

Contextualizing Multicultural Visions from the Foot of the Mountain

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Abstract

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Many White students will grow up to become economic and political leaders, policy makers, employers, and executives of U.S. society. If White students are taught by teachers well versed in multicultural education, these youth may become future leaders with a developed self- and social-consciousness who promote actions to combat racism and other forms of oppression, contribute to dismantling disproportional privilege and institutional systems of racism. These hopes were the guiding force for this study of how White female teachers interpret and implement multicultural education in predominantly White public elementary school settings.

Data from this critical case study were collected, analyzed, and presented using portraiture methodologies. In addition to describing findings, portraiture has a transformative orientation in that it is intended to facilitate some action based on the data collected. The data generated from this study showed some significant differences needed to teach equity and social justice through multicultural education in predominantly White school settings.

The conceptual framework for this study used multicultural education as a vehicle for social justice teaching along with theories of social geography and race discourse. Data were collected from semi-structured interviews with each of the four participating teachers, classroom observations, and an inventory of print texts in the classrooms, including books, posters, and

management tools. This study took place in a large urban school district in the Pacific Northwest. The three school sites in the study were in predominantly White neighborhoods and had less than 10% of their students who received free and reduced lunch; were from African American, Latino American, and Native American populations; and qualified for English language learning services. The professional experience of the participants ranged from 2 to 29 years and they taught in grades 2-5.

Data analyses revealed some foundational features of teaching similar to multicultural education (such as building learning communities and trustful relationships between teachers and students), but because key conditional and methodological aspects (such as being explicit about racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity in teaching) were missing from their practices they were not considered genuine multicultural education.

Four other major findings resulted from the data analyses. They were

- Strong communities of learners were developed, but without opportunities to explicitly examine race, privilege, and Whiteness.
- Interpretations and practices of multicultural education were influenced by some formative and pivotal experiences of the White teachers, such as international traveling, and economic limitations during childhood.
- History was taught through the stories and experiences of different high profile individuals without connecting the past to the present when it comes to racial inequities and discrimination.
- Learning activities emphasized generalized differentiation, critical thinking, and knowledge construction but without placing them in the contexts of ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity and social activism.

The findings suggested that fear, anxiety, and lack of understanding about how to engage in conversations about present day issues of race, racism, and Whiteness and privilege prevented participants from actually practicing multicultural education and teaching for social justice. Recommendations for future research and practice were made to overcome these gaps between ideas and actions, and to help Whites teachers become genuine (and more competent) multicultural educators for and with their students.

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Mountain climbing is an activity no one does alone. Even if you hike alone, you are not by yourself. The first person to introduce you to mountain climbing, the person who fit your shoes and backpack, and the person who taught you to read a map and compass are always with you. Similarly, while my name alone will be on my dissertation, I did not accomplish this task by myself. For me, completing this dissertation is analogous to climbing that mountain!

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Dedication

For my mom who supports me unconditionally

For Jason, whose patience and encouragement are unwavering

For all my students who made want to be a better teacher

Chapter I

Preparing for the Mountain Trek

Introduction

My favorite painting is “Starry Night” by Vincent Van Gogh. The swirling stars in the dark sky remind me of camping while sitting high atop a mountain I just climbed and looking down at the small quiet village that was big and loud when I began my quest. To me it represents accomplishment, challenge, solitude, and quiet. The image calms me when I am stressed, relaxes me when I am tense, and comforts me when I am forlorn. While I have spent quite a bit of time looking at and admiring this painting, there are people who feel fear, anxiety, and discomfort when they look at it. It is the same work of art, but different life experiences bring different perspectives to the same piece.

If you view it from a distance and only look at it briefly you miss out on what makes the image whole. You do not see the green tucked in the night sky between the blues, whites, and yellows. You do not see the blob of yellow near the church that looks like a face. You do not see the purple in the rolling hills. You do not see the many shades of brown and hints of green of the dark formation in the foreground. You do not see the tiniest little speck of red in the background that could be a creature, a shadow, or something else entirely. You do not see the chunks of paint and the hard strokes that created the starry night sky. If you do not see how many things are connected to create one composition, your vision may be skewed.

The social and institutionalized inequities that plague our nation must be viewed compositely, like this painting, in order to understand the impact. Choosing not to or being unable to see (whether conscious or unconscious) the many components that create systems of inequity that overwhelmingly place people of color at a disadvantage only perpetuates the

inequity. Systemic racism, institutional racism, the school to prison pipeline, for-profit prisons, poverty, segregated housing practices and policies, and unfair policing are examples of the many interconnected pieces that contribute to composing the picture of the United States we see today. Together they comprise a kind of societal composition, somewhat like *Starry Night* is a composite art form.

The school year in which I undertook this research journey opened with protests in Ferguson, Missouri and closed with protests in Baltimore, Maryland. From my vantage point #BlackLivesMatter, #SayHerName, and #BlackSpring were always on the horizon and inevitable because I see how police brutality and the policing system are connected to many other factors that perpetuate the racist foundations of the United States. Many may say that the protests were due to isolated incidents of police brutality where young Black men were not seen as victims of a tragic act, but demonized to look as though they somehow deserved to die. They do not see a Black teen walking home. They do not see a Black man breaking up a fight. They do not see a Black child playing alone in the park. They do not see a scared Black father. They do not see a Black student out for the evening. They do not see valuable people of color who make the United States a pluralistic society. Their vision is skewed because they see isolate parts or incidents instead of composite wholes. They try to see the complexity of the “mountain” by looking at it from the foot when comprehending its magnitude requires perceptions from the summit.

Others, including critical race theorists, conclude that recent acts of racial brutality are just a spark and the true fuel is the systemic racism that runs through institutions across the United States, including education. Being a White woman in the education system makes it challenging to express and show why teaching through multicultural education is important in predominantly White settings because many White teachers choose not to “see” racism and

Whiteness, or they do not know how to do so. While at the same time it seems like an obvious way to transform the racist underpinnings and paint the pedagogical canvas anew. The portrait of racism in the United States runs deep, is perpetuated by Whiteness, and is at the core of the American way. Like the little speck of red, or the shades of brown, or hints of green in “Starry Night” this research study focused on one small piece of the larger picture of education in the U.S. to see if and how perpetuation of the status quo is being disrupted in predominantly White elementary school settings through the implementation of multicultural education.

Multicultural education is not only for diverse classrooms. It is also necessary for White students in predominantly White neighborhoods where the purpose of schooling is to provide the best education possible, stay on top, and perpetuate the status quo. Many of these children grow up to become the economic and political leaders, policy makers, employers, and executives of U.S. society. If White students are taught by teachers well versed in multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching they may then enter their post-education careers with better knowledge of and attitudes about the struggles of oppressed populations and the privileges of their own population. They may become political leaders and policy makers who work to reallocate power and privilege among ethnically diverse groups. They may become employers and executives with a developed self- and social-consciousness who analyze critical sociopolitical issues and events, and promote actions to combat racism and other forms of oppression. In order to contribute to dismantling disproportional privilege and institutional systems of racism, this study sought to answer the question, *How do White female teachers interpret and implement multicultural education in predominantly White public elementary school settings?* This question is especially worthy of study because of the segregation that creates predominantly White neighborhoods in the U.S.

The United States is continuing to undergo major shifts in population demographics. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (Kena, et al., 2014) 52% of students enrolled in U.S. public schools in 2011 were White, a 12% decrease since 2001. Latino students make up 17% of enrolled students, a 5% increase since 2001, while African American students shifted from 17% of enrolled students in 2001 to 16% in 2011. The number of White and African American students is projected to decrease into 2023 while Latino enrollment is projected to increase. This trend in changing demographics is not matched in the teaching profession where White female teachers dominate. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the teaching profession is 76% female and 83% White. Since the 1980s, the number of women becoming teachers has steadily increased, while the number of males has decreased (Feistritzer, 2011). Also, there are small increases in the number of teachers of color, but this number has yet to reach 20% of the teaching force (Feistritzer, 2011). Because of the growing number of students of color, the low number of teachers of color is problematic. As student population demographics change in U.S. schools, the realities of who inhabits classrooms are not reflected in the teaching force across the country, in politics, or in who is leading many corporations. This may leave many children of color wondering about their role and status in the U.S.

The United States is growing more segregated in the wake of huge growths of diversity (DiAngelo, 2012b; Orfield, 2014), even though the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* and the 1964 *Civil Rights Act* were meant to alleviate an unequal education and racial separation between Whites and people of color. Policies and practices that force many urban poor families of color into low-income housing are the same policies and practices that produce segregated environments where students attend schools lacking funding, rigor, advanced classes, and experienced teachers (Anyon, 2014). White students are the most segregated due to the economic

opportunities afforded White families to choose which schools their children will attend (DiAngelo, 2012b; Howard, 2012). White teachers are likely to come from “schools and neighborhoods that were racially segregated, and thus most have little or no firsthand knowledge of or relationships with people from races different from their own,” perpetuating the “impact of White privilege and power in American society” (Howard, 2012, p. 4). Consequences of putting the needs of students of color into the hands of White teachers from suburban backgrounds should be examined more deeply to see if or how they contribute to the continuing disparities in academic success as shown in achievement gap data.

According to 2013 statistics from the National Center for Education Statistics (Kena, et al. 2014), reading scores of all students have been slightly increasing since 1990. However, Black and Latino students have trailed White students since then. The same is true of mathematics. As Kozol (1991) explained in *Savage Inequalities: Children in American Schools*, this gap cannot reflect an inferior intelligence when disparities in how students are educated are so large. For example, in the late 1980s per pupil spending ranged from \$5,585 in New York City to \$11,372 per student in the suburb of Manhasset (Kozol, 1991). In 2012, New York City per pupil spending was \$8,138 and Manhasset was \$13,685 per student. In the New York City Public Schools, Latino, African American, and Native American students made up 69.6% of the student population where White students made up only 14.3% in the 2009-2010 school year. In Manhasset African American, Latino, and Native America students combined was 6.9% and White students made up 78%. For the United States as a whole the 2011 expenditures per student were \$11,153 (Kena, et al, 2014). When White teachers leave their havens of homogeneity and go into classrooms, diverse or homogeneous, their students could be at a disadvantage before they even walk into the classroom. While this study does not focus on White teachers in racially

diverse classrooms, the disparities among schooling between White students and students of color are not to be dismissed, and beg the question of what the purpose of schooling is in the first place.

Multicultural Education as a Vehicle for a Socially Just Society

Nearly every citizen in the United States can relate in some way to school systems because of their compulsory nature. As institutions, questions can be raised about their role in maintaining or combatting racism. One of the grounding principles of multicultural education is critically analyzing the perpetuation of inequalities among marginalized groups (Gay, 1995). According to Bell (1995, p. 901), “some positions have been historically oppressed, distorted, ignored, silenced, destroyed, appropriated, commodified and marginalized – and all of this, not accidentally.” This statement may be hard for many White educators to accept, especially when they believe they are not overtly racist, which may very well be the case. But, because Whiteness is an invisible norm, and standards of education practice and performance achievement are based on White middle class criteria (in fact the entire system) (McLaren, 1995) it is understandable why White female teachers may not recognize the depths of institutional racism. However, this ignorance can ensure that White students from privileged backgrounds perpetuate the status quo and continue to marginalize historically oppressed populations.

Also, when teachers in predominantly White schools do not think they need multicultural education because their school is not diverse, they “other” those missing in the population (Banks, 2002/2013). In the following statement Delpit (1988) argued that “othering’ is a byproduct of the culture of power:

Children from middle-class homes tend to do better in school than those from non-middle-class homes because the culture of the school is based on the

culture of the upper and middle classes — of those in power. The upper and middle classes send their children to school with all the accouterments of the culture of power; children from other kinds of families operate within perfectly wonderful and viable cultures but not cultures that carry the codes or rules of power. (p. 283)

By understanding the ideological foundations and action strategies of multicultural education, White teachers can begin to deconstruct these institutions and see their students in a new light (Brion-Meisels, 2009; Haymes, 1995). White teachers in suburban settings should teach their young White students the impact privilege has on themselves and others, while breaking down the myths of meritocracy, colorblindness, and individualism, and how to view the world differently, in hopes of achieving a societal transformation where there is justice for all.

Multicultural education began in the late 1960s and early 1970s with scholars of color who were part of the Civil Rights Movements and wanted to challenge inequities in terms of instructional racism in schools (Hernandez-Sheets, 2010; Sleeter & McLaren, 2009). The roots and ideals that drive multicultural education support social justice teaching. Beginning with ethnic studies programs, multicultural education evolved over the years in promoting teaching more than the European view of the world by including the histories, experiences, and contributions of other ethnic groups such as African Americans, Native Americans, Latino Americans, and Asian Americans, women, and people with disabilities (Banks, 1993b). At the same time “concerns about the treatment of ethnic groups in school curricula and instructional materials directly reflected concerns about their social, political, and economic plight in the society at large” (Gay, 1983, p. 560). Therefore, demands for transforming education paralleled

those for equalizing societal opportunities. They required teachers to think about and commit to changing teaching paradigms of the past.

The version of multicultural education many White educators find most acceptable is what Banks (2002/2013) calls a contributions approach. It focuses on celebrating cultures with foods and games, and teaches about people from around the world. At first glance, this focus may appear to be compatible with the multicultural education priority for helping “students to become critical thinkers who have knowledge, attitudes, skills, and commitments needed to participate in democratic action to help the nation close the gap between its ideals and its realities” (Banks, 1993b, p. 5). But there are important nuanced differences and the operative words are “the nation.” Furthermore, many White teachers do not have the knowledge and skills themselves required to meet these goals, perhaps due to a sheltered upbringing in predominantly White neighborhoods. Banks offered a second approach to implementing multicultural education called additive. Here, books, units, and facts about ethnically and racially diverse groups are added to existing curricula without changing their basic structures. This could leave students with a lack of critical competence to question contradictions that are bound to appear throughout the year with the materials added into preexisting curriculum. Teachers who take this approach do not teach about social injustices or institutionalized racism, which is what multicultural education intended (Sleeter & McLaren, 2009). In the third approach – transformation – the curriculum is changed to give students the opportunity to see the world from many diverse ethnic and cultural perspectives in the United States and beyond. Finally, the fourth approach called social action, enables students to make decisions and take action on issues (Banks, 2002/2013). Curricula are modified to support students, teaching them to be critical thinkers, collaborative

with colleagues, and to question the realities in which they live. This fourth approach in multicultural education is social justice teaching.

Purposes of the Study

The goals of multicultural education are much more transformative than many White teachers have assumed (Sleeter & McLaren, 2009; Howard 2006; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Gay, 1995). Multicultural education seeks to teach students skills that will help them question societal assumptions and think critically about the ideals of the United States versus its realities in order to work towards a more just society for diverse population groups (Banks, 1992). Multicultural education has the capacity to revolutionize education, which, in turn, may revitalize society. However, being able to efficiently put together truly multicultural education programs and practices takes a certain kind of knowledge, and conceptual and application skill mastery that many educators do not have (Gay, 1992). This study explored the knowledge, skills, and applications White elementary teachers use to promote equity, social justice, and multicultural education in predominantly White classroom settings, and how they come to develop these commitments, confidences, and competencies.

While some teacher education programs have adopted multicultural education as foundational ideology and practice, many still avoid making it a major focus (Gay, 2002). When multicultural education is a required class in a teacher preparation program, coupled with the lack of discussion of White privilege, social justice, and other critical theories, the message sent to White teachers is that multicultural education is something to think about, but not anything that must be done in order to ensure academic success for all students. Gardner (2007) makes it clear that teachers' attitudes about achievement, ability, and expectations will not close the achievement gap until, "racism is recognized as the pervasive and insidious cancer that it is and

when Americans are united in their willingness to do something about it” (p. 545). Therefore, a major goal of this study was to examine White female teachers’ definitions and practices of multicultural education with predominantly White students.

According to Gay and Howard (2000), there are many attitudes that must be combatted before teachers can truly teach through a multicultural education framework. One of them is, “resistance to dealing directly with race and racism” (p. 1) in the classroom and the schools in which White teachers work. A major goal of this study was to find out how White teachers in predominantly White public school settings are having these conversations about race with students and each other. With one in five children growing up poor and over one million children homeless in the United States (Leistyna, 2009) it could be argued that it is critical to educate all students in order to eradicate these injustices through social justice and multicultural education. Paulo Freire, author of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970/2000), explained that students often internalize the negative conceptions of their identities and heritages disseminated by mainstream societies. He said:

Self-depreciation is another characteristic of the oppressed, which derives from their internalization of the opinion the oppressors hold of them. So often do they hear that they are good for nothing, know nothing and are incapable of learning anything – that they are sick, lazy and unproductive – that in the end they become convinced of their own unfitness. (p. 63)

Students from oppressed, marginalized, and mainstream populations come into classrooms with views of the world that favor Whiteness over others. White teachers have an opportunity to teach all students, including White students in largely mono-racial, -ethnic, and –cultural settings, the nature and effects of oppression for both the oppressed and the oppressor in critical ways that

will foster action and transformation in society. Therefore, by teaching all students from a multicultural education framework, including White students in predominantly White settings with their White teachers, transformation to a more equitable and just society can be attainable.

This study looked closely at what White teachers in predominantly White schools think of the importance of multicultural education, along with the skills and knowledge needed to be effective multicultural educators. Derman-Sparks and Ramsey (2005) suggested techniques teachers in predominantly White settings could use to integrate multicultural education in their classrooms. These included analyzing ways Whiteness becomes the invisible norm in the classroom; developing authentic identities based on personal abilities and interests, family, history, and culture; creating collaborative projects that require children to pay attention to others' perspectives; and showing children that activists are real people and that the message is not about "rescuing" others but rather about how people working together as allies have the power to make change. However, before White teachers can even attempt to do these things, they need to accept that doing so is imperative.

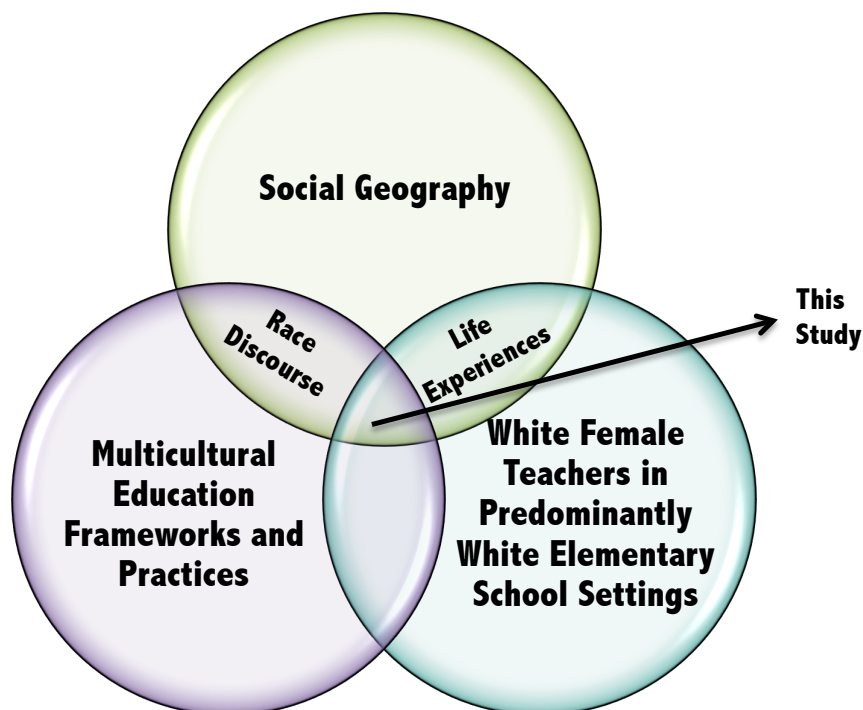
Conceptual Framework

Multicultural educators have to decide how to engage with race both personally and professionally “since people sometimes want race not to matter to how people are treated in schools and sometimes argue that race should matter very much indeed. Claims about race’s relevance are always highly controversial” (Pollock, 2004, p. 43). Many teachers have the attitude that race is not important and that all students should be treated the same. However, in practice this claim of colorblindness devalues and ignores the real experiences of students who are different from the teacher in some way. It leads to what Pollock (2004) described as colormuteness, which is “the routine act of knowingly deleting race words from discourse, rather

than being truly ‘colorblind’”(p. 35). Talking about race and dealing with race in education may be controversial and uncomfortable, but to truly be multicultural educators, teachers must be willing to confront these issues in their teaching and other relationships with students. A goal of this study was to identify how White teachers are discussing race with their White students and facilitating engagement among students.

The conceptual relationships this study focused on are shown in Figure 1.1. The yellow circle at the top shows the relationship between social geography and phases of U.S. race discourse (Frankenberg, 1993) with how White women view the world. The teal circle at the bottom right represents the majority of the elementary school teaching force. The purple circle on the bottom left represents multicultural education frameworks and practices. This study also examined what happens in the intersecting spaces between multicultural education practices,

Figure 1.1: The Intersections of Social Geography, Multicultural Education, and White Female teachers



White female teachers in predominantly White elementary school settings, and social geography.

Teachers do not come to the classroom with the same personal histories, experiences, beliefs, values, and levels of skills. Quite often, teachers have not reflected on those values and norms so they cannot make connections between their personal beliefs and classroom practices (Irving, 2006). Early in their lives they learn that their Whiteness is “the norm” so it is very hard to be cognizant of their values and how their privilege has given them access to opportunities that others do not have (Dodd & Irving, 2006). To understand this framework more clearly, a description of Frankenberg’s (1993) work on social geography from *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness* is helpful.

Ruth Frankenberg was a feminist and a sociologist. After criticism from scholars of color about the feminist movement being defined by White women, she began to question what Whiteness actually is and what it means for women in the United States. These analyses led to the conclusion that race is a critical factor in shaping women’s lives. Her project consisted of intense interviews with 30 White women. The women were young and old, straight and lesbian, working- and middle-class, and in relationships with White partners and partners of color. The women interviewed shared information about their families, upbringing, relationships, jobs, views of the world, politics, and encounters with race and racism. Two of the most important results of this study are Frankenberg’s conceptions of social geography in shaping perceptions of race in women’s lives and the phases of race discourse in the United States.

Social geography “suggests that the landscape is peopled and that it is constituted and perceived by means of social rather than natural processes” (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 44). This means that where and how people live in space, place, and time influence who they become, what people experience as they grow up affects their ideas and images of the world as adults.

Teachers bring their ideas and images of the world to the classroom and the students they teach. Frankenberg's key ideas resonate with those of sociocultural theorists (such as Vygotsky, 1978) and multiculturalists (such as Banks & Banks, 2004; Nieto & Bode, 2011; Bennett, 2004) who emphasize the influences of cultural socialization, racial and ethnic identity, and prior experiences have on current teaching and learning.

Social geography connects directly to Frankenberg's phases of U.S. race discourse. She found that where people grow up in place and time affects how they talk about race. The phases of race discourse are essentialist racism, color- and power-evasiveness, and race cognizance. Essentialist racism considers race as a rationale for inequality; underlies other conceptualizations of difference; downplays structural/institutional inequities; and denies that racially structured political and economic inequalities shape material reality (Frankenberg, 1993). Basically, individuals who believe racism is overt in form and if they do not exhibit these behaviors, then they cannot possibly be racist.

Color- and power-evasiveness is analogous to colorblindness. It is the idea that everyone is the same and that race does not matter. This thinking "involves a selective engagement with difference," and "leads white women back into complicity with structural and institutional dimensions of inequality" (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 143). White women who believe there are no differences between races cannot recognize the inequities among races caused by the structures, systems, and institutions in the United States. Also, this way of thinking causes people to believe that success in the United States is based on merit. If individuals do not achieve full productive citizenship and economic success, it is not the fault of the system that establishes restrictive policies, but because they do not try hard enough. A body of research (Fives & Gill, 2015) on the

perspectives of pre-service teachers about teaching culturally, racially, and ethnically diverse content and students affirm Frankenberg's findings and claims.

Finally, race-cognizant White women are able to identify institutional racism and their place in the structural system. They understand the role White privilege and racism play in their lives. They have a heightened awareness of how racism structured their lives, and how their thinking is informed by racism and privilege (Frankenberg, 1993). Frankenberg found that women who used this phase of racial discourse made connections between racism and colonialism. Social geography and U.S. race discourse are factors that impact how White women navigate through the world, and may influence how White teachers instruct their students. This study sought to identify how the life experiences of White female teachers shaped their race discourse, and how this, in turn, affects their understanding and use of multicultural education as a mechanism for social justice teaching.

Summary

This study sought to identify what multicultural education looks like in the thoughts and actions of White female teachers in predominantly White elementary school settings. To conceptually frame the study tenets of multicultural education as a vehicle for social justice and social geography were combined as its conceptual framework. Among them were the importance of explicit analyses of racial identities, racial disparities, White privilege, and transformative efforts as essential elements of multicultural education. Social geography contends that where people grow up in space, place, and time influence how they view race.

Scholarship in support of the study is summarized in Chapter II. Research methodologies including identification of participants, and data collection and analysis procedures are described in Chapter III. The findings from the data collected are presented in Chapter IV and Chapter V.

Finally, a summary of the findings, interpretations of the data, implications for teacher education, and recommendations for further research are discussed in Chapter VI.

Chapter II

Trailblazing Mountaineers

Introduction

Looking at “Starry Night,” a painting by Vincent Van Gogh, I imagine being at the top of the mountain depicted, looking down onto the dark night of the village. I wonder who in that village would not have the means to also climb. Now, climbing a mountain should be something that everyone can do; it is just walking after all. However, if you think of the time it takes to get to the mountain, as well as the time it takes to climb up and back down, and then to return home, this is an activity for someone who can take time off from work. If you think of the amount of physical exertion it takes to sustain a pace fast enough to get back down before dark, this is an activity for someone who has time and resources for regular exercise. If you think of the food needed so as to not expel all your energy, this is an activity for someone who has access to healthy food. If you think of the specialty clothes and accessories, the hiking boots, the pants, the backpack with a hydration compartment, this is an activity that costs quite a bit of money and is outside normal day-to-day living. When you think about climbing a mountain this way, it becomes clear that this is not for everyone; it is an activity of privilege. Being genuine and competent multicultural educators, as well as the social, ethical, and academic skills it demands and the benefits it produces, is analogous to climbing a metaphorical mountain.

The benefits of climbing a mountain are immeasurable; the cardio and strength to stay fit and healthy; the mental stamina to not turn back; the reward of seeing the view of other peaks and people below you; the exhilaration of knowing the trek down is easier than up; the exhaustion that comes from working your mind and body outside of their comfort zone; and the accomplishment that comes from looking up at the mountain top from the village floor knowing

you've been up there. These thoughts are analogous to some of the attributes and advantages associated with other kinds of privilege. Reflecting on these lead me to believe that everyone should enjoy these benefits because they are consistent with a happy, healthy quality of life. When persons of privilege navigate through the world knowing their undeserved privilege has detrimental impacts on others, they do not live in a liberated space. Freire (2000) suggested that those with privilege only become liberated when "the oppressed who, by freeing themselves, can free their oppressors" (p. 56). I want to be free, and I want education for freedom! This study was undertaken with these values and visions in mind, and with the belief that multicultural education produces sociocultural and academic liberation.

Unfortunately, the U.S. has a long history of oppression, exploitation, and discrimination practices diametrically opposed to its ideological commitments to freedom that prevent some students (and teachers, too) from even imagining the existence of the metaphorical mountain, least of all reaching its summit. Its education system has been a mechanism for perpetuating these anti-freedom practices, especially for underprivileged populations. In schools across the country these legacies are justified over and over again using images of savagery and lack of intelligence to perpetuate supremacist agendas, or the status quo. In this chapter, reasons why putting an end to this type of education is important are examined by discussing research and scholarship on multicultural education; Whiteness and privilege; social justice; racial identity; and the research paradigm of portraiture. They constitute the epistemological foundations of this study.

Multicultural Education

A major component of multicultural education is social justice, which requires high levels of critical thinking, questioning, and action. Consequently, it is an academic, ethical and

political act (Howard, 2012; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2012; Nieto, 2010; Schoorman & Bogotch, 2010; Cochran-Smith, 1998; Macedo, 1995; Freire, 1970/2000). Scholarship about the origins and dimensions of multicultural education is summarized in this section.

Conceptualizing Multicultural Education

Multicultural education is a movement that emerged out of the frustrations and injustices the schools imposed on oppressed groups in the United States. African American scholars who were part of the 1960s Civil Rights Movement wanted to stress the concept of educational inequities in terms of institutionalized racism (Sleeter & McLaren, 2009; Bennett, 2001; Gay, 1995). According to Bennett (2001) following the *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision in 1954, multicultural education “emerged quickly and passionately, drawing on a long history of multidisciplinary inquiry, artistic and literary achievement, social action, and scholarly writing” (p. 172). She added that multicultural education was (and is) “a hopeful and idealistic response” to the existing educational conditions of minority students. It grew rapidly among educational equity advocates. As multicultural education grew, it began to encompass other groups. By the 1970s, its goals of equal opportunity and social justice in education constituted “a set of core values and ideals that provide conceptual clarity and power to its contemporary research and practice” (Bennett, 2001, p. 172).

Gollnick and Chinn (1998) suggested that multicultural education “has evolved from concepts that have existed since the 1920s, when educators began writing about and training others in intercultural education and ethnic studies” (p. 24). They explained that participants in ethnic studies in the 1960s and 1970s were typically members of the groups being studied. The emphases were on ethnic history and culture, and instilling pride in one’s identity, while also

examining conflict with mainstream society. They explained that in reacting to the ethnic studies movement,

Educators responded by expanding multiethnic education to the more encompassing concept of multicultural education. This broader concept focused on the different microcultures to which individuals belong, with an emphasis on the interaction of membership in the microcultures, especially race, ethnicity, class, and gender. It also called for the elimination of discrimination against individuals because of their group membership. (p. 27)

The study of identity and ethnicity extended to encompass belonging to multiple marginalized groups, as well as groups of privilege and intersectionality.

Ladson-Billings (2004) described multicultural education as having grown into an “umbrella movement” for many identifiable differences from its initial focus on challenging “inequities that students of color experienced in school and society” (p. 55). She explained that even though multicultural education is often equated by some with curriculum content (especially in practice), its ideals and purposes encompass education as a whole. Part of this expansion is attributed to “a growing understanding of the multiple identities that people inhabit and embrace, and an awareness of other forms of oppression [that] made the ethnoracial distinctions a limited way to talk about multiculturalism and multicultural education” (p. 51). These scholars imply that multicultural education began with limited parameters that expanded in depth and breadth as the field evolved. It is highly probable that individuals may exhibit similar patterns of growth with novices viewing the field rather narrowly, and these conceptions becoming more complex as their knowledge of and experiences with cultural diversity increase.

More recent conceptions of multicultural education (at least in theory) view it as being inclusive and that it is beneficial for all students (Michael & Bartoli, 2014; Gay, 2010; Gollnick & Chinn, 1998; McIntyre, 1997; Tatum, 1997; Marshall, 1994; Bennett, 1981). Pang (1994) stated that, “multicultural education is the study of schooling aimed at providing all children with an equal opportunity to learn in a culturally affirming and caring environment” (p. 291).

Therefore, multicultural education includes ideologies, values, knowledge, ethics, beliefs, and behaviors. Spring (1999) expressed some caution about the inclusivity aspect of multicultural education. It has to do with its global expansion. He explained that different countries share similar issues such as cultural hegemony, language imperialism, gender equality, neglect of children living in poverty, and gaps in wealth. Spring declared, “These problems require multicultural studies to be active and not neutral or passive” (p. 13). The idea that multicultural education is an educational framework that one chooses in both career and life should not be lost. This is an active choice in that daily decisions multicultural educators make through the lens of this framework are embodied in the form of doing. The ideologies, aims, goals, foundations, principles, and beliefs are the basis of these decisions.

Bennett (2001), Gollnick and Chinn (1998), and Gay (1995) identified and clarified the major purposes of multicultural education. A common theme among these scholars is pluralism in conceiving and constructing quality education for ethnically, racially, culturally, and economically diverse students. According to Bennett (2001) pluralism is a way of envisioning,

A society based on core values of equity and social justice, respect for human dignity and universal human rights, and freedom to maintain one's language and culture, provide the human dignity, and [ensure that the] rights of others are not violated. It stands as a compromise between cultural assimilation on the one hand, whereby ethnic minority groups are expected to give up their language and culture to blend into mainstream

Anglo-European culture, and segregation or suppression of ethnic minorities on the other hand. (p. 173)

Gay (1995) placed the pluralism imperative of multicultural education more within the context of schooling. She reminded educators that it is,

A way of knowing, believing, and behaving which incorporates sensitivity to cultural diversity in making all education decisions about the planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs, policies, and procedures. It values and celebrates the cultural pluralism that is endemic to the human condition and U.S. society. (p. 159)

Gay explained further that the intent of multicultural education is to make education more equitable for and representative of the social, ethnic, and cultural pluralism characterizing U.S. society; make high quality learning more accessible to a wider variety of students; and contribute to the creation of a society in which the democratic principles of equality, freedom, justice, and human respect are realized for culturally diverse people.

Similarly, Gollnick and Chinn (1998) identified the major beliefs of multicultural education as cultural differences having strength and value; schools are models for the expression of human rights and respect for cultural differences; social justice and equality for all people is of paramount importance in the design and delivery of curricula; attitudes and values necessary for the continuation of a democratic society should be promoted in schools; providing students with the knowledge, dispositions, and skills for the redistribution of power and income among cultural groups; and working with families and communities to create environments that support cultural diversity. To activate these beliefs, Gollnick and Chinn suggested that teachers:

- Integrate cultural diversity into the curriculum
- Promote critical thinking
- Teach multicultural education academic subjects

- Incorporate culturally diverse student voices
- Establish cooperative learning practices
- Continue to build repertoire of multicultural teaching and learning practices

Thus, both Gay (1995) and Gollnick and Chinn (1998) contend that school is a place to prepare students to live by the democratic principles of equality, fairness, and justice.

However, instructional materials are not always helpful in achieving these goals because of racial, gender, cultural, and social class biases embedded in them. Ladson-Billings (2004) pointed out that sometimes these biases are conveyed by placing “information about racially and ethnically subordinated peoples in a special features section while the main text, which carries the dominant discourse, remains uninterrupted and undisturbed by ‘multicultural information’” (p. 53). This placement of content about diversity can be seen as a form of marginalization. Other cultural diversity biases often transmitted through textbooks are invisibility; stereotyping; selectivity and imbalance; unreality; fragmentation and isolation; and linguistic choices (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998). Multicultural educators adjust and supplement their curricula to avoid perpetuating these biases, and they teach students to think critically about who or what is missing, why that might be, and discovering what roles and functions the invisible played. A useful illustration of this is provided by Pang (2006) in addressing the invisibility of Asian Americans in social studies textbooks. It involved a labor strike conducted by Chinese railroad workers in 1867. Students learn about building systems of railroads from the mainstream perspective of U.S. growth and development rather than from the Chinese laborers’ experiences of working under hard and prejudicial conditions. In analyzing the selectivity and imbalance in this curricular decision, Pang (2006) stated, “The exclusion of information denies their [Asian Americans] existence and conveys the idea that their experiences were not important to society

in general. Also, the manner in which Asian Americans are presented in these texts reinforces stereotypes of Asians as weak and inconsequential, therefore not leaders” (p. 74).

Hollins (1983) expressed similar concerns about school curricula excluding non-White mainstream populations. She suggested it is absurd to assume that mainstream school curricula are about and for students from ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds. Instead,

The experiences, perceptions, and values of curriculum are still too much that of an idealized Anglo American middle-class culture. The assumption that existing curricula are suitable for all children in the American society, and that the rate and degree of acquisition and mastery of what is [*sic*] presented in school depends primarily on the pupils' intellectual ability and maturation, is a disregard for difference in experience, perception, and values, and contains a basic disregard for culture. (pp. 46-47)

Bennett (2001) suggested several principles of and practices for multicultural education. These included the theory of cultural pluralism; ideals of social justice and the end of racism, sexism, and other forms of prejudice and discrimination; affirmation of culture in the teaching and learning process; and visions of educational equity and excellence leading to high levels of academic achievement for all children and youth. She also developed a conceptual framework to guide research and inquiry in the field of multicultural education.

This framework included four clusters of study with three genres in each cluster. These are 1) curriculum reform cluster with genres of historical inquiry, detecting bias in materials, and curriculum theorizing; 2) equity pedagogy, including school and classroom climates, student achievement, and cultural styles in teaching and learning; 3) multicultural competence with genres of ethnic identity development, prejudice reduction, and ethnic group culture; and 4) and social equity encompassing social action, demographics, cultural diversity, and race in popular

culture. Bennett (2001) argued that the gap between multicultural education theory and practice could become better understood by using her conceptual framework. This idea became more applicable to the present study when she stated, “studies of teachers who do use multicultural content in their classroom focus on multiple perspectives in history and the reduction of prejudice and stereotypes, but not the curriculum transformation and social action advocated by multicultural curriculum experts” (p. 182). This gap between theory and practice often distorts multicultural education in action, or leads some teachers to assume certain aspects of teaching to be multicultural when they are, in fact, not.

Three types of scholarship in multicultural education on who are intended recipients or benefactors of multicultural education are especially relevant to this study. One is scholars of color who write on the importance of teaching students of color. For example, in *Other People's Children* (2006) and *Multiplication is for White People* (2012) Lisa Delpit exposed the cultural divide between students of color and their White teachers, and the importance of having the same high academic expectations for racial minorities as those held for White students. Realizing the immense role that teachers play in shaping the minds of their students, Sonia Nieto (1999), in *The Light in Their Eyes*, highlighted theories and practices for building multicultural learning communities. Geneva Gay (2000/2010) discussed the academic importance and moral imperative of using culturally responsive teaching practices with students of color. These arguments are presented in *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice*.

A second body of research and scholarship is produced by White scholars who speak specifically to White educators about teaching in ethnically, racially, and culturally diverse classrooms. For example, Gary Howard's (2006) *We Can't Teach What We Don't Know* explored how White teachers can use knowledge of self, instructional practice, and students to create more relevant and effective learning environments for diverse students. Some of Christine

Sleeter's diverse publications, including *Empowerment through Multicultural Education*, that analyzed critical pedagogy and privilege, aimed to help White teachers understand their roles and their effects in diverse classrooms. In *White Teacher*, Vivian Paley (2000) provided a personal account of challenges and accomplishments in teaching an integrated class in a predominantly White neighborhood. Paley emphasized the need for White teachers to engage in self-reflection. These publications show White teachers how to improve their practice, reflect on their privilege, and ensure success for the large population of students of color in U.S. schools.

The third type of scholarship is produced by White scholars and emphasized teaching multicultural education and social justice primarily to White students. For example, Swalwel's (2013) *Educating Activist Allies: Social Justice Pedagogy with the Suburban and Urban Elite* examined how White educators taught history through a social justice lens in predominantly White high schools. Also, Derman-Sparks' and Ramsey's (2011) *What if all the Kids are White? Anti-bias Multicultural Education with Young Children and Families* proposed anti-bias education for early childhood, and included strategies and resources for families and teachers. All of these scholars agree that teaching is not neutral, and that it is political. They also agree that multicultural education is important for Whites as well as students of color, although the reasons why and application strategies differ.

These scholars are not alone in declaring that teaching is not neutral. Others such as Michael (2015), Michael and Bertoli (2014), Sensoy and DiAngelo (2012), Gollnick and Chinn (1998), Macedo (1995), and Marshall (1994) argue that neutrality is a false claim in teaching and education. As Macedo (1995) succinctly stated, "Teaching is a political act, even if you think it should be neutral" (p. 77). The fact that one chooses *to* or *not to* teach multicultural education,

and to promote justice, equity, cultural diversity, and social transformation makes it a political decision. Sensoy and DiAngelo (2012) explained that to do so means that teachers and schools, have to educate students about the nation's social history; provide a multitude of perspectives; foster critical thinking ideas; and improve students' ability to engage with research, raise critical questions, evaluate alternative explanations, tolerate ambiguity, and foster collaboration. Without these skills, young people are ill-equipped to advance a socially just, democratic nation state. (p. 131)

Michael and Bartoli (2014) suggested that deliberately *not* teaching through multicultural perspectives is a form of silence that "perpetuates a racist status quo" (p. 58). Therefore those who choose not to teach a multicultural education, are, in effect privileging the mainstream and marginalizing others. They also acknowledge that some educators do not think the school is the appropriate place for racial socialization. These teachers prefer, instead, to attempt to maintain racial neutrality. However, Marshall (1994) suggested, "Neither teachers nor students come to the study of multicultural education from value neutral stances" (p. 19).

Because teaching from a multicultural education framework is political rather than neutral, it is necessary for teachers to understand the role they play in either perpetuating or interrupting the status quo. Sleeter and Grant (1996) suggested that education is a tool that can serve to subjugate or liberate. When school lacks connection to students' lives and present knowledge as incontestable, it serves to subjugate. Learning is liberating when "it helps students think about their own lives, when it gives them skills and conceptual frameworks that help them pursue their own concerns, and when it helps them examine the barriers that keep them from success and attainment of the good life" (p. 299). Pang (1994) added that the teachers' roles are to share in learning because, "True freedom occurs when teachers and young people tackle a problem and come to collective decisions about what action can be taken. The teacher does not

act as the person in control; rather he or she shares leadership and the responsibility for learning” (p. 290). Nieto (2010) offered similar ideas about teachers connecting content to their students’ lives. Because teaching is “embedded in a particular sociopolitical context” learning in multicultural education classrooms moves beyond adding to existing curriculum or developing “innovative pedagogical strategies with no connection to the lives of the students with whom they are used” (p. 112). Nieto advised multicultural educators to view their practice as more than deciding what is taught and how, to empowering the attitudes and beliefs of both teachers and students because social action is the desired outcome of multicultural education. Adjusting curriculum is a start, but it is not enough.

Nieto (2010) also recommended that teachers and students use “multiple and contradictory perspectives to understand their reality more fully” (p. 131). She encouraged students and teachers to construct their own knowledge, to examine connections between learning and the broader sociopolitical contexts in which they live and learn. By using critical perspectives and connecting school knowledge to societal living, students become “active agents” in their learning and “begin to understand that they have a role to play in the world” (p. 146). Freire (1970/2000) argued those seeking liberation, along with those who work in solidarity with them, must develop a strong critical awareness of the world and the struggles of the oppressed. This can be accomplished by constructing knowledge, which “emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other” (Freire, 1970/2000, p. 72).

Multicultural education seeks to teach students skills that will help them to question societal assumptions, think critically about United States ideals versus realities, and work

towards a just society (DiAngelo, 2012a; Banks, 1992). It has the potential to revolutionize education, which in turn will revitalize society. White teachers need to understand why equity, social justice, and multicultural education are imperative for the success of all students, including those attending predominantly White schools, and act in accordance with these insights. Marshall (1994) discussed the transformative nature of multicultural educators and the responsibility to make,

problematic those aspects of schooling (and teachers' contributions to them) that serve to perpetuate the inequitable treatment and disempowerment of many groups. Teachers can most effectively serve in this role by developing critical awareness of multicultural education and how the current structure of many schools is inconsistent with its premises. (p. 25)

Pang (2006) declared that caring is an important aspect of multicultural education, and it is tied to social justice as a form of action. She stated,

When people care about another person, they find ways to treat that person justly, fairly, and equitably. Our nation is strongest when people struggle for justice, freedom, and equality because they care for others and hold human life sacred. Therefore, schooling must be part of the national commitment to democratic education that seeks to develop self-directed citizens who are dedicated to a just and compassionate community. (p. 69)

While caring is essential more is needed to fully implement multicultural education in classrooms; social justice and anti-racism understandings and actions are imperative, too.

Social Justice

Gollnick and Chinn (1998) contended that multicultural education is a way to model democracy, equity, critically analyzing society, and engaging in transformative, thought, and

action. They identified some ways teachers can do this, including critiquing society in the interest of social justice and equality. Swalwel (2013) suggested that if teachers “care about social justice and believe that schooling can help transform society, then we should care about how students of privilege are educated” (p. 14). Cochran-Smith (1998) identified social justice education as teachers being committed activists curtailing the inequities in the United States. To do this, she proposed six principles to guide teaching for social justice, all of which also are aspects of multicultural education:

- Enable significant work for all students within learning communities
- Build on what students bring to school with them
- Teach skills and bridge gaps
- Work with individuals, families, and communities
- Diversify types of assessments
- Make activism, power, and inequity explicit parts of the curriculum.

Nearly all scholars mentioned here declare social justice as a tenet of multicultural education. However, social justice is an ambiguous term that leaves many wondering what it actually means, conceptually and pragmatically. In developing this understanding it is beneficial to distinguish between two theories of justice, distributive and social. There is overlap between the two and each theory has several dimensions. These conceptions can cause confusion and contradiction in justice efforts (Boyles, Carusi & Attick, 2009; Chubbuck & Zembylas, 2008). On April 4, 1967, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. gave a speech entitled *Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence* at New York Riverside Church. In that speech he said, “True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar; it comes to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs

restructuring” (para. 46). Through the eyes of compassion, Dr. King succinctly illuminates, in one sentence, the difference between distributive justice and social justice

Distributive theory defines justice as the fair allocation of goods, such as, jobs, wealth, resources, and opportunities (Boyles, Carusi & Attick, 2009). Cochran-Smith (1998) states that the distributive paradigm of justice focuses on civics and citizens pursuing their own dreams and redistribution of things to ensure fairness and equality. An injustice in a distributive paradigm would be inequality. Putting everyone on an even playing field and ensuring that they have the same opportunities fall under distributive justice. This is a common theme in education and other systems in the United States. However, it only redistributes what is available. In King’s quote, giving the beggar a coin distributes more resources, but the beggar must still beg.

Social justice, a more complex theory, is addressed in the second part of King’s statement that, “an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring.” It is not enough to allocate resources toward the ills of society or even question why they exist. Social justice is eliminating systems that create beggars in the first place, and freeing those who feel that oppression limits their share of the resources available (Boyles, Carusi & Attick, 2009). Young (1990) argued that this requires the oppressed and the oppressors to acknowledge “those group differences in order to undermine oppression” (p. 3).

Young (1990) explained five types of oppression, which are exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence. Describing injustice as the suffering people endure because of, “everyday practices of a well-intentioned liberal society” (p. 41) distinguishes social justice dramatically from distributive justice. Young (1990) suggested that oppression is often created by people who are going about their lives like everyone else in society and do not see themselves limiting the rights and opportunities of others whom they

share a liberal society. Therefore, “For every oppressed group there is a group that is *privileged* in relation to that group” (Young, 1990, p.42). By acknowledging one’s privilege, one must also acknowledge the role that privilege plays in oppression. Sensoy and DiAngelo (2012) added that racism is an unequal distribution of power between Whites and people of color; therefore racism cannot exist without also having Whiteness. In fact, Haymes (1995) noted this interactive relationship in suggesting, “that to understand white consumer culture’s images and representations of black people and black culture, we must first recognize the historically specific ways that *whiteness* is a politically constructed category that is parasitic to *blackness*” (p. 110). Helms (1992) supported this idea in her claim that Whites invented racism and its various manifestations (See Roediger, 2007; Jacobson, 1998; Allen, 1994 for history of Whiteness). Thus, teaching for social justice includes analyzing how privilege and oppression function in daily lives, making them visible, and acting on what is seen. These analyses can start with observing and unpacking distributive justice. However, social justice restructures the complex systems that contribute to the unfair distribution of resources; it is transformative. Multicultural education can help teachers deconstruct these practices and guide students to construct new realities.

Because multicultural education needs to be addressed in all classrooms across the U.S., including predominantly White schools, it is expressed differently in practice depending on the setting, and who is teaching and learning. Therefore, teachers prepared to work in diverse, low-income schools may not be able to successfully teach predominantly White, middle-class students about issues of cultural diversity, ethnicity, racism and justice, and vice versa. Sleeter and Grant (1986) suggested that because the U.S. is a stratified society founded on White supremacist ideals, student outcomes will vary greatly:

Even when their levels of educational attainment are identical, some youngsters move into positions of power and wealth on leaving school, while others live lives marked by poverty and powerlessness. This is the case because society distributes its resources, at least in part, on the basis of race, socioeconomic background, and gender. (p. 297)

Consequently, conversations about racism in the United States are incomplete when privilege and Whiteness are not included.

Racism

Racism is so embedded into U.S. culture that it is hard for many to identify and name, especially Whites. Yet, it is still thriving, purposeful, and the vehicle for inequities in the United States. According to Ladson-Billings (1998) traditional educational structures and practices value Whites and Whiteness. But, education can (and should) be a platform for social justice and democracy. Dismantling oppression, hegemony, and privilege is a central theme in multicultural education.

Tatum (1997) defined racism as “a *system* involving cultural messages and institutional policies and practices as well as the beliefs and actions of individuals” (p. 7). Sensoy and DiAngelo (2012) elaborated on this idea in their explanation that racism is

White racial and cultural prejudice and discrimination, supported by institutional power and authority, used to the advantage of Whites and the disadvantage of people of Color [*sic*]. Racism encompasses economic, political, social, and institutional actions and beliefs that systematize and perpetuate an unequal distribution of privileges, resources, and power between Whites and people of Color [*sic*]. (p. 101)

Mills (1997) offered a similar definition of racism as “a political system, a particular power structure of formal or informal rule, socioeconomic privilege, and norms for the differential

distribution of material wealth and opportunities, benefits and burdens, rights and duties” (p. 1). Likewise, to Sleeter (1994) racism is, “The system of rules, procedures, and tacit beliefs that result in Whites collectively maintaining control over the wealth and power of the nation and the world” (p. 6). All of these definitions consider racism as systemic, institutionalized, and embedded in U.S. society. They all focus on the oppressor. Yet, many Whites do not see racism in their daily actions. They believe racism is only overt in nature and if they are not deliberately demeaning, denigrating, and oppressive to others then they cannot possibly be racist (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2012).

Tatum (1997) metaphorically compared racism to smog. Smog is ever present in the air. Some days it is thick, visible, and easy to identify. Other days it is barely there, invisible to the eye. Either way, people are constantly breathing it. Similarly, racism is constantly present and pervasive. Sometimes it is active and blatant, such as a 21-year old walking into an historic Southern Black church and killing nine of its members (Pierce, 2015), or a White woman appropriating Black culture while living among and taking leadership roles in the Black community (Ghose, 2015). At other times it is passive and subtle, such as laughing at a joke or assuming a Black person got into college because of affirmative action and not on intellectual ability. Tatum (1997) stated that racism is taught, passed down from adults to children.

Furthermore,

Unless we engage in... conscious acts of reflection and reeducation, we easily repeat the process with our children. We teach what we were taught. The unexamined prejudices of the parents are passed on to the children. It is not our fault, but it is our responsibility to interrupt this cycle. (p. 7)

Frankenberg (1993) stated a similar conclusion when she suggested that Whites are “inheritors” of racism rather than authors to avoid guilt and work toward dismantling racism (p. 182). This is also the responsibility of multicultural educators. In predominantly White school settings this means identifying, critically analyzing, and discussing Whiteness and privilege, along with race, racism and oppression.

Yet, many White teachers do not believe racism is an issue in contemporary society and schools. They believe that race is less relevant today in determining the status and well-being of people of color. However,

Contrary to what many would like to believe, America is still organized around structures that perpetuate racial inequality. If anything, these structures may be just as pervasive than ever before, yet harder to identify, especially if our eyes are closed. To not see skin color or race is not to see racism either. For to be color blind is to be blind to White culture, and, thus, blind to one’s own White privilege. (Rosenberg, 2004, p. 268)

Colorblindness masks racism and allows Whites to not claim their part in oppression. Marshall (1996) suggested that when teachers enter classrooms with a colorblind ideology they claim to treat all students the same, even when cultural factors of the students do not follow the mainstream culture. Rosenberg (2004) pointed out the danger of a colorblind ideology and how it perpetuates the status quo. She stated,

Those who favor a color-blind society fail to see that race, especially skin color, has consequences for a person’s status and well-being. That blindness to skin color and race remains a ‘privilege’ available exclusively to White people highlights the reality that color blindness only serves to perpetuate and institutionalize the very divisions between people that it seeks to overcome. (p. 257)

Colorblindness is not the only ideology that prevents Whites from seeing their role in racism. Meritocracy and individualism are also mainstream ideologies that perpetuate dominance among Whites. Tatum (1997) described why the fallacy of these ideologies would be hard for Whites to recognize and accept:

The view of oneself as an individual is very compatible with the dominant ideology of rugged individualism and the American myth of meritocracy. Understanding racism as a system of advantage that structurally benefits Whites and disadvantages people of color on the basis of group membership threatens not only beliefs about sociology but also beliefs about one's own life accomplishments. (p. 103)

Gollnick and Chinn (1998) supported this claim in their explanation of the failure of many Whites to understand why everyone cannot achieve simply by working hard:

[They] believe that their mobility was based totally on individual achievement, they cannot understand why members of other groups have not experienced the same success. They deny that racial inequality has any impact on one's ability to achieve. They seldom acknowledge that white oppression of people of color around the world has contributed to the subordinate status of these groups. Many whites are unable to acknowledge that they are privileged in our social, political, and economic systems. (p. 88)

By critiquing meritocracy and individualism White students may begin to develop different understandings of racism, privilege, and inequities. However, these critiques are not common undertakings among most Whites teachers, thereby making discussions of racism almost impossible tasks.

Sensoy and DiAngelo (2012) also observed that racism is a very difficult discussion to have among Whites. The reason is "pervasive miseducation about what racism is and how it

works; a lack of productive language with which to discuss racism; institutional and economic interests in upholding racism; ideologies such as individualism and colorblindness; and an emotional attachment to ‘commonsense’ opinions that protect...our worldviews” (p. 97). Mills (1997) calls this the “Racial Contract” in which Whites created and uphold a political system that benefits them, teachers among them.

Sleeter (1994) examined how pre-service teachers responded in discussing Whiteness. They, “tried to place [Whites] on a parallel status with the other racial groups, defining our problems as comparable to theirs.... [They] could discuss our religious, ethnic, and social class differences, but not our common Whiteness or the privileges we gain from White racism” (p. 6). Sleeter also noticed the prospective teachers discussed race in ways that perpetuated racial privilege. For example, they were willing to “critique the psychological impact of slavery on Blacks, but not its impact on [Whites]” (p. 6). These observations led Sleeter to conclude that, while multicultural education challenges racism, it cannot do so fully without also confronting White supremacy. Thus, White teachers need to understand the role of White supremacy in racism, and oppression, and be able to critically analyze their role in these processes, as a basis for a more just society. Michael (2015,) added to these explanations the idea that Whites are very much a part of any racialized social problem, even though they are often unnamed or unrecognized as a racial group. One advantage of this reframing is that when we recognize our role in racialized social problems, we open up to the possibility of being part of the solution as well. (p. 11)

White Teachers and Multicultural Education

Multicultural education emphasizes transformative education, social justice, and equity, but these cannot come to fruition without also understanding Whiteness. Yet, Whiteness “refutes

the legacy of racism, dismisses the race inequities that exist in our schools, and resists the restructuring of educational institutions, making resources equitable for *all* students” (McIntyre, 1997, p. 120). Getting White teachers to understand Whiteness and privilege has proven difficult in many contexts and for many reasons. Among these reasons are a lack of understanding of privilege and power, and fear, anxiety, and discomfort in talking about race and racism.

Privilege and Power

According to McIntyre (1997) many White teachers deny or ignore the “critique of the multiple levels of miseducation for children of color, and of white children as well, and the unequal distribution of wealth and power that exists in our nation and is partially lived out within the confines of our educational institutions” (p. 13). Due to their upbringing and socialization, many Whites in the U.S. find it difficult to see and accept the impact their privilege has on people of color. These disconnections produce a “disturbing view of what constitutes transformative classroom practice” (McIntyre, 1997, p. 121). This socialization teaches Whites to see themselves as the norm and raceless, while viewing people of color as “Other.”

Nieto (2010) contended that one cannot be a multicultural teacher without also being a multicultural person. Even when the curriculum is, “outwardly multicultural, if teachers do not demonstrate through their actions and behaviors that they truly value diversity, students often can tell” (p. 177). While Nieto was talking about White teachers working with children of color, the same can be said for White students in predominantly White schools. If White teachers do not teach and value the pluralistic nature of the U.S., then neither will their White students.

Sensoy and DiAngelo (2012) and DiAngelo (2012b) defined socialization as the process of learning the norms, meanings, and practices that enable children to make sense of and behave appropriately in a given culture. In the U.S., many White children are socialized into

unquestioning acceptance of White supremacy and dominance. Sensoy and DiAngelo suggest that this is done through messages that White students receive on a daily basis that they are superior to other groups of people. Haymes (1995) claimed that “white supremacist assumptions and ideas penetrate every facet of daily life” (p. 106). Subordinate and dominant groups are influenced by these assumptions with “the number and variety of images of the dominant group available through television, magazines, books, and newspapers [that] provide subordinates with plenty of information about the dominants. The dominant world view has saturated the culture for all to learn” (Tatum, 1997, p. 24). Much of this socialization happens in enclaves where White teachers grow up and then return to teach the next generation of White students.

Whites are the most segregated population in the United States (DiAngelo, 2012b; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2012; Grant & Sleeter, 1985). Grant and Sleeter (1985) observed that many of their White pre-service teachers did not have contact with people of color until high school or college. Sensoy and DiAngelo (2012) attributed this isolation to the economic means Whites have to choose segregated living, and that White neighborhoods are examples of racism. DiAngelo (2012b) found that pre-service teachers from predominantly White neighborhoods believe that, because of their colorblind ideals, racism was in the past. She noted the irony in this way of thinking:

I teach in an education program that is 97% white, and it is rare for me to have any students of color in my classes. Thus, this typical insistence that race doesn't matter comes from white students sitting in an all-white classroom, who grew up in primarily white neighborhoods and attended primarily white schools, are currently being taught by a virtually all-white faculty.... These racial realities testify to a society separated by race. (DiAngelo, 2012a, p. 4)

To claim that this White self-segregation is a by-product of a post-racial society would be a major misunderstanding of the depths to which privilege, White supremacy, and racism permeate present day U.S. society and schools.

Brown v. Board of Education (1954) deemed segregation a detriment to children that “affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone” (para. 18). Bennett (1981) suggested that segregation serves to “reinforce negative prejudices, fears, myths, and stereotypes that are difficult to overcome” (p. 589). However, she also acknowledged that, for people of color, segregation from Whites is sometimes a means of cultural preservation. A similar argument could be made about students growing up in predominantly White schools, which is reason for them to learn about privilege in critical and constructive ways, to interrupt the cycle of racism that breeds in predominantly White neighborhoods.

Low (2004) investigated White racially segregated communities and noted that they “intensify social segregation, racism, and exclusionary land use practices already in place in most of the United States” (p. 36). Families move from urban areas to the assumed safety and tranquility of gated suburban communities as part of pursuing the “American dream.” This type of community segregation is troubling because interactions between White children and children of color are limited if not non-existent. The lack of “direct experience means that what one learns about the ‘other’ is based on secondhand information, information too often conveyed in the form of media stereotypes or parental prejudices” (Tatum, 1997, p. 212). This practice perpetuates the status quo and continues the generational cycle of racism in the U.S. What parents pass down to their children in this cycle is privilege, which Helms (1992) calls “the unspoken law of the land,” a foundation of racism.

Sensoy and DiAngelo (2012) defined privilege as “systemically conferred dominance and the institutional processes by which the beliefs and values of the dominant group are ‘made normal’ and universal” (p. 57). It would make sense, then, that if dominant groups decide what is normal, they would also determine what is abnormal, which in the U.S. happens at the expense of marginalized minority groups. These authors explained further that privileged individuals are “the least likely to understand oppression and the most likely to be invested in holding it in place, [it] is the group in the position [who] write the rules” (p. 72). They also listed internal and attitudinal effects of privilege that are seen by non-dominant members of society but rarely seen by the privileged. These include the belief that the dominant group deserves their superior position; a lack of humility from not knowing about the dominated group; and the invisibility of privilege.

Tatum’s (1997) suggestion that dominant groups “set the parameters within which the subordinates operate” (p. 23) is apparent in employment patterns, histories, cultures, experiences, contributions, and education. Other ways that privilege is manifested include standardized testing and access to rigorous curriculum (Fine, 2004), and textbooks written by Whites (Mills, 1997). While many do not acknowledge these benefits, some Whites can see the advantages of Whiteness, as others continue to deny the validity of race, and the pervasiveness of racism. Michael and Bartoli (2014) suggested that although these intentions may be noble, race and racism are real and they matter profoundly. To interrupt the cycle, White teachers in predominantly White schools need to see and teach how privilege and racism are interconnected. However, for many the thought of doing so leads to a discomfort that results in denial and/or silence.

Fear, Anxiety, and Discomfort about Difference

Many Whites do not know how to have conversations about privilege and racism with students. Whites do not believe racism is real or that they are racist, therefore, there is nothing to talk about. Those who are ready and willing to talk about race and racism need to know how to do so in productive and non-threatening ways, which means addressing the fear, anxiety, and discomfort often associated with these discussions.

McIntyre (1997), Sleeter (1994), and Michael (2015) agreed that failure to confront discomfort with difference is, in effect, a way to preserve a racist status quo. This avoidance led Tatum (1997) to question, “What do we fear?” She proposed several possible answers including, Isolation from friends and family, ostracism for speaking of things that generate discomfort, rejection by those who may be offended by what we have to say, the loss of privilege or status for speaking in support of those who have been marginalized by society, physical harm caused by the irrational wrath of those who disagree with your stance. (p. 194)

Whatever the reasons for not explicitly examining racial difference and racism, it is an established fact that children are conscious of these at a young age. If White adults do not help them examine their encounters with the mass messaging society sends them daily, they will reach negative conclusions, and take on the prevailing attitudes and behaviors of Whites privilege and racial oppression (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2012).

Both Tatum (1997) and Helms (1992) suggested that children are not born colorblind and do recognize racial differences as early as three and four years old. Consequently, Tatum suggested beginning conversations about race and racism at this young age. Michael (2015) encouraged this intervention because “a contextualized understanding of racism helps children

make sense of the world around them, one that is and has been shaped by systems of racism” (p. 101). She also considered this as an effective way to challenge Whiteness and include race-based discussions in normal, daily classroom routines, and in ways that are relevant to students’ worlds. Therefore, in predominantly White schools this includes teaching White children what it means to be White in a society which privileges them over racial others.

Tatum (1997) and Michael and Bartoli (2014) also suggested that teachers should identify and cultivate White antiracist allies as they teach about Whiteness and racism. This gives White students identity and action options that may foster social justice and transformation. Michael and Bartoli (2014) also emphasized the importance of the interconnectedness of racial group histories. If taught in isolation these histories can lead students to assume that Whites are pre-empted from any involvement in or responsibility from causing and correcting racism; that racism is a thing of the past; that they should sympathize with or pity victims of racism; and that they have no role to play in resolving the racist consequences. Haymes (1995) argued that educators can correct these misconceptions by confronting their own and their students’ racial formations. Grant and Sleeter (1994) suggested that an effective way for teachers to provide students with a quality multicultural education is to change their beliefs and behaviors. Because some White teachers may harbor negative or stereotypical perceptions of minority groups and their experiences (even though they may be “unconsciously” enacted behaviorally) they need to bring these to a level of consciousness, critique, and transformation before helping students to do likewise (Nieto 2010). This is needed whether they are teaching in diverse or predominantly White school settings. The limited amount of ethnic, racial, cultural, linguistic, and economic diversity in predominately White schools make accomplishing these goals difficult but nonetheless imperative. In order to prepare students to engage better with what they have not

actually seen or experienced racially, they need to participate in classroom dialogues and learning experiences that deal explicitly with a variety of ethnic and cultural differences (Tatum, 1997). Part of this heightened awareness for White students is understanding the role of Whiteness and privilege in the social order of the U.S., as well as developing positive White racial identity.

White Identity Development

White teachers come to the profession having already been socialized into a society that values Whiteness and privileges those who are White. This White identity affects their instructional behaviors in classrooms. It includes “a complex intersection of the personal, historical, and cultural; they are formed within a social context. An identity depends upon others; we know who we *are* by knowing who we *are not*” (DiAngelo, 2012a, p. 26). Tatum (1997) also pointed out that identity is partially constructed in interactions with others. As she stated, “The parts of our identity that *do* capture our attention are those that other people notice, and that reflect back to us” (p. 21). Some White teachers who do not see themselves as racial beings assume others do not either. McIntyre (1997), Tatum (1997) and Gollnick and Chinn (1998) all suggested that White teachers see themselves in society as the cultureless norm and raceless. They then pass this presumption of racial invisibility on to White students by not acknowledging their raciality. McIntyre (1997) pointed out that these identity perceptions have implications for teaching practice, such as how materials are chosen, how students are assessed and graded, and the expectations held for students. However, White teachers need “to problematize race in such a way that it breaks open the dialogue about white privilege, white advantage, and white ways of thinking and knowing that dominate education in the United States” (p. 14). These analyses are

necessary for teachers and students to understand how and why race matters in education and society.

Grant and Sleeter (1985) conducted a study examining whether it is teachers or the organizations in which they function that determine how their work is done. They found that teachers' backgrounds have a strong influence on their teaching practices related to cultural diversity. Grant and Sleeter explained that

Most teachers' personal backgrounds limited their understanding of human diversity and of social inequality based on race, class, and gender. Most were white and had been raised in totally or predominantly white communities. A little over half came from middle-class backgrounds; few came from economically poor family backgrounds. Most of the teachers had been raised in homes in which the father worked and the mother stayed home. (p. 218)

Based on these results teachers from predominantly White backgrounds with little to no knowledge of the effects of Whiteness in schools and society need a more thorough understanding of the concept of racialization, and the interactions between schools and society. Howard (2006) and Michael (2015) endorsed these ideas in suggesting that to become genuine multicultural educators White teachers need to know who they are racially and culturally, develop positive racial identities, and master knowledge and skills needed to teach students about the various components of multicultural education.

Tatum (1997) encouraged teachers to develop healthy and positive racial identities, as did Hollins (1990). By taking pride in their own cultural heritage, learning from personal family histories, and understanding the systemic nature of Whiteness (both structurally and influentially) teachers are better positioned to help students become social justice activists and

transformative citizens. Thus, racial identity development is important for White teachers as well as White students. As Michael and Bartoli (2014) advised, teachers and schools should “take a more proactive approach to teaching white students about race and racial identity” (p. 59). This need was reaffirmed by Helms (1992) in her observation that “in this society, one learns to act White, but not to *be* White” (p. 9). She suggested a four-step process for Whites to use in being White without exploitation, oppression, racism, and hegemony. They are:

- Make deliberate decisions to abandon racism.
- Observe the ways racism is maintained on various levels in society and schools.
- Learn the difference between expressing racism and expressing White culture, and monitor your own and others’ behaviors accordingly.
- Discover the positive aspects of being White, and distinguish them from pejorative Whiteness.

Howard (2012) presented a framework for becoming and being White racially that is similar to Helm’s but pertained specifically to White teachers. It represents a growth process where Whites see their racial identity as contextualized and constantly growing. The process includes three major phases or stages: 1) fundamentalist, or being explicitly or implicitly supremacist and colorblind; 2) integrationist, conveyed as a savior attitude that does not question how Whites’ beliefs and practices contribute to racial disparities; and 3) transformationist that acknowledges the racial realities of the U.S., critically analyzes the complexity of race, and challenged the supremacist structures of dominance in schools. Effective multicultural education teachers must be transformationists.

Michael and Bertoli (2014) also created a framework for White racial socialization. It includes messages, content knowledge, and skills. Messages emphasizes the importance of

talking about race. They distinguish between racial talk and racist talk. Because race is essential to one's identity, talking about race is not racist and should be done proactively rather than reactively. Content knowledge includes understanding the history of race and racism in the U.S. and how they function in societies and schools. Here it is important to understand systemic racism, the meaning of race, antiracism, stereotypes and prejudices, and counternarratives. Anti-racist skills involve being proactive in race discussions, and confronting and resisting racism. Some of the specific skill sets Michael and Bartoli suggested include managing racial stress, developing self-awareness about racist beliefs, and creating spaces or relationships of affinity and allegiance.

Another skill set strongly recommended by Michael and Bartoli (2014) is White students learning about the meaning of Whiteness and developing positive, but realistic White racial identities. They believe this is important because, "It is through seeing themselves in a larger racialized context that white people can begin to understand how they can work to change racism — and change what it means to be white" (p. 60). Apple (2004) took a similar position in suggesting that "those who are deeply committed to antiracist curricula and teaching need to place much more of their focus on white identity" (p. 80). Part of the positive White racial identity these scholars recommended is teachers refusing to perpetuate the status quo and the oppression that it promotes, either as persons or in their teaching practices with students.

Research Paradigm

A qualitative research paradigm was chosen for this study of White teachers implementing different aspects of multicultural education (such as social justice, anti-racism, and racial identity) in predominantly White elementary schools. Four main characteristics are often used to describe qualitative research (Merriam, 2009). First, the intent of qualitative research is

to interpret, construct, and apply meaning to the experiences of others. Second, the researcher is the primary instrument in qualitative research. This means the researcher collects, analyzes, and interprets data. A third characteristic is the inductive process of qualitative research. Rather than prove or disprove a phenomenon, qualitative research verifies, revises, or creates theory.

Through interviews and observations researchers identify themes, concepts, patterns, and trends in the data collected to add to existing bodies of knowledge, or construct new ones. Finally, rich descriptions are used to convey research findings in words and pictures. Excerpts from interviews and observations are woven together to tell the story of the phenomenon being studied. For this study, portraiture was the methodological technique used in constructing the stories the data produced. All of these processes are to interpret the meaning of the events studied, not the events themselves (Geertz, 1973). Wolcott (1997) stated that qualitative data collected are, “both a description of what is going on among a particular social group and a cultural interpretation of how that behavior ‘makes sense’ to those involved” (p. 343).

Qualitative research is different from other genres of research because its goal is to tell someone else’s story. Therefore it is imperative to tell that story responsibly.

Another common feature of qualitative research is participant observation. Wolcott (1997) identified multiple kinds of participant observation, including active participation, privileged active observer, and passive observer. An active participant has full access to the issues being studied. For example, in a school study, this could be a teacher conducting research who is already a member of the staff. Thus, these researchers are considered insiders. The privileged active participant is an observer who has access to some information, talks to others, and conducts formal interviews. The passive observer is a researcher who primarily sits back and observes, watching everything. For this study, I was a privileged active observer, but not a

participant observer. I interviewed and observed the participants' multicultural education practices with their predominantly White students, but I did not engage in the instructional practices themselves.

To initiate change from readers, qualitative research "reimagine[s] social research for social justice" (Fine, Wise, & Wong, 2003, p. 184). By designing and investigating research questions, the researcher may already have preconceived notions that drive the research process. Consequently, qualitative researchers cannot make claims of objectivity, impartiality, and neutrality. For these reasons, it is important to understand the presence of the researcher's positionality and biases throughout all phases of the research process (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997; Merriman, 2009; Wolcott, 1997).

Qualitative research includes a plethora of procedures. The ones used in this study most often were case study and portraiture. A case study occurs when a researcher deeply explores a "bounded system." In this case the bounded system was three predominantly White school settings. The bounded system is observed over time, and data are collected from multiple sources (Merriam, 2009). This was a critical case study because the findings were used to inform and add to existing bodies of knowledge, and to critique and challenge the status quo. Fine, Wise, and Wong (2003) questioned the responsibilities of the researcher and attempted, "to move a public conversation about researchers and responsibilities toward a sense of research for social justice" (p. 168). They explained further that social researchers must have a vision of and imagination for "what could be" (Fine, Wise & Wong, 2003, pp. 192-193). This critical case study challenged assumptions that multicultural education is not needed in predominantly White school settings and envisioned what society might be like if White students develop positive racial identities

understand the pervasiveness of White privilege, and are committed and competent anti-racist and social justice activists.

Portraiture as a qualitative research paradigm combines the researcher, participants, and their stories to answer a call for action. Research stories can be engaging, gripping, emotional, and captivating. When a reader finds a character who influences her, the themes in a story become of personal significance, and ones to which others may relate, thus increasing the value of the research conducted. Features of portraiture important to this study are the role of the researcher, goodness, and context.

An important feature of portraiture that distinguishes it from other forms of qualitative research is the researchers becomes part of the story. They are not neutral or objective observers of some “other.” Instead, as Chapman (2007) stated:

In portraiture, the role of the researcher has a personal dimension that cannot be severed from the researcher’s professional interests or personal identity... the newest stage of qualitative research that continues to move away from postpositivist notions of research, those that adhere to formal relationships in the field and espouse researcher objectivity and detachment. The decisions made, the relationships formed, and the narratives that represent people’s lives are deeply connected to the past and present experiences of researchers and their epistemologies concerning the research topic and participants. (p. 158)

The portraitist also views the research participants as “...knowledge bearers, as rich resources, as the best authorities on their own experience. She is interested in examining the roots of their knowledge, the character and quality of their experiences, and the range of their perspectives” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 141).

Lawrence-Lightfoot (2005) provided the following explanation of the unavoidable presence and bias of researchers in their own work, which she called “predisposition,” and skepticism and how they are “checked” or counterbalanced in the research process:

From deciding what is important to study, to selecting the central questions, to defining the nature and size of the sample, to developing the methodological strategies, the predisposition and perspective of the researcher [are] crucial; and the researcher’s perspective reflects not only his or her theoretical, disciplinary, and methodological stance but also personal values, tastes, and style. The shaping hand of the investigator is counterbalanced by the skepticism and scrutiny that [are] the signature of good research. Through rigorous procedures and methodological tools, the researcher tries to rid the work of personal bias that might distort or obscure the reality that he or she is recording. So at the center of *all* research, the investigator needs to manage the tension between personal predisposition (more or less explicitly recognized and expressed) and rigorous skepticism (p. 11)

Much research is focused on what is wrong with a phenomenon or why an intervention does not work. Portraiture also focuses on benefits and contributions of phenomena and interventions. This focus is called looking for goodness. Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) explained that this does not mean portraiture seeks to tell stories of greatness in all things and that nothing needs improving or restructuring. Instead, even when research focuses on what is working, “we inevitably see the dark shadows of compromise, inhibition, and imperfection that distort the success and weaken the achievements” (p. 142). Approaching research with goodness in mind allows contradictions, complexities, and alternate ways of understanding how people interact with the world (Chapman, 2007; Gaztambide-Fernandez, et al., 2011). Seeking out the

goodness and finding weakness can produce a better, more richly textured picture of the issues studied. Intersections of competencies and challenges were part of the “goodness” revealed in this study.

Context plays a pivotal role in both portraiture and multicultural education. Without an understanding of the context it is nearly impossible to grasp how and why things work the way they do. The context for this study was predominantly White schools in segregated White neighborhoods. In speaking about the importance of context, Lawrence-Lightfoot (2005) noted, “if the portraitist is to speak to an eclectic and broad audience, living and working in *other* contexts, then the [research] itself must be very specific and deeply contextual” (p. 13). Disseminating research to a wider audience than academia is another reason why context is a key component of portraiture research. According to Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) there are several different kinds of contexts – physical, geographic, temporal, historical, cultural, aesthetic. Furthermore,

Context becomes the framework, the reference point, the map, the ecological sphere; it is used to place people and action in time and space and as a resource for understanding what they say and do. The context is rich in clues for interpreting the experience of the actors in the setting (p. 41).

In portraiture, two simultaneous actions are happening around context. First, the portraitist is using the contexts to interpret the actions of the participants. Second, the way the participants move through the contexts help the portraitist to understand “how [research participants] perceive and experience social reality” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 43). The context is central to analyzing and interpreting what is being investigated. Chapman (2007) added that when applying portraiture through a critical race theory framework it is important o

be aware of the political dimensions such as political events, personal histories, societal norms, and policies that affect the setting. She also suggested that a researcher must make connections to the experiential knowledge of participants as racialized subjects. Chapman offered this advice in connection to conducting research with people of color, but it is important to racialize Whites.

Positionality

In portraiture the researcher's personal values are inseparable from the work. The portraitist is the "primary tool for data collection, analysis, and interpretation" (Chapman, 2007, p. 158). I brought specific life experiences to this research that contributed to how I interpreted the data and how I listened to the stories being told (Lightfoot, 2004). The following story shares some of those life experiences that contribute to my positionality, or contextualization.

Approximately five years ago I moved to the Pacific Northwest and joined a group called The Work of European Americans as Cultural Teachers (WEACT). At one of our meetings the facilitator asked the group of mostly White women when we realized we were White. At that moment, I could not think of the first time I knew I was White, only the first time I realized that I was not Black.

I grew up in California, the east bay area across the bridge from San Francisco, which I thought was culturally and racially diverse. I had friends from many races and cultures. But most of my time was spent with African American families. My dad is a Jehovah's Witness and we attended a Kingdom Hall where we were one of a few White families among the congregational membership. I remember attending slumber parties and summer BBQs with Black families, being babysat by the teenagers in the congregation, and just growing up as the White girl.

The high school I attended was 70% African American. What I thought was racial diversity was really more for me and the other 30% of non-Black students in the school. It was

there where I first remember really observing how different things were at my school compared to the high school on the other side of San Pablo Avenue. Our pool was closed because it was cracked and coated with algae. The other school had a swim team. Our track was made of gravel with weeds growing through the cracked, uneven surface. It was deemed unsuitable for meets, so we always traveled. The other school had a new resurfaced track with regular meets.

I realized I was not Black at one of the slumber parties at my house. My friends were braiding hair with beads. I was told my hair was “White girl hair,” and not going to work for proper braids. I also remember this moment as the first time being told I could not do something and doing it anyway. I showed up at the next congregation meeting with a confident walk, a bounce in my step, and three frayed, haggard braids in my hair with beads. Undoubtedly, these are pivotal influences in the formation of my personal vested interests in multicultural education and social justice, and how they are woven into this study of White teachers. My story was a turning point in my life that led me to multicultural education. It is part of my social geography and symbolizes some of the biases and perspectives I bring to this research; it is part of my positionality, like the participants in this study, I too, am a White female elementary school teacher who has professional experience in predominantly White schools in economically privileged White communities.

As the portraitist in this study, I placed multicultural education in the context of predominantly White elementary school settings, based on the participating teachers own descriptions of their understandings and actions. These descriptions included pride, confusion, and embarrassment; problems and celebrations; competencies and uncertainties. Like other portraitists, I want the results of my research to be influential. Therefore, I needed to “speak in a language that is understandable, not exclusive and esoteric . . . a language that encourages

identification, provokes debate, and invites reflection and action” (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2005, p. 9). Furthermore, the portraitist’s responsibility of provoking “readers, participants, and ourselves into reevaluating our respective points of view is a small but meaningful form of social justice” (Chapman, 2007, p. 159). The extent to which the results of this study are persuasive in conveying why and how multicultural education can and should be implemented by White teachers for White students in predominantly White schools meets the research intentions and the mandates of portraiture.

Summary

The research and scholarship in this chapter discussed the goals of multicultural education. Their transformative nature causes them to also be political. Therefore, authentic multicultural educators cannot claim neutrality. While multicultural education is beneficial and imperative for all students, it is a contextual endeavor. The process of teaching multicultural education to White students must differ from those used with students of color, although many of its ideological content emphases may be the same. As a vehicle for social justice, multicultural educators are committed activists who use education as a forum to critically analyze prevailing societal and educational practices, and to transform White supremacist policies and privileges to create a just society for all citizens.

The arguments of several different scholars were used to demonstrate why colorblindness, meritocracy, and individualism can become racist ideologies that perpetuate the status quo. Deconstructing these notions, along with thoroughly analyzing privilege, Whiteness, race, and racism with White students in predominantly White schools are necessary to help them understand the racial responsibility Whites have in dismantling oppressive systems that privilege Whites while oppressing people of color.

Fear, anxiety, and discomfort in discussing racism, power, and privilege in White settings also were addressed in this chapter. While scholars, such as Tatum (1997) and Michael (2015) acknowledge these reactions are very real; they cannot absolve teachers of helping students understand the extent and consequences of racial inequities in schools and society at large. This is especially true in predominantly White settings where silence on topics of racism, power, and privilege perpetuate prevailing conditions.

Identity development in predominantly White settings was discussed in this chapter as a way to comfortably and routinely talk about racism, power, and privilege. Research shows that a positive White racial identity can prompt students to see Whiteness as a hegemonic tool in the U.S., and to use it as a way to interrupt racism rather than to perpetuate it. Specific strategies to help White teachers support positive identity development for themselves and their Whites students were summarized.

Finally, the qualitative research paradigms of critical case study and portraiture were discussed. These paradigms take into consideration the researcher's positionality, biases, and interests as part of the research design and analysis. Also, both paradigms consider research as a tool for critical reflection and transformative action.

Chapter III

Mapping the Terrains of the Mountain

Walking through the halls of the predominantly White schools that were sites of the study, produced similar images – art hanging from the ceiling and the walls; save the date posters for the annual PTA fundraisers; murals and donations tagged by graduating classes of yesteryear; the creaking of old wooden floors; young White children laughing at the excitement of recess and crying for the nurse from that same excitement; and the familiar old musty smell of hallways that make you wonder who walked through them from generations past. The purpose of this study was to determine, how do White female teachers interpret and implement multicultural education in these contexts.

Context and Settings

The participants in this study were from three predominantly White schools in the same school district. The schools were in neighborhoods where a majority of the housing was single-family homes and the prices range from \$500,000 to over \$2,000,000. The neighborhoods boasted beautiful views of mountains to the east and the west as well as water views. There is a multitude of parks where children play baseball and soccer. According to 2010 census data, the population in this area of town is 74.4% White; 2% African American; 4.4% Latino American; and .03% Native American. Homeowners make up 45.9% of the area and 54% are renters. The demographics of the city as a whole are 69.5% White; 7.9% African American; 6.6% Latino American; and .8% Native American. Homeowners make up 48.1% and 51.9% are renters (<http://seattle.gov>).

The schools were landscaped with manicured lawns and flowering trees. The spaces for play were large and open with room to roam and play on structures designed to improve strength,

balance, and good sportsmanship. One of the schools had an incredible garden where students learned skills of tending to and harvesting vegetables and the responsibility and joy that come with it. The purpose of this study was to explore how White female teachers who work in these predominantly White public school/privileged halls interpret and implement multicultural education.

For purposes of this study, “predominantly White” was defined as a public school in a district in which less than 10% of the student population is receiving free and reduced lunch; less than 10% of the school population is of African American, Latino American, and Native American ancestry; and less than 10% of the school population receives English language learning services. In this study Asian American students were not included because of the confusing way in which the student demographic data were reported to the state. For example, when looking at school site data, in some cases, the percentage for Asian ancestry was identical to the percentage of Pacific Islander. The lack of clarity on whether these were the same students or if multiple schools had the same exact number of Asian students as well as Pacific Islanders prompted the question of what the data were reflecting about the school population. (Wong & Halgin, 2006).

Site and Participants Selection

Finding schools that fit the parameters for this study was not difficult. Documents from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction provided demographic data for each school in the district where the research was conducted. There were nine qualifying schools from which participants were selected. All were located north of downtown in an area that is upper-middle class and predominantly White.

To identify potential participants, the principals of all qualifying schools in the district were contacted by email. Also, I was part of a network of teachers, administrators, and educators in the area with which I have worked, taken classes, and studied. The participants selected for the study were part of other networks. Therefore, with an email explaining the study I reached many potential participants. The email to principals and the teachers network described the study and the type of teachers who would make ideal participants. The email included a nomination form (See Appendix C) that teachers could use to either self-nominate or suggest others. It included the name of the nominee and a brief description of why that person should be considered to participate. Some of the descriptions on the form included using knowledge of students' interests and backgrounds in lesson planning and classroom management; giving students the opportunity to identify social issues and take reflective action to resolve them based on clarification of data and understanding; and collaborating with other teachers, staff, and families. These were considered examples of multicultural education teaching practices because they help "students to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to participate in reflective civic action" (Banks, 1993b, p. 5). Gay and Howard (2000) identified two other conditions that were key to this study. First, more responsibility for implementing multicultural education in classrooms should be assumed by White teachers because they are the majority of the teaching force. Second, self-knowledge, such as disclosing beliefs, negotiating power, and dealing with concerns about managing a classroom apply to multicultural education teaching and promoting social justice which is an "intended outcome and a descriptive characteristic of multicultural education" (Gay & Howard, 2000, p. 10).

Once potential participants were identified, they were interviewed to determine their knowledge and understanding of multicultural education. They were asked to share their

definitions of multicultural education, examples of how they teach through a multicultural framework, and how their teaching practices might change if their students were more diverse in race, language, and socioeconomic status. Because this study investigated what multicultural education looks like in predominantly White school settings, the first interview was used to determine if the potential participants' understandings of multicultural education align with the scholarship. Once that determination was made the chosen individuals were invited to participate in the study. The final participants were four White females at three schools.

All three schools from which the participants were selected are public. One school (A) was west of the other two schools. Demographically, 9.1% of its students received free and reduced lunch; .2% qualified for English language services; 1.3% were African Americans; 7.2% were Latino Americans; and .2% were Native Americans. The total enrollment was 471. The standardized test scores for the school were above the state and district averages in both reading and math. The most eastern located school (B) had a total of 598 students. Of these 6.8% received free and reduced lunch; .3% qualified for English language services; 1.3% were African Americans; 4.8% were Latino Americans; and .3% were Native Americans. The school's standardized test scores were above both the district and state averages in reading and math. The third school (C) was located geographically between schools A and B, but on other criteria it was quite similar. Of the 362 total enrollment 9.1% qualified for free and reduced lunch; no students received for English language services; 2.5% of the students were African Americans; 6.6% were Latino Americans; and .6% were Native Americans. Standardized reading test scores for 3rd and 5th graders were above both district and state averages. Although 4th grade reading scores had recently declined somewhat they were still equal to district and state averages. Math scores for school C fluctuated between being greater and less than state and district averages.

The Participants

Table 3.1 provides a demographic profile of the teachers who participated in this study. It includes years of teaching, grade level taught during the study, careers prior to teaching, the conditions of their youth, and the history of teachers in the family. A descriptive profile of each participant is presented next.

Nicole

The youngest of the participants, Nicole was in her second year of teaching at school C. She taught next door to Ellen, another participant in this study. Nicole is a lovely person who is instantly warm, gracious, and kind. After unseasonably sunny and warm winter days I walked into her room from the cold rain. Her classroom, the Lighthouse, is warm in both temperature and welcome. The room, lit only by lamps strategically placed, offered a relaxed and inviting atmosphere. The library in her room is decorated with a 3D tree holding neatly decorated raindrops from its branches, and hopes and dreams artwork hanging on the wall to the right of it. The books were neatly shelved by series and genres around a small rug with a colorful net in the corner with cozy pillows for a quiet place to read. On top of the shelves are 22 magazine holders housing the work of the students about to enter the room.

Nicole comes from humble beginnings in a rural farming town in which the Latino

Participant	Number of years teaching	Current grade level	Major in Undergrad	Teaching as 1 st or 2 nd Career	Geographic Location as youth	Type of Neighborhood as youth	Socioeconomic Status as youth	History of Educators in Family
Nicole	2 years	4 th grade	Theatre	2 nd , Nanny, Accounting	Washington	Rural	Lower Middle Class → Middle Class	No
Elisa	15 years	2nd	Recreation and Leisure Studies	2 nd , Outdoor Education	Connecticut	Suburban	Middle class → Upper Middle Class	No
Ellen	24 years	5th	Political Science	2 nd , Fund-raising, Secretarial	Washington	Urban	Middle Class	No
Nancy	29 years	3rd	Asian Studies/Art	1st	Massachusetts	Suburban	Middle Class	Yes

Table 3.1 Participants at a glance

migrant labor camps were segregated from the rest of the predominantly White population, although all students attended the same school. Nicole recalled some peers coming and going, students who did not speak English, and others who looked and dressed differently. As a high school student she noticed groups of “others” but did not question the relationship between them and her Whiteness. Reflecting on this diversity she claimed that at the time “I never thought anything of it. You would only hear it on the periphery.” When she was young her single mother did the best she could to take care of four daughters. It was not until recently that Nicole realized the “gift boxes” her family received were actually charity boxes from a local church filled with food, clothes, and toys. Upon her mother’s marriage to her stepfather, the family was able to purchase a small home on 40 acres where many family memories were made, including raising cows, a wedding, and nieces and nephews growing up.

Growing up, Nicole was a ballerina and developed a love for the theater and reading. Being the “good one” in the family, reading became her escape from the trouble her sisters brought home. She enjoyed reading and getting lost in the stories of the characters, something she regards today as important in understanding human behavior. School was easy for her and it was not until her junior year in high school that she finally felt challenged to think about the world in different ways. She attended a well-regarded private liberal arts college where she majored in theater. Upon graduation she became a nanny, an accountant, and a pre-school teacher. It was at the pre-school that she decided she loved working with children and had a yearning to learn more about education and teaching. She applied to a private online program through the University of Southern California and received her teaching credential a few years ago. Nicole taught 4th grade at the time of the study.

Elisa

Elisa taught at school A. In contrast to the calm atmosphere in Nicole's room, the East coast energy that she brought to her 2nd graders was full of joy, caring, and learning. Elisa grew up in a working class neighborhood where she spent her summers socializing with friends, swimming in neighbors' pools, and taking toll money from unsuspecting commuters to buy a midnight snack at the local Subway. Elisa has a passion for life that is driven by the pure enjoyment of living it. She is hilarious and is great fun to interact with. She is always on the move and all of our interviews involved a walk.

Elisa's early years were spent in a middle class neighborhood that she described as "mixed ... but more White." In high school she and her parents moved to an even whiter neighborhood. Her experiences then and now with racially, ethnically, and culturally different people have been mostly through her travels outside of the United States. She recognized that the absence of close interactions and friendships with people of color have had some limiting effects on her personal and professional lives. For example, she pondered, "If you sit around with [only] a bunch of White people and talk about race, what are you going to learn?" This statement seemed to imply that Elisa thinks competence around race and racism is the purview of racial minorities in "their" densely populated neighborhood schools and regions.

A high school experience with a 10-day camping trip sparked Elisa's love for the outdoors that is still close to her heart. This love led her to major in recreation and leisure studies during her undergrad days after which she became an outdoor educator for a community center. After the disappointment of not being accepted to a physical therapy graduate program, she decided to get a Master's degree in teaching. At the conclusion of her program she left the pressures of finding a husband and starting a family and headed West.

When Elisa got to the West coast she received teaching credentials for her new residence, but was not ready to go to the classroom. For a few years she was a waitress and then travelled abroad. Upon returning she decided it was time to start her career. She taught middle school science and did not enjoy it as much as she thought she would, so she took time off and traveled throughout China. When she returned she went back to teaching and found that she enjoyed the small group atmosphere of being an interventionist teacher. When that program ended, she went back into the classroom for a couple of years, and again got the travel bug and headed out for another trip. When she returned from this trip she settled into her life a little, got married and had been in the classroom for the past four years, at the time of this study. She enjoys traveling and has plans to travel more. One of the things she enjoys about traveling is meeting new people and hearing their stories. Elisa has been teaching for 15 years and was teaching a 2nd grade class at a neighborhood school, and she loved every minute of it.

Ellen

A fourth generation member of the community where she lived, Ellen was teaching at school C, the same one her three sons attended and where she went as a young girl. She lives a mile from the school and two miles from her mother. She stated that she identifies and affiliates more with place than with her White identity. She spent her youth as part of a drum and bugle corps throughout the area and in northern California where she dedicated many, many hours of her youth to perfecting routines that she performed across the country each summer. One of these summers her corps won the National competition. It was during this time in her life that she realized the world was a very diverse place and that getting to know people and their stories turned acquaintances into friendships. In her travels to the southern U.S. for competitions she

saw overt racism against her teammates. The experience impacted her worldview and how she teaches.

In California she attended University of California, Berkeley where she graduated with a degree in political science. Not knowing exactly what to do with that degree she came back North and worked as a substitute secretary in the local school district and then got a job as a campaign manager for a large research facility. Realizing what the future held in that company, she and her husband, then boyfriend, decided to go to school and get their Master's degrees in teaching. They were part of the first cohort in a new teacher preparation program based on the foundations of social justice education.

A mother of three boys, Ellen spends quite a bit of time driving around, although that will come to an end shortly as the youngest will be getting his driver's license and the oldest is completing his first year of college. As her boys grow older she and her husband discussed what their future might hold, working in international schools or caring for their elderly parents.

Ellen's classroom was always busy and students were constantly asking questions, being pushed to the next level of learning, and sharing their ideas and opinions about how the world works around them. Her reflective nature, combined with her love and caring for her students, prompted her to plan critical thinking experiences for her students that helped them develop their own ideas and opinions. She had taught for 24 years and taught 5th grade with a group she looped (the practice of remaining with the same group of students for more than a year). Ellen and her students have been together for two years.

Nancy

Nancy had spent the last 29 years in the classroom, with most of those years teaching in gifted education. Her desire to become a teacher was sparked by her 4th grade teacher. As a

young girl, Nancy was teased and ostracized due to her quiet and socially divergent nature. She spent most of her youth feeling like she did not fit in anywhere, so much so that she even lost her voice for a few years and did not participate in class discussions, feeling as though she did not have anything to offer to conversations. Her 4th grade teacher made her feel valued, important, and welcomed in the classroom; a feeling she held dear and worked hard to impart for each of her students.

The oldest of four children born to a political science professor and social worker (and peace activists), Nancy spent her school years in a predominantly White upper-middle class East coast neighborhood. She claimed the school district she attended had more “religious diversity and [a] socioeconomic schism between me and them.” African American students were bused to her high school but, “They were very separate. They ate at separate tables and they didn't really interact with the rest of us in high school.” She seemed to place the burden of crossing racial divides on them, even though Nancy spent much of her time learning to navigate unwelcome spaces. Her tutelage in doing so came from reading, creating art and music, and traveling to other countries. Her family spent a semester in Hawaii and she spent a year abroad in Japan during her undergrad career. She had since traveled extensively, including to China, Greece, and France.

Leaving the East coast, Nancy headed to the Midwest for undergraduate studies. Knowing she would pursue teaching she was able to major in her passions, Asian studies and art. Upon graduation she headed back East to attend graduate school where she majored in early childhood development, earning a special education endorsement as well as general education. She began teaching directly after graduation. Nancy eventually left the East coast and made her way West where she had been for over 20 years. She has one son who was finishing his freshman year in college, and she was enjoying her newlywed life with her second husband.

Nancy liked to settle into a place and had been teaching in her current school for 10 years. She planned to retire from that school. At the time of this study, she was teaching 3rd grade at school C and absolutely loved it. Her classroom was full of excitement and curiosity. She planned units, experiences, and activities for students to explore places they have not been, meet people they do not encounter, and experience things they did not know existed.

Data Collection

From January – April 2015, multiple forms of data were collected to describe how White female elementary school teachers interpreted and implemented multicultural education in predominantly White public school settings. Data sources included interviews, observations, and inventories of printed materials.

Interviews

Three semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant. Semi-structured interviews were guided by a list of predetermined questions (Appendix A), with the flexibility to ask further questions based on how the participants answered (Merriam, 2009). The interviews lasted from one hour to two hours each. Topics discussed included personal histories, experiences and backgrounds; why the participants became teachers; their definitions of multicultural education and social justice, and how these definitions impacted their teaching. Also discussed were views on politics, White privilege in education, and the importance of multicultural education in predominantly White settings. These questions were chosen to connect social geography with White female teachers' interpretations and implementations of multicultural education. The interviews were fundamental to the study as they captured the life experiences, ideals, and instrumental actions that affected how the participants considered multicultural education.

The interviews were audio recorded with a livescribe pen and voice memo on an iPhone. The reason for this was to ensure at least one good recording would be saved. All notes written from the livescribe pen during interviews were uploaded and saved as PDFs. Interviews were transcribed into written texts for subsequent analyses.

Classroom Observations

Each participant was observed five times. Of the five observations, one was all day, and at least three included class meetings. Each participant suggested times for the observations. The focus was on actions and interactions that reflected teaching through multicultural education frameworks. These interactions were specifically sought during the times of day when the teachers were not teaching to the whole class. These times included transitions, class meetings, routines and procedures, teacher-student interactions, classroom management procedures, motivational strategies, lesson plans, and the print environment of the classroom. I chose to pay special attention to interactions during these times, in addition to instruction, because they were not pre-planned. It was a form of triangulation to see how teachers interacted with students in unplanned situations to determine if these interactions align with their philosophies when planning lessons and more formal instructional experiences for students. Observations were not video taped nor audio-recorded. Instead, extensive field notes were kept. This choice was motivated by the logistical issues of permission for students to be photographed and inefficient sound equipment to hear all that would be going on in the class, as well as the focus of the research being on the teachers rather than the students.

Following conventions suggested by Merriam (2009), field notes were recorded during each observation. These included writing down what the teacher said and what students said; describing the physical setting; noting activities and interactions among groups of students, and

between students and the teacher; and recording conversations between the teacher and individual students. Analysis of observations began with open coding. After a first run of developing codes, data were analyzed and codes eventually minimized to nine. After many observations, I recorded my thoughts into a voice memo. Finally, when time permitted, I debriefed with each participant after observations to ensure accuracy of what I saw and to hear her thoughts on how it went and how decisions were made.

Classroom inventories

A classroom inventory was created for each of the teachers. This added to the data set because teachers may say what they thought the researcher wants to hear most of the time and be able to quote best practices, but the classroom environment is where tensions between who we think we are and how we talk and act are found, if any exist. This data source was another good method for triangulation. By obtaining data in various forms rather than relying on one source of information, the findings become more credible (Lincoln & Guba 1985; Wolcott, 1997). The classroom inventory was in the form of a photo journal. The journal included a list of books in the classroom library arranged in alphabetical order, and photos of other print materials found in the classroom such as posters, job charts, displayed books, and teacher created curriculum charts. The photos of the classroom were taken only once. Therefore, any of the participants who were very diligent about changing the print in their rooms, was not captured through photos, only through observation notes. Participants received a copy of their photo journal so they could have an updated list of their library and a visual record of what was on the walls in their classrooms.

Taking inventory of the classroom libraries was important for another reason. Seeing the resources teachers used for read a-louds and literature circles can be very revealing about their actual practice of teaching multicultural education. There are many different ways and reasons to

teach multicultural literature, including universal themes, cultural criticisms, and ethnically specific messages within context. Teaching multicultural literature seems to be controversial for some teachers (Ketter & Lewis, 2001). Therefore, by looking at the classroom library, a telling picture of the choices teachers make about what to teach began to emerge. One of the most important ways teachers show what they deem important is how they spend allocated money on resources and materials for the classroom.

By photographing the print in the room and drawing diagrams of the classroom layout, I was able to monitor what teachers referred to everyday, what message students were receiving through the “hidden curriculum,” how students maneuvered through the room, and how the teachers interacted with students. Through posters, charts, and self-created materials much can be learned about teachers’ ideas of culture, social justice, and equity, and the students’ reactions to them.

As a critical researcher, it was imperative to get the stories of these White teachers correct. The data collected from them and their schools are very personal, and are really a researcher’s “own constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to” (Geertz 1973, p. 9). These constructions could be labeled as fiction, which is what Geertz (1973) called the work of ethnography. He noted that, “In short, anthropological writings are themselves interpretations, and second and third order ones to boot. [By definition, only a "native" makes first order ones: it's *his* culture.] They are, thus, fictions; fictions, in the sense that they are “something made,” “something fashioned” (p 15). Geertz did not mean untruths, but was suggesting that research results are the creation of the researcher, not a replication of the culture being observed. It is for these reasons that I chose portraiture as my primary research method.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, I used certain strategies throughout the study. First was triangulation. By using multiple sources of data, I was able to cross check interview information with observations; how students interacted with the teachers in small groups, at class meetings, and individually; and then classroom print inventories. Second was conducting member checks. By sharing my analyses with the participants and clarifying the accuracy of intended meaning, I was able to build trust and ensure the participants knew what was happening throughout the research process. Third, since the research focused on a sensitive topic, I, as Merriam (2009) advised, was reflexive throughout the data analysis process by considering inner struggles, misinterpretations, biases, and assumptions. These reflections included analytic memos that I dictated into my voice memos while getting to know my data. With the participants chosen for this study, knowledge was co-constructed about White women teaching through multicultural education to achieve more socially just educational outcomes.

Data Analysis

The data were initially organized by what I heard (answers to interview questions, chats with participants, and student-teacher and student-student interactions), and what I saw (teacher-student interactions, room layout, print materials around the room, how the school was organized, and where the school was located physically). The first step I took was to transcribe the interviews. I read the transcriptions to code the data by identifying keywords. I then found specific data segments that aligned to indicate patterns and trends (Merriam, 2009). By using a system of color-coding, it was easy to identify codes throughout the interview data. The code categories eventually formed the answers to the research question of how White female teachers interpret and implement multicultural education in predominantly White school settings. I used field notes from observations as more evidence to support what was found in the transcriptions.

The field notes were written with a Livescribe notebook with and a Livescribe pen, and uploaded to the computer in PDF format so that I could save multiple copies of the same pages and code them using categories, if necessary, without damaging or making the originals incomprehensible. These codes also were color-coded by category so that patterns could be easily identified to support findings in the transcriptions. These analyses were an “aid to the ultimate process of interpretation” (Feldman, 1995, p. 68).

Because the ultimate goal of this research was for an audience to read it and then act on it, portraiture required that the findings of the analyzed data are presented in a way that examines the “dimensionality and complexity of goodness” and also show “ample evidence of vulnerability and weakness” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 9). Portraiture requires that the portraitist make herself visible and part of the story being told. As the portraitist in this research I was obligated to share my interests in and reasons for the importance of the research. A portraitist “wants to document the specifics, the nuance, the detailed description of a thing, a gesture, a voice, an attitude as a way of illuminating more universal patterns” (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2005, p. 12).

Everyone has a story to tell. Stories share memorable moments of life, careers, love, second chances; understandings of how the world works, and the destinations made through both failures and accomplishments. For these reasons portraiture was the method used in this study to analyze how White teachers understand and enact multicultural education in predominantly White elementary classrooms. The intent was to share stories of insights and efforts that will “transform our vision of the whole. Both artists and scientists hoped that their choice of views, their shaping of perspective, would allow their readers to experience the whole differently” (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2005, pp. 6-7).

In portraiture, participants and researchers work together to create something. In this case it is to share messages, images, and techniques about and for multicultural teaching in predominantly White school settings, and how such efforts are constructed ideologically and operationally. Through portraiture perspectives are shared and shifted; relationships are built to blossom; and, in this case, teaching practices can be challenged and changed. By interviewing, observing, talking, sharing space in time and place with the participants life experiences turned into shared stories that convey hopes, dreams, goals, motivations, and ideals of teaching in a specific way and in a particular context. In portraiture the context is crucial (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). The context for this study set the stage for how multicultural education practices can shift and change. By focusing on predominantly White schools and neighborhoods, this study illuminated the ideas that setting and context are imperative in multicultural education.

Summary

This chapter discussed the research design and methods used to examine how White female teachers interpreted and implemented multicultural education in predominantly White elementary school settings. The study took place in a large urban school district where White students live segregated from students of color. The participants were four White female teachers in three schools, who taught across grades 2-5. Their years of teaching experience ranged from 2 – 29 years. The participants engaged in multiple semi-structured interviews and five classroom observations. The classrooms were also inventoried with photos of the print on the walls and the books in the classroom libraries. The four participants were generous with their time, stories, and willingness to push the understandings of what multicultural education means in predominantly White school settings. Both the researcher and the participants thought about multicultural education in reflective ways.

The data collected were analyzed through portraiture procedures to identify consensual stories and compelling ideas. A main reason for using this method of analysis was to foster action from readers. The perspectives of the researcher and the participants, as well as the importance of the context were foundations of the study design.

Chapter IV

Arriving at the Foot of the Mountain

As bells ring and children laugh and scream, the teachers in this study made sure they were ready for the academic day to begin. They set out photocopies, sticky-note books, made sure the agenda was correct, bookmarked videos, and posted morning messages that built confidence and posed quandaries. When all was in place, they opened the classroom doors and greeted the students as they entered with, “Good morning!” The purpose of this study was to find out what happened around issues of multicultural education and social justice after the students entered and work began.

Five major themes emerged from the data analyses. They are 1) influences of formative experiences on conceptions of multicultural education; 2) importance of community building among students; 3) claims of implementing multicultural education without discussing White privilege and power; 4) teaching history from multiple perspectives without connecting the past to the present when it comes to racism; and 5) encouraging students to develop their own ideas and opinions by planning learning activities that emphasize differentiation, and critical thinking without including a component of social action. The details of these results are presented across two chapters. Chapter IV includes the first two findings and Chapter V focuses on findings 3-5. Each finding is presented using quotes from interviews and notes from classroom observations for verification. While the print inventories of the classroom were valuable, they were not used in the data analyses and findings. The libraries in the classrooms were extensive and included books purchased by districts, as well as books inherited from teachers previously in the classroom. This made it difficult to determine which entity found value in the books, the teacher, the administration, or the district. In the findings, I included print materials that I observed

teachers using. Focusing on what materials teachers chose to use as teaching tools with students proved more informative in examining how multicultural education was interpreted and implemented in these contexts.

Building a Community of Learners

Building a strong community of learners is a necessary element of multicultural education because students need a place to be confident; to make mistakes without shame; to speak freely without judgment; and to learn and grow without unnecessary obstacles. Students in strong learning communities attend class meetings, know each other well (including the teacher), and learn important communication skills. All of the participants in this study built strong learning communities. They stressed that classroom community is necessary to develop a place of respect and trust; to honor the individual while working as a collective; to affirm and validate students; to model flexibility in learning and being with others; and, most importantly, to grow students as learners who are also caring, compassionate citizens. Yet each had some unique attributes.

Building Respect

As Nancy's quiet, empty classroom began to fill with noisy students, their anticipation of a new book drew them to their class meeting with excitement. They are reading *The Quiltmaker's Journey* by Jeff Brumbeau (2005) and have a brief discussion about the difference between a prequel and a sequel. The story begins after students receive compliments from each other and the classroom journal is looked over for any entries of class problems, of which there are none. As the student leader begins to read, her classmates make predictions about what is beyond the town's wall and a discussion about poverty and wealth ensues.

In her 3rd grade classroom, Nancy intentionally developed ways to build community. She felt very strongly that developing relationships with students and knowing what may excite them invites them into learning. She also believed that community is a way to honor each other. She said, “Honoring everyone means honoring differences. We have class meetings four times a week. They start with class compliments and then we’re building pieces of conflict resolution.” Nancy’s classroom was a place where predominantly White students appreciate their differences and honor each other as individuals. Later, she elaborated, “I have a lot of diversity. You can look at my classroom and go, ‘Well, you’ve got a predominant number of kids that are White and well off,’ and all of that, but within that there’s a lot of learning differences and attention to that is really important to me.”

At the core of Nancy’s community building was students respect for each other. She stated, “I developed a very strong sense of being an individual person who is creative and honoring differences and respecting others ... I know what it feels like to be not treated with respect.” Nancy’s beliefs about respect and honoring differences also were apparent in how she defined multicultural education:

I look at multicultural [education] beyond just of different countries. I look at it as honoring individual voices and points of view. All of the activities where there’s voice or individual expression if it’s artistic or whatever, that I consider multicultural [education]. I guess just honoring and really paying attention to the individuals in my classroom.

While Nancy focused on individuality and mutual respect, when these individuals come together conflict is bound to arise. At one class meeting she read the following problem from the classroom journal. A “mean kid” from another class was bothering some of the students in her class. As Nancy listed response options – let the recess teacher know, walk away, ask them to

stop – the students made it clear they had done all of those repeatedly and that the student was putting his arms around others’ necks and students were being choked. Nancy said that this was a safety issue and recommended that they talk to the teacher on recess duty. She decided that she would go outside with the students at the next recess and talk to the adult on duty with them. This is one example of how Nancy taught students the importance of respect by showing respect for them and helping them out with complicated issues.

Building Trust

When students walked into Nicole’s classroom the warm, cozy air freshener made them feel at home. With the only light in the room coming from the windows and strategically placed lamps, the soft jazz playing in the background greets the morning. Students came in and knew exactly what to do – put away their things and head to the carpet for morning meeting. As students entered, Nicole was standing at the doorway greeting them. She explained the importance of this:

I think my number one thing, and this is probably one of my biggest takeaways from my teacher education program, was creating a culture of caring and all the ways to do that and how that informed pretty much everything in your classroom. That’s me standing outside the door and greeting every child, everyday. Standing outside the door everyday, saying goodbye to every child, everyday. They feel seen and touched.

As the students came to the carpet for morning meeting they read messages that alerted them to big things happening during the day or of any changes, and questions to think about, such as what is one unique quality you contribute to the community. Once students finished greeting each other and discussing the question of the day Nicole began the lesson for the day. After mini-lessons students were able to use any place in the classroom for workspace. The trust

level in her classroom was apparent in the fact that most students made good choices and got their work done quietly and independently, leaving Nicole time to check in on and work with individual students and move about the classroom with ease.

An example of this trust was exhibited one day after the children returned to class from recess. A boy in the class was incredibly upset, with tears and that shaking voice that make it hard to speak. Some classmates were taking his hat off his head and teasing him with it. As soon as the class came in from recess, whatever was scheduled was pushed back and an impromptu class meeting began. During this meeting the students talked about respect, what is personal property, and how to make sure this does not happen again. Nicole remembered the incident and explained why class meetings are so important to community building.

He wears that hat every day, no matter how hot it is. There is something with his hat...

I've only seen him come to tears one other time. That was huge for him. If somebody has an issue, ... we sit and we talk about it, and we hold each other accountable.

She went on to explain why she felt trust, along with validation, is key to a successful community, “[He] came up and he was so upset. If he didn't trust me to know that I would validate whatever silly thing he was experiencing, there's no way he would have brought that to me.” While she said, “whatever silly thing,” she meant whatever upsets students, she was willing to listen and help guide them to resolutions. During classroom observations of three morning meetings and one impromptu meeting Nicole used questions to help students to come up with their own ways of solving problems. By the ways students spoke during the meetings and used time to think before offering suggestions or ideas, it seemed that Nicole had spent time at the beginning of the year establishing her expectations for how to communicate and had practiced them throughout the school year.

Nicole's beliefs and philosophies about building a strong community of learners also were related to how she defined multicultural education,

I think it goes back to everything I said about creating a community of learners because the students learn to listen and to respect one another, and ... accept each other's personal culture and their family culture, each other's personal learning cultures. I think all of that is considered multicultural [education], according to my definition.

Building Relationships

Ellen's classroom had a buzz about it that indicated an active working environment. She has looped with this class, meaning the students had spent almost two years with her as their teacher. Routines that were set up and maintained the previous year carried over to the current year. The students knew what to do, where to do it, and how to do it. My first experience with this class was a morning meeting where Ellen was reviewing a communication lesson on how to comment when a classmate shares a personal experience. Students had the opportunity to share something during the meeting by writing their name on the board. After the welcome greeting and reading of the morning messages students got to share. As they prepared to share, Ellen reminded them that a comment is not an opportunity for the audience to share a story about their experiences, but to state a reaction to the speakers and what they shared. There was a heightened level of trust in this room due to what the students were sharing. For example, one student shared how scared and nervous she was about a family member having kidney surgery. The students responded with genuine concern and curiosity about what that meant and if she and her family were doing all right.

In this particular school there was an institution-wide effort to build community in classrooms and more broadly. Because all teachers were using the same Responsive Classroom

model, Ellen did not want to take any credit for the smooth operation of her classroom. She explained,

I think I try and also get them to treat each other well. It's really easy to do here because they came acting that way. This year, I've been able to build on community building that's been done before. The second and third grade teachers that we are taking from the loop are ... the masters at that.

Ellen knew her students very well. Parents, siblings, and other family members frequently came in to inquire about a student. After each one left she shared a story about the student or his or her family. In one particular case, she expressed concern because she had not seen one student's parents in a while and was wondering why someone else was picking her up at the end of the school day. Her emails to the family were left with no response. In discussing how her multicultural education efforts differed from other teachers, she said,

The only thing that I think that maybe I do differently, and I don't know that it's particularly multicultural [education] is [the] kind of ... individual relationships that I end up having with kids. I feel like I have pretty warm individual relationships with kids.

There was a comfort in this classroom that was demonstrated through interactions Ellen had with her students. One day during observations a music teacher came and took certain students for instrumental lessons at different times throughout the afternoon. So many of her students do this that it was hard to teach a lesson because too many would miss different parts of the lesson. So Ellen did choice time and offered students the opportunity to work on math enrichment, writing, finishing up assignments or projects, and reading for fun. As students began working, Ellen moved around the room checking in with them. She checked on one student doing math and showed him how to test to see if a number is divisible by three. Then she assisted

another student with a halving and doubling strategy, accidentally gave the student the answer, and they giggled together. On her way back around she checked a finished project from a group of students and admired their work. A student who was absent the day before wanted to read what she missed for the read aloud so Ellen accessed the appropriate page for the student to read on her phone. It was like this every time I was there for observations. Ellen moved throughout the classroom as a facilitator and guide for learning. Although sometimes she found it challenging to be consistent with the responsive classroom model all the time, she tried to make the classroom the students “as much as possible in terms of making them responsible... I think that would be my ongoing challenge to make it really run smoothly... I would like to view my role as sort of facilitating that.”

Building Responsibility

The youngest of the classrooms involved in this study, Elisa’s 2nd graders were full of spunk and energy. The class was always busy and the students never remained in the same place for too long. Elisa worked hard to create a strong, caring community of learners. As she explained,

I try to nurture teamwork and family love within the classroom starting on day one. We're all here, we're a team, this is room nine. Having kids see themselves in the classroom, so there is some kind of self-portrait right away. Getting artwork up right away. Getting their nametag. Getting them together. Having them do lots of teamwork activities. I pull them outside and have them do trust activities, communication and teamwork activities.

The classroom cooperation, starting those first two weeks, I really try to get those kids to bond as a community through games, activities, and artwork.

With 2nd grade it is important to teach them how to be a community in different ways from the 4th and 5th graders that Nicole and Ellen taught. They started at the beginning, with the difference between tattling and a class concern.

One afternoon after I had just arrived for an observation, Elisa looked through the problem can. Unlike 3rd grade where there were one or two problems written in the journal, and unlike the 4th and 5th grade classes where problems were brought up in the moment, 2nd graders were just beginning to make sense of community problems. She had a number of slips of paper in her hand. She held them up and told the class that only one was an issue. The rest were tattles. She proceeded to read the students a book about tattling. Afterwards the students discussed what goes into the can and the teacher reminded them to think about, “Have I done everything I can to solve this problem?” The class discussed what to do if someone hurts your feelings, or if you feel like you need to tattle. After the group decided they would let the person know and a brief discussion about how to apologize, Elisa revealed the issue – a materials manager told a student that he was not responsible for having the materials. The class decided the teacher was the one who can make that determination. They let Elisa throw away the tattles, and they headed to recess.

Later in the year I observed another class meeting. The class had definitely learned the difference between a tattle and a concern. Their concerns were about mindful minutes after each recess, students using signals to say mean things, and a student who is diabetic who gets a little grumpy when her glucose level is low. This was a far different discussion than the meeting earlier in the year. The students expressed their ideas, concerns, and suggestions and came to a decision about each issue where everyone was either happy or willing to give a resolution a try.

Elisa explained other ways that she builds community. These included students having “Roles. Jobs in the classroom, jobs within their table communities. We change seats every month. Even the way I refer to the class. It's like, ‘This is our community. We show kindness and caring.’” Elisa’s work at building a community among students was shown both through love of her students and their love for her. In our last interview Elisa declared, “I love those little guys. They're just full of love.” Also, on one of the days I was in the classroom a handcrafted book appeared on Elisa’s chair right after the students left the classroom. It was a cute little book full of notes and poems from some of her students. It was beautiful!

In multicultural education a strong community is important because it brings students together in ways that foster engagement and ownership of learning; a place to investigate and construct knowledge together; and a place to challenge the status quo and question power and privilege. These participants laid a great foundation to doing these things, but their effort fell short in many instances. Such as not dealing with content issues specific to multicultural education during community building processes.

The communities the participants were able to build exemplified dedication to students, teaching, and learning. All participants felt strongly that these communities were essential for high level achievement and success. Also, that desirable performance went beyond academics to embrace personal, social, and civic development. These emphases are fundamental to multicultural education as well. An important missing link, though, was cultural competency for functioning in ethnically pluralistic settings and relationships. Undoubtedly, the various purposes, emphases, and strategies participants used in building classroom community were affected by their prior formative experiences.

Formative Experiences and Effects

From suburbs to farm towns, from low income to upward mobility, and from rocky friendships to solid relationships these participants were both similar and diverse, as well as familiar and unknown. Their formative experiences impacted the way they interpreted and implemented multicultural education. They can be seen through the predominantly White neighborhoods they grew up in, pivotal experiences, and the multicultural education connections to their classrooms.

Predominantly White Neighborhoods

All participants in this study grew up in predominantly White neighborhoods. Nancy and Elisa were from small suburban towns on the East coast of the United States. Elisa grew up in a middle class area where, “The whole neighborhood would get out and play. We’d play cheetahs and antelope. We would run through people’s yards. Hide in little alleyways. We would be all over.” Nancy led a more secluded childhood, even though she was the oldest of four where she, “had a pretty suburban kind of a lifestyle, I guess. I wasn't very social, so I did a lot of reading and music. That was kind of big in our family.”

Nancy and Elisa implied that their families did not have a lot of money. Both of their mothers are admired for the way they manage money. Nancy shared that her mother’s frugality freed her from thinking about money,

My mom could write a book on how to save money and she was ... the rummage sale queen. It was great. I learned a lot about and was freed up about money, because I knew I could live off of Ramen and work at McDonald's or whatever, I'll be able to make it. It was in stark contrast to the culture I was immersed in.

The culture Nancy was referring to was the community where she spent her youth, which was very materialistic. Her family was not this way, but moved there because of the school district. Nancy said her family “didn't have a lot of money and so we had canned stuff and hand-me-down clothes and that kind of thing. I was very aware and didn't really connect with the whole affluent culture around me.” The education system was “a pretty cutting edge school district, and it was during a period of a lot of experimental things with education,” Nancy recalled. This educational experience was a pathway to Nancy’s teaching beliefs and philosophies.

Elisa’s parents were do-it-yourselfers and she learned from her mother’s money management abilities. She said, “My mom’s real good with money, so I think I picked up those economy things. Do it yourself, make good investments, strategize for your future, go out, enjoy life though.” Although Elisa’s family “didn't shop at fancy stores and we didn't have a lot of money or we didn't take airplanes on vacations but we had everything we needed.” However, her parents owned a rental property and when she was in high school they moved from their middle class neighborhood to “a really, really small affluent, predominantly White, upper, upper, upper, no rich, rich community.”

Ellen and Nicole both grew up in highly segregated towns in the Pacific Northwest. Ellen’s childhood home environment was located in a large city where redlining and housing covenants prevented people of color from moving into her White neighborhood. Nicole grew up in a small, rural, farming town where the migrant farmworkers lived in “the labor camps.” She explained that the labor camps “were parts of town where those groups of people lived because they were more affordable.”

Ellen’s childhood was similar to Elisa in that she fondly remembered “summer camp or ... running around the neighborhood with friend who were from the neighborhood.” Nicole’s

youth was more closely aligned with Nancy's. She, too, did a lot of reading as a form of escape, but,

As a child, I was reading really inappropriate things. We did not have a lot of books at our house. I would devour whatever I could from the school library, but during the summer, I was sitting at my mom's bookshelf with a lot of Danielle Steel at a really inappropriate age. I didn't have TV, and my sisters caused a lot of tension in our house. That is what I did.

Nicole was one of four girls raised by a single mother with very little support. She did not realize the extent to which her family was poor until she was much older. Nicole explained,

... when we were sitting around the table, this was a couple of months ago, and my mom was telling the story of how I came to adopt this beloved little toy. I thought I had been born with it, basically. She's like, 'No, that came in a church box, in a charity box from the church.' Up until just recently, I had no idea that we were basically poor. It just never occurred to me when I was little that we were a charity case. Now, looking back, I'm like, 'Oh my god, that makes so much sense.' I get it.

This was in contrast to Elisa and Nancy who lived in upper middle class neighborhoods and thought they were poor, to actually being poor and having no idea, but that soon changed.

When Nicole was in elementary school her mother remarried and, with two incomes to support a family, they were able to purchase a house. Nicole spoke very fondly of their small ranch, and has great memories of raising cattle, her sister's wedding, and boarding horses.

Ellen grew up in a neighborhood with housing covenants that prevented families of color from moving in. She remembered there were no African American families in her neighborhood, but there were a few students bused from the southern part of the city to her school. She also

recalled that her own and other parents tried to get the girls more involved with activities at school:

I remember the moms trying to get these girls to be able to be in camp fire girls with all of us but it was just impossible because parents couldn't, you know back then everyone had only one car and I mean people just could not get up here to pick them up and its not like it would have crossed our mothers' minds to like drive them back.

This experience created in Ellen's mind the idea that their neighborhood must be very far away. When she was older and began to drive she spent quite a bit of time in the southern area of the city where she had been told there were dangerous neighborhoods. Of her drives home she stated, "I would drive from [there] to here ... on side roads trying to find the, those dangerous parts of town, looking for them because nothing seemed to ever be as dangerous as everyone was describing and saying." She began to realize that her neighborhood was racially segregated from others in the area.

Ellen's mother was also quite vocal about showing her how segregated her world was and pointed it out whenever she could. For example, when the family was attending a wedding at the country club in their predominantly White neighborhood her mother made sure "we [knew] the people serving were Black and couldn't be members of the tennis club and this was a bad place."

Growing up in predominantly White neighborhoods provided pivotal experiences that shaped how these teachers functioned in their classrooms not only as teachers, but as people too. Sometimes these effects were easily recognized by the participants, but at other times they were not. Most often the subtleties embedded in the explicit actions were missed. Yet, these are the places where more definitive connections to multicultural education could have been made.

Pivotal Experiences

Ellen was taught to see race and racism from an early age. Her mother would not let the family shop at a local store because, “they were discriminating against African American employees. Basically they wouldn’t hire Black clerks at Pansave so we couldn’t go there.” Her mother’s views and discussions about race really impacted Ellen. She recalled the following incident from 8th grade when she was shunned by her friends:

The source of that was me talking about a girl’s parents who would say racist things in front of me. ... I told that to somebody else and it got back to her. ... Now that I think about it, if I were going to put some things together, that’s what actually set [the shunning] off. Yeah, so ... I would say my mom was, in my perception, fairly unique in being pretty clear about that.

While she could not remember if busing was voluntary or involuntary when she was in elementary school, both Ellen and her sister experienced busing in one way or another. Her sister was bused from her predominantly White neighborhood to integrate a school serving predominantly students of color. Ellen went to a school where mostly African American students were bused to integrate her predominantly White school. Her perception of busing at that age was that

the administrators weren’t prepared to deal with it so they just ignored it because they didn’t know what to do and didn’t want to be accused of being... My speculation... it’s ... probably [not] what I would think looking at it now. But my perception ... as a high schooler was, well they’re just ignoring [the behavior] because they don’t want to be called racist so they’re not going to deal with it.

Ellen was referring, in her own words, to “being hauled across town into something that felt unfamiliar and it felt like it ended up being sort of turmoil or behavior problems,” and the high school administration’s way of handling it, or in her perception, not handling it.

Other pivotal moments in Ellen’s youth involved witnessing overt racism in the South. Ellen spent her late teens and early 20s participating in various drum and bugle corps. Drum and bugle corps is competitive and similar to marching bands, where the members spend a year working on perfecting one performance. Practices were three days a week during the school year and all day in the summer. The corps toured around the United States and competed against other corps. Their hard work paid off with a national title one year. Eventually, her neighborhood corps disbanded and she headed to the southern part of the city, where the African American students were bused from, to join another group.

When Ellen left her predominantly White neighborhood to join the corps in the southern part of the city and began to discover other areas of her city, “it was completely intimidating because I’d never ...been around that much diversity and here I am totally immersed in it.” Even though her mother spoke with her often about the nefariousness of racism her Whiteness still caused her to initially be uncomfortable in the racially diverse settings. For a few summers during her time in the corps, she traveled to the southern United States for competitions. In the following exchange she recalled her encounters with overt types of racism during these outings:

Ellen: We had the experience [of] traveling in the South and actually ... being kicked out... We were in Birmingham in 1980 and ... I guess, there were lots of little things but the biggest thing was when these four guys that I knew decided they wanted to go swimming and they got some girl to help them jump the fence at the country club and one of the guys was Black. And afterwards the pool manager came over screaming at the

corps director because he said he had to get everybody out to drain the pool because this boy had been swimming in their pool.

Researcher: And what did you think of that?

Ellen: The whole experience of being in the South at that time was so astonishing because coming from up here I didn't think that still existed. I mean everything from ... little White kids approaching friends who were mixed race and saying, 'What are you? ... Are you Black or are you White?' And somebody got booted out of a laundry mat. She was wearing Star of David and they wouldn't serve her and they said she couldn't do her laundry there. There was a bunch of stuff ... At the time I knew, it was both, it was all very sort of exciting more than really anger. I mean we didn't really do anything about it. We didn't know what to do, and most ... at the point we thought it was really entertaining. We made a bunch of Ku Klux Klan signs and taped them up on the school bus from one of the White suburban schools hoping that somebody might break, like smash the bus up or something. ... We thought it was real funny to go around and make these things, and we stuck them on the outside of somebody else's school bus

Researcher: This was in the South?

Ellen: Yeah, because we didn't even know what to do with them. We thought they were all crazy people. You know. But I can't imagine how horrifying it was for the people who were actually having the experience and I don't remember spending a lot of time thinking about that.

Ellen's response to witnessing this racism showed a need for race discussions in multiple educational settings. Ellen and her peers' lack of understanding, as well as their inability to deal with the emotional stress and shock of what they witnessed, are evident in how they attempted to

rectify the situation and hoping someone else would “take care” of the racists. This was a futile effort but all they could think to do at the time. Ellen’s illusions that racism is restricted to “the South” and blatantly overt actions needed to be challenged. She needed to be helped to understand why and how racism operates in many ways and in many locations throughout all regions of the United States (and elsewhere in the world).

On these trips, the corps slept on gym floors of local schools. Ellen noticed the disparities between Black schools and White schools, as she recalled,

This one time we were staying in this school in Birmingham that was clearly all Black... And that was clearly observable right away. When you stayed in the suburban schools they were nice. When you stayed in the inner city the schools were terrible and full of cockroaches, and falling apart, because we sleep on gym floors when you travel. So... it definitely was a wake up call in terms of it still being alive and well.

Eventually Ellen’s love for drum and bugle corps took her to the San Francisco Bay Area in California where she auditioned and joined another corps. She ended up moving into a one-bedroom apartment in Oakland with five roommates, all people of color. There she again noticed the segregation of neighborhoods on her bus rides from the “in between area” where she lived:

... if you [walk] one way, six blocks you’re in Fruitvale, and if you walk six blocks the other way... You’re at the lake. It was interesting that I could take one bus and everybody in the bus would be African American; take the other bus and everybody on the bus would be White.

These are examples of pivotal experiences Ellen had that made her think about cultural and racial differences. Ellen now constantly thinks about how other people view these historical events of racial discrimination, and how she might bring those perspectives into the classroom.

Nancy had many experiences where she felt like the “other.” In her younger years she “was always kind of isolated, just kind of the smart girl that was a little nerdy. I was picked on and ostracized.” Having not really ever been “enough” for others, she added,

I had all these strengths but I didn't really fit into any of the cliques that existed in my high school, so I was kind of on my own. I was musical, but I wasn't in the orchestra. I was artistic, but I didn't do drugs. I was intellectual but not that intellectual. I didn't really find my people.

In her junior year in high school she and Nancy's family spent a semester in Hawaii where she thought she would get a fresh start and make some friends. As she recalled, “I arrived in corduroy jeans and got the once over, and got written off. I had been pretty unhappy socially, so I thought [a] fresh slate. I can be whoever. What I found was I still am myself.”

It was a rough start for Nancy in Hawaii, but in the end she loved it and felt like she “met people who really accepted me for myself.” Although that semester away was fun for her, she “didn't really have circles of friends as most people do. ... it made me feel... like it was fine to be different than everybody else.” Her words sounded as though she was content with being herself and having few, if any, friends. But she was not happy about this existence. As she explained,

I wouldn't say I was happy, but I was kind of like reframing it. I think in general I'm pretty positive, and so I have had some pretty challenging situations at times and I just kind of look at, well, how do I want to be in this world?

Part of this lack of friends and unhappy social life was because she was a shy person. In her own assessment, Nancy declared, “I was super shy. Super shy. I couldn't pick up the phone. Didn't have a lot of social experience with kids. It was like, for a really long time in my life, I

was just incredibly anxious and shy.” This debilitating shyness caused her to lose her voice for a period of time, “not in terms of laryngitis, but I literally lost confidence that I had ideas worth sharing.” This lack of confidence first began in a high school English class. Nancy remembered, I took honors English and people would be extremely articulate about different things within a book we would read and I would just be like, ‘Wow, I did not see that or think of that.’ I started verbally shutting down where I didn't participate in discussions. I just didn't feel like I had ideas that measured up.

During this period of being voiceless Nancy met a man and was in a relationship that lasted for six years. She already had a very small circle of friends and did not widen her friendship network because she “was so into that relationship.” The two of them spent a year of study abroad in Japan. Nancy provided the following explanation for why this was a pivotal experience for her:

I went with a program called the Associated Kyoto Program (AKP) and I didn't really have any Japanese before I left so I did a six-week intensive, like one year squished into six weeks. I did Tokyo. That was very intense and kind of lonely. I didn't really know anyone. Then my boyfriend was going on the year abroad, but he was Japanese, and he grew up half his life in Japan, so he was fluent. We did the AKP program; really fascinating culture. I have an affinity for the arts, but as a woman who has ideas, it felt very challenging to feel comfortable and be as intellectually engaged because I could talk about my major and I could talk about the weather, but I couldn't really have conversations. It's just a very different culture.

She regained her voice during graduate school along with self-confidence. Remembering the efforts Nancy playfully stated, “Now it's been like, ‘just shut up.’ Now I interrupt people and it's

like a problem.” Nancy’s experiences with being ostracized and feeling “othered” combined with her love for artistic expression were foundational to her emphases in teaching respect, being true to oneself, and valuing artistic expression.

Elisa is a free-spirited, energetic, and independent person who values and appreciates fun and freedom. She was a “bad honors kid” in high school because she, “would get kids to skip [classes]. ‘Like I don’t want to go to French today. Come on, everybody. Let’s skip.’ I figured if I got a whole group of kids to skip, we wouldn’t get in trouble.” Her mischievous ways began in her youth and being a member of a family with older siblings she added that the antics were fine as long as they were not too disruptive:

Parents didn’t really know, most of the time. Principal was tough, ...[but] didn’t call my parents. They didn’t get me in trouble. My brother was pretty bad. They were like, ‘You’re Louie’s sister? Oh yeah. We won’t bother your mom with this.

Elisa’s independence and freedom started with her first job as a ten-year old. She recalled, “I got a paper route when I was 10. I had money. I had freedom. I had transportation. There was nothing that could stop us. We were just out there doing everything and having a blast.” Coming from a solidly middle class neighborhood with many friends her age many adventures were had.

Everybody played and it was really fun ... Lots of kids. When the street lights came on, it was the signal for most of us to go home and have dinner. There was no cell phones or hollering, we were out free, running around. There was no worry at being snatched, no one wanted us. We would ride our bikes to the trails and go over jumps. We had a blast. As she and her friends got older, the adventures became more mischievous, “We were crazy. We’d camped out in our backyard and then we’d sneak out in the middle of the night, walk to

Subway like 2:00 in the morning... Then we would go steal all the toll money and we'd go buy sandwiches."

Skipping school, stealing money, and walking around town in the wee hours of the morning were just the beginning for Elisa's adventures. In high school she had an opportunity to go to wilderness school. As with many things unknown, her excitement ebbed and flowed. At first, she was very excited about the opportunity to try something new. In pursuing the prospect Elisa talked to the school counselors and let them know she was interested. They said, 'Okay.' I guess it's a school that not many people wanted to go. Each school guidance counselor can refer two kids to go each year and so he put me in and I'm thankful to him." The excitement then turned to anxiety and fear as the trip approached:

When it came the time to go, I was like, 'I don't want to go.' Because they put you in a group of eight to ten kids, all between the ages of 12 and probably 16, was about the oldest. We go off for 20 days, outward bound. They make sure that you're not in a group with anybody that you know.

Even though Elisa was hesitant she went on the trip, the confidence she gained, goals she learned to set, and the obstacles she learned to overcome became life-changing and pivotal moments in her life. She explained these benefits in detail in the following statement:

It's all about natural consequences. If you hike too slow, you get there late. Cooking in the dark, the people would all cook the food, they burn it. That's all they have, better eat it anyway. There's all these natural consequences and altercations; sitting down and talking. We did goal setting. It was probably a total of 8 days hiking; 4 days river canoeing; rock climbing 3 or 4 days. Then we did a 48-hour solo where they just give you a tarp and stuck you somewhere, and like a little bag of GORP and one banana. They

encourage you to not eat, to fast the entire time. I did, because when I woke up there was like a bite out of my banana or something, and I'm not eating that. I didn't eat those two days... There were so many mosquitoes. There was this boy. The boy and I were starting to like each other ... I don't know where they placed us, but they placed us probably far away and put themselves probably right in the middle. They put me right on this riverbank and I had so many mosquito bites. I think I had over 60 mosquito bites on my body when I left that spot because it was just a blue tarp and no mosquito netting, just a tarp, nothing underneath you or anything. I was really covered in mosquitoes. Setting those goals, having those discussions with those leaders and all that kind of stuff. ... [H]earing from them their perspective on who I was, I think it was really valuable and it gave me a lot of confidence to think like, 'I can do this. I can do whatever I put my mind to... I think it really changed me a lot. My mom's like, 'You didn't even want to look at a bug. You were like, 'Ew. Ew. Ew.' and then you went there, you came back, you were different.'

Wilderness school was followed by Elisa's first attempt to leave the East coast and move to the Western U.S. When she was in her early 20s many of her friends were getting married and having children and everyone was wondering when she would do the same. The pressure was too much and she felt that she did not "really fit in in Connecticut anymore." After an internship in Tennessee she went on a cross-country road trip with her friends instead of going to California since it "will always be there." This was the first of many trips she would eventually take.

Before beginning her first teaching job Elisa traveled through Central and South America. She also spent a year traveling through Africa, from Cape Town to Cairo; another two and a half years traveling through Asia and Australia including Tibet and Mongolia; around India

and Nepal; and throughout the United States. Her travels have been intermixed among years of work, first as a waitress and then as a teacher. Although expensive, traveling enriched Elisa and gave her the ability to see the world through many different lenses. Her parents always were supportive of her travels, as Elisa recalled,

Even if it was scary for them. They let me go; they let me travel. They let me do things that I wanted to do. They've always supported it. I guess, that's always given me ... a feeling of safety that I know that I can go. I always have a place to come back to. No matter what risks I take, I know that my family is there for me.

These experiences helped Elisa build strong relationships with others and affect some of the priorities displayed in her teaching and interactions with students.

Nicole also learned to see the world through multiple perspectives, but rather than through travel it came through theater and being an avid reader. These were the sources of many pivotal experiences for her. Nicole read a lot as a young girl and excelled in school although she was very rarely challenged. It was not until high school when she realized what learning was really like when she took a course offered by the school librarian. In remembering this experience Nicole explained:

It was either 10th or 11th grade. We had this crotchety old librarian. His name was Mr. Owen. Every other year, he would offer a humanities class where he would take over one section of the library and create this big round space, a table. Only a handful of kids took it. We read all of the classics. We would read, and then we would sit and talk, and have these incredible discussions about Homer and the Odyssey. He would talk about his childhood in Michigan, and he would talk about Hemingway, all of these things. We'd write these great papers. He was the first person to ever pay attention and ask questions.

Cared about the fact that I was super nerdy and a big reader. Do you know what I mean? I just ate up every minute of it. So cliché! I remember this one time he asked this big question, and there were these funny stoners in the class, who were just taking it for an easy ride. He asked this question, he just sits back on his couch and he says, ‘What is it? What's the one thing? What is life about?’ Everyone had to go around, asking these 16-year-old kids, and say what the thing that life was meant to be about. I loved it, I was like, ‘This is it. I love this.’ The next year, he offered to do an independent study with me. We took a whole term on Emily Dickinson. I would go back in the mornings and we'd do two hours. Sit in his office, in his armchair, we'd drink coffee, eat bearclaws, we'd read poetry, and make notes and talk about it.

Having a teacher who pushed her is what drove Nicole to go to college after high school graduation. She said, “he'd give me my essays back and be like, ‘Try harder, do better.’ He was the first person in my academic career who was like, ‘You're better than this. I can tell you're phoning it in.’”

Being from a small town and having sisters who “were a little troubled” Nicole spent some time attending the Baptist church, for which her mother was grateful that she was following a more wholesome path. This path, however, led her to question the world in which she was growing up and what else was out there.

I had some interesting experiences at the church. There were these old ladies who were super judging of my sister, who was a teen mom. They didn't know that I was in the room when they were having the discussion. I was like, ‘I can't believe this.’

Her questioning led her to become the only liberal in her family.

Even though Nicole did not realize the extent of her financial disparity when she was young, in college she became sensitive to the difference between the wealth her friends had and the lack of wealth she had.

In college, after that second year, when I started to have this awakening, because the girls would invite me to their houses for spring break. Then we would go to their beach house, literally on cliffs of the Oregon coast... Where I come from, that doesn't happen. You're lucky if you own your house.

While her family did enjoy home ownership eventually, the idea of having enough to get by seemed the norm to Nicole. She found it odd that some people did not know what it was like to go to bed hungry, as the following comments attest:

What is very prevalent, and has always been very prevalent, is [this] crazy class split...

That is what I can speak to in terms of experience. Even now, we talked for an hour about being financially oppressed. Obviously, that's different than somebody who's legitimately in poverty... I'm not making any sort of comparison, but it is an experience. When I had my one bedroom apartment, there were times I could not afford to go grocery shopping. I have friends too who don't know what it's like to be hungry. 'You don't know what it's like to go to bed hungry? You've never had that?' I find that very bizarre.

Nicole also recalled a time where she began to retreat from her friends because their lives were so different and they did not understand why she was working two jobs and going to school: "As that stuff started to pile up, I got really self conscious. It made me super compassionate or aware or something." She did not think her friends were malicious, but the idea that they could not understand that she had to work made Nicole self-conscious about her

financial situation and feel less than normal. She sought comfort and safety in the theater community. As she explained,

Even though I was never in the mainstream, there was always a small handful of people who loved and appreciated me. Do you know what I mean? Even in the theater community. Many of those theater kids are super well off, but they're also super quirky, and there are other things going on... That's when I started to pull back and retreat to the safety net of a busy schedule, and the theater community, where it didn't really matter if you were yourself.”

Nicole felt that theater is important to culture because it provided opportunities and spaces where diverse people's stories can be told and heard. She noted, specifically,

I think it's important to culture. I think that it's also important to players, the people who create theater. I think it's often more important to those people, to those of us, than it often is to the audience. But I think what is key to theater, and has been/should be key, is the concept of storytelling. That is the part of theater that I've come to [value]. ... Even though I know that sometimes it's so silly, and can be so self absorbed, you can't dismiss the act of storytelling.

She also thought that being exposed to and understanding stories through theater can facilitate making connections and inferences, and developing abilities to sympathize and empathize with others. In making this point, she declared, “That level of human connection is what drives kindness and compassion, forgiveness and truth, and moral lessons, and all of that. That is at the core of storytelling.” Her background in theater has honed Nicole's facility for understanding people and discovering their background stories to build better relationships with them. These skills were apparent in her classroom interactions.

Multicultural (Mis)Connections to the Classroom

Connections can be made between all of the participants' formative and pivotal experiences and how they interpreted and implemented multicultural education in their classrooms. The best examples, however, were provided by Ellen, Nancy, and Nicole. The impact of seeing and understanding racism showed in Ellen's classroom through her choice of literature. The impact of being ostracized, feeling different, and being able to be creative was evident in Nancy's classroom management and planning. The influences of feeling inferior because her financial situation was different from her classmates' showed in how Nicole taught and conveyed compassion for her students.

During one observation she was doing a read aloud unit on *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* by Mildred D. Taylor (1976). This book is set in Mississippi during the 1930s depression. It details the struggles of learning to maintain integrity and pride in the midst of racism and social injustice. The family wants their own land and, Cassie, the story's narrator, learns why this is so important. The story's themes of adversity, strength, and courage were part of Ellen's goals for this unit. Ellen used the book to also teach summarizing, identifying important events, determining a story's theme, and explaining story structure. She chose the book to expose students to a story with African American characters.

During another observation Ellen had the following poem by Langston Hughes projected on the screen and asked the students to name the author.

I, Too

By Langston Hughes

I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.

They send me to eat in the kitchen

When company comes,

But I laugh,

And eat well,

And grow strong.

Tomorrow,

I'll be at the table

When company comes.

Nobody'll dare

Say to me,

“Eat in the kitchen,”

Then.

Besides,

They'll see how beautiful I am

And be ashamed—

I, too, am America.

As students started to call out random historical figures they had been studying during their yearlong unit on the American Revolution and Constitution, Ellen asked them to look at the language to see if their guesses were reasonable. As they named more historical people, she asked if a White man would have written this poem. After the students decided it must be someone who is African American, she told them they would find out the next day and have a longer discussion about the meaning of the poem. What happened in the subsequent discussions was not part of the data collected for this study.

During the first interview Ellen declared that multicultural education is not a choice, but an obligation in today's diverse world. She elaborated further:

...it just feels like it's what needs to be done; it's necessary.... it seems like it should be the embedded piece underneath everything ... that we're teaching in a diverse country with this diverse group of kids. We're aiming for equity and we're aiming to create good citizens. ... I mean all these things you don't get there. It's not really an icing on the cake sort of thing. It's more of an essential sub-component of what you're doing if you're going to get to those places.

Her comments imply that multicultural education is a part of her routine teaching.

Nancy considered multicultural education as a way of looking at the curriculum, and designing it to incorporate the strengths of all students:

I think of it like a lens you look through when you are ... making decisions about materials, making decisions ... aside from like creating experiences for kids to be themselves and have a creative voice, I also wanted them to have respect for other people that were different from them. That partly probably goes back to how I was treated and that whole education piece, but respect is kind of at the core of my classroom.

Nancy acknowledged that multicultural education was not a focus in her teacher preparation program and that her passion for it stemmed from, "the core of who I am and how I was brought up and the experiences I had." Her experiences as a student greatly impacted how she planned, interpreted, and interpreted and implemented multicultural education. She said,

I didn't consciously go, 'Okay, I'm going to be a multicultural teacher.' It's more like in my classroom I've had the good fortune to be in school districts that honor my abilities to create curriculum and really shape it in a different way. When I've had that opportunity to

create my own curriculum that's just one element that I'm bringing in. [The] idea of treating people with respect, honoring different voices, that really goes way back before my formal education.

Nicole's theater training made her implementation of responsive classroom easy because she used her ways of studying a character in getting to know her students. Similar to the way one would fall in love with a complex character in a good book, Nicole loves her students. In reflecting on her affinity to responsive classroom practices she declared "no wonder I naturally fell into that responsive classroom culture because I have a little bit of that background of what's happening behind the choice of this character, or this individual's thinking."

Nicole also knew that students' behavior and success are connected to their lives outside of school. She shared a story about two students who were chronically late for school. One had a new baby sibling at home and it was hard for her mom to get all of the children out of the door on time. The other did not listen to her mother about getting up and ready for school. In both instances Nicole treated the students with compassion, while imposing consequences for being late. She provided the following explanation for why she engaged with the students as she did:

I have a student who is chronically late and she's just a dear and I love her and she just adores me but I had to crack down. I was like, 'dude, what is going on? Is there something you need to do in the morning to get yourself ready?' ... She looked at me and she's like, 'I'm so sorry Nicole, my mom, the baby keeps having these accidents right before and my mom is really stressed out at my little sister, and I'm doing everything I can to help everyone get out the door.' And I said, 'it's okay.' So, she can be late now and that's okay for her. Other kids who are like, 'I just slept in.' That's not okay. That is not acceptable. So, I think in that way and that is applicable to any classroom. And it's not

just knowing your students but knowing families. I had another student who was chronically late. She would just have this attitude anytime she walked in the door late so you need to go to the office and check in, and she was rolling her eyes and like just getting so sassy. I told her that I do not appreciate that. That is not respectful. You may not have that attitude with me. This is happening to you and if you want to talk about why it's happening we can, and we pulled her in and had a meeting with her mom and she's like it was all the student's doing. She just wasn't following directions in the mornings and so I worked with that family to set up an almost ... behavior plan.

Nicole's ability to work with students and their families to help them be the best they can be for school, their family, and for each other stemmed from her feelings of inadequacy during her college experience. This is one way in which she interpreted and implemented multicultural education.

Close connections between formative experiences and how multicultural education was implemented showed that these teachers brought their own lives into their teaching, and that the two cannot be separated. They also indicated that what they considered as multicultural education often was not consistent with its conceptual characteristics.

Summary

The findings in this chapter revealed connections between participants' formative and pivotal experiences, and the priorities in their teaching practices. All of the participants grew up in predominantly White settings that helped shape their instructional practices. This was shown through the participants' interpretations of multicultural education, the importance of building strong learning communities, and the life lessons they wanted their students to carry on beyond

their classrooms. The results of the study also showed some major gaps in what the participants called multicultural education and the description offered by scholars in the field.

Chapter V

Seeing Foothills Instead of Mountains

The findings presented in this chapter revealed why and how the participants' good teaching practices were not genuine multicultural education as defined by experts in the field. While the participants' teaching strategies were valid and viable, and should not be dismissed, the importance of being clearer and more strident about what is genuine multicultural education need to be observed. The results are arranged according to three main themes. These are avoiding White privilege, power, and racial identity; connections between the past and the present; and transformative teaching.

Teaching without Discussing White Privilege, Power, and Racial Identity

The hard work and time put into building strong communities in these classrooms was not extended to examining White privilege, power, and racial identity specifically. This absence reflected the participants' definitions and understanding of White privilege; dealing with White guilt and shame, their perceptions of appropriateness for discussing these issues with elementary students, and having covert rather than overt discussions.

Definitions and Understandings of White Privilege

Quality discussions about White privilege and power necessitate teachers having clear understandings and definitions of what the concepts mean. Some participants in this study had clearer definitions than others. Ellen's school district spent some time years ago having discussions with teachers about race, privilege, and teaching. But she was resistant to these discussions because, "In the first couple years it felt more like it was about the whole issue of recognizing your own biases from recognizing your own experiences. Then we did that again and it felt like it never moved anywhere." Her desire to really teach and engage her students left

her wanting more than what was happening in these workshops. She was confused about the message of the workshops and “trying to balance ... know[ing] my kids and their personal cultures and at the same time [not] mak[ing] assumptions about my kids and their personal cultures.” This tension between messages received in the workshops and what was happening in her classroom, which at that time was a more diverse setting, caused Ellen to resist both feelings of privilege and guilt. Yet she said,

[It] is not that I don't believe privilege is a big deal but I'm just tired of [it], whether I should be or not, honestly. ... But then I find myself still looking forward and reading it. If somebody puts it in front of me because that's important to me, so I feel like I just do it kicking and screaming, but I don't know how to describe that.

Ellen's tensions between understanding how White privilege plays a role in teaching and wanting to move beyond theoretical ideas to teaching practices created dilemmas and ambiguities for her. Yet, wanting to avoid dealing with privilege or move beyond it in discussions about education can be a sign of privilege itself.

Ellen understood what privilege means even though she resisted the idea of teaching students about it. In her estimation neither she nor her students were “ready” for these discussions. This dilemma is evident in the following comments:

I haven't named it as privilege because even defining White becomes difficult because White as in how many numerous mixed race kids anymore ... Probably a quarter of this class is a quarter of something else. Then there're the kids who are adopted ... It's sort of hard to figure out how to talk about what skin color conveys because then you have to talk about the experiences that people are having now. I don't know how I would tell them what not having privilege looks like. You know what I mean... Maybe I can talk

about privilege but I'm not really ready to talk about Ferguson and I'm not really ready to talk about the fact that I know that [she] might get followed in the grocery store in three years when [she] won't. I can't tell them those things yet. ... I can't go there ... They haven't seen it yet so I don't want to be the one to put it in front of them. If it's in front of them, then it's one thing to talk about it but if it hasn't been in front of them yet...

Ellen showed an understanding of how Whiteness and privilege can impact her students in the future, how they will have more opportunities and less obstacles while her few students of color will not, even though they are adopted by White families. However, this understanding was compromised by her belief that lack of personal experience with oppression excused her students from having to study privilege. Ellen also thought it was impossible to have conversations about privilege in a predominantly White school because there are so few students of color present. As she explained,

It's been much harder at this school than at my old school in the sense that it's ... not [so] diverse. It's hard when you have just one or two kids that are obviously of color to not have them feel like the poster child. When you've got six or eight then you can have a pretty good conversation about how things are without putting any one person on the spot.

Unfortunately, she placed the responsibility for carrying race-based discussions on students of color. This default occurs too often in other teaching and learning situations involving racial issues. Ellen also stated that her predominantly White students have not yet seen oppression and racism. But in the diverse school where she taught formerly the students had "a pretty good conversation about how things are." This distinction could mean she considered racism,

Whiteness, and privilege were appropriate content in teaching students of color, but not White students.

Nicole's understanding of White privilege was strong, but had developed fairly recently compared to Ellen. She had graduated from a Master's in Teaching program only four years earlier. In her program she took a "handful of classes" that dealt specifically with White privilege. Learning about White privilege and power shocked Nicole at first, but she soon realized that even though she worked hard she "had a leg up" due to her privilege. She explained White privilege as follows:

An ignorance in white people, Caucasian people ... For me I was totally oblivious because I never thought of myself as privileged. I worked so hard for so many things and then I was ... offended. I was like, 'We're privileged? What are you talking about? I worked my ass off'. Then I was like, 'Oh!'

Nancy demonstrated her understanding of White privilege by describing a situation in which she felt like a minority:

I'm part of the mainstream culture. A lot of the life experiences I have are different because of that, because I'm White and I've lived in other cultures or had other cultures. I lived in Hawaii and I lived in Japan and I've been a minority in those cultures. ... So I've had a little bit more sensitivity to what that feels like to be judged on the color of your skin ... yet, I think White privilege is ... pervasive [in] how our education system is set up ... access to jobs, access to the way we speak.

Nancy's brief explanation of White privilege encompassed Ellen's and Nicole's ideas that accessibility to jobs and education is a component to privilege. She also indicated that language is a factor of privilege because it includes and exudes power.

Elisa was still constructing her understanding of privilege. In our discussions she expressed confusion over the concepts of privilege, privileges, and being privileged. She attempted to convey her understanding by sharing this example of a discussion about privilege with her students:

We talk about it in terms of who's being discriminated and who's not... They're pretty quick. ... We were talking about, 'Why were the White people afraid? What were they afraid of? The dark color was going to rub off on them?' Then I [said], 'Would it have mattered?' Most of the kids were like, 'No.' One kid's [said], 'Yeah.' [I said], 'Why? Why would it matter to you?' He's like, 'I wouldn't want to be Black.' I was like, 'Why not?' He goes, 'Because they're discriminated against.'... He was like, 'I wouldn't want to have to live through that.' They know it's not a fair world.

This interaction showed that students are conscious of race and racial differences, and they know that some people are treated unfairly because of race. It also showed that Elisa did have some conversations about race with her students: however, it had a colorblind bent to it when she said, "Would it matter?" The only student who suggested that it would, in fact, matter was looking at the world through a racialized lens even at eight years old. This student's emerging understanding of privilege is supported in a classroom community built on trust and opportunities for students to freely share thoughts and ideas. However, Elisa was unable to develop the discussion fully because of her confusion over what White privilege truly means.

This was evident from the following comments:

I tell them [students] straight up, 'You're privileged. Most of you have a mom and a dad, whether they live together or not. You know them, and there'[re] a lot of kids who don't. There's a lot of kids whose parents are incarcerated. There's kids who don't have food in

the refrigerator, in our city... You have clothes. You have a beautiful school. You have a family. You don't want for anything.' All of their needs are completely covered - emotional, social, clothing, shelter. They travel. I have kids in Hawaii right now. They're in Mexico, They're in Hawaii. They're in California. They're in Disneyland. This is privilege.

In this comment Elisa confused White privilege with socioeconomic status and that those who have more material and fiscal resources compared to those who have less. She also assumed that those whose socioeconomic status is less means their social emotional needs are not being met. She further confused White privilege and being privileged or having privileges, in stating that,

I think when I talk to my class about White privilege, I'm also talking to those few Asian kids in there. I'm talking to all of them. Even if there was a Black kid in my class and he[']s living in [this neighborhood] there's a privilege over other Black kids going to another school. Being in my class is a privilege over being in [another school] ... or somewhere else. I think that everyone [here] has to realize, even if you are a minority, that you still have advantages over other people who don't live in our community and go to our school. I'm not [saying], 'Only you White kids have privileges.'

This is misleading at least and detrimental at most. The confusion in these statements denies the importance of prejudice and racism that the few students of color in her school may have experienced already living in a predominantly White neighborhood, and the future experiences they will have when they are outside of their neighborhood.

Elisa did not seem to understand the disparities and connections between race and socioeconomic status in this explanation of privilege:

I think it's ... understanding that not all people are born equally. If you're born into generational poverty and you're African American. Look at these guys, it's all coming out. Ferguson is fining the African American people for their income for their city, for revenue. They're specifically targeting the people who need the most help. That just makes me sick. ... We need to put laws into place that protect people and to help people get a foot up.

Her understanding of the economic disparities in the U.S. was apparent, but she did not make the connection between White privilege and power, and that the system that she has benefited from her whole life is the same one that imposes discriminatory policies on people of color throughout the U.S.

Because of the understanding that some of the teachers had about White privilege and power is still evolving, the idea of teaching them to students caused concerns of the impact on students. Concerns about White guilt, shame, and the age-appropriateness of having conversations on White privilege, power, race, and racism were common among the four participants in this study.

White Guilt, Shame, and Age-Appropriateness

According to Helms (1992) and Michael (2015) guilt and shame are stages in the development of White identity and positive racial attitudes, and it takes deliberate efforts to overcome them. For the teachers in this study, the age and time to do this were unclear and questionable. This was especially so for Ellen, Nicole, and Nancy. Due to Elisa's lack of understanding about White privilege, she is not included here, but her classroom discussions about race with 2nd graders should not be dismissed.

Often as Ellen answered questions she would immediately begin to wonder if what she just said was valid. This was evident in the following ambiguous comments about race without mentioning White privilege:

I feel like at this age, all I can really do is help [students] understand ... some pieces of [race] that are out there so that maybe when they're looking at it later-... Yeah, maybe ... prepare them to sort of start to understand it or to ask questions about why it's like that... If we were reading more current events ... That would have really presented more of an opportunity for [discussing race].

Ellen also mentioned that her students had not “seen [racism] yet so I don't want to be the one to put it in front of them. If it's in front of them, then it's one thing to talk about it but if it hasn't been in front of them yet.” Then she would not explicitly include issues of race and racism in teaching her 5th graders. This statement was followed by another about the only Black student in her class, a girl adopted from Ethiopia by a White family, who had experienced racism:

Her parents are White and her older brother and sister are White. They had an experience of her sister bringing home a friend from school who had been her friend for a long time. [She] was with [her] in the house and was talking about how much she didn't like the Black kids at school, which sent the sister into a frenzy of, ‘Who are you and what are you doing in my house?’ It was so upsetting and awful and then to find out that she knew people ... knowing full well that her sister is African.

The contradictions between claiming students are not seeing race and White privilege, and retelling this experience, along with Ellen admitting that she did not want to “go there,” show fear and a lack of confidence in dealing with these issues in her teaching.

Yet, Ellen had attended a workshop on developing lessons about White privilege, sponsored by the Pacific Northwest Teachers for Social Justice. She said this experience had caused her,

to think about where [White privilege] fits because the trick is to figure out what you want [students] to take from it other than feeling guilty for what they have. It doesn't really do a whole lot of good. The only thing that I have tried to do this year is to convince them that looking at 40 and 50 and 60 and 80 years past stuff that feels really apart from their experience ...[has] left trails.

In using this approach, Ellen wanted students to understand that the past is connected to the present, even though in her actual teaching she did not make these connections explicitly.

Nicole also struggled with not wanting her students to feel guilty about racial inequities, but was uncertain about how to proceed in teaching them. This uncertainty was apparent in the following comments:

It's a hard conversation to have with ten year olds. They're so prone to guilt and shame...So, any discussion that we have about privilege or even multiple perspectives, I'm super careful because I don't want them to feel shame...In terms of privilege and power, that's also tricky because I have students whose parents do very well for themselves, and for spring break they can take elaborate trips. [But] then I have other students whose families ... are in different situations and they have 'staycations.' So, rather than say what did you do over your spring break, [I ask], 'What did you appreciate about your spring break?' And eighty percent of the students, no matter where they were or what vacation they took, they [say] 'I appreciated being around family.'

Here, Nicole confused socioeconomic status with White privilege, as well as feeling that discussions will inevitably lead to guilt and shame.

Nancy viewed talking about White privilege as “very politically charged and not so appropriate for elementary students,” while also saying that, “I think you can do it developmentally at any age but it's going to look different.” She also declared that, “As educators we need to be mindful about not being too biased or indoctrinating our [students] with our own political views.” This statement is contrary to the view of many educators that teaching is always a political act and that attempts at neutrality perpetuates the status quo (Neito, 2010; Sleeter, 1994). Nancy felt avoiding expressing her political views because she wanted “students to have the ability to make informed decisions and to be able to think critically. They may end up with diametrically opposed political views...but I value diversity, so that's fine.” In making this declaration Nancy seemed to be referring to diversity of personal opinions and perspectives, rather than of race, class, ethnicity, and culture.

These three teachers said talking about White privilege, power, race, and racism was important, but it was not age appropriate for their 3rd – 5th grade students. They also agreed that if these issues were to be discussed at all it was best to do so in covert, implicit ways rather than in overt and explicit ways.

Covert Discussions

Ellen, Nancy, and Nicole used literature to covertly talk about White privilege, power, race, racism, and social justice. All three gave examples of this through books they read as a whole class or with literature circle groups. For example Ellen said,

We kind of talk about that [White privilege] all the time without really talking about it...I guess it's mostly as it comes up to point out what might give people advantages ... We

were reading *Roll of Thunder [Hear My Cry]* and talking about the importance of land.

There did seem to be an opening. I can't remember how the discussion went but ended up talking about how they don't really recognize those kids whose ... parents are homeowners and whose grandparents were homeowners and whose great grandparents were homeowners, how much wealth there is in having had your own property for multiple generations and having that passed along.

Nicole explained that,

We were reading this book, it's called *Written in Stone*.... We just started it, just a chapter, and it's telling this story of this Makah child. She lived up in the Makah village in the 1920s. They're a whaling tribe. Her father doesn't return from the whaling trip. This White man from town with a beard comes ... The man was ... challenging the grandfather and the uncle, 'How are you going to bury this guy? ...' The narrator, this young girl, is saying, 'That's because they outlawed potlatch. It was against the law. He was just waiting to see if he could take them to jail.' ... When I read the line, 'they outlawed potlatch,' every single one of [the students] [gasped]. The room was full of little White kids. It's outrageous to them; 'How dare you do this.' It's because they've been taught and understand this idea of multiple perspectives. It's not just all, 'Here's what's right for everybody' ... but there's another side to this story.

In retelling this story Nicole even missed the opportunity to "name" the actions racism and White privilege by calling them "multiple perspectives" instead.

Nancy's comments also applauded literature as a means for teaching about differentiating privilege:

I think I addressed [White privilege, power, and racism] through my literature choices. I try to expose the kids to things like prejudice and not just ... racial prejudice but class issues. It's somewhat subtle and then it's sometimes more overt. Martin Luther King Day's a day when you talk about racism more overtly. Some of the book choices I make, the literature choices definitely look at those biases ... Most of the kids read *Sylvia & Aki*. Not only does it look at the Japanese internment, but it looks at the difference, the segregation of school experience for the Latino community.

Nancy wanted her students "to be exposed to [racist and privilege] situations in the reading" but was not willing to "have a whole class discussion" on them. Nicole similarly stated that her approach was not, "Lets' sit down and talk about our racial identity." Yet, there were times when her students began talking about their racial identity on their own initiative. She noted, for example, that,

there have been instances where we've been talking and sharing like, 'Oh, I read this on the news, and this is happening in Ukraine, and it's important to me because my grandparents came from Ukraine and that's my history; and somebody else will pop up [with] ... 'oh tell me more about that.'

Elisa tended to have more overt discussions about White privilege, power, race, and racism. She said, "We talk about it in terms of who's being discriminated [against] and who's not." According to her these discussions occurred regularly in her classroom. On two occasions during observations students discussed Cesar Chavez and his dedication to working for Latino migrant farm workers, and Mae Jemison and the discrimination she encountered on her journey to become the first African American female astronaut. The latter discussion extended to women being discriminated against in different science and technology careers. Elisa was constantly

connecting lessons from one subject to another, as well as the same subject across time. One day the students were discussing important women in history. She started by listing all the people and events they had already discussed, such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, Cesar Chavez, Sacajawea, the Civil Rights Movement, and Japanese internment. During the final observation the students earned a movie day and the discussion that followed addressed equality, women's right to equal pay, and gay marriage.

Multiple Perspectives without Connecting the Past to the Present

All the teachers in this study stressed the importance of teaching history through multiple perspectives, and tied it to their definitions of multicultural education. For example, Elisa explained,

Because, especially the younger students, they can tend to be very egocentric. To realize that there's not one right way to do things, there's not one right way to see things. Many people, even [within] our own school community, may view the same issue in different ways and how does our culture affect that worldview. The two, they're connected. I really want them to know that there's way more going on than what we think ... What we think we know.

Ellen considered multicultural education as, “both considering a variety of cultural perspectives in what I'm choosing to teach and the material I'm using ... making sure that there's just a range of different cultural perspectives considered.” Nancy made essentially the same point in declaring,

I think of it as ability to integrate lots of different perspectives and honor students' individual voices and their creativity. I think it's a little deeper and broader. I bring in things like class issues, in terms of socioeconomic differences; prejudice[s].

Nicole implied multicultural education in her support of multiple perspectives in teaching and learning when she stated, “the kids have to be open-minded and flexible people who are able to articulate their ideas in a way that ... sets them up to be open-minded to other perspectives.”

These teachers incorporated multiple perspectives into their history lessons. Students learned about history through immigrant experiences, Jim Crow laws, Native American experiences, slavery, Japanese internment, the Holocaust, poverty, and segregation. Elisa’s 2nd graders learned about historical figures and events mostly through read-alouds and celebrations. She explained this focus as follows:

With the second grade, it's pretty much integrated in We read about Martin Luther King; we're reading personal narratives or narrative stories. I'll read *Goin' Someplace Special*, about a young girl who's trying to get to the library. She doesn't tell you it's a library until the very end. All the Jim Crow Laws that she experiences on the way ... We've read a book about Japanese internment and talked about that. We read *The Harmonica*, which is about a young boy in a concentration camp in Nazi Germany.... It's mostly through read-alouds, through cultural celebrations.

Nancy also used literature as a way to teach multiple perspectives to her 3rd graders. She explained her choice of using *Star Fisher* by Laurence Yep:

I think it's out of print now, which is really unfortunate. It has all kinds of layers of how does it feel to be a minority person in a setting where there are not a lot of people like you. A kid who's straddling the two different cultures. You're born in America, you speak fluent English, but your parents are first generation immigrants. That's an interesting one that has ... prejudice comes up in it and you see how the families deal with it. There's some poverty issues.

Ellen read *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* by Mildred D. Taylor with her students. She wanted to give them an historical account of what life was like for African American families in the South who encountered racism and injustice on a daily basis. She was hoping the students would also recognize the universal themes of adversity and struggle. Ellen's interpretation of the book's instructional value bypassed race and racism entirely. She viewed the book as,

really about facing unfairness and facing adversity with your integrity intact, and yourself and your family intact. [The students] weren't quite there so it was clear that they were looking on as a story that really didn't have a lot of attachment to themselves so that's something that I think is hard perhaps.

Nancy described her experience teaching about American Indian history in a unit she taught prior to this study. She struggled with teaching her young students about encounters between pilgrims and the Wampanoag, Thanksgiving, living together in peace, violence, and what is developmentally appropriate. Nancy noted that in 2nd grade,

We did a whole Wampanoag study. I was torn because I wanted to present that experience in a developmentally appropriate way. The more you learn about it, it's like there's a period of time where I got very ... they were in a war and their kids were taken off and only put in White schools and they couldn't speak. All of ... that whole part of the history. So I had to ask myself what's the educational outcome that I'm going for here. What's developmentally appropriate The Wampanoag people were the ones that were invited to the pilgrim's thanksgiving feast. ... You want to be as accurate and bring in the reality of, No, they didn't have little buckles on their hats. Kind of straighten out the story a little bit and there are some really good materials for that. You just look at it as for some people thanksgiving is this kind of experience. For other people, it's this other

experience why would that be? ... Kind of presenting both points of view and then I made a conscious decision to just talk about the 50-year period where they had peace which is a really long period of time to have peace and then just kind of touch on why it did change.... What were the things that caused that relationship to change and become antagonistic, and so I touched on it without really getting into a whole lot but we talked about it.

Nancy's decision to learn on her own the circumstances that led to the creation of the first "Thanksgiving feast" is one many teachers choose to focus on regularly. Also, having conversations with young students about how the meaning of Thanksgiving is different for different people is a step toward helping them think critically about history. However, only touching on why things changed between English colonists and the indigenous people they encountered does not explain how Whiteness and privilege fueled the genocide that dispersed indigenous people across the United States in populations much smaller than the time of pilgrims. By not connecting the plight of today's indigenous populations with the plight of earlier generations, the pilgrims and early colonists, situations that created today's conditions are disconnected from race and racism.

Ellen taught a year-long unit on the American Revolution and the Constitution that offered many perspectives from this period of time in U.S. history. She explained how she addressed slavery:

To some degree I'm trying to balance, ... the voices and balance the perspectives. ... We started with colonization to make sure that we cover the beginnings of slavery and the beginnings of slave code[s], to make sure [the students] have some idea how slavery that developed here was egregious in a different way than slavery that had existed in other

parts of the world, and to make sure they understood how much of the country [was] actually of African descent at the time of the Revolution. ... Before we even start ... I said ... that we're going to be reading these stories and you're going to see mostly White people, but remember this is the backdrop all the time that we're going to be talking about freedom, but there's all these people that aren't free...

The one African ancestry student in Ellen's class (adopted into a White family) was very resistant to these materials and participating in related discussions. Ellen worked with her and the family to devise a plan where she was able to comfortably participate. She explained how the situation was resolved in the following statement:

When we started dealing with slavery this year, I have a, one girl who's adopted from Ethiopia and she completely freaked out because she didn't want to read about slavery, and she didn't want to know about slavery, and she didn't want to talk about slavery and [she had a] total meltdown at home ... So, I worked with her folks and her mom got a copy of the book that we were reading for read-aloud and she pre-read with her the whole thing. So she was prepared for it and could cry and talk about it, and be upset about it and not have to put a happy face on at school. ... All the kids were really upset by the material but she engaged with it in a really different way.... She had such a strong reaction, it was so hard for her. I thought maybe I shouldn't be doing it but we know ... this is exactly what she does need to be doing, ... and with enough time and sensitivity ... she can figure out how she's going to deal with it and what that means.

This scenario is a good example of why it is so important to connect the past to the present. It illustrates the contemporary impact of a White supremacist society on people of color. Yet, Ellen taught the unit from an historical perspective leaving her White students detached

from the history, and her African American student hesitant to learn. All of these historical individuals and events remain in the past when their impact on today is not addressed. Without connecting the past to the present when it comes to racial oppressions White students may think their presence does not have any bearing or effect on the history they are learning, and eventually, will construct.

Two of the four teachers, Nancy and Ellen, were in their 50s and have lived through some of the history they are teaching their students. To them it is something they feel their students should know. However, without teaching students about the connections to the present and what racism looks like today they may become detached and believe that they now live in a post-racial society. Nancy made this point when she said:

It's interesting because it's part of my historical time frame. I've seen a lot of change. My parents were involved in the civil rights movement and some of this is not abstract. I was alive when Martin Luther King was shot and very impacted by that. It was very intentional for me to bring in things like these issues but my experience with the kids is they're just totally accepting. Well of course we treat everybody equally ... They understand that there's a history and that's the way it used to be. It doesn't make a lot of sense to them that people would be treated differently.

In response to a question asked about whether students were aware that racism existed presently, just less overtly Nancy said, “ I think they're removed from that ... I don't know how much news they watch or anything like that but I think they're a little removed from that personal experience.” Ellen expressed similar sentiments when she said:

It means something to us [teachers]. We remember a world like this. To our students it's like, ‘Why are we talking about this?’ ... Not that there's not racism, but we should be

talking about Ferguson, maybe, not talking about the back of the bus because that's so far from their frame of reference. While it's part of history and they should learn about, it doesn't really make any sense to them... If that's what we're talking about when we talk about racism, then it's reasonable that they should say, 'This is not a problem.' ... Because they don't understand what that would be. It's really ... ridiculous to them, the idea of separate drinking fountains or something. ... When we raise these things to them, it's as weird to them as riding on a covered wagon or something. It's so far from their experience. It seems like we need to update what we're talking about when we talk about what work we have to do, or what work to celebrate, either way.

In another interview, Ellen reiterated teaching history and current events when she said: How do you not just feel guilty about your own past if that's you? I don't know that they really associate themselves with that history because it seems so far fetched, that kind of behavior. It's like they know they wouldn't act that way. I know that they just view it as bad people. I don't know that they view it as White people. I think it would be harder if we were talking about a lot of current events right now to do that.

Although Ellen suggested that history should to be taught through the present, she did not include contemporary examples of racial discrimination in her class discussions. She explained the difficulty in choosing to speak about them or not:

We haven't talked much about Ferguson. It's hard to figure out some of that stuff. Their families may not have talked about it. I can't figure out whether to introduce it or not ... we haven't talked as much about current events as I've wanted to, given what we're working on in social studies, but we will be because of what they need to do with the rest of their expedition.

Ellen's avoidance of contemporary racism demonstrates the difficulty many White teachers have with talking about race in predominantly White settings. Teaching history from multiple perspectives without connecting those perspectives to specific acts of past and present racism is inconsistent with transformative education and is in opposition to some other major goals of multicultural education.

During one observation Elisa did connect the present to the past, but in regards to gender discrimination rather than race. The students were learning how to create timelines and using a book about Mae Jemison. They used clues from the book to determine what year events in her life happened. The students knew that she was born in 1956 and Elisa asked them what was happening in the United States when she was born to set the stage for the obstacles she encountered. The students told Elisa that it was the Civil Rights Movement. Elisa clarified and added "she was born into an unequal society." She continued to say how even today women are being discriminated against and shared an example about the number of male engineers where her husband works compared to the number of females. She did clarify that Jemison had a "doubly difficult" time because she was both a woman and Black, but did not guide the students to examine this idea thoroughly. Discussing the hardships women have today was a point well taken. However, to dismiss the hardships and discrimination that women of color still have today because of race and gender left the students assuming that racism was something of the past and no longer exists in the present.

Teaching without Transforming

All of the teachers in this study were skilled in designing curriculum that offers students learning experiences that emphasize differentiation, critical thinking, and knowledge construction. They spent time modifying curriculum or writing their own. Both processes can be

components of multicultural education when addressing issues specific to ethnic, racial, cultural, and social diversity. However, these plans did not emphasize these concerns, nor social activism, another essential component of multicultural education. To do this, teachers needed to take a stance on the impracticality of trying to be neutral in the classroom.

Multiple Approaches to Learning

Nancy's classroom was full of books, posters, and alternative spaces for students to work. She displayed books on top of shelves and decorated walls with posters that aligned with the units students were studying. During the second observation there, I noticed that the tables under the window were different. When I asked Nancy about the change she explained that the class had just started a unit on walls. The books were about the Western wall, the Berlin wall, the Great Wall of China, and Veterans' Memorial Walls, but also about walls with murals, prison walls, and firewalls. The students read books about walls, learned about metaphors, studied different walls, and wrote a story from a walls perspective. Besides the reading and writing content, Nancy wanted them to understand both literal and figurative ideas of walls as barriers. This unit was intentionally followed with one on bridges. Nancy explained, "The reading I choose, I don't make the direct connection for them, but it's very intentional. The books that I have them read look at bridging challenges, bridging cultures."

Nancy also used centers, or learning stations, in her classroom. Each student was paired with a partner for the year and four days a week they spent time in one of the centers. Students were observed building with Legos, creating digital animation movies, learning how to identify animal tracks, playing word games, learning to type, and discovering new art mediums. She explained that the centers served multiple purposes:

I try to take skills and not teach them so isolated ... for instance, I want kids to have the skill of using nonfiction reading materials so they need to know about indexes and those kinds of things, and I think typically that would be taught as a lesson like here is what an index is, here's how it works. The end! One of my centers uses indexes as a tool to do research for animal tracks...They kind of build on that idea of multiple intelligences and then the affective piece of having somebody that you're working with then you can work independently on most of them or with a partner collaboratively.

Elisa frequently integrated reading and writing. Students were in book clubs together and reading books in a series. Elisa used the books they were reading to teach students how to write an opinion about a character's traits. She modeled how to make a claim and support it with evidence using a read-aloud book. Then the students went back to their seats and wrote their opinions using the books they read with their book club. Elisa also used integrated literacy and writing skills to teach summarizing and making timelines.

At the school where Ellen and Nicole taught yearlong thematic planning was central to the mission and vision. Ellen's unit was the American Revolution and the Constitution, and Nicole's unit was oceans. Ellen integrated reading, writing, and social studies into her yearlong unit, but math and science were taught separately, while Nicole integrated reading, writing, and science. Ellen explained her ideal of how a yearlong unit should evolve over time.

Once we get passed Constitution we're going to look at dissensions. We're going to approach that through art or poetry or music. They're going to decide what they want to research ... They're going to choose a piece of art, or piece of poetry, or piece of music that represents some conflict or protest movement, and ... use that as a jumping off point for what they're going to learn more about. Then they're going to propose an amendment

[to] the Constitution. So I feel like when we get back in the dissension I have much more opportunity to talk about ... what happened to the Constitution over time and how can we use the Constitution to create ... fairness for different groups of people in different situations over time.

As the students worked on this unit they created political cartoons, researched making a timeline of the beginnings of the United States, rehearsed a play about the thirteen colonies, and wrote essays about what is worth fighting for.

In Nicole's unit students learned how to identify main ideas and key details in informational text, observe aquatic plants, design an experiment to examine the impact of ocean acidification on shellfish, research and write informational essays on ocean life, and use adverbs and adjectives to make their writing more interesting. Nicole had to modify and write her own curriculum so that students would be able to reach the intended goals, objectives, and expectations. She explained her modifications to the acidification experiment:

We need[ed] to bring this around and connect with everything that's going on. So, they had to write this conclusion, What surprised you? How did the results compare to your predictions? So, not ... were you right or wrong...What was the difference and how does this connect to the real world?

All these instructional strategies focused on a variety of students' learning needs, encouraged critical thinking, and constructed knowledge that led students to develop and articulate their own ideas. Conceptually, these processes were potentially good fits for multicultural education, but they lacked the content specificity to be so in actuality.

Differentiation. The teachers in this study differentiated their instruction to adjust lessons and assessments to help individual students succeed with targeted goals and objectives.

Nancy described differentiation beautifully when she compared her classroom to a symphony:

As you switch up and you have language acquisition issues and you have special needs and you have kids who are coming in less ready to learn and all of those kinds of issues, then you're honoring the diversity of that and you're creating experiences where everybody has success ... My classroom's always a little bit like a symphony. You got all these different groups coming on and different objectives for different groups. In some ways it doesn't change but the pace and the content would be more skill acquisition oriented if that's what needed to be focused on. Not that the kids that are coming here with a really rich background and solid skills. Their skill acquisition set just changes. It's not that they get less; it's just different and it's paced differently.

Although stated differently, Nicole had a similar conception of differentiation that focused on accommodating individual academic abilities.

In terms of differentiation... my baseline is, ... everyone gives a 100% effort. Your 100% effort may produce something different than my 100% effort. The only way to know a child is giving their very best effort is to know your child or know the children.

For some teachers differentiating instruction can be a daunting task. Nicole managed it with a workshop model used while reading and writing.

You meet with this child individually and you assess their notes. Where are they? How are they performing? They've got it. Great. Give them a teaching point that's at their level, a little bit more advanced. Then you meet with another student and they're really struggling so you give them a teaching point that's more at their level.

Nicole and her students had many discussions about and experiences with different individual academic abilities. These reflected her beliefs in

Keeping high expectations but a flexible understanding of how that's going to manifest [individually] which is why we talk so much ... – So-and-so's written work is going to look different than this person's written work but we can all have a conversation if we know what we're talking about.

Nancy had similar ideas about differentiation and individualizing learning. She explained, “I really pay attention to individual needs so I try to individualize the curriculum as much as I can and look at how I'm going to get the best growth.” These efforts were motivated by her desire to,

find that cutting edge between ... something's new but it's also attainable. I want to optimize success so I differentiate a lot and try to be multisensory and writing things for visual and speaking and adapting for certain individual needs.

Elisa associated differentiation with knowing what students can and cannot do. As she explained:

Why should we hold them back because you feel it's not appropriate when they can do it? And they can explain it. ... They do. Some don't. Some are not there yet. They're a little immature, maybe developmentally that's where they're at. They really don't get it. They need a lot more practice, especially the math, with grouping and dividing. ... There are some kids that ... can do it. They can do it all. They can explain it. They can write it. They can do it beautifully.

In Elisa's class differentiation was most obvious in reading. Students were reading leveled books and participated in book clubs based on their reading levels. At one point during observations, Elisa took four students to the counter where there were worms living in a Worm Hotel. She proceeded to ask them questions about where the food was going, why was one

section becoming soil faster, will it all become soil, and how do worms make soil. She gave these students an oral quiz the rest of the class had taken on paper earlier because she knew they were not good test takers, but also knew they understood the concepts and skills being taught.

Ellen approached differentiation through options provided for students to complete their work. Her classroom was like a workshop. During nearly every observation the students were working on a project or an assignment. Ellen posted prioritized tasks on the board and students chose what needed the most attention. As they worked, she checked on their progress and helped them with various tasks. One day she went from posting pictures for an assessment on the iPad for a couple students, to reteaching factors for another, to listening to a third one read her writing assignment. Ellen moved often throughout the room changing strategies depending on what students' needs were at the moment.

Critical Thinking Through Multiple Perspectives. These teachers used critical thinking as a means for students to see multiple perspectives and then use the knowledge and insight to form their own opinions, ideas, and beliefs based on research and evidence. Nancy felt that critical thinking was a skill that her students should have because they would leave her

classroom with some more tools and practice being respectful, honoring different voices and different kinds of people. That's kind of a core thing. I want them to be critical thinkers and that's [a] critical piece that multicultural education taps into.

Nancy's comments here captured an idea central to multicultural education but her actions did not exemplify it by using specifically related content.

Nancy's units were designed so that all students did research on a topic, and at the end of the unit wrote either an essay or a narrative answering a question or solving a problem. For example, in the walls unit, the students had to write a story from the wall's perspective. This

assignment was an example of effective teaching because the students learned about the wall they were studying from different perspectives, but not multicultural education. They would have to know why the wall was built, who built it, who/what was being kept out or in, the circumstances in which the wall was built, and the current state of the wall. Then the students had to choose what to write about the wall and how the wall would feel about it.

Nicole's ocean unit gave students the opportunity to practice their critical thinking skills regularly. She stated,

rather than just looking at it like big industry is killing our ocean, like well let's take a step back. Why is that happening? People need jobs....Why are fishermen cutting off the fins of sharks and shoving them back into the ocean to die? They need money because ...[they] have to feed and clothe their family... So, that idea of getting children to understand that life is not black and white. We can make good decisions. Also understand that there are other perspectives here.

By looking at various ways the ocean is impacted by humans, students were able to examine how different people are using the ocean, and use that information to develop ideas and opinions based on evidence. During one interview Nicole discussed the world the students will inherit when they become adults. She felt that being able to think critically and understand multiple perspectives will help them problem solve later in life. In explaining further she said,

I try ... [to] promote mindfulness, so that it doesn't happen in the future. 'Okay, so we discovered this real cool thing. What are the alternative perspectives to that?' ... and how to prevent them in the future by having multiple perspectives. Knowing how to think about things from different angles.

Elisa thought understanding different perspectives and applying critical thinking skills were vehicles to reducing violence in the world:

You can't live in isolation; you have to be aware of what's going on. The more we understand each other and understand maybe where people are coming from or even if we don't understand, we could, at least, see their perspective, I think there's less chance of violence in the world.

This was Elisa's first year teaching 2nd grade. Previously she had taught 5th grade and the students how to use critical thinking skills in an argument essay they wrote. She recalled, "We did a huge thing on institutionalized discrimination and social-protest ... The argument essay we did was, Should the U.S. intervene in Syria? We got tons of perspectives on it."

Ellen provided students with opportunities to practice critical thinking skills when they wrote essays about what is worth fighting for. In order to write that essay, students had to learn about multiple sides of an idea, event, or issue and be able to express why it was so important to them. Ellen hoped that knowing more sides of a topic and using critical thinking skills would, make students "more thoughtful and empathetic and compassionate people ... and better informed ... More skeptical of information that might be narrow. Hopefully they will question things." For the end of the school year, Ellen planned on having the students write an amendment to the Constitution. The goals were similar to the essay in that students would have to examine their issue of concern from multiple vantage points, use their critical thinking skills to take a stand on it and write legislation about it.

By differentiating lessons and learning so that all students were successful and teaching critical thinking skills through multiple perspectives students in these classes began to construct knowledge with their peers and teacher. Rather than always being told what the world is like, the

students in these classrooms discovered some of it on their own. Unfortunately for this study most often these powerful teaching and learning processes were devoid of content specific to White privilege, power, race, and racism.

Knowledge Construction. Two participants in this study, Nicole and Nancy, provided multiple examples where students had the opportunity to construct knowledge on their own, or in a guided way. Nicole was partial to discovery learning and students building knowledge themselves. She explained,

I ask a lot of questions. I believe in discovery and less in ... direct instruction. Which is why sometimes I struggle with some types of curriculum. It's like here let me model this for you and now you try it. Whereas what's natural for me is to say, 'What do you notice? You tell me what you think is going on and what can we pull out of that. Why is that important and how is that experience for you.' I think setting [the] kind of ... environment of it's not me bestowing information or knowledge on to you, it's like let's figure it out together. I think that that's really important.

This learning process was exemplified when the class was preparing for an experiment on how acidification impacts shellfish. The goal was to see how the shells soften. One student wanted to conduct a different experiment. Nicole noted that, "He wanted to see if they would actually shrink." Rather than telling him no, she set some shells aside for him so that he could conduct that experiment on his own. Nicole knew the results of the experiment before she asked the students any questions. Yet, asking appropriate questions and responding enthusiastically to their answers about what they were creating gave the students a more engaging lesson with feelings of personal ownership in learning.

Besides feeling that guiding students to construct their own knowledge was the best way for them to learn, Nicole was “genuinely interested in what they have to say.” She used the class discussions to assess “why do you think this happened and how can we take this in this direction or whatever. Why do you think differently? ... I am logging all of that.”

Nancy was clear on her philosophies about students constructing their own ideas and opinions, in stating that

There are all kinds of biases out in the world as far as media goes and I'd like them to have the ability to take in a lot of different sources, and then discern what sounds right, what resonates, what feels right, that kind of thing. I just feel like that's one of the core things that education should impart... Really, I'm trying to give them a broad experience with a lot of different characters that are going through different situations. It's not for me to say what they take away from that... It's exposure. I feel like if you're going to respect people that are different than you, and you don't have firsthand experience, the next best thing is secondhand experience, and that if we're going to break down the prejudices that exist, it's firsthand experience or it's a sense of, ‘Oh, I have something in common or I have an understanding that maybe there's a reason that person is different than I am and acting the way they're acting.’

Nancy gave her students the opportunity for secondhand experiences through read-alouds and the books they read for literature circles. The centers her students did four times a week also were examples of students constructing knowledge on their own. She provided a center where they could practice a skill or learn how to do something on their own with little guidance from her. She created,

some experiences where the kids are shaping their own education a little bit. Some of it's opened-ended materials like Legos and others it's exposure to nonfiction reading in a context that's more fun. Critical thinking stuff they're doing programming and digital animation... It's also learning how to read certain kinds of directions and write, but I'm not teaching them that. They are learning it on their own.

Yet, the various approaches these teachers used to allow students to construct their own knowledge were not contextualized in multicultural-specific issues and experiences.

Social Action

A major goal of multicultural education and social justice teaching is transformation through social action. These participants saw themselves as vehicles for social change by their teaching beliefs and philosophies, but their students also needed to use the knowledge they acquired in ways that lead to social action. This was not always readily apparent in the instructional practices of these teachers.

Ellen and Elisa were more vested in social action than Nancy and Nicole. Elisa wanted her students to become adults who act. She reasoned, "It's their responsibility to get a good education to become adults who vote and take part in a community; who take part in action." Elisa shared a personal story about social activism with her students one day during an observation. She lives near a small public beach on a lake. One day, it seemed, suddenly, the beach was no longer public. Someone had bought the property and the people who lived near it and had been going there for years no longer had access. She explained, "I told them about my beach. How you have to go out and protest, and go to city hall, and do things and stand up for what you believe in." Elisa modeled what social action looked like. She was a very political person. During interviews she was forthright in expressing her opinions on regulations, unions,

economic inequality, homelessness, tax laws, employee compensation, living wages, politicians buying policies, and police brutality. This is why she did not hesitate to talk with her students about current events. Yet, her students did not describe any incidents about social action on their own in their current lives, nor were Elisa's examples about race-based issues and events.

Service learning projects were part of Ellen's yearlong unit. Formerly the 5th graders at her school had volunteered at the local food bank, but due to so many peanut and food allergies, they no longer did so. This left Ellen searching for a new service project:

I was trying to come up with a service project and I found [Valentine's for Veterans] online. And we're supposed to go sing down at the VA and the conversation we had in class. This is where I ended up putting myself. It was hard ... because ... personally ... I don't know people in the military. I've not been very supportive of the act of going to war myself but that doesn't mean that I can't feel compassion and support for people who have put themselves in that position... I was trying to figure out how to present it to [the students] because I had the impression that a lot of them were in that boat. In the sense that they don't personally know people who have served in the military and this sort of ... stuff for our veterans and rah-rah for the army and whatever, feels very sort of Midwestern and more to the right than we normally walk. So trying to figure out how to present the idea for doing this for veterans was interesting, a puzzle because it came from me because they couldn't really figure out what kind of service project would correlate with this expedition that we're doing, because service is supposed to be part of the [unit].

Ellen struggled with many things here, including choosing a service project for the students rather than them self-selecting; the military project seeming too far right politically for what she is used to; and issues of political neutrality or advocacy. Her project's focus also revealed an

implicit idea that multicultural education for her Whites students was about them helping unfortunate “others” rather than themselves and their own communities. This “saving syndrome” is too often how Whites conceive understanding and dealing with ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity.

Neutrality

Teaching multicultural education is partially a political decision; therefore neutrality does not exist for multicultural educators. In this study there was tension for Ellen and Nancy around their ideas about politics and neutrality in teaching. The issue of neutrality did not come up during observations or interviews with Elisa and Nicole.

Ellen stated in an interview, “Your politics are all over what you pick and choose.” This short, yet clear statement demonstrated her understanding that even in attempts to be neutral, teachers make political decisions on a regular basis when they select instructional materials and how to present information to students. Nancy expressed similar feelings when she mentioned, “I don't bring ... political values ... in a sense of sharing how I vote or anything like that, but I do color and shape my classroom around my values, which are [political]. I value creativity. I value respect for others.”

The difference between the two occurred in how they assessed their viewpoints impacted teaching students. Ellen felt that because the population of the families in her class tended to be left of center politically as was she, it was easier to not have to be neutral. She explained this along with sharing how some students become political in her classroom:

I am just trying to make sure I'm presenting information and they can draw their own conclusions ... But your choice of what you present certainly influences that and I think it would be more challenging if I were teaching in [a different district] or something to try

to make sure I'm neutral. ... I don't know if challenge is the right word. Maybe it would be easy to be neutral. When most of the kids...are also coming from ... a pretty left wing household, ... and even at [her last school] you pretty much knew where kids stand. They're pretty vocal about it. It's tricky ... Like it is always challenging when it is ... a presidential election cycle because you got the one poor kid who is trying to represent. Maybe he is coming from [a] republican household, because we've done things like have ... caucuses in the classroom and the kids like, 'If you're going to make a critique you have to have a reason. You can't just say somebody is stupid.' I had to get on my parents, [and suggest they] quit having these coffee table conversations. 'My dad says George Bush is a big fat idiot.' 'Is Howard Dean electable?' Yeah, that one! What do you think about the electability of Howard Dean from a 4th grader. It's hard because the kids aren't very balanced, always.

While these political conversations center around actual political elections, Ellen understood that if she did not talk with students about political issues, they would not have enough information to form their own ideas and come into their own political being.

Nancy was willing to expose students to different ideas, but to avoid explicitly expressing political positions. In an email correspondence she wrote:

As educators we need to be mindful about not being too biased or indoctrinating our [students] with our own political views. I feel comfortable having respect for individuality as something central to what and how I teach, but don't share my own activism or political preferences since that would be unprofessional in my opinion. I want students to have the ability to make informed decisions and to be able to think

critically. They may end up with diametrically opposed political views, etc., but I value diversity, so that's fine.

Nancy was responding to teaching about White privilege, but followed up with general political conversations. In order for students to be able to think critically, they need someone to collaborate with, talk to, and to question. This responsibility falls within the purview of multicultural educators, but in editing what she was willing to talk about with her students Nancy by-passed much of its substantive content.

Summary

To expose students to issues of poverty, prejudice, and class without discussing them for deep understanding is leaving them to make their own conclusions without enough information. This is especially true in predominantly White settings. All the participants stress validating and affirming their students. When the lives of White students are validated and affirmed without discussing the current political lives of people of color, and racial disparities in the United States, teachers are perpetuating the status quo rather than stunting it. Multicultural education is about transforming current inequities in education and society, which is why it is imperative for White female teachers to use race-based differentiation to teach their White students how to develop and articulate transformative ideas, opinions, and actions through knowledge construction and critical thinking.

Teaching multicultural education in predominantly White settings is a complex idea. The line between transforming society and perpetuating the status quo is fine and blurred. In order to do the former rather than the latter, a strong understanding of the goals of multicultural education are needed along with practical ways to implement it in the classroom. This study revealed that historical lessons are taught in isolation from the present and not connected to students everyday

lives; that multiple perspectives and alternative teaching techniques were used, but analyzing White privilege, power, race, racism, and social justice activism were missing from the instructional planning, differentiation, critical thinking, and knowledge construction that occurred routinely in the targeted teachers' classrooms.

Chapter VI

Visions from the Summit

This chapter summarizes the study, how White female elementary teachers interpreted and implemented multicultural education in predominantly White school settings. It also includes a discussion and interpretation of the findings, its limitations, the significance of the research, and implications for future research and practice.

Summary

This study examined how four White female teachers interpreted and implemented multicultural education in predominantly White school settings. Multicultural education as a vehicle for social justice teaching, coupled with Frankenberg's (1993) theory of social geography and race discourse, comprised the conceptual framework. Qualitative research paradigms of critical case study and portraiture were used in conducting interviews, observing classroom practices, inventorying classroom print, and analyzing data to investigate how these teachers conducted multicultural education practices in their classrooms. This study took place in a large urban school district in the Pacific Northwest. The three school sites in the study were in segregated White neighborhoods of a large city with less than 10% of their students who received free and reduced lunch; were from African American, Latino American, and Native American populations; and qualified for English language learning services. The professional service of the participants ranged from 2 to 29 years, and they taught in grades 2 – 5.

Data analyses revealed some foundational features of teaching similar to multicultural education (such as knowing students) in these classrooms, but because key conditional and methodological aspects (such as being explicit about racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity in teaching) were missing from their practices they were not considered genuine multicultural

education. However, with some targeted professional development interventions these teachers might become actual multicultural educators in predominantly White school settings.

The following major findings resulted from the data analyses:

- Strong communities of learners were developed; however, opportunities were not provided to explicitly examine race, privilege, and Whiteness.
- Interpretations and practices of multicultural education were influenced by formative and pivotal experiences of the White teachers, such as being bullied as a youth, travelling internationally as young adults, and having economic hard times as children.
- A common method used to implement multicultural education was to teach history from multiple perspectives, but without connecting the past to the present when it comes to racial inequities and discrimination.
- Claims of multicultural education implementation included learning activities that emphasized differentiation, critical thinking, and knowledge construction, but without social activism.

These findings suggested that while the White teachers in this study were committed ideologically to including multicultural education in teaching White students, fear, anxiety, and lack of understanding about how to engage in conversations about present day issues of race, racism, and Whiteness prevented them from actually practicing multicultural education and teaching for social justice in their classrooms.

Discussion and Interpretation

Just as the many people who gaze upon “Starry Night” develop their own interpretations of the painting which reflect their own feelings and thoughts rather than those of the artist, so is

the case with making sense of the findings of research studies. These are my interpretations; others may interpret them differently, see something I did not, or offer perspectives different from mine. As Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) explained, "the reader might be able to offer an alternative hypothesis, a different interpretation of the data" (p. 91).

Many scholars use an analogy of an iceberg to explain culture (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2012). While icebergs appear to be large on the water's surface, what is seen is only 10% of what actually exists. What is visible of the iceberg above the surface of the water symbolizes aspects of culture that are easily identifiable, such as foods, ceremonies and celebrations, how people dress, games they play, and language that is spoken. Below the surface are the intangible components of culture, such as the ways in which people are socialized into their culture; values, beliefs and ethics; and how people gauge personal space, interpret facial expressions, deem what is beautiful, make decisions, understand gender roles, and define identity. Like the submerged part of an iceberg, these aspects of culture are deeper; more profound; more influential. But they and their effects are also more difficult to see, to comprehend, to appreciate, to respect, to engage reasonably and constructively. While the teachers in this study did not practice genuine multicultural education, they all attempted to do so. Their intentions were to expose their students to the varied and distinctive cultures that comprise the United States but cautiously and without the controversial parts. So, while the findings and the following discussion examine what they did not do, their attempts to do so should not go unnoticed. Their efforts may be considered as starting places for them to continue developing toward becoming successful multicultural educators in the future.

The findings of this study suggested that although implementations of multicultural education aligned with the participants' interpretations, they were not actually multicultural

education because of significant aspects missing from the teachers' knowledge, perceptions, and practices. Not addressing White power and privilege, the marginalities (such as racial, ethnic, and cultural inequities) specific to multicultural education, and the important role of context and transformation made their actions less than ideal. What these teachers considered as multicultural education was based on information acquired from various sources. Some participants recalled limited exposure to multicultural education in their teacher education programs. What was remembered seemed to have less of an impact on their teaching than their formative social experiences, and professional development, such as workshops, personal reading choices, distinctive life experiences, and the activities and lessons they chose to teach. However, their perceptions were often inconsistent with academic research and scholarship. Their understanding of the scope of multicultural education needed more specificity, depth, and clarity to be appropriately applied in predominantly White schools. For example, teaching the historical roots of discrimination was an important part of their conceptions of multicultural education. The discipline includes contemporary analyses as well, along with the role of Whites in creating and perpetuating racial inequities. Thus, these teachers needed a better understanding of the scope of multicultural education; under examination of privilege and Whiteness; teaching as social and political activism; connecting context to content; and developmental (in)appropriateness of race talk; interrupting racism rather than perpetuating the status quo. Despite the limitations revealed by the data, multicultural education in predominantly White schools can become transformative spaces for liberation.

The Scope of Multicultural Education

The parameters and intentions of multicultural education are broad and nuanced. They go beyond generalized notions of building strong learning communities, validating and affirming

students, critical thinking, teaching multiple perspectives, knowledge construction, and differentiation, all of which the participants in this study demonstrated. These practices failed to exemplify multicultural education because they were not contextualized in race and ethnicity. As Bennett (2001) and Gollnick and Chinn (1998) declared, social action for the redistribution of power and privilege among mainstream and marginalized groups is a key component of multicultural education. Another multicultural education aspect missing was the connection between history and the present, as well as the role of mainstream dominance in both. According to Howard, (2006) one of the important learning targets for multicultural education is, “To understand the history and dynamics of dominance” (p. 85).

In the predominantly White classrooms of these teachers, different individuals were included in teaching history, but there was not connection to students’ lives. Nor were the conventional historical narratives contested. For example, as students read about the lives and circumstances of the fictional Logan family in *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* (Taylor, 1976) they did not connect them to either the universal themes of struggle and adversity, or the present day issues of racism for African Americans that stem from the historical setting in Mississippi and elsewhere in the United States. Nor did the students compare fictional accounts with factual experiences, or study the similarities and differences of the encounters of other ethnic minorities (such as Native, Latino, and Asian Americans) with struggle, adversity, and racism. The students had no personal connection to the literature. Yet, this is one of the frequent arguments made for using literacy texts as a tool for teaching about cultural diversity and traversing time periods and the referential experiences of students. Consequently, there were gaping holes in the accuracy of the participants’ claims of implementing multicultural education.

Deconstructing Whiteness and privilege have always been an important aspect of multicultural education efforts to combat systemic racism and educational disparities. Understanding that racism benefits Whites at the expense of people of color, as critical race theorists such as Ladson-Billings (2004) argue, is a necessary component of teaching for social justice. Although the teachers in this study claimed to believe in social justice, their teaching behaviors rarely embodied these beliefs. Instead, they assumed their students were too young to be taught such complex ideas, or that they did not need to get too deeply into them because they were White. Yet, *because* they are White these students needed to be thoroughly immersed in analyzing race, racism, White privilege, oppression, marginalization, and justice. Frankenberg (1993) argued that it is crucial to look at the racialness of Whites and to find connections between oppression and privilege. After all, White students are likely to hold economic and political leadership roles in the future and be in positions to create social change. What often gets lost among White teachers is that multicultural education does need to be taught in predominantly White classroom settings, although differently from socially, ethnically, and culturally diverse schools. This oversight was strongly evident among the teachers in this study.

Context. Multicultural education is a contextual endeavor. The ways it is practiced with students in one setting or location, such as a school with a large population of students of color, differ from another, such as a school with a large population of White students. It also means framing the content about ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity to make it relevant to students. Because a large body of scholarship in multicultural education focuses on White educators teaching students of color (See for example, Nieto, 2010; Delpit, 2006; Howard 2006), it makes sense that some teachers will assume that it applies only to those populations, and/or would be confused or reluctant to apply it in predominantly White settings. Yet, most scholars agree that

multicultural education is valuable to all students and school settings. However, this is less explicit and crystallized for White students in White schools.

The contextual reality of this study was four White women who grew up in segregated White neighborhoods - suburban and rural; east coast and west coast - now teaching in segregated White neighborhoods. They thought their students were insulated from and had not been exposed to racism. However, their students live in a society inundated with racial inequities. Sleeter (1994), and DiAngelo (2012b), explained that a predominantly White group of students sitting in a class believing that race is not an issue in the United States is not only preposterous; it is colorblindness feeding denial, which is a form of racism. In this racially stratified country (Rosenberg, 2004; Grant & Sleeter, 1986), Whites have purposefully and unapologetically segregated themselves from people of color.

The participants in this study felt multicultural education in predominantly White settings meant primarily exposing students to the “safe” aspects of the “Other,” such as teaching students about world cultures, and national historical events involving racial groups (often through fictional literature). For example, Nancy offered her students vicarious experiences with racial diversity through literary activities as the next best thing to the firsthand experiences her students would not have with people of color. Nicole’s unit on oceans focused on how different people impact the ocean in cultural and socioeconomic ways. The units and lessons did not connect racial history to Whiteness, or to the present state of being for people of color in the U.S. Gollnick and Chinn (1998), Gay (2010), and other scholars suggest that the strength and value of cultural diversity is a fundamental belief of multicultural education. However, when the teaching and learning process occurs in a predominantly White school, if this idea is not examined thoroughly and critically, and not placed within contemporary contexts that affect students’ lives

there is danger of reinforcing supremacist ideologies and actions by presenting people of color and mainstream Whites as existing in total separation from each other. This disconnect could manifest itself in colorblindness, lack of racial responsibility, or charity; all of which perpetuate the status quo. Frankenberg (1993) warned that seeing people as “other” can create a compassion that leads to “an optional, extra project, but not one intimately and organically linked” to their own lives (p. 6). This is in opposition to multicultural education goals. Michael and Bartoli (2014) noted that since racial group histories are deeply interconnected they should not be taught in isolation. Unfortunately, for the most part, the teachers in this study did not follow this advice.

Focusing on teaching White students about the “Other,” although incomplete, highly selective, and historical, could have resulted from the participants’ lack of understanding the full scope of multicultural education. Like many other misinformed teachers, they thought multicultural education was limited to history and artifacts common across cultures (the tip of the iceberg). Therefore, they focused on human similarities, to the virtual exclusion of racial and ethnic differences. Adapting multicultural education practices to White students proved difficult for them. This could be from a lack of knowledge of the scope of multicultural education. Yet, both conceptually and in genuine practice multicultural education is about transformation and social justice. In predominantly White school settings means teaching White students what it means to be White and non-White in the United States, and how the inequities that resulted have and can be resolved.

Social Justice. To be a social justice educator, in part, means to understand systemic and institutional racism, oppression, exploitation, cultural hegemony, and teaching students how to be agents of social and political change (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2012; Young, 1990; Freire, 1970/2012). In predominantly White settings these ideas need to be explicitly taught because

mainstream society uses claims of meritocracy, colorblindness, and individualism to argue that results from individual ability and initiative, opportunities and accomplishments rather than unequal distribution of resources and privileges (Michael & Bartoli, 2014; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2012; Rosenberg, 2004). The role Whites play in race-related social justice movements such as civil rights, policing, and education should be different from, although complementary to, that of people of color. Without this understanding, many Whites are likely to act, according to Howard (2012), either as supremacists or saviors, neither truly working toward a socially just society. The teachers in this study did not do much of this with their students. Instead, they defaulted by doing nothing beyond occasionally examining historical acts of racial biases such as Jim Crow practices.

To avoid supremacist and savior orientations White teachers in predominantly White settings need to commit to teaching activism. While Nancy suggested educators need “to be mindful about not being too biased or indoctrinating,” and Ellen thought teachers are obligated to teach multicultural education, they resisted being too explicit in doing so. Instead Ellen preferred for it to be “more of an essential sub-component of what you’re doing.” Effective multicultural educators do want students to be critical thinkers and problem solvers about race-based and cultural diversity issues. However, doing so in a “neutral” classroom is not possible because students cannot access and analyze enough information to develop educated and informed decisions and context-specific transformative actions. Claims of neutrality and objectivity are, in effect, euphemisms for perpetuating the prevailing mainstream order of White power, privilege, and cultural dominance. White multicultural education critiques, challenges, and transforms them.

The teachers in this study should have taught their students activist attitudes and skills, along with case examples of Whites engaging in social justice activism. By not doing so this was an opportunity missed to prepare them for the roles they should play in making U.S. society a more equitable and desirable place to live. The only explicit efforts by the teachers to teach social justice and anti-racism were historical lessons about Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, and the 1960s Black Civil Rights Movement. However, when students learned about racism through Jim Crow laws, they believed that these practices no longer existed. Either intentionally or by default these teaching practices were perpetuating the folkloric idea that the U.S. is now a post-racial society. Ellen recognized the fallacies embedded in these messages when she observed that historical events of racism were so far from the personal experiences of her students that “we need to update what we’re talking about....” Yet, she did not discuss racism in contemporary U.S. society with her students. Carlson (2004) problematized this type of thinking in suggesting that teaching the Black Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s from the viewpoint that Rosa Parks was a tired bus patron rather than a long term political activist minimizes her role in the struggle for racial equality, and even the struggle itself. It is this type of critical analysis that needs to be taught in predominantly White schools about historical social justice movements, what has been accomplished, what still needs to be accomplished, and what roles Whites can (and should) play in getting them accomplished.

White students need to understand how policy makers, political leaders, and educators (most of whom are White) can effectively implement regulations and actions to counteract racism and other injustices. They are in a better position to judge the advocacy of these actions when they understand the systemic, persistent, and pervasive nature of racism and the inequities it produces. Therefore, social justice education as a component of multicultural education is

imperative for White students, as scholars Michael and Bartoli (2014), Gay (2010), and Tatum (1997) have previously claimed. Unfortunately, the teachers in this study did not endorse these ideas as conveyed by their classroom actions.

Developmental (In)Appropriateness

Examining racism, Whiteness, and racial identity for themselves and with their White students was a challenging and emotional task for the four participants in this study. For example, Ellen, Nicole, and Nancy felt that talking about race, racism, and Whiteness were not developmentally appropriate for elementary students. Ellen suggested that her students had not yet seen racism, so it would not be appropriate for her to expose them to it. Nicole did not have these conversations with her students because she did not want them to feel guilt and shame about being part of the dominant mainstream culture. Nancy believed these topics are too politically charged and inappropriate for 7-10 year old students. The few attempts to do so were so veiled and amorphous as to be virtually useless. These silence and avoidance strategies are a disservice to effective education for citizenship in a pluralistic society. They send compelling messages that race does not matter, is taboo, and/or inherently problematic.

Tatum's (1997) suggestion that fear is a contributor to this silence was confirmed by the results of this study. But rather than using this fear as a convenient excuse to avoid dealing with race and racism she recommended that it be confronted and overcome. In doing so, positive outcomes can result in the form of genuine conversations about and productive actions that promote social justice, transformation, and liberation. Despite their own hesitancy, these teachers' students seemed to be competent enough in many process skills that could have been applied with relatively few modifications to actual multicultural education content issues, had their teachers been willing to do so. Guiding students through ignorance, ambiguities, and

possibly guilt and shame associated with race-based opportunities and inequities in schools and society are crucial, rather than leaving students to attempt to decipher and process that they see happening in the world on their own. The fact is teachers cannot protect their students from exposure to racial realities. Students, as Michael (2015) noted, encounter racial identities and differences everyday from a young age, even in their predominantly White settings, and even if they are not consciously aware of what is happening. If White teachers in these settings do not address issues of ethnicity, race, racism, and equity, they are placing students in untenable positions relative to effectually processing complex issues and situations without guidance and assistance.

The participants in this study attributed not dealing with racism and Whiteness to the developmental levels of students; they felt elementary students were too young to deal with such harsh and troublesome content. However, their reasoning and related actions raised both ethical and pedagogical concerns posed as rhetorical questions: Is avoidance an effective strategy for solving any problems, especially complex ones like racism and other forms of oppression? How can educators expect students to learn to understand, appreciate, and engage constructively with racial and cultural diversity if they are not taught to do so? How can teachers not see the relevance of multicultural education to their White students to be citizens of a culturally, racially, and ethnically pluralistic society and world?

Suggesting that studying race and racism is developmentally inappropriate for elementary students, and claiming neutrality as deterrents to having these conversations could be a way for teachers to divert responsibility away from themselves, and place it elsewhere. Doing so relieves teachers from having difficult discussions with children, as well as the need to reflect on and think about why they are *not* having them. Also, this projection of what is developmentally

appropriate for students could reflect a developmental position of the teachers. That is, they may have been engaging (or not) race, racism, privilege, and Whiteness as they, themselves were developmentally prepared to do so according to their competency in multicultural education. While novice multicultural educators initially may not be comfortable discussing these topics and may make some mistakes, if genuinely committed they will persist because of the importance of these issues. From their example students will see that race is a daily part of life in the U.S. and that it is important to talk about without threat and intimidation. Michael and Bartoli (2014) suggested, “silence is a socialization strategy that perpetuates a racist status quo” (p. 58). Other scholars such as Marshall, (1994), Sensoy and DiAngelo (2012), Macedo (1995), and Gollnick and Chinn (1998) agree. Since multicultural education is committed to changing the status quo around issues of voice, visibility, justice, power, and privilege of marginalized populations, teachers, who claim to endorse this advocacy, cannot avoid teaching about race and White privilege. Because the participants in this study did elicit this avoidance, the authenticity of their commitment was suspect. Their social geography as characterized by Frankenberg (1993) may have been more the culprit than personal intentionality and/or subterfuge. After all, with the exception of Ellen, they grew up, lived, and worked in White environments largely isolated from interpersonal interactions with individuals and communities of color, and probably where race, racism, privilege, and even Whiteness were not routine topics of critical conversations and skill development.

These four teachers’ understandings of White privilege varied. For example, Ellen had quite clear ideas about privilege because of professional development training in her district years prior. However, this professional development created resistance to participating and guiding in discussions about racism, privilege, and Whiteness with students. Elisa felt that

privilege was more about socioeconomic status than race. Nancy equated privilege with accessibility to opportunities such as jobs, and felt it was pervasive throughout the education system. Nicole believed strongly that privilege was having “leg up” because of race. Her evolving definition was confusing at first, and caused her to believe that privilege meant Whites do not have to work hard, rather than people of color having to work harder and overcome more obstacles. The connection that the privilege Whites have and the oppression others face are results of the same system was not recognized. Sensoy and DiAngelo (2012), Mills (1997), and Frankenberg (1993) state that understanding systemic advantages is important in order to have valid conversations about the role Whiteness and privilege play in racism in the U.S. These teachers did not have these kinds of conversations with their students. Most often when resource and rights differentials occurred they were associated with the past and/or individual abilities.

Although the participants did not have these conversations, they did attempt to expose students to race and oppression through literature. They all used this strategy specifically to share situations and events that their students would not normally encounter due to their segregated living. For example, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* (Taylor, 1976); *Written in Stone* (Parry, 2013); *Sylvia & Aki* (Conkling, 2011); and biographies featuring Cesar Chavez, Mae Jamison, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Nelson Mandela were among the list of books used. But emphasis on literacy skills tended to overshadow issues of race and racism. Students were not helped to unpack the meanings, consequences, and continuing relevance of these issues, their identities as racialized individuals, or impacts of racial inequities on their present day lives and the lives of others. This omission is detrimental to helping students develop into social justice allies and antiracist individuals who can contribute to transforming U.S. society, and building better interpersonal relations across various manifestations of cultural diversity. An example of the

effects occurred with Ellen's only African ancestry student and her resistance to reading about slavery. This resistance could be indicative of confused ethnic identity development where she resists being a person of color in a predominantly White world, internalizing negative mainstream racial attitudes. Ellen and the student's adoptive White parents worked with her to resolve the dilemma. Other students did not have an opportunity to discuss the long-range ramifications of slavery on them as part of a privileged population.

White racial identity development is essential for multicultural educators in predominantly White school settings. McIntyre (1997) says this is important for teachers to understand the role race plays in education and their own lives. It also may help them conquer fear, anxiety, and discomfort they have about race-based discussions, and assist students to have realistic views of Whiteness in predominantly White schools, and in society. The women in Frankenberg's (1993) work did not use White as an identifier about who they were. This denial of Whiteness is what perpetuates the status quo and keeps Whites from seeing race. This is another reason why helping students develop a positive White identity is imperative for the aims of multicultural education. Helms (1992) suggested that educators teach more about antiracist Whites as role models for young White students inundated with racialized oppressive messages from society. Since race is a social construction (Michael, 2015; DiAngelo, 2012b; Ladson-Billings, 1998) and racism is taught (Tatum, 1997) it is necessary for multicultural educators to help White students develop antiracist identities. This cannot be done in the silence caused by fear, anxiety, and discomfort in talking about racism, Whiteness, and privilege. The participants' decisions to *not* discuss race and Whiteness is a crucial demarcation between accurate and skewed multicultural education practices.

The findings of this study also showed that formative experiences influenced the teachers the participants became (Grant & Sleeter, 1985). For example, Nancy was teased and ostracized because of her quiet and shy nature. In her classroom, it was important for her that students recognize differences among themselves and to respect each other for those differences. Yet, these explorations did not extend to raciality. The significance of this result is two-fold. First, the participants must increase their understandings of racism and Whiteness to the point where they become comfortable discussing these issues with the children they teach. There is no one model of perfect multicultural education practice. It is a constantly evolving process stemming from growth, reflection, and interrogation of the systems and selves who are engaged in it. To continue to grow towards being strong multicultural educators in predominantly White settings includes continuing to develop in one's own White identity along with a variety of other knowledge and skills related to ethnic, racial, cultural, and socioeconomic diversity. Howard (2012) described a transformational process for White teachers to comprehend racial realities of the U.S. and to help White students to do so as well. Among these were beginning early in teaching children why and how to debunk racism and privilege, and to engage in transformative social activism.

Second, if elementary teachers in predominantly White school settings do not offer formative anti-oppressive learning experiences students will not develop the knowledge and skills they need to understand the importance of race in the United States. Experiences, discussions, and activities involving the analysis of contemporary and historical interracial events, and social justice methods and effects can provide students with the practice they need to develop reality-based White racial identities, to understand the role race and Whiteness play in the lives of all citizens, and to become social change activists.

Student Detachment from History. All the participants taught historical racial events in a way that may have caused students to believe racism was in the past. This involved deliberate omissions of the state of race relations in the U.S. today, such as the #BlackLivesMatter movement. Nancy and Ellen thought it was important to teach the Civil Rights Movement of the U.S. because they lived through it, although they were unclear about what they wanted their students to take away from these history lessons. Ellen did say she wants students to see how the past “left trails” to the present, but did not follow-up with detailed specificity and explicit linkages. Consequently, the students exhibited detachment from the learning activities may indicate that they did not know and what they are supposed to do with the information they were receiving. As Nieto (2010) stated, students need to be “active agents” in their learning to “begin to understand that they have a role to play in the world” (p. 146). Depending on the students’ understanding of the role Whiteness and privilege play in history, they may decide their role is either perpetuate, change, or do nothing about the existing social order. Michael and Bartoli (2014) strongly encourage educators to teach histories of different populations in conjunction with each other to help students understand how interactions among groups have shaped the United States into its prior and current iterations. All of these, along with deep analyses of race, racism, Whiteness, privilege, and social justice are necessary components of understanding that teaching is activism, and allowing students to act on how they understand multicultural education in predominantly White school settings.

Limitations of the Study

The findings and discussion of this study have some real valuable implications. And, they reveal some “goodness” in relation to teaching in general, if not for multicultural education in particular. However, there were limitations. Primary among them were the small number of

participants and schools in one part of the country, research methodology, and the researcher's positionality.

With only four participants in three schools, in one district in one city, the results cannot be generalized to all White teachers in predominantly White elementary schools across the U.S. This study produced some results common among the participants that are worthy of further pursuit, and may be indicative of how other teachers in similar settings view multicultural education. These similarities also need closer scrutiny according to grade level. This study did not distinguish reactions and responses of teachers by the grades (2-5) they taught. Also, how a "predominantly White school" was defined may be problematic for some. If the definitional criteria of less than 10% free and reduced lunch were eliminated, and the percentage of racial minorities among the student population were increased more schools would be identified as "predominantly White" in the host district for this study and others in the region. This would have substantially increased the pool of White teachers in predominantly Whites elementary schools for future research studies.

The interviews conducted were semi-structured with predetermined questions that were asked of each participant. During some interviews, it was clear that other questions could have been added, but sometimes circumstances did not allow this to happen. The quality of the responses received to the questions may have been a function of the ability of the researcher in posing the questions. Certainly, this affected the overall results obtained. For example, it was very difficult to get one participant to provide more than short phrases as answers, and to get her to elaborate. Part of this probably reflected my competency in interviewing. Spreading the interviews out over a longer period of time could have produced more in-depth answers and discussions with the participants. Interview skills of researchers and more long-term

relationships with research participants could contribute to acquiring more detailed data, and to the fluidity and authenticity of interactions between the researcher and the researched. The short time frame of the study was also a limitation. A longer period of time, and more time spent in each classroom may have produced different data that may either challenge or confirm the findings reported.

Another methodological limitation of this study was the lack of data collected from students. Other than what students said during lessons, class meetings, and one-on-one interactions with teachers, they were not targeted as data sources. This study was designed to examine in-service teacher practice of multicultural education. Therefore, students were not interviewed. However, addressing students' own ideas about race, racism, and White privilege and their perceptions of teachers' facility with these issues would have added another layer of enrichment to the data about how teachers implement multicultural education practices in predominantly White school settings.

My positionality as a White female multicultural educator and an elementary school teacher of predominantly White students was present throughout the duration of this study. This presence was both implicit and explicit. It included my ideas about what multicultural education is and its purpose and practices, as well as the importance of White racial identity and the need for students to understand White privilege. Undoubtedly, my positionality had some effects on the data obtained, but exactly what these were was impossible to determine with certainty because they were not deliberately explored with the participants. Despite these possibilities, the results of the study are still insightful and worthy of serious consideration by multicultural scholars and school practitioners.

Significance of the Study

Much of multicultural education research and scholarship have focused on White teachers, their abilities to teach and relate with students of color, and thus close gaps in educational opportunities and achievement. This study grew out of the research on multicultural education in relation to racism, Whiteness, and privilege. It contributes to this body of scholarship by focusing on White teachers' conceptions and practice of multicultural education among White students in predominantly White elementary schools. It is a response to the need to relieve oppressed students and communities from having to bear the burden of fighting for justice alone, and placing some of the responsibility on privileged Whites. It is imperative for Whites to join in this fight as allies and accomplices by creating equity and multicultural education policies, programs, and practices in White schools and communities.

A large body of research in the area of multicultural education focuses on pre-service teachers; an anticipatory approach to what multicultural educators should be or may be in the classroom. This study focused on in-service teachers who are currently teaching and, for most, have been for many years. It showed what actually happens in classrooms; the decisions made, the lessons planned, and the interpretations applied to practice. This is significant because it shows how multicultural education gets misinterpreted and misapplied, and how teaching that claims to be multicultural can actually confirm conventions.

This study also adds another perspective to the growing research on teacher self-study and reflective practice. All the participants in the study, including me, did both throughout the research processes. During interviews and while discussing observations, participants worked through challenging and sensitive topics. As we discussed race, racism, and White privilege, we were constantly negotiating how and why they need to be examined in predominantly White

school settings, and how these examinations will be different there than in other contexts. Studying their own teaching practices and being critically reflective of them allowed these teachers to improve pedagogically and personally, which is particularly important because being multicultural educators is a personal, political, ethical, and professional endeavor, and an ongoing process. This study also became an act of professional collaboration. The researcher and the researchers worked together to capture and crystallize our understanding of multicultural education and to become better practitioners of it. While we did not reach the ideal end point some noteworthy beginnings occurred that should be pursued further, and may motivate others to critique and refine their own multicultural education understandings and instructional efforts.

This study contributes to these efforts by serving as a reflective tool for teachers to view other conceptions of multicultural education more critically, and judge the degree of consistency of their practices with theorized mandates. Often Whiteness is discussed as a theoretical abstraction in multicultural education research and scholarship. This study examined it from the context of the instructional practices of White teachers in the specific settings of predominantly White elementary schools. Thus, it raised the questions of why and how context can be a vehicle for promoting multicultural education, social justice, and equity.

Implications for Practice and Research

Nicole made a comment that succinctly sums up the importance of multicultural education in both pre-service and in-service professional development for White teachers in predominantly White school environments. She said, “The reasons we don’t have these discussions [about racism, Whiteness, and privilege] is because our understanding of multicultural education is so narrow we think that we don’t need to have that. ... It doesn’t become a priority so the understanding definition stays narrow.” Nicole comments that when

discussions about topics of multicultural education are few and far between the commitments and skills teachers bring to their practice cannot grow and evolve. Creating time and space to discuss issues of race, racism, Whiteness, power, privilege and social justice among colleagues would improve teachers' understandings as well as working together to develop these understandings with students.

Assuming that new educators will come into the teaching profession with the skills needed to be multicultural educators is not enough. While some teacher education programs include something about multicultural education, many still avoid making it a primary focus and pervasive presence (Gay, 2002). When multicultural education is only one, or a very few required class(es) in a teacher preparation program and is coupled with a lack of discussion of White privilege, social justice, and other critical theories, the message sent to White teachers is that these issues are options, not necessities to ensure the present and future academic, moral, ethical, social, cultural, political, personal, and civic success of all students. To make these goals more feasible teacher preparation and performance accountability should include the careful study of and skill development for multicultural education, culturally responsive teaching, race, ethnicity, equity, power, privilege, and social justice in general, and in different teaching contexts. This development also should focus more on converting ideological claims into instructional practices. Such interventions could contribute significantly to closing the gaps between what teachers say they believe about racial, ethnic, and cultural differences, and how they actually behave toward those differences in their instructional actions. Although these are intended for teachers in elementary schools, other levels of educational leadership are implicated as well. Middle and secondary school teachers, school building and district level administrators, and policy makers need to continue to develop their practice-based and context-specific

multicultural education competencies, as well as helping those whom they supervise become more proficient.

Teacher education programs can work on developing their multicultural education practices first by embracing its imperativeness. For example, a teacher education program that claims to be a social justice project would have to incorporate multicultural education into its core classes. However, that would be just the beginning. All foundations and methods classes would have to be grounded in multicultural education ideology and practice, both teacher educators and their students would have to be held accountable for actualizing these values and investments. This would entail addressing the academic, moral, ethical, social, cultural, political, personal, and civic contexts of the schools in which the pre-service teachers are placed; how race, power, and privilege impact teaching and learning; and how to implement multicultural education in the various aspects of professional development associated with different parts of the education enterprise, including curriculum development, classroom instruction, and performance assessment. The message sent to pre-service teachers should be that multicultural education is nonnegotiable and mandatory and that their teacher education is just the beginning of the journey, rather than an end.

The teaching force in the U.S. is predominantly White and female, and they live in mainly suburban areas geographically separated from the diversity of cities. In these White enclaves, many are inclined to think, “We don’t need multicultural education here. We are not diverse.” This way of thinking implies that multicultural education is only about and for “others,” but not for White students; that it is not a transformative education practice for all students. However, the reality is that multicultural education in predominantly White settings is imperative, although for contextually different reasons, purposes, and methods. Teachers need to

understand how and why these contextual influences will cause multicultural education practice to be nuanced somewhat differently for White students in predominantly White schools than for various configurations of students of color in racially and ethnically diverse schools.

Consequently, it would be useful for teachers to have some training in how to implement multicultural education in demographically different schools and community settings.

School districts and the schools within those districts need to make similar commitments to multicultural education teaching practices in professional development programs – that they are mandate, not a choice! To make this commitment feasible school districts must provide on-going professional development opportunities so teachers can grow and improve their multicultural education practices. This could be in the form of summer classes, building-led workshops, guest speakers, facilitated book studies, and teacher coaches with a focus on translating multicultural theory into actual practice. It is also imperative for school districts to have a clear understanding of how school demographics would affect what school practices look like in different learning environments. This would mean differentiating professional development based on where educators teach. Districts should steer away from the standardized view of professional development in which one workshop is developed and taught to all teachers. In these training sessions the role race, racism, Whiteness, power, and privilege play in education should be dealt with explicitly and forcefully. School practitioners should be held accountable for implementing multicultural education practices consistent with the responsibilities of their domain tasks within the education enterprise. These dynamics should be incorporated into all professional development opportunities from content-specific curriculum to using technology to institutionalizing transformative education practices including funding, class size, wrap-around services, and community partnerships.

As districts ensure that teachers and other educators are provided with opportunities to develop knowledge and skills needed to implement authentic multicultural education programs and practices, school- and classroom-based practitioners must take responsibility for their own professional actions as well. They can form action research projects; within and cross-grade, subject, and school collaborations and participate in professional conferences to extend their knowledge and skill sets. The content of all of these development opportunities should focus on issues and concerns at the center of multicultural education, such as how race, culture, power, privilege, and difference do make profound differences in teaching and learning.

White students and teachers in predominantly White schools need to develop a “sociopolitical consciousness that will enable them ... to participate in the transformation of society in ways more consistent with the ideals of democracy and social justice” (Leonardo, 2009, p. 649). Thus, it is imperative that the largely White teaching force in the U.S. is better prepared to teach multicultural education. In addition to teaching students more effectively about the challenges, benefits, and strengths of cultural diversity, they can participate more fully in building viable alliances with people of color, and using their positions of power and privilege to combat inequities in education and society. White teachers do not have to live in multiracial communities or teach in ethnically diverse schools to be advocates of equality, social justice, and anti-racism. These skills can and should be demonstrated in all settings, and be taught early in schools to young students. Furthermore, modern technology makes ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity, and oppression and racism easily accessible and transcendent of geographical boundaries. Consequently, it is unreasonable and untenable for teachers to claim that there is no diversity in the lives of their White students, or that they do not need multicultural education.

While this study focused on predominantly White school settings, future studies around various contextualities of multicultural education practices could add to the body of scholarship. For example, comparative studies of multicultural education at different school levels; in different content and skill areas, in different demographic environments, and even different geopolitical settings could be beneficial. Also, because Whiteness transcends socioeconomic status, and geographic locations extending the conceptual and demographic parameters of “predominantly White schools” could contribute more data about the intersectionality of race, socioeconomic status, and place. The geographical context of this study focused on a large metropolitan area that considers itself to be progressive. There are many other geographical locations that are predominantly White, such as rural areas, the suburbs, and small towns. These areas could be politically progressive, conservative, or a mixture of the two. Future studies in contextually different geographic locations would add to the research on how formative experiences and living conditions impact multicultural teaching, and how social justice education is affected by the socioeconomics and politics of different locations.

In future studies, how young students understand and respond to multicultural education in predominantly White settings could contribute to the scholarship on White saviors and allies. Examining how students develop their opinions and ideas in conjunction with multicultural education teaching, along with them, collecting data on family dispositions around transformative education and racial responsibility would also be valuable additions.

Literacy practices were also not a focus of this study. However, findings suggested that literacy was an important site the participants used to teach multicultural education. Future studies focusing on multicultural literacy practices in predominantly White school settings might offer ways to improve multiple kinds of academic, interpersonal, and social skill development

about and for racial and cultural diversity. Finally, more research comparing the work of pre-service and in-service teachers in regards to understanding the contextual nature of multicultural education and its contribution to social justice teaching is needed. One aspect could be how these two groups of teachers compare in converting theoretical ideas about multicultural education into instructional practices. Another could focus on how different segments of the teaching profession navigate fears and discomfort associated with race, racism, and White privilege. These “professional community segments” could include comparisons among novice and experienced teachers; elementary and secondary teachers; and teachers in different subject domains such as math, science, social studies, language arts and literacy, the health sciences, and fine arts. The insights derived from such research could be very valuable in removing some of the current obstacle to teaching high quality multicultural education across entire school curricula, both formal and informal.

Conclusion

This study was designed with a vision in mind; to see an established phenomenon in a new light; to understand teaching in nuanced ways; and to envision a society where education is the driving force for change. The research presented offers a fresh look at a taken-for-granted system. What each person takes away from this study, it is the portraitist’s hope, will be used to improve educational practice and impact students’ schooling experiences. For each reader that vision may be different, just as how different people take away different ideas, feelings, and energy from literature, music, and art.

While there are some who may look at the painting “Starry Night” and feel fear, anxiety, and discomfort, I hope they also appreciate the final product; appreciate the time Van Gogh put into its creation; appreciate the hard work and pain brought to the painting; and appreciate the

enjoyment and peace the artist may have felt when it was finished, or the desire to do more. I hope those who feel fear, anxiety, and discomfort when they look at the painting will talk about it anyway and discuss why the painting evokes such feelings. I hope that with appreciation and dialogue about the painting they will find comfort in it and the courage to enjoy it.

Similarly, until White teachers find comfort and courage in discussing race, racism, and White privilege, and how they are connected, our understandings of racism in the United States will continue to be stunted and misinformed. It is the responsibility of teachers to understand that unexamined claims of meritocracy, individualism, and colorblindness can be contemporary racist ideals that perpetuate the status quo. We need to *see* people as their stories; a Black teen walking home; a Black man breaking up a fight; a Black child playing alone in the park; a scared Black father; a Black student out for the evening; and the potential racist consequences that may befall them for just being themselves. We also need to *see* a wide variety of valuable people of color who make the United States a pluralistic society. Our vision needs to be adjusted, sharpened, and deepened.

Systemic racism, institutional racism, the school to prison pipeline, for-profit prisons, poverty, segregated housing practices and policies, and policing in the U.S. are examples of the many interconnected things that comprise the portrait of the United States apparent today. We need to look at it with new vision and understanding. Instead of focusing only on its separate components we need to step back and see the whole picture, where we do not pretend that racism is a thing of the past, and we acknowledge the role Whiteness has in perpetuating the systems that continue to oppress people of color in the United States. This study reaffirmed the importance of teaching multicultural education in predominantly White school settings, and that transformation is possible if teachers find courage in their fear, peace in their anxiety, and solace

in their discomfort. At a time when a White woman disguises herself as Black and infiltrates the African American political arena assuming a key leadership role; a young White supremacist massacres nine at worship in an historical Black church; Black churches are being burned regularly; the Confederate flag's meaning is being debated; the KKK rallies in support of White rights and flying a symbol of racism; White students sit in segregated classrooms; and Black lives are being lost at the hand of an (in)justice system regularly, it is clear that White teachers and students need to be examining race and racism from multiple perspectives, for multiple reasons, and in multiple ways as a routine happening in their teaching and learning.

These endeavors are necessities for promoting equity and justice for all, both in schools and society at large. This can be possible when White teachers understand the imperativeness of the journey and begin to truly step away from the foot of the mountain with all of its partial views and distorted visions, and move more deliberately toward the summit with all the clarity of insight and the empowerment of informed effort it offers. Here the "mountain" is accurate, well-grounded multicultural education anchored in the midst of high quality, transformative education for all students.

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Appendices

Appendix A:
Interview Questions

First Interview: Multicultural Education Background Knowledge

1. What is your definition of multicultural education?
2. How do you keep informed of progress/ideas/theories from researchers and theorists of multicultural education?
3. Please describe how you came to use a multicultural framework in the classroom.
4. Please share an example of how you implement multicultural education in your classroom.
5. How do you feel multicultural education impacts students?
6. Why do you feel multicultural education is important?
7. How would your teaching practices change if your student population included students more diverse in race, language acquisition, and socioeconomic status?

Second Interview: Background

1. Tell me about your background and youth. What are some of your most vivid memories from childhood? *(I am looking for where the participant grew up, the time and context of that place, as well as family and social dynamics)*
2. What was schooling like for you as a child, K-12? *(Identifying her early views of schooling through memories of her first experiences with school)*
3. What social circles were you a part of in high school and college? How did these circles impact your identity? *(I am looking for ways the participant sees a connection from her past to her present)*
4. How do you think your family and place shaped your identity? *(Looking for family dynamics)*
5. Outside of the classroom, how do you spend your free time? What communities are you involved in and in what capacity? What are your passions? *(Looking for extracurricular activities that drive and motivate)*
6. How would you describe your political views?
7. How do you think the contexts of your childhood impact your political views? *(Looking at connections between the past and the present)*
8. How has your contact with people of racial or cultural groups different from yours impacted how you view the world? *(Looking for ideas of how race interacts with everyday life)*
9. What do you think is the most important social issue of our time? *(Looking for more detailed information of political views)*
10. How close is your role to your soul? *(Looking at the relationship between the role of being a teacher and how and why put into it from personal beliefs and philosophies)*

Third and Final Interview: Connecting Life to Practice

1. Describe the process you took to become a teacher. (*Looking for any patterns in sociopolitical contexts that connect to being a teacher*)
2. What characters/qualities do you have that make you a multicultural person?
3. What do you take into consideration when planning lessons? (*Here I will refer to a lesson I observed. I will also refer to other observations and ask for clarification and relationship to multicultural education.*)
4. Describe how you build a community of learners and how you view your role in this community. (*Looking for examples of teaching philosophies and beliefs*)
5. What advice/tips/info would you give to pre-service teachers about becoming multicultural educators?
6. What are some struggles that come with being a multicultural educator? How do you approach and deal with these struggles?
7. How do you address issues of power and privilege with your students?
8. In your opinion, what is the purpose of schooling?
9. Please explain how your teaching style through a multicultural framework differs from other teachers and how it impacts students.
10. What are your hopes and dreams for your students?

Appendix B:
Observation Guide

Observation Guide

DATE: _____ TIME: _____

Teacher Does...

Notes:

Questions for debrief:

Student Does...

Appendix C:
Nomination Letter

Dear (Name of Administrator, Community Member, or fellow teacher)

I am a PhD Candidate at the University of Washington embarking on my dissertation. I am looking for nominations for participants in my study, which will be conducted from November 2014 through March 2015. The goal of the study is to see how White female teachers interpret and implement multicultural education in a school in which the student population has 10% or fewer students using free and reduced lunch; 10% or fewer students who are African American, Latino, and American Indian; and 10% or fewer students receiving ELL services. There is much literature about what multicultural education looks like in diverse schools, but little is out there on what it would look like in less diverse situations. I am hoping you have someone in mind who may enjoy participating in the study.

The commitment would be to participate in three interviews, one at the beginning of the study, in November, one prior to me coming into the classroom and one at the completion of the study, in February. Interview questions would focus on definitions of multicultural education and how they are implemented in the classroom; the participants' story and background; and teaching philosophies and practices. Following the interviews I would like to observe in the classroom a few times, one of which would be all day. I will be paying special attention to non-curricular times in the class such as, transitions, classroom meetings, recess duty, classroom management systems, and planning. The observations will not involve talking to students, just observing. The final component is a print inventory. I would like to visually record the print on the walls, as well as the books in the classroom library for students.

Some of the qualities and characteristics that nominees would have include the following:

- Takes consistent action to educate self and incorporates multiple perspectives into lessons;
- Collaborates with other teachers and staff, as well as families;
- Broadens students understanding of identity groups, moving away from constructing or reifying narrow stereotypes;
- Uses students' funds of knowledge in planning and classroom management;
- Engages in conversations around media literacy that include race, gender, stereotypes, discrimination, and oppression;
- Helps students gain understanding of self by viewing themselves from the perspectives of other cultures;
- Identifies the role privilege and power play in their daily lives as well as the lives of their students;
- Teaches students the importance of participating in civic action to make society more equitable and just for all;
- Gives students the opportunity to identify social issues and take reflective action to resolve issues based on clarification of data and understanding;
- Helps students to develop cross-cultural competency in cultures beyond our national boundaries and the insights and knowledge needed to understand how all peoples have interconnected fates;
- Brings to light the pain and discrimination that members of some ethnic and racial groups experience because of their unique racial, physical, and cultural characteristics; and
- Helps students grapple with the realities of oppressive patterns in dominant groups and to resist oppressive ideologies.

This list of qualities and characteristics are a set of guiding principles of multicultural education. The teachers I am looking for may embody the entire list or a partial list. If you know of a White

female teacher who has these, or some of these, teaching qualities and characteristics, please fill out and send in the attached nomination form to the address listed below.

Sincerely,

Suzie Hodges | PhD Candidate
University of Washington | Curriculum & Instruction | Multicultural Education
hodges3@uw.edu | 719-352-7840

NOMINATION FORM

I would like to nominate the following teacher for your study. The goal of the study is to see how White female teachers interpret and implement multicultural education in a school in which the student population has 10% or fewer students using free and reduced lunch; 10% or fewer students who are African American, Latino, and American Indian; and 10% or fewer students receiving ELL services. There is much literature about what multicultural education looks like in diverse schools, but little is out there on what it would look like in less diverse situations. I think this teacher would be a good candidate for participation in your study.

NAME: _____

SCHOOL/GRADE LEVEL: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE: _____

I believe, _____, would be a great candidate

because

_____.

RELATIONSHIP WITH NOMINATED TEACHER: _____

Thank you for your time and nomination! To return the form, please choose one of the following:

1. Scan and email it to hodges3@uw.edu
2. Snap a picture of it and email it to hodges3@uw.edu or text it to 719-352-7840
3. Mail it to:
 Suzie Hodges
 4402 NE 60th Street
 Seattle, WA 98115

Appendix D:**Consent Process**

- A. Email Invitation To Participate
- B. Information Letter
- C. Consent Form

Dear (Teacher),

I am writing to invite you to participate in a research study I will be conducting from November 2014 – March 2015. The goal of the study is to see how White female teachers interpret and implement multicultural education in a school in which the student population has 10% or fewer students using free and reduced lunch; 10% or fewer students who are African American, Latino, and American Indian; and 10% or fewer students receiving ELL services. There is much literature about what multicultural education looks like in diverse schools, but little is out there on what it would look like in less diverse situations.

I am doing this study as part of my doctoral program at the University of Washington in curriculum and instruction. This study will be the focus of my dissertation and, may lead to further studies at the university.

In this study, I would like to have 3-5 teachers volunteer to participate in the case study. I am hoping that you might be interested in volunteering. The commitment would be to participate in three interviews, one at the beginning of the study, in November, one prior to me coming into the classroom and one at the completion of the study, in February. Interview questions would focus on your definitions of multicultural education and how you implement it in your classroom; your story and background; and your teaching philosophies and practices. Following the interviews I would like to observe you in your classroom a few times, one all day. I will be paying special attention non-curricular times in the class such as, transitions, classroom meetings, recess duty, classroom management systems, and planning. The observations will not involve talking to students, just observing. The final component is a print inventory. I would like to visually record the print on your walls, as well as the books you have in your classroom library for students.

Participation in the study is voluntary. If you choose to participate and then at a later time decide that it isn't going well or you do not have time, you may opt out at any time. If the results of the study are published or presented, pseudonyms for the district, the school and your name will be used.

Thank you for your consideration in participating in this study. I am available by phone, text, and email if you have any questions you would like answered before making a decision to participate.

Sincerely,

Suzie Hodges | PhD Candidate
University of Washington | Curriculum & Instruction | Multicultural Education
hodges3@uw.edu | 719-352-7840

Dear (Name of Prospective Participant)

Thank you so much for your interest in this study. Once again, the goal of the study is to see how White female teachers interpret and implement multicultural education in a school in which the student population has 10% or fewer students using free and reduced lunch; 10% or fewer students who are African American, Latino, and American Indian; and 10% or fewer students receiving ELL services. There is much literature about what multicultural education looks like in diverse schools, but little is out there on what it would look like in less diverse situations.

In this study participants will:

- Participate in three-four interviews (one of which you just completed). Two of the interviews will focus on you as a person; who you are where, your background, your interests outside of teaching, your views on the world, etc.... The final interview will be about your teaching practices, beliefs, and philosophies. Interviews will range from 45 minutes to 1 ½ hours.
- Be observed in the classroom approximately five times. One of these observations will be all day. Three of the observations will include class meetings, and one will be in a meeting with at least one other colleague. The focus of observations will be non-curricular teaching moments that include transitions and classroom management practices.
- Debrief each observation. The debriefs should not last longer than 20 minutes and will consist of sharing what I saw and clarifying any questions.
- Get a photo journal of the classroom print. The print in the classroom will be photographed, as well as the classroom library.

The timeline for the study is as follows:

November: Interviews 1 and 2; begin photo journal

December: Two observations; continue photo journal

January: Interview 3 and two observations; continue photo journal

February: Final interview and observation; and photo journal completed

Participation in the study is voluntary. If you choose to participate and then at a later time decide that it isn't going well or you do not have time, you may opt out at any time. If the results of the study are published or presented, pseudonyms for the district, the school and your name will be used.

Thank you for your consideration in participating in this study. I am available by phone, text, and email if you have any questions you would like answered before making a decision to participate.

Sincerely,

Suzie Hodges | PhD Candidate

University of Washington | Curriculum & Instruction | Multicultural Education

hodges3@uw.edu | 719-352-7840

Investigator: Suzie Hodges
College of Education, Curriculum and Instruction
Contact: hodges3@uw.edu; 719-352-7840
Faculty Advisor: Geneva Gay, ggay@u.washington.edu; 206-221-4797

Investigator's Statement

I am asking you to be in a research study. The purpose of this consent form is to give you all the information you will need to help you decide whether or not to be in the study. Please read the form carefully. You may ask questions about the purpose of the research, what I would ask you to do, the possible risks and benefits, your rights as a volunteer and anything else about the research or this form that is not clear. When all of your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to be in the study or not. This process is called "informed consent." I will give you a copy of this form for your records.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to see how White female teachers interpret and implement multicultural education in school settings in which the student population is mostly White. There is much literature about what multicultural education looks like in diverse schools, but little is out there on what it would look like in less diverse situations.

PROCEDURES

If you choose to be in this study, I would like to interview you three times. Once about multicultural education; once about your background, including your youth, schooling experiences and passions; and finally, about your teaching career. The interviews will last between 45 – 60 minutes. Some examples of questions that will be asked are, "Why did you become a teacher?" "How do you feel multicultural education impacts students?" and "Describe a community of learners and how you view your role in that community."

Between interviews, I will observe you teaching your students multiple times, once for an entire day. I will be paying close attention to non-curricular times in the class such as, transitions, classroom meetings, recess duty, classroom management systems, and planning. The observations are not in any way evaluative and are strictly observations. They are not observations of students and only notes will be taken on teaching. There will not be any audio or visual recordings of the observations. After each observation, I would like to conduct a short debrief of the observation. This will be very brief and will consist of questions such as "Did anything happen that you were not expecting?"

With your permission, I would like to audio tape the interviews so that I can have an accurate record of our conversation. Within three weeks of the interview, I will create a written transcript of the conversation which will identify you by pseudonym only and then I will delete the original recording, leaving only the coded transcript of the interview. Only I will have access to the recording which, will be kept in a secure location until the recording has been deleted. If you would like a copy of the transcript, it will be provided.

The final component of the study will be a print inventory of the classroom. Before or after school I would like to set up a time when I can come in and visually record the print on your walls and the books in your classroom library. Once the books and print are compiled and downloaded you will receive a copy for your records.

RISKS, STRESS OR DISCOMFORT

Some people feel that providing information for research is an invasion of privacy or feel self-conscious when notes are taken and interviews recorded. I have addressed concerns for your privacy in the section below.

BENEFITS OF THE STUDY

You may not directly benefit from taking part in this study, but there are some benefits. One benefit is the possibility of developing new insights on multicultural education, teaching practices and student achievement. The information from this study will be used as a foundation or basis for my doctoral dissertation.

OTHER INFORMATION

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You can stop at any time. Information about you is confidential and a pseudonym will be assigned to you and then the data will be coded. I will keep the link between your name and the coding in a secure location until April 2019. Then I will destroy the information linking your information to the pseudonym. If the results of this study are published or presented, I will not use your name or any other identifying information.

Government or university staff sometimes review studies such as this one to make sure they are being done safely and legally. If a review of this study takes place, your records may be examined. The reviewers will protect your privacy. The study records will not be used to put you at legal risk or harm.

I may want to re-contact you for future related studies. Please indicate below whether you give me permission to re-contact you. Giving me permission to re-contact you does not obligate you in any way.

If you have any questions about this research study, please contact me, Suzie Hodges, at 719-35-7840 or email hodges3@uw.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact Geneva Gay at the UW College of Education, at 206-221-4797.

Signature of Investigator

Printed Name

Date

Participant's Statement

This study has been explained to me. I volunteer to take part in this research. I have had a chance to ask questions. If I have questions later about the research, I can ask the investigator listed above. If I have any questions about my rights as a research subject, I can call Geneva Gay at the UW College of Education, at 206-221-4797. I will receive a copy of this consent form.

_____ I give permission for this researcher to audiotape my interview.

_____ I do NOT give permission for this researcher to audiotape my interview.

_____ I give permission for this researcher to re-contact me to clarify information or for future related studies.

_____ I do NOT give permission for this researcher to re-contact me to clarify information or for future related studies.

Signature of Participant

Printed Name

Date

Curriculum Vitae



Curriculum Vitae

Susan M. Hodges

University of Washington | College of Education
Curriculum and Instruction | Multicultural Education

PRESENT POSITIONS:

Doctoral Student (PhC): 5th year student in curriculum and instruction, multicultural education, advisor: Dr. Geneva Gay...Dissertation: Contextualizing Multicultural Visions from the Foot of the Mountain ... graduation: June 2015...projected completion of dissertation: August 2015

FORMER PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS:

University of Washington, Elementary Teacher Education Program TA/Teacher Coach: August 2013 – 2015... supervise teacher candidates at Sand Point Elementary...support candidates in lesson planning, assessment, building positive student relationships, build strong student engagement practices, develop classroom management skills, and plan for differentiation...evaluate practice during formal observations...help teacher candidates develop strong goal setting and reflection practices...support teacher candidates through inquiry action project process...TA in one class per quarter...support instructor in planning, grading, and teaching.

Ben Franklin Elementary School: August 2010 – June 2013... Fourth/Fifth Grade Teacher in Quest program (gifted education program)...Plan and implement lessons for all areas of the curriculum using Common Core State Standards... Create individualized curriculum to ensure success for all students... Successfully manage daily classroom routines for a class of 19-28 students ... Communicate with parents through monthly newsletters and needed conferences.

Olympic View Middle School: August 2009 – June 2010... Math Teacher – Algebra, 7th grade and 8th grade courses... Plan and implement lessons in three math courses in a standards based middle school...intramural advisor...Teacher Learning Community facilitator...Plan agenda and run monthly meetings for a small group of teachers in PE, math and electives.

Colorado College: June 2007 – 2009... Summer School Teacher in gifted and talented summer program... Part of MAT program... Plan and implement lessons to enrich and challenge gifted students ... Urban Ecosystems, Artist Study, Sustainability ... Supervise and assess MAT student teacher.

Peace Camp Director: May 2007 – 2009... Plan and implement summer camp program... focus on tolerance, conflict management and social justice... two weeks each summer, ages 6 – 9 and 10 – 12 ... sponsored by the Pikes Peak Justice and Peace Commission.

School in the Woods: August 2007 – June 2009... Fourth Grade Teacher at environmental science choice school in Academy School District 20... Plan and implement lessons for all areas of the curriculum ... Create individualized curriculum to ensure success for all students... Successfully manage daily classroom routines for a class of 25 ... Create lessons across the curriculum that focus on the environment and environmental justice issues ... Communicate with parents through monthly newsletters and needed conferences.

Discovery Canyon Campus: August 2006 – 2007... Second Grade Teacher at Math and Science Choice School in Academy District 20... Plan and implement lessons for all areas of the curriculum ... Create individualized curriculum to ensure success for all students... Successfully manage daily classroom routines for a class of 23 ... Attend weekly and monthly meetings ... Communicate with parents through weekly newsletters and needed conferences... Pilot teacher for Engineering is Elementary... Intramural Sports Director... Yearbook Coordinator... Volleyball Coach

St. Jerome Catholic School: August 2005 – 2006... Third Grade Teacher ... Plan and implement lessons for all areas of the curriculum ... Create individualized curriculum to ensure success for all students... Successfully manage daily classroom routines for a class of 20 ... Attend weekly and monthly meetings ... Communicate with parents through weekly newsletters and needed conferences.

Academy Edison Elementary School: September 2001 – June 2004 ... Second Grade Teacher ... Plan and implement lessons for all areas of the curriculum ... Successfully manage daily classroom routines for a class of 25 ... Communicate with parents through weekly newsletters and needed conferences... Attend weekly and monthly team and staff meetings ... National Writing Trainer (2002) ... Science Curriculum Coordinator (2001-2002) ... Technology Curriculum Coordinator (2002-2003) ... School Webmaster (2002-2003) ... Yearbook Advisor ... Designed and built school garden ... Garden Club Advisor

St. Edward School: September 1998 – 2001... First Grade Teacher ... Plan and implement lessons for all areas of the curriculum ... Successfully manage daily classroom routines for a class of 35 ... Attend weekly and monthly meetings ... Provide leadership for WASC (Western Association for Schools and Colleges) self-study process ... Student Council Moderator ... Communicate with parents through weekly newsletters and needed conferences.

AmeriCorps*VISTA: Volunteers in Service to America, California Conservation Corps, July 1994-July 1995 ... Develop, coordinate volunteer projects ... Supervise trips to local events ... Recruit, manage, maintain volunteers ... Restructure Corpsmember Advisory Board ... Create, implement programs ... Promote positive image to community.

EDUCATION:

University of Washington, Seattle, PhD student, Curriculum and Instruction; multicultural education 2010-present

New College of California, Master of Arts in Teaching, Critical Environmental and Global Literacy 2004-2005

California State University, CalStateTEACH Credential Program 1999-2001

California State University, Northridge, Bachelor of Arts, Liberal Studies 1989-1994

William Paterson College, National Student Exchange Spring 1993

VOLUNTEER WORK AND ORGANIZATIONS:

ERAC Committee member, Seattle Public Schools, 2014 - present
Washington Student Cycling League, 2010 - present
Pikes Peak Justice and Peace Commission, 2006 - 2009 Board Member 2009
Recycling Coalition of Colorado Springs, 2001 - 2004 Secretary
Catholic Youth Organization, 1998-1999, 8th grade volleyball coach
Clean Air Campaign, 1996-1999, Member of Board of Directors, Triathlon Committee
Starsmore Discovery Center, 1995, 1996 - Education program, Kindergarten hike leader
Union Programs Council, 1990-1994, Publicity, Spontaneous Programs, President
Alpha Xi Delta Sorority, 1990-1994, Publicity, Recording Secretary
Panhellenic Council, 1991-1992, Vice President

HONORS AND AWARDS:

Certificate of Appreciation for Volunteer Service, Senator Cathie Wright, 1995
Aida C. Salazar Award, Multi-Cultural Programming, University Student Union, 1994
National Association for Campus Activities, Educational Foundation Scholarship, 1994
Most Outstanding Officer, Union Programming Council, 1994; Panhellenic, 1992

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRESENTATIONS:

LWSD: 2010- 2014:

- Aligning standards
- Backwards mapping, unit planning
- Teaching Philosophies
- Staff Community Building
- Introduction to Multicultural education

RESEARCH INTERESTS:

- Multicultural education in predominantly White school settings

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS:

Honor Society 2013-present
 Pi Lambda Theta-2013-present
 NAME (National Association for Multicultural Education) 2013-present **PRESENTER**
2014 Conference
 AERA 2013-present
 KAME (Korean Association for Multicultural Education) Co-author Social Justice
 Education in the United States 2014
 NEA 2009 – present
 WEA 2009 – present