

Reimagining Public Schools and Teacher Education

Solidarity and Activism through *Testimonio*

by

Jennifer Gale de Saxe

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Washington

June 2014

Reading Committee

Kenneth Zeichner, Chair

Wayne Au

Shirley Hune

Program Authorized to Offer Degree:

College of Education

University of Washington

Abstract

Reimagining Public Schools and Teacher Education

Solidarity and Activism through *Testimonio*

Jennifer Gale de Saxe

Chair of Supervisory Committee:

Kenneth Zeichner

Curriculum and Instruction

This dissertation examines the interdisciplinary role that critical feminism and critical education may have in regards to reconceptualizing the way we understand the purposes of schooling. Through an examination of the historical and current debates regarding the purposes of schooling and teacher education, this dissertation offers another way to conceptualize a democratic and liberatory education. With the political and self-reflexive act of sharing ones educational experiences through *testimonio*, educators have the potential to make school a place that truly aims to embrace all of our students and their families. Further, by reconceptualizing the purpose of schooling as a place of democratic teaching and learning, educators can work and support students in becoming critical thinkers, local and global activists, as well as help their students understand the power they have in affecting the course of history. Therefore, by aiming to reframe and infuse our teacher education programs with elements of critical feminism, we can refocus the attention of teacher preparation and our understanding of the purposes of schools as places that put the human component of teaching and learning at the center.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my faculty advisor, Dr. Kenneth Zeichner, for believing in this work, and taking me on as an advisee. I would not have been able to finish my degree without his support. He pushed my thinking, and introduced me to scholars and work that totally revolutionized the way I think about education. I would also like to thank Dr. Wayne Au for his dedication with not only my dissertation and exam writing, but for supporting me with my teaching and learning as an instructor at UW Bothell and Seattle U. His commitment to education is evident through his many visits and presentations to my classes while I was teaching. I would also like to thank Dr. Shirley Hune for teaching some of the only courses on Women in Higher Education. She is truly an inspiration for women in academia. Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Angela Ginorio, for were it not for her Women of Color in Academia course, I would have never learned about *testimonio* or have even considered bringing critical feminism and education to the table. Her unrelenting support throughout my years as a grad student has truly helped me navigate my way through the College of Education. I feel so fortunate with the four members who served on my committee. I can not thank you enough.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my family. Ben, Sam, and Leah... from too early of an age for you to remember, you have been a part of this process. Ben, you started attending college classes at the age of one. Sam, you sat many an hour coloring or playing games on the computer while I wrote chapter after chapter. Leah, you kept me company in bed right after you were born as I worked furiously on my written exams. Mom and dad, you have been nothing but supportive of me since the moment I decided to go back to grad school. Grandma Bertha, I wasn't sure you would be here to see me finish my dissertation. You have been an intellectual inspiration to me for as long as I can remember. And Babe, I can't even begin to tell you how much your love and support has meant to me throughout this process. You never once questioned my choice to go back to school, nor did you allow me to give up when the process became too stressful. I would not have been able to finish without you. Thank you. I love you all.

Prologue

I write this dissertation as a White, heterosexual, cisgender, middle-class, Jewish, woman. I am also a former elementary educator. It is important to present myself in this manner, as there are many frameworks and arguments within my dissertation that are important to me in varying degrees, and for this reason, it is contextually important to know where I am coming from. My interest in this scholarship, which will continue as my life's work, began as I enrolled in a Masters in Teaching Program in Chicago, Illinois, while simultaneously working in a private K-12 school.

To be honest, there was nothing particularly noteworthy, exciting, or critically impressive about the teacher education program I enrolled in. There were two professors, one who presented teaching math with a real-world perspective, and the other, a professor in a sociocultural foundations course. Both classes really spoke to me with their breadth and depth of teaching with a critical eye, but seemed to be isolated within the grand scheme of the content offered throughout the program.

While I was getting my teaching certificate and Masters in Teaching degree, I served as a classroom assistant at a nearby private school, and witnessed so much wealth and privilege, that I never felt truly comfortable throughout most of my time there. Very little of what I learned in my teaching program was actually applicable, as the lower elementary grade classrooms I worked in were thematic, didn't require standardized testing, and were all based on portfolios. This type of teaching was engaging and empowering, but realistically, I knew, that it was not available for all

students. I couldn't relate to the teacher I was becoming, and wasn't comfortable with the relationships I had with the families. By no means am I trying to generalize private schools or the families who attend them, but having gone to public school my entire life, I knew that was where I needed to teach. Once I finished my degree, I began applying for jobs in "hard to staff" schools in Orange County, CA.

My first year of teaching was in a public school, fifth grade classroom in Costa Mesa, California. I had 34 students, barely enough desks, and a wide range of academic levels, languages, and parental involvement. Nearly 75% of the students identified as Latino/a with the remainder identifying as White/Caucasian or Asian/Pacific Islander. I had the "stereotypical" first year teaching experience; staying until after 6 each night, taking my work home, and not being able to let go of the emotional toll the students had upon me. It was tiring work, but I loved it.

After just one year of teaching, my husband enrolled in a graduate program in the central coast of California, so the next two years of my teaching career were in a 4th and 5th grade classroom at a school in Seaside, California. Ninety-five percent of the students identified as Latino/a with the remainder identifying as African American. The free and reduced lunch percentage was well over 75. Luckily, I spoke Spanish, so was able to connect and have deeper relationships with the parents and families that didn't require a translator.

It was at this school that I was introduced to (what I consider) to be the demeaning content of a scripted curriculum. We had an entire week devoted to learning how to "make sense" of the various parts of the way too involved teaching package. It felt so stifling, and the kids seemed as bored with the curriculum as I

was. The creativity that I so desperately wanted to include in my teaching, became ever more difficult to slip into the day.

It was also during these two years that two very significant events took place: I had the privilege of partnering with an organization called National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI), who helped us implement an anti-bullying program, which also include an afterschool “diversity” council. Simultaneously, the school was slated for closure due to test scores and AYP.

NCBI was an amazing program that tried to tackle some substantive, institutionalized, and oppressive issues that occurred both within and outside our school community. I felt so fortunate this program partnered with us, but trying to rally allies and other support among staff was tougher than I expected, which actually surprised me at the time because we had a diverse staff, both racially and linguistically. There were three other teachers (all upper grades) who became involved with the program, which made it difficult to implement within the school. However, for the year we instituted the program, the students engaged in some powerful dialogue and discussion. Unfortunately, it dissolved after I left.

In regards to the school closure, the community and school members were relentless and amazing with their turnout at the town hall meetings, and luckily, we didn’t close. However, the impact this had upon our students was difficult, as the negative comments they heard around the neighborhood stuck with them, and, as they told me often, they felt it was their fault that the school was closing.

After my time teaching at the school for two years, my husband and I decided to move to Seattle, where I took the job of a fourth grade boys teacher at a public

elementary school in the Central district. This class had more of an impact on me than any other, and was really the catalyst that pushed me to go back to school.

The school became gender separate just a few years prior, which was an experiment in working to increase academic achievement and test scores. The class of boys I had were together for four years straight, and had only experienced every teacher they had leave the school after they taught them. I had eighteen boys, the majority of whom identified as African American, with a few identifying as Somalian and Ethiopian. The percentage of free and reduced lunch families at the school was well over the 95 percent mark.

I was determined to create a warm and safe classroom community, but experienced resistance and disinterest in the community building activities I tried. As the year went on, and we grew closer and worked towards a relationship of mutual respect, I learned that the boys felt they were never treated respectfully, never experienced positive teacher role models, and felt that none of their previous teachers thought they could do challenging work. Knowing this, it made all too much sense that they would resist wanting to engage with yet another teacher, whom they believed would only leave after the end of the year because of their class, as well as make them feel that they were anything but less than. To make matters worse, this school was also slated for closure, and once again, the power of the community and families worked harder than they should have had to in order to keep their neighborhood school open.

At the beginning of my second year at the school, I had my first baby, and had to decide whether I was going to stay at the school or apply to graduate school. My

decision was obviously a tremendously difficult one, as I didn't want to be that same teacher who left after I taught the boys. However, I had to choose the latter and told the boys my departure had nothing to do with them, but rather I needed to work with teachers going into the profession so they could learn how to be the best teachers they could be for all of their students and families.

I knew that the schools I worked at, and the policies and curriculum enacted within them were not the exception, but rather the norm. I knew that every student deserved to have the best teachers, education, and caring learning environment that was their due right as a respected human being. I knew that the problems were bigger than me, but that I had to start somewhere, and work with as many allies as I could along the way.

After two years at a private school, and almost five years as a public school educator, I began my research and teaching in higher education. I knew the challenge I would face in terms of trying to work against a system that doesn't support every student and family along their educational career. However, we need to do the hard work, and push against the grain. I write this dissertation as an ally, and as someone who is unrelentlessly committed to combatting racism, sexism, classism, and homophobia, as well as any other injustices that permeate our education system. I do this work to help make all schools safe, empowering, and academically challenging for every student and family who attends them.

Table of Contents

Preface- Why do we need to Reimagine?i

Part 1- Setting the Stage

Chapt. 1- A Neoliberal Critique- Conceptualizing the Purposes of School 1

Understanding Neoliberalism and Education

False Meritocracy and the “Blame Game”

Further Inequity and High Stakes Testing

Chapt. 2- The Current Context of Teacher Education.....16

Attacks on Foundation and Multicultural Education Courses in Teacher Education

De-professionalizing Teachers

Fast Track and Alternative Pathways to Teaching

Chapt. 3- The Complexities of “Social Justice” Teacher Education29

Defining a Critical Educator

Moving further with Critical Pedagogy

Understanding the ‘Critical’ Piece of “Social Justice Teacher Education”

Complicating ‘Social Justice’ in Teacher Education

Predominantly White Institutions and Teacher Education

Deeper than a light flesh-colored bandaid: Rearticulating Whiteness

Critical Whiteness Studies and Teacher Education

Diversifying the Teaching Force

Part 2- An Interdisciplinary Approach- Critical Education and Critical Feminism

Chapt. 4- What’s Critical Feminism doing in a Field like Teacher Education?.....59

Men and Feminism

Defining Methodologies of Resistance

Recognizing Critical Race Theory within Critical Feminism

Critical Feminism as an Evolving Framework

Moving Forward: Contextualizing Critical Feminist Theory in Teacher Education

Chapt. 5- An Interdisciplinary Approach: Critical Feminism and Critical Education86

Revisiting some Characteristics of Critical Feminism

Disrupting the Educational Canon and Mainstream Academic Knowledge

Questioning Hegemonic Understandings of Oppression

Speaking Out Through Diverse Methods and Forms of Resistance

The Interdisciplinarity of Critical Feminism and Critical Education

Moving forward from a framework to pedagogy and practice

Part 3- Considering *Testimonio*

Chapt.6- Understanding *Testimonio* and Education..... 105

Defining Testimonio

Situating Testimonio within the Context of Education

Testimonio and Further Considerations within Teacher Education

Chapt.7- A Case Study Analysis of <i>Testimonio</i>	125
Part 4: Conclusion	
Chapt. 8- Next Steps	138
<i>My Testimonio</i>	
Appendix A.....	149
Rosa's <i>Testimonio</i>	
References	151

Preface- Why do we Need to Reimagine?

Adopting a critical stance requires that the educator: engage in an honest and detailed examination of the way existing power structures shape experience, resulting both in unearned privilege for some and unfair disadvantages for others; offer students the respectful treatment, valid voice, and relevant curriculum that is their due as human beings; embrace the role of public intellectual, taking seriously the educator's opportunity and challenge to function as change agents in pursuit of a genuinely democratic society; and, accept the responsibility and need to engage in activism, no matter the discomforts and risks inherent in such work. (Hinchey, 2008, p.128)

The institution we call public school is plagued with tensions and contradictions that currently allow us to characterize it as an environment that focuses heavily on the following principles: standardized testing, preparing students to be active members of a capitalist economy, as well as creating and maintaining politically neutral citizens ¹who are taught not to question the status quo² in regards to the inequities found both within and outside the school setting. Thus, rather than all schools acting as democratic³ and empowering spaces that help build critical thinkers, teach students to become local and global activists, and encourage students to see citizenship as something that includes having pride for oneself and their families, many public schools push forth an agenda that actually oppresses all too many of our students, teachers, and others involved within our educational communities (Apple, 2007; Ayers', 2011). Additionally, as Lipman, (2011) argues,

¹ Throughout this dissertation, I understand and use the term citizenship within the following context; participating in civic life and interacting with others, learning values, norms languages and practices, which constitute diverse and situated forms of civic practice according to different social contexts (Nam, 2012).

² Although we would like to believe that our schools behave as neutral institutions, Apple (1995) argues that even though there have been numerous attempts to politicize knowledge and power, in actuality, a continuous reproduction of the knowledge that is taught becomes ideally suited to perpetuate and legitimize the structural bases of inequality. Further, these systems of domination and exploitation persist and reproduce themselves often, without being recognized or challenged. Consequently, these practices become commonly accepted.

³ Throughout the entirety of my dissertation, I refer to democratic education in the following manner: " Giving students the knowledge and skills they need to struggle for a continued expansion of political, economic, and social rights. Of utmost importance is making students aware that they have the power to affect the course of history that history is the struggle for human rights" (Spring, 1996, p.28).

“It (education) is no longer seen as part of the larger end of promoting individual and social development, but is merely the means to rise above others... Tensions between democratic purposes of education and education to serve the needs of the workforce are longstanding” (p.118).

Consequently, it is vital that we deeply examine these tensions and contradictions, and reconsider how we understand the purposes of schools: I look to the following quote by Apple (1995) to help frame the premise of this analysis:

Schools are not “merely” institutions of reproduction, institutions where overt and covert knowledge that is taught inexorably molds students into passive beings who are able and eager to fit into an unequal society. Clearly schools need to be seen in a more complex manner than simple reproduction. (Apple, 1995)

Arguably, reexamining the purposes of schools is only half the work. The aforementioned tensions continue to exist and often perpetuate themselves in ways that require us look at teacher education programs, and consider how they choose to respond to these contradictions. In other words, are teacher education programs examining these tensions with a critical lens, and are they preparing teachers to conceptualize schools as democratic spaces that value their students, families, and communities? Are they interrogating educational reform as Berliner (2014) suggests, so that they see that “the current menu of reforms in public education are working fine for many America’s families and youth, and that there is a common characteristic among families for whom the public school is failing” (p.9) Furthermore, are they engaging in pedagogies that speak to the overarching power imbalances that permeate education and society? These vital questions will be the driving force and platform within which I present my dissertation.

There is often a direct connection between the content, philosophy and pedagogy⁴ enacted within many teacher education programs, and the ways in which many preservice teachers leave their programs with or without a critical eye regarding the purposes of schooling. Therefore, it is necessary to question and potentially reconsider teacher education so that all of our teachers can leave their teacher education programs prepared to be active members of a democratic school system. As Apple and Beane (2007) discuss, democratic schools are designed and understood as communities of learning that prize diversity and have a sense of shared purpose. Additionally, curriculum within democratic schools offers access to varied opinions and viewpoints that include those of the students, families, and educators. Arguably, the reality of creating democratic schools is not an easy one, but with collective optimism, and politically informed and engaged educators and students, we can move to work towards such a reality.

It is for this reason I call on us to reconceptualize and reconsider the philosophy and focus of many teacher education programs. We must work to challenge and transform the dominant paradigms, knowledge, and teaching pedagogies currently used in many teacher education programs. As Bartolome (1994) asserts, “ It is important that educators not blindly reject teaching methods across the board, but that they reject uncritical appropriation of methods, materials,

⁴ My understanding of the word pedagogy builds upon Gore’s (1993) definition: “It is a kind of focus on the processes of teaching that demands that attention be drawn to the politics of those processes and to the broader political context within which they are situated. Therefore, instruction and social vision are analytical components of pedagogy; insofar as the concept implies, both, each requires attention (p.5).

curricula, etc. Educators need to reject the present methods fetish so as to create learning environments informed by both action and reflection” (p.177).

Teacher educators and preservice teachers must look at elements of education that are not generally considered given the dominant philosophies and understandings of educating prospective teachers, and move further to frame teaching and learning in a democratic manner. As Hill (2007) contends, “Teachers, teacher educators and student teachers should develop an understanding of the potential role of teachers in transforming society” (p. 12). Only through this self-reflection and examination can we move towards a school system that can be characterized as empowering and democratic. As Gillette and Schultz (2008) state, “ It is necessary for teacher candidates to develop such an imagination for what is possible” (p.232).

Throughout the entirety of my dissertation, I address some potential alternatives for what could be reconsidered and even challenged within teacher education. As such, I argue that we need to move towards a vision that includes framing classrooms and schools as democratic communities of learning that provide all students the opportunity to be critical thinkers, politically aware, and thoughtful individuals.

More specifically, I argue that by reimagining teacher education through a critical feminist lens⁵, we can aim to restructure the method-heavy and less than

⁵ Within this framework, I understand critical feminist theory per McLeod (2009) “Feminism and education are malleable and political. Poststructural feminism is not a bounded, fixed-in-time transcendental theory, but a shifting, socially and temporally embedded system of reasoning, that generates particular ways of thinking about education and about feminism-its political project, the topics that warrant “new concepts,” and its sense of history and possible futures” (p. 146).

critical pedagogies and philosophies that constitute many of our current teacher education programs.⁶In other words, we can reconceptualize teacher education as a space that offers pre-service teachers, and teacher educators, a different, more reflexive and critical path to begin the process of understanding themselves and their positionalities⁷ as teachers and learners in empowering public schools.

In order to engage in such personal and professional self-reflection, preservice teachers must examine their own understandings of school, education, and society, and deeply examine how they currently conceptualize the purposes of public schools. Anyon (2005 & 2011) argues that much of comprehensive school reform and transformation is ineffective because it often fails to move beyond curriculum and testing and include economic and political factors. As I argue later in this dissertation, situating critical feminism within the context of education is one way to offer a space for educators to examine such relationships between the school and society.

One of the most important components to becoming an educator is being self-reflexive and introspective, as well as paying close attention to the politics surrounding education (Zeichner, 2006 & 2011). Not only does this practice require honesty in moving to make connections between our own educational experiences,

⁶ It is important to note that there has been scholarship that addresses gender and race within teacher education. Gore, Luke, and McWilliams (all Australians), have brought feminism to the table within teacher education, but have detached gender from race and sexuality. Similarly, critical multiculturalism, with contributions from Banks, Sleeter, Darling-Hammond and Ladson-Billings has focused on race and class, but hasn't comprehensively included gender within the discussion. Thus, I build off of both strands of scholarship, arguing for a critical feminist perspective, which includes the many diverse facets and ways of understanding this constantly changing and shifting term.

⁷ Maher and Tetrealt (1997) describe positionality as, "a concept advanced by postmodern and other feminist thinkers that validates knowledge only when it includes attention to the knower's position in any specific context. People's locations within these networks are susceptible to critique and change when they are explored rather than ignored, individualized, or universalized" (p.322).

teaching, and our roles in the greater society, but it also provides us a space to look deep into the lives we lead, and the kind of educators we hope to become.

Throughout this dissertation, I will discuss how critical feminism⁸, as a theoretical and pedagogical framework, offers a way to think about doing this. One of the many aspects of understanding critical feminism is through its potential to produce spiritual, social and psychological healing, yet with the intent of political action and activism. The concept of healing takes on many forms, one of which results in a personal and social transformation that can lead to mobilization and collective action. As such, we see practices that honor human difference, while providing opportunities to come together with a shared agenda towards emancipation and liberation (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). Following Bartolome, (1994), teachers and students will have the opportunity to focus on the *human* component of education, and thus, move beyond the stifled walls of testing, the commodification of schools and teaching, as well as political complacency (also see Apple, 2009; Au, 2008; Berliner, 2014, Labaree, 1997; Lipman, 2011; Picower, 2011).

As a way to move forward with this type of introspective thinking and learning, while also challenging the traditional nature of many teacher education programs, I examine the pedagogy and practice of *testimonio*.⁹ As Huber and Cueva

⁸Throughout this dissertation, critical feminism will build off the work of hooks (2009): hooks argues for the emphasis on the multiple, diverse, and individual ways women experience oppression. She not only resists the “hegemonic dominance of feminist thought by insisting that it is a theory in the making, that we must necessarily criticize, question, re-examine, and explore new possibilities” (p.39), but goes further to explain how her own role in the revolution has not been as a result of past feminist conscious-raising.

⁹ “By *testimonio* I understand a novel or novella-length narrative told in the first person by a narrator who is also the real-life protagonist or witness of the events he or she recounts” (Beverly, 1991, p.2).

(2012) state, “*Testimonio* as a methodological approach was employed to provide the participants with a space to reveal and reflect on their educational experiences as mediated by race, immigration status, class, and gender” (p. 396). This process of conceptualizing how one sees and understands themselves with and within the world is just one way in which critical feminism as a framework, and *testimonio* as a pedagogy can be considered within the context of teacher education.

I argue in this dissertation that through critical feminism as a framework, and *testimonio* as a pedagogy in relation to one’s educational experiences, teacher educators and teacher candidates can reflect upon, reimagine and potentially reconceptualize how they make sense of the purposes of schooling for all students and teachers. Chavez (2012) describes her *testimonio* as a way to “reinterpret the events we choose to depict regarding our lived experiences. Thus, while stories are many times fragmented bits and pieces of our own collective memory, these instances serve to deepen our understanding of the ways in which social relations are embedded within existing hegemonic structures—in this case, educational institutions” (p.345).

Through this reconceptualization, and by examining our individual experiences and how they relate to the sociocultural and sociopolitical components of teaching and learning, teacher educators and preservice teachers will have a unique opportunity to self-reflect and engage in a self-analysis of our relationships between the school and society. As Lewis (2009) states, “ Schools provide a venue in which to study larger social processes as well as a unique setting in which to

Additionally, per Reyes and Rodrigues (2012), “*testimonios* evolve from events experienced by a narrator who seeks empowerment through voicing her or his experience” (p.527).

study identity formation-they are one of the central places where notions of self are formed” (p.129). Throughout this process, all educators can enter the institutions of public schools with a deeper understanding for how to consider moving forward with truly democratic and empowering education.

Furthermore, as Anyon (1994) states, “what must occur is that social conditions must be created that foster opportunities for Others (eg., Blacks, Latinos, students) to publish (or act or paint, etc.) without having to go to the White majority for “space” (p.127). Within this practice, the hope is that preservice teachers can become politically informed educators who use methods that “create conditions that enable subordinated students to move from their usual passive position to one of active and critical engagement” (Bartolome, 1994, p.177)

Ultimately, as Ayers and Ayers (2011) assert, we aim to reconsider every assumption and reexamine fundamental principles, with the ultimate goals of “entering the deeply contested space of school and social change, without guarantees, but with an expanded sense of hope, confidence and possibility”(p.6). Further, if we look to the characteristics of critical feminism and critical education as a way to better understand how intertwined the educational community is to sociocultural and sociopolitical issues, current and preservice teachers can become better equipped to move forward with the phrase “Teach the Taboo” (Ayers, and Ayers, 2011).

In order to argue for the radical pedagogies and practices that fall within critical feminism, *testimonio*, and critical education, it is essential to understand the political context of public education today. Arguably, my proposals fall outside the

perspective that many current “reforms” in education espouse. Thus, I begin this dissertation with a focus on the historical and current tensions regarding the purposes of public schooling, as well as those reforms that coincide with such perspectives. I move further with an analysis for why teacher educators and preservice teachers need to examine and possibly reconsider how they understand the purposes of school, as this really frames the essence for what I will be arguing. Within chapter one, I consider the following questions: What are the current and historical debates and contradictions surrounding the purposes of school? What impact do these tensions have upon teacher educators, preservice teachers, and their K-12 students?

Throughout this discussion, I pay particular attention to the current move towards neoliberalism, privatization, and deregulation within our public schools by addressing the following points: How and why is it important to examine neoliberalism throughout our discussion of public education? What impact is the privatization movement having upon our students, schools, and communities? It is throughout the discussion in chapter one that I am able to better contextualize and make a case for why the work I am proposing is important and valuable to the education community.

Importantly, the move to privatize is not isolated within the national conversation regarding our public schools. Similar policies are being proposed and institutionalized within many traditional teacher education programs. It is for this reason that chapter two will discuss the current climate and attacks on university teacher education programs. Specifically, I discuss the following issues regarding

the push to eliminate traditional teacher education programs: 1) the claim that foundations and multicultural courses are unnecessary, as they are not part of the “practical” components to teaching 2) the current trend of deprofessionalizing teachers and teaching, and 3) the move towards fast track teaching programs. This brief analysis will help better demonstrate the challenge my proposal will face given the current realities of traditional teacher education programs.

Once a better understanding of the current sociopolitical components of education are addressed, it is important to analyze past and current work that has addressed the issues of equity, equality, and “social justice” education, as they are deeply connected to the work I am proposing. I organize chapter three as a way to make sense of the term “social justice” and how it relates to teacher education programs. I look to the following questions as a way to guide the discussion within this chapter: What does “social justice” mean within the context of teacher education? How do teacher education programs understand this concept within their conceptual frameworks, required courses, diversifying the teaching force and overall campus climates? What does the term “critical pedagogy” mean within the discussion of teacher education, and why must we specifically define certain components of the phrase “social justice” in order to truly aim for partnerships (between teachers, students, and the community) in our teaching and learning?

Throughout this chapter I will also discuss why it is important to understand a critical Whiteness perspective, and how it interrelates and connects to some of the work I am proposing through a critical feminist and education perspective. As such,

I demonstrate how I envision elements of both critical Whiteness studies and critical education theory connecting with critical feminism.

Following the discussion of social justice and teacher education, I move onto chapter four and outline a framework of critical feminism as a way to potentially consider reframing components of teacher education. I reflect on the following questions within this chapter: What is critical feminism? Why must we understand methodologies of resistance when considering the many nuances and dimensions of critical feminism? How can critical feminism be articulated within the context of teacher education? Finally, how does reframing teacher education through these lenses offer us a way to reimagine the purposes of school, and potentially help us move towards more democratic spaces for all students and teachers?

Importantly, there is significant scholarship within the critical education community that resonates with many of the characteristics of critical feminism. The discussion in chapter five will help illuminate the interdisciplinary relationship between both critical feminism and critical education. Further, the aim of chapter five is to consider the scholarly significance of framing teacher education through both lenses by addressing the following questions: What is the benefit of thinking about and structuring teacher education through these lenses (critical feminism and critical education)? What elements of critical education theory intersect and complement critical feminism? What components found within the work of various critical education scholars connect with elements of critical feminism?

Once an interdisciplinary framework of critical feminism and critical education are established, I explore and engage in a deep discussion of the pedagogy

of *testimonio*. The following questions will be embedded within this chapter: What is *testimonio*, and how does it differ from other counter-narratives? How can we utilize *testimonio* as a pedagogy within teacher education? How does *testimonio* impact teacher and student voice? Further, what is the role of “silence” within this pedagogy? Finally, I will explore some potential concerns in regards to who can write their own *testimonios*.

Importantly, theoretical frameworks and pedagogies resonate more fully when we can humanize their impact. As a way to better explain how I consider deploying critical feminism and *testimonio* in higher education, I offer a case study analysis from an undergraduate course I taught. Chapter seven will entail a description of the course, as well as the framework in which I engaged in critical feminism and *testimonio* with the students. It also includes reflections from the students in regards to their experience when learning about *testimonio*. The discussion and brief analysis will include responses from an anonymous survey as well as some in-class reflections in which the students discuss their thoughts regarding *testimonio*, and its potential positive impact on both teachers and students.

The final chapter in this dissertation will include some summarizing points regarding the interdisciplinary of critical feminism and critical education. It will also speak to how I consider moving forward incorporating critical feminism and *testimonio* in teacher education. Specifically, I come back to how this framework and pedagogy could potentially help teacher educators and preservice teachers analyze their own experiences, and how deeply connected these experiences are to the

sociocultural and sociopolitical components of education; both through teaching and learning. The hope is that through this reflecting, educators can reframe how they see their roles in educational institutions, and what this means in regards to reconceptualizing the purposes of public school. This final chapter concludes with my own *testimonio*, which highlights my experiences in graduate school, and how I make sense of this process as it relates to the larger picture of reimagining teaching, learning, and education as a space for true human freedom¹⁰.

¹⁰ I follow Greene's (1988) discussion of education as the practice of freedom. Greene states, "I want to explore some other ways of seeing, alternative modes of being in the world. My focal interest is human freedom, in the capacity to surpass the given and look at things as if they could be otherwise" (p.3)

Chapter 1-A Neoliberal Critique: Conceptualizing the Purposes of School

Education in the U.S. has always had a contradictory nature. On the one hand, schools have been primary agents of social control and the reproduction of class, gender, and racial advantages and disadvantages. However, education also had-and continues to have- potentially liberating, egalitarian, and transformative possibilities as well. (Anyon, 2005, p.167)

The school and society have been inextricably linked to one other since the birth of public schools (Ayers and Ayers, 2011, Anyon, 2005 & 2011, Lipman, 2011, Nieto, 2005, Tyack, 2004, Spring, 1988 & 1996)). One of the salient linkages between the two has historically been and continues to be the role schools play in working to mold the ideal *American*, or what Hinchey (2008) describes as “ a process intended to blend the individuals into one mass, and eventually producing a homogenous standard product” (p. 8). Tyack (2004) and Spring (1996) note that the tension between citizenship and schooling has been an intertwining element within the common school since before the American Revolution. In fact, Tyack (2004) describes a Jeffersonian virtue in which “political homogeneity was not a vice but a virtue” (p.17).

Presently, many public schools function as institutions that aim to produce, perpetuate, and maintain “worthy” citizens, and do so, in a manner that demands obedience and compliance (Ayers and Ayers, 2011, Hinchey, 2008; Labaree, 1997; Tyack, 2003). Historically and today, individualism within this context can be considered undemocratic, and thus it becomes necessary to “break the hold of the group” and inculcate the individual to eventually become “Americanized” (Tyack, 2004, p.34). Although not a novel insight, the school and prison comparison could not be more salient and striking than it is today (Foucault, 1977). As Ayers and

Ayers (2011) note, “ Schools reward conformity and mindless habits of obedience for a reason, and they relentlessly punish deviance with a purpose” (p.22).

Importantly, not *all* schools and children are the victims of such control and standardized school experiences. The majority of schools that conform to this oppressive form of schooling are those that serve children living in poverty; representing both rural and urban communities.

This chapter serves as the starting point in which to interrogate how our current classrooms and schools seem to sidestep the *human* component of education, (Freire, 1970; 1974, Greene, 1988, Beista, 2006) while also demonstrating why it is necessary to deeply examine and question the current practices, “reform” movements, and ideologies that characterize and encompass the tensions surrounding the purpose of public schools. As Ravitch (2103) argues:

Once upon a time, education reformers thought deeply about the relationship between school and society. They thought about child development as the starting point for education. In those days, education reformers recognized the important role of the family in the education of children. Many years ago, education reformers demanded desegregation. They debated how to improve curriculum and instruction and what the curriculum should be. But that was long ago (p.18).

What follows is an analysis of neoliberalism, and how through its current attempt to take-over public education, we see such ramifications and consequences as false meritocracy, high stakes testing, and drastic funding inequities found within all too many public schools.

Understanding Neoliberalism and Education

For a definition and contextualization of neoliberalism, I refer to Davies and Bansel (2007) who discusses its emergence in the 1970's, and help define it as a

means to make “subjects”, or democratic citizens, both more governable and more able to service capital. Spring (2008), also notes that neoliberalism is a practice in which government-provided services are privatized and turned over to the forces of the marketplace. As privatized institutions, it is important to note that competition serves as the driving force measuring success.

Through the selling points of individualism and autonomy, neoliberalism is not seen as a dangerous form of governance, as it is successfully crafted to create a false sense accomplishment Davies and Bansel (2007) state, “A particular feature of neoliberal subjects is that their desires, hopes, ideals and fears have been shaped in such a way that they desire to be morally worthy, responsible individuals, who, as successful entrepreneurs, can produce the best for themselves and their families” (p. 251).

Ultimately, neoliberal policies shun social projects, capitalizing on the notion that they are the binary opposite of economically fruitful policies. As such, “freedom is rearticulated as freedom from want, and is to be gained through self-improvement obtained through individual entrepreneurial activity”. (Davies and Bansel, 2007, p. 252). Not surprisingly, neoliberal policies have serious implications for our current education system.

Apple (2001) discusses the relationship between neoliberalism and education by placing public schools at the epicenter of such policies. Through a neoliberal vision, Apple describes the education system as a “vast supermarket”. In fact, he goes so far as to argue that “rather than democracy being a *political* concept, it is transformed into a wholly *economic* concept...the entire project of neoliberalism

is connected to a larger process of exporting the blame from the decisions of dominant groups on the state and onto poor people” (Apple, 2001, p.39).

Consequently, the recent direction of education reform (both liberal and conservative) seems to hop on the neoliberal bandwagon, without seeming to question the severe impact it has upon our children, their families, and the community (Moses and Nanna, 2007).

Categorizing a neoliberal restructuring of public education, Lipman (2011) explains, “ (This agenda) features mayoral control over school districts, closing “failing” public schools or handing them over to corporate-style “turnaround” organizations, expanding school “choice”, and privately run by publically funded charter schools, weakening teacher unions, and enforcing top-down accountability and incentivized performance targets on schools, classrooms, and teachers” (p.116). Additionally, a neoliberal restructuring of education is permeated with a deeply racialized, classed, and gendered subtext (Anyon, 2011; Apple, 2001; Au, 2009; Tyack, 2004).

Moving further, Labaree (1997, 2010), recognizes that a neoliberal agenda considers the social mobility factor of schooling to be the most important purpose of our public schools. In essence, “ the social mobility approach to schooling argues that education is a commodity, the only purpose of which is to provide individual students with a competitive advantage in the struggle for desirable social positions” (1997, p.42). Thus, within this framework, schools become the most important vehicle to prepare our children to be productive members of society; ie; readying them for increasing the economic growth in society. Likewise, this model breeds

further inequity, in that the better one achieves in school, the more possibilities become available for higher education, the better the job, etc. Additionally, as Labaree (1997) argues, “ Schools create educational channels that efficiently carry groups of students toward different locations in the occupational structure” (p.50).

Taking all of this as a given, it is important not to forget what Anyon (2011) argues in regards to school and our inequitable society. In essence, “ the economy creates relatively few highly paid positions-making it increasingly less certain that more education will assure that work pays well... or that education will get a person a good job and thereby reduce poverty and inequality” (p. 68-70). Thus, we must not be fooled into thinking that by merely being a “successful” student, we will be able to change our economic status within our current societal structure.

Additionally, a neoliberal agenda often (but not always) works in tandem with the¹¹neoconservative belief that schools serve as equalizers, and that they actually level the playing field for *equal opportunity*. Further, the way reformers frame many of their arguments, it is not surprising that we see bipartisan support for them (Ravitch, 2013). For example, who can argue with the following goals?

The reformers say they want excellent education for all; they want great teachers; they want to “close the achievement gap”; they want innovation and effectiveness; they want the best of everything for everyone (Ravitch, p 19).

¹¹ Apple (2001) describes neoconservatism as engaging with a romanticized version of the past. For example, he mentions the following policies as demonstrating a neoconservative agenda: A “return” to higher standards, a revivification of the “Western tradition”, and patriotism, among others. Further, neoconservatives fear the “Other”, as we see such movements to end bilingual education, eliminate multicultural curriculum, and standardize curriculum and testing.

Essentially, the word “reform” has been coopted to suit the ideology of its members and supporters.

Moving further, McLaren (1989) refers to the “myth” or what Anyon (2011) terms “false meritocracy”, demonstrating how we “live in a culture that stresses the merits of possessive individualism, the autonomous ego, and the individual entrepreneurship” (McLaren, p.225). It is this belief that paves the way for “reform” movements such as standardized testing, merit pay for teachers, as well as any other school improvement that reduces “failure” to the individual, as opposed to seeing such “problems” as “having to do with social and material inequality and collective greed and privilege” (McLaren, p. 225). Likewise, Berliner (2014) states,

“ Instead of facing the issues connected with poverty and housing policy, federal and state education policies are attempting to test more frequently, raise the quality of entering teachers; evaluate teachers on their test scores and fire the ones that have students who perform poorly; use incentives for students and teachers; allow untrained adults with college degrees to enter the profession; break teachers unions, and so forth” (downloaded copy, p.5).

For these reasons, when we examine education “reforms”, it is imperative to deeply scrutinize the current trends in neoliberal and privatization policies that are currently saturating our education system. As Picower (2011) argues, “ By focusing on the rights and responsibilities of individuals, neoliberal policies have resulted in increasing accountability systems that have inadequately served them. Rather than improving the quality of education, this vicious circle creates school climates characterized by compliance, conformity, and fear” (p.1105-1106).

Additionally, and potentially even more drastic, Baltodano (2012) argues, “Neoliberalism has taken away the joy of learning, the creativity of teaching, and the formation of strong public intellectuals. Public education is gradually fading and is being replaced by new privatized forms of schooling. The results are the lack of an articulate public and the reduction of public spheres to contest the dominant neoliberal vision of society” (p.489). However, even within this bleak picture of our current state of education, there are many forward thinking, progressive and radical educators who work daily to push back against such harsh and stifling policies.

Further, it is important to recognize that not all education reformers are greedy capitalists whose mere intention is to privatize education. Ravitch (2013) points this out by noting that some in the reform camp truly believe that American education is failing, and that the only way to actually “fix” our current school system is to redesign and revamp our nation’s failing schools. As she notes, “ some sincerely believe they are helping poor black and brown children escape from failing public schools. Some think they are on the side of modernization and innovation” (p.20). Thus, although this discussion focuses on the former aforementioned “reformers,” who have the ultimate goal of privatization and a neoliberal take -over, not everyone believes that this is the best direction to take when working towards and debating educational reform.

Appropriately, what follows is a discussion of how a neoliberal presence creates intense contradictions in regards to how we currently understand the purposes of public education.

False Meritocracy and the “blame game”

Lipman (2011) talks about neoliberalism and the institutionalization of oppression, in that it is a “process that works its way into the discourses and practices of schools, through the actions of not only elites, but also marginalized and oppressed people acting in conditions not of their own making” (p.121). For example, we see the practice of students, teachers, families and communities, believing that “failure” is the result of individual action and lack of motivation instead of considering societal and institutional inequity and exclusionary practices.

With this idea in mind, I refer to Alexander (2010) who does not intentionally or directly implicate our educational institutions, but recognizes that our classrooms and schools are intimately related to what goes on in society, and vice versa. Therefore, when Alexander argues that “something akin to a racial caste system currently exists in the United States,” (p.2), we must be aware of the dangerous educational ideologies that encompass too many of our classrooms and schools. Furthermore, as Spring (1996) notes, there is an assumption that the educational system is fair, and that “the individual is being judged solely on talent demonstrated in school and not on other social factors such as race, religion, dress, and social class” (p.8).

Interestingly, although Memmi (1965) wrote his famous text *The Colonizer and the Colonized* over fifty years ago, his discussion of internalized oppression and self blame continue to ring true today as we talk about meritocracy, individualism, and institutionalized oppression; all components of a neoliberal ideology. Memmi (1965) argues that the colonized are not free to choose whether or not they are

colonized, and in fact, they begin to internalize and accept their inferior status as truth. He also recognizes that oppression is so institutionalized that the colonized both admire and fear the colonizers, while also placing blame and “failure” upon themselves as opposed to societal factors and marginalization practices.

Ayers and Ayers (2011) connect with this point stating that “students are struggling to maintain, and to construct, their own identities within an institution that validates White middle-class student discourse as a matter of routine and puts all others into deep conflict” (p.109). Additionally, as Grady et.al (2012) assert, “Under neoliberalism, those who work hard are those who ultimately succeed in advancing to the arenas of higher education while those who fail are deemed lazy and only have themselves to blame” (p. 988). Consequently, we see the institutionalization of inferiority that so often manifests itself within many of our students, classrooms and schools.

Even more damaging, and what we see all too often when talking about “failing schools”, is what Memmi refers to as the “mark of the plural”. He talks about the depersonalization of the colonized, stating, “ the colonized is never characterized in an individual manner; he is entitled only to drown in an anonymous collectivity” (Memmi, p. 85). Albeit masked in such rhetoric as “underperforming and high needs schools,” the message rings loud and clear... “those” children are the ones who need to be *helped, reformed, and fixed*. This ideology seems to stem from the historical component of education which, overtime, has differed from the role of the schoolhouse acting as an institution where everyone had equal education (19th

century), to one where the school is responsible for identifying certain individuals and their “abilities” (20th century and today) (Spring, 1996).

The current language surrounding educational reform relies heavily on the American dream-myth, that working hard will undoubtedly result in success and economic growth. However, as Berliner (2014) notes, “ The *general* case is that poor people stay poor and that teachers and schools serving impoverished youth do not often succeed in changing the life chances for their students” (downloaded copy, p. 1). Berliner moves further in arguing that the current wave of reform and policy initiatives (read neoliberal agenda) “often end up alienating the youth and families we most want to help, while simultaneously burdening teachers with demands for success that are beyond their capabilities” (p.2).

This brings us back to the notion that the “American-dream,” in actuality, is a fallacy. The warped perception of reality that underlies most reform movements is misguided and continues to perpetuate societal inequalities. As Anyon (2011) so eloquently remarks, “ Attempting to fix an inner city school without fixing the neighborhood it is in is like trying to clean the air on one side of a screen door” (Anyon, p.50). Yet, the “reforms” keep pouring in, and the school environment continues to be seeped within the mess and chaos of privatization and corporate take-over.

*Further inequity and high stakes testing*¹²

Contrary to the explicitly stated policy goal of leaving no child behind, the

¹² I refer to “high- stakes testing” as defined by Au (2009) “ 1) Standardized testing as the technology and tool/instrument used for measurement, and 2) Educational policy erected around the standardized test results that usually attaches consequences to those results thereby making such tests “high –stakes.”

research body suggests that educational policies constructed around high-stakes, standardized testing increase achievement gaps in education rather than close them, and thus contribute to increased educational inequality. (Au, 2009, p.65)

Spring (1996), talks about the role schools play in social reproduction which he defines as the way in which schools reproduce and perpetuate the social-class structure of society. This idea is manifested in the way schools receive state and federal funding, the turnover rate of teachers and principals, and the extra-curricular activities that schools either provide, or need to eliminate altogether (Berliner, 2014). Within the current craze of accountability, inequitable school resources, and drastic differences between how schools teach and treat their students, we see draconian measures that seem to only be implemented in schools that serve “other people’s children” (Delpit, 2006; Hinchey, 2008). Kozol (2005) painstakingly describes this reality as:

A relentless emphasis on raising test scores, rigid policies of non-promotion and non-graduation, a new empiricism and the imposition of unusually detailed lists of named and numbered "outcomes" for each isolated parcel of instruction, and often times fanatical insistence upon uniformity in teachers' management of time, an openly conceded emulation of the rigorous approaches of the military, and a frequent use of terminology that comes out of the world of industry and commerce-these are just a few of the familiar aspects of these new adaptive strategies (p.268).

We must ask ourselves, how is it acceptable for certain schools to function in such a manner as to continuously reproduce socio-educational inequalities that actually seem to become more dire each year?

Grady, et.al (2012) refer back to a neoliberal ideology in explaining this phenomenon, in that “the focus (of such policies and practices) remains riveted on high stakes testing which continually institutionalizes formalized educational inequality and widens disparities.” In its most obvious form, Hinchey (2008) discusses how a neoliberal ideology is connected to high stakes testing by the way in which corporations benefit from the profits they make from the tests themselves.

Further, as Moses and Nanna (2007) argue, “high stakes testing reforms, driven as they are by political and cultural ideology and concerns for efficiency and economic productivity, serve to impede the development of *real* equality of educational opportunity, particularly for the least advantaged students” (p.56). Thus, we see once again, the hidden elements behind policies that promise to equalize education and opportunity, but in actuality, have the opposite effect, and promote even further inequity (Au, 2009).

Au (2007 & 2009) digs deeper within this discussion by noting the influence corporations have on schools in regards to advancing their specific ideological and organization forms associated with capitalist production. For example, just like in the business community, “failing” businesses will be removed and new, better, and highly effective ones will come in as replacements. Similarly, the movement and policies surrounding school choice, merit pay, and curricular control, all point in the same direction, as “failure” either equates to school closure or loss of job.

Furthermore, the pressure to perform well on such high-stakes tests bodes well for private tutoring companies since many students and families often search for outside help and support in order to help their children perform well on such tests. As Moses and Nanna (2007) note, “the number of private high schools and tutoring services aimed at helping students prepare for high stakes tests (or providing an alternative educational pathway for those failing high stakes exams) is on the rise. Government endorsement of corporate ventures either through direct capital support or public policy is certainly nothing new, and the business is most likely welcome in the testing industry” (p.61). Again, such behavior demonstrates the move towards privatization and a deregulation of public education. (Au, 2007; Apple, 2001; Lipman, 2001).

Such an intense focus of standardized testing has had, and continues to have grave consequences for students, teachers, and the overall school community. Grady et.al state, “A test-driven education nonetheless, constrains teachers’ and students’ ability to develop critical approaches to knowledge. Since they become consumed with teaching-to-the-test their job security is becoming increasingly linked to student test results” (p.988). We, of course, can refer to what Haberman (1991) calls the *pedagogy of poverty*, in that the curriculum and teaching practices not only disempower students and teachers alike, but they almost make everyone involved in the education process immune to any teaching that could potentially include critical thinking or creative engagement. As a consequence, anything that falls outside the testing box is excluded from the classroom and school community, which often means multicultural and anti-racist curriculum and perspectives (Au, 2009).

However, we must again recognize those educators, schools, and students who work against this narrative, and challenge the status quo whenever possible.¹³

As mentioned earlier, such neoliberal and neoconservative policies (here referring to high-stakes testing) are saturated with class, racial and gender bias, in that public schools serving urban African American, Latino, and other communities of color, are driven by a minimalist curriculum of preparing for standardized tests” (Lipman, 2011). Au (2009) also describes racist and classist practices in the way standardized tests are disaggregated, as to make it easier to see which students, schools, and communities are not performing well. Since standardized tests are constructed in ways that a percentage of students will perform poorly so comparisons can be made, it seems all too coincidental that “certain” schools consistently underperform on such tests. In fact, Berliner (2014) claims, “ the USA appears to have social and educational policies that end up limiting the numbers of poor youth who can excel on tests of academic ability...the political power of a neighborhood and local property tax rates have allowed for apartheid-like systems of schooling to develop in our country” (downloaded copy, p. 4).

Throughout this discussion, we see the intersection of many different ideas and policies as to how one understands the purpose of public schools.

Unfortunately, our students are the ones who are most affected by such measures and reforms, as they are the pawns and “projects” in which success is “measured”.

¹³ In January 2013 in Seattle, WA, teachers and students in the Seattle Public Schools District successfully boycotted the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) testing, arguing that it was not useful for students, nor was it an appropriate measuring tool for either students or teachers.

What follows in chapter two is a brief discussion of the current climate of teacher education, which not surprisingly, is also affected by neoliberal and neoconservative policies. Traditional teacher education is under attack as an unnecessary avenue for teacher certification, as the arguments against such programs fall in line with how current reform movements conceptualize the purpose of public schools.

Chapter 2: The Current Context of Teacher Education

Teacher education now finds itself under assault in the context of neoliberal pressures on education and society more broadly... There are three related neoliberal/neoconservative pressures on teacher education in the US: (1) [a move] away from explicit multicultural, equity-oriented teacher preparation, and toward preparing teachers as technicians to implement measures school districts are taking to raise student test scores; (2) away from defining teacher quality in terms of professional knowledge, and toward defining it in terms of testable content knowledge (and mastery of technical skills); and (3) toward shortening university-based teacher education or by-passing it altogether (Sleeter, 2008, p.1952).

Considering Sleeter's argument, it is not surprising that there is a movement to end traditional teacher education programs.¹⁴ The current debates regarding the purposes of schools are intimately interconnected with the institutions that prepare public school teachers. In order to even consider issues of equity, diversity and social justice within teacher preparation, we must take note not only of the tensions regarding the purpose of public schools, but also the purposes, and most recently, the attacks and "reforms" on teacher education and teacher preparation.

Labaree (2008) describes the low status of teacher education, which only makes it easier to justify the argument against maintaining traditional teacher preparation programs. Specifically, he makes the following claim:

Teacher education has long suffered from low status. Everyone picks on it: professors, reformers, policymakers, and teachers; right wing think tanks

¹⁴ Currently, most traditional teacher education programs consist of a one to two year commitment, usually including significant time (either the entire school year, or many weeks throughout the school year) spent with a mentor teacher within their classroom. The traditional trajectory of courses include: a foundations course (multicultural education, school and society, historical purposes of education, etc., which tend to be isolated from the other courses) discipline-specific methods courses (literacy, math, etc.), classroom management, special education, and possibly a few additional courses (art, social studies, P.E., etc. for elementary programs). Importantly, the majority of teacher self-reflection comes in the form of analyzing discipline-specific lessons and planning. There are of course many varieties in which these courses are designed, offered, graded, and included within the entirety of the program.

and left wing think tanks; even the professors, students, and graduates of teacher education programs themselves. In part, this status problem is a legacy of the market pressures that shaped the history of the normal school; in part it is a side effect of the bad company that teacher education is seen as keeping; and in part it is a result of the kind of work that teachers and teacher educators do (Labaree, p. 297).

Additionally, Kumashiro (2010) notes, teacher education is at a crossroads in regards to how it positions itself towards social justice and equity. Although there is little evidence that teacher education programs can actually change the attitudes prospective teachers have in terms of how they understand the purposes of schools, not offering a space to consider such issues will only reinforce “ Commonsensical ideas about teaching that are often the very ideas and practices of teaching that fail to address diversity and equity” (Kumashiro, 2010, p. 57).

This chapter will consider three current “reform” movements that are underway in terms of aiming to eliminate traditional teacher education programs: 1) Demonstrating a disregard and/or elimination of the foundations and theory courses that challenge dominant knowledges, 2) De-professionalizing teachers and the profession as a whole, and 3) A move towards fast track and alternative teacher preparation programs. As Kumashiro (2010) argues, “ Within these movements, the ending of teacher education plays a central role in reshaping public education in the service of stratification and inequity based on race, social class, gender, and other markers” (p. 63).

Attacks on Foundation and Multicultural Education Courses in Teacher Education

The push towards teacher preparation content that focuses on raising and collecting data on the academic achievement of students (via high-stakes and standardized tests) clashes with the content and critical thinking that can take place within foundations and theory courses. Kincheloe (2009) argues, “The educational reforms have reflected a worldview and a perspective on knowledge and teaching in particular that early critical theorists referred to as a form of rational irrationality” (p. 25). As such, Zeichner and Peña- Sandoval (2014, in press) note, there is a critique that current teacher education programs “spend too much time on theory *at the expense of* the acquisition of practical expertise” (p. 35). This argument falls in-line with the pressure for teachers and their students in public schools to score well on the high states tests in order to truly “demonstrate” an increase in their academic achievement.

The attack on the theory and content that emphasizes equity and multiculturalism stems from a neoconservative view regarding the “proper” content for teacher education programs. According to Zeichner (2010), “These attacks equate a focus on social justice and multiculturalism with a lowering of academic standards and blame university teacher education for the continued problems in educating public school students who are increasingly poor and of color” (p. 1549).

Zeichner (2010) notes that these claims actually skirt the real issues and factors that contribute to such inequity; underfunding of public education, lack of affordable housing, transportation, healthcare, and decent paying jobs, just to name a few. In fact, Kincheloe (2009) notes, “Until such complex understandings of the

sociocultural and political economic forces at work in contemporary education are widely cultivated in professional education, students in high-poverty schools will continue to find little opportunity to experience rigorous schoolwork with savvy teachers” (p. 34).

Further, within such a neoconservative perspective, multicultural education is equated with decreased rigor and lower expectations for preservice teachers. This point of view, Kincheloe (2009) argues, “illustrates the political, theological, and educational relationship that perpetuates anti-intellectualism, fear of diversity of all forms, and a rejection of a critical multiperspectival teacher education in particular and teaching and learning in general” (p.29).

Interestingly, this point of view is not exclusive to those directly outside of the teacher education community. Hatch and Groenke (2009) created an open-ended questionnaire that collected information about critical pedagogy in teacher education programs. The questionnaire was distributed to anyone the authors could identify as having written or presented on topics related to critical pedagogy. Sixty-five participants responded to the questionnaire.

The findings indicate tensions within teacher education programs (both with teacher educators and preservice teachers) regarding critical pedagogical work and teacher preparation. For example, Hatch and Groenke (2009) note “many respondents feel disconnected and frustrated because their colleagues see critical work as low on the list of what needs to be addressed in the preparation of new teachers” (p. 69).

Additionally, their findings reveal that another major issue within teacher preparation was the expectation from preservice teachers that they should be taught how to “teach” in lieu of spending substantial time developing critical perspectives for themselves and their future students. “ For the students, learning how to teach meant acquiring a set of skills that would enable them to manage their classrooms and efficiently convey curriculum content” (p.70). This idea supports the argument that currently, one of the ways to “reform” teacher education is by eliminating critical, social justice, and multicultural work that appears to get in the way of lesson planning, classroom management, or any other teaching that may go against the status quo.

The difficulty with this perspective is that it paints teaching as a black or white, and easily definable profession. On the contrary, teaching includes not only engaging with subject matter and content, but entails intimately understanding one’s students, their families and the community. It also includes versatile classroom management strategies and timely transitions. Further, teachers must have a solid understanding of their subject matter content, while also making sure that they reach all of their students with diverse learning style, languages, and varied degrees of academic understanding. Importantly, this list speaks to just some of what teaching entails.

Thus, I am not arguing that university teacher education programs should eliminate methods courses, or working with their teacher candidates on how best to teach their students content and subject matter knowledge. However, I am arguing that this pedagogy is only part of what a teacher education program should include.

All of the factors that contribute to the profession of teaching can only be strengthened if intertwined with critical perspectives that ask prospective teachers to take into account their own understandings of the sociopolitical and sociocultural issues of education, and how interconnected these become with our conceptualization of what it means to become an educator.

My argument moving forward will follow Picower (2014) who states, “While the first priority for new teachers should be learning skills to engage and educate their students to levels of excellence, the ability to do this effectively requires an awareness of the political nature of education” (p. 185). Therefore, I argue that in order to be the best educator (both inside the school and classroom community), we must become intimately aware of who we are as teachers and learners, how we understand educational inequities, and what we can do provide the best education for all of the students and families who enter our classrooms and schools.

De-professionalizing Teachers

Another issue I confront is the broader push of educational “systems” (including the university) that encourages technicism in our profession. This push creates the expectation in some students that they are being “trained” to be a teacher, which sometimes manifests itself in a resistance to thinking critically about teaching and learning, curriculum, and social issues related to equity (Participant Response, Hatch and Groenke, 2009, p.71).

Within the current climate of high stakes testing and the common core state standards, Sleeter (2008) recognizes that many public schools that partner with Colleges of Education will not be as willing to work with preservice teachers who attempt to teach against the grain or challenge the status quo. There is a pushback towards partnering with teacher education programs that do not prepare their

prospective teachers to teach with a focus on the state and national tests.

Understanding that this is becoming more prevalent, we must find a way to prepare teachers to work in schools that have such a focus, as well as provide them with skills that teach them how to infuse critical perspectives in scripted, rote, and test-oriented programs and schools. Arguably, this is not an easy endeavor, and entails many factors that we must consider as we look at the current context of teacher preparation and overall school and classroom climates.

Au (2011) argues, “There is a de-skilling readily apparent in the research on the effects of high-stakes testing and pre-packaged, scripted curricula in the US, where teachers have seen their curricular decision-making power severely diminished and are essentially being instructed on what to teach and how to teach it—across all subject areas” (p.34). As such, Sleeter (2008) notes, “In this context, teacher education programmes are being compelled to jettison not only explicit equity-oriented teacher preparation, but also learner- centered teaching, in order to prepare technicians who can implement curriculum packages” (p. 1952).

Within this narrative of teachers as technicians, instruction and traditional teacher education is considered an unnecessary component to the profession of teaching. As Hatch and Groenke (2009) discuss, “Teacher education students are expected to demonstrate technical competencies, and their instructors are expected to ensure that those competencies are mastered” (p.70). Further, there is an increased effort to erode teacher autonomy and collegial authority (Zeichner, 2010). According to Kumashiro (2009), teacher education is considered undesirable,

“because teacher preparation is what can prepare teachers to teach against the script, to teach against “common sense, ” and is much more costly”(p.62).

Aside from the current rhetoric defining the profession of teaching as mere technician work, we must also revisit Labaree’s claim regarding the low status of teacher education in general, as it only serves to support the argument for eliminating traditional teacher education programs. As Labaree (2009) notes:

It [teacher education] bears the legacy of a historical evolution that undermined its commitment to the professionalism and marginalized it within a university setting where it is given little respect; it lacks the high status associations that enhance the prestige of the major professions; and it is stuck with problems of professional practice that are overwhelmingly difficult but that earn it little public credit (p.299).

Within this discussion, we can see that traditional teacher education is in a dire situation. As Wilson and Tamir (2009) remind us, critics of the professionalization of teaching argue,

Teaching might be a profession, but that it still has important work to do to meet the minimum requirements of a profession (e.g. an agreed upon professional knowledge base, internal accountability), and others claiming that teachers need verbal ability and some content knowledge, nothing more, nothing less(p.923).

Thus, the increasing number of fast-track and alternative pathways to teaching are becoming more common, and considerably more attractive to those interested in pursuing the field of teaching.

Fast-track and Alternative Pathways to Teaching

These descriptions of teacher-education-as-status-quo and alternative-certification-as-reform exemplify the power of language to de-historicize certain concepts. In particular, the notion that fast-track alternative certification programs provide “the blueprint for the new civil rights movement” stands in stark contrast to the underlying goals for such programs, which actually work against the goals that have historically been associated with civil rights movements (Kumashiro, 2010, p.57).

Currently, we are at a crossroads regarding where to prepare our public school teachers. The last two sections discussed the case against traditional teacher education programs, focusing on two particular arguments: 1) Equity-oriented and multicultural education courses bearing little importance in regards to teacher preparation, and 2) Teaching as a profession can be reduced to mere technicist work, as scripted curricula and test-mandated materials monopolize all other facets of preparing today’s public school teachers. The next logical step, it would seem, is to argue that fast-track and alternative pathways to teaching fulfill the requisite preparation for learning how to teach. Therefore, this final section of chapter two will explore the move towards such alternative and fast-track pathways to teacher certification.

Sleeter (2008) describes alternatives pathway to teaching: “The term “alternative teacher certification” refers to a wide variety of programmes, ranging from field-based university programmes with well-designed professional education, to test-based programmes with minimal professional preparation and no contact with a college of education” (p.1954). Zeichner (2010) also discusses an increase and move towards alternative teacher certification:

These alternatives (e.g., Kaplan, I-Teach Texas, the University of Phoenix and

Laureate) have actively been supported by the federal government under both Republican and Democratic party administrations; a former secretary of education said in a major report on teacher quality that he thought participation in a teacher education program should be made optional and by state policies in certain parts of the country that have actively encouraged alternatives to college and university-based teacher education (p. 1545).

This push towards market and greater external control of teacher education brings us back to the technician view of teaching, which reduces teaching to nothing more than a few online classes, as well as scripted teaching and curricula. As Stoddard and Floden (1996) note, proponents of such alternative programs believe that as long as individuals have subject-matter expertise, they can learn to teach on the job as long as they are given some type of in-service training and support. As just one example, Teach for America and Wendy Kopp (TFA's founder), claims,

TFA'S recruits, fresh out of college and with only five weeks of training, get better results than new teachers who spent a year or more in teacher education programs...However, after a careful review of research, TFA corps members get about the same test score results as other new and uncertified teachers (Ravitch, 2013, p.137).

Furthermore, one of the enticing elements of TFA is that it is merely a two - year commitment and often serves as a resume builder, with the intent of moving into a more lucrative and high paying job. Additionally, many TFA graduates go on to work in the private sector of education, and are often strong proponents of test-based accountability, and are also advocates for increased privatization in education

(Ravitch, 2013). This is not to say that all TFA or other alternative certified teachers support privatization and deregulation. In fact, many TFA alums are quite critical of the program, and are active in speaking out against TFA and similar programs (Kretchmar & Sondel, 2014).

However, it is important to consider the following statement by Zeichner and Peña-Sandoval (2014, in-press):

There is a growing concern that the new turn in educational philanthropy toward shifting control of public education institutions to private organizations will narrow the purpose of public education to its economic aspects and ignore the broader civic and political purposes that have historically been a part of our hopes for our public education system” (p. 19).

This statement is one of the most crucial points to consider in terms of how we conceptualize the purpose of public school as well as the purpose of teacher preparation. If we move forward reducing education (K-12) to mere workforce preparation, testing, and accountability, it would seem that teacher preparation will continue to move in a direction of “ abandoning college and university-based teacher education in favor of an open market approach in which new teachers would receive expedited, shorter preparation and be able to enter classrooms sooner” (Michelli and Earley, 2011, p. 2). Furthermore, advocates of fast track and alternative teacher preparation truly believe that such programs are progressive and actually serve as a way to reform education.

However, if we believe that traditional teacher education programs have the potential to prepare teachers to move towards a vision that education can be the

practice of true human freedom, then our goal is to work to save and support traditional teacher education. We must believe that teaching is more than just a form of banking education (Freire, 1970), and that education can prepare students to be successful, critically minded, and thoughtful individuals.

Not surprisingly, my dissertation is based on the premise that education can, and should be the practice of freedom. I also believe that traditional university teacher education programs can aid and support this democratic ideal, and that they have a unique opportunity to focus their attention on such principles within their teacher education communities. I have hope that university teacher education programs will create spaces for prospective teachers to not only learn how to teach subject matter content, but can do so with a critical eye, understanding that all teaching and learning is political. As Picower (2104) argues,

When armed with a political analysis, many new teachers are anxious to “do something” about what they see as unjust. It is important for such educators to realize that building their awareness is part of a developmental process.

Further, armed with this analysis, teachers have the potential to become social justice activists because they can choose to make conscious choices to interrupt policies that may not be serving their students (p. 185-187).

Thus, the remainder of my dissertation will speak to this notion, describing some of the ways in which I envision traditional teacher education as a place that has the potential to create an environment in which we can truly think about reconceptualizing the purpose of public schools. Additionally, I will speak to how

such programs can serve as spaces where all teachers and students can move forward and look at education as the practice of freedom.

Chapter 3-

The Complexities Surrounding “Social Justice” and Teacher Education

Social Justice is based on recognition of significant disparities in the distribution of educational opportunities, resources, achievement, and positive outcomes between minority or low-income students and their white, middle-class counterparts. This recognition of disparities is coupled with the position that teachers can and should be both educators and advocates who are committed to the democratic ideal and to diminishing existing inequities in school and society by helping to redistribute educational opportunities” (Cochran-Smith, et.al, 2009).

The purpose of chapter three is three-fold: First, I define a critical educator and critical pedagogy. Following this, I interrogate the nebulous term ‘social justice’ teacher education, working to reframe it through a critical education and pedagogical lens, arguing that it must have a more specified meaning in order to be actualized as a social justice practice.

Second, recognizing the fact that teacher education programs are comprised of mostly White, middle-class women (Hinchey, 2008; Sleeter, 2008) and that the presence of White privilege permeates much of our educational institutions, both K-12 and higher education (Leonardo, 2004), I aim to delve deeper into a framework and discussion of critical Whiteness studies and rearticulating Whiteness. I will argue that such a framework, (critical Whiteness studies) could potentially help teacher educators and teacher candidates problematize and even reconceptualize ‘multicultural education’, as this term is often the one that lays the foundation for ‘social justice’ work in teacher education.

Finally, I will discuss the need to diversify¹⁵ the teaching force, noting that with more diversity among teacher candidates and teacher educators, there can potentially be more critical reflecting regarding one's personal educational and life experiences. Through this, we can see how such self-reflection might aid into a deeper understanding of ourselves as teachers and learners, while also thinking about reframing how we conceptualize the purpose of schools.

Through all three analyses, I hope to demonstrate how important it is for our teacher education programs to incorporate more critical pedagogies and methodologies that truly work to problematize the institutional inequities that are far too prevalent within many of our public schools. Only when our teacher candidates pay close attention to the sociohistorical and political dimensions of education (Bartolome, 1994) can they become the educators, activists and advocates that we hope for them to be for all of the children and families who enter their classrooms and schools.

Defining a Critical Educator

In a sense, one of the defining elements of a critical educator is to speak out against the current educational agenda, while questioning, critiquing, and providing transformative theories for revolutionizing the inequities and colonizing structures found within our educational institutions as well as the knowledges that are disseminated as "Truth" (Hinchey, 2008). However, I also look to O'Connor and Zeichner (2011) for another way to conceptualize a critical educator as it relates to

¹⁵ I use the College of Education at University of Colorado Boulder's definition of diversity: "Our definition of diversity includes gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and disabilities as well as racial, cultural, and ethnic identity".

thinking about reframing teacher education, and its relationship to the many inequities found within educational institutions. O'Connor and Zeichner discuss what they refer to as a critical global educator (CGE).

According to their analysis, a critical global educator is someone who understands the politics of knowledge as it relates to their own understandings of the world. Additionally, "competent critical global educators should have substantive knowledge of the dominant modes of oppression that create and maintain forms of socioeconomic injustices and cultural dominance worldwide; embedded in this knowledge ought to be an appreciation for the multiple locations of oppression and their associated complexities" (O'Connor & Zeichner, p.532).

Within this framework, the methods of teaching for CGE's include being action-oriented, demonstrating modes of solidarity with those who are marginalized and oppressed throughout the world, and creating spaces in their classrooms and schools where their students can feel empowered within the curriculum. O'Connor and Zeichner (2011) recognize the professional risks for those who choose to adopt the philosophy of a critical global educator. However, they note that in order to truly create transformative and liberatory spaces in their classrooms and schools, they must be willing and prepared to embrace the struggle that may ensue in their own places of employment.

Thus, when thinking about the roles of a critical educator, we must understand that its characteristics and practices move beyond the confines of the classroom and school setting. As previously discussed, the school and society create and maintain institutions that continue to perpetuate inequities for far too many

students and their families. Accordingly, a critical educator is constantly working and challenging the very institutions in which we work, with the ultimate goal of creating change through political engagement, activism and solidarity.

Moving further with Critical Pedagogy

As argued by Huerta-Charles, (2007) “ Within the critical pedagogy perspective there is hope that teachers will become agents of social change” (p.250). If we are to ask our prospective teachers to become activists, armed with a sense of ongoing “political clarity,” ¹⁶(Bartolome, 2007) in that we hope they will work to actualize change within their classrooms and schools, we need to create an environment that promises a way to prepare them for such a feat. This is where we must consider how enacting elements of critical pedagogy can prepare teachers to name and challenge harmful ideologies and practices in their future classrooms and schools (Bartolome, 2007). However, we must be explicit as to what we mean by “critical pedagogy.”

One of the fundamental ways in which I think about critical pedagogy and teacher education is reconstructing the relationship between teacher educators and prospective teachers. According to Huerta-Charles, (2007) “ critical educators must change the relationship we have with our students from one where we are in control of the learning and teaching processes into one that places us in a subject-to-subject relationship of collaboration in constructing knowledge and learning” (p.254). Thus, we must work against the traditional paradigm of academia,

¹⁶ Bartolome (2007) refers to “political clarity” as process and practice in which individuals continue to deepen their levels of consciousness and activism in regards to the sociopolitical and economic realities that shape their lives.

understanding that we can learn as much from our students as they can learn from us.

There is often a single voice of authority that results in a traditional pedagogy, thus reinforcing a classroom of monologue as opposed to one with dialogue. I look to Bakhtin, (1981 & 1984) and his ontological claim that dialogue is absolutely necessary for human existence. He argues that we cannot have humans or human life without it. Further, Bakhtin sees dialogue as something that has mutual and reciprocal influence. In the classroom or school setting, this mutual influence allows for the learner to influence the educational experience reciprocally with the teacher. Or as Greene (1988) argues, we need to embrace the multitude of cognitive perspectives by developing “a *praxis* of educational consequence that opens the spaces necessary for the remaking of a democratic society” (p.126). Thus, “critical pedagogy opens up a space where students should be able to come to terms with their own power as critical agents; it provides a sphere where the unconditional freedom to question and assert is central to the purpose of the university, if not democracy itself” (Giroux, 2007, p.1).

It is within this framework that I situate my discussion of critical pedagogical and methodological frameworks for reimagining and reconceptualizing teacher education. Although I will be bringing in many elements that incorporate numerous facets of critical pedagogy, the overarching goal will always be the same: creating and maintaining authentic and empowering reciprocal relationships between teacher and student, with the ultimate goal of exposing and working to eradicate the many injustices found within and outside our educational institutions.

Understanding the 'Critical' Piece of "Social Justice Teacher Education"

(We must be aware) of the importance of infusing teacher education curricula with critical pedagogical principles in order to prepare educators to aggressively name and interrogate potentially harmful ideologies and practices in the schools and classrooms where they work...Teachers need to develop political and ideological clarity in order to increase the chances of academic success for all students. (Bartolome, 2007, p.264).

Apple (2008) argues that critical education is politically driven, and that we need to think *relationally*. He contends that we must look to the unequal power structures that permeate our larger society, and dig deeper into the ways in which critical work has been successful in rupturing these dominant and subordinate roles. In regards to our work in transformative education, Apple suggests we move away from the trite questions that often infuse our classrooms and schools, ie: Have students mastered the content knowledge? Have they received a passing score on the state test? Instead we need to ask the types of questions that demonstrate critical reflecting and thinking: Whose knowledge is this? How did it become "official"? More specifically, what can we do as critical educators and activists to change existing educational and social inequalities and to create curricula and teaching that are more socially just (Apple, 2008)?

Similarly, Ayers and Ayers (2011) argue we must "look at the taken-for-granted in teaching, the everyday-ness of schools, the common sense of the entire educational project, and open our eyes to a deeper reality through a pedagogy of questioning"(p.1). Ayers and Ayers seek to illuminate the hidden components of our educational institutions, and to expose us to the realities that must be ruptured in order to transform and revolutionize our classrooms and schools. Further, they

suggest that “schools tend to teach political indifference, emotional and intellectual dependency, and provisional self-esteem, one’s proper place in the hierarchy of winners and losers, and the need to submit to certified authority” (p.6).

Thus, Ayers and Ayers (2011) charge educators to reconsider every assumption and reexamine fundamental principles, with the ultimate goals of “entering the deeply contested space of school and social change, without guarantees, but with an expanded sense of hope, confidence and possibility”(p.6). They summon us to reach for new educational possibilities and to argue for a “Pedagogy of Equity and Engagement”.

Anyon (2005) calls for the education community to join social movements if change and transformation in education are to become a reality. She refers to this process as Social Movement Theory. Anyon (2005) characterizes Social Movement Theory as one that “makes clear that raising people’s consciousness about their oppression through reflection and talk is not enough: Physical and emotional support for actual participation in public contention is required” (p.11). Anyon recognizes that this is a lofty, and a potentially risky endeavor, however, in order to truly strive for comprehensive economic and educational justice, we need to deeply engage ourselves in a revolutionary social movement.

Anyon (2005) discusses multiple components that characterize a Social Movement Theory. One such characteristic is that of bi-cultural and bi-class brokers, who become instrumental agents in regards to providing support in the movement building process. She defines bi-cultural and bi-class brokers as “progressive teachers, social workers, and other minority and White professionals concerned

with social justice” (p.167). Anyon discusses the importance of these particular individuals and groups who have a more privileged status, and how vital it is for them to engage and participate in such contentious politics.

Another component to Anyon’s ideas on Social Movement Theory is to empower our youth by developing a political identity through action and engagement. In order for students to mobilize and become involved with the politics of transforming their educational experiences, educators must “help students appreciate their own value, intelligence, and potential as political actors” (Anyon, 2005, p.179). Anyon further argues that students need to be made aware of the structural inequities, dominant knowledges, and cultures of power so they can hold the system accountable and move away from self-blame, and instead, advocate for better opportunities for themselves and their communities.

Through such examples, it becomes clear that infusing teacher education with elements of critical pedagogy and practice is not an easy endeavor, as there are various components that complicate how we may come to think about reconceptualizing and reimagining our teacher education programs in a socially just manner. Therefore, we must move further in our discussion and pay particular attention to the current climate of our teacher education programs.

I ask the following questions as a way to situate the latter portion of chapter three: What are some of the current understandings of ‘social justice’ in teacher education? How do we make sense of the overwhelming majority of White preservice teachers, and what can we do within such a context to reconstruct the environment of our institutions of higher education? Finally, how might we

incorporate a critical Whiteness framework to help activate a 'social justice' agenda, and how will this help me to move forward and complement my discussion of critical feminism in teacher education?

Complicating 'Social Justice' in Teacher Education

Indeed, the paradox of the nation's teacher preparation programs is that *everything* is about diversity and social justice in the preparation of teachers and, simultaneously, *nothing* is about diversity and social justice in the preparation of teachers. (Juarez, Smith & Hayes, 2008, p. 20).

Understanding the intricacies of a critical educator and critical pedagogy, it would appear that we should easily be able to conceptualize social justice and teacher education. However, the connection between the three (critical educator, critical pedagogy and social justice teacher education) is evasive at best. It appears "easier to devise fashionable slogans about diversity in education than to develop coherent and just policies in schools" (Tyack, 2003, p.71). Arguably, "the meaning of social justice appears to be in the eyes of the beholder... conceptual frameworks are not always explicit about the capacities that a candidate should have to reflect social justice or multicultural education in their teaching" (Gollnick, 2008, p.252-253). Therefore, we must look at some of the critiques regarding the philosophies, content, and design of our current teacher education programs, and how they appear to conceptualize "social justice".

Vavrus (2002) notes that many teacher education programs perceive multicultural education as a possible elective or singular add-on course, which of course only isolates it within the greater program. Additionally, he argues "Many programs have rhetorically embraced multicultural education but seem unable to

make necessary multicultural across-the-curriculum changes despite the growing literature in the field during the 1990's" (p.19). Importantly, multicultural education and social justice education are not interchangeable terms. However, multicultural education fall within elements of enacting social justice education.

Similarly, Preto and Villenas (2012) recognize that there is often a disconnect with how prospective teachers view multicultural issues in education, as many of them have limited knowledge of the history of non-dominant groups. This may be due to the fact that few prospective teachers have taken ethnic studies courses, as well as merely taking the single, required multicultural course offered in many teacher education programs. They state, "this structural devaluation of the knowledge and histories of communities of color, along with a lack of attention to critical multiculturalism, forms the backdrop to our work as women educators of color in higher education" (p. 413).

Even further, Moya (2002) argues that within the past few decades of multicultural education, schools and teachers are still not addressing the true issues at hand, which she describes as a reluctance or unwillingness to challenge the neoconservative agenda embedded in education. Instead, she regards the current problems of multicultural education practices in classrooms and schools as more accurately depicting and demonstrating a deficit model of teaching multiculturally. Thus, per Moya, current pedagogy implemented within multicultural education actually does the opposite of what it is intended to do: institute real and transformative change within our classrooms and school communities.

Moving further, multicultural or social foundations courses (which often include elements of critical pedagogy, challenging dominant knowledges, etc.) often have an effect that leaves` teacher candidates feeling like they are unable to connect or see the relevance of these courses, which are generally taught towards the beginning of a teacher education program. As Gillette and Schultz (2008) note, many teacher candidates see such foundational aspects of education useless to their future teaching. They ask:

How do we assist candidates in developing a vision that is underpinned by a foundational context in order to justify their ideas and ideals about what is possible?... This moral aspect of teacher vision enables effective teachers to take action challenging the status quo and interrupting conventional practices when those practices do not lead to more equitable educational outcomes (Gillette and Schultz, 2008, p.235).

These critiques lead directly into Zeichner and Flessner's (2009) argument that the lack of specific components or critical ideologies in which teacher education programs are advertising what they mean by "social justice", implies that a social justice teaching agenda carries with it generic, essentialist, and easily definable meanings and outcomes. On the contrary, a social justice teaching program can have very different meanings depending on how one understands and makes sense of the term. As Grant (2012) asserts, "Words have multiple meanings, and sometimes words or phrases such as social justice in oral and/or written discourse come with no meaning attached, with weak or mushy application for equity and/ or equality,

and/or with vague, sometimes rambling intent within political, social, and ethical/moral discourses. (p.912).

Moreover, the various conceptions of social justice “have different implications for how one would organize a teacher education program and what one would expect teachers to be able to know and learn how to do” (Zeichner & Flessner, p.297). Therefore, in order to organize and truly teach pre-service teachers in a manner that would suggest they are learning ways to be critically minded and politically aware, it is imperative that the phrase “social justice” has particular and unique meanings with detailed goals and agendas.

In addition to a specified philosophy regarding the nature of a social justice teaching program, everyone involved in the teaching of pre-service teachers must have shared goals and agendas in terms of executing this critical work. As Sleeter (2008) charges, “ The faculty and cooperating teachers who work with pre-service students [must] share norms and a vision regarding the purpose of education, the nature of teaching and learning, and the nature and value of equity and diversity”(p.562). Without such a shared vision and philosophy, the teaching of pre-service teachers will become superficial, disconnected, and impractical. Teacher candidates need to know that those who educate them feel such a sense of urgency to dramatically transform the inequities found within our educational institutions.

Moving forward, Zeichner (1996) argues that teaching is not politically neutral. We cannot engage with liberatory methodologies with our pre-service teachers without critically immersing ourselves within the politics of what is institutionally occurring both inside and outside of our classrooms and schools. As

Kumashiro (2008) states, “ When teacher educators do not trouble their own partialities, in the process, they indirectly and, perhaps, unintentionally model a resistance to an impossibility of putting anti-oppressive theory into practice” (p.241). Thus, by incorporating some of the aspects of how I have defined a critical educator, in addition to the ways in which I have described critical pedagogy, I aim to center and contextualize the discussion regarding reframing and thinking more deeply about social justice and teacher education.

Predominantly White Institutions and Teacher Education

In order to move towards a vision of reimagining teacher education, we must look at who currently enters teacher education, and the types of schools where many of these teachers begin and quickly end their teaching careers. Sleeter (2008) notes the mismatch between the overrepresentation of White teacher candidates entering teacher education, and the demographics of the students where teachers begin their careers. According to Hinchey (2008), this mismatch often results in teachers entering the profession with very different assumptions, expectations, and norms, regarding how they (students and teachers) perceive education.

According to Sleeter’s review of the data from National Center for Education Statistics in 2002 (as cited within Sleeter, 2008), she found that “ less than 16 percent of the teaching force is of color, in contrast to about 42 percent of public K-12 students. The demographic gap between students and teachers is growing as the student population continues to diversify but the teaching population does not” (p.559).

Moreover, Sleeter (2008) addresses such concerns in her analysis of *Professional Coursework on Culture and Equity*. Specifically, she summarizes the research regarding White preservice teachers entering teacher education:

1) They have little awareness or understanding of discrimination, especially racism, 2) They have depressed expectations for the achievement of students of color buttressed by a taken-for-granted deficiency orientation, 3) Their ignorance or fear of communities of color, and of discussing race and racism, and 4) their lack of awareness of themselves as cultural beings, and of communities and classrooms as cultural sites (As cited within Sleeter (2008, p.566).

Additionally, and equally important, we must be aware of the lack of teacher educators of color in our institutions of higher education. Ladson-Billings (2005) notes, "Teacher educators are overwhelmingly White, and their positions as college- and university-level faculty place them much further away from the realities of urban classrooms and communities serving students and families of color" (p.230). Thus, we must be mindful when thinking about the overrepresentation of Whiteness as an issue both in terms of preservice teachers, as well as teacher education faculty.

Paying close attention to such issues and challenges, it is imperative that we respond and react appropriately if we are working to dismantle and challenge the inequities found within many of our public schools. As such, Picower (2009) argues that we must interrogate Whiteness, as "the sheer number of White people in the teaching field in a country marked by racial inequality has implications for the role White teachers play in creating patterns of racial achievement and opportunity" (p.197-198). Importantly, such a statement has implications for not only our K-12 public schools, but for our institutions of higher education as well.

The next two sections of this discussion will address the often hostile and negative environment found within many predominantly White institutions (PWI's) for students of color, as well as the need to engage within a framework of critical Whiteness studies in order to challenge and disrupt such hostile environments and the hegemonic practices that tend to permeate the academy. I will argue that by situating ourselves within such discussions, we may begin to think about not only improving the higher educational experience for our students of color, but also work to challenge the prevalence of Whiteness, and the dangers that come with ignoring this pervasive and powerfully harmful ideology as we prepare teachers for their own classrooms and schools.

A Response to PWI's: Addressing Negative Campus Racial Climates

Villegas and Davis (2009) discuss the climate of many institutions of higher education that are predominantly White. They state, " In the context of overwhelming whiteness, it is not surprising that minority (teacher) candidates frequently report feeling unsafe in class, especially when discussing issues of diversity with peers and faculty whom they perceive as insensitive to these topics and disinterested in hearing what they have to offer... the withdrawal of students of color from in-class discussions deprives everyone, including White students, of opportunities to engage in critical dialogue they need to become agents of change" (p. 599).

Coinciding with this research, Yosso (2006) refers to a negative campus racial climate, as a " social and academic environment that exhibits and cultivates racial and gender discrimination against People of Color" (p.101). Although not

always overt, many higher institution campuses perpetuate an environment that oppresses and isolates many students of color, to the point that they feel unwelcome and uncomfortable. These subliminal messages are termed racial microaggressions. Yosso, Smith, Ceja and Solorzano (2010) cite Chester Pierce (1995) for a definition of racial microaggression:

Probably the most grievous of offensive mechanisms spewed at victims of racism and sexism are microaggressions. These are subtle, innocuous, preconscious, or unconscious degradations, and putdowns, often kinetic but capable of being verbal and/or kinetic. In and of itself a microaggression may seem harmless, but the cumulative burden of a lifetime of microaggressions can theoretically contribute to diminished mortality, augmented morbidity, and flattened confidence (as cited within Yosso, et.al (2010).

Yosso et.al (2010) argue that these microaggressions cause stress, and result in situations in which they (the victims) must decide how to counter and respond to the circumstances in which they find themselves marginalized. With the risk of perpetuating stereotypes, victims of racial microaggressions worry about being “too defensive” or “too sensitive”. Thus, “within a negative campus racial climate, these interpersonal interactions create anxiety for Latina/o undergraduates, who cannot shake the sense that their every word may reaffirm racialized assumptions and cast doubt on their academic merit” (Yosso, et.al, p.669).

In addition to the ways in which individual students experience feelings of being marginalized in some of their classrooms, campuses, or within groups of students and teachers, Yosso et.al (2010) argue that there are overall campus

environments and climates that engage in what they term “institutional microaggressions”. They define institutional microaggressions as “those racially marginalizing actions and inertia of the university evidenced in structures, practices, and discourses that endorse a campus racial climate hostile to People of Color”(p.673). Institutional microaggressions are very powerful forces that too many students are subjected to for often times many years of their schooling experiences.

For example, Souto –Manning and Ray (2007) note, “Both individualized and institutionalized oppressive forces operate in tandem with one another and can have a tremendous impact on the academic success and well-being of graduate women of color” (p.282). Similar to the hegemony of the academy, traditional westernized schooling, or even a “hidden curriculum”¹⁷, institutional microaggressions are very powerful forces that too many students are subjected to for often many years of their schooling experiences.

When considering critical pedagogies and methodologies within teacher education, we are looking at the diverse ways in which individuals and groups are choosing to respond to oppression, marginalization, and discrimination in institutions of higher education as well as in K-12. Yosso et.al emphasizes, “They are not alone in their marginality. They become empowered participants, hearing their own stories and the stories of others, listening to how the arguments are framed,

¹⁷ I refer to Rick and William Ayers and their discussion of a hidden curriculum in their book, *Teaching the Taboo: Courage and Imagination in the classroom*. They argue, “the hidden curriculum-all the unstated assumptions, beliefs, and values that prop up the culture and the structure of every school- works its own mighty will. Because it’s opaque, unavailable for comment or critique, it is often a more powerful teacher than the official and planned curriculum” (p.29).

and learning to make the arguments themselves” (p.680). It is within this context that I look to critical Whiteness studies, and rearticulating Whiteness as a way to think about and respond to such microaggressions. Further, I look to such a framework as a space for White preservice teachers to begin to think differently about themselves and their roles in our inequitable and often dehumanizing structures within our educational communities.

Deeper than a light flesh-colored bandaid: Rearticulating Whiteness

So often, the initial discourse surrounding White privilege ¹⁸begins with the “awe-factor” that comes about when one reads McIntosh’s (1990) “list” surrounding her privileges, which of course, includes her attention to light-flesh colored bandaids. I myself, remember feeling uncomfortably frustrated by the fact that I had never recognized this before being introduced to her reading, or even the concept of White privilege altogether. Additionally, although I am very new to teaching in higher education, it has been interesting to note that every single class in which I have used this reading, (in conjunction with others) the same initial response occurs. Furthermore, many of the readings surrounding the concept of White privilege that I have found note the same phenomenon (Haviland, 2008; Leonardo, 2004 & 2009; Penington et al. 2012).

As a note, this particular literature did not even come to me until my studies in graduate school, when I learned through two particular readings in a Race,

¹⁸ Throughout this discussion, White privilege will be conceptualized and referred to in a more critical way. I look to Leonardo (2004), who describes White racial privilege as “the notion that white subjects accrue advantages by virtue of being constructed as whites. Usually, this occurs through the valuation of white skin color, although this is not the only criterion for racial distinction...Privilege is granted even without the subject’s (re)cognition that life is made a bit easier for her. Privilege is also granted despite a subject’s attempt to dis-identity with the white race” (p.137)

Gender and Knowledge Construction course about the history of Whiteness as a social construct (Jacobson, 1998;), and the concepts of “becoming White” (Brodkin, 1998). Importantly, the concept and emergence of recognizing White privilege emerged in the 1980’s as a response to Women of Color’s observation that feminist theory failed to consider racial differences (Baily, 2000).

Additionally, while also in graduate school, I became aware of, and learned about the “cultural mismatch” or “cultural divide” that often occurs between White educators and their students and the communities in which they work (Apple (2007, 2008); Cochran-Smith, 2009; Gay (2009); Hinchey (2008); Ladson Billings, (2005); Lee (2005) ; Sleeter (2008); White (2012)). Therefore, it is through my personal experiences, in addition to how the concept of “White privilege” is situated within the context of ‘social justice’ teacher education that I find myself intrigued as to how we can move further, and potentially reframe the conversation towards a deeper, more reflexive and praxis-oriented manner.

As a way to help reshape the discourse and praxis surrounding the concept of ‘Whiteness’ and critical Whiteness studies, I look to two theoretical frameworks: ‘third wave’ Whiteness and White reconstructionism. Once defined, I use these lenses as a means to think about rearticulating the discussion of Whiteness, and how this can relate to actualizing social justice within the context of teacher education.

Twine and Gallagher (2008) describe the concept of *third wave Whiteness* as building upon existing scholarship, while moving further and away from its mere “exposure, yet invisibility”, and towards a reality that challenges the perpetuation of power and privilege. As Maher and Tetrault (1997) note, “By beginning to be able to

understand and “track” Whiteness in these ways, as constructed socially and historically, allows us to think about the possibilities of revealing its various operations so as to challenge and renegotiate its meanings” (p.346).

Additionally, Twine and Gallagher (2008) recognize the interdisciplinary nature of third wave Whiteness (owing a significant debt to feminist scholarship on race), noting that “this diverse scholarship is linked by a common denominator- an examination of how power and oppression are articulated, redefined and reasserted through various political discourses and cultural practices that privilege whiteness even when the prerogatives of the dominant group are contested” (p.7). In essence, one of the aims of third wave Whiteness is to decenter the conversation of Whiteness that often occurs as a strategy for denial and protection (Solomana et al., 2006), and instead, expose it as a structural and social construct with the aim of challenging and unsettling it as opposed to seeing it as “invisible” or unmarked (McIntosh, 1990).

One of the components that differentiates third wave Whiteness from other scholarship on Whiteness is its avoidance of essentializing accounts of Whiteness, and rather “sees whiteness as a multiplicity of identities that are historically grounded, class specific, politically manipulated and gendered social locations that inhabit local custom and national sentiments within the context of the new ‘global village’ (Twine and Gallagher, 2008). In other words, one of the central foci of third wave Whiteness is how we make sense of the many nuances surrounding the tenuous, situational, and relational power that White privilege plays in ones’ everyday public and private life.

For a second conceptual framework of critical Whiteness studies, I turn to Leonardo (2009), and his discussion on White reconstructionism in education. In sum, White reconstructionism offers a space for discourse that works to transform Whiteness, and White people, into something other than an oppressive ideology and identity. It also aims for a “rearticulated form of whiteness that reclaims its identity for racial justice...Whiteness is a privilege but that whites can use this privilege for purposes of racial justice and therefore contribute to the remaking of whiteness that is not inherently oppressive and false” (Leonardo, 2009, p. 124). This critical approach to rethinking and rearticulating Whiteness shifts the white racial project from one of dominance to one of justice. Importantly, we can look to the concept of “allyship”¹⁹ as another way to think about this process. However, in order to do so, Leonardo (2009) argues we must engage in the pedagogical practice of unlearning the codes of what it currently means to be White.

White reconstructionism argues that because Whiteness is a social construct, it has the potential to be fluid and flexible. Leonardo (2009) claims that Whiteness is part of a hermeneutics of the self, and is more of an ideological choice than a biological destiny. If we look to Whiteness as a hermeneutics of empathy, we “reserve hope that whiteness may emerge as an authentic worldview... white racism is inherently oppressive, but whiteness, seen through the prism of reconstructionism, is multifaceted and undecidable” (Leonardo, 2009, p.127).

¹⁹ Ayvazian (2010) defines as ally as follows: “ An ally is a member of a dominant group in our society who works to dismantle any form of oppression from which she or he receives the benefit. Allied behavior means taking personal responsibility for the changes we know are needed in our society, and so often ignore or leave to others to deal with. Allied behavior is intentional, overt, consistent activity that challenges prevailing patterns of oppression, makes privileges that are so often invisible visible, and facilitates the empowerment of persons targeted by oppression” (p.625).

Additionally, White (2012) reminds us that we “all have multiple identities wherein the performance of any single identity is actually a hybrid of the multiple contexts of the self” (p.19). Therefore, we can consider what Leonardo (2004) refers to as “White investment”, which recognizes the “extent that racial supremacy is taught to white students, it is pedagogical. Insofar as it is pedagogical, there is the possibility of critically reflecting on its flaws in order to disrupt them” (p.144).

Finally, I refer to what Moya (2002) calls a postpositivist realist theory of identity, which appears to support the work of White reconstructionism. Moya defines a postpositivist realist theory of identity as follows: “[I] understand identities to be socially significant and context-specific ideological constructs that nevertheless refer in a non-arbitrary (if partial) ways to verifiable aspects of the social world” (p.13). Accordingly, Moya’s argument falls in line within this framework as it suggests that identities are not objectively defined, and that in fact, they are constantly adapting and changing over time. As such, Moya states, “ it is the sophisticated and nuanced theory of identity needed by ethnic studies scholars who are moving into the twenty-first century” (p.17).

Critical Whiteness Studies and Teacher Education

Examining a critical Whiteness framework theoretically seems easier than enacting it pedagogically. However, there are many scholars who describe some of their work through such a lens. Thus, I argue that it *is* possible to infuse many courses within teacher education with such critical work. Sleeter (2009) argues that the importance of multicultural education is rooted more as a struggle against White racism as opposed to appreciating diversity. To complicate this notion even further,

Juarez, Smith & Hayes, (2008) note, “Clearly, teacher preparation programs are preparing teachers for social justice. The question, therefore, is not whether or not teachers are being prepared for social justice, but rather, for what kind of social justice are teachers being prepared? Based on the everyday business of teacher education, teachers are being prepared for social justice as Whiteness” (p.22).

Therefore, it seems appropriate and effective to take a critical Whiteness approach to thinking about and enacting practices of social justice within teacher education.

As previously discussed, talking about Whiteness often focuses on the invisibility of the privilege, and does so in a more surfaced manner. Instead, we should aim to deeply examine and rearticulate whiteness as a pervasive ideology, and consider it in a more nuanced, structural, and institutional manner as opposed to an “individual” problem (Haviland, 2008; McIntyre, 2002; Pollock et. al, 2009). As McIntyre (2002) notes, “ Students are accustomed to a culture of niceness that often suffocates critique in many classrooms and institutions of higher learning...it is a significant barrier to developing a discourse that critically explores the various dimensions of whiteness” (p.44).

Even further, Haviland (2008) refers to a *White Educational Discourse*²⁰(WED) that seems to permeate many Predominantly white Institutions (PWI's), and “can insulate participants from implication in social inequality, value social cohesion over challenge, and promote a noncritical stance to race, racism, and White supremacy”(p.44). She also notes that White people often dominate many facets of

²⁰ Haviland (2008) cites Gee (1996, p. viii) to define the first portion of White Educational Discourse: WED is a way of being in the [educational] world shown through ways of behaving, interacting, valuing, thinking, believing, speaking, and often reading and writing “ about race, racism, and White supremacy that is pervasive, powerful yet power-evasive, and yet nonmonolithic (Haviland, p. 44).

life, but tend to not be conscious of the power. Rather, as per the tenets of rearticulating Whiteness, Haviland (2008) argues we can examine some of the practices of a WED, and use them to push ourselves, and our students out of such a comfort zone, and instead, accept our complicity in racism and White supremacy and begin to enact anti-racist pedagogies.

One of the ways in which we may refer back to third wave Whiteness, and how this framework may be considered in teacher education, is through what Lowenstein (2009) refers to as a homogenization of teacher candidates as a monolithic group. Interestingly, a pervasive message disseminated throughout many teacher education courses is the need for our preservice teachers to move away from making “blanket statements” about their current and future students. However, as Lowenstein points out, “the kinds of generalizations teacher educators want our teacher candidates to avoid when learning about culture, race, and ethnicity, actually are the same kind of framework often used to think about who teacher candidates are as a group” (p. 168). Thus, Lowenstein (2009) argues we move away from such a deficit approach to thinking about our White teacher candidates, and instead, ask our teacher educators to consider how we conceptualize our teacher candidates as learners about issues of diversity. By doing so, we build off of both conceptual frameworks of Whiteness by resituating the construction of a White identity, and how individuals choose to make sense and rearticulate themselves as anti-racist teachers and learners.

As another way to think about critical Whiteness studies pedagogically, I turn to Pollock et al., (2010) who discuss a series of tensions surrounding prospective

teachers and their roles in thinking about and enacting anti-racist work in their future classrooms. Specifically, they complicate the question “ “But what can I do?” putting in bold different words within the question depending on the context of the tension (What can I **DO**?, What **Can** I do?, and What can **I** do?). As a way to briefly explain such tensions, Pollock et. al (2010) state: “ they (teacher candidates) would accept only concrete ideas rather than theories, commit only to individual acts rather than structural change, or demand only personal development before professional improvement was possible (or vice versa in each case)” (p.221).

The students who seemed less inclined to feel frustrated after examining the questions were those who felt comfortable embracing the tensions and “considered antiracist and good teaching as an ongoing merged project and view structural and individual efforts as simultaneous rather than as sequential or extra additions to their basic teaching practice” (Pollock et. al, 2010, p.219). These findings seem to suggest that the desire to engage within these discussions are there, however the tensions demonstrate a need to dig deeper, and more critically into how a prospective teacher sees and understands themselves within such conversations.

Another way in which we may think about interrogating ourselves, our educational institutions, and the role Whiteness plays in the development of a teacher identity, is what Seidl and Hancock (2011) refer to as a *double image*. A double image “provides White people with insight into the images they project in cross-raced encounters, allowing them to anticipate the ways in which People of Color might perceive some of their behaviors, responses, and beliefs and to understand the emotions these might raise” (p. 688-689). According to Seidl and

Hancock (2011), this is not an easy place to come to, however, in order to truly engage in anti-racist work, Whites must work towards a development of an identity that includes the varied ways in which they are perceived as Whites. Interestingly, and in accordance with the many privileges that continue to permeate and perpetuate Whiteness, Seidl and Hancock make the following point:

The very fact that most Whites can move in and out of a double image, depending on the context, denotes the maintenance of their privileged position. Similarly, the fact that such an image is temporary for most Whites, given their movement in and out of places occupied by People of Color, is neither good nor bad; rather, it is the outcome of our society's structure of oppression and dominance. (p. 695)

Thus, in thinking about how we can aim to rearticulate Whiteness, we must consider how it is perceived, even when this process feels uncomfortable and leaves us with less than positive images of ourselves. As Solomon et.al (2005) argue, " It becomes increasingly important to have teacher candidates explore their personal attitudes and understandings of the ways in which their racial ascription and social positioning inform their actual practices and interactions with students" (p.149). White (2012) also reminds us that we must be aware of the extent that Whiteness intersects with other aspects of our identity, and further shapes how we understand our roles within the school system.

It is important to note that anti-racist work is recognizing the complexities that surround a White identity, and always making deliberate decisions regarding

how we choose to make sense and understand ourselves in regards to the work we do with others across raced lines while challenging and working against racism.

Diversifying the Teaching Force

In accordance with the previous discussion of PWI's and reframing our teacher education programs with elements of critical Whiteness frameworks, we must also engage with the very real issue of increasing the number of students of color in our teaching programs. It is not a new argument that as a result of the low percentage of teachers of color entering the profession, teacher education programs need to proactively respond and work towards diversifying teacher candidates, while also effectively preparing the students of color who are currently in teacher education programs.

According to Gillette and Schultz (2008), "all teacher candidates must develop a content-knowledge base that is multicultural, come to see themselves as cultural beings with a plurality of identities, develop the type of critical thinking and analytic skills necessary for problem-posing, critical inquiry, and reflective thinking, and acquire the skills necessary to help P-12 students succeed" (p.233) However, while addressing the following components with all current teacher candidates, we must pay particular attention to the overall climate of teacher education programs, which only reinforces the need to diversify who enters our teaching cohorts.

Per their literature review on recruiting teachers of color, Villegas and Irvine (2010) found two prominent reasons that support diversifying the teaching force. The synthesis of the research concluded that by increasing the diversity of the teaching force, students will benefit in the following ways: the role modeling effects

of teachers of color, and the potential of teachers of color to build cultural bridges to learning for students of color (p. 187). Moving forward, I suggest there are additional reasons for us to think about when discussing the need for diversifying the teaching force.

When we consider the concepts of positionality, self-reflexivity, knowledge, and perspective in our pre-service teaching cohorts, it seems vitally important to have as many diverse viewpoints and experiences as possible represented. Cochran-Smith (1995) refers to this process as a reconsideration of personal knowledge and experience. Solomon et.al (2005) also describe the importance of “having teacher candidates explore their personal attitudes and understandings of the ways in which their racial ascription and social positioning inform their actual practices and interactions with students” (p. 149).

Additionally, as Hinchey (2009) argues, “ The majority of the teaching force is comprised of teachers who conform to traditional expectations (of teaching and learning) and are likely to feel very much at home in the profession. They are also likely, however, to be unaware of the extent to which they are enacting someone else’s cultural agenda” (p.25). Thus, by having critical conversations with a diverse cohort of prospective teachers, we can move away from the practice of talking about issues of inequity in terms of personal blame and guilt, and move rather to talking about them as institutional and systematic in origin. (Cochran-Smith, Davis & Fries, 2004).

Zeichner (1996) makes this point further by suggesting that much of the reflexive teaching that takes place often results in teachers looking inward and

reflecting on their own teaching with their individual students as opposed to considering “the social conditions of schooling that influence the teachers’ work within the classroom” (p.204). Additionally, Greene (1998) talks about bringing in new voices, new perspectives, and to look at alternative ways of teaching and learning... With this approach, we penetrate the “so-called ‘culture of silence’, and bring in the many diverse perspectives, stories and experiences that are often ignored and invisible. Thus, we need to move away from the more surface levels of reflective teaching, and instead, incorporate the whole picture of what is systematically and institutionally going on in our classrooms and schools.

By pushing to diversify the teaching force with the added component of self-reflection, we can comprehensively examine and reexamine our own knowledge and educational experiences. As O’Connor and Zeichner (2011) state, “By recognizing students as holders of knowledge whose experiences carry their own ‘truths’, teachers demonstrate to students that all people’s experiences are valuable to the construction of knowledge, regardless of their positioning in the global social order” (p.526).

This insight into our experiences and perspectives will not only provide a space to talk about the need for transformation of the traditional mainstream knowledge within the academy, but they will also provide an awareness of the way pre-service teachers can begin the process of examining how their own experiences are directly related to how they make sense of themselves as prospective teachers, their roles within our schools systems, as well as how their future students make sense of themselves. According to Greene (1998), we must offer public spaces where

individuals can be in the presence of other human beings, and where thoughtful discussions and action can take place. She sees such spaces as environments where individuals can challenge, seek alternatives, and come together to help move towards more caring communities. Greene argues that people are deprived of their true freedom when there is no public space where they can actively participate with others.

As demonstrated, teaching, (both in teacher preparation and K-12 education) is politically charged and has the potential to be infused with activism. As discussed throughout the entirety of chapter three, we see that there are many intricacies that encompass the characteristics of a critical educator and critical pedagogy, as well as the need to think more deeply about critical Whiteness studies, while also continuing to work towards diversifying the teaching force. As I will argue, all of these components prepare us for understanding critical feminism, as it is truly an interdisciplinary perspective that incorporates many components of critical pedagogy, critical Whiteness studies, as well as other theories and methodologies of resistance.

Moving forward, in order to articulate what a teacher education program advertises as being “social justice,” it must be done so in a descriptive and particular manner. Thus, the remainder of my dissertation will demonstrate how I propose we consider a specific social justice agenda in teacher education. What follows, will be a detailed analysis of critical feminism as theoretical framework, and *testimonio*, as a pedagogy, and how I envision the two aiding in a re-imagination of teacher education.

Chapter 4

What's Critical Feminism doing in a field like Teacher Education?

Feminist theory can bring a substantive integrity to our practice when it is used as a tool to acknowledge difference in ways that unite and organize diverse people for social change. [There] is an organizing principle around an evolved feminism that encourages women and men to acknowledge their diverse backgrounds and to gather strength from their experiences of oppression and shared commonalities, and to provide opportunities to rally their abilities for collective action... It is also concerned with how intersections of knowledge can be functional and productive and can contribute to the abilities of teachers and learners to understand themselves and strive to transform themselves and society (Brady & Dentith, 2001 p. 166, 168).

The focus of this chapter will highlight the ways in which educators (defined in this case as pre-service teachers, current educators, as well as faculty within higher education) could potentially understand critical feminist theory as a framework, and methodologies²¹ of resistance as an integral component within the theoretical framework. I will argue that critical feminist theory is a relevant and important framework to be utilized methodologically and pedagogically in teacher education. By deploying elements of critical feminist theory within the context of teacher education, pre-service teachers and teacher educators will have a better way of deepening their understanding for how to be more self reflexive, critical and counterhegemonic in their future teaching practices.

As mentioned earlier, some characteristics of critical pedagogy and critical Whiteness studies (as discussed throughout chapter three) connect with how I

²¹ I use Hesse-Biber, Leavy & Yaiser's (2004) definition of methodology: "Scholars create a feminist methodology by arguing against the mainstream ways research has proceeded and how theory has been applied to research questions and data. Feminists explicitly link theory with methods" (p.15).

understand and conceptualize critical feminist theory. Throughout the entirety of chapter four, elements of both will be woven within the discussion and examination of critical feminism. As such, critical feminist theory, as a theoretical and pedagogical framework, offers teacher educators and prospective teachers a unique opportunity to critically engage with themselves and their students not only in their teacher education programs but in their future classrooms as well. To note, McWilliam (1994) argues, “ I have learned that contemporary feminist theorizing can be usefully applied to actual practices across a range of teacher education endeavors, from policy analysis to pedagogy and from research to the “reality” of field experiences’ (p.147).

Moving further, as we consider themes of democracy, liberation, and individual experience, I aim to further frame and argue that critical feminism is an anti-oppressive theory²², and one that embodies critical and difference centered perspectives. Moosa-Mitha (2005) discusses, that feminist approaches to research are “collectivist, women-centered, and grounded in lived experience”. She discusses how a feminist approach to research privileges the specific and the contextual, and argues that in order to fully understand the many diverse experiences of oppression, we must move away from validating positivist²³ academic knowledges and “Truths”, and instead, base a feminist theory upon lived experiences and

²² Kumashiro (2002) describes an anti-oppressive theory as a way of teaching to create a more safe, tolerant, and open-minded classroom for oppressed students.

²³ Hesse-Biber, Leavy & Yaiser (2004) define positivism as “based on deductive modes of knowledge building where objective and value-neutral researchers typically begin with a general cause and effect relationship derived from an abstract general theory” (p.5).

oppositional social movements. When conducting research, feminist theorists position the researcher and the participant in engaged and self-reflexive activities.

Thus, rather than making universal claims, feminist researchers are working to make sense of one's social reality through lived experience and subjectivities that can be based on narratives, performance, as well as other methodologies that incorporate individual and personal experiences (Moosa-Mitha, 2006). Importantly, we see a similar discussion within standpoint theory. Au (2012) describes standpoint theory as:

A recognition of personhood and one's equality, which means that by definition, it must also be connected to antiracist and antihomophobic positions, among others. Hence, standpoint has to contend with issues of power and oppression in a general sense because, as a paradigmatic orientation, standpoint openly acknowledges that the social location of the oppressed and marginalized (as defined by historical, social, cultural, and institutional contexts) is the best vantage point for starting knowledge projects given that it can provide a clearer, more truthful lens for understanding the world than that of hegemonic epistemologies (8).

As such, the discussion moving forward will build off of standpoint theory, as its premise and underlying principles deeply connect to how I understand critical feminism and its relationship to education.

Moving further, Dadd's (2011) argues, " the dilemmas facing humans seeking a liberatory theory for education are global *and* particular. When we understand this, we realize that feminist thought and action is a key element to critical social theory and is crucial to its engagement with the educational enterprise" (p.190). In order to demonstrate that critical feminist theory is an effective framework to be used within teacher education, it is important to explicitly discuss how I understand the many dimensions and nuances of a critical feminist theory.

McLeod (2009) argues that feminism and education are malleable and political. Poststructural feminism is not a “bounded, fixed-in-time transcendental theory, but a shifting, socially and temporally embedded system of reasoning, that generates particular ways of thinking about education and about feminism-its political project, the topics that warrant “new concepts,” and its sense of history and possible futures” (McLeod, p. 146). It is this philosophy that helps shape how I begin to understand critical feminism.

Men and Feminism

It is important to examine the roles men have within the realm of critical feminism, given that teacher educators, preservice teachers, and current educators are comprised of both men and women. Harding (2004) argues that there are many possibilities in contemporary feminist thought for men to make significant contributions as well as be subjects of feminist thought. For the purposes of this discussion, it is helpful to consider the following statement as a way to think about men and their roles within critical feminism and the education community: “ As some feminists of color have argued, one will want to appreciate the importance of solidarity, not unity, among groups with different but partially overlapping interests” (Harding, 2004, p.195). It is for this reason that I build off of the White reconstructionist perspective as a way to connect men and feminism.

Similar to how White reconstructionism (Leonardo, 2009) argues for recognizing one’s position and privilege, and using this as a way to speak out against oppression and inequity, men, too, can serve as allies and refuse to accept and respect masculinity ideals. Harding asks, “ Can not men, too, learn to listen, and go

on to use what they learn critically to rethink the institutions of society, their cultures, and practices” (p.185)? Therefore, as Harding (2004) argues, we must take a moment to rethink the role of men and feminism, and see critical feminist thought and practice as creating spaces for men to speak out against patriarchal politics and thought, their relations to dominant patriarchal discourses, and their distinctive ways of organizing the production of knowledge. Additionally, feminism must include a critical race perspective, which I will discuss at a deeper level later on in this chapter.

Defining Methodologies of Resistance

Critical feminist theory, as a framework, is comprised of methodologies of resistance that work towards the following goals: disrupting the educational canon and mainstream academic knowledge²⁴, questioning hegemonic understandings of oppression, as well as intimately looking at the diverse methods and forms of resistance within critical feminist theory as a way to reconsider how we might understand our roles as teachers and learners. Additionally, in order to understand critical feminism, we must pay particular attention to the many components (or methodologies of resistance) that help conceptualize it as an evolving and malleable theory and framework.

To better understand methodologies of resistance, I refer to the important works of Paulo Freire. However, in doing so, we need to move further and re-

²⁴ Mainstream academic knowledge is defined by Banks (1996) “The concepts, paradigms, theories and explanations that constitute traditional and established knowledge in the behavioral and social sciences” (p. 11),

envision his call for an education for critical consciousness ²⁵and liberatory pedagogy. Freire defines liberatory pedagogy as: “ This pedagogy (the pedagogy of the oppressed) makes oppression and its causes objects of reflection by the oppressed, and from that reflection will come their necessary engagement in the struggle for their liberation” (Freire, p.48). In other words, Freire argues that we must examine the individual and/or collective forms of oppression as the starting points (one’s reality), of which we can then move forward to combat and free oneself from this oppression through critical action and intervention.

I look to Denzin and Lincoln, (2008) who argue that by re-grounding Freire’s pedagogy, we must merge together the ideals of critical and indigenous scholars. This union can be thought of as a *critical indigenous pedagogy* (CIP). The particular dialogue that Denzin and Lincoln call upon incorporates specific ideologies and understandings: Inquiry is both political and moral; methods are used critically and for social justice purposes; transformative power of indigenous and subjugated knowledges are valued; praxis and inquiry are emancipatory and empowering; western methodologies, and the modern academy must be decolonized (2008). Thus, a methodology of resistance includes, but is not limited to the aforementioned themes, while also incorporating practices and pedagogies that aid in the reconfiguration of “traditional” research and teaching practices.

These ideas are shared by Darder, (2006) who argues, “we must stretch the boundaries of critical educational principles to infuse social and institutional contexts with its revolutionary potential. It is a moment when our emancipatory

²⁵ Freire (1974) describes a critical consciousness as being *in* and *with* one’s reality, and that “within every understanding, sooner or later an action corresponds” (39).

theories must be put into action, in our efforts to counter the hegemonic fear-mongering configurations of a national rhetoric that would render teachers, students, parents, and communities voiceless and devoid of social agency” (p.11).

In order to sufficiently argue that methodologies of resistance are important, relevant, and vital within the context of teacher education, we must situate the themes and ideals with pre-service teachers in mind. Specifically, educators must engage with methodologies of resistance in ways that proactively move towards a critical pedagogy that disrupts the hegemonic cultural and educational practices that often permeate many teacher education programs.

As Kinhole and Steinberg (2008) argue, “ such ways (indigenous knowledges) of knowing and acting could contribute so much to the educational experiences of all students, but because of the rules of evidence and dominant epistemologies of Western knowledge production, such understandings are deemed irrelevant by the academic gatekeepers” (p.136). Although not prescriptive in practice, one of the ideals of incorporating methodologies of resistance is that they call in to question these current structures of power and knowledges within the academy (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008).

Smith (1999) argues this point further. She states, “ The form that racism takes inside a university is related to the ways in which academic knowledge is structured as well as to the organizational structures which govern a university”. Privileges are protected and are already in place. Thus, Smith (1999) argues, histories must be retold, authenticated, and rewritten in order to remove the

oppression of theories that continue to be perpetuated, unchallenged, and stagnant within the academy.

Similarly, Grande (2009) articulates for a space in which we may incorporate *Red Pedagogy* within our educational communities. She argues that unless we pose critical questions and engage in dangerous discourse, we will not reach a point of un-thinking one's colonial roots and rethinking democracy. Many of the characteristics of *Red Pedagogy* connect and fall inline with some of the aforementioned modes of resistance; it is fundamentally rooted in indigenous knowledge and praxis, promotes an education for decolonization, and is grounded in hope... just to name a few. Most important, Grande (2009) argues, “ [*Red Pedagogy*] speaks to our collective need to decolonize, to push back against empire, and reclaim what it means to be a people of sovereign mind and body” (p.201).

Moving further, one of the ways in which methodologies of resistance can help educators and pre-service teachers think more critically and proactively about the often-times unchallenged nature of traditional Western schooling is to consider the concept of *multilogicality*. Kincheloe and Steinberg (2008) define multilogicality simply as the need for humans to encounter multiple perspectives in all dimensions of their lives. This idea is central to understanding indigenous knowledges and perspectives. Kincheloe and Steinberg (2008) further argue that multilogicality shapes social analysis, political perspectives, knowledge production, and action; all elements that make up methodologies of resistance. Thus, by incorporating multiple viewpoints and ways of being and seeing the world, “ multilogical teachers begin to look at lessons from the perspectives of individuals from different race, class,

gender, and sexual orientations. They are dedicated to search for new perspectives” (Kincheloe and Steinberg, 2008, p.139).

Moving further, not only is it important to consider multiple viewpoints and perspectives, but self- reflection, and the consideration of one’s positionality as it relates to understanding oppression is another component to engaging with methodologies of resistance. Thus, we must recognize our own positionalities in order to challenge the dominant paradigms of traditional educational practices, as well as the hegemonic understandings of oppression and resistance.

A final characteristic for understanding methodologies of resistance can, and should “produce spiritual, social and psychological healing” (Denzin and Lincon, p.15). The concept of healing takes on many forms, one of which results in a personal and social transformation that can lead to mobilization and collective action. This transformation results in critical pedagogies and practices that honor human difference, while giving us opportunities to come together with a shared agenda towards emancipation and liberation (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). It is through these alternative ideals and practices which are incorporated within methodologies of resistance that we may envision a reworking of the university in general, and teacher education in particular.

Recognizing Critical Race Theory within Critical Feminism

As a scholar of critical race theory and education, Ladson -Billings (2009) continues her discussion regarding race and education arguing “race *still* matters”. Thus, I look to the following quote by Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, and Thomas (1995) as a way to keep the conversation going:

“There is no canonical set of doctrines or methodologies to which [CRT scholars] all subscribe” (p. xiii). But, CRT scholars are unified by two common interests- to understand how a “regime of white supremacy and its subordination of people of color have been created and maintained in America” (p. xiii) and to change the bond that exists between law and racial power” (as cited within Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 114).

Therefore, although critical race theory hasn’t been explicitly discussed within the aforementioned characteristics of critical feminist theory thus far, it is important to note the characteristics of CRT that are woven throughout the conceptualization and discussion of critical feminist theory. Importantly, “CRT’s insistence on story-telling and counter narratives provides us with a powerful vehicle for speaking against racism and other forms of inequity” (Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 120). CRT challenges the cultural scripts that state individualism, equal opportunity, and success are available for all Americans. Not surprisingly this cultural script conveniently omits the fact that there are structural and institutional factors that make this advancement near impossible for many people. Therefore, Ladson-Billings reminds us that, “CRT argues for the primacy of race in understanding many of the social relations that define life in the United States. CRT is a constant reminder that race still matters” (p.121).

Additionally, and as Bhandar (2000) reminds us, “Feminist interventions in critical race theory have been crucial in shaping and developing a legal discourse that recognizes the intersectionality of race, class, and gender formations” (p.109). Arguably, the political component of education cannot be understated, as we see the

importance of recognizing the presence of critical race theory and critical feminism throughout the entirety of our educational discourse.

Critical Feminism as an Evolving Framework

The discussion that follows will demonstrate the many ways in which critical feminism continues to evolve and move forward as a framework for responding to the many diverse injustices and oppressions that we encounter both in and outside the field of education. In a broad sense, the central characteristics of feminism include “the recognition that gender is a phenomenon which helps to shape our society. Feminists believe that women are located unequally in the social formation, often devalued, exploited and oppressed... Feminism is a social theory and social movement, but it is also a personal political practice. For feminist educators, feminism is a primary lens through which the world is interpreted and acted upon” (Kenway and Modra, 1992, p.139). Thus, although critical feminism includes many diverse components, the way in which it is grounded aims to offer universal principles.

For example, although critical feminist theory is malleable and multi-dimensional, there are, what appear to be, some universal components, or “pivot points” to critical feminism that Dadds (2011) notes. Dadds supports Agger’s (1997) claim that, “Feminist theory has developed in a more grounded way than Marxism because theory and lived experience are consistently respected, interacting in both dialectical and reflexive ways to provoke us to live better lives in the here and now, not postponing liberation” (Agger, 1997, p.102). Dadds (2011) argues that feminist

theory is constantly interrogating an entire interconnected system, and by doing so, is aiming towards liberation, emancipation, and empowerment.

The “pivot points” that Dadds (2011) refers to help clarify some of the aforementioned themes within methodologies of resistance, and thus, critical feminist theory. In short, the pivot points include: *reflexive historicity, lived experience and hidden structures, dialogic engagement with the margins, and embodiment and interdependence*. These pivot points “serve as key feminist contributions to critical social theory and educational scholarship. Insofar, we are engaging education with a critically social *feminist eye*” (Dadds, p. 177, 178).

Before beginning an analysis of the many contributions to critical feminist theory, it is important to consider the concept of essentializing, which Code (1991) critiques, by discussing the damage it can do in relation to feminist epistemology. In feminist thought, there is often a desire to find a common voice among women. Code argues against this practice, noting that the differences in race, class, and sexuality are neglected. Code (1991) states, “Feminists need to demonstrate the reality of social injustices and practices and to work as hard for change in larger social structures and institutions as for change in the ‘personal’ areas of women’s lives” (p. 320). Her interpretation offers women the voice to stand together, but recognizes the need to define themselves individually.

Throughout my own understanding of critical feminism, as well as thinking about such work in the broader context of society, I believe it important to consider how our own intersecting identities are diverse, yet our goals for fighting against oppression help join us together. Thus, we can see that developing an understanding

of critical feminist theory is not simplistic, prescriptive, or easily definable. However, by examining various components, movements, and the politics surrounding them, we can have a better understanding as to how critical feminism as *framework* moves to dismantle oppression in various forms and dimensions.

Additionally, it is important to note that critical feminist theory, as a framework, does not offer specific or “text-book” ways we can go about creating or transforming spaces. Rather, it calls on us to reconsider our existing understandings of knowledge, power, and spaces of empowerment. One way that critical feminist theory acknowledges the many diverse forms of resistance is by examining recent liberatory social movements that have been used as ways to leverage transformation and liberation.

Sandoval (2000) engages within this discussion by calling for a *differential consciousness*, and argues for a transformative way of reassessing our current understandings of theoretical and methodological forms of oppositional praxis. Sandoval discusses the various ways in which race, gender, and sexuality intersect, and why it is imperative that all forms of resistance within each form of oppression must be addressed if true oppositional resistance can take place.

Sandoval notes, “Hegemonic feminist scholarship was unable to identify the connections between its own understandings and translations of resistance, and the expressions of consciousness in opposition enacted among other racial, ethnic, sex, cultural, or national liberation movements” (Sandoval, p.54). Sandoval recognizes that previous forms of oppositional resistance have worked and challenged boundaries, however, she argues for a way to move forward, or expand upon the

many diverse forms of opposition. In *Methodology of the Oppressed*, Sandoval considers four historically significant social movements or forms of resistance: equal-rights form, revolutionary form, supremacist form, and the separatist form, and argues for a fifth, or differential form of oppositional consciousness or resistance (Sandoval, 2000).

The historical involvement of U.S. feminists of color in regards to oppositional consciousness and resistance tended to move in and out of the four ideologies (forms) mentioned above. Sandoval points to Anzaldúa's recognition of this activity as weaving between and among oppositional ideologies²⁶ In other words, Sandoval explains, "I think of this activity of consciousness as the "differential," insofar as it enables movement "between and among" ideological positionings (the equal rights, revolutionary, supremacist, and separatist modes of oppositional consciousness) considered as variables, in order to disclose the distinctions among them" (Sandoval, p.57). Sandoval calls for a coming together, a commitment to reach across disciplines and forms of resistance to better effect and engage in egalitarian social justice. Thus, we must unite in solidarity if we hope to systematically and institutionally transform how we are preparing our preservice teachers for teaching in the twenty-first century. What follows is a way in which we may consider Sandoval's call for a differential consciousness as a way to help interpret and understand the many dimensions that fall within critical feminism.

²⁶ Anzaldúa (1987) compares her experience to that of "two worlds merging to form a third country, a border culture". She describes her experience as a cultural collision, such that she felt like she was "cradled in one culture, sandwiched between two cultures, straddling all three cultures and their value systems, la mestiza undergoes a struggle of flesh, a struggle of borders, an inner war" (p. 100).

To begin, I refer back to the late 1970's, when The Combahee River Collective (1978) offered a powerful epistemological critique that discussed four major topics: "1) The genesis of contemporary black feminism; 2) what we believe, ie., the specific province of our politics; 3) the problems in organizing black feminists, including a brief herstory of our collective; and 4) black feminist issues and practice (Combahee River Collective, p.3)". These specific modes of resistance arose out of the disillusionment and lack of resonance felt by many Black feminists during certain liberation movements of the 1960's and 1970's.

The Combahee River Collective needed more than the isolated modes of oppositional resistance practiced politically at the time, ie: civil rights, Black nationalism, and the Black Panthers. The belief of the Combahee Rive Collective was that "the most profound and potentially the most radical politics come directly out of our own identity, as opposed to working to end someone else's oppression" (Combahee River Collective, p.5). Thus, we see a break away from the generic understanding of traditional feminism, and instead, a move towards the reframing and reconsidering of alternative modes of oppositional resistance.

It was around the same time of The Combahee River Collective that Women of Color began fighting for equality and social justice outside the borders of "White feminism." Butler and Raynor (2007) explain "Selecting the phrase *women of color* by many women of U.S. ethnic groups of color is part of their struggle to be recognized with dignity for their humanity, racial heritage, and cultural heritage as they work within the women's movement in the United States" (p.198). Recognizing

various strains of Women of Color helps individualize and understand the experiences of many groups of diverse women.

Further, Garcia (1989) notes, to define feminism for Women of Color, it is imperative to recognize the “struggle to gain equal status in the male-dominated nationalist movement and also in American society” (p. 220). It is both a fight against sexist oppression and racist oppression. Women of Color understood the need to find a place to fight for equalities within class, race, gender, and sexuality. Acosta-Belen and Bose (2000) explain,

Out of the subordination of Latinas and their initial exclusion from both male-dominated ethnic studies movement and white-dominated women’s movement, Chicanas, puertorriquetas, and women from other disenfranchised U.S. ethnoracial minorities began to forge and articulate a feminist consciousness and collective sense of struggle based on their experiences as members of diverse individual nationalities, as well as on their collective panethnic and cross-border identities as Latinas and women of color (p.1114).

This partnership demonstrated that it was vital for coalitions to be formed to distinguish themselves from the feminist movement, however, it was just as important to keep their respective autonomous identities. Anzaldúa (1997) notes “The answer to the problem between the white race and the colored, between males and females, lies in healing the split that originates in the very foundation of our lives, our culture, our thoughts” (p. 272).

Similarly, hooks (2009) argues, “Feminism in the United States has never emerged from the women who are most victimized by sexist oppression; women who are daily beaten down, mentally, physically, and spiritually- women who are powerless to change their condition in life. They are a silent majority” (p. 31). Building off of the Combahee River Collective’s discussion of the racism within the feminist movement, hooks discusses the evolution of feminism, beginning with Betty Friedan’s *The Feminine Mystique*. She uncovers the ‘actual’ fight Friedan waged, which was masked by a façade of camaraderie, in that Friedan seemed to argue the movement included *all* women. This example reveals the origins of the feminist movement as something that was one-dimensional, narrowly focused, and even narcissistic.

hooks argues for an emphasis on the multiple, diverse, and individual ways women experience oppression. She not only resists the “hegemonic dominance of feminist thought by insisting that it is a theory in the making, that we must necessarily criticize, question, re-examine, and explore new possibilities” (p.39), but goes further to explain how her own role in the revolution has not been as a result of past feminist conscious-raising. She states, “We [black women] are the group that has not been socialized to assume the role of exploiter/oppressor in that we are allowed no institutionalized “other” that we can exploit or oppress” (43).

Thus, as part of a true feminist struggle, hooks insists that “Black women recognize the special vantage point (our) marginality gives (us) and make use of this perspective to criticize the dominant, racist, classist, sexist hegemony as well as to envision and create a counter-hegemony” (p. 43). hooks calls for the making of a

liberatory feminist theory and praxis that undeniably depends on the unique and valuable experiences of Black women.

Collins (2000) also recognized that as a collective, Black women have been subjected to various forms of oppression: economic, political, and ideological, and argues “ While common experiences may predispose Black women to develop a distinctive group consciousness, they guarantee neither that such a consciousness will develop among all women nor that it will be articulated as such by the group” (p. 24).

For another interpretation of critical feminism that further challenges hegemonic understandings of oppression, I refer to Million, (2009) who discusses the term *felt analysis*. Felt analysis is a way for Native women to discuss and examine their personal narratives that aim to speak out against the racialized, gendered, and sexual nature of their colonization. Felt analysis creates a new language in which to discuss the “real multilayered facets of their histories and concerns by insisting on the inclusion of [our] lived experience, rich with emotional knowledge of what pain and grief and hope meant or mean now in [our] pasts and futures... the importance of felt experiences as community knowledges that interactively inform [our] positions as Native scholars...” (p.54). Million argues that not only is felt experience often ignored, but its very purpose is misconstrued and considered a subjective form of narrative, thus, it cannot be considered “Truth” or objective, “except in Western sciences’ own wet dream of detached corporeality”(Million, p.73).

Million explains that through the very existence of these stories (felt analyses) we see alternative truths and alternative historical views. Million quotes Jeanette Armstrong: “We must continue the telling of what really happened until *everyone* including our own peoples understands that this condition did not happen through choice” (as cited within Million, 2009, p.64). Thus, per Million, it is imperative for the victims of history to tell their stories in order to break through the silence that has systematically distorted the real Truth, and to challenge what is recognized as a “past that stays neatly segregated from the present”.

Next, I turn to Muñoz, (2009) who uses elements of queer theory ²⁷to disrupt or challenge heteronormativity, or “a model of intergender relations, where one thinks, sees and lives straight” (Sumara & Davis, 1999). Such a practice, by nature, demonstrates another component of critical feminist theory: reconsidering and reframing dominant understandings of concepts, methods, and theories.

Muñoz (2009) calls for a methodology of hope which he describes as “ A backwards glance that enacts a future vision” (p.4). He refers to such a methodology as way to move forward with the idea that queerness it not simply a being, or a state, but rather a matter of thinking about that thing (queerness) that lets us feel that this world is not enough, that indeed something is missing” (p.1).

In other words, Muñoz moves thought, time and space away from the here and now, and calls for a utopia, or a conceptual understanding of life as the “not-yet conscious” and a different way to consider queerness. Muñoz’s queer futurity calls

²⁷ As described in Lorraine Code’s *Encyclopedia of Feminist Theories*, queer theory is “ a function of resistance not only to the heterosexist norm but also to itself as it encompasses a multitude of differing and discordant communities and political projects” (p.415). In other words, although queer theory can and often does serve as a platform of oppositional resistance regarding sexuality, it can also be considered a way to redefine the concept “queer”, thus a rupture in the standard definition of queer theory.

for an awareness of the past in order to critique the present. In doing so, Muñoz recognizes much of queer critique to be antirelational and antiutopian, thus a movement to think beyond the moment and being available to the not-yet-here. Per Muñoz, we must reconsider prescribed time and space, and instead, be critically proactive for conceptualizing a different and better future.

Finally, I recognize the important contributions that Anzaldúa (1987 & 1997) offers to critical feminism. Anzaldúa refers to a concept termed *borderlands feminism*, where she describes a sense of feeling like she was caught between two cultures, while simultaneously feeling like an alien in both. Anzaldúa compares her experience to that of “two worlds merging to form a third country, a border culture”. She describes her experience as a cultural collision, such that she felt like she was “Cradled in one culture, sandwiched between two cultures, straddling all three cultures and their value systems, la mestiza undergoes a struggle of flesh, a struggle of borders, an inner war” (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 78).

Another part of la mestiza that Anzaldúa (1987) recognizes is her lesbian identity. She weaves the phrase, “not me sold out my people, but they me,” demonstrating a challenge to the *vendida* or “sellout” label often assigned to Chicana lesbians who are charged for melting into “White society”. She states, “ Being lesbian and raised Catholic, indoctrinated as straight, I made the choice to be queer. It’s an interesting path, one that continually slips in and out of the white, the Catholic, the Mexican, the indigenous, the instincts. It is path of knowledge-one of knowing (and of learning) the history of oppression of our raza. It is a way of balancing, of mitigating duality” (p. 19).

As demonstrated, there are many facets to conceptualizing and understanding critical feminist theory. By recognizing the many diverse modes of oppositional resistance, and how those affected by oppression choose to respond, we see that critical feminism is constantly evolving, and truly interdisciplinary within the realm of academia. Further, in analyzing these particular feminist and queer scholars, we can see how the process of conceptualizing critical feminism aims to liberate oneself from the confines of a more prescriptive practice or mode of understanding resistance. Finally, although unique in their own theories and methodologies, what such scholars all have in common is that they offer alternative ways of looking at emancipating oneself from the institutionalization of oppression; an integral component of teaching and learning in empowering and liberating spaces. Importantly, as I look back on my relationship to critical feminist theory, and the connections I have made throughout my own teaching and learning, what CFT does best is help me better understand my students and families as individuals, as opposed to groups who may or may not share similar situations or circumstances.

Moving Forward: Contextualizing Critical Feminist Theory in Teacher Education

Much of my discussion thus far has focused on examining diverse methodologies of resistance and how they help define and better conceptualize the many components of critical feminism. In order to move forward and situate critical feminism within teacher education, it is important to refer back to critical pedagogy and critical Whiteness studies, and understand how critical feminism moves further, and actually builds off of both of their aims and goals. As Kenway and Modra (1992) state, “As critical pedagogy theorists claim that they are quintessentially engaged in

democratizing the education process, (their) failure to engage with feminism casts considerable doubt on their authenticity” (p.138). Thus, in order to truly problematize and challenge the politics and intersections of race, class and gender in our classrooms and schools, it makes sense to ground ourselves within a critical feminist lens.

To situate critical feminist theory within the field of education, I look to Cannella and Manuelito’s, (2008) who see feminist research, conceptualizations and practices as wide ranging, complex, and constituting the diversity of human beings. They further consider the role of feminism as a social science to increase social justice from diverse standpoints, with the goal of creating transformative solidarities that can bring about a wide range of possibilities for human beings who truly care for one another. Greene (1992) makes a similar claim:

Most (feminists) deliberately resist temptations of harmonious agreement, although they surely come together in a concern for authentic liberatory teaching and for the rejection of patriarchy. Demonstrating at every step that there exists no “essence” of radical feminism, they are drawn to shifting viewpoints, interruptions, the idea of multiple identities. And yet, as they make clear their refusals and resistances, they identify some of the most crucial and unsettled issues confronting teachers in search of emancipatory pedagogies today (p.ix).

Similarly, Butler and Raynor (2007) discuss and look at feminist pedagogy over the past twenty years or so and argue for “reveal(ing) a call for teaching from multifocal, multidimensional, multicultural, pluralistic, interdisciplinary

perspectives” (p.202). They suggest that this can be accomplished through transformation. They define transformation as the need to unify as human beings, while helping to capture and hold onto the differences. They state, “ Transformation implies acknowledging and benefiting from the interaction among the sameness and diversity, groups, and individuals” (p.203). Butler and Raynor (2007) highlight the complexity of their argument through the simple words of a West African proverb, “I am we”. Albeit concise, what its meaning implies is that through the lived experiences and working through the intersections of race, class, gender and ethnicity, sexuality, etc., we can truly move forward in fostering emancipatory and liberatory spaces for all who take part in the education of our children.

When thinking about critical feminism within education, Lather (1991) considers certain questions which help us reflect upon a liberatory curriculum that directly address elements of self-reflexivity²⁸, knowledge as power, as well as a deconstruction of what we have been deeply embedded in throughout many years of Westernized schooling. As Lather argues “ Reflexive practice is privileged as the site where we can learn how to turn critical thought into emancipatory action” (Lather, p. 13).

Moving further, Lather (1991) suggests, “ One cannot talk of students learning without talk of teachers teaching” (p.1). She deeply connects the link between knowledge and power, empowering pedagogy, and praxis as an

²⁸ Within the context of critical feminism, I refer to the following definition of self-reflection: “ Instead of using reflection as a code word for “professional thinking” it should be used as a heuristic device through which teacher educators *and* preservice teachers can collectively construct a comprehensive understanding of what it means to teach given our current political, social, and educational circumstances” (Goodman, 1992, p.184).

interruption strategy. All of these components help support many of the characteristics and elements of critical feminist theory.

What might we gain as both teachers and learners if we considered some of the following questions when we look at our teacher education classrooms and communities? *Did I encourage ambivalence, ambiguity and multiplicity, or did I impose order and structure? Have I questioned the textual staging of knowledge in a way that keeps my own authority from being reified? Did I focus on the limits of my own conceptualizations? Who are my "Others"? What binaries structure my arguments? What hierarchies are at play?* Finally, and what Lather suggests might be the most important, *Did it (the curriculum) go beyond critique to help in producing pluralized and diverse spaces for the emergence of subjugated knowledges and for the organization of resistance?* (Lather, 1991 p.84).

Such reflexivity mirrors what Zeichner (1992) refers to as a social reconstructionist conception of reflective teaching. Within such a practice, "schooling and teacher education are both viewed as crucial elements in the movement toward a more just and humane society" (p. 166). This form of reflecting makes central the way teachers choose to respond and work to disrupt the status quo in schooling and society. Additionally, a social reconstructionist practice of reflecting teaching is rooted in its "democratic and emancipatory impulse and the focus of the teacher's deliberations upon substantive issues which raise instances of inequality and injustice within schooling and society" (p.166). Ultimately, and similar to a dialogical relationship, such reflecting is purposefully political in nature,

communal in practice, and collaborative with its commitment to transform unjust and inhumane institutional and social structures.

Such a practice falls directly in-line with a critical feminist framework. As such, Goodman (1992) contends that it is hard to imagine true reflexivity without acknowledging interpersonal relationships, the conception of knowledge, or the relationship between ones students and their learning. Thus, as Goodman notes, “Feminist pedagogy offers preservice teachers an opportunity to reflect on the way in which education is a form of cultural politics within a very direct and personally meaningful context” (p.180).

Moving further, Maher and Tetreault (1994) support the practice of reflecting by specifically examining the goals of a feminist classroom or setting. They discuss the importance of fostering a space where students can work to recreate knowledge and history for their own communities and cultures, rather than rely on androcentric bases of traditional knowledge. Maher and Tetreault (1994) explain that the feminist classroom is one where viewpoints of all groups in society and not just the most powerful are heard and delivered to the students. They state, “The meanings people create about aspects of themselves, like gender, culture identification, and class position vary widely in different classrooms. Although these meanings are in constant flux, they nevertheless reflect the unequal power relations that govern the society outside the classroom” (p.202). Thus, by framing the teaching and learning of pre-service teachers with the practice of critical reflecting, we can begin to think about systematically changing the direction of a colonized, and one-dimensional way of engaging with ourselves as well as our students.

Finally, I look to one of the most important components of conceptualizing critical feminist theory as it relates to teacher education; the practice of engaging in honest dialogue as it relates to many of the themes discussed thus far. This is where we may think about the previous discussion of critical pedagogy, critical Whiteness studies, and methodologies of resistance. Although it is often difficult to immerse ourselves within such conversations, by doing so, we create spaces to theoretically or conceptually reconsider our current understandings of oppression, resistance, knowledge, and power, and what this might mean in the context of teaching and learning in the twenty-first century.

Importantly, as Berry (2010) suggests, it is imperative that the relationship between the professor/educator and the pre-service teacher shift, in that the traditional asymmetry between power and privilege transform. The professor/educator must be open to learning from their students, and their lived experiences. As Berry argues, “Students’ stories, including their stories of school, are important to know in the context of their development as teachers because these stories, these experiences, may influence what they learn and how they learn it as well as what they choose to teach and how they choose to teach as emerging teachers” (p.24).

This act (engaging in thoughtful and critical conversations, as well as self-reflecting), in and of itself, will hopefully offer new ways to question the “traditional” nature of schooling, as well as to listen and learn about the many diverse sources of empowerment and resistance, in addition to the unique experiences that all students bring to the classroom. Thus, by deploying a critical

feminism as a framework within teacher education, we create spaces to begin and renew vital conversations. This practice alone might not guarantee a tangible transformation to the asymmetrical relationships within the education community, but what it will do is ignite a conversation. This conversation will hopefully be the starting point for thinking about moving towards reimagining teacher education. By looking at redefining elements of teacher education through a critical feminist lens, we can guide pre-service teachers in their journey to becoming reflective and critical educators.

Chapter 5- An Interdisciplinary Approach: Critical Feminism and Critical Education

We are seeking ways to bring people together to work on common causes across differences. If, indeed, all oppressions are connected, then it follows that the targets of this oppression are connected as well as their solution. This interconnection leads us to the idea of collaborative efforts to create democratic values, discourse and institutions (Pharr, 2101, p.590).

Throughout chapter four, I argued that critical feminist theory as a framework has the potential to be transformative when thinking about reimagining and reconceptualizing the purpose of public school, as well as preparing future teachers to be critically minded in their future classrooms. The aim of this chapter is to integrate and discuss, comprehensively, how interconnected critical feminism is theoretically and practically in terms of thinking about critical or radical educators²⁹.

I base my discussion on the following claim by Gore (1993): “ The field of radical pedagogy appears to consist of separate strands of radical discourse, each existing and developing relatively autonomously as it tries to create its own spaces within immediate intellectual and institutional contexts” (p.45). Although written over twenty years ago, there is much truth in this statement as we consider the metaphorical existence of silos within our university departments and disciplines.

I argue that we can reframe our understandings of the purpose of public school, as well as think about engaging in true social justice teacher education by

²⁹ For the purposes of this question, I am referring to critical educators as those individuals or groups who speak out against neoliberal, privatization, and neoconservatism; both directly and indirectly.

incorporating the theories and pedagogies of both critical feminism and critical education. More specifically, by highlighting contributions from both disciplines throughout teacher education programs, both preservice teachers and teacher educators will be better prepared to see and understand themselves as politically informed and critically engaged educators who can conceptualize education as the practice of true human freedom.

The organization of chapter five consists of three sections: The first part refers back to the principles of characterizing critical feminist theory as a framework, while recognizing how these particular components can be seen within the work of some scholars of critical education³⁰. Second, I will discuss how the theoretical and practical components of critical feminism and critical education incorporate such ideas and practices as political activism, critical thinking, and humanism. Finally, I will consider how such an interdisciplinary approach to reimagining the purpose of school can reframe how we currently understand teacher education in the twenty-first century.

Revisiting some Characteristics of Critical Feminism

Throughout chapter four, I discussed three important characteristics that helped me better understand and conceptualize critical feminism: Disrupting the educational canon and mainstream academic knowledge; questioning hegemonic understandings of oppression; and intimately looking at the diverse methods and

³⁰ I discuss “critical education” as it is conceptualized by Teitelbaum (2009): “ It is a form of counter-socialization that seeks to make transparent the connection between educational and cultural practices and the struggle for social and economic justice, human rights, and democratic community, to enhance critical understandings and emancipatory practices for the purpose of progressive social and personal transformations” (p.31).

forms of resistance found within critical feminist theory. What follows will be a further and deeper look at each component, while speaking to how their themes and characteristics resonate within the work of some critical education scholars.

I refer to the following critical scholars, and discuss how components of their works incorporate elements of critical feminism, as well as how they have spoken to me over the years during my own teaching and learning: Michael Apple, Toni Morrison, Michelle Alexander, Maxine Greene, and bell hooks.

Disrupting the Educational Canon and Mainstream Academic Knowledge

I look first to Michael Apple, teacher educator and former classroom instructor. Apple has written extensively in regards to critical, democratic, and liberatory education. This discussion, however, will include just a brief reference to some of his arguments as they relate to disrupting the educational canon and radicalizing education. More recently, Apple (2008; 2009) has referred to the powerful movements, rhetoric, and mobilizing forces of the Right³¹, and how they have collectively organized through acts of strategic manipulation, as their arguments and claims come from a place of hidden truths and successful crafting. Masked under the umbrella of false advertising (educational reforms will help all students, vouchers, 'common culture' in curriculum, the privatization of schooling, etc.), Apple aims to expose and "interrupt" the Right. He argues, "We need to make research public not only on the negative effects of the policies of conservative

³¹ Apple refers to the "Right" as a "powerful new 'hegemonic bloc' (that is, a powerful set of groups that provides overall leadership and pressure on what the basic goals and policies of society are). Neo-conservatives, neo-liberals, and authoritarian populist religious conservatives are just some of the factions that make up the new rightist alliance (Apple, 2008).

modernization, but just as importantly, on the positive effects of more socially and educationally critical alternatives” (Apple, 2009,p.93). Thus, I will be looking at Apple’s work as a way to move away from the powerful and dangerous forces of the Right, and instead, look to his pedagogies that “hold our dominant institutions and the larger society up to rigorous questioning and at the same time this questioning must deeply involve those who benefit least from the ways these institutions now function”(Apple, 2009,p.94). One of the ways Apple suggests we do this is through a process he refers to as “thick democracy”.

Apple (2009) discusses “thick democracy” as something that provides a realistic alternative to the “thin democracy” that appears under the dangerous version of reality and democracy that dominates rhetoric from the Right. For example, thick democracy aims to incorporate many viewpoints and participation when making decisions; including the case of creating youth programs, in which youth are asked to take part in the development of their own programs. Additionally, it may include a public discussion in which youth are called upon to share their own realities and aspirations, and allow them to “live their freedom”. Thick democracy brings in principles of “how specifically one can build a curriculum based on the lived culture of oppressed people, and how it can actually be made to work among the poor and disenfranchised (and among all citizens); all issues that we face in regards to our educational realities (Apple, 2008). Apple notes that there are organizations, groups, communities, and schools that engage in such participatory and thick democracy, but in order to make a stir, and warrant a case for their democratic capacities, their actions need to be louder and more visible. The

critical piece to this work is the challenge of making visible the successes that are, in fact, taking place within many of our educational institutions.

Similar to the political characteristics that make up much critical feminist thought, Apple argues that critical education is politically driven, and that we need to think *relationally* (Apple, 2008). He contends that we must look to the unequal power structures that permeate our larger society, and dig deeper into the ways in which critical work has been successful in rupturing these dominant and subordinate roles. In regards thinking about transformative education, Apple suggests we move away from the trite questions that often infuse our classrooms and schools: Have students mastered the content knowledge? Have they received a passing score on the state test? Instead, he proposes we ask questions such as: Whose knowledge is this? How did it become “official”? And, more specifically, what can we do as critical educators and activists to change existing educational and social inequalities and to create curricula and teaching that are more socially just (Apple, 2008)? Thus, by interrupting the Right, and exposing the ways in which they have recently dominated the educational rhetoric, while also engaging in such practices as “thick democracy,” we can aim to truly democratize and transform our classrooms and schools so they can aim to empower and support all of our children.

Next, I turn to Toni Morrison, literary icon, and author of *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (1992). In this book, Morrison critiques classic American literature, and questions the roles Blacks have played in literature, while also recognizing that the literature was never actually written for “them.” Additionally, she discusses the silencing of Black characters and how this type of

setting and tone has resulted in demeaning and demoralizing portrayals of Black characters and how they are represented in many of the writings of classical American literature. Throughout this discussion, we are reminded that in order to engage in liberatory and transformative education, we must critically examine and challenge the hegemony and dominant culture found within many of our educational institutions; both in pedagogy and curriculum.

Throughout *Playing in the Dark*, Morrison discusses traditional canonical American literature, which has been conventionally accepted and circulated as knowledge, and is supposedly “free of, uninformed, and unshaped by the 400 year old presence of Africans then African Americans in the U.S.” (Morrison, pg. 5). Not surprisingly, we can also question who truly benefits from the public school system. *Playing in the Dark* can be used as a metaphor for what might be going on in many of our classrooms and schools. Were schools ever “written” for all students?

Morrison refers to and explores what she calls an African (or Africanist) presence, which is a term she uses for the connotative Blackness that African people have come to represent, as well as “an entire range of views, assumptions, readings, and misreadings that accompany Eurocentric learning about these people” (p. 7). It is through these lenses that she is able to analyze and ask the question of why is “Whiteness” defined as American? Conversely, how can one look at the role of the “Other” in American literature, and not see some parallels as to the role of the “Other” and how they are treated in the public school system? With the concerns Morrison has about Whiteness, defining what it means to be American, as well as

exploring and questioning the intended audience for both literature and schools, we are able to question and consider who schools are truly “written” for.

Morrison analyzes the work of Willa Cather’s *Sapphira and the Slave Girl* to see how literature behaves in its encounter with racial ideology. The novel’s concerns are the power and license of a White slave mistress over her female slaves. Cather struggles to demonstrate an “interdependent working of power, race, and sexuality in a [W]hite women’s battle for coherence” (pg. 20). In other words, the slave, Nancy, seems to be put in the novel only to reinforce the slaveholder’s ideology, and to be the “Other” against whom Sapphira can measure herself. Nancy becomes “the unconsulted, appropriated ground of Cather’s inquiry into what is of paramount importance to the author: the reckless, unabated power of a [W]hite woman gathering identity unto herself from the wholly available and serviceable lives of Africanist others” (pg. 25). Without the acquiescence of the Africanist characters, Cather wouldn’t have been able to write the novel the way she did. Whiteness, as Cather portrays in her novel, is the true American, while everyone else is seen as a subject or “Other” to be greater and more superior to.

This Africanist “Other,” so important in the works of Cather and other writers in American literature, helps point out what is so problematic in many of our classrooms and schools. There is something in the way many schools are designed, the way the curriculum is written, as well as the overall attitude of the purpose of school that fosters the feelings of inadequacy that many children feel within their educational experiences. Since the school and its system for teaching and learning seem to measure success as submitting to and adopting the agenda of Whiteness as

being American, it seems that for those who don't succumb and succeed in a specific way, they will be classified as "failing".

Morrison's book helps better explain what is so problematic in U.S. public schools. Her critique of American literature leaves room to help interpret how schools have truly not been designed for all children. Additionally, Morrison claims that through silencing an "Other," we are delegitimizing them as free, expressive human beings. It is through her analysis that we can see distinct characteristics of critical feminism, in that Morrison effectively aims to disrupt the educational canon and mainstream academic knowledge, both through the literal and metaphorical interpretations she makes throughout her text.

Questioning Hegemonic Understandings of Oppression

Next, I turn to Michelle Alexander, (2010) author of *The New Jim Crow*. Alexander offers important insight regarding oppression, racism, and the need to dramatically speak out against the inequities that permeate many of our institutions. Although Alexander has not directly implicated our educational institutions, she does recognize that our classrooms and schools are directly related to what goes on in society, and vice versa. Thus, when she argues that "something akin to a racial caste system currently exists in the United States," (p.2), we need to become intimately aware of the practices and pedagogies that take place in our classrooms and schools that can result in making similar statements. Alexander is engaging in rhetoric that suggests we need to move outside the box of "labeling" oppressions, and rather recognize that the very systems which are supposed to "serve and protect" (prisons and law enforcement), are instead, targeting an

overwhelming number of Black and Brown men, and masking the round-up as a “War on Drugs”.

For example, Alexander states “ Law enforcement officers often point to the racial composition of our prisons and jails as a justification for targeting racial minorities, but the empirical evidence actually suggested that the opposite conclusion was warranted. The disproportionate imprisonment of people of color was, in part, a product of racial profiling-not a justification for it” (p.131). Alexander is turning upside-down the general consensus or understanding of who goes to jail and why, and instead, exposes the systems that are complicit in this behavior. She notes “ Relatively little organized opposition to the drug war currently exists, and any dramatic effort to scale back the war may be publically condemned as “soft” on crime. The war has become institutionalized. It is no longer a special program or politicized project: it is simply the way things are done” (p.83).

Alexander argues that we must move away from this complacency and recognize what is humanly at stake. In order to do so, we must “hope not for a colorblind society but instead for a world in which we can see each other fully, learn from each other, and do what we can to respond to each other with love” (p.231). Alexander argues the need for a revolutionary restructuring movement. She refers back to the movement of saving affirmative action, and calls for one to end mass incarceration as well as educational inequity, recognizing that the latter two are so deeply masked and imbedded in the system institutionally, that something akin to a revolution is the only way we can aim for true transformation. Alexander recognizes

the enormity of these crises, and although she understands that they may seem so large as to appear intractable, this cannot be the excuse.

She calls for us to break the cycle in which “an aspect of human nature is the tendency to cling tightly to one’s advantages and privileges and to rationalize the suffering and exclusion of others” (p.244). Oppression is not compartmentalized and easily targeted. It requires a deeply held belief that all systems of injustice are intertwined, and that working to end one means we are aiming to dismantle them all. Thus, although Alexander speaks to our incarceration system, she is simultaneously forcing us to become aware of all the systems of injustice that we can work to expose, transform, and emancipate.

Speaking Out Through Diverse Methods and Forms of Resistance

Maxine Greene’s (1998) *The Dialectic of Freedom* argues for a re-exploration and definition of true human freedom. She asks such questions as: “How much does the possibility of freedom depend on critical reflectiveness, on self-understanding, on insight into the world? How much does it depend on being with others in a caring relationship? How much does it depend on integration of the felt and the known, the subjective and the objective, the private and the public spheres?” (Greene, p.79)

Greene explores these questions, while recognizing that too many students are being educated in schools that do not provide them with the basic rights of human freedom.

According to Greene, one of the ways to achieve freedom is to offer public spaces where individuals can be in the presence of other human beings, and where thoughtful discussions and action can take place. She sees such spaces as places

where individuals can challenge, seek alternatives, and come together to help move towards more caring communities. Greene argues that people are deprived of their true freedom when there is no public space where they can actively participate with others. She sees schools behaving in ways that demonstrate the apparent absence or concern for freedom in the “ways in which young people feel conditioned, determined, even *fated* by prevailing circumstances” (p.124). She also sees classrooms and schools as places that leave little or no room for creating spaces where feeling a sense of freedom is part of the daily repertoire of the school setting. Greene argues that too many children come to school, work hard, try their best, but still feel that their efforts and hard work will not amount to much, as they are “convinced of inimical forces all around them, barricades that cannot be overcome” (p.124).

Through *The Dialectic of Freedom*, Greene emphasizes the need for schools to begin to move towards an environment where children can engage in the *thought* of freedom. She discusses the idea of an education for freedom as one that opens up cognitive perspectives, and moves towards new ways of “looking at things,” as opposed to treating the current system as normal, predictable, or natural. Greene offers alternatives to the rote, mechanical, and behaviorist approaches we find in so many of our educational institutions. She emphasizes the need to open up cognitive perspectives, by developing “a *praxis* of educational consequence that opens the spaces necessary for the remaking of a democratic society” (p.126). It is vital that we understand the importance of recreating not only the environment of our schools, but redefining the way we think, communicate, and imagine ourselves and our lives.

Per the many characteristics of critical feminist thought, particularly through methodologies of resistance, we need to “open -up” spaces to remake and redefine a democratic community. Greene focuses on bringing in new voices, new perspectives, and to look at alternative ways of teaching and learning that will lead to what we may see and understand as a transformative way of teaching. With this approach, we penetrate the “so-called ‘culture of silence’, and bring in the many diverse perspectives, stories and experiences that are often ignored and invisible. This way of teaching and learning not only offers a multitude of perspectives on previously unquestioned curriculum, but also serves as a platform for empowerment, imagination, and true human freedom.

Finally, I turn to bell hooks, foundational scholar both within critical feminism and critical education. In particular, I look to *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*(1994). Throughout her text, hooks argues for an *engaged pedagogy*, which helps further support the need to consider multiple forms and methods of resistance if we are to speak out against institutionalized oppressions both inside and outside of our educational communities. hooks refers to an engaged pedagogy as one that emphasizes well-being. In essence, an engaged pedagogy asks that educators be committed to practices that encourage their growth, as well as promote their own personal and professional well -being. Within this process, educators move towards a manner of teaching that truly aims to empower their students (hooks, 1994).

Through engaged pedagogy, hooks argues that radical teaching, and education as the practice of freedom, can become actualized in the classroom

setting. In fact, she notes that the philosophy of an engaged pedagogy aims not only to empower students, but should be a practice that creates an environment for teachers to grow and feel empowered themselves. hooks argues, "Empowerment cannot happen if we refuse to be vulnerable while encouraging students to take risks" (p.21). She more explicitly makes this point in the following quote:

It is often productive if professors take the first risk, linking confessional narratives to academic discussions so as to show how experience can illuminate and enhance our understanding of academic material. But most professors must practice being vulnerable in the classroom, being wholly present in mind, body, and spirit (p.21).

Thus, within the framework of an engaged pedagogy, we see how vital it is for all members of the educational community to work communally if we are to truly move towards liberated schools and classroom spaces. However, the process of a safe and trusting community is not something that happens quickly or easily. hooks argues that in order to create a classroom space where all members feel safe and comfortable, everyone must be interested in one another's presence, voices, and interests. She notes, " There must be an ongoing recognition that everyone influences the classroom dynamic, that everyone contributes. These contributions are resources" (p.8). This pedagogic practice enhances the capacity of creating an open learning community that is truly communal and dynamic.

The reality of an engaged pedagogy and communal classroom community has the potential to come to fruition with an understanding and appreciation of the unique differences of all individuals. Additionally, and equally important, all

members of a trusting and cooperative space must learn to take a respectful, and humble stance of what we know or do not know about one another. One way to think about such a concept and practice is referred to as *cultural humility*. According to Schuessler, Wilder, and Byrd, (2012) “Cultural humility requires embracing the belief that one’s own culture is not the only or best culture” (p.96).

Rooted in the medical and social work communities, cultural humility acknowledges that we can all operate as humble beings, understanding that we do not need to be competent, or all knowing about individuals who are different from us. In essence, “Cultural humility is likely to have a positive association with working alliance because the client is likely to develop a sense of trust and safety with a therapist who engages with his or her cultural background with an interpersonal stance of openness rather than superiority” (Hook et.al, 2013, p. 2). Although referring to a client-patient relationship, it is not difficult to see the positive connection a practice like cultural humility can have upon educators and students. Whether this practice occurs in a K-12 setting, or classroom of higher education, creating safe and trusting environments requires deliberate and meaningful attention to inter and intra personal relationships. The concept and practice of cultural humility is just one way in which I think about fostering a respectful community where we may think about hooks’ engaged pedagogy.

As discussed, the aforementioned critical scholars all incorporate elements and characteristics of critical feminism within their theoretical and pedagogical work. Whether it is shown through diverse perspectives and experiences of oppression, an analysis of the sociocultural and sociopolitical conditions that play

out within the school and society, or the ways in which educators and their students speak out and move forward with empowering and radical practices, each of them demonstrates that the groundwork has already begun. As such, my argument for an interdisciplinary relationship between critical feminism and education is to simply build off of the current work, adding a more deliberate acknowledgement to the reciprocal relationship and academic partnership between the two disciplines. The next section will speak to this vision, focusing on the distinct connection between the two.

The Interdisciplinarity of Critical Feminism and Critical Education

Agger (1998) discusses the wave of blending critical theories into different versions of critical social theory, ultimately representing a new form of scholarship. Not surprising, Agger discusses the challenges and critiques that these new forms of scholarship bring to the academy, as they outright question what is traditionally understood. My arguments thus far have been moving in this direction, as I find myself as a graduate student of education pulling in theories and arguments from feminism as a way to reconceptualize and create new understandings for how I envision we may think about reframing the purposes of education. Although I am not renaming the blending of the two as a new critical social theory (as Agger may argue), I do believe that many of the characteristics that Agger posits that encompass a critical social theory ³²help identify how I conceptualize both critical education theory and critical feminist theory.

³² Agger, (1998) argues that the following features distinguish critical social theory: Opposing positivism, the possibility of progress, domination being structural, and the dialogical relationship between the everyday life and structure (p.4-5).

Rather than rephrasing the theoretical connection between critical feminism and education as a critical social theory, I prefer to link the two in more of an interdisciplinary manner. My reasoning for this is that labeling often seems more finite, acting less fluid, in that I am not arguing for the convergence of the two into creating a new theory. Instead, I engage with the reciprocal relationship between feminism and education, as characteristics from both disciplines spill over into one another, offering perspectives from each.

Pratt-Clarke (2010) helps explain the interdisciplinary relationship between critical feminism and education. She argues that by using multiple disciplines, we move further with the objectives of Black feminism by challenging rigid boundaries, exposing artificial lines, and forcing questions to be asked from a different standpoint. This work will “produce answers that have the opportunity to transform society by informing both the scholarship and the professions that can apply to the scholarship, such as education, social work, and law” (26).

The literature on critical theory, similar to the literature on feminist theory, has considerable diversity. In order for us to have a better understanding of a critical perspective of education, we must be aware of past contributions of critical educators. Teitelbaum (2009) discusses the historical and current wave of critical education (a newer term within the discipline), that focuses on the demystification of the political neutrality of school life, society, and culture. Picower (2013) also speaks to the highly political field of education, arguing for the importance of preparing preservice teachers to attend to the sociopolitical and sociocultural politics of education. By doing so, Picower (2013) argues, “Teachers have the

potential to become social justice activists because they can choose to make conscious choices to interrupt policies that may not be serving their students” (p. 187). However, it is just as important that teacher educators fight for such spaces within their programs. Importantly, the practice of social justice and activism can and should grow through a collaborative effort: working both with teacher educators and the preservice teachers.

Moving further, many advocates and practitioners of critical education have attended to pedagogical issues of critical inquiry, dialogue, and related concerns for self-expression, feeling, and imagination. Interestingly, Teitelbaum (2009) reminds us, “Like current work on critical education, past efforts were quite varied, with competing ideas and strategies vying for consideration amid a paucity of resources... all dedicated to the creation of a more egalitarian society, to fostering understandings and skills within educational and cultural settings that would help to create a new social order (p. 313). Therefore, we must be ever mindful while engaging in such practices, ensuring that we continuously revise, redefine, and examine how we conceptualize such critical work done within our educational institutions.

By pursuing an interdisciplinary approach to conceptualizing a truly democratic educational system, we can, theoretically and pedagogically, create a more comprehensive picture regarding education as the practice of freedom. Importantly, we need to be aware of the fact that the education community does not exist in isolation, but rather incorporates many ideas, theories, and knowledges from multiple disciplinary communities. In other words, working towards

democratic education from the perspective that we can gain important and relevant insight from a variety of sources (critical feminism and critical education), we can better explore the hegemonic forms of knowledge production, power, and internalized oppressions that we find in and outside of our education communities; all factors that matter significantly as we work to recreate our understandings of the purposes of schools.

In order to strive for such a rethinking of how we conceptualize education, it is vital that we reach across disciplines, and engage in a consideration of multiple theories, perspectives and experiences. hooks (1994) eloquently describes this type of theorizing as a liberatory practice:

Theory is not inherently healing, liberatory, or revolutionary. It fulfills this function only when we ask that it do so and direct our theorizing towards this end... [I] find writing and theoretical talk-to be most meaningful when it invites readers to engage in critical reflection and to engage in the practice of feminism... Personal testimony, personal experience, is such fertile ground for the production of liberatory feminist theory because it usually forms the base of our theory making (p.61,70).

Moving forward from a framework to pedagogy and practice

hooks (1994) reminds us that the convergence of theory and practice must be deliberate and meaningful. Although there have been some references to praxis, pedagogy, and curriculum thus far, quite a bit of the discussion has been in support of thinking about critical feminist theory as a *framework*, and one that we may consider implementing within teacher education communities. However, as Au

(2012) argues, we cannot effectively move forward with praxis without attention and understanding of theory, as our theories are an extension of practice. Therefore, as we move forward, it is important to remember that theories do not exist solely for analyzing the experiences of others, they coexist within us and through us (Saavedra and Pérez, 2012).

I am fully aware that the challenge regarding what to do with this theory as it relates to praxis is not a new one, particularly within teacher education. For this reason, it makes sense to consider specific components of critical feminist theory, and intimately discuss how we might consider incorporating them, methodologically and pedagogically in teacher education programs. What follows, in chapters six and seven, is a thorough discussion of *testimonio*, which I frame as a pedagogy that has the potential to aid in the process of reflective thinking and learning. Through this reflecting, teacher educators and preservice teachers will have the opportunity to understand their own educational experiences and how they connect and interrelate to the sociocultural and sociopolitical components of education.

Chapter 6: Understanding *Testimonio* in Teacher Education

The most important characteristic of *testimonio* in educational research or in the classroom [is that it] holds the Freirian promise of conscientization to hope, faith, and autonomy. From these endeavors come documents, memories, and oral histories that can be used to recast and challenge pervasive theories, policies, and explanations about educational failure as a problem, not of individuals but of systemic institutionalized practices of oppression (Reyes and Rodrigues, 2012, p.527)

Chapter six frames *testimonio* as a powerful pedagogical tool that can be practiced with both with teacher educators and preservice teachers. Throughout this chapter, I define the elements of *testimonio*, both through its history and current understandings, as well as connecting these components to some of the ways I have theorized the evolving framework of critical feminism. Further, I will demonstrate how the practice of *testimonio* offers a space for teacher educators and prospective teachers to consider their own experiences as connecting to the sociocultural and sociopolitical components of teaching and learning.

Throughout the discussion of *testimonio*, I will demonstrate how individuals who experience many diverse forms of oppression choose to speak out and empower themselves both personally and politically, aiming towards solidarity and social justice. Importantly, within the context of this discussion, *testimonio* will pay attention to, and discuss one's educational experiences. As such, the pedagogy of *testimonio* serves as a response to the inequitable educational spaces that many of our students and families are subjected to year after year.

Defining Testimonio

The pedagogy of *testimonio* is comprised of specific components that align with how I conceptualize methodologies of resistance and critical feminist theory. In particular, I refer back to the following themes: disrupting the educational canon and mainstream academic knowledge, questioning hegemonic understandings of oppression, as well as intimately looking at the diverse methods and forms of resistance and decolonization as a way to reconsider how we might understand our roles as teachers and learners.

For a definition of *testimonio*, I turn first to Beverley (1991): “ By *testimonio* I understand a novel or novella-length narrative told in the first person by a narrator who is also the real-life protagonist or witness of the events he or she recounts” (Beverly, 1991, p.2). Additionally, per Reyes and Rodrigues (2012), “*Testimonios* evolve from events experienced by a narrator who seeks empowerment through voicing her or his experience” (p.527). One of the most well known examples of *testimonio* is *I, Rigoberta Menchú* (1983). Through her experiences in Guatemala, Menchú’s *testimonio* demonstrates an authentic picture that represents how she saw and understood her own world and life, while also detailing the oppression and horrific events that she personally witnessed. Menchú’s individual account, although undoubtedly shared by many others, is her own story and her own experience as she chooses to share them. As Yudice (1991) asserts, *testimonio* rejects broad and master narratives, and instead, is a “personal testimony where the speaker does not speak for or represent a community but rather performs an act of identity-formation which is simultaneously personal and collective (15).

Further, Menchu's *testimonio* is political, as her story serves as a place to garner support and solidarity for all of the oppressed people of Guatemala. For a deeper look at the political nature of *testimonio*, I turn to Partnoy (2003) who elaborates on how *testimonio* is not only a form of resistance but also a source of empowerment. Partnoy describes *testimonio* as: "An act of testifying, through the creation of the *testimonio*, the survivors of horrendous abuse are empowered. They are no longer tortured bodies to be pitied or patronized; they became the central force in a process that makes a difference in their own personal lives and also helps to further their political agenda" (, p.176). It is not just a narrative that allows one to freely and authentically express oneself, but it is also political, and creates a discourse of solidarity that nurtures social justice and political activism, while also aiming to undermine "official knowledge".³³

What makes *testimonio* so much more powerful than many other forms of narrative, counter-stories, etcetera, is that the focus is most importantly *not* about Truth. Partnoy (2003) notes, "The central feature of *testimonio* is neither its truth-value nor its literariness (or lack thereof), but its ability to engender and regenerate a discourse of solidarity" (Partnoy, 2003, p.176). Therefore, the main difference regarding other narratives and *testimonio*, is that the ultimate goal is not to come to an agreement of Truth, or to use the story as a way to generalize experiences for

³³ For a definition of official knowledge, I cite Apple (1993)"The curriculum is never simply a neutral assemblage of knowledge, somehow appearing in the texts and classrooms of a *nation* (emphasis added). It is always part of a selective tradition, someone's selection, some group's vision of legitimate knowledge. It is produced out of the cultural, political, and economic conflicts, tensions, and compromises that organize and disorganize a people"(p. 222).

specific communities or populations. Nor is *testimonio* a place where we need to consider the concept of essentializing, or ascribing the same attributes and characteristics to all peoples who may similarly identify themselves.

Finally, *testimonio*, serves as a place to empower the speaker or writer, and also aims to weave the author of the *testimonio* and the reader into a relationship that moves towards social change and social justice, that “encourages them (the readers) to participate and become agents for change, forging alliances with those who are at the margins” (Partnoy, 2003, p.177). It asks the readers to consider not only the *testimonio* they are reading, acting as both a listener and a witness, but to also think about who they are at a specific time in their lives, and what kind of impact the *testimonio* has upon them individually. As Cruz (2012) further explains, “What *testimonio* does best is offer an opportunity to “travel,” positioning a listener or an audience for self-reflection. Under certain open circumstances, a listener or an audience member is given the opportunity to become complicit as an observer and as a witness” (p. 462).

Although I initially came to learn about *testimonio* outside of the education community, the pedagogy, as an educational and political tool, has made its way into academia and the field of education. Importantly, we can look to *testimonio* as a form of counter-hegemony as well as a way to think about liberation and resistance when working towards transformation within our educational communities.

Very recently, *testimonio* has been used as a way to re-envision a form of liberating pedagogy within the K-12 educational system, as well as in institutions of higher education. In fact, the journal of the *Equity and Excellence in Education*

(2012) devoted an entire issue to *testimonio* and its relationship and relevance within the field of education. This demonstrates a move towards rethinking our current practices and pedagogies, and looking deeper into different ways in which we may decolonize and emancipate our students and teachers from the oppressive nature of our traditional education systems. What follows is a discussion of *testimonio* within the context of education and how I envision it being deployed as a pedagogy and practice within teacher education programs.

Situating Testimonio within the Context of Education

In order to contextualize the pedagogy of *testimonio* within the field of education, it is important to refer back to the “pivot points” mentioned in chapter four that Dadds (2011) utilizes in terms of conceptualizing critical feminist theory. Doing so will further demonstrate the relationship between critical feminist theory, methodologies of resistance, and the pedagogy of *testimonio*. The pivot points include: *Reflexive historicity, lived experience and hidden structures, dialogic engagement with the margins, and embodiment and interdependence*. These pivot points “serve as key feminist contributions to critical social theory and educational scholarship... We are engaging education with a critically social *feminist eye*” (Dadds, p. 177, 178). Thus, looking back at our discussion regarding the characteristics of *testimonio*, we can see how its elements and characteristics align with critical feminist theory and its liberatory potential within the field of education.

One of the key components of *testimonio* is its emphasis on looking introspectively, talking about lived experiences, and validating individual knowledges. Cruz (2006) discusses how Women of Color must begin within

themselves, their families, and their experiences in order to define or examine their production of knowledges. As Huber and Cueva (2012) state, “*Testimonio* as a methodological approach was employed to provide the participants with a space to reveal and reflect on their educational experiences as mediated by race, immigration status, class, and gender” (p. 396). It is in this framework that one can disrupt the cannon, and work towards a movement of divergent thinking.

Cruz suggests that by beginning with the powerful narratives about the body, while acknowledging that knowledge is produced from the body, we can move towards rethinking about our work in education. Specifically, she argues, “For the Chicana educational researcher, the body is a critical component of the study of agency and empowerment” (p.73). Pointedly, *testimonio* offers a space to do just this. As Saavedra and Pérez (2012) state, “*Testimonios* can provide a space for self-reflection of the internalized ways that one can embody and live out the very oppressions we desire to challenge, change, and decolonize” (p. 431).

As discussed above, *testimonios* offer a space for self-reflection and empowerment, with the ultimate goal of creating a discourse of solidarity through its political and social justice agenda. These same characteristics hold true when situating *testimonio* within the context of education. “What is certain is that *testimonio* is not meant to be hidden, made intimate, nor kept secret. The objective of the *testimonio* is to bring to light a wrong, a point of view, or an urgent call for action. Thus, in this manner, the *testimonio* is different from the qualitative method of in-depth interviewing, oral history narration, prose, or spoken word. The *testimonio* is intentional and political” (Reyes and Rodriguez, 2012, p. 525).

Testimonio is a place where personal truths regarding the inequities and injustices in education can come to head, and through collective action and activism, we can begin the process of thinking about educational transformation.

Building on the political component of *testimonio* is its ability to disrupt and reconsider “mainstream” or “official” knowledge. Pérez Huber (2009) argues that there is an apartheid of knowledge in academia, and that official knowledge is based on racist, sexist and Eurocentric epistemologies. She calls for the development of methodologies that can be used in anti-racist research and practice, and specifically looks to *testimonio* as one such methodology. Further, Peréz Huber argues that *testimonio* acknowledges and draws from the diverse experiences and knowledges that exist outside of academia and within communities of color.

One of the most critical components of deploying *testimonio* as both a pedagogical and political tool is that we can contextualize it in a way that demands both the narrator and the reader understand its power and liberating potential as an anti-racist and anti-oppressive practice within the education community (Cruz, 2012). For example, Chávez (2012) describes her *testimonio* as a way to “reinterpret the events we choose to depict regarding our lived experiences. Thus, while stories are many times fragmented bits and pieces of our own collective memory, these instances serve to deepen our understanding of the ways in which social relations are embedded within existing hegemonic structures—in this case, educational institutions” (p.345). The political component of the *testimonio* is made clear in the way it reveals the true ideologies of education. As Huerta- Charles (1997) argues, “ Testimonies should promote, among the people listening to and sharing them, a

critical praxis that connects action and reflection in order to transform the world” (p.257). Through this act of testifying and witnessing, we can begin to think from an activist perspective in regards to working towards educational change.

Additionally, and equally important, we must be aware of the relationship the *testimonio* creates between the narrator and the reader. As previously mentioned, the *testimonio* demands that the reader be invested in what the narrator is choosing and willing to share. In the case of those who are offering and sharing their stories of their educational experiences, the audience must not read these stories passively. As Cruz (2012) argues, “*Testimonio* demands rapt listening and its inherent intersubjectivity when we have learned to do the kind of radical listening demanded by a testimonialist, turning all of us who are willing to participate as listener, storyteller, or researcher into witnesses whether we come from a place of political solidarity or even from places of conflict” (p.463). The *testimonio* resituates the customary manner in which stories are shared. The traditional structures and dominant paradigms of education are called into question and the ones commonly at the margins move to the front. These stories turn upside-down the very nature of the hegemony of our educational institutions.

In a similar fashion, Haig-Brown (2003), looks to *testimonio* as another way to “listen differently”. She notes, “Teachers, like students, should be expected to think beyond their experiences. Such efforts imply accepting the limitations of conventional scholarship while being open to encountering and considering the unknown” (p.418). Her argument builds on the previously discussed premise that

we must listen across differences and be open to new knowledge forms, while also validating the experiences and stories of the *testimonio*.

Testimonio, as a practice, is comprised of characteristics that allow both the narrator and reader to engage in such discussions (both internally as well as through conversations). Lather (1991) argues, "Strategically, reflexive practice is privileged as the site where we can learn how to turn critical thought into emancipatory action. This entails a reflexivity where we learn to attend to the politics of what we do and do not do at a practical level" (p.13). *Testimonio* is based on lived experience, and thus, is journey into "unchartered territory" (Lather, p. 63). This process of cultural transformation, uncertainty, and reframing how one sees the world, is just one way in which such a form of critical pedagogy can be enacted within the context of teacher education. Lather (1991) makes this point eloquently in the following quote:

The development of emancipatory social theory requires an empirical stance which is open-ended, dialogically reciprocal, grounded in respect to human capacity and, yet, profoundly skeptical of appearances and "common sense". Such an empirical stance is, furthermore, rooted in a commitment to the long-term, broad-based ideological struggle necessary to transform structural inequalities (p.65).

For a deeper understanding of how I envision the relationship between writing a *testimonio*, reading others' *testimonio*, and the effect both of these practices may have upon the self, I turn to Au (2012) and his discussion of the dialectical conception of consciousness. Au characterizes a dialectical conception of

consciousness as “how we are simultaneously with and within the world” (p.16). Thus, it is what intertwines and connects the world and community outside of the classroom and school, with the world and community inside the classroom and school; “We come to know things vis-à-vis our inseparable relationships with the totality of our environments” (Au, p. 19).

The dialectics of consciousness supports the notion that our educational institutions and classroom cultures are simply just a microcosm of what occurs outside, in the “real” world. The interconnectedness between the two spaces is fluid in nature, evolving, and move together. We are both in the classroom, and in the world, simultaneously. Therefore, in order to make liberatory and emancipatory changes to the greater society, educators must first engage with themselves and their students, dialectically. By doing so, the necessary radical changes and shifts can begin in the classroom, and hopefully spill over into the greater society.

This is the point that brings us to *testimonio*, and how we can use and think about it pedagogically in terms of a dialectics of consciousness. By engaging teacher educators and prospective teachers with *testimonio*, both parties are asked to be introspective and self-reflexive, while also acting as a listeners and witnesses. Further, one of the characteristics of utilizing *testimonio* as a practice, as well as thinking about it in terms of a dialectics of consciousness, is the process of fostering self-reflection aimed at the development of critical consciousness. This could be through reflecting on the *testimonio* of others, and/or reflecting through the process of writing one's own. As Au states, “We simultaneously react to and act upon the world in which we live” (p.18). This process heals, empowers, and creates a

relationship and discourse of solidarity that can and should ultimately lead to the work of educational transformation.

As previously discussed, teacher educators need to engage in similar self-reflexive and introspective practices that they ask of their own teacher education students. To reiterate, Cochran-Smith, Davis and Fries (2004) argue, “Teacher educators themselves must engage in unflinching self-examination about underlying ideology in much the same way they urge for teacher candidates” (p.956). Additionally, for teacher educators to be involved in the practice of *testimonio*, they can truly demonstrate who they are by living and being with the curriculum and their teacher education community (Berry, 2010).

For an example, Chávez (2012) discusses her role as both an educational researcher and teacher educator. By writing her own *testimonio*, she states, “My stories are thus an attempt to recreate the instances where I collide with hegemonic ideological constructs. As an autoethnographer, my role serves to unpack the repercussions on my educational identity all along the pipeline. Exploring the development of particular identities may help inform research in understating how Latinas/os and other marginalized students of color experience educational institutions in order to acquire more specific knowledge of their academic successes and failures” (p. 335).

As another example, I turn to Prieto and Villenas (2012), who talk about their roles as teacher educators, and how they have implemented the practice of writing and sharing their own *testimonios* with prospective teachers. Upon recognizing the disconnect between the single, required multicultural course in

teacher education, as well as the lack of ethnic studies courses many prospective teachers have taken, they note that it often seems like prospective teachers view multicultural issues in education with little knowledge of the history of non-dominant groups. Prieto and Villenas (2012) state, “This structural devaluation of the knowledge and histories of communities of color, along with a lack of attention to critical multiculturalism, forms the backdrop to our work as women educators of color in higher education” (p. 413). Thus, a teacher educator’s *testimonios* can be considered and understood as a way in which prospective teachers can learn from the diversity and experiences that their own teacher educators bring to the field of education. To quote Prieto and Villenas, “Our teaching practices, which emerge from our diverse cultural experiences and memory, are invaluable to the university classroom” (p.413-414).

Further, Prieto and Villenas discuss a very crucial and critical component when incorporating their *testimonios* into their teacher education classrooms. They state, “Modeling and allowing students to dwell in moments of dissonance³⁴ requires protocols that let students (and us) freeze, name, and reflect on those moments, though sometimes they may have no words to describe them. All students have knowledge and can derive knowledge from reflection on uncomfortable dissonance” (p. 425). Pedagogically, sharing their *testimonios* offers a space to begin

³⁴ Prieto and Villenas (2012) refer to dissonance as “Cultural dissonance highlights the contradictions we experienced in the institutions of family and education, particularly along markers of race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, immigration status and experience, and language. It also emphasizes the profound learning and consciousness we were developing as children about power and justice in society”(p. 416).

and renew the vital conversations that generally do not take place in teacher education classrooms.

Finally, Prieto and Villenas (2012) acknowledge the political and social justice component of sharing their *testimonios* with pre-service teachers. They call on prospective teachers to “embark on a journey of their cultural self-awareness, but only with responsibility and commitment to each other and to their instructor as they develop their commitments toward children and families from non-dominant communities” (p.425). This process requires prospective teachers to question, reevaluate, and dig deeply into the dominant knowledges and epistemologies that permeate our educational institutions.

Arguably, thinking about *testimonio* as a pedagogy within the field of education is not something that just “materializes”, or occurs in a happenstance manner. It is vital that educators and their students collectively create a safe classroom space and community. Further, since *testimonio* offers a way for us to bridge the gap between the theoretical and abstract content of the university and the realities of the world within our classrooms and schools, we must be explicit as to their purposes and roles in the classroom. This takes time, trust, and dedication from everyone involved in the classroom space.

Students share their testimonies when they feel that we have constructed a safe environment for them to show themselves as individuals. This is because testimonies from the practice are personal... Students are trying to make meaning of the content we are analyzing, connecting it with their previous personal and professional experiences. In that way, testimonies help me

show my students how complex concepts, such as hegemony, subalternity, domination, oppression, and praxis itself, illuminate and happen in our daily actions at our schools and in our personal lives (Huerta-Charles ,2007 p.257-258).

Additionally, when we think about the classroom community, the relationships between teacher and student, as well as student to student, we must not forget the power of silence and its connection with *testimonio*. Orner (1992) argues, “ There are times when it is not safe for students to speak: when the one student’s socially constructed body language threatens another; when the teacher is not perceived as an ally” (p.81). Further, Orner reminds us that we must not be quick to analyze the student’s silence as a case of internalized oppression, resistance or false consciousness. We must pay particular attention to instances of silence, as they can often times speak louder than words.

Therefore, it is imperative to confront the realities of classroom life, which undoubtedly include comfort level, power distinctions not only between teacher and student but between students, as well and the naiveté of truly believing that all classroom spaces include a genuine sharing of voices. However, as Orner (1992) states, “What does seem possible, on the other hand, is an attempt to recognize the power differentials present and to understand how they impinge upon what is sayable and doable in that specific context” (p.81). Thus, we must constantly reflect upon what is going on in the classroom space, as well as be deliberate in our conversations in terms of how we consider bringing in diverse and often sensitive practices such as *testimonio*.

The practices highlighted above demonstrate how both teacher educators and prospective teachers may engage in interactive pedagogy, specifically through the practice of sharing *testimonios*. These examples support the argument that we must consider systematically and institutionally reframing and reconsidering the current pedagogical approaches used in many teacher education programs. By doing so, we aim to create a space where both teacher educators and prospective teachers can question educational oppressions, binaries, and Westernized epistemologies that are deeply embedded within in our educational institutions (Saavedra & Pérez, 2012).

This process is not an easy one. As Darder and Miron (2006) claim, even the most well-intentioned teacher education programs fall into patterns of reproducing the canon, and fall short of challenging the construction of knowledge that inevitably demonstrates the disconnect between the students' reality and daily lives. We must move forward with critical pedagogy that asks both teacher educators and prospective teachers to examine the hegemonic nature of schooling so the cycle of reproducing these oppressions can be ruptured and emancipated.

Testimonio and Further Considerations within Teacher Education

Testimonio has the potential to aid in speaking out against educational inequities through its empowering, political and spiritual characteristics. To reiterate, one of the most important components to becoming an educator is being self-reflexive and introspective, specifically involving one's own educational experiences. Not only does this practice require honesty in moving to make connections between our own educational experiences and becoming a teacher, but

it also provides us a space to look deep into ourselves to the kind of teachers we hope to become, and how intertwined our experiences are to the politics of education.

Additionally, by utilizing *testimonio* as a pedagogy in teacher education, both prospective teachers and teacher educators are asked to use personal experiences as a way to build upon and deeply examine the issues regarding the oppressive nature, practices, and ideologies that make up many of our educational institutions. However, Ellsworth (1992) makes an important point, in that we must constantly be mindful of utilizing non-traditional pedagogies such as *testimonio*. She states:

We need to become capable of a sustained encounter with currently oppressive formations and power relations that refuse to be theorized away or fully transcended in a utopian resolution-and to enter into the encounter in a way that both acknowledged [our] own implications in those formations and are capable of changing [our] own relation to and investments in those formations (p.100).

Importantly, we must be aware, as students and educators, how we can become complacent, only reaffirming the very oppression we are working to dismantle.

Within this discussion, we must consider some of the issues discussed earlier, as they are relevant in terms of thinking about *testimonio* as a pedagogy and practice within teacher education. Specifically, in regards to thinking about the reality of predominantly White institutions (PWI's) and teacher education programs, we are aware of the fact that there is little representation of faculty of

color as well as prospective teachers of color. With this in mind, it may be more challenging to gain multiple perspectives and experiences when teacher educators and pre-service teachers in such settings write and share their *testimonios*.

There is another component that is equally important to consider within our PWI's, and current make-up of public school educators. If there is little representation of faculty, teachers, and students of color, we must be cautious of creating an environment that invites the concept of "tokenism" when writing *testimonios*, even though the characteristics of *testimonio* aim to steer away from this very notion. Additionally, it should not be expected that everyone will feel comfortable writing and sharing a *testimonio*. Likewise, simply because there is a teacher educator, student of color, or someone who experienced any form of oppression within their education, it should not be assumed that their individual experiences require a methodology of resistance such as *testimonio*.

Importantly, we must also consider who is able to write their own *testimonios* given that so much of the literature comes from Latina scholarship. Reyes and Rodrigues (2012) speak to this notion when discussing how they research and continue to document *testimonios*. During some of their readings and analysis, they came across many different types of "*testimonios*", which made them reflect back on the definition, intentions, and purposes of the methodology and pedagogy.

Such a situation occurred when they discovered some children's stories describing their lives in the Appalachian region. It was at this point that they made the following statement: "How is this *testimonio*? We need only examine the oral

history interviews that tell comparable class oppression experienced by rural, poor, White people to understand that privilege is not shared as the product of Whiteness, but rather it is informed by economic and political inequality... as well as by institutional barriers of discrimination based on class, neglect, educational exclusion, and ethnocentrism. “ (p. 531).

Thus, my own interpretation of who can write *testimonio* coincides with the arguments made by Reyes and Rodriguez (2012). Although they explore the conventional definitions of *testimonio* (as do I within my dissertation), they recognize that, “using both the traditional *testimonio* and other methodological cousins, such as oral histories and interviews, we conclude that the important aspect of this endeavor is precisely the objective of *testimonio*: It provides an outlet for affirmative epistemological exploration” (p. 532). Therefore, I follow suit, and frame my analysis and understanding of *testimonio* with the same perspective. Those who suffer oppression (in this case, oppression within one’s educational experiences) and want to seek out a way to voice their struggle through a discourse of solidarity and political activism, have the potential to do so through writing, reading, and sharing *testimonio*.

Alternative Ways to deploy Testimonio

Recognizing such limitations and potential concerns regarding *testimonio*, I offer another way in which to think about bringing the practice into teacher education communities. Since *testimonio* offers a space to make connections between one’s educational experiences and the greater sociopolitical and sociohistorical issues within the school and society, we can also read *testimonios*

written by individuals and scholars who choose to employ the pedagogy in their own work. For example, Chávez, Cruz, Saavedera and Pérez have written and shared theirs, just to name a few.

While reading and discussing these *testimonios*, teacher educators and prospective teachers can engage with them in a similar manner as we would with our own, and consider how their stories help us make sense of the theory and content that speak to the many inequities found both within our educational communities and society at large. As hooks (1989) contends,

It is only as allies with those who are exploited and oppressed, working in struggles for liberation, that individuals who are not victimized demonstrate their allegiance, their political commitment, their determination to resist, to break with the structures of domination that offer them personal privilege (p.109).

Thus, it is not mandatory for one to have had an educational experience in which they might consider writing a *testimonio*, but instead, having the opportunities to hear what others are willing to share, with the intent of listening deeply and with purpose, as this can also prove to be just as powerful. As Chávez (2012) states:

As an autoethnographer, my role serves to unpack the repercussions on my educational identity all along the pipeline. Exploring the development of particular identities may help inform research in understating how Latinas/os and other marginalized students of color experience educational institutions in order to acquire more specific knowledge of their academic

successes and failures (p.335).

Following the work of Chávez (2012), I wanted to spend some time engaging with *testimonio* literature with my own classes where I work with higher education students. My purpose for doing so is to help develop and better understand how we can examine educational inequities through another lens. Therefore, the next chapter will discuss a case study, in which I introduced and spent some time learning about *testimonio* with a group of undergraduate students. Although just one analysis, it seems that *testimonio* is a pedagogy that higher education students, many of whom would like to become educators, are interested in exploring in greater depth.

Chapter 7: A Case Study Analysis of *Testimonio*

For the empirical component of my dissertation, I chose to deploy the method of case study, as it seemed to be a valuable way in which to examine the impact *testimonio* may have upon students. As Yin (2006) argues, “ Compared to other methods, the strength of the case study method is its ability to examine in-depth, a “case” within its “real-life” context” (p.111). Within this context, I aimed to produce a firsthand understanding of people and events, focusing specifically on a group of undergraduate students, and their reactions and reflections after learning about *testimonio*. Further, as Merriam, (2009) notes there are multiple realities, or interpretations of a single event.

I understand the limitations of focusing on only one specific class when conducting my analysis, however, as Stake (2010) notes, “Understanding the case requires an understanding of other cases, things, and events, but also an emphasis on its uniqueness” (p.31). Thus, although I argue that the rich description and context in which my case study is situated will contribute to the body of knowledge within teacher education, I am careful to recognize its distinctive components and contributions as well.

In the fall of 2012, and the spring of 2013, I was the instructor for the Education and Society course at a University in the Pacific Northwest. This is a required course for the undergraduate education minor. The course objectives include the following description:

Before we are able to create a better world, it is critical that we understand the current one. In this course, we investigate historical, ethical, social,

political, and economic forces that impact our schools and society. Students will be given guidance in developing critical thinking and writing skills as they consider the fundamental question, "What should educators in the US do to provide an educational experience that emphasizes both quality and equity for all students in a democratic, pluralistic society?"

It is this statement that guides the philosophy and pedagogy of the course, which considers multiple perspectives, experiences, and understandings of education. One of the first discussions we had as a class was about the way in which critical feminism is framed, understood, and stereotyped. I was curious as to how the students viewed not only "feminists," but critical feminist scholarship and activism. Not surprisingly, feminism, as a discipline and form of speaking out, still carries with it negative connotations and associations. Thus, we needed to unpack critical feminism as it is stereotypically viewed, and have a conversation about the history and evolution of the discipline as it is now understood and conceptualized.

The whole class and small group discussions followed a similar path as to how I framed it earlier in this dissertation. My goal in the class, as it is within this work, is to recognize the importance of seeing critical feminism as a positive contribution to fighting oppression and learning about the diverse ways people are oppressed and choose to respond to their oppression. Further, I wanted the class to understand the constantly changing discipline as something that is continuously evolving.

My goal was for the class to see themselves as members of the educational community, who could engage in discussions that challenge their current

understandings of oppression, and what this might mean in the context of teaching and learning. Thus, what learning about elements of critical feminism does is create spaces to begin and renew vital conversations. It was within this framework, that we went deeper into particular components of critical feminism, and the students were introduced to *testimonio* (both its historical origins, and how it has recently be studied and practiced within the field of education), and we discussed collaboratively how we could potentially imagine such a pedagogy and practice within our future teaching and learning experiences.

One week of the course (two class periods) during the quarter was devoted to reading, discussing, and sharing *testimonio*. Specifically, the class read the following texts: Cruz, C. (2012). *Making curriculum from scratch: Testimonio in an urban classroom*, Saavedra, C.M. & Pérez, M.S. (2012) *Chicana and Black Feminism: Testimonios of Theory, Identity and Multiculturalism*, and Sands, K (2001). *Coming out and leading out. Pedagogy Beyond the Closet*. These particular texts were chosen deliberately as they incorporate multiple perspectives when learning about *testimonio* by offering both an explanation and description of *testimonio*, as well as the authors' personal *testimonios* and their relationships to the broad field of education.

Prior to having small group and a whole class discussion about *testimonio*, students read the articles and reflected upon them outside of class. I was able to read and respond to the students' reflections prior to class. The following class session was devoted to engaging with the aforementioned texts, as well as discussing and learning about *testimonio* in a manner that included the following

prompts: *What is testimonio, how does it relate to education, why is it important to look at this methodology of resistance, and what impact could it have upon us and our future students?*

Additionally, we spent considerable time discussing who can write *testimonios*, and what particular roles seem appropriate for those students who did not identify with writing one of their own. Importantly, the texts the students read helped guide this conversation, most specifically Cruz' (2012) piece. Cruz discusses the importance of *rapt listening*, as this deliberate way of engaging with *testimonio* as a listener and ally is just as vital in terms of considering it as an interactive pedagogy. It is for this reason that I included multiple activities and opportunities for the students and myself to engage with the many ways in which we can think and become intimately involved with *testimonio*

After our mostly theoretical discussion of *testimonio*, I shared my former student's *testimonio* (I'm calling her Rosa), and in small groups, the students discussed her *testimonio* (Rosa's *testimonio* is included in appendix A). They talked deeply about how this type of narrative could help them make sense of the theoretical component of *testimonio*, and how we could visualize, as well as humanize, some of the course concepts, issues, and texts that we had been talking about all quarter. In a way, we participated in a verbal exercise of text analysis with our course readings and Rosa's *testimonio*. We looked at certain components of Rosa's *testimonio*, and connected her experiences to some of the theoretical concepts and ideas regarding educational and institutional inequity and oppression that we had been learning about throughout the quarter.

For example, in her *testimonio* Rosa talks about how she equates Whiteness with being smart. This statement allowed us to not only unpack White privilege and Whiteness as an ideology, but we were also able to discuss the concepts of institutionalized racism, classism, and sexism, as well as some other topics we had been covering, both in our course readings and class discussions. The purpose of this activity was to help students connect the abstract theory to the practice component of the course.

Additionally, we unpacked and discussed how *testimonio* is considered a non-traditional methodology in the area of academic research. We spoke to its newer presence in the academy, and how it can, (and has been) questioned in regards to its authenticity and validity as real “research”. Further, we talked about how such narratives, analyzed in conjunction with theory, have the potential to help us move forward by offering a more comprehensive picture as to what so many of our students experience throughout their time in education. These rich discussions helped me see the potential of including *testimonio* in classes that focus on the complexities of education.

Following the class sessions, I emailed out an anonymous survey on WEB Q, in which I asked the students to think about and reflect upon the class experience. I wanted the survey to be voluntary and anonymous so that the student’s didn’t feel pressure to speak about *testimonio* if it wasn’t something they felt strongly about in terms of thinking about their future teaching and learning. Additionally, their anonymity allowed them a space to feel free to write without any identifying factors. In retrospect, I should have offered time during class for the students to respond, as

the return rate for the survey was not as high as I had hoped. Out of the thirty- four students in the course, sixteen responded to the survey. Thus, I direct the focus of the responses towards their content and depth, as opposed to the quantity and percentage of those who responded.

The prompts and direction for the reflections included the following questions: 1) *How did you feel after reading the pieces on testimonio? What thoughts did you have as you begin to think about your future career in education?* 2) *What were your thoughts about my former student's testimonio? Was the activity helpful in terms of humanizing some of the theory we have been talking about all quarter? If so, how?* 3) *Do you think learning about testimonio is a helpful pedagogical tool for teacher educators and preservice teachers? Why or why not?* 4) *Do you plan on thinking about and/or using testimonio in your future education careers?* 5) *Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience with testimonio?*

These particular questions were designed with the intent of connecting theory, practice, and the personal experiences the students could make between their own education and how these may affect their future teaching and learning. As discussed in the previous chapters, the disconnect between theory and practice is one of great concern when we consider the ideas of transforming education, activism, and deploying non-traditional pedagogies within teacher education. Thus, I wanted to see the impact that thinking about, and potentially using *testimonio* might have with this particular group of students.

As I have been discussing throughout the entirety of my dissertation, it is vital that educators engage in ongoing self-reflection about the ways in which

education has affected us in a personal way, and what this means within the context of the greater society. Thus, the first part of the survey included attention to the specific texts we read because I wanted to gauge whether or not they were appropriate choices for a first look at *testimonio*. The comments and reflections to this question were very powerful, as many of the students felt a direct connection to the texts, as well as the ways in which they thought about themselves as students, and their future roles in education. As a note, all responses are direct quotes and are unedited.

For example, one student provided the following reflection:

After reading the pieces on testimonio, I thought about what i have done to change who I am, or rather what can i do to change who i think i am. I realized that the first thing I have to do is to accept who I am and then work on fixing my shortfalls before I can look at things the way other people see them.

Another student provided a very personal account of how he/she sees themselves within our current education system.

This reading, really made me reflect on my education experience. I am not supposed to be graduating in June. I'm not supposed to be getting educated. That is the reality I live in, but I have been able to work in the system to create change for myself. The institution is not made for people like me, yet I will fight every day to ensure students of color are able to access higher education.

Finally, one of the student responses spoke to the power of listening when we read *testimonio*. It states:

I feel that there is a lot of power in students testimonies. It is logical approach

to me to conduct education reform looking into the depth and breadth of issues that were spoken of in students testimonies. In regard to my future career in education the simplest lesson this has taught me is to listen. Listen enough even when time may be short just knowing that they are heard can mean so much to a student.

This reflection speaks to one of the fundamental characteristics of *testimonio*, which is creating a discourse of solidarity that includes rapt and authentic listening between the reader and the testimonialista/o.

Another component to the class activity of learning about *testimonio* included sharing one from a former elementary student of mine. Rosa, who was sixteen when she wrote her *testimonio*, agreed to write her story, as well as allowed me to share it with my students and other educators. The purpose of this activity was to connect the theoretical component of *testimonio*, and offer the students an opportunity to truly hear Rosa's story. Further, the students would hopefully begin to make sense of her educational experiences and see how they related to many of the course concepts that focus on inequality and oppression. As per the characteristics of *testimonio*, the author has the chance to describe personal accounts and speak out about injustice and oppression. Additionally, *testimonio* offers the readers a chance to travel with the author, and move forward with the intent of pursuing equity and justice. With these components in mind, I wanted to understand how the students in the course connected to Rosa and her story.

One of the responses spoke directly to this notion of listening to one another, and how important this idea can be within the context of education.

I felt it was very helpful. If anything, I felt that it made the concepts we've been discussing come to life in relating to the real life events and emotions involved with testimonios. When I can relate to something it holds more weight, instead of being removed from it in a sterile less intimate way. Moreover, I felt it shows that every person has a voice that should be heard and has inspired and given me the courage to want my voice to be heard as well.

Another student commented on the emotional connection they had while reading Rosa's *testimonio*.

Her testimonio brought up a lot of emotions. While our stories are in no way identical, I was able to relate to her and see the similarities. I really felt her pain and her belief that she wasn't good enough.

The emotional and personal connection that the students experienced, speak directly to the argument that we need to reevaluate the human component of schooling. With this in mind, I was curious as to how my students (many of whom want to go into the teaching profession) might think about such a pedagogy and practice in their future classrooms. Even further, I wanted to see how such a non-traditional way of conceptualizing the purpose of school (through the eyes of a student and/or educator) would have upon them as they think about their future roles in teaching and learning.

The students seemed to really embrace *testimonio*, while also thinking about it as a way to help imagine the type of educators they hope to become. For example, one student wrote the following reflection:

As a pedagogical tool it forces any person to first, look at themselves and see

who they are, where they are, and how they relate to this world from their own experience. Openly relating to ones' self promotes compassion towards ourselves for all that we've seen and experienced, none better or worse than any other, always just our own experience. Cultivating this kind of compassion and empathy better allows any individual to relate to the human race as a whole. In order to objectively, compassionately, and empathetically view others e.g. students, teachers, parents etc. we have to start with ourselves. If teachers view students as being separate then students feel separate from teachers and the learning process could be hindered due to a lack of safe intimate space. Testimonio creates a platform to engage in emotions, feelings, and experiences that bind us all.

Although nearly all of the responses were positive, a few pointed to some potential issues that could come about when sharing, learning and conceptualizing *testimonio*. One of the concerns I had when thinking about *testimonio* was that it wasn't accessible to everyone, or that it might be viewed one-dimensionally. This point came up within a couple of reflections:

My first thoughts were that I could never write my own testimonio because I am not that passionate about anything. At first it seemed that testimonios were only for people who had been wronged and felt oppressed somehow. As I begin to think about my career in education I think it has become increasingly clear to me that everyone needs to feel they have a voice.

Another response touched on similar issues:

When i think about testimonio, I think of my own experiences in the classroom. i

was the typical nerdy white girl, who always hung out with the teachers, and read three books a week. but no one ever asked me what was going on inside of me. my fears of failure, the pressure i felt from my family, and the shame i felt from the students around me. all i wish is that someone had just asked me what i was going through...

Interestingly, the reflections helped me to see not only how the students understand *testimonio*, but it gave me a look into how they make sense of themselves within their own conceptualizations of education. Another student wrote:

I'm glad that we read the pieces of testimonio because it showed me a new perspective on issues within the US education system. From these testimonios I was able to self reflect on my own education and was able to pinpoint what did/didn't work. This moment of self-realization and self reflection will be useful for my future career in education. I will be more open minded to the issues that the education system is currently facing.

Undoubtedly, there were many emotions that came about while reflecting, and their candid responses allowed me to better understand and see some very important thinking about their future roles in education. Another student wrote:

I would love to write my own, but I honestly just don't know where to begin and end at this point because of everything that I have experienced in even the last four years alone. I have had some very unique experiences throughout college, and looking back past that, my childhood and leading up to college has so much more that I don't even know where to start.

Another reflection shared something similar:

The testimonio pieces show an understanding of events through a student's personal point of view. As I think more about my future in education, it worries me and inspires me to want to continue on. I want to work with students so we can learn from each other and create environments in schools that are welcoming and safe, something I lost while in my schools which I want to help rebuild.

This final point is where I see the impact *testimonio* may have upon prospective teachers and how they view themselves and their future students. As I have been arguing thus far, critical self-reflection (regarding our own lives and the greater society) is not always a common practice within teacher education. Arguably, it is the most important as it truly serves as the starting point for how prospective teachers view themselves as well as their future students and families. Furthermore, it is the base for how one understands the purpose of school. If the human element of teaching and learning are not continuously examined, we see educational institutions and the students within them being nothing more than numerical data. As one student shared:

After reading about testimonios, I felt more connected. The act of humanizing content and feeling connected with a story or situation that is being read, one can't help but more fully engage with the reading. In regards to becoming a future educator, it is something I would like to be able to promote. To authentically portray myself and encourage others to do so is something that I feel is important in the education and growth of any person. In learning how to

do this more, I feel it would be huge in connecting with students, teachers, parents, and all people in general.

As a pedagogical tool, *testimonio* has many possibilities. Throughout this chapter, I discussed how prospective teachers and teacher educators may learn about *testimonio*, with one of the goals being to self reflect and either construct one's own, or listen and/or read another's *testimonio*. This practice serves as a way for educators to consider their own experiences, and how they connect in helping to better understanding the politics and culture of our schools and communities.

Importantly, there are additional ways in which we may consider examining the pedagogy and practice of *testimonio* within teacher education. One of these include the academic exercise of text analysis, which I briefly discussed in chapter six, after a discussion of considering some potential limitations and concerns regarding *testimonio* and teacher education. Although it was in more of a verbal format, the undergraduates in the Education and Society course did explore Rosa's *testimonio*, and engaged in an exercise of text analysis with many of the readings that were assigned throughout the quarter. This alternative way in which we may participate with *testimonio* is just another manner to consider the impact one's educational experiences may have in helping us understand the sociocultural and sociopolitical components of education.

Chapter 8- Next Steps

Liberation is a praxis: the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it. Those truly committed to the cause of liberation can accept neither the mechanistic concept of consciousness as an empty vessel to be filled, nor the use of banking methods of domination (propaganda, slogans-deposits) in the name of liberation (Freire, 1970, p. 79).

Throughout the entirety of my dissertation I have argued that we need to reimagine the purpose of public schools, which in turn, results in us rethinking the current practice and pedagogies used within teacher education programs. As such, I have attempted to articulate that by potentially reframing, and infusing our teacher education programs with elements of critical feminism, we can refocus the attention of teacher preparation and social justice education in a manner that puts the human component of teaching and learning at the center. Further, I have discussed the interrelationship between the characteristics of critical feminist theory, critical race theory, and critical education theory, demonstrating that many educators and scholars have already been engaging in such radical and politically motivated pedagogy.

I connect Allen's (2004) notions of political theory and education, as they offer another way to speak to the interdisciplinarity of critical feminism and critical education, and how when used together, can help us think about and move forward with the goals of true liberation in all of our classrooms and schools.

Allen argues that democracy is better served by seeking not "oneness," but "wholeness." With the language of "wholeness" we become a group of citizens who are tied together, working together, and evolving together. The term "wholeness" helps capture our diversity and makes a space to honor and respect our fluid and

constantly changing society, as opposed to “oneness” that forces a false homogeneity among citizens. That is, citizens attempt to create a platform in which the development of citizenship is something that aims for a focus on an integral whole. This notion speaks to the solidarity component of *testimonio*, as well as its political intent of advancing social justice.

Importantly, I understand that this concept of “oneness” as opposed to “wholeness” speaks directly to one of the essential goals of neoliberalism and the “Right’s” definition of education reform: individualism and competition. We must contend with what Sleeter (2008) reminds us in regards to the current assaults on teacher education. She notes, “Shifts from public to private investment, and from preparation partially for citizenship to preparation for work, have escalated doubts in the US about the need to invest in university-based teacher education” (p.1948). Unquestionably, the work I am arguing for falls outside of anything that neoliberalism espouses. I recognize the challenge of working against the concept of individualism, as such a shift requires a reframing of how we currently understand the very essence of our society within such a neoliberal context.

Moving further, and connecting back to critical feminism and critical race theory Berry (2010) makes the following points:

As a critical race feminist, I understand that one's racial/ethnic appearance does not dictate a singular story about who they are. Critical Race Feminism (CRF) is a multidisciplinary theory that addresses the intersections of race and gender while acknowledging the multiplicative and multi-dimensionality of being and praxis for women of color. While advocates of CRF are

concerned with theory, praxis is central to this theory; theory and praxis must be a collaboration (p.25).

Therefore, I believe that by infusing elements of critical feminism, critical education theory, and critical race theory within the content and structure of our teacher education programs, we can be more deliberate in our work towards true democracy within our classrooms and schools. As I have been researching, reading, and teaching over the last few years, I am more convinced now that nearly every text I read in both critical feminism and critical education, I am provided with a space to think back on an experience I had when I was teaching. Whether it was in the structural make up of the school, the curriculum or policy choices, or the ways in which the students often felt within their classrooms and schools. In fact, such internal connecting and self-reflecting was what drew me to both forms of scholarship.

Such a framework (connecting the disciplines) will include and demonstrate that this work is in fact part of a comprehensive picture of teacher preparation. As previously noted, the framing and implementation of the critical pedagogy I am calling for, can most definitely coincide with the other very important elements of teacher preparation that require us to become the best educators we can be for all of our students.

In support of my argument, I look to Bartolome (2007) who underscores the importance of infusing elements of critical pedagogy into teacher education. She argues that such practices allow prospective teachers to examine the political and cultural roles that counterhegemonic resistance can play in working to transform

undemocratic values and beliefs that we so often see within many dominant educational practices.

Moving even further, I look to the pedagogy and practice of *testimonio*. I have hoped to offer *testimonio* as another way for us to move towards a deeper practice of self-reflexivity and recognition regarding our diverse educational experiences. As Huerta-Charles (2007) states, “ Testimonies help us as teachers and educators reject and transform what is dehumanizing and alienating us... In my experience, testimonies bridge the connection between the “abstract” content from the university classrooms and the “real world” of schools” (p.257). Thus, I believe that such a practice could better illuminate and help our prospective teachers understand the sociocultural and sociopolitical components of education.

Building off of such scholarship, much of my dissertation has focused on the political components found within both critical feminism and critical education theory. In order for us to move in a direction that aims for true democracy in education, I argued that we must go deeper and engage with elements of self-reflexivity regarding ones educational experiences. To reiterate, such elements are just a few of the essential components of critical feminism and *testimonio*. hooks (1989) speaks to this notion when she argues that “To reaffirm the power of the personal while simultaneously not getting trapped in identity politics, we must work to link personal narratives with knowledge of how we must act politically to change and transform the world” (p.111)

However, I am well aware that as I consider weaving the work of critical feminism and *testimonio* into teacher education programs, I need to be deliberate.

For this reason, I follow McWilliams (1994), who argues, “Feminism as a process can be woven into the fabric of our daily work in ways that allow them to be both explicit and implicit in our institutional practices” (p.39). Thus, my suggestions are not to create a class that focuses exclusively on critical feminism and liberatory education (although this would be very interesting), but rather infusing elements of critical feminist theory within our current teacher preparation literature and pedagogies.

For example, I imagine a classroom (possibly a foundations course, but not necessarily), in which teacher educators and prospective teachers may discuss the components of *testimonio* and self-reflexivity, while also reading critical education theory regarding democratic education. This discussion could be framed through the lens of a *community teacher*³⁵, in that in order to be the best educator (both academically and socially), we must better understand ourselves, our students, and their families.

I have been participating in this type of pedagogy within some other courses I have been teaching over the last two years. Although I did not collect written responses, or formalized evaluations, the students in my classes have provided me with their own thoughts on the connections between looking at the current politics of education, and the literature on critical feminist theory we read in class. In

³⁵ **“Community teachers”**: “Community teachers draw on richly contextualized knowledge of culture, community, and identity in their professional work with children and families in diverse urban communities. Their competence is evidenced by effective pedagogy in diverse community settings, student achievement, and community affirmation and acknowledgement of their performance. Community teachers have a clear sense of their own cultural, political, and racial identities in relation to the children and families they hope to serve. This sense allows them to play a central role in the successful development and education of their students” (as cited within CFP summary, 2014. From Peter Murrell, Jr., 2001, p. 4).

particular, they see the many ways in which students and families are oppressed and exploited both inside and outside of school, and understand the necessity to the diverse ways in which we might respond to such oppression.

Moving further, I might anticipate the reading and/or writing of a *testimonio*, which could be used to interpret theory as it relates to one's own educational experiences. Throughout this process, teacher educators and students will be able to contextualize the interconnecting relationships between the school and society, and how these intertwining elements help us better understand how we may need to reframe our understandings regarding the purposes of school. As Levinson (2011) explains, employing such theories and practices "helps illuminate educational processes-from the microlevel negotiation of relationships between teacher and student in the classroom to the macrolevel structuring of national and even global educational policies and systems" (p.15).

Thus, by looking at elements of critical feminist theory, and discussing the ways in which critical educators are making sense of such issues within their own scholarship, I have hoped to demonstrate that the work has already begun, and continues to grow. As Brady-Amoon (2011) argues, " Educators operating from a humanistic, feminist, and multicultural perspective respect people's experiences and the way individuals uniquely construct meaning from their life experiences" (p.141). Importantly, we must continue within this realm, and aim to continue incorporating such theories and practices within the context of teacher education communities.

Giroux (2007) states,

Pedagogy always represents a commitment to the future, and it remains the task of educators to make sure that the future points the way to a more socially just world, a world in which the discourses of critique and possibility in conjunction with the values of reason, freedom, and equality function to alter, as part of a broader democratic project, the grounds upon which life is lived (p. 2).

As Steinberg (2007) reminds us, “ By naming the practices, people, and ideologies that infect our schools with dishope, test-driven expectations, and socio-economic insults to our students, we create a space for critique and insurgency” (p.x). Therefore, unless we deliberately move to engage in such conversations, how can we begin to move in a direction for such an ideological shift to take place?

I have been focusing on the interconnectedness and interdisciplinarity between not only critical feminist theory and liberatory education, but also the intimate relationship between the school community and society at large. I believe that my vision, albeit a lofty and idealistic one, has the potential to be transformative through collaboration and cooperation. As Freire (1970) argued, “ The pursuit of full humanity cannot be carried out in isolation or individualism, but only in fellowship and solidarity” (p.85).

We can begin to move towards a practice where the work occurring within teacher education programs can move into our classrooms and schools, and hopefully begin to spill over to the greater society, and vice versa. As Apple states, “Democratic educators seek not simply to lessen the harshness of social inequities in

school, but to change the conditions that create them. For this reason, they tie their understanding of undemocratic practices inside the school to larger conditions on the outside”(Apple, 2007,p.13).

Therefore, in order to refocus the attention of education (both K-12 and teacher education) in a more democratic manner, we must be committed to working collaboratively, and in solidarity. Of equal importance, is the notion that we must never stop questioning and being critical of the status quo in education. As González (2003) notes, “ When our language becomes too familiar as to stimulate agreement and eager head nods before our minds have been actively engaged in a process of critical understanding, it is dead” (p. 77). Thus, such critical discussions must be an ongoing process that must never turn into complacency. I imagine, and am hopeful, that teacher education can be a catalyst for the liberating changes that need to occur in order for all of our students, educators, and families to be part of a meaningful and empowering education community.

My Testimonio

When I was a in a course titled *Women of Color in Academia*, I learned about *testimonio*. Up until that point in my graduate career, I had read quite a bit of feminist literature that I personally felt was very relevant to my years as a classroom educator. I was always amazed with how much inter-connection there was between feminist writing and my years of teaching in public schools. However, once I read and learned about *testimonio*, I knew there was no way I could move forward with my graduate work without finding a way to “convince” people in the field of education that there was a place for work like critical feminism and

testimonio in regards to teaching and learning. It was in this course that a former student of mine offered to write and share her *testimonio* with me. It was so brave of her to tell her story knowing that I would read it and share it with others.

I remember my final presentation for this class, offering my thoughts on how inspired I felt by *testimonio*, and how I needed to move forward with this work within the College of Education and my graduate studies. After my presentation ended, I remember one of my classmates saying... *You are in a position to take this work and develop it in the College. You have to do this.* I knew what she meant, and realized that with my unearned privilege as a White woman, I would have a somewhat easier time taking this work to the COE, and making a case for the relevance of critical feminism and *testimonio* in the field of teacher education.

It is an understatement to say that I was shocked at the reception I received when sharing this work. Most faculty I talked to had been former classroom teachers, yet seemed completely resistant to even consider this work as acceptable and as real “research” when thinking about teaching and learning from a feminist perspective. I remember one faculty member actually saying to me, *Why is it important, or even necessary, for me to read feminist literature... what does this have to do with education-about teaching and learning?* At the same meeting, another colleague was looking at me with a face that could only be interpreted as mockery... suggesting that critical feminism and education was a relationship that didn’t belong together. I felt nothing less than defeated and to be honest, so far from feeling like someone who could contribute in any way to the scholarship within the field of education. Here I was, thinking that I was at a progressive, forward thinking

university. I quickly learned that there was no room for such thinking in the COE. I felt so nervous about sharing my work with a former advisor that I would actually rehearse beforehand with a faculty member in the Women's Studies Department regarding what I would say, and how I would make a case for my work. At one point, I began applying to the PhD program in the Women's Studies Department, as I felt so isolated and alone with myself and work in the College of Education. The only place I felt listened to was when I was taking Women's Studies courses.

Luckily, after many meetings, I found a group of faculty members who believed in this work, and who agreed to help support me through the process of developing it within teacher education and the College of Education. I truly don't know if I would still be in the Education Department if it were not for these few faculty members who believed that we needed to think outside of the box, and challenge the hegemony of the academy. I had no idea that higher education could be so dehumanizing or elitist until experiencing it firsthand. We read stories and hear through the grapevine, and always hope that our work is deemed "worthy" of real scholarship, and contributing to the knowledge of the College.

I believe in this work. I believe that challenging the status quo is worth it, and that things can change. One of the central elements of *testimonio* is how it serves as a discourse of solidarity, and a fight for justice. This is why I needed to include my own *testimonio* in my dissertation. How could I ask others to tell their story without telling mine as well? All of our stories are different. All of our experiences are unique. However, what we all have in common is that we are not ok with the way things are. Being vulnerable and willing to share is what unites us. I hope that others

feel inspired to share their stories, and that we all move forward knowing that things are not ok the way they are now, but that they can and must get better.

Appendix A.

November 13, 2010

Being a Hispanic girl, it was challenging to even consider taking Honors classes at Salinas High School. Racism is not an issue at my school. Classes were always diverse and kids never felt out of place in a classroom, but the thought of being in the same class as 29 (white) over-achievers seemed to give me goose bumps. I could not see myself with smart kids. I knew I had scored advanced in my English state test last May, but most everyone in my last English class used to say that only intelligent white kids got into Honors English. Since I believed my peers, I did not bother signing up for that class. Our teachers never talked to the whole class about taking advanced classes. Maybe our teachers thought college prep students couldn't excel to be honors students? Who knows? It was not until my English teacher, sophomore year, encouraged me of all people to take honors English. I accepted, and after school when I told my mother, she was ecstatic. No one in our family had ever been in Honors or Advance Placement classes during High School.

The first day of school was bittersweet for me, especially in that class. Sure, I loved seeing my friends, but after second period Honors English, I was ready to call it quits. When I stepped into that class, I felt so alone. Sure, I didn't know anyone, but the fact that there was only one other Hispanic kid, a boy, in my class was truly devastating. This made me, as a Hispanic girl feel unwelcome. It was sure that the Hispanic boy had amazing genius skills that wowed teachers and exceeded in their expectations. After a week, I did not like that class. I was afraid to speak throughout the whole period because I thought that if I would have said anything, I would have

*sounded dumb. It was to the point that I wanted to run out of the classroom and never return. One day, I remember talking to my teacher before school started telling her I wanted to switch into a college prep English class instead. She wanted to know why and crying, I told her that I thought I wasn't good enough to be in the same class as the other smart kids. Inside I knew that the reason behind it was because that they were white which automatically made them seem like they were better than me. She assured me that I **belonged** in that class and that just because the kids were white did not signify that they were better than me. All I had to do was believe in myself.*

Her advice was golden because the next day, I spoke for the first time during a discussion and everyone nodded in approval; some even complimented me after class. I learned then and there that having faith in oneself is what will get yourself noticed in a positive way regardless of who your audiences are.

I've never been embarrassed about being Hispanic. I think it's what makes me special and sets me apart from others (especially my Honors English class). With the golden advice I received from my teacher, I don't think I'll ever be disappointed or humiliated about being Hispanic. The fact that there was only two Hispanic students in my English class encouraged me to do better, so other Hispanics in my grade can know that with a little hard work, they too can be in Advance Placement classes.

My friends didn't take gifted classes, so I am hoping that they will be encouraged to take some when I talk to them. They should know that taking advanced classes is challenging, but also extremely rewarding

References

- Acosta-Belen, E. & Bose, C.E. (2000). U.S. Latina and Latin American feminisms: Hemispheric encounters. *Sources*, 25(4), 1113-1119.
- Agger, B. (1997). *Critical social theories: An introduction*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Alexander, M. (2010). *The new jim crow: Mass incarceration in the age of colorblindness*. New York: The New Press.
- Allen, Danielle, S. (2004). *Talking to strangers: Anxieties of citizenship since Brown vs. Board of Education*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Anyon, J. (1994). The retreat of Marxism and socialist feminism: Postmodern and poststructural theories in education. *Curriculum Inquiry*. 2 (2). 115-133.
- Anyon, J. (2005). *Radical possibilities: Public policy, urban education, and a new social movement*. New York: Routledge.
- Anyon, J. (2011). *Marx and education*. New York: Routledge.
- Anzáldua, G. (1987). *Borderlands/ la frontera: the new mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Book Company.
- Anzáldua, G. (1997). La conciencia de la mestiza: Towards a new consciousness. In A.M.Garcia, *Chicana feminist thought: The basic historical writings* (pp.270-274). New York: Routledge.
- Apple, M.W.(1983). The politics of official knowledge: Does a national curriculum make sense? *Teachers College Record*. 95(2), 222-241.
- Apple, M.W. (1995). *Education and power: Second edition*. New York and London. Routledge.
- Apple, M.W. (2001). *Educating the "right" way: Markets, standards, god and inequality*. New York and London. Routledge.
- Apple, M.W. & Beane, J.A. (2007). *Democratic schools*. Virginia: Association for supervision and curriculum and development.
- Apple, M.W.(2008). Can schooling contribute to a more just society? *Education, Citizenship, and Social Justice*. 3(3), 239-261.
- Apple, M.W. (2009). Some ideas on interrupting the right: On doing critical educational work in conservative times. *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*. 4(2), 87-101.

- Au, W. (2007). High-stakes testing and curricular control: A qualitative metasyntesis. *Educational Researcher*. 36 (5), 258-267.
- Au, W. (2009). *Unequal by design: High-stakes testing and the standardization of inequality*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Au, W. (2011). Teaching under the new Taylorism: High-stakes testing and the standardization of the 21st century curriculum. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*. 43(1), 25-45.
- Au, W. (2012). *Critical curriculum studies: Education, consciousness and the politics of knowing*. New York: Routledge.
- Au, W. (2012). The long march towards revitalization: Developing standpoint in curriculum studies. *Teachers College Record*. 114 (050308), downloaded copy, 1-30.
- Ayers, R. & Ayers, W. (2011). *Teaching the taboo: Courage and imagination in the classroom*. New York and London: Teachers College Press.
- Ayvazian, A. (2010). Interrupting the cycle of oppression: The role of allies as agents of change. In Adams, M., Blumenfeld, W. J., Castaneda, R., Hackman, H. W., Peters, M. L. and Zuniga, X. (Eds.). (2010). *Readings for diversity and social justice. Second edition* (pp.625-628). New York: Rutledge.
- Baily, A. (2000). White privilege (race privilege). In Code, L. *Encyclopedia of feminist theories*. (489). London and New York: Routledge.
- Bakhtin, M.M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Bakhtin, M.M. (1984). *Problems of Dostoevsky's poetics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Baltodano, M. (2012). Neoliberalism and the demise of public education: the corporatization of schools of education. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*. 25(4), 487-507.
- Banks, J.A. (Ed.). (1996). The canon debate, knowledge construction, and multicultural education. In J.A.Banks., *Multicultural education, transformative knowledge, and action: Historical and contemporary perspectives* (pp.3-30). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Bartolome, L.I. (1994). Beyond the methods fetish: Towards a humanizing pedagogy. *Harvard Educational Review*. 64(2). 173-194.

- Bartolome, L.I. (2007). Critical pedagogy and teacher education: Radicalizing prospective teachers. In McLaren, P. & Kincheloe, J.L. *Critical pedagogy: Where are we now?*. (pp.264-286). New York: Peter Lang.
- Bazerman, C. (2006). Analyzing the multidimensionality of texts in education. In Greene, J.L., Camilli, G., and Elmore, P.B. (2006). *Handbook of complementary methods in education research*. (pp. 111-139). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Berliner, D.C. (2014). Effects of inequality and poverty vs. teachers and schooling on America's youth. *Teachers College Record*. Manuscript submitted for publication. 116 (1),. 1-15.
- Berry, T.R. (2010). Engaged pedagogy and critical race feminism. *Educational Foundations*. Summer-Fall. 19-26.
- Beverly, J. (1991). "Through all things modern": Second thoughts on testimonio. *Boundary*, 2(18), 1-21.
- Beverly, J. (2000). Testimonio, subalternity, and narrative authority. In Denzin, N.K. and Yvonna L.S, *Handbook of qualitative research; Second edition*. (555- 565). California: Sage Publications
- Bhandar, D. (2000). Critical race theory. In Code, L. *Encyclopedia of feminist theories*. (109-110). London and New York: Routledge.
- Biesta, G., J.J. (2006). *Beyond learning: Democratic education for a human future*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers.
- Brady, J. & Dentith, A. (2001). Critical voyages: Postmodern feminist pedagogies as liberatory practice. *Teaching Education*, 12(2), 165-176.
- Brady-Amoon, P. (2011). Humanism, feminism, and multiculturalism: Essential elements of social justice in counseling, education, and advocacy. *Journal of Humanistic Counseling*, 2001 (50), 135-148.
- Brodkin, K. (1998). *How Jews became white folks & what that says a bout race in America*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Butler, J.E. & Raynor, D. (2007). Transforming the curriculum: teaching about women of color. In J.A.Banks & C.A.M.Banks, *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives, sixth edition* (pp. 195-215). New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Cannella G.S. and Mañuelito K.D.(2008). Feminisms from unthought locations:

- Indigenous worldviews, marginalized feminisms, and revisioning an anticolonial social science. In N.K.Denzin, Y.S.Lincoln, & L.T. Smith. *Handbook of critical and indigenous methodologies*. (pp. 45-61). Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Chávez, M.S. (2012): Autoethnography, a Chicana's methodological research tool: The role of storytelling for those who have no choice but to do critical race theory. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 45(2),334-348.
- Cochran-Smith, M. (1995). Color blindness and basket making are not the answers: Confronting the dilemmas of race, culture, and language diversity in teacher education. *American Educational Research Journal*, 32(3), 493-522.
- Cochran-Smith, M., Davis, D. & Fries, K. (2007). Multicultural teacher education: Research, practice, and policy. In J.A.Banks & C.A.M.Banks. *Handbook of research on multicultural education, second edition*. (pp.931-975). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Code, L. (1991). *What can she know? Feminist theory and the construction of knowledge*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Code, L. (2004). *Encyclopedia of feminist theories*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Collins, P.H. (2000). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment* (Revised ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Connelly, F.M. and Clandinin, D.J. (2006). *Narrative inquiry*. In Greene, J.L., Camilli, G., and Elmore, P.B. (2006). *Handbook of complementary methods in education research*. (pp.477-488). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Cruz, C. (2006). *Toward an epistemology of a brown body*. In Chicana/Latina education in everyday life. Feminist perspectives on pedagogy and epistemology (pp.59-79). New York: State University of New York Press.
- Cruz, C. (2012). Making curriculum from scratch: Testimonio in an urban classroom. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 45(3), 460-471.
- Dadds, J.H. (2011). *Feminisms: Embodying the critical*. In B.A.U. Levinson. *Beyond critique: Exploring critical social theories and education*.(pp.171-196). Boulder: Paradigm Publishers.
- Darder, A. & Miron, L.F. (2006). Critical pedagogy in a time of uncertainty. *Cultural studies, critical methodologies*. 6(6), 5-20.

- Davies, B & Bansel, P. (2004). Neoliberalism and education. *International journal of Qualitative Studies*. 20(3), 247-259.
- Delpit, L. (2006). *Other people's children: cultural conflict in the classroom*. New York: New Press.
- Denzin, N.K., Lincoln, Y.S., Smith, L.T. (2008). *Handbook of critical and indigenous methodologies*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Ellsworth, E. (1992) Why doesn't this feel empowering? Working through the repressive myths of critical pedagogy. In *Feminisms and critical pedagogy*. New York: Routledge.
- Fischman, G.E. & McLaren, P. (2000). Schooling for democracy: Toward a critical utopianism. *Contemporary Sociology*. 29(1), 168-179.
- Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline & punish: The birth of the prison*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Freire, P. (1970). *The pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Freire, P. (1974). *Education for critical consciousness*. New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group.
- García, A. M. (1989). The development of Chicana feminist discourses, 1970-1980. *Gender and Society*, 3(2), 217-238.
- Gay, G. (2009). Acting on beliefs in teacher education about cultural diversity. *Journal of Teacher Education*. 61(1-2). 143-152.
- Gillette, M.D. and Schultz, B.D. (2008). Do you see what I see? Teacher capacity as vision for education in a democracy. In M. Cochran-Smith, S. Feiman-Nemser, & D.J. McIntyre.(eds). *Handbook of research on teacher education. Enduring questions in changing context, third edition*. (232-237). New York: Routledge.
- Gollnick, D.M. (2008). Teacher capacity for diversity. In M. Cochran-Smith, S. Feiman-Nemser, & D.J. McIntyre.(eds). *Handbook of research on teacher education. Enduring questions in changing context, third edition*. (249-257). New York: Routledge.
- Goodman, J. (1992). Feminist pedagogy as a foundation for reflective teacher education programs. In Valli, L. *Reflective teacher education: Cases and critiques*. (174-186). New York: State University of New York Press.

- González, Maria C. (2003). "An ethics for post-colonial ethnography." In Clair, R, P. (2003). *Expressions of Ethnography*. (77-86). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Gore, J.M. (1993) *The struggle for pedagogies: Critical and feminist discourses as regimes of truth*. New York: Routledge.
- Grady, J., Marquez, R., & McLaren, P. (2012). A critique of neoliberalism with fierceness: Queer youth of color creating dialogues of resistance. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 59(7), 982-1004,
- Grande, S. (2009) Red pedagogy: Indigenous theories of redistribution. In Apple, M.A., Au W., & Gandin, L.A. *The routledge international handbook of critical education*. (pp.190-203). New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.
- Grant, C.A. (2012). Cultivating flourishing lives: A robust social justice vision of education. *American Educational Research Journal*. 49 (5), 910-934.
- Greene, M. (1988). *The dialectic of freedom*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Greene, M. (1992). Foreword. In Luke, C. and Gore, J. *Feminisms and critical pedagogy*. (pp. ix-xi). New York: Routledge.
- Haberman, M. (1991). The pedagogy of poverty verses good teaching. *Phi Delta Kappan*. 73(4). 290-294.
- Haig-Brown, C (2003). Creating spaces: Testimonio, impossible knowledge, and academe. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*. 12(3), 415-433.
- Harding, S. (2004). Can men be subjects of feminist thought? In Hesse-Biber, S.N. and Yaiser, M.L. (2004). *Feminist perspectives on social research*. (177-197). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hatch, J.A. & Groenke, S.L. Issues in critical teacher education: Insights from the field. In Groenke, S.L. & Hatch, J.A. *Critical pedagogy and teacher education in the neoliberal era, Small openings*. (pp.63-82). Springer Science.
- Haviland, V.S. (2008). "Things get glossed over": Rearticulating the silencing power of whiteness in education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 59(1), 40-54.
- Hill, D. (2007). Critical teacher education, new labour, and the global project of neoliberal capital. *Policy Futures in Education*. 5(2), 204-225.

- Hinchey, P.H. (2008). *Becoming a critical educator: Defining a classroom identity, designing a critical pedagogy*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Hobbel, N. (2009). Standards talk: Considering discourse in teacher education standards. In Groenke, S.L. & Hatch, J.A. *Critical pedagogy and teacher education in the neoliberal era, Small openings*. (pp.37-48). Springer Science.
- hooks, b. (1989). *Talking back: Thinking feminist, thinking black*. Boston, MA: South End Press.
- hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*. New York. Routledge.
- hooks, b. (2009). Black women: Shaping feminist theory. In *Still brave: The evolution of black women's studies* (pp.31-44). New York: The Feminist Press.
- Hook, J. N., Davis, D. E., Owen, J., Worthington, E. r., & Utsey, S. O. (2013). Cultural humility: Measuring openness to culturally diverse clients. *Journal Of Counseling Psychology*, 60(3), 353-366.
- Howard, G. (1996). Whites in multicultural education: Rethinking our role. In Banks J.A. *Multicultural education, transformative knowledge, and action*. (pp. 323-334) New York: Teachers College Press.
- Huber, L.P & Cueva, B.M. (2012). Chicana/Latina testimonios on effects and responses to microagressions. *Equity and Excellence in Education*, 45(3), 392-410.
- Huerta-Charles, L. (2007) Pedagogy of Testimony: Reflections on the pedagogy of critical pedagogy. In McLaren, P. & Kincheloe, J.L. *Critical pedagogy: Where are we now?*. (pp.250-261). New York: Peter Lang.
- Jacobson, M.F. (1998). *Whiteness of a different color: European immigrants and the alchemy of race*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Juarez, B.G., Smith, D.T., & Hayes, C. (2008). Social justice means just us white people: The diversity paradox in teacher education. *Democracy and Education* (17)3, 20-25.
- Kenway, J. and Modra, H. (1992). Feminist pedagogy and emancipatory possibilities. In Luke, C. and Gore, J. *Feminisms and critical pedagogy*. (pp.138-166). New York: Routledge.
- Kincheloe, J.K. and Steinberg, S.R. (2008). Indigenous knowledges in education:

- Complexities, dangers, and profound benefits. In Denzin, N.K. , Lincoln, Y.S. & Smith, L.T. *Handbook of critical and indigenous methodologies*. (pp.135-157). Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Kincheloe, J.K. (2009). Contextualizing the madness: A critical analysis of the assault on teacher education and schools. In Groenke, S.L. & Hatch, J.A. *Critical pedagogy and teacher education in the neoliberal era, Small openings*. (pp.19-36). Springer Science.
- Kozol, J. (2005). Confections of apartheid: A stick-and-carrot pedagogy for the children of our inner-city poor. *The Phi Delta Kappan*. 18(4), 264-275.
- Kretchmar, K & Sondel, B. (2014). Organizing resistance for Teach for America. *Rethinking Schools*. 28 (3)
- Kumashiro, K.K. (2002). *Troubling education: Queer activism and anti-oppressive education*. New York: Routledge Falmer.
- Kumashiro, K.K. (2008). Partial movements toward teacher quality... and their potential for advancing social justice. In M. Cochran-Smith, S. Feiman-Nemser, & D.J. McIntyre.(eds). *Handbook of research on teacher education. Enduring questions in changing context, third edition*. (238-242). New York: Routledge.
- Kumashiro, K.K. (2010). Seeing the bigger picture: Troubling movements to end teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*. 61 (1-2), 56-65.
- Labaree, D.F. (1997). Public goods, private goods: The American struggle over educational goals. *American Educational Research Journal*, 34(1), 39-81.
- Labaree, D.F. (2008). An uneasy relationship. The history of teacher education in the university. In M. Cochran-Smith, S. Feiman-Nemser, & D.J. McIntyre.(eds). *Handbook of research on teacher education. Enduring questions in changing context, third edition*. (290-306). New York: Routledge.
- Labaree, D.F.(2010). *Someone has to fail: The zero-sum game of public schooling*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2005). Is the team all right? Diversity and teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*. 56(229), 229-233.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2007). Multicultural teacher education: Research, practice and policy. In J.A.Banks & C.A.M.Banks. *Handbook of research on multicultural education, second edition*. (pp.931-975). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). Race still matters: Critical race theory in education. In

- Apple, M.A., Au W., & Gandin, L.A. *The routledge international handbook of critical education*. (pp.110-122). New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.
- Lather, P. (1991) *Getting smart: Feminist research and pedagogy with/in the postmodern*. New York: Routledge.
- Lee, S.J. (2005). *Up against whiteness: Race, school, and immigrant youth*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Leonardo, Z. (2004). The color of supremacy: Beyond the discourse of 'white privilege'. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*. 36(2).137-152.
- Leonardo, Z. (2009). Pale/ontology: The status of whiteness in education. In Apple, M.A., Au W., & Gandin, L.A. *The routledge international handbook of critical education*. (pp.123-136). New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.
- Levinson, B.A.U. (2011). *Beyond critique: Exploring critical social theories and education*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers.
- Lewis A. (2009). Learning and Living Racial Boundaries. Ch. 5: *Race in the School Yard: Negotiating the color Line in Classrooms and Communities*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Lipman, P. (2011). Neoliberal education restructuring. Dangers and opportunities of the present crisis. *Monthly Review*, July/August; 63(3), 114-127.
- Lowenstein, K.L. (2009). The work of multicultural teacher education: Reconceptualizing White teacher candidates as learners. *Review of Educational Research*, 79(1), 163-196.
- Luke, C. & Gore, J. (1992). *Feminisms and critical pedagogy*. New York: Routledge.
- Maher, F.A., & Tetreault, M.K.T., (1997). Learning in the dark: How assumptions of Whiteness shape classroom knowledge. *Harvard Educational Review*, 67(2), 321-349.
- McIntosh, P. (1990). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. *Independent School*, 90(49), 31-36.
- McIntyre, A. (2002). Exploring whiteness and multicultural education with prospective teachers. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 32(1).32-49.
- McLaren, P. (1989). *Life in schools: An introduction to critical pedagogy in foundations of education*. New York: Longman Inc.

- McLeod, J. (2009). What was poststructural feminism in education? In M.A.Apple, Au W., & Gandin, L.A.*The routledge international handbook of critical education.*(137-149). New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.
- McWilliam, E. (1994). *In broken images: Feminist tales for a different teacher teacher education.* New York: Teachers College Press.
- Memmi, A. (1965). *The colonizer and the colonized.* Boston: The Orion Press, Inc.
- Menchú, R. (1983). *I, Rigoberta Menchu An Indian woman in Guatemala.* London: Verso.
- Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Michelli, N.M. & Earley, P.M. (2011). Teacher education policy context. In *Teacher education policy in the United States: Issues and tensions in an era of evolving expectations.*(1-14). New York: Routledge.
- Million, D. (2009). Felt theory: An indigenous feminist approach to affect and history. *Wicazo SA Review.* (pp. 53-76).
- Milner, R.H. (2009). What does teacher education have to do with teaching? Implications for diversity studies. *Journal of Teacher Education,* 61(1-2), 118-131.
- Morrison, T. (1992). *Playing in the dark: Whiteness and the literary imagination.* New York: Vintage Books.
- Moosa-Mitha, M. (2005). *Situating anti-oppressive theories within critical and difference centered perspectives.* In L. Brown, & S. Strega. *Research as resistance: Critical, indigenous, and anti-oppressive approaches.*(pp.37-73). Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.
- Moses, M.S. & Nanna, M.J. (2007). The testing culture and the persistence of high stakes testing. *Education and Culture,* 3(1), 55-72.
- Moya, P. M.L. (2002). *Learning from experience: Minority identities , multicultural struggles.* Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Muñoz, J.E. (2009). *Cruising utopia: The then and now of queer futurity.* New York and London: New York University Press.
- Nam, C. (2012). Implications of community activism among urban minority young people for education for engaged and critical citizenship. *International*

Journal Of Progressive Education, 8(3), 62-76.

- Nieto, S. (2005). Public education in the twentieth century and beyond: High hopes, broken promises, and an uncertain future. *Harvard Ed Review*, 75(1), 43-64.
- O'Connor, K. & Zeichner, K. (2011): Preparing US teachers for critical global education. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 9(3-4), 521-536.
- Orner, M. (1992). Interrupting the calls for student voice in "liberatory" education: A feminist poststructuralist perspective. In *Feminisms and critical pedagogy*. New York: Routledge.
- Partnoy, A. (2003). On being shorter: How our testimonial texts defy the academy. In Hernandez, J. B. *Women writing resistance: Essays on Latin America and the Caribbean* (173-192). Cambridge, MA: South End Press.
- Pennington, J.L., Brock, C.H., & Ndura, E. (2012). Unraveling the threads of white teachers' conceptions of caring: Repositioning white privilege. *Urban Education*, 47(4), 744-775.
- Pérez Huber, L. (2009). Disrupting apartheid of knowledge: testimonio as methodology in Latina/o critical race research in education. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 22(6), 639-654.
- Pollock, M., Deckman, S., Mira, M. & Shalaby, C. (2009). "But what can I do?": Three necessary tensions in teaching teachers about race. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 61(3), 211-224.
- Pharr, S. (2010). Reflections on liberation. In Adams, M., Blumenfeld, W. J., Castaneda, R., Hackman, H. W., Peters, M. L. and Zuniga, X. (Eds.). (2010). *Readings for diversity and social justice. Second edition* (pp.). New York: Rutledge.
- Picower, B. (2009). The unexamined Whiteness of teaching: how white teachers maintain and enact dominant racial ideologies. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*. 12(2), 197-215.
- Picower, B. (2011). Resisting compliance: Learning to teach for social justice in a neoliberal context. *Teachers College Record*. 113 (5), 1105-1134.
- Picower, B. (2013). You can't change what you don't see: Developing new teachers political understanding of education. *Journal of Transformative Education*. 11(3), 170-189.
- Pratt-Clarke, M.A.E. (2010) *Critical race, feminism, and education: A social justice model*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Prieto, L. & Villenas, S.A. (2012): Pedagogies from nepantla: Testimonio, Chicana/Latina Feminisms and teacher education classrooms. *Equity & Excellence in Education*. 45(3), 411-429.
- Ravitch, D. (2013). *Reign of error: The hoax of the privatization movement and the danger to America's public schools*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Reyes, K.B. & Rodríguez, J.E.C. (2012): Testimonio: Origins, terms, and resources. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 45(3), 525-538.
- Riviere, D. (2008). Whiteness in/and education. *Race, Ethnicity, and Education*. 11(14), 355-368.
- Salomona, R.P, Portelli, J.P., Daniel, B-J., & Campbell, A. (2006). The discourse of denial: How white teacher candidates construct race, racism and 'white privilege'. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*. 8(2), 147-169.
- Saavedera, C.M & Pérez, M. S. (2012): Chicana and Black feminisms: Testimonios of theory, identity, and multiculturalism. *Equity & Excellence in Education*. 45(3), 430-443.
- Sandler, B., Silverberg L., Hall R. (1996). *The Chilly Classroom Climate*, AAUW-excerpt.
- Sandoval, C. (2000). *Methodology of the oppressed*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Sands, K.M.(2001). Coming out and leading out. Pedagogy beyond the closet. In Kingston-Mann, E. *Achieving Against the Odds*. (18-35).Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- School of Education University of Colorado, Boulder: Diversity Statement, retrieved from <http://www.colorado.edu/education/about/diversity.html>.
- Schuessler, J. B., Wilder, B., & Byrd, L. W. (2012). Reflective journaling and development of cultural humility in students. *Nursing Education Perspectives*, 33(2), 96-99.
- "Scrap the MAP!" *Scrap the MAP*. N.p., n.d. Web. 27 Jan. 2014.
- Seidl, B.L. & Hancock, S.D. (2011). Acquiring double images: White preservice teachers locating themselves in a raced world. *Harvard Educational Review*. 81(4), 687-709.
- Souto-Manning, M. and Ray, N. (2007): Beyond survival in the ivory tower: Black and brown women's living narratives. *Equity & Excellence in Education*.

- 40(4), 280-290.
- Sleeter, C.E. (2008). Equity, democracy, and neoliberal assaults on teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*. 24, 1947-1957.
- Sleeter, C. E.(2008). Preparing white teachers for diverse students. In M. Cochran-Smith, S. Feiman-Nemser, & D.J. McIntyre.(eds). *Handbook of research on teacher education. Enduring questions in changing context, third edition*. (559-582). New York: Routledge.
- Sleeter, C.E.(2009). Diversity vs. White privilege: An interview with Christine Sleeter. In Au, W. (2009). *Rethinking multicultural education: Teaching for racial and cultural justice*. (37-44). Milwaukee, WI: Rethinking Schools Publication.
- Spring, J. (1988). *Conflict of interest: The politics of American education*. London: Longman.
- Spring, J. (1996). *American education; Seventh edition*. New York: McGraw-Hill Inc.
- Spring, J. (2008). Research on globalization and education. *Review of Educational Research*. 78 (2), 330-363.
- Smith, L.T. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. London: University of Otago Press.
- Stake, R.E. (2010). *Qualitative research: Studying how things work*. New York: The Stake (2010) notes, "understanding the case requires an understanding of other cases, things, and events, but also an emphasis on its uniqueness" (p.31). Guilford Press.
- Steinberg, S.R. (2007). Preface: Where are we now? In McLaren, P. & Kincheloe, J.L. *Critical pedagogy: Where are we now?*. (pp.IX-X). New York: Peter Lang.
- Stoddart, T. & Floden, R. (1996). Traditional and alternative routes to teacher certification: Issues, assumptions, and misconceptions. In K. Zeichner, S. Melnick, & M.L. Gomez. *Currents of reform in preservice teacher education*.(80-106). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Sumara, D., & Davis, B. (1999). Interrupting heteronormativity: Toward a queer curriculum theory. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 29(2), 191-208.
- Teitelbaum, K. (2009). Restoring collective memory: The pasts of critical education. In Apple,M.A., Au W., & Gandin, L.A.*The routledge international handbook of critical education*.(pp. 312-326). New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.

- The Combahee River Collective (2009). In *Still brave: The evolution of Black women's Studies* (pp.3-11). New York: The Feminist Press.
- Twine, F.W. & Gallagher, C. (2008). The future of whiteness: a map of the 'third wave'. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. 31(1). 4-24.
- Tyack, D (2003). *Seeking common ground: Public schools in a diverse society*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Vavrus, M. (2002). *Transforming the multicultural education of teachers: Theory, research and practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Villegas, A.M. & Davis, D.E. (2009). Preparing teachers of color to confront racial/ethnic disparities in educational outcomes. *Handbook of research on teacher education. Enduring questions in changing context, third edition*. (559-582). New York: Routledge.
- Villegas, A.M. & Irvine, J.J (2010). Diversifying the teaching force: An examination of major arguments. *Urban Review*. 42, 175-192.
- White, E. (2012). *Whiteness and teacher education*. New York: Routledge.
- Wilson, S.M. & Tamir, E. (2009). Preparing teachers of color to confront racial/ethnic disparities in educational outcomes. *Handbook of research on teacher education. Enduring questions in changing context, third edition*. (908-935). New York: Routledge.
- Yin, R.K.(2006). Case study methods. In Greene, J.L., Camilli, G., and Elmore, P.B. (2006). *Handbook of complementary methods in education research*. (pp. 111-139). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Yosso, T.J. (2006). *Critical Race Counterstories along the Chicana/Chicano Educational Pipeline*, Ch. 4-undergraduates.
- Yosso, T. J., Smith, W. A., Ceja, M., & Solorzano, D. G. (2010). Critical race theory, racial microaggressions, and campus racial climate for Latina/o undergraduates. *Harvard Educational Review*, 79(4) 659-690.
- Yudice, G. (1991). Testimonio and postmodernism: Whom does testimonial writing represent? *Latin American Perspectives*, 18 (3)15-31.
- Zeichner, K. (1992). Conceptions of reflective teaching in contemporary U.S. teacher education programs. In Valli, L. *Reflective teacher education: Cases and critiques*. (161-173). New York: State University of New York Press.

- Zeichner, K. (1996). Teachers as reflective practitioners and the democratization of school reform. In K. Zeichner, S. Melnick, & M.L. Gomez. *Currents of reform in preservice teacher education*.(199-234). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Zeichner, K. & Flessner, R. (2009). Educating teachers for critical education. In Apple, M.A., Au, W. and Gandin, L.A. *The routledge international handbook of critical education*. (296-311). New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.
- Zeichner, K. (2010). Competition, economic rationalization, increased surveillance, and attacks on diversity: Neo-liberalism and the transformation of teacher education in the U.S. *Teaching and Teacher Education*. 26 (2010) 1544-1552.
- Zeichner, K. & Pena- Sandoval, C. (in press, 2014). Venture philanthropy and teacher education policy in the U.S: The role of the New Schools Venture Fund. *Teachers College Record*.
- Zeichner, K., Bennett, D. , Cooley-Stroum, K., Guillen, L., Napolitan, K., Bowman, M., & Lindsay, J. (2014). Community-Family-Politics (CFP) Strand in the Elementary and Secondary Teacher Education Programs at the University of Washington-Seattle.