CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY IN THE SOCIAL STUDIES:

CASE STUDIES OF TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF THIER PRACTICES AND

HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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This multiple case study employed interviews to examine how three selected secondary social studies teachers in an urban center in the Southeastern United States describe their culturally responsive practices and how they perceive these practices are influenced by their higher education experiences. Culturally responsive approaches to teaching are known to provide more equitable learning experiences to low-income students of color, the majority of whom live in urban areas (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Milner, 2010). Teacher education programs may be able to improve curriculum and instruction if they understand how former students engage in culturally responsive pedagogy once they are in-service teachers. Secondary social studies as a content area lends itself to culturally responsive practices, and while research on culturally relevant practices in the secondary social studies classroom exists, little is known about how current teachers relate such practices to their higher education programs.

Findings indicate the formation and evolution of critical consciousness can occur throughout teachers' lifetimes if provided opportunities for reflexivity once they are in-service teachers. Second, the culturally relevant practices of the social studies teachers in this study include providing students with multiple perspectives and utilizing constructivist practices in activities and assessments to meet the needs of diverse learners. Other findings support the notion that social studies teachers need training to engage in discussions of inequity (Bickmore & Parker, 2014) and that culturally relevant teachers need collegial and administrative support to sustain their practices.

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

"You know I loved you Miss P..." *"Phanae, you yelled at me and told me you f-ing hated me and my class almost every day!" (laughter together) "Yea... but you know I loved you, Ms. P..."*

This is an excerpt from a conversation I recently had on the city bus with one of my former students. Now a 21 year-old young woman, Phanae was my 8th grade student when I taught United States History at a large urban middle school attended primarily by low-income African American students. Did I know that Phanae loved me at that time? Yes, we had a good relationship and genuinely liked each other as people. I recognized that her telling me she hated me on a regular basis actually meant that I was important to her. But when I think about whether or not I was an impactful teacher in terms of providing her a "good" education, I am not as confident. Phanae's outbursts were frequent, difficult, and impacted the entire class, and although I made a conscious effort to do my best, I am sure there are ways in which I could have approached teaching Phanae that would have been more effective. I often wonder now as I did then, how could I have more effectively worked with Phanae and all of my other students?

I begin with my recent encounter with Phanae because I believe that there are many well-intentioned urban teachers who genuinely care about their students and strive to improve their teaching practices who feel the same way that I did. During my seven years as urban educator, I

felt that there were innumerable forces impacting my efficacy that were outside of my control, such as school administration, school, district, and national policies, and standardized curricula to name a few. Forces such as these, as well as high stakes accountability systems for my students and me, resulted in what seemed like insurmountable pressure, ultimately causing me to leave secondary teaching. I am not alone, as high rates of teacher turnover in urban schools are well documented (Ingersoll, 2001). I do not believe this reflects a defect on the part of many well-intentioned teachers and their students, nor does it reflect ill- intentions by administrators and policymakers. It is in part a lack of preparedness, and in some cases understanding and support for so many teachers, students, and school leaders who try their best on most days. It is from this perspective that I am seeking ways in which future urban educators can be better prepared, efficacious, and supported in their work.

1.1   BACKGROUND

Low-income students of color, the majority of whom live in urban areas, continue to experience substantial educational inequities when compared to their White middle class counterparts (Howard 2010; Tatum, 2007). Although this "achievement gap" is characterized by discrepancies in the educational outcomes between these two groups of students, a more constructive view of the achievement gap is that it is actually a *symptom* of opportunity gaps, or accumulated unequal access to educational resources such as "expert teachers, personalized attention, high quality curriculum opportunities, good educational materials, and plentiful information resources that support learning at home and at school" (Darling-Hammond, 2010, p. 28). Therefore if and how teachers, the majority of whom are female, White, and middle class

(Aldeman, Carey, Dillon, Miller & Silva, 2011; Tatum, 2007) are prepared to teach low-income students of color in urban schools is an essential topic of discourse within the field of teacher education. Many scholars and practitioners have found that White, middle class teachers lack an understanding of the impact of cultural, racial and social constructs on teaching and learning and are thus unprepared to teach within cultural contexts that likely differ from where they grew up and continue to reside (Fuller, 1994; Ukpokodu, 2007). The same can also be true for teachers of color who are also middle class, as similar ethnic backgrounds between student and teacher does not necessarily equate to effective teaching (Gay, 2000). Such ill preparation of teachers results in significant opportunity gaps not experienced by most White middle class students. This is especially problematic since many middle class candidates who enter their teacher education programs falsely assume that they will never teach in an urban school (Fuller, 1994; Ukpokodu, 2007). The ultimate consequence then, is the likelihood that low-income students of color will remain unable to achieve their full their potential and the "achievement gap" will remain or even increase (Chubbuck, 2004; Delpit, 1995; Erickson, 1993; Gonzolez, 2004; Howard, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2009; Ogbu, 1992; Spindler, 1967, 1973; Vogt, Jordan, & Tharp, 1993).

For these reasons, more culturally responsive approaches to teaching are necessary in order for middle class teachers to provide more equitable learning experiences for their low-income students of color, the majority of whom live in urban areas (Banks, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Tatum, 2007). It is incumbent upon teacher education programs therefore, not only to provide teacher candidates with courses and experiences in culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP), but also to understand if and how their former students engage in these practices once they are practicing teachers. By doing so, teacher education programs can better inform their own curriculum and instruction.

Secondary social studies is a subject area that lends itself to culturally responsive practices since this discipline includes courses in history, civics, and government, and geography and in some cases economics, psychology, and sociology. These courses likely offer secondary students rich opportunities to learn and discuss current and historical inequities as they relate to the very cultural, racial and social constructs that culturally responsive teachers themselves must contemplate and critique. These factors make the secondary social studies classroom a salient option for exploring how culturally relevant pedagogy is taught and enacted.

This multiple case study (Stake, 1995) employed interviews (Seidman, 1998; Rubin & Rubin, 2012) to examine three secondary social studies teachers' perceptions of their culturally responsive teaching and how their current practices relate to their teacher education programs (TEPs). Purposeful criterion sampling (Patton, 2002) was used to select three participants from a Southeastern urban center in the United States who currently practice culturally relevant pedagogy to a majority of low-income students of color and had previously engaged in pre-service coursework related to culturally relevant teaching. Each selected social studies engaged in one in-depth face-to-face interview and one in-depth phone interview. Member checking was also done to ensure accuracy of data findings and assertions.

The findings of this study provide insight for contemplation by teacher educators, higher education institutions, secondary teachers, school leaders, and administrators invested in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy as one means to improve educational equity.

1.2   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following questions were used to guide this study, which examines factors that influence the formation and evolution of culturally responsive teaching among the selected secondary social studies teachers, how they describe their engagement with culturally responsive practices, how they perceive these practices are influenced by their higher education experiences, and the supports and challenges of this enactment.

Q1: What factors influence the early formation, development, and evolution of culturally responsive teaching among the three selected secondary social studies teachers?

Q2: How do the selected social studies teachers perceive their engagement with culturally responsive pedagogy in their practice?

Q3: What from their higher education experiences do the selected social studies teachers draw from to put culturally responsive teaching into practice?

Q4: What do the selected teachers perceive are the challenges and supports of enacting culturally responsive pedagogy?

1.3   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Although federal laws such as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, and the American Investment and Recovery Act of 2009 have each included policies designed to promote educational equality and narrow what is described as the "achievement gap" between middle-class Whites and low-income K-12 students of color, the prevalence and persistence of this gap continues today (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Howard, 2010; Jackson, 2011; National Council on Education Statistics [NCES], 2013). For example, according to NCES, the 2009 average scale scores of African American and Hispanic students in reading and math on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) remained lower then those of White students (NCES, 2013). Although test scores are only one measure of these inequities, African American and Hispanic students also continue to have lower high school completion rates then Whites (NCES, 2013), as well as higher suspension and expulsion rates (Lipman, 2003).   Furthermore, students of color remain overrepresented in special education courses and underrepresented in advanced content courses (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Howard, 2010; Tatum, 2007).

Our nation's failure to significantly diminish educational inequity is even more concerning when one considers its changing demographics. By the year 2025, students of color will comprise 50% of school age children, and by 2050, students of color will make up half of the United States population (Education Commission of the States [ECS], 2013). These trends indicate that eventually half of our country's population will be unable to achieve the socio-economic mobility that education supposedly procures. If low-income students of color continue to face opportunity gaps that are in part due to teachers who are ill prepared to teach them, it is imperative for educators and society at large to address this critical issue.

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1.4   CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

For over three decades, teachers and scholars have documented culturally responsive pedagogy to be an effective approach to teaching for equity that offers meaningful learning experiences to low-income students of color (Banks, 2007; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, Ladson-Billings 2009; Milner, 2010; 2011; Tatum, 2007). Described in more detail in the review of the literature (Chapter Two), culturally responsive pedagogy can be understood by looking at five assumptions and five characteristics. The first assumption is that the culture of the teacher, the student, and the school impacts teaching and learning, particularly when the teacher is White middle class and the students are low-income students of color (Banks; 2007; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2010). A second assumption discussed by Gay (2010) is that conventional reforms designed to improve the academic achievements of students of color will remain inadequate if they fail to address culture, ethnicity, and other personal factors known to impact student performance.

Other assumptions discussed by Gay (2010) include the recognition of cultural diversity as a strength, that good intentions on the part of a teacher are not adequate, and that test scores and grades are symptoms of achievement gaps, not causes. Five characteristics of culturally responsive pedagogy detailed in my review of the literature describe it as validating and affirming, comprehensive, multi-dimensional, empowering and transformative, and emancipatory (Gay, 2010) (see Section 2.2). With these characteristics and assumptions serving as overarching constructs, I created my conceptual framework that focused upon teacher's beliefs and classroom practices.

The attitudes and beliefs needed by teachers to support their culturally relevant teaching can be described as critical consciousness, or an individual's awareness of how herself and

others are impacted by dimensions of culture, race, class, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation, as well as how these dimensions are related to the political, social, and economic systems in the United States (Banks, 2009; Gay, 2010; Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Ladson-Billings 2009; Grant & Sleeter, 2011). With critical consciousness, a teacher is aware of how these dimensions and structures impact teaching and learning. Further described in the review of the literature elements of critical consciousness specific to the dimensions of race and culture in the context of teaching and learning are also represented in Chapter Three, Figure 1. With race and cultural consciousness, a teacher can engage in what I am calling Culturally Responsive Areas of Practice, which is my conceptual framework described below and in Chapter Two (also see Figure 2).

I created my conceptual framework based upon a synthesis of the works of numerous authors as to what CRP looks like in the classroom (Banks, 2007; Gay 2010; Grant & Sleeter 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2010; Milner 2010). My synthesis of this research suggested three areas of practice in a culturally responsive classroom in that it is *caring and relationship-based*, *strength-based and student-centered*, and *community-oriented with an eye towards social justice* (Banks, 2007; Delpit, 1995; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Gonzolez, Moll & Amanti, 2004; Gutierrez, Morales, & Martinez, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 2010; Milner, 2010; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). In a *caring and relationship-based* classroom, a teacher sustains reciprocal dialogs with her students and maintains relationships with students of color that are warm, considerate, personable, passionate, and adaptable, yet demanding of themselves and their students (Alder, 2002; Banks, 2007, Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2010; Milner, 2010; Valenzuela, 1999). She also models and facilitates the cultivation of these same types of

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relationships between her students and encourages them to be responsible to one another (Gonzolez, 2004; Gutierrez et al., 2009; Ladson-Billings 2010).

Secondly, culturally responsive teachers consciously work to identify the cultural frameworks and cultural capital that their students bring to the classroom and utilize these *strengths* throughout their curriculum, instruction, and assessment by using a variety of instructional approaches (Banks, 2007, Gay, 2010; Gonzolez et al., 2004; Grant & Sleeter, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2010; Milner, 2010). Lastly, a culturally responsive teacher strives to create a *community-oriented* classroom in that she promotes civic discourse and teaches her students about societal inequities and how to work towards *social justice*. She also values building authentic relationships with her students' parents, household, and community outside of the regular school day and is aware of the positive impacts these relationships can have on her teaching and her students' learning (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings 2010; Milner, 2010). By using my conceptual framework, I was able to more clearly analyze commonalities and divergences of how CRP is enacted in each case and identify practices that may not already be present in the literature. Although the organic nature of relationships and teaching lends itself to cross-pollination among the three areas of practice, I found it helpful to conceptualize each as its own entity.

Cultural responsive pedagogy has a distinct ideological and pedagogical framework; however, given the broadness of this framework, it is inevitably interpreted and enacted quite differently by teachers who practice it. In fact, some teachers might refer to their culturally responsive practices as multicultural education since these are overlapping, sometimes indistinguishable constructs. Not only do teacher practitioners use different terminology to refer to culturally responsive pedagogy, an individual's belief systems, values, life experiences, pre-

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service training, and specific teaching context create nuances in how teachers practicing culturally responsive pedagogy conceptualize and enact it. This study is important because I explore how participating teachers' life experiences, higher education programs and current contexts impact how each makes meaning of CRP as social studies educators. This information may be of interest to secondary social studies teacher educators, school leaders and administrators, secondary social studies teachers, and the field of CRP in general.

1.5   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

There are many studies on pre-service teachers' experiences and perceptions of culturally relevant pedagogy while still enrolled in their teacher education programs, including those by Cochran-Smith (1999), Durden and Truscott (2013), Gay and Kirkland, (2003), Milner (2003, 2010), Morales (2012), Nieto (2000), Sleeter (1999), Singer, Catapano & Huisman (2010), Siwatu (2006), and Ukpokdu (2007) to name but a few. These provide essential information as to how students learn about CRP in their coursework and in some cases experience how it is enacted while at their field placement. Other related studies examine *practicing* urban educators' perceptions of their teacher education programs (Gupta, 2010; Whitney, Golez, Nagel, & Nieto, 2002; Ullici, 2010), yet these involve elementary, not secondary educators. An extensive study on successful teacher education programs by Darling- Hammond (2006) explores both secondary and elementary programs and examines the perceptions of practicing teachers of both their overall TEP and specific aspects of their coursework; however, this study is an exception. Unfortunately, not much is known about if or how teachers attribute their current culturally responsive practices to their TEP and what exactly it is from their previous TEP that they now

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utilize in their classrooms (Cochran-Smith, Davis, & Fries, 2004). This is why Sleeter (2000) cites the need for "mapping backwards" or finding out what good teachers of diverse students do inside of their classrooms as well as investigating who they are, how they were trained, and how their training is actually utilized in the classroom. This is certainly true for secondary social studies education, although there is some existing research that explores culturally relevant practices in individual social studies classrooms.

As discussed in detail in Chapter Two, Martell (2013) examines his own culturally relevant teaching in the social studies classroom by analyzing a teacher journal, classroom artifacts, student reflections, student surveys, and student interviews. Another relevant study was conducted by Manfra (2009), who as a teacher educator explored how four current social studies teachers enrolled in a Masters level course engaged in their own critical teacher research, or "self-study" (p. 157). A third study by Journell & Castro (2009) examined the culturally relevant practices of a civics teacher in the south side of Chicago. While these studies provide important insight into how practicing teachers engage in particular aspects of CRP, they are not designed to investigate the connection between enactment and TEPs, nor were they designed to investigate the phenomenon of CRP across multiple teachers. Therefore, it is important not only to garner more insight on how secondary social studies teachers engage in culturally responsive pedagogy, but also how they connect these practices to what they learned in their preparation programs.

This study has significant implications for secondary social studies teacher educators, secondary social studies teachers, school leaders and administrators, and the field of CRP in general. Teacher educators interested in adequately preparing educators will benefit from knowledge of how teachers connect their learning of CRP to their practices as they progress through their careers, which may in turn inform program coursework and field experiences.

Furthermore, it provides more information for teacher educators as to how CRP is enacted in the social studies classroom. Also, information on what current teachers find challenging and supportive can be incorporated into coursework, so that the teacher candidate can be better prepared once they enter the field. This study may also benefit urban social studies teachers who seek to improve their current practices by providing them more insight as to what CRP entails in the secondary social studies classroom. Finally, urban school leaders and administrators interested in improving the quality of their teachers and addressing their students' opportunity gaps may also find this study helpful in offering them examples of what CRP practices entail as well as ways they can support their staff in their culturally relevant practices.

1.6   DESCRIPTION OF TERMS

Border-crossing: A student's moving back and forth between what is considered proper or valued knowledge at home and what is proper at school

College and University Faculty Assembly (CUFA): An associated group of the national council for social studies (NCSS)

Colorblind Racism: Internalized form of racism that occurs when a teacher believes and/or claims not to see her students' race and refuses or is unable to acknowledge the power and privilege associated with having Whiteness (Blaisdell, 2005).

Consciousness-raising: The process of recognizing, analyzing and reflecting upon the one, the socially constructed identities of one's self and others and two, how these identities relate to the political, social, and economic systems in the United States (Banks, 2007; MacKinnon, 1989)

Clinical Experience: The experience of the teacher candidate in which he or she observes and then teaches in a classroom under the mentorship of a practicing teacher.

Critical Consciousness: In this study, refers to an individual teacher's awareness of how herself and others are impacted by dimensions of culture, race, class, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation, as well as how these dimensions are related to the political, social, and economic systems in the United States (Banks, 2009; Gay, 2010; Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Ladson-Billings 2009; Grant & Sleeter, 2011).

Cultural Discontinuity: Differences between the culture of a middle class teacher (usually White) and the school as a White institution and students of the non-dominant race or culture. Often characterized by differences in sociolinguistics, interpersonal or intergroup relations, the absence of certain concepts in certain ethnicities, and conflicts in teaching and learning style (Ogbu, 1992; Spindler 1997a, 1997b).

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP): The overarching philosophy for teaching that is explored in this study. Generally refers to awareness on the part of the teacher of how culture, race, class, gender, and other societal structures impact her teaching and the learning of her students (Banks, 2009; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings 2009; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Milner, 2010).

Culturally Responsive Areas of Practice: The conceptual framework utilized in this study. Includes culturally responsive classroom practices that are caring and relationship-based, strengths-based and student-centered, and community-oriented with an eye towards social justice (Banks, 2007; Delpit, 1995; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Gonzolez, Moll, & Amanti, 2004; Gutierrez Morales, & Martinez, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 2010; Milner, 2010; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

Culturally Relevant Teaching (CRT): Same as Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Deficit Thinking: The blatant or suppressed type of thinking that blames and pathologizes the values, attitudes, and behaviors of a non-dominant group, because there must be something "wrong" with people who do not assimilate into the dominant culture (Howard, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2010; Nieto, 2000; Rosenfeld, 1973).

English Language Learner (ELL): A student whose native language is something other than English

*English as a Second Language (ESO*L*):* English taught to students whose native language is not English

Field experience/Field placement: See Clinical Experience

Funds of Knowledge (FOK): The valued knowledge and skills of non-dominant groups of students and their households (Gonzolez, 2004; Gonzolez, Moll, & Amanti, 2004).

Higher Education Institution (HEI): a college or university that the teacher candidate enrolls in to obtain a terminal degree. Typically, this is a four-year undergraduate degree or a fifth-year Masters in Arts in Teaching (MAT) degree.

In-service Teacher/ Teaching (IST): Refers to the person or the acts of a person who has graduated with a degree from a higher education institution and is now a practicing teacher.

Mentor Teacher: The in-service or practicing teacher who provides tutelage for the teacher candidate. The teacher candidate works in this teachers' classroom.

Multicultural Education (MCE): A philosophy that values and affirms cultural differences and pluralism. Considered necessary to permeate schooling in order to provide educational equity (National Association for Multicultural Education, n.d.).

National Council of the Social Studies (NCSS): The largest association in the United States that is dedicated only to social studies education and was founded in 1921.

Practicing teachers: See in-service teachers

Pre-service teacher (PST) / teaching: The student who is enrolled in the higher education institution's teacher education program

Teacher candidate: See pre-service teacher

Teacher educators: Those employed by the higher education institution that instruct and supervise the teacher candidate

Teacher education program (TEP): Refers to structured coursework and clinical experiences of the higher education institution's terminal degree program for future teachers

Teacher education program (TPP): See teacher education program

Zone of Proximal Development: The space and time in which students work independently with less assistance

2.0   REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

To address the research questions in this study, this chapter explores pertinent literature, including the historical underpinnings and theories that support culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP), characteristics and assumptions of CRP, areas of culturally responsive practice, English Language Learners and CRP, how CRP is addressed in teacher education programs, and lastly research on how CRP is currently enacted in the social studies classroom.   Although not exhaustive, synthesis of the literature regarding each of these topics enables conceptual clarity from which I can thoroughly investigate and understand the phenomena.

2.1   HISTORICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY: MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

The purpose of this section is to take a look at the historical development and meaning of sociocultural constructs that are related to CRP in order to inform my understanding of it.   The first of these is multicultural education.

The concept of multicultural education was a direct outgrowth of the overall multiculturalist movement that called for the active promotion of access and equity for people of color in the societal arenas of employment, housing, wages, health care, and education (Grant & Sleeter, 2011).   Multiculturalism gained prominence during the 1960s and 1970s as the Civil

Rights, Chicano, Native American, Women's (2nd Wave), Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Rights, and Disability Rights movements collectively increased the public's awareness of the societal and institutional inequities experienced by members of those groups. One direct result of this awareness was that teachers, parents, and others took note of studies indicating that textbooks and curriculum clearly demonstrated racial and gender bias (Klineberg, 1963; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Parkay, 1983). Other concerns brought forth included racial segregation in schools, the absence of teachers of color in classrooms, individual discrimination by teachers, and/or deficit theories held by teacher, and cultural discontinuity (Banks, 1975; Parkay, 1982; Silberman, 1970; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Spindler, 1997)..

Deficit theories or thinking is understood to be the type of thinking that blames and pathologizes the values, attitudes, and behaviors of a non-dominant group, because there must be something "wrong" with people who do not assimilate into the dominant culture (Howard, 2010; Ladson- Billings, 2010; Nieto, 2000; Rosenfeld, 1973). Cultural discontinuity refers to differences between the culture of a middle class teacher (usually White) and the school as a White institution and the students of the non-dominant race or culture. It is often characterized by differences in sociolinguistics, interpersonal or intergroup relations, the absence of certain concepts in certain ethnicities, and conflicts in teaching and learning style (Ogbu, 1992; Spindler 1997a, 1997b). As a result of these concerns, supporters requested improvements to teacher education, curricular development, and the hiring of school employees that reflected the diversity of the student body (Banks, 1975; Grant & Sleeter, 2011). By the late 1970's and early 1980's, multiculturalist education was becoming a more commonplace means to address these issues (Grant & Sleeter, 2011). Despite this, multiculturalist education had and continues to have its assimilationist critics (Nelson, Carlson & Palonsky, 1993).

According to Grant and Sleeter (2011), multicultural education can be used to close equity gaps them within the context of schooling. These gaps include but are not limited to differences in student learning and achievement, access to high-quality education, and access to both educational and economic resources. Since schools are positioned within the greater context of society, as institutions they reflect and perpetuate existent social structures, and those who are not members of the majority group or dominant culture are subject to educational disadvantage as evidenced by achievement gaps (Darling-Hammond, 2006, 2011; Grant & Sleeter, 2011). Thus, proponents of multicultural education suggest that to effectively close opportunity gaps in education, a teacher's view of herself, others, and the political, social, and economic systems in the United States must include an awareness of how these systems relate to the aspects of race, gender, class, culture, sexual orientation, and disability (Banks, 2009; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings 2009; Grant & Sleeter, 2011). As Banks (2007) explains, "Teachers values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors influence those of their students whether they intend to or not" (p. 99).

If failure to raise self-awareness relative to sociocultural consciousness simply perpetuates opportunity and achievement gaps (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter 2011; Milner, 2010), then it is incumbent upon teacher education to engage pre-service teachers in what is referred to "consciousness-raising" (MacKinnon, 1989), or the process of recognizing, analyzing and reflecting upon the socially constructed identities of themselves and others (Banks, 2007). As noted by Banks (2007), "Reflective self-analysis requires teachers to identify, examine, and reflect upon their attitudes towards different ethnic, racial, gender, and social class groups" (p. 99). In light of this, the next section describe some of the main racial and

sociocultural constructs that need to be examined on the part of the PST and in-service teachers in order to engage in culturally relevant teaching.

2.2   RACIAL AND SOCIOCULTURAL CONSTRUCTS THAT HELP INFORM CULTURALY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY

Teachers who understand the role of race and culture as these relate to school are better equipped to develop and sustain more effective pedagogical skills and authentic relationships with their students, parents and the overall community (Cochran-Smith, 2000; Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Milner, 2010; Nieto, 2000; Singer et al., 2010; Tatum, 2007; Ullichi, 2010; Ukpokodu, 2007). Not only does a teacher need to recognize race and culture as a "thing" she also needs to examine her own racial beliefs, which might include blatant or suppressed deficit models about the race(s)of her students. When a teacher gains self- awareness of her own racial ideologies in relation to the social constructs surrounding her, she can then contemplate how to use this knowledge in her construction of effective pedagogy.

According to Ladson-Billings & Tate (1995), the social structure and the cultural significance of race are perpetuated in schools, as teachers hold beliefs about their students of color that the White teacher may not even be aware that he or she possesses. These beliefs are in part based on several socially constructed American ideologies that converge to influence how we Americans perceive one another and thus can not be disconnected from the classroom since they are ubiquitous in how each of us thinks, feels, and acts act in our country. Three of these

constructs: Whiteness as property, Whiteness as privilege, and Whiteness as pure and good, are described below.

2.2.1   Whiteness as Property, Whiteness as Privilege, and Whiteness as Pure and Good

The first construct is that of Whiteness as property. "Whiteness" is a constructed racial category that essentially grants those that "have it" to exclusive privileges and separates them from "the other", or non-Whites that do not share the privilege of being White (Chubbuck, 2004). "Whiteness" then, is actually property; something that one either has or does not have. Those that have this piece of property maintain their power and security in American society because they inherently understand that "I am not the other" (Chubbuck, 2004). Those that "own" Whiteness are able to create and sustain the rules, regulations and laws such as those established in Americas' schools, which maintain their White privilege whether they are aware of it or not (Blaisdell, 2005).

In the classroom, Whiteness as property can be understood as when a White teacher assigns Whiteness to her students, which denies her non-White students equal access to the curriculum, pedagogy, and learning that takes place in the classroom. This occurs when a White teacher's concept of how a good student behaves and speaks creates regulations that deny those that do not have Whiteness equal access to the teacher's curriculum and instructional methods (Blaisdell, 2005). When a teacher assigns White notions of what is appropriate, she may "unknowingly hold lower expectations of [her non-White] students, discipline them unfairly, or interact with them in ways that negatively affects their access to curriculum" (Blaisdell, 2005, p. 7).

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In addition to not owning Whiteness, non-White students are also at a disadvantage because a White teacher's curriculum and classroom practices mirror White culture. The Whiteness of a teacher's curriculum, discipline, language, interactions, and pedagogy may have negative results on non-White students. This is because her perceptions, based on White norms, inadvertently cause her to form negative judgments and place limitations on her non-White students. For example, some teachers denounce the unfair tracking of students of color as an institutional inequity, but fail to realize how this may be a result of their own teaching practices (Blaisdell, 2005). When White teachers do not realize and reflect upon how the standards for curriculum, behavior, and speech are actually "White property," their teaching practices will perpetuate inequity (Blaisdell, 2005).

According to McIntosh (1988), Whites, as part of the dominant culture, are oppressors by nature of the fact that they own Whiteness, a commodity that people of color do not own. Therefore, Whiteness is a privilege that over-rewards those that have it with an invisible package of unearned economic, social, and political assets that people of color do not have the same inherent access to. McIntosh (1988) posits that White privilege operates under a system of denial, since Whites are conditioned into oblivion about the existence of privilege, resulting in oppressiveness that is unconscious.

As members of the dominant group, Whites are taught to view racism as individual acts of meanness, but not necessarily as embedded systems or structures that maintain racial dominance for those born with Whiteness. McIntosh (1988) further elaborates on how Whites have the false assumption that they are morally neutral and warns of the tendency of Whites to see working for the benefit of others as a way for "them" to be more like "us."

A third racist ideology that permeates American society is the notion that Whiteness equates to what is pure, normal, and good (Hunt, 1987). Although this belief was well established in Elizabethan England, it continues to permeate American political ideology today (Hunt, 1987). Since these notions have been embedded in American ideology for hundreds of years, a subconscious stratification exists between White teachers and their students of color that influences pedagogy (Chubbuck, 2004). Moreover, the ideologies of Whiteness as property, privilege, and purity have combined with the American assumption of meritocracy to create the notion that "anyone can succeed on the basis of merit, hard work, and adherence to the rules of society, [and this assumption] produces inequitable material effects and racists attitudes" (Chubbuck, 2004, p. 304). When combined with racially bound ideologies, this assumption may result in negative consequences in the classroom.

2.2.2 The False Assumption of Educational Meritocracy

Chubbuck (2004) contends that Americans and their educational institutions make a false assumption that they operate objectively and that they equitably reward students based on merit. A problem ensues however, since teachers, schools, and school systems do not recognize that these systems are based on White cultural norms (Chubbuck, 2004). The result is a perpetuation of structural White privilege. As Thompson (1999) states:

> The combination of an assumed objective meritocracy and a privileging set of White norms produces material effects that cause "superiority" in White people and "inferiority" in people of color to seem "normal" and "natural" to White people. (as cited in Chubbuck, 2004, p. 304)

Furthermore, White teachers may not recognize their internal notions of White superiority. A conflict therefore arises when a White teacher has a "self-proclaimed commitment to democratic equality for all" (Chubbuck, 2004, p. 302) but is unaware that she has internalized notions of White supremacy. In his study, Chubbuck (2004) investigated how the social construct of race and the false meritocracy of education were enacted by White teachers of African American students. He found that although teachers stated a strong desire to respond to the issues of societal racism within their classrooms, "The outcome of their practice and policy, however, did not match their intention" (p. 329). Chubbuck contends that this is because teachers maintained areas where Whiteness enacted racist outcomes.

For example, one teacher had a very strong emotional identification with her students that caused her to focus on protecting them from an inequitable system that she felt had not prepared her students to do well in school. By adopting a caring ethos, sometimes she lowered her expectations and as a consequence failed to provide her students with the very skills that they would need to do well in American society. By operating from this position of White privilege, she adopted what is referred to as the "White savior response" (Titone, 1998). By attempting to protect her students from the ills of inequality, she actually perpetuated these ills by not adhering to the academic needs of their students.

A study by Duncan (2002) of African American male students attending a city high school also examined the convergence of the social construct of race and the false meritocracy of education. Duncan (2002) found that racially informed power relations caused administrators, teachers, and students to "write off" African American males. The high attrition rates for African American males were to be expected, as supported by the news, popular culture media, universities, and researchers. By hiding behind these legitimized views of the oppressed, the

White students, teachers, and administrators could avoid examining how their own discourse and classroom pedagogy contributed to these conditions.

Duncan (2002) also found that the discussions held by the White administration, teachers, and students implied that the academic failure of African American males in their schools was because these males were academically and socially deficient. Furthermore, officials and students believed that if African American male students could not take advantage of a fair and equal education, they only had themselves to blame for being marginalized. These attitudes pervaded the school to the point where the average person in the school and even the district did not find the marginalization of African American males at the school as noteworthy (Duncan, 2002).

Thus far, this paper has examined some of the theories related to race as a social construction as one dimension of critical consciousness important for future and current urban educators to develop. These reveal the importance of examining how race and culture influences the thoughts, feelings and actions of both the teacher and learner in the classroom, as well as the significance of knowing one's self and one's students as they relate to broader social structures. With this in mind, the next section describes assumptions and characteristics of CRP.

2.3   CULTURALY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY: ASSUMPTIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

According to Gay (2010), culturally responsive pedagogy is premised on five *assumptions*. The first is that the culture of the teacher, the student, and the school impacts teaching and learning (Banks; 2007; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2010; Milner, 2010).

Secondly, Gay (2010) asserts that conventional reforms designed to improve the academic achievements of students of color will remain inadequate if they fail to address culture, ethnicity, and other personal factors known to impact student performance. A third assumption is that good intentions on the part of a teacher are not adequate. In other words, neither colorblind racism nor the "missionary zeal" (Gay, 2010, p. 14) of some teachers who elect to teach in schools attended by low-income students of color will help to close achievement gaps. Another assumption is the recognition of cultural diversity as a strength, not a deficit, and finally the last assumption is the premise that test scores and grades are symptoms of achievement gaps, not causes (Gay, 2010). These assumptions form the foundation for my conceptual framework.

When discussing the five general *characteristics* of culturally responsive pedagogy, Gay (2010) describes the impact of multicultural education on the development of culturally responsive pedagogy from an historical vantage point. Although described here within Gay's (2010) framework, others such as Banks (2007), Grant and Sleeter (2011), Ladson-Billings (2010), and Milner (2010) describe similar characteristics in their own extensive research on multicultural education and culturally responsive pedagogy.

As outlined by Gay (2010), the first characteristic of culturally responsive pedagogy is that it is *validating and affirming* to students because it acknowledges the legitimacy of their own culture and how it shapes their dispositions, values, and approaches to learning. It is also validating because, "It builds bridges of meaningfulness between home and school experiences as well as between academic abstractions and lived sociocultural realities" (p. 31). Gay (2010) further states that it is validating and affirming because it uses a broad range of instructional strategies based on these learning styles, it teaches students to value and compliment one another's cultures by using multicultural resources in a pervasive manner, versus a one-day

episodic cultural celebration, sometimes referred to as the heroes and holidays (Lee, Menkart, & Okazawa-Rey, 1998) approach.

A second characteristic of culturally responsive pedagogy includes the notion that it is *comprehensive* because "teachers of culturally responsive pedagogy develop intellectual, social, emotional, and political learning by using cultural resources to teach knowledge, skills, values and attitudes" (Gay, 2010, p. 32). Third, Gay (2010) stresses that culturally responsive pedagogy is *multi-dimensional* in that it covers curriculum content, learning context, classroom climate, student-teacher relationships, instructional techniques, classroom management, and performance assessments. Next, Gay (2010) posits that culturally responsive pedagogy is *empowering and transformative* to students in part because it explicitly utilizes students' cultural experiences during teaching and learning without succumbing to the false notion that utilizing cultural and ethnic affiliations in the classroom is anti-academic. It also empowers students by teaching them how to analyze the impact of inequities faced by ethnic individuals and to act upon them. Students learn about cultural hegemony in the classroom and how to act upon it as well. Lastly, Gay (2011) emphasizes that culturally responsive pedagogy is *emancipatory*. It frees students from the constraint of believing that the only legitimate ways of knowing and being in the world are those aligned with the mainstream, Western Eurocentric canon, which historically has been perpetuated in the institution of school.

In her work with teachers or African American students, Ladson-Billings (2009) emphasizes that culturally responsive pedagogy is *emancipatory* as well. Using cultural relevance in the classroom because it helps African Americans develop a "relevant black personality" that can move between the African American culture and the dominant White culture while maintaining the positive identity development necessary for academic

achievement. Culturally responsive pedagogy is also emancipatory because it emphasizes cooperation, community, and connectedness versus competitive individualism, which are also typically associated with Western European values (Banks, 2007, Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2010).

With these overarching assumptions and characteristics in mind, the following section provides my conceptual framework used in this study to explore the beliefs and actions of teachers who practice culturally responsive pedagogy. These include building a caring classroom, a classroom that is strengths-based and student centered, and a classroom that is community-based with an eye towards social justice.

2.4   CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE AREAS OF PRACTICE

This section offers detail on how literature describes teacher practices that support the five characteristics of CRP discussed in Section 2.3. My synthesis of the research on CRP indicates that a culturally responsive classroom is caring and relationship-based, strength-based and student-centered, and community-oriented with an eye towards social justice (Banks, 2007; Delpit, 1995; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Gonzolez et al., 2004; Gutierrez et al., Ladson-Billings, 2010; Milner, 2010; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Although the organic nature of relationships and teaching lends itself to cross-pollination among the three areas of practice, it is helpful to conceptualize each as its own entity. A visual representation of the attitudes and behaviors that support the three areas of practice can be found in Chapter Three, Figures 1 and 2.

2.4.1   Area of Practice One: A Caring and Relationship-Based Classroom

Since teachers have cultural frames of reference and are "orchestrators of the social contexts for learning," (Diamond & Moore, 1995, p. 35) it is up to them to build bridges between their culture as middle class women or men and their students' culture across the curriculum, instruction, and assessment by using a variety of approaches to instruction (Banks, 2007, Diamond & Moore, 1995; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2010; Phelan, Davidson, & Cao, 1991).   This type of pedagogy requires the ability to develop and sustain reciprocal dialogs with their students and maintain relationships with students of color that are warm, considerate, personable, passionate, and adaptable, yet demanding of themselves and their students (Alder, 2002; Banks, 2007, Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2010; Milner, 2010; Valenzuela, 1999).

While seemingly these are qualities of any effective teacher cultural discontinuity can significantly alter the nature of relationships, and therefore teaching and learning, when differences in culture are based in prejudice or ignored. For example, Grant and Sleeter (2011) assert that in order to not appear racist, teachers:

> are often inadvertently and simultaneously friendly but condescending toward students of color. This stance is manifest when the teacher allows students to get by without working very hard, allows them to get away with things, avoids talking to their parents, or believes their parents cannot be helpful in their education. (p. 98)

Similarly, Grant and Sleeter (2011) posit that when a teacher believes that a child living in poverty is not receiving love at home and assumes responsibility for providing that love, the pity incurred for that student makes a reciprocal relationship that is not inherently condescending difficult to cultivate. While a teacher's awareness of the students' home environs is important, a

culturally responsive teacher would utilize this knowledge during her planning and instruction versus simply feeling sorry for the child. Yet another problem occurs when a teacher is colorblind, because essentially this means that she refuses to acknowledge a large part of her student's identity. This stunts the social, psychological, emotional, and thus academic development of the child (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Milner, 2010).

What all three of these cases describe is how a teacher's view of her students impacts her instruction as well as her behavioral and academic expectations of her students (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Milner, 2010). Inadvertent condescension (Grant & Sleeter, 2011, p. 98) is another reason why consciousness-raising and its resultant ability to help a teacher form caring, authentic relationships are so important. Caring teachers acknowledge differences between themselves and their students without judging them. This affords them the interpersonal competencies necessary to positively impact the social, emotional, and psychological well being of their students. These interpersonal skills are reflected in both a teacher's personal behaviors and instructional practices and provide a model for her students as to what respectful cross-cultural relationships look like (Banks, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 2010; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011). As Gay (2010) states:

> In addition to respecting the cultural backgrounds, ethnic identity, and humanity of students, teachers who care hold students accountable for academic, social, and personal performance and make sure this happens. They are demanding but facilitative, supportive and accessible both personally and professionally. And they do not have to be of the same ethic groups as students to do this well. (p. 56)

Consequentially, Grant and Sleeter (2011) assert that "strengthened teacher-student relationships lead to better student engagement in the classroom which in turn leads to higher

achievement." (p. 95) This is in part based on the work of Bell (2003), Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh, and Lani (2009) and Klem and Connell (2004), which indicates that teacher expectations have an enormous effect on student achievement. When teacher expectations increase, the achievement of their students does as well. Conversely, lowered expectations can result in a child's learned helplessness and lower academic achievement (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011). One must be cautious, however, since increasing the academic achievement of students of color is not simply a matter of increased teacher expectations. A culturally responsive teacher needs to build relationships with students built upon mutual respect and trust in order to approach teaching through a strengths-based, student-centered approach. This area of practice is discussed below.

2.4.2   Area of Practice Two: Strength-Based and Student-Centered Practices

A teacher who practices culturally responsive pedagogy utilizes the cultural capitol held by her students, which includes but is not limited to, communication and learning styles to inform her pedagogical practices (Banks, 2007; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2010). Although many low-income students of color do not come to school with the same type of cultural capital valued by the White middle class morays "on which school knowledge is built" (Grant & Sleeter, 2011, p. 134), they do enter the classroom with a rich culture of their own. Culturally responsive teachers acknowledge this and understand that a person's culture provides the framework from which he or she makes meaning of the world around them and communicates with others (Gay, 2010). She therefore seeks ways to use culture as a focal point in their approach to teaching and learning. With this in mind, the following paragraphs more clearly discern cultural differences in communication and learning styles.

Those who study culturally responsive pedagogy acknowledge the work of psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1978) in explaining that in addition to making meaning, communication also effects the ways in which an individual learns and expresses that learning, as well as how one interprets and analyzes new information and experiences (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011). Communication relative to the culturally responsive classroom includes the use of language, code switching, style and discourse variations such as signifying, problem solving, task engagement, and the organization of ideas (Kochman, 1981). Differences in communication and learning styles, as well as how culturally responsive teachers address them, are described below.

The use of Standard American English (SAE) and dialect historically has been viewed from an assimilationist vantage point that devalues the home language of students of color (Delpit, 1995; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011). Delpit (1995) asserts that language and dialect diversity in the classroom should be valued and utilized. If SAE and African American Language (AAL) are used together, the student will have more success in learning SAE. By valuing bilingualism, students of color are more adept at cultural border crossing between their home culture and the dominant White culture. This helps students preserve their ethnic identity, which is essential to a student's overall well-being and academic development. The use of AAL has been met with controversy by assimilationists, whereas culturally responsive teachers view code switching, or the ability to move back and forth between AAL and SAE, as a strength. They engage their students in learning and enacting language appropriateness based on situational context versus a prescriptive "right way" verses "wrong way" to speak (Delpit, 1995; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011).

Variations in style and discourse can be used to inform teaching and learning. As with any analysis of ethnic and cultural differences, it is important to remember that using group

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differences to enhance one's knowledge and skills also requires the simultaneous recognition of individual variations and the tendency to overgeneralize or engage in negative stereotyping. This is indeed true for the practicing teacher. Nevertheless, Kochman (1985) and Gay (2010) compare the interactive, participatory learning preferences of African Americans with what is typically present in today's more conventional classroom in which students listen and respond when called upon by an authority figure. Furthermore, Gay (2010) cites the work of Pasteur & Toldson (1982) and Smitherman (2000) to assert that African Americans have a more oral-aural nature that invests in emotions, personality power, and actions. This includes "Verbal performers whose speech patterns are fueled by personal advocacy, passion, fluidity, and creative variety." (Gay, 2010, p. 105) Gay (2010) also explains how differences in behaviors are more pronounced within low-income students of color because they have less exposure to the interactive structures of their middle class counterparts. Such variations of discourse are an example of cultural discontinuity that may lead middle class White teachers to falsely view the behavior of her low-income African American students as disrespectful, rude or insolent.

Other differences offered by Gay (2010) include a student's tendency towards inductive or deductive questioning by White and Blacks respectively, as well as how students begin to engage in a task. For example, she notes that African American students may be "setting the stage" for learning, which includes socializing, arranging a desk, sharpening their pencils, or stretching before class or an assignment. This can be viewed by a teacher as wasting time, when from a cultural perspective she is getting ready for the "performance" of learning.

Lastly, Cazden (1988) and Smitherman (1986) explain that different cultures may organize ideas their ideas differently. For example, while White middle class individuals may tend to think, speak, and write in a more linear, topic- centered fashion. African Americans

might link topics together in chains or use personal narratives that may seem verbose to some, although some African Americans view it necessary to answer questions or analyze a topic effectively. Gay (2010) further states that when presenting a position, "Black discourse dynamics value emotions just as much as fact and opinion, otherwise the topic is not worth critical scrutiny" (p. 115). These discourse dynamics are almost the direct opposite of European Americans who place more value on objective reporting (Kochman, 1981). Since emotions are thought to interfere with a person's ability to reason, in most instances more value is placed upon those who can minimize conflict in their discourse and keep an open-mind. Those who do not withhold passion are viewed as too easily affected or perhaps even non-academic (Kochman, 1981). This discourse style seeks to weaken the emotion some might view as making a person too obstinate. In the classroom, African American students might be more likely to challenge authority then other students because debate is a valued aspect of their culture (Gay, 2010).

All of the cultural associations described above significantly impact how students interact with classmates, teachers, curriculum, problem solving, and assignments. Culturally responsive teachers do not view these differences from a deficit perspective that needs to be corrected, but they legitimize their students' communications style(s), compare and contrast them with their own, and examine how their students negotiate between the two. With this knowledge, the teacher can change her practice to more effectively engage her students, helping them learn multiple communication styles without feeling that there is one right or wrong way (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011). It is important to note that culturally responsive pedagogy does not seek to replace White middle class values or modes in the classroom, however, it facilitates a bidirectional approach to teaching that considers what specific groups of students need while simultaneously teaching them how to negotiate mainstream educational structure (Gay, 2010).

Once a teacher learns how her students are molded by their cultural and ethnic identities at large, as well as within the particularities of the geographical community and the family, she can utilize students' strengths to facilitate teaching and learning. For instance, many teacher candidates, regardless of subject or content area, learn an approach called scaffolding. Scaffolding entails teaching new content knowledge, a concept, principle or skill by first relating it to the students existing schema, or frame of reference, as well as upon what they may already know about the topic. The teacher then helps students make sense of the content as it relates to the new concept or learn the new skill by first working and practicing with them. Little by little, the teacher becomes less prevalent and allows the student to relate to the new concept or partake in the skill on his or her own without the guidance of the teacher (Rogoff, 2003; Vygotsky, 1978). The space and time in which students work independently with less assistance has been termed by Vygotsky (1978) as the zone of proximal development (ZPD).

Teachers using a culturally responsive approach need to know their students' cultural frames of reference in order to effectively engage in scaffolding and the ZPD. They recognize that learning may be trying when students border-cross, or move back and forth between what is considered proper or valued knowledge at home and what is proper at school (Phelan, Davidson, & Cao, 1991). The culturally responsive teacher builds bridges for border crossing and thus more successful teaching and learning by identifying what the *funds of knowledge* from the home actually are (Gonzolez et al., 2004; Grant & Sleeter, 2010). To do this, a teacher needs to know what jobs, roles, and knowledge the households in the community actually encompass. Gonzalez (2004) asserts that when a teacher incorporates funds of knowledge, she includes the "processual approaches" (p.41) of non-dominant groups and uses the everyday lived experiences of the students as a frame of reference for teaching. By finding out more about their students' lives

outside of school, teachers can "use these tools to connect concepts and skills in the curriculum with what student know, care about or find interesting." (Grant & Sleeter, 2011, p. 147) Although it can be argued that an effective teacher learns her students' values, language, and belief systems regardless of her cultural origins, Gutierrez et al. (2009) make the distinction that to make a more significant impact on classroom pedagogy, there needs to be a more intimate dialogical relationship between the student *household* and the educators within the school than what is currently typical of American schools.

Grant and Sleeter (2010) assert that another pedagogical approach utilized by many culturally responsive teachers and currently taught in professional development is differentiated instruction. In brief, differentiated instruction involves a teachers' varying of the content, process, or product of lessons or units based upon differences in student access to learning, student motivation, and student efficiency (Tomlinson, 1999). In contrast to whole-group direct instruction, proponents of differentiated instruction assert that the content, process or product need not be the exactly the same for everyone in the class, however, the activities given must be equally respectful in order for students to value their own learning process (Tomlinson, 1999). Tomlinson (1999) explains that a teacher who undertakes differentiated instruction has high expectations for her students, helps them work towards independence, and acknowledges the importance of helping her students make sense of their own ideas. Yet again it becomes evident that a teacher needs to understand her students' cultural frames of reference, including but not limited to their modes of communication, understanding and learning, in order to plan how she will differentiate her content, process or product.

Both the examples of scaffolding and differentiated instruction highlight that a culturally responsive framework would help teachers more effectively implement current pedagogical

strategies taught in teacher education and professional development. It is also evident that "doing" CRP is not an alternative to proficient content knowledge or pedagogical content knowledge (Banks, 2007). Rather, it is through cultural awareness that a teacher can more effectively utilize content knowledge and pedagogy to close achievement and opportunity gaps. In addition to the greater cultural context, teachers also need fundamental working knowledge of the local environs in which her students live and how these systems link and interact with the family and the school (Brofenbrenner, 1994). This notion relates to the final area of practice in which a culturally relevant teacher creates a classroom that it is community-based and works towards the promotion of social justice.

2.4.3 Area of Practice Three: A Community-Oriented Classroom that Promotes Social Justice

Another area of practice includes an emphasis on community, discussed here in three different ways. First, a community of learners is constructed in the classroom by building student-to-student relationships that encourage them to be responsible to and for one another. Secondly, social, economic, and political inequities are addressed inside and outside of the classroom, and third, teaching and learning in the culturally responsive classroom builds upon the knowledge of the students' home and community. These three aspects are described in more detail below (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings 2010).

In addition to building caring relationships between the students and themselves, culturally responsive teachers also teach students how to cultivate and maintain these types of relationships with one another (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings 2010). Ladson-Billings (2010) asserts that in traditional schools and classrooms, the values of

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competition and individualism are inadvertently or blatantly taught as proper social relations. In contrast, a culturally responsive classroom accentuates communalism and cooperation in what Ladson-Billings (2010) terms a "community of learners."

In a community of learners, learning is an interactive process in which both the teacher and the students treat one another as if they already have valuable knowledge. By validating students' existent knowledge and cultural frames of reference as legitimate, students are more inclined to view learning as a fulfilling process verses a mere end product. If as discussed earlier, a teacher develops a less hierarchical, and more fluid relationship between her and her students, then she is already modeling this type of relationship for her students to have with one another (Gonzolez, 2004; Gutierrez et al., Ladson-Billings 2010).

Grant and Sleeter (2011) offer the pre-service teacher ways to look at classroom management within a community-building context. They assert that an authoritarian disciplinary style that uses rewards and punishments leaves students hating or fearing their teachers, which only results in students either acting out, lying, cheating, or withdrawing from the classroom. Grant & Sleeter (2011) help the future teacher distinguish between student discipline and the broader idea of classroom management:

> From a multicultural perspective, classroom management refers to the teachers' ability to arrange classroom learning, so that it welcome and affirms all students and it promotes cooperation and high expectations across ethnic, gender, and economic lines. (p. 106)

Since beginning teachers typically turn to episodic conflict suppression or conflict management instead of being proactive, the authors offer many models and specific activities for teachers to use with their students to introduce the topic of conflict inside the classroom. Through these means, a teacher teaches her students that while they do not need to agree with

one another's perspectives, they do need to understand why different things makes sense to different people and that arguments naturally occur as people have different ideas about what is fair based upon their life experiences (Grant and Sleeter, 2011). Grant and Sleeter (2011) give specific models and activities that teachers can carry out in class that address human difference, raising stereotype awareness, how to take a stand against hurting one another, and cooperative learning. These activities are designed for the teacher to help her students develop self-esteem, build empathy, affirm each other's beliefs, and build caring relationships. Simultaneously, they are learning how to take responsibility for one another's learning while engaging in civil discourse. In essence, the culturally responsive teacher is modeling and teaching her students how to participate in a democracy (Banks 2007; Grant & Sleeter, 2011). Furthermore, students also learn how to extend these types of interactions into the community (Ladson-Billings, 2010).

Culturally responsive teachers promote democratic ideals by helping "students make connections between their community, national and global identities" (Ladson-Billings, 2010, p. 38). As students gain a clearer sense of their identity in a multilayered context and develop constructive intrapersonal skills in the classroom, a teacher can then guide her students towards critically analyzing the current social, economic, and political injustices in their communities, the country, and the world at large. As Grant and Sleeter (2011) posit, essentially a teacher operating within a multicultural or culturally responsive framework is giving her students the necessary tools to take action within a participatory democracy and ultimately work towards social justice.

Grant & Sleeter (2011) once again provide many sensitive and appropriate ways in which pre-service teachers can go out into the neighborhood and/or community to find out what the adults' areas of expertise are and what their students do when they are not in school. By doing

so, teachers find out what assets and interests their students have. Ladson- Billings (2010) confirms that although typically teachers of African American students do not live or spend time in the neighborhoods in which they teach, culturally responsive teachers find ways in which to facilitate interactions with community members and cultivate relationships with their students outside of the classroom. They view the school community and the communities in which their students live as assets they can utilize towards more relevant and effective instruction (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings 2010). With familiarity of students' lives outside of school a teacher can then create a truly strength-based, student centered teaching and learning environment built upon authentic and caring relationships.

2.5   TEACHER EDUCATION AND CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY

In their review of the literature on multicultural teacher education research, practice, and policy, Cochran-Smith et al. (2004) discuss broad scale changes made by higher education institutions (HEI's) by the early 1990's that specifically focused on multicultural education. For example by 1993, 16 of the 17 national curriculum guidelines approved by The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) involved multicultural guidelines, and 40 states required teacher education programs to require some form of ethnic, multicultural, bilingual, or cultural study. Cochran-Smith, et al. (2004) also note that between 1993 and 2003, many colleges and universities had revised curriculum, coursework, and the pre-service clinical experience to include a explicit focus on multicultural education and diversity.

Today, it is commonly understood that urban teacher education programs should work towards social justice through a multicultural framework that encompasses the three program

components of curriculum, coursework, and the pre-service clinical experience. (Banks, 2007; Cochran-Smith, 2000, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Nieto, 2000; Peterman, 2008; Solomon & Sekayi, 2007; Ukpokodu, 2007). When all three of these components are aligned, there is a greater likelihood of a positive impact on teacher training and ultimately teacher practice. Furthermore without an all encompassing framework, programs will simply continue to ill prepare teachers to work with diverse groups in general, and especially with those living in urban poverty (Nieto, 2000).

An integrated and encompassing framework such as this requires strong connections between coursework and the clinical experience (Darling-Hammond, 2006) and coherent school-HEI partnerships that directly align coursework with the pre-service clinical experience (Berry, et al., 2008; Darling-Hammond, 2006, 2011; Levine, 2006). Scholars and practitioners in the field of urban teacher education view this type of integrated program crucial for the development of future urban teachers (Berry et al., 2008; Murrell, 2008; Peterman & Nordgren, 2008; Quartz, Olsen, & Duncan-Andrade, 2008; Smaller, 2007; Solomon, Allen, & Campbell, 2007).

The importance of coursework, the clinical experience and the HEI- school partnership is duly noted and explored in this study. However, more emphasis is placed on how teachers perceive their current enactment of CRP as it relates to previous coursework. Therefore to understand these particular phenomena, a more detailed look at coursework involving CRP is a relevant line of inquiry.

2.5.1 Coursework on Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

As discussed extensively in Section 2.4, one major component of culturally responsive coursework is helping future teachers develop a critical consciousness through self- reflection

(Gay & Kirkland, 2003). Literature suggests that this re-socialization process is inquiry based and pedagogies used for these processes often include engaging pre-service teachers in self-reflective autobiographies and personal narratives (Cochran Smith, 1995; Cochran-Smith et al., 2004). Milner (2003) describes two pedagogical structures utilized in his TEP courses that consist of critically engaged dialogue around race as well as race-reflective journaling. A few examples of the twelve questions and sub questions posed to PST's include:

> How will my race influence my work as a teacher with students of color? How might my student's racial experiences influence their work with me as the teacher? How might racial influences impact my students' interests in the classroom? How might I connect lessons to those interests? How do I situate and negotiate the students' knowledge, experiences, expertise, and race with my own? (p. 178)

By asking questions such as these, TEP's help future teachers develop the notion that they racial and cultural beings and that race and culture matter in the classroom (Milner, 2003).

Likewise, Gay and Kirkland (2003) assert that critical self- reflection and dialoguing should involve real life experiences in order to turn "critical thoughts into transformative instructional actions." (p. 5) They describe techniques such as using poetry as pedagogy and engaging students in observations of "ethnic others" in their daily routines. This is followed by discussions about "interactions of ethnic group members and what to do with what they find" (p. 5). Other activities are described in the following way:

> [They] are organized around cooperative learning projects; are based on the philosophy of learning by doing, involve realistic situations, issues, and events, and require students to use knowledge they have learned about ethnic, racial and cultural diversity in creating their instructional strategies. (p. 5)

Gay and Kirkland (2003) summarize their critical pedagogy by stating:

> Our learning by doing with the context of authentically lived experiences approach to teaching models techniques that they, in turn, can use with their own students to teach similar skills. It is also one of the anchors of effective teaching for social justice in multicultural contexts. (p. 5)

Safford and Bales (2011) discuss the implementation of a field –based "pedagogy lab," which is a 1-credit course in an urban teacher preparation at University of Lake City as part of the Teachers for a New Era Project. This project, aimed at teacher education programs, is funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and has been adopted by several universities nationwide (Teachers for a New Era, 2001). In this course, students partake in teaching scenarios or cases and problem solve ways in which to respond to particular teaching situations in more culturally relevant ways by helping them develop the skills needed to work with multicultural learners. This helps them to connect culturally responsive theories with their teaching practices while they are in a supportive environment (Safford & Bales, 2011).

Zeichner (2010) describes two ways in which universities have worked to connect their campus courses with the expertise of effective urban educators. The first is a two-year residency program that brings K-12 teachers into the college classroom as instructors, after which they return back to their school districts. The second includes using web-based representations s of current K-12 teachers in actual practice as well as subsequent interviews with the practicing teacher and her students, all of which the university-based instructor utilizes in their teaching methods courses. Other documented multicultural pedagogies for pre-service teachers include going into classrooms of teachers viewed as experts in equity pedagogy, conducting case studies

of successful and unsuccessful teachers of diverse students, and community immersion (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Cochran-Smith, et al., 2004; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Zeichner, 1993).

Another recent area of study in urban teacher education programs related to coursework is community service outside of the classroom. There is research that indicates a multicultural course combined with a community experience is more impactful than a lone-standing course (Sleeter, 2000, Paccione, 2000). A community practicum such as the one described by Smaller (2007) is part of students' community development course and requires the teacher candidate to partake in two hours of weekly service in the community in which he or she is teaching throughout the entire academic year. The goal of this practicum, as well as other programs that require candidates to engage in service (Solomon, Manoukian, & Clarke, 2007), is for students to gain a clearer understanding of the context in which they are teaching and to make the community connections deemed necessary to bridge the cultural divide and build trust between the teacher and the community. Thus, the community practicum helps students contextualize the ongoing reciprocity between their reflexivity and critical consciousness with real world daily interactions.

2.5.2   Books that Support Culturally Responsive Coursework

Books by Milner (2010), Grant and Sleeter (2010), and Loewen (2010) are designed to provide opportunities for teacher educators to help PST's (and themselves) work towards consciousness-raising and subsequently impact their life-long teaching practices. While it is presumed that all three of these books are likely used in TEP coursework, the extent to which, as well as their impact on practice, is not systemically documented in the research. Nevertheless, Milner's book, *Start Where you Are, But Don't Stay There* (2010) provides deep insight into the beliefs and

practices of three IST's and six PST's as they "capture the nexus of diversity, opportunity, and teaching" (p. 11). Milner shares the narratives of his teacher participants as they exemplify his explanatory framework of this nexus, which includes the constructs and instructional consequences of colorblindness, cultural conflict (discontinuity), the myth of meritocracy, deficit mindedness, and context-neutral mindedness. By embedding the rich teacher narratives within the explanatory framework, Milner's (2010) work provides teacher educators and teacher candidates many clear and focused points of inquiry from which they can dialogue during coursework and the TEP in general. Not only does this help raise sociocultural and racial consciousness, but also it offers concrete examples for exactly how CRP constructs directly impact teaching and learning (Adamek, Lewis, Rodriguez, & Kilpatrik, personal communication, September 10, 2013).

Grant & Sleeter's book (2010), *Doing Multicultural Education for Achievement and Equity*, provides specific reflections and assignments for the teacher candidate to complete as each relates to consciousness-raising and the development of cultural responsive ideology and practice. These exercises are consistently interspersed throughout the book so that students can internalize the research and theory behind such constructs and learn how to apply strategies that are culturally relevant. For example, the first chapter of the book includes several reflection exercises that ask the student to think about their own family-decision making patters, home and family culture, school experiences, and affiliation groups. These exercises, along with others such as interviewing students, begin the process of students recognizing themselves as cultural beings whose ideas as to what is "normal" differs from someone else's notion of what is "normal" even if they are the same race or from the same sociocultural or socioeconomic group.

Other chapter topics, and thus specific reflections and exercises, guide students as to how to "do" CRP, such as how to engage in the art of scaffolding in the ZPD, how to use students funds of knowledge, how to boundary cross, and how to learn about their students' communities, to name a few. Still other chapters require students to critically examine curriculum, textbooks, tests and assessments and engage in exercises such as interviewing teachers. The book then provides students with concrete ways to engage with these concepts, such as how to identify unintended curriculum and how to develop an authentic assessment.

A book specific to social studies education is Loewen's (2010) book *Teaching What Really Happened: How to Avoid the Tyranny of Textbooks and Get Students Excited About Doing History*. This book helps future history and social studies teachers consider why it is imperative to enter the classroom with a multicultural mindset and gives PST's many examples and strategies for how to engage students in "doing history" which essentially is a culturally responsive way to approach teaching. Based on a litany of detailed examples from current and past history textbooks, Loewen (2010) asserts that our textbooks continue to hide and distort discrimination and racism and that this and "other acts of collective discrimination impoverishes students and hurts their ability to understand the present, not just the past" (p. 17). Additionally, since history textbooks cover copious amounts of material, teachers are subjected to the "tyranny of coverage," (p. 19) which leaves teachers, and hence their students either overwhelmed or disinterested in what must be covered for standardized exams (Loewen, 2010). Thus, Loewen offers logical ways in which PSTs can be selective in what they teach.

Loewen (2010) also uses research to support the idea that cultural discontinuity necessitates the importance of maintaining high expectations for students, that standardized exams hinder the development of students' critical thinking, and that sociocultural biases present

in the text of college entrance exams deprives the poor and people of color with equal opportunities for college admission. With these foundations in mind, he then describes ways that PSTs can engage in "doing history." By doing so, teachers and students can explore the historical myths present in, and parts of history eliminated from, current U.S. history textbooks and develop critical thinking and research skills.

Loewen (2010) provides examples from his own teaching, as well as from teachers he has interviewed, about ways to "do history" with students. He posits that the purpose of "doing history" is to critique it, which entails locating the speaker, audience, and era of a piece of history, such as a film, a textbook passage, a biography or autobiography, newspaper article, or field trip site. Students are tasked with asking questions such as:

> Who created it, What was their position in society and their groups point of view, Who was the intended audience and what does the piece want them to do, did the intended audience hold power, Who is left out and how would the story be different if that group had told it? Are their words or symbols that were used that would not be appropriate today, what does it leave out about the people it treats as heroes, and is the presentation accurate according to other primary and secondary sources. (Loewen, p. 77)

By asking critical questions like these about a piece of history and completing the research necessary to answer them, the student is in fact doing history.

Loewen (2010) also details ways in which students can "do history" within the context of writing a research paper, creating a product, or simply critiquing a small passage of a textbook. Other examples of doing history include interviewing older residents or one's family members to uncover how their lives intersect with major themes in U.S. history such as immigration, the struggles of working-class Americans to move up the economic ladder, or the costs of war. He

then accentuates the importance of providing students the opportunity to present their final works. The final five chapters of the book provide ways in which teachers can help students "do history" relative to the topics of how and when the U.S. was first settled, reasons for European dominance, teaching slavery, and The Nadir, all of which are topics traditionally ignored or ill-taught in current history texts and curriculum.

2.5.3   Challenges to Culturally Responsive Coursework

Challenges for teacher educators engaged in culturally responsive coursework are also documented (Haberman, 1991; Milner, 2010; Nieto, 2000; Ukpokodu, 2007). As Ukpokodu (2007) posits, most teacher education programs are dominated by assimilationist ideologies that lack commitment to multicultural education on the part of faculty. Ukpokodu (2007) points to the fact that the majority of teacher educators are White, which in large part is due to the failure of HEI's to recruit and retain diverse faculty.   Therefore, until White teacher educators themselves are able to interrogate their own racism, their ability to aid their students in doing the same is unlikely. Thus Ukpokodu (2007) calls for teacher educators to engage in their own self-transformation and a commitment to social justice.

Nieto (2000) also asserts that major changes in teacher education programs must take place in order to bring equity front and center within teacher education programs. This includes HEI's taking a stand on social justice and diversity to better prepare their teachers and making "social justice ubiquitous in teacher education" (p. 3). In other words she states, "celebrating diversity in lieu of teaching students about the structural inequities that exist in schools are hollow activities." (p. 3) Like Ukpokodu, Nieto (2000) concludes that teacher educators must enlist on the same journey of life-long reflexivity as their students and *with* their students.

Haberman (1991) offers plausible reasons for why these seemingly logical notions are often not embraced nor enacted by teacher educators.

Haberman (1991) asserts that, "education faculty members do not agree on the values that future teachers need because they do not agree that future teachers need to become more culturally aware" (p. 26). Furthermore, Haberman (1991) notes that many education faculty members do not believe that they should be tinkering with their students values, else it be an infringement upon students' individual rights. Additionally, Haberman (1991) calls into question whether or not a university can really teach cultural awareness, noting that life experience is the most influential piece of predisposition towards cultural responsiveness. Indeed, Gay & Kirkland (2003) document the challenges they have faced in helping their pre-service students develop critical consciousness, citing students' tendencies towards silence, diversion, guilt, and/or benevolent liberalism. Milner (2010) shares similar reflections regarding his research with PST's, noting students' inability to understand the impact of familial experiences on their views of race, racism, and overall prejudice in the form of attitudes, words and mindsets that were inadvertently, but not overtly racist. Thus, for pre-service teachers, particularly those placed in all-White teaching field experiences, it was difficult for them to understand the connection between sociocultural consciousness on the part of the teacher and opportunity gaps for students of color (Milner, 2010).

The experiences described by Milner (2010) and Gay and Kirkland (2003) highlight why Haberman (1991), brings into question the issue of the selection process of teacher candidates, stating that HEI's should at the very least screen out blatant sexist or racist candidates. Darling-Hammond's (2006) study of successful teacher education programs concluded that these HEI's were quite selective in choosing their candidates. Unfortunately, while selecting students with a

predisposition to engage in culturally relevant pedagogy might be ideal, the reality is that most teachers of low-income students of color in urban schools will not have attended such a selective institution (Haberman, 1991). Furthermore, while it may be ideal for pre-service students to experience a diverse field placement, this is not always an option for students or programs.

As discussed earlier, most pre-service students, the majority of whom are female, White and middle class, falsely assume that they will never teach in an urban school (Fuller, 1994; Ukpokodu, 2007). This is precisely why teacher educators such as Ukpokodu (2007) argue that *all* programs should approach teacher education through a multicultural framework that focuses upon social justice (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Nieto, 2000; Peterman & Norgdren, 2008; Solomon & Sekayi, 2007). Otherwise, we risk the perpetuation of ill-prepared teachers in urban schools.

2.6   SECONDARY SOCIAL STUDIES AND CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY

As mentioned in Chapter One, not much is known about if or how teachers attribute their current culturally responsive practices to their pre-service coursework and what exactly it is from their previous coursework that they now utilize in their classrooms (Cochran-Smith et al., 2004; Sleeter, 2000). A review of the literature substantiates the same findings in the field of secondary social studies. However, literature specific to how secondary social studies teachers "do" CRP in their classroom helps to identify what these specific classroom practices entail.

In a study by Martell (2013), he explains how he made race and ethnicity a main focus of his U.S. history course, despite the fact that the textbook and school curriculum was White and European American-centric. Martell taught in an urban area that was culturally and economically

diverse. Using this diversity as an anchor, Martell "problematized teaching White history" and provided students with opportunities to "explore their own cultural histories" (p. 72) by individualizing research papers and research projects to reflect their backgrounds. By creating his own packets for his students, Martell was able to include competing interpretations of history versus utilizing the textbook based upon Western canon. He also guided his students to talk about their own heritages during discussions.

Martell then examined the impact of his own culturally relevant teaching by analyzing a teacher journal, classroom artifacts, student reflections, and conducting student surveys and interviews. Martell's (2013) student survey demonstrated that a large majority of both his White and non-White students learned that history is made up of different perspectives, that they liked learning about history more after taking the class, and they could recall more historical information than in previous history courses. Students of color also reported feeling more connected to the people from history in this class. In other data sources, students expressed that his class helped them connect more personally to history, that they had gained a better sense of their racial identity and their identity as scholars of history, and that there are multiple and sometimes conflicting historical narratives of the past.

Suggestions from students included making more of a connection to Brazilian history and increasing the study of both women and immigrants, even if they were White, in order to show how their experiences might be connected no non-Whites. Immigrant students suggested including other countries' perspectives of the US and exploring what commonalities might be shared between White immigrants with immigrants of color.

Martell (2013) concludes that not only should White teachers not shy away from discussions on race and culture, but they should also make efforts to understand students'

backgrounds and use these understandings to connect to their students' lives. He asserts that students are more engaged in learning history when they can see themselves in the U.S. history curriculum and discover their personal identity within the larger field of U.S. history. Finally, Martell reiterates the importance of teachers continuing to interrogate their own Whiteness and its inherent privileges.

Martell's (2013) work is important to the study of CRP in the social studies classroom because it is one of the few of its kind. Not only does Martell (2013) provide a concrete picture of what curriculum and activities a culturally relevant teacher might engage students in, he also demonstrates sociocultural and racial reflexivity through the self –study of his own teaching practices.

Another relevant study by teacher educator Manfra (2009) explored how four current social studies teachers conducted self-studies on the impact of their applications of critical theory and critical race theories on teaching and learning in their classrooms. Enrolled in Manfra's *Teachers as Researcher* course in their master's degree program, each of the four teachers experienced important aspects of CRP that they expressed had and would continue to impact their practice. For example, after reading Gay (2000) one teacher realized that what she perceived as her African American students as talking rudely and out of turn was actually a difference in communication styles, in this case call and response (Manfra, 2009). Thus, she implemented more activities designed to communicate more openly with her students and learn more about them by becoming "a 'student' of her students" (Manfra, 2009, p. 176).

After creating a more open dialogue with her students, she altered the course of her upcoming unit based on their suggestions. In order for her students to engage more fully in the unit about European colonialism and Africa, she found that her students also needed more

connections between what was going on between Africa and the U.S. today. By doing so, she believed that her students had a much better understanding on the impact of European colonialism on Africa today. Ultimately, this teacher's use of CRP left her more determined to listen to the voices of her students in the future.

Another student in Manfra's class combined two concepts that he had learned about in class, differentiated instruction and CRP, and applied these to his units on the Civil War and the Roaring Twenties. He designed differentiated learning activities by giving the students choices in the assignments, providing content that included different multicultural topics, and building in "ample opportunities for student success." (Manfra, 2009) This teacher then interviewed his students to help him contemplate the effectiveness of his lessons. He concluded that history became more relevant to his students when they had more autonomy in selecting their assignments and assignment topics and that culturally relevant lessons engaged his students by giving them the opportunity to study people like themselves.

Although the contexts of the four teachers were different, all of them experienced the benefits of recognizing the racial, sociocultural, and historical contexts in which they taught. By studying critical race theory, teachers were better able to articulate these contexts. Furthermore, their research projects allowed them to confront race and racism and embrace CRP as they formed new identities of themselves as individuals and teachers. Finally, all four teachers experienced the instructional benefits of dialoging with students and committing their classroom to the act of collective versus individual empowerment (Manfra, 2009).

A final example of CRP in the social studies classroom is a case study by Journell & Castro (2009) that was a part of a larger study by the first author on teaching politics in secondary education. The case study took place in large, diverse, high school in a working-class

neighborhood in the south side of Chicago and focused upon one Civics class taught by Mr. Harrison, an African American teacher. Eighteen of the 24 students in this class were Latina/o and the rest were split evenly between African American and White American students. Observations, student surveys, student and teacher interviews, and artifact analysis were used to investigate the teachers' practices in one classroom from August through November of 2008.

Findings from the study demonstrated several aspects of CRP and the positive impact it had on students. Generally speaking, Journell & Castro (2009) found students engaged in the class and interested in the topics discussed, such as the presidential election. Culturally relevant practices included Mr. Harrison's ability to relate to his students on a personal level in part because he had grown up in a near by neighborhood and his efforts to make sure course topics related to the personal interests of his students. He also maintained very high expectations for his students and embraced conversations about race and racism in classroom. More specifically, Mr. Harrison used immigration as an entry point for students to understand, contemplate, and analyze the concepts of natural rights, the "melting pot," and national unity. By discussing issues of race and immigration, which were topics that the students were connected to and passionate about, Mr. Harrison was able to help them understand concepts that are often quite abstract to young students of civics. Through open discussions and critical analysis of political cartoons and the textbook, students were able to separate the ideals of democratic theory from the complexity of its enactment. In these ways, CRP impacted the civic dispositions of his students, as they were able to appreciate the American government while maintaining their cultural identity within the American political system.

Each of these three studies provide important insight on how practicing teachers engage in particular aspects of CRP; however with the exception of Manfra (2009), they are not

designed to investigate the connection between pre-service coursework and enactment, nor were they designed to investigate the phenomenon of CRP across multiple teachers. Therefore, it is important not only to garner more information on how secondary social studies teachers engage in culturally responsive pedagogy, but also how they connect these practices to their past learning in their TEP.

In the final section of this chapter, I discuss literature specific to English Language Learners (ELLs) CRP, and social studies education. It is important to explore this body of literature because culturally relevant teachers of ELL students must also attend to the challenge of helping students develop proficiency in academic English while learning social studies (Cruz & Thorton, 2009).

2.7   SECONDARY ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Culturally relevant teachers of Secondary English Language Learners (ELL's) engage in the same areas of practice as other culturally responsive practitioners; however, they face additional challenges. Therefore, this final section of the literature review provides insights into the particularities of these challenges in the social studies classroom and culturally relevant practices found to help address these challenges.

ELL students are from diverse backgrounds and bring a variety of experiences to their schools. They arrive to school with varying levels of language acquisition, literacy skills, and content area knowledge in both their native language and English (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). ELLs also differ in their expectations for the school experience and come from a variety of family situations and personal experiences. Even though over half (57%) of the secondary

ELL population is second or third generation immigrants, they continue to lack proficiency in English (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). The remainders of secondary ELL students are immigrants who arrive to the country at different ages and with different education levels. Thus they are even more challenged when they enter the secondary level. This is because they have less time and resources to learn English and become proficient in content area subjects (Cruz & Thorton, 2009; Short, 1994; Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). Moreover, immigrants tend to be poor, and those who are undocumented are of low socio-economic status (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007).

Such a variety of factors pose quite a challenge for teachers of ELL students. Although nationwide the number of secondary level ELL's continues to increase, most secondary teachers are not trained in teaching basic literary skills in addition to their core content area (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). Since academic literacy for adolescent ELL's is impacted by their literacy contexts outside of school as well as their personal, social and cultural experiences (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007), a culturally relevant approach that includes pedagogy specific to literacy skills is thought to be an effective approach to teaching ELL's, particularly in secondary social studies classrooms (Cruz & Thorton, 2009).

Culturally relevant teachers of ELL students adhere to the same tenets of all culturally relevant practitioners. To build respectful relationships with students in their families, teachers must consider students' "culturally- based expectations" for their role in school, become familiar with students' familial discourse patterns, and foster cultural pride through home-school communications (Cruz & Thorton, 2009, p. 30). Once a teacher is aware of her students' funds of knowledge (Gonzolez, 2004) she can incorporate aspects of their culture and daily lives into her lessons and make decisions for activities based upon the most effective way for individual

ELL's to border-cross. Examples of this are described in the following paragraphs. By using a culturally relevant approach, a teacher can attend to the challenge of helping students develop proficiency in academic English while learning social studies (Cruz & Thorton, 2009).

2.7.1   English Language Learners in Secondary Social Studies

Social studies for ELL's often integrates both language and content objectives, but can take on different formats. For example, students can be "sheltered," or placed together in one social studies class without native speakers, placed in mainstream classes, or placed in a bilingual class. In these instances, social studies teachers often work closely with or are placed with a language educator who may or may not be present in the classroom. Another format is when the language educator is the main teacher and integrates social studies content objectives. This is referred to as content-based English as a Second Language (ESOL) (Short 1994).

As a field, social studies are more linked to literacy skills than other subjects such as math or science, which can pose quite a challenge for ELL's because social studies classes require understanding large amounts of information through expository text and often through teacher lectures (Short, 1994). In addition to being able to read and understand this material, students need to understand tables, charts, timelines pictures, photographs, and other graphic organizers often used in social studies, and much of this information may involve schemas and concepts that they are unfamiliar with (Short, 1994).   Social studies classes typically require high- level writing skills that ask students to compare and contrast, determine cause and effect, and analyze. This places ELL's at a disadvantage because social studies teachers often do not focus on the organization and literacy skills needed to write essays (Cruz & Thorton, 2009; Short, 1994).

Another challenge specific to social studies is that many ELL students, especially those newly arrived, lack the background knowledge necessary to understand many of the concepts taught in social studies, particularly U.S. history (Cruz & Thorton, 2009; Short, 1994, Short & Fitzsimmons).   Since U.S history begins in elementary school and is usually taught chronologically, students who emigrate in middle and high school do not have the background information necessary from which to build further knowledge. Furthermore, U.S. textbooks and curriculum are usually White and Eurocentric in historical and political thought. Therefore, ELL's who have had formal schooling and come from countries that teach non-Western or non-Eurocentric histories are also at a disadvantage (Short, 1994).

2.7.2   English Language Learners and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in the Secondary Social Studies Classroom

Culturally relevant teaching is also known to be an effective approach to working with ELL students. Consistent with my conceptual framework, ELL's are also more inclined to engage in class if one, they feel the teacher cares about them and relationships are built upon, two, when the teacher learns about and validates their culture and uses this knowledge of their strengths throughout instruction, and three, when the teacher builds a community based classroom. Once grounded in this framework, a social studies or language teacher with ELL's can move to praxis that attends to the curricula, text, and assessment while helping students develop academic language and academic skills specific to social studies. It is critical to note that although discussed here in the context of the research on ELL learning, similar techniques are described above in Sections 2.4 and Section 2.7.

United States history textbooks rarely portray our nation's history and events from the perspective of persons of color. When books do discuss the views of "others," the roles of people, events, and concepts are at best relegated to very particular sections of the text and often are simply "highlighted" in textboxes or sidebars. For culturally relevant social studies teachers of ELL's, providing students supplemental readings that portray multiple perspectives is critical. Not only so they learn about diverse points of view, but also so they can reflect upon how it relates to their own background information and home country's culture and history. It is these connections that keep students engaged (Cruz & Thorton, 2009; Short, 1994). From this grounding, students can better learn and understand White man's history, which puts them in a better position to negotiate White mainstream society (Banks, 2007). Other problems with social studies curriculum, particularly U.S. History textbooks, occur because they are focused on military and political history that ELL's find hard to interpret, thus simple delivery of historical content through reading or teacher lecture is not adequate (Grant, 2001).

Since both the culture and content of most social studies curricula is foreign to ELL's, and academic language is required to be successful social studies, how teachers elect to structure class activities is crucial to students' ability to learn (Cruz & Thorton, 2009). To build concrete background information such vocabulary terms and concepts, teachers in research by Short (1994) working on a Revolutionary War unit used pictures from the text, newspaper photographs, pantomime, and in one case an impromptu role play to show students the meaning of words such as marches, speeches and forming armies. Short (1994) also found that both adapted and authentic materials, such political cartoons and contemporary songs helped students understand background information included in textbooks. Other strategies that help ELL's

interpret textbook information include using charts, tables, and diagrams (Moline, 2011), content maps, outlines and questions clearly aligned to their reading passage (Brown, 2007).

Abstract concepts, such as patriotism and justice in the Short (1994) study, are more difficult for teachers to explain and discuss with ELL students (Cruz & Thorton, 2009; Short, 1994). Therefore explaining deeper concepts as they relate to their daily lives, and popular news, and events they are familiar with help them understand ideas like representation and oppression (Cruz & Thorton, 2009; Short, 1994). For academic tasks developed in the social studies, such as reading maps and primary source documents, organizing and writing various types of essays, or analyzing political cartoons, Cruz & Thorton (2009) tout the imperative of modeling with ELL students instead of just telling them how to do something. Political cartoons are used help students develop higher order thinking, because their exaggerated features and centralized themes offer them a means to better understand political commentary. While primary source documents can be difficult for ELL's to decipher, their authenticity helps stimulate interest and therefore critical thinking and analysis (Cruz & Thorton, 2009; Short, 1994).

When questioning and discussing material, White (1990) suggests that teachers should speak less, use longer wait time, and guide students to build upon each other's answers. White's (1990) recommendations also include selecting topics, or relating topics to what is meaningful in the community and share responsibility for discussions with students. To do this however, a teacher must spend time modeling behavior for discussions and openly discuss skills such as how cause and effect reasoning is used during the discussion.

Cooperative learning is known to be an effective learning approach for ELL's that fosters bilingual skills for varying levels of ELL's in social studies classrooms (Cruz & Thorton, 2009). ELL students working with other ELL's are given the opportunity to develop higher order

thinking skills as they listen an communicate their thoughts to one another in their native language, which would not be the case in a teacher-focused classroom spoken in English. When students are moved into groups whose native language is English, they are then given the opportunity to engage in collaborative verbal interaction to varying degrees (Cruz & Thorton, 2009). Short (1994) also found that in mainstream classes with ELL students, peer tutoring was effective when ELL students worked with an English-speaking partner.

Assessments of ELL's can be difficult because they require the teacher to distinguish between language and content proficiencies. Traditional writing assessments such essays and final papers may require additional time and resources for ELL students because in addition to language and content, they are also learning about the writing process (Cruz & Thorton, 2009). Alternative assessments that are product-based, performance based, and authentic are known to "have higher rate[s] of completion and student involvement" for ELL's (Cruz & Thorton, 2009, p.59). Product-based assessments can be differentiated for each student and ask students to demonstrate content knowledge through a variety of mediums such as videos, posters, poetry, art, music, dioramas, scripts, or exhibits (Cruz & Thorton, 2009; Short, 1994; Tomlinson, 1999). Portfolios and journals that require self- assessment and reflection are alternative assessment tools in which artifacts are collected over a period of time. Also, dialogue journals between the teacher and student, learning logs, or response logs are also ways in which teachers can assess students' progress and learning over time. All of these types of assessments can be traditionally written or presented through various forms of media. Authentic assessments include projects such as those described by Loewen (2010) and include advertisements, letters to political officials, or surveys and interviews of fellow students. Finally, performance-based assessments ask students to act, mime, role-play, or orally present a created product. All of these alternative

assessments are student-centered and provide ELL's a forum from which they can demonstrate the social studies content knowledge and skills that they have learned (Cruz & Thorton, 2009).

2.8   CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I explored several different areas of research, including the historical underpinnings that support culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP), characteristics and assumptions of CRP, areas of culturally responsive practice, how CRP is addressed in teacher education programs, how CRP is currently enacted in the social studies classroom, and lastly issues and practices specific to English Language Learners and CRP in the social studies classroom.   Together, these areas of study provide me with background knowledge used to inform my line of inquiry regarding social studies teachers culturally relevant practices and facets of teacher education programs that promote both CRP in general and CRP as it relates to secondary social studies education.

3.0   METHODOLOGY

This multiple case study examines factors that influence the formation and evolution of culturally responsive teaching among the selected secondary social studies teachers, how they describe their engagement with culturally responsive practices, how they perceive these practices are influenced by their higher education experiences, and the supports and challenges of this enactment. By exploring and analyzing each member's descriptions of their beliefs, practices, and experiences, I can represent my understanding of each case and offer common and distinctive themes *within* and *across* cases. The following questions were utilized to guide this study:

Q1: What factors influence the early formation, development, and evolution of culturally responsive teaching among the three selected secondary social studies teachers?

Q2: How do the selected social studies teachers perceive their engagement with culturally responsive pedagogy in their practice?

Q3: What from their higher education experiences do the selected social studies teachers draw from to put culturally responsive teaching into practice?

Q4: What do the selected teachers perceive are the challenges and supports of enacting culturally responsive pedagogy?

3.1   RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN

An instrumental case study is often used in education research when the researcher is interested in understanding a phenomenon and believes this insight can be obtained through the study of a bounded case (Stake, 1995). Since I was interested in how teachers describe and interpret their past and current experiences and current teaching contexts as these relate to a phenomenon, a case study design was an appropriate approach to this research. In this study, the phenomenon is described by the four research questions, and each of the three selected teacher participants, or members, is a separate case. Through this design, I am able to explore the subjective perceptions of the actors, or teachers in order to tell the stories of each teacher and thus provide "thick descriptions" (Geertz, 1973) to create the story of each case (Stake, 1995). Because I was interested in exploring phenomena within the individual case as well as across the cases to investigate how the cases were common and divergent, a multiple case study design was appropriate (Stake, 1995). To aid in the triangulation of my interpretations and to confirm or disconfirm my main assertions, member checking was also utilized.

Due to my seven years of teaching secondary social studies in urban schools attended by a majority of low-income African Americans, as well as my four years of experience as both a secondary social studies teacher educator and clinical supervisor of pre-service teachers (PSTs) in urban schools, my own experiences are a source of input in the all phases of research. I am not a direct actor in this case study; however, since none of my higher education experiences prior to my teaching consisted of culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP). Nevertheless, I do come to the field of study with intimate knowledge of sustained teaching of secondary social studies in urban public schools, as well as knowledge and experience with teaching of the theories and methods related to social science teacher education (and to a lesser extent, culturally relevant

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teaching). Borrowing from Burawoy's (1998) description of extended case study, my experiences allowed me to join with the teacher participant via dialogues that intersubjectively explored our knowledge within the context of collegial interviews, thus creating situational knowledge of the phenomenon. Both the second interview and member checking with each teacher allowed me to then analyze the data to demonstrate what Burawoy (1998) refers to as "social processes." (p.15) In this way, this multiple case study utilizes my "pre-suppositions, questions and frameworks" to connect to the teacher participant, however, such frameworks were used as an emergent "prism" as opposed to a fixed "template." (Burawoy, 1998, p.11)

To identify teacher participants, a purposeful, criterion sampling of secondary social studies teachers who engage in culturally responsive pedagogy and took courses related to culturally responsive pedagogy during their TEP was conducted. To do this, an initial online screening survey was administered to gather information on the teacher's attitudes and practices relative to culturally relevant teaching and relevant pre-service coursework. Teachers who self-reported high levels of cultural responsive pedagogy, engaged in relevant coursework during their teacher education program, who taught a majority of low-income students of color and who agreed to be interviewed were selected. In the event that selected teachers have also undergone professional development related to race, culture and education during their tenure as teachers, only those who have taught for five year or less were asked to participate.

Once participants for the case study were selected, in-depth interviews were used to garner the rich experiences of each participant. As Stake (1995) contends, each interviewee has a unique story to tell; therefore a conversation guide (see Appendix B) with a series of open-ended questions ensured that participants were able to fully describe their experiences relevant to the phenomena. However, questions were varied or changed during the interview process to

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elicit a conversational flow that engaged the participant, resulting in authentic and rich stories about his or her experiences (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Additionally, specific questions were asked based upon the individual's response to the initial on-line screening device; therefore a more open-ended approach to the interview was appropriate. As discussed above, these interviews were in some ways reminiscent of extended case study (Burawoy, 1998) in that my understanding of the experiences of teachers was also used to create a situational understanding of the phenomenon.

3.2   CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

As discussed in my review of the literature, culturally responsive pedagogy can be understood by first looking at five assumptions and five characteristics. These are mentioned here briefly, followed by my conceptual framework used for this study. The first assumption is that the culture of the teacher, the student, and the school impacts teaching and learning, particularly when the teacher is White middle class and the students are low-income students of color (Banks; 2007; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2010). Gay (2010) contends that a second assumption is that conventional reforms designed to improve the academic achievements of students of color will remain inadequate if they fail to address culture, ethnicity, and other personal factors known to impact student performance (Gay, 2010). Other assumptions discussed by Gay (2010) include the recognition of cultural diversity as a strength, that good intentions on the part of a teacher are not adequate, and that test scores and grades are symptoms of achievement gaps, not causes. Five characteristics of culturally responsive pedagogy detailed in my review of the literature describe it as validating and affirming, comprehensive, multi-

dimensional, empowering and transformative and emancipatory (see Section 2.2). With these five characteristics and five assumptions serving as overarching constructs, I created my conceptual framework that focused upon teacher's beliefs and classroom practices.

The attitudes and beliefs teachers need to support their culturally relevant teaching are represented in Figure 1. Items in this figure align with the literature already described in Sections 2.1 and 2.2 in which I highlight the importance of critical consciousness specific to the dimensions of race and culture. These beliefs and attitudes serve as a precursor to my conceptual framework, which focuses on culturally responsive areas of practice (see Figure 2).

Discussed in in Section 2.3, I based my conceptual framework on the works of numerous authors as to what CRP looks like in the classroom (Banks, 2007; Gay 2010; Grant & Sleeter 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2010; Milner 2010). My synthesis of this research suggested three areas of focus in a culturally responsive classroom in that it is *caring and relationship-based*, *strength-based and student-centered*, and *community-oriented with an eye towards social justice* (Banks, 2007; Delpit, 1995; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Gonzolez et al., 2004; Gutierrez et al., 2009; Ladson-Billings, 2010; Milner, 2010; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). By using my conceptual framework, I was able to more clearly analyze commonalities and divergences of how CRP is enacted in each case and identify practices that may not already be present in the literature. Although the organic nature of relationships and teaching lends itself to cross-pollination among the three areas of practice, it is helpful to conceptualize each as its own entity.

Figure 1: Teacher Critical Consciousness Relative to Race, Ethnicity and Culture

What Attitudes and Beliefs are Needed to Engage in Culturally Responsive Areas of Practice?

The Teacher…

Identifies ways in which:

Race, ethnicity, and culture influence their teaching and their students' learning.
Their students' culture brings value to their education.
School culture (e.g. values, norms, and practices) is different from students' home culture.
Schools reflect and perpetuate existent social structures, subjecting those who are not members of the dominant culture to educational disadvantage.

Continues to:

Examine their beliefs about race and ethnicity and their attitudes towards different races, ethnic groups, and cultures.
Identify how these beliefs might be based in inadvertent condensation and prejudice, and consciously work to thwart these tendencies.
Examine White privilege and/or the privilege of their socio-economic status.
Acknowledge cultural differences between themselves and their students.
Interrogate the notion educational meritocracy

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework: Areas of Culturally Responsive Practices

What do Culturally Responsive Secondary Social Studies Teachers do?		
Caring and Relationship-Based	**Strength-Based and Student Centered**	**Community-Oriented with an Eye towards Social Justice**
Develops and maintains personal relationships with each of their students.

Engages in reciprocal dialogues with students of color that are warm, yet demanding of themselves and their students.

Consciously focuses on building student-to-student relationships and encourages them to be responsible to one another.

Helps students develop self-esteem and empathy.

Helps students affirm each other's beliefs, and build caring relationships and learn how to take responsibility for each other.

Develops lessons that facilitate civic discourse. | Utilizes knowledge of students' home environs and cultural backgrounds (cultural capitol) during planning.

Explains new concepts and skills by using examples that are familiar to students from diverse cultural backgrounds and are taken from students' daily lives.

Incorporates a variety of modes of instruction to help build bridges between their and their students' culture.

Considers what is valued knowledge in students' homes and communities. Uses this knowledge to engage students' in social studies content knowledge and skill building.

Teaches about the contributions of minorities to the social studies (or appropriate content area). Critically examines curriculum to determine if it reinforces negative cultural stereotypes.

Considers how their students' culture impacts how they interpret and analyze new information.

Understands the communication preferences of their students, and examines how students negotiate between their home and school. Helps students develop the ability to code-switch, or move back and forth between the two. | Specifically addresses social, economic, and political inequities in society.

Guides students towards critically analyzing the current social, economic, and political inequities in their communities, the country, and the world at large.

Engages students in activities that that address human difference, and conflict.

Considers what specific non-dominant student groups in their classroom need while simultaneously teaching them how to negotiate mainstream educational society.

Finds ways to interact with students' parents and members of my students' community.

Establishes positive home-school relations to increase parental involvement. |

3.3 RESEARCH POPULATION

To select the participants for this study, a three – phase process was employed, including Phase One: Negotiating Entry (Mertens, 2010), Phase Two: the Teacher Attitudes and Perceptions Inventory (TAPI), which was a screening device designed to identify participants for the study, and Phase Three, which consisted of in-depth collegial interviews.

3.3.1 Phase One: Negotiating Entry

In Phase One, I wanted to learn how or where I might eventually locate secondary social studies teachers who currently practice culturally responsive teaching and who had some form of culturally responsive training while they were enrolled in a teacher education program (TEP) at a higher education institution (HEI). Therefore, I contacted higher education scholars in the field of social studies to determine if they have had any professional involvement with such teachers. I sought the assistance of these scholars through the College and University Faculty Assembly (CUFA), which is an associated group of the National Council for Social Studies (NCSS). CUFA members are higher education faculty members, graduate students, and others interested in working with social educators. To be a CUFA member, one must also be a member of NCSS. NCSS was founded in 1921 and is the largest association in the United States dedicated to social studies education. According to its website, "Its membership represents K-12 classroom teachers, college and university faculty members, curriculum designers and specialists, social studies supervisors, and leaders in the various disciplines that constitute the social studies" (http://www.socialstudies.org/about.). NCSS developed its first set of widely recognized

national curriculum social studies standards in 1994 and again in 2001. The organization's publications reach more then 25,000 educators worldwide.

Since I am a member of NCSS and CUFA, I posted an inquiry message on the CUFA website's discussion board, where an email was automatically sent to each CUFA member's email address. In the email, I asked if the recipient knew of any teachers who currently practice culturally responsive pedagogy or multicultural education that might be interested in participating in my dissertation research. I did not provide any details as to my conceptual framework for cultural responsive areas of practice at this time. I received responses from three CUFA members who indicated that they worked with secondary social studies teachers they believed practiced culturally responsive pedagogy. Two of these respondents were university teacher educators in secondary social studies education programs, and one was a practicing teacher who has since taken a position at a university as a secondary social studies teacher educator. I had several email conversations with the three CUFA members to inquire as to one, how likely they thought the recommended teachers would participate and two, if these teachers may have learned about culturally responsive pedagogy in their pre-service coursework. Based upon these CUFA members' professional opinions, I initially contacted two groups of teachers to simply inquire as to if they might be interested in taking a survey and partaking in a follow-up interview on culturally responsive teaching practices. The purpose of these communications was not yet to recruit or gain consent, however, I wanted to make some sort of professional communication with those in the field to gain a sense of general interest in order to determine the feasibility of this population sample.

In May of 2013, my CUFA contact person from one urban school district in the northeastern part of the United States suggested that I email a group of teachers whose names

were on the district website. Of the 22 teachers I sent emails to, I received one response from a teacher who said she was interested. I emailed this group a second time and received two responses from people who were interested. My second CUFA contact embedded my email inquiry into his email to a group of teachers in a large southern urban school district. From this communication I received one email from an interested respondent indicating interest. My third CUFA contact person from a different large southern urban area gave me a list of 39 teachers who she believed would likely fit the population I was seeking and two rounds of emails were sent to this group of teachers.

3.3.2 Phase Two: Population Identification: Participant Screening Device (Teacher Attitudes and Practices Inventory)

Once my initial list of potential participants was identified, I proceeded onto Phase Two, which consisted of determining research participants through a screening device that I developed and termed the Teacher Attitudes and Practices Inventory (TAPI). In Phase Two, the 41 total recommended teachers were contacted via email and asked to participate in the Teacher Attitudes and Practices Inventory (See 3.7) to explore their attitudes and practices regarding culturally responsive pedagogy and to inquire as to whether or not they have learned some of these practices in their teacher education coursework. Out of the 41 teachers contacted, 18 participated in the survey. Of the 18 teachers who took the survey, three were selected to participate in Phase Three, which included in-depth interviews as outlined by Seidman (1998) and Rubin and Rubin (2012). These teachers were selected upon: their willingness to be interviewed, their high levels of culturally responsive practices as characterized by my conceptual framework via the survey, indication of pre-service coursework related to culturally

responsive pedagogy and student classroom demographics comprised of a majority of low-income students of color. Also, in the event that practicing teachers had undergone professional development related to race, culture and education during their tenure as teachers, only those in and those who have teaching for less than five years were selected since over time the impact of ongoing professional development may outweigh the impact of their previous TEP coursework.

3.3.3   Phase Three: Participant Interviews

Once the participants were identified, two in-depth interviews (see Appendix B) took place. This provided salient information on the experiences, feelings, and meaning making of participating teachers regarding their life experiences, teacher education program, current practices, and contextual supports and challenges relative to culturally relevant teaching. The first series of in-depth interviews took place face to face with each participant, one of which took place at her the school site. The second series of interviews took place over the phone.

I did not limit participants to White middle class females, even though they are the dominant teaching population (Fuller, 1994; Ukpokodu, 2007). This is due to the fact that much can be learned from culturally responsive practices of individuals regardless of race, gender, or culture. Furthermore, cultural and socioeconomic divides between teachers of color and their students can also significantly impact teaching and learning (Gay, 2000).

3.4   MATERIALS AND INSTRUMENTS

3.4.1   Participant Screening Device: Teacher Attitudes and Practices Inventory

I developed the Teacher Attitudes and Practices Inventory (TAPI) (see Appendix A) as a screening device to select my population and inform the interview protocol. The survey questions are aligned with research questions one through four and inquire as to the selected secondary social studies teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs towards culturally responsive pedagogy, teaching practices specific to culturally responsive pedagogy, and whether or not they partook in pre-service coursework on culturally responsive pedagogy. Based upon their responses, I was able to determine which teachers indicated the highest levels of culturally responsive knowledge, attitudes, and practices and those who teach a majority of low-income student of color. Information from the TAPI was also used to inform the interview with specific participants.

To create the survey, I used my conceptual framework for areas of culturally responsive teacher practices and utilized details as described in the review of the literature to determine subcategories and operationalize culturally relevant practices into question items. Other broad survey categories and accompanying survey questions were based on the theoretical constructs discussed in the literature review, including teachers sociocultural and racial awareness, deficit-theory awareness, and other central assumptions regarding multicultural education. After creating my original matrix, I then reviewed more literature to see if there were any existing surveys used to research teachers' culturally responsive practices and found two from Siwatu (2006). These were the Culturally Responsive Teaching Outcome Expectancy Scale (CRTOE) and Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale (CRTSE).

I used the CRTOE and the CRTSE (Siwatu, 2006) to cross reference the major categories, subcategories, and question items that I had already created. In doing so I found my framework and question items consistent with these two measurement scales. In addition to my own questions, I used seven question items from the CRTSE and six items from the CRTOE survey, since the content of these items were similar to those I had already created, but worded more appropriately than my own original questions. I contacted Dr. Siwatu via email and received his permission to use these questions, which are indicated by a * in Appendix A.

The screening device included 41 content items and 10 items that ask for participant demographics and characteristics of their teaching context. Although responses from the TAPI were used to inform the in-depth interviews, the TAPI was primarily a screening device. Therefore, data analysis of this instrument was limited to mean frequency distributions.

3.4.2   Pilot Study of the Participant Screening Device: Teacher Attitudes and Practices Inventory

To gain insight as to the appropriateness of my protocols and to identify possible issues and with data collection, a pilot study was conducted for both the TAPI screening device and Part One of the interview. The TAPI pilot was completed online via Survey Monkey by three female high school social studies teachers, both who teach in a Mid-Atlantic city. One teaches in a charter school and the other two teach in a highly populated school in a large urban district serving the Mid-Atlantic city. After a general analysis of this data and the specificity of population required by my study, I determined the TAPI would grant me the population desired.

3.4.3   Participant Interviews

The third phase of this study utilized an in-depth interviewing structure as detailed by Seidman (1998) and included two interviews. Open-ended questions for the interviews were developed from the review of the literature and aligned with the four research questions in order to elicit more detailed responses than can be produced from the TAPI. A conversation guide (see Appendix B) for both interviews (Rubin & Rubin, 2012) was designed to generate detailed stories and rich descriptions about the background of the participant, the interrelated phenomenon of current CRP enactment and the participants' teacher education program (TEP), and the contextual supports and barriers to the participants' current enactment of CRP. The first interview consisted of 13 open- ended questions, or main questions. I also used conversational management probes as discussed in Rubin & Rubin (2012) if the participant was having difficulty providing detailed descriptions. These included but were not limited to confirmation probes and elaboration probes that helped confirm and expand my understanding of interviewee experiences. The second interview consisted of both open-ended questions and clarifying questions that I determined after transcribing the first interview.

The first question of the conversational guide included two general questions regarding the life experiences and predispositions of the teacher. As noted by Seidman (1998), a focused life history, particularly when the researcher inquires in the form of "how" questions is crucial because it asks the participant to "construct a range of contextual variables relevant to the topic." (p. 111) The second question asked participants how students' race and culture impacts their teaching of social studies. This question was used to that teachers could discuss what culturally relevant teaching means to them. As Patton (2002) suggests, when asking questions about a phenomenon, the interviewer should first ask what the participants believes the phenomenon to

be and then ask follow-up questions about these descriptions in order to clarify what they actually do and say they do in regards to the phenomenon. This is because the researcher needs to use the language understood by the participants, and this can only be learned by first investigating their frame of reference relative to the phenomenon. In doing so, I was able to ensure information clarity from which I subsequently framed the phenomenon alongside conversation guide. For this study, a common understanding was already somewhat established because the participant was selected based upon their answers to the inventory survey, which was aligned with my conceptual framework. However, culturally relevant teaching has many facets, parts of which might mean different things to different teachers and enactment is dependent upon individual and contextual factors. Therefore, it was necessary to have this initial discussion in order to increase the likelihood that all relative information was included and nothing was misunderstood. This was followed up by questions about participants' relationships with students, families and communities so that I could understand their experiences of the phenomena of CRP as it related to both their teaching practices and my conceptual framework.

Third, I asked participants to discuss their TEP in general terms and subsequently asked them if there were specific courses or experiences in their TEP that helped them think about and learn how to teach low-income students of color. I then asked if or what from their coursework and HEI experience that they draw from or use in their current teaching practices as they relate to teaching low-income students of color. The final questions were regarding what helped them in teaching their low-income students of color and challenges they experience in these practices. A conversational guide for the second interview was also utilized for clarification and elaboration. The second interview helped in the process of sense making because both the participant and I were able to explore and clarify our discussions. It also provided me an

opportunity to review the audiotape prior to Interview Two and explore avenues that I opted not to investigate during the first interview but thought worthy of discussion (Seidman, 1998). These questions were based upon the information gathered during the first interview and specific to that interviewee.

3.4.4 Pilot Study of Interview One

In addition to the pilot of the TAPI, Interview One was conducted with the teacher from the charter school. Questions allowed for detailed elaboration, story-telling and worthwhile follow-up questions or prompts when I found that I needed clarification or more information. One notable insight was the necessity of asking the participant a specific question about their background and life experiences prior to attending their TEP. For the pilot, I phrased the question as, "Can you tell me about what brought you to your teacher education program?" as I was concerned that my original question might be too intrusive. Although I did garner information relevant to background, upon reflection I concluded that asking this question more directly would me with a much broader contextual understanding of her "teaching story" and how it relates to her current CR practices. Therefore, this question was added to my guide. Another lesson learned was that it was valuable to ask questions specific to the interviewees completed TAPI survey during the interview in order to gain more detailed information on said practices and to ask for clarifications.

3.5   DATA COLLECTION

3.5.1   Participant Screening Device: Teacher Attitudes and Practices Inventory

I sent an invitation email to the suggested teachers that described the study, requested their participation, and embedded a link to the inventory survey in the email. The survey was administered via Survey Monkey and data was imported from Survey Monkey into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). In this case, an online survey was necessary since participants do not live in close proximity. Furthermore, it was cost-effective, response times were relatively quick, and data collection and analysis could be automated (Mertens, 2010). I did provide, however, the option for each participant to take the survey inventory and send it through the United States Postal Service with a paid self-addressed return envelope if this is their preference, although all survey participants elected to complete the survey online.

I engaged in a few different measures to help increase the likelihood of response (Mertens, 2010). First, I had already established contact with each of the individuals via the CUFA member who had provided me with their names. Second, I sent the email including the survey from both the CUFA member and me in hopes that were more inclined to take the survey when reminded of the person who had suggested their possible willingness to participate. I also provided an incentive of a $50.00 Visa gift card in an attempt to increase response rates. It was explained to participants that after completion of the survey, each participants name would be placed into a blind drawing of one person to receive the gift card and that he or she would be notified if selected. Finally, I followed up twice with those who did not respond to ask for their participation.

Participants were informed that their participation in the survey served as their consent and that all information regarding the participant, school, district, or any other identifiable information would not be included in any subsequent research or reports. They were also informed that once data was imported from Survey Monkey into SPSS, each person would be assigned a coded a number. At the end of the survey, participants were asked if they were willing to participate a follow-up interview. Those who were willing and fulfilled the other identifying parameters as defined in Section 3.5 were then contacted via email.

3.5.2   Participant Interviews

Interview participants were reminded that all information garnered during the interview process (and in one case site visit) regarding the participant, his or her school, district, or any other identifiable information would not be included in any subsequent research or reports. All three participating teachers provided verbal consent to be audio recorded and all interviews were then transcribed.

After data from the interviews were collected and transcribed, analysis of data followed the processes described by Seidman (1998) and Rubin and Rubin (2012) and included coding, summarizing, sorting (and resorting), weighing and combining. Descriptions are represented in narrative format to provide the necessary detail to portray the phenomena of early life experiences, CRP enactment, experience in higher education programs, and the experience of challenges and supports. Narrative also includes the use of participant stories and vignettes when they provide examples of thematic findings. Similar and divergent themes between teaching practices were explored and are represented, as are discrepancies between the

participants' experience of the phenomena and the conceptual framework, all of which is represented in narrative form.

3.6   DATA ANALYSIS

The screening device was be administered via Survey Monkey and data and imported from Survey Monkey into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).   Descriptive statistics, such as average mean frequencies for each Likert-Scale items, determined those teachers who self-reported the highest levels of engagement of culturally relevant pedagogy. High- implementers of CRP who also indicated that they engaged in some form of culturally relevant teaching during their teacher education coursework and teach a majority of low-income students of color were then selected for interview. Information from these survey questions was used to clarify concepts of pedagogical engagement during the interviews.

After interviews were recorded and transcribed, my engagement with the analysis process followed the models outlined by and Seidman (1998) and Rubin & Rubin (2012) and included the processes of coding, summarizing and sorting (and resorting), weighing and combining. The data analysis process described by both authors is very much alike; therefore combining their work provided a clear path for analysis.

The first step of coding or labeling involved marking the original transcript for what I thought each passage, term or event meant and placing an identifiable notation on it. This phase of reduction is sometimes referred to as horizonalizing, or separating each interview statement into equally important data points or units of the experience (Moustakas, 1994). After breaking the transcript into small units of analysis, I coded or labeled the concepts and themes raised by

the participant, concepts that I specifically asked about, and those that were connected to the literature. At this stage, I also began to identify more nuanced themes, such as differences between what participants said regarding the same issue (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Anything on the transcription that was labeled the same within and then across interviews was placed into an assigned categorical file (Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Seidman, 1998). The identifiable notations within the file made it easier for me to return to the original transcript when necessary, and some excerpts were categorized into more than one file (Seidman, 1998).

After coding or labeling each interview, the next phase of analysis consisted of sorting and summarizing and sorting and comparing my coded data (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Once categorical files were constructed, the content in each file was summarized for similarities and differences, and I began to determine which files were more compelling or of significant interest. During sorting and summarizing, I looked for repetition of an aspect or experience and connected these passages to one another. This process helped me explore common experiences of CRP in the secondary social studies classroom and commonalities between what exactly teachers discussed about their TEP and HEI.

During sorting and comparing, I identified which passages connected to the literature, as well differences or outliers between interviews (Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Seidman, 1998). Because my research also aimed to explore how participants make individual meaning of culturally relevant teaching, which undoubtedly is impacted by their life experiences and particular teaching contexts, I explored outliers or unexpected findings between teachers regarding each of the research questions (Creswell, 2009, Stake, 1995). This was an iterative process that explored teacher participants' practices, TEPs and HEIs, and current teaching contexts, all of which were important lines of inquiry necessary to fully understand how individuals enact CRP

as well as the contextual factors that impact his or her practices. Since each teacher's life experience, TEP, school, and classroom context impacts their perceptions and practice; I noted differences in the constructed realities of each participant regarding these experiences to gain a nuanced understanding of these differences.

The next step was that of weighing and combining, which involved examining how the identified events, concepts and themes related to each other and how these relationships answer my research questions. Connections between themes include explanations, causes, or tensions regarding CRP enactment, elements of TEPs and HEIs, or contextual variations; however I did not enter this process with preconceived notions as to what these connections would be. Finally, I contemplated which of the themes and findings might be applicable to those in a similar setting, as well as how they may or may not be related to my conceptual framework (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

3.7   RESEARCHER POSITIONALITY

As a researcher conducting a qualitative inquiry, it is necessary to reflect upon how my identity and experiences impact my research processes and findings (Patton, 2002). According to McCorkel and Myers (2003) a researcher's positionality can be problematic when those who hold privilege are studying populations or phenomena involving those who are "marginalized on the basis of class, race, and gender." (p. 199) Tillman (2002) argues that it is imperative to consider whether or not the researcher has the cultural knowledge to accurately interpret the experiences of African Americans in the context of phenomenological study. Therefore, a culturally sensitive researcher will "carefully consider the extent of their own cultural

knowledge, cross-race and same-race perspectives and insider and outsider issues related to the research process." (p. 6) Since the aim of my research is to study culturally and racially embedded pedagogy, it is my responsibility to "name my reality" (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995) or openly reflect upon my own cultural and racial ideologies so that my assumptions and motivations are exposed (Milner, 2007).

There are a few aspects of my identity and experiences that seem to have had the most influence on this research, including my experiences as a White secondary social studies teacher of low-income students of color, my position as a White, middle class person (race and socio-economic status), and my own evolving processes regarding racial and cultural consciousness which began after secondary teaching. These aspects of my identity significantly shape how I make meaning of the experiences of my participants. Ways in which I believe these factors most saliently impact my creation of meaning are discussed below.

As I mentioned in the introduction of this paper, I spent seven years as a White teacher of low-income students of color in schools deemed "low performing," and my own emotional burnout caused me to leave teaching and enter graduate school to study Social Analysis of Education. As a secondary teacher, I elected to teach in urban schools, the majority of which were attended by African Americans, because I thought it was strange that I did not know many people of color. I was not colorblind and I did not have a White savior mentality, but I did hold inadvertent deficit notions and was naïve in that I did not know much about African American culture or history, nor inadvertent or institutional racism. For seven years, I learned about my students' cultures and myself. Although it took time for me to understand cultural and individual nuances, I never desired to teach anywhere outside of my urban district. In fact,

developing personal relationships with students and colleagues was my favorite part of teaching, and colleagues (African American and White) often told me that I "was good with the kids."

The relationships I had with my African American administrators and colleagues were mostly positive and sometimes complicated (as they could be with my White administrators). Sometimes I felt disliked because I was White, and this was the first time I recognized my White privilege. I did not like how it felt, but on a basic level I understood why these feelings might have existed. Other African American colleagues and administrators saw me more as an ally and we enjoyed working together with students groups and on school projects. In general, my approach at the time was to work with each person the best I could and while I noted differences, I tried to understand how individuals operated without being too judgmental. While this may seem naïve, this was all I knew how to do.

At graduate school I began to learn about structural oppression, critical consciousness and CRP. This ignited my underlying passion and concern for how teachers are educated to teach in urban settings, what culturally relevant teachers "do," and how they are supported once they are out in the field. My graduate experiences also helped me understand structural inequality and investigate and articulate my own biases and in ways I was not capable of doing when I was a secondary social studies teacher. I discuss all of these aspects of myself, albeit briefly, because my research springs forth form this lens of experience and identity

In regards to class and race, since Ashley and Lauren are both White women and grew up middle-class, I inherently share more in common with how they experience the world around them than I do with Anthony. However, my early life experiences were quite different from those of Ashley. Ashley grew up in an outwardly racist family and community, whereas I did not. My parents were socialist democrats, and racism was acknowledged as something that

other (bad) people did or had. My parents acknowledged and discussed structural racism and its intersection with poverty, but there was also inadvertent racism. The differences between Ashley and me facilitated my desire to explore her current values and insights as to if or to what extent she is operating from a deficit lens or as a White savior.

I seem to have the most in common with Lauren, primarily due to her teaching context. I taught in several "low-performing schools" that were often in some sort of crises in part due to gang involvement and other conflicts often associated with inequity and urban poverty. Her urgency and frustration brought on a visceral response from me. Because I internalized the despair of her teaching context, I felt guilt in discussing her early inadvertent resistance to critical consciousness and other challenges she faces in her classroom. Although necessary, it was at times difficult for me to critically analyze her experiences or teaching choices.

Anthony and I have the least common experiences, since he is an African American male who grew up with familial, financial, and discriminatory challenges that I have not experienced. I have likewise never served in the military. I also realize that I cannot ever know what it is like to be an African American male teacher and have not been judged by parents and colleagues in the ways that he explains in this research. Despite this, I feel I gained a basic understanding of his experiences because we both seemed very comfortable being forthright and detailed throughout our lengthy conversations.

I once held White privilege and power as a former secondary social studies teacher of low-income students of color. Now, I hold this power and privilege as a White teacher educator and a researcher. I acknowledge that what I determine is significant is based upon my multidimensional assumptions about how I view schools, low-income students of color, the

adults that work in schools, and students' communities at large. It is from this viewpoint that my research is brought forth.

Furthermore, one influential factor of my identity during both data gathering and analysis was my experience as a former teacher and current teacher educator. Although I was an outsider to participants' teaching contexts, in most cases I was able to relate to the scenarios they discussed and inquire as to whether or not my own experiences were similar or different to the particular subject being discussed. In this way, my research included elements of extended case study (Burawoy, 1998) in that my experiences as a former urban teacher and current teacher educator allowed for dialogue with participants that created intersubjective situational knowledge of the phenomenon studied. My experience as a teacher educator also informed data analysis and assertions. Because of this, I engaged in in member checking by sending each participant their individual chapter and their section of Chapter Eight in which I wrote about our discussions of their teacher education program (TEP). By doing so, interviewees were given the opportunity to determine if what I deemed significant seemed that way to him or her (Seidman, 1998) and to confirm or disconfirm my assertions (Stake, 1995). The changes requested by participants were minor (not thematic in nature) and attended to.

3.8   METHODOLOGICAL ASSUMPTIONS

This study has several methodological assumptions. First, I am assuming that all of the participants in each of the phases are providing honest and forthright information regarding his or her attitudes, perspectives, and enactment of culturally relevant practices, the nature of their teacher education and other graduate programs, their current teaching contexts, and life histories.

Thus it is also assumed that the teacher's perception of his or her beliefs and experiences is itself worth knowing.

Secondly, the case size does not make my study generalizable to the overall population of secondary social studies teachers engaged in culturally relevant teaching. It does however; elicit the particularization of the case (Stake, 1995). My study also attempts to adhere to the qualitative standards of dependability and authenticity that lead to transferability, or the likelihood that similar teachers in similar contexts will experience the phenomenon in many of the same ways (Patton, 2002). Dependability on the part of the researcher is contingent upon systematic processes that are methodically followed during data gathering and analysis and authenticity in part requires reflexivity on the part of the researcher (Patton 2002). These processes are detailed Section 3.7. As the sole researcher, it is assumed that I engaged in dependable and authentic.

To ensure the above elements on the part of the participant, the screening device and conversation structure afforded me the opportunity to ask participants to reflect and make meaning of their survey answers as well as our first conversation. Doing so allowed me to check for internal consistency for each participant, which makes the dependability and authenticity of the interviewees' perceptions and understanding of their own experiences likely (Seidman, 1998). I also conducted member checking (Mertens, 2010; Stake, 1995) to help ensure accuracy of my main assertions.

3.9   LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS

There are several limitations in this study that warrant discussion. Foremost, I acknowledge the fact that this study utilizes an interpretivist methodology to study a pedagogy that is in large part based upon critical, multicultural, emancipatory, and transformative paradigms. Although it is important to understand the constructed realities of teachers' learning and engagement of culturally responsive teaching, it is appropriate for a study on this type of pedagogy to also include an emancipatory approach to methodology by including the viewpoints of students, parents, and/or neighborhood and community. Moreover, I am a White middle- class female who has been given considerable privilege simply because of my race, class, and education. In essence, I hold the exact power that culturally relevant teaching seeks to equalize, and by not using the voices of low-income students, parents, and communities of color, I risk imposing my interpretations of theory and research upon low-income people of color instead of coming to understand the phenomenon with them.

A second limitation is relative to data collection is that I am not observing inside the actual classrooms themselves. While certainly this would add to richness of information as to what the culturally relevant pedagogy of social studies teachers actually looks like, this was not a feasible avenue available for me during this stage of research. This limitation was addressed by trying to get as close to the phenomenon as possible by conducting two in-depth interviews for each participant, as well as engaging participants in member checking (Mertens, 2010).

This study is limited to those teachers who first engaged in coursework related to culturally relevant teaching in their TEP. Thus it does not include teachers engaging in this type practice who first learned about it as an in-service teacher during professional development, nor does it include teachers who received their certification through alternative programs outside of a

higher education institution. Although I am certain that many such teachers engage in culturally relevant teaching practices, the purpose of this study is to focus deeply upon what it is teachers learn during their TEP that is utilized.

Finally, although I duly note the significance of the intersectionality between class, race, and culture, gender, and sexual orientation, analysis of gender and sexual orientation relative to teaching practices is not focused upon in this study unless they are specific focal points discussed by the participant.

3.9.1   Ethical Assurances

As the sole researcher of this study, it was essential for me to "respect the rights, needs, values, and desires of the informant." (Creswell, 2009, p. 198) Since I gathered information regarding teacher participants' attitudes, beliefs, and experiences through an initial screening device and interviews, it was my professional duty to ensure each participant that no identifying information would be given during any phase of my research, including determining my population, data gathering, collection and analysis, and reporting. By providing the assurance of anonymity, I hope participants were forthright and sincere with their information. As such, each prospective participant in Phase One: Negotiating Entry was provided essential information as to the objectives of the study and it was made clear that their completion of the survey served as their consent to participate. It was at this time that they were asked if they were willing to be interviewed either at their school site or via Skype.

Once they agreed to participate, the following measures took place upon the commencement of the interview. First, I clearly explained the objectives of the study and how the interviews and possible subsequent document analysis during the interviews would help me

reach the objectives of the study (Creswell, 2009). Next, I read a consent script aloud to ask his or her permission to be audio or video recorded during the one-on one interviews. At this time, participants were reminded that all data would remain strictly anonymous and any identifying information about them, their students, school, or district would not be used in any reporting although pseudonyms may be used (Mertens, 2010). During all phases of the research, the audio recordings and transcriptions of the interviews were located in a secure, locked location within the researcher's office. Following completion of the written findings that emerge from this study, all inventory/survey data, transcripts and data collected from the site visits will be destroyed.

Finally, it was my ethical responsibility to build the most equitable relationship possible between the teacher participants and me, especially since I was exploring each person's life histories and experiences with a pedagogy that seeks to ameliorate societal equities. According to Seidman (1998), building a rapport with each participant first required my awareness of how an individual's identity is impacted by his or her experiences with, race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, and status and how these interact with one's sense of power. Because the interviewing relationship consists of power differences, such as who has control over the conversation, it was incumbent upon me to recognize how these issues might affect me while being sensitive to how they may impact the teacher participant. Thus, it was important that I entered the relationship with humility and not use potential power differences to my advantage.

Building a relationship that is sensitive and nonjudgmental is recognized as a critical element of responsive (Rubin & Rubin, 2012) interviewing. It requires listening and asking questions versus making assumptions as well as respecting and valuing what is being said. I am confident that that my experiences as a teacher have honed my ability to listen without judgment

and that my passion for teaching is reflective of a genuine respect for others that was hopefully evident to participants during the interview process. I am also confident that both my teaching and interviewing skills while an evaluator increased the likelihood that I was be able to ask relevant questions without making broad assumptions.

4.0   ANTHONY SMITH

"I'm always evaluating myself. I'm always, you know reflecting. And any time I'm teaching history and I don't make those types of [cultural] connections, they really struggle."

This chapter provides both the results and analysis of my conversations with Anthony and consists of seven major sections. The first of these describes Anthony's life experiences leading up to his teacher education program (TEP) at what will be referred to from this point forward as State University or State U. Section two outlines the context of his school and classroom, and section three provides details about Anthony's culturally relevant classroom practices. Section four highlights how Anthony builds relationships with students and helps them negotiate mainstream society, and section five provides insight as to how he uses his knowledge of family and communities to support parental involvement and his expectations for students. The final section discusses what Anthony finds supportive and challenging to his culturally relevant teaching. Anthony's perceptions of his TEP are discussed in Chapter Seven.

4.1   ANTHONY: LIFE EXPERIENCES PRIOR TO ATTENDING STATE U

Anthony is an African American male in his thirties who spent the first 18 years of his life in a city of approximately 125,000 people in Greenfield State. He had three siblings growing up, although one has since passed away. Anthony grew up in low-income housing and describes his family experiences as "very troubled" and full of conflict, particularly between his mother and father.   He further explained that his father often moved in and out of the home. While discussing his youth, Anthony immediately noted how the challenges he faced affected his education and his current role as a teacher: "Me and my teachers weren't really prepared for it, so it kind of shapes how I deal with my students today." Despite his challenges, Anthony was enrolled in ROTC and able to graduate from high school when he was 18 and left for the United States Marine Corps three days after graduation.

Anthony remained in the Marine Corps for eight years, but the birth of his daughter and frequent deployments caused him to leave the Marines and enroll in State U, where he majored in political science and history. Although originally he wanted to be a lawyer, Anthony recalled a conversation with a friend during his second year of undergraduate school in which she inquired: "You know before, you used to always talk about being a teacher, what happened with that?" For Anthony, this was "life changing," and soon after he passed the state certification exams for social studies and began substitute teaching in one of the counties of Metropolis. It was during this time that he went to a lecture by Marion Wright at State U and learned about its Master's in Arts in Teaching (MAT) program that focused upon urban education and research. Anthony describes his thoughts after attending a subsequent informational meeting on the program, in which he was told he would likely be placed in an urban school:

So when she said that, I was like, "Ok this is really the program I want to be, in." Cause like I said when I was younger, I felt like a lot of things I went through. Yes I had my parents, but I struggled in school a lot, because I don't feel like the teachers were really into meeting me where I was at. And I'm not making excuses, because I did make bad choices also. But I didn't have a whole lot of people that were really adjusting to the things I was going through, and I was going through a lot that would have had an impact, but I don't really remember having a conversation with any one about those things, which is interesting you know.

Anthony's life experiences have significantly influenced his attitudes towards education and how he engages in CRP.

4.2   ANTHONY: GENERAL TEACHING CONTEXT

Anthony teaches eighth grade Greenfield State Studies at a charter school that serves grades six through eight in the city of Metropolis. He was hired after he completed his yearlong pre-service teaching placement at the same school and has since been teaching there for 3 years. Prior to being converted to a charter school, "Rockville Middle School", was a public school in the Metropolis School District. The school is an International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Programme School (MYP). IB schools offer programs in public and private schools around the world and encourage the development of students' cultural and national identity as well as international-mindedness (International Baccalaureate, n.d). The MYP program is specifically for students aged 11-16. Rockville Middle School is also a Title I focus school (National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES], n.d), meaning that the State Educational Agency (SEA) has

identified it as either having the largest in school gaps between the highest achieving and lowest achieving subgroup(s) or having low achievement in its subgroup(s), either of which is determined over a course of several years by proficiency on state assessments (United States Department of Education, n.d).

In the 2011-12 school year, Rockville had a total of 912 students, 56% of which pay free or reduced lunch prices (NCES, n.d). Of the 912 students, 42% are Hispanic, 29% are White, 23% are Black, 4% are Multiracial, and 2% are Asian/Pacific Islander (NCES, n.d). This is similar to Anthony's 2014 description of the schools' racial demographics in which he estimated the ethnic makeup of this students to be about 40% Hispanic, 30% African American, and 30% White. According to Anthony, admission is by attendance zone and lottery, which means that for some students this is their neighborhood school, while others chose to attend from other parts of the city. Anthony "loves" his school, because "We don't select our students. We have an attendance zone just like any other school."

Anthony describes that his students are diverse in terms of SES and that he has students who are children of millionaire professional athletes and students living in poverty. His sense is that most of the upper class students are African American, most of the lower class students are primarily African American or Hispanic, and his middle class students are racially diverse. When Anthony was hired he was the only African American teacher in the building, and he notes that although several African American teachers have been hired since then, there are still no Hispanic teachers in his school.

On several occasions, Anthony and I discussed the school's governance board, which is comprised of educators, including him, and parents. He sees the board as an important asset to the school, because "The community gets a big voice with what goes on in the school." He does

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express concerns that the board does not represent the demographics of the school, which is something that he and the other educators on the board have discussed.

Anthony teaches five general education classes as opposed to gifted and talented students, and is the leader of his social studies content team. According to Anthony, the Greenfield State Studies course is essentially a history of the state with some focus upon how the state's history is relative to the history of the United States. It aligns to the Greenfield State standards and includes a topical curriculum map that can be found on the Greenfield State website. Although there is a textbook for the course, Anthony elects not to use it.

4.3   ANTHONY: TEACHING PRACTICES

Throughout our conversations, it was quite obvious that Anthony is a reflective person and educator. I was not surprised when he told me that he is referred to "the Team Dad" by faculty and students. I too experienced him as open and friendly, but serious about his students' education and the field of education in general. Anthony's culturally relevant mindset has been well developed, according to him due to his own life experiences and his TEP at State U. Anthony regularly contemplates what he does and does not apply from his TEP to his social studies pedagogy. The first of these practices is how Anthony tries to bring in multiple perspectives relative to the Greenfield State History curriculum.

4.3.1   Using Multiple Perspectives to Connect Students to the Greenfield State Curriculum

Anthony believes it is important for students in a diverse school such as his to understand that we all have contributed to history in different ways.   Since he finds that the Greenfield State Curriculum does not include many women or people of color, Anthony uses primary source documents and informational texts to provide students with a more diverse array of perspectives as well as an opportunity to build their skills of dissecting and discussing different writing genres.   For example, he will include the writings of free African Americans living in the north during slavery and the diaries of enslaved African American women.   He also will openly discuss the roles that women and people of color have contributed to history, for instance the role of African American women in the Civil Rights Movement:

> I always bring up the fact that while there were a lot of African Americans marching, it was the women in the background that were really pushing them. When Blacks first got the vote, you know it was Black women that made them not sell it. You know things like that. So I feel like I've got to bring those things in so they have a holistic understanding of history.

Anthony contends that it is quite difficult to find supplemental readings from the perspectives of Latinos, thus he has to do quite a bit of research to locate and include readings from this perspective, particularly in relation to Greenfield. Despite the fact that Anthony strives to provide his students with multiple perspectives, it was not until after his first year of teaching that he realized he was not making cultural connections to the curriculum.   For example, although he might have *stated* that there were African Americans and Hispanics involved in the Civil War, these topics were merely mentioned and not further read about or explored. Now he tries to engage his students in more extensive readings and developed classroom conversations.

Similarly, it was also not until after his first year that he realized he did not talk much about women. In response, he created a women's history project in his second year. In all of these ways, Anthony tries to help his students realize that there were other people who played a role in history, even though they are not included in Greenfield Studies standards.

Anthony admits that he feels more comfortable bringing in multiple perspectives in the classes where he has only one or two White students. We discussed how in the classes where there is an evenly divided racial balance, he feels he has to be very careful not to come across as if he is trying to push a Black agenda:

> Those thoughts will come into mind you know. I don't want anybody to think I have some agenda where I'm trying to make kids feel horrible about themselves, because I've been there, so I think about those things when I'm teaching. I don't want anyone to feel out of place or anyone to feel uncomfortable. So that has a lot to do with how I shape things and how I present it in class. I'm very, very careful. Those things really shape things in class.

Anthony does not want his focus on multiple perspectives to make his any of his students feel uncomfortable and does not want his White students to experience White guilt. However, he does not shy away from including resources and having conversations about the views of women and people of color, he is simply careful and reflective about how he approaches it with his students. Perhaps an even more looming challenge for Anthony is that in order to supplement the Greenfield State Curriculum with multiple perspectives, he has to convince some members of his social studies content team that the additional readings fulfill the requirement of the school's focus on literacy and interacting with text. This is because at times there is resistance to bringing in these perspectives. This poses a challenge for Anthony, because he is committed to this aspect

of his teaching, yet he enjoys being part of a team and acknowledges the importance of being a team player in his school context. My sense in talking to Anthony is that by bringing in multiple perspectives, he may be viewed as the African American, or "other" who is not adhering to the White mainstream status quo seemingly embedded in the Greenfield State Studies and what is more comfortable for, if not the priority of, some of his social studies colleagues. As both a leader in his school and a culturally relevant practitioner, this creates a difficult balancing act, which I discuss further in Section 4.

Anthony's focus on multiple perspectives is consistent with the review of the literature on CRP as it is student-centered and he specifically teaches about the contributions of people of color to social studies, in this case Greenfield State Studies. Anthony understands that his students' culture provides the framework from which they make meaning of the current world around them (Gay, 2010) and likewise how they interpret and analyze history. Similar to Martell (2013), Anthony finds that his are students much more engaged when they are given the opportunity to see themselves in the Greenfield State Studies curriculum and discover how their personal identities relate to the larger field of U.S. history. He contends that they in fact struggle with the curriculum when he does not purposefully include these connections.

Although Anthony uses culture as a focal point of his approach to teaching Greenfield Studies, he does not have his students critically examine the curriculum to determine if it reinforces negative cultural stereotypes. One reason for this might be his overarching concern of pushing a Black agenda and perhaps this would be going to far, in other words make others uncomfortable. Other reasons for this may be more simplistic, such as the perceived lack of time to go into such activities or the fact that he does not use the curriculum in the first place.

Regardless, Anthony descriptions of his teaching involve other aspects of CRP. The first of these is what he describes as individual students "trajectories."

4.3.2 "The Trajectory"

Anthony often refers to his students' growth in developing social studies skills and learning content knowledge in terms of a very purposeful "trajectory." This means that he determines their initial knowledge and skill levels and uses modeling and scaffolding throughout the year to lead them up a growth trajectory. He sets the end of the trajectory for what he believes the student should be able to accomplish, whether gaining the ability to read at a certain levels or learning particular skills, such as interpreting and analyzing primary source documents through Document-Based Questions (DBQs). He explains that do this he must understand "where they are at" and make it relevant to them. He describes this process relative to the DBQs:

> A lot of them struggled on the first one where we looked at our primary source documents and we did the in- class essay. They struggle but I know that we're going to do it again, and I know that where they struggled this time their gonna learn that "Oh if I would have just simply done this, my essay would have been so much better." The bar has to be here [motions upward]. And like I said, my kids can do the same thing my TAK [gifted] kids can do, but it's all about how I'm gonna get them on that trajectory. If I want them here, I need to build them to that. So initially, I can't give them a document-based question where we have five primary source documents. I need to walk them through step by step. Something as simple as modeling. [State U professor] said this all the time. Any time I taught a lesson when the kids just couldn't do it. The first question was at any point did I model what I wanted? And many times that's what it comes back

to. I didn't set my expectations. I didn't set them up for success. I didn't scaffold. I didn't model. And some teachers struggle with modeling, because [they say] well, "I'm already showing them how to do it." Well, yea you're gonna show them how to do it this time for Unit 1 and by Unit 5 they should be able to do it. So the bar has to be here. And I understand it's hard work, its really hard. You know to get them to the point where they're comfortable with the rigor of that type of work. But, its' still a work in progress, like I said, we've got that trajectory.

Anthony's discussion of how he models and then scaffolds his students work with DBQ's is consistent with the review of the literature in that he uses his students' existing frame of reference and then works with them on their interpretation and analysis skills over an extended period of time. After modeling and scaffolding, students work in the ZPD (Vygotsky, 1978) until eventually they are able to do the work independently. Anthony explains that this process not only requires planning out the steps of students' trajectories but also reviewing when necessary in order to move them forward. Although this particular example does not give insight as to how he border crosses between cultural frames of reference as discussed in my review of the literature (Gonzalez et al., 2004; Grant & Sleeter, 2010; Phelan, Davidson, & Cao, 1991), it does adhere to constructivist principles, or how the creation of new knowledge is based on a person's previous frames of reference. Social studies educators have long argued whether or not constructivism the most effective approach to teaching social studies and perhaps even the ultimate purpose of the social sciences (Brooks & Brooks, 1999). The fact that CRP takes into account one's cultural frame of reference signifies its alignment with general constructivist thought. Thus by adhering to these principals, Anthony is in fact being responsive to his students needs and teaching them based upon what he understands these needs to be. Furthermore, as discussed later in this

section, Anthony's survey responses do indicate that he "Often" uses student's funds of knowledge in his teaching, although this scenario does not portray this particular aspect.

In addition to social studies skill building, Anthony also talked about his students' content knowledge trajectories. He notes that their lack of background information makes it difficult for students to construct and initial connection to the material, which in turn makes it harder for them to develop an understanding of broader historical events or concepts. He gives the example of when he was discussing the Missouri Compromise, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and the Compromise of 1850:

> And, you know, it's hard to just get right to it because I have to pull up a map and I have to explain exactly where these states are, exactly where these territories are. Because if I don't then they're going to be lost. And that's just something that simply takes time because when I first made the flip chart that I use, it took me about three hours to make that flip chart. And then… It's crazy. I'm talking about spending an hour looking for a picture because I know if I don't show a map that represents exactly what I need us to understand, then they won't comprehend it, you know? So the first year I taught this, when I explained to them that the Kansas-Nebraska Act threw the Missouri Compromise out the door, I couldn't get them to conceptualize any of it until I put it on the map. You know, but I had to find the perfect map to explain it, so it's little things like that.

At first glance, it might seem that Anthony is merely acknowledging the deficits of his students by commenting on what it is that they do not know, however this passage speaks to his willingness to use their strengths, in this case their visual skills, to engage them at the point of their frame of reference to help build their comprehension of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Considering multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1993), or identifying the modes in which individual

students learn best, is recognized in constructivist- oriented social studies education curriculum (Teachers Curriculum Institute, 2010). It also aligns with the literature discussed on ELL's who often struggle with background information in U.S. and state history courses (Cruz & Thorton, 2009; Short, 1994, Short & Fitzsimmons). Once again, although this approach does not directly involve learning about using funds of knowledge from students' homes and communities, it does signify a strengths-based approach to teaching, which as described in the review of the literature, is a central component of culturally relevant teaching (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2010).

I did inquire, however as to why Anthony answered "Sometimes" for the items, "I specifically use the knowledge I have of my students' cultural backgrounds when I teach them new concepts or skills." "I use examples that are familiar to students from diverse cultural backgrounds," and "I incorporate a variety of modes of instruction to help build bridges between my students' culture and mine." Anthony responded that he does these things, it, but not as often as he would like to:

> I do it, but not as often as I want to. Where as I personally feel like from my experience here at State U, I feel like I should try to do. I feel like every unit I need to be able to do that, but I haven't gotten to that point yet. I try to bring it in as much as I can, but I still don't feel like I'm totally there yet. Because I'm now at the point where I really understand the curriculum, really understand what the kids really need to know. And now I'm like, ok I got this down pat, what else can I bring in now? So I think that was my thought process right there [on the survey].

Anthony's comments about his survey responses reveal a few points worth noting and are further discussed subsequent sections of this chapter. First, using funds of knowledge in social studies,

for Anthony is an ongoing process that requires fluid development of both his knowledge of students' culture and the social studies curriculum he has been hired to teach. Thus Anthony is constantly developing and redeveloping culturally relevant practices. As Anthony and I discussed, this is challenging for him, since he has three distinct cultural groups in most of his classes. As discussed in Section 4.4, building the relationships necessary to understand the culture of students is pertinent, but takes time and effort. Finally, the above passage indicates that his experience at State U directly influences how he Anthony views his teaching and how he prioritizes it (see Chapter Seven).

In terms of his students growth trajectories, we see that developing his students' skills and content knowledge requires quite a bit of preparatory research in that Anthony needs to get to know his students strengths and frames of reference as well as locate the exact resources he believes will help them conceptualize the content or learn the desired skill. This requires a tremendous amount of patience and also speaks to the high expectations Anthony holds for both himself and his students. One way in which Anthony conveys his high expectations for students is by using positive talk.

4.3.3   Positive Talk: A Vehicle to Change Mindsets

In part because of his own life experiences, Anthony views positive talk as an essential element of his teaching and works to instill the belief in his students that they "can do it." As he explains:

> You know, like I said when I look back and I realize what I didn't get and how I   could
>
> have turned out. It kinda scares me. When I look back and I see people who I've known
>
> when I was in middle school or high school and where they are in life, it makes me

realize that at some point, everyone needs someone in their life that can tell them, "You can do it." And it sounds kind of hokey, but I didn't really have that. Actually the only person that really pushed me was when I was in ROTC in high school. And that's what let me go on to the Marine Corps right there. But looking back at my educational experience, looking back at the struggles that I've had in life, just like with my parents and everything, I could have easily been one of those kids that slipped through the cracks. Things just happened to work out for me. And I just see it all the time and you know sometimes I may carry it too much in all honesty, because it's hard sometimes when I see a kid that has completely given up. And sometimes I'm like, "You know, I've gotta move the masses and I don't how much more [time he can spend with one student]. But than that next day, I'm like no, I can't give up on you, you're gonna get it one way or another" And I look at my kids and they go through so much, you know. (Pause) And some of them, you can just tell, like they haven't given up, but they don't understand how much they still have in front of them. They're just going through the motions. They don't realize that there is so much out there, there is so much more for you, and you CAN [emphasis added], but you gotta do it [the work].

Anthony shows high levels of commitment to helping his students learn and grow academically. This commitment comes from his reflections upon how different his life might have been if he did not have an adult figure in high school that encouraged him and pushed him to do well. Because of this experience, it is important for Anthony to be a teacher that expresses his belief in students' abilities. In this way, Anthony's priorities allow him to work in the main component of CRP in that he is a caring person and uses positive talk to build students' confidence:

I want my kids to go to [the IB high school] and feel like they can do it with any other student their too. Like "Yea, you want to take an AP class, I'm going to give you some things that can help you. I'm going to teach you to that level. And you will at least feel comfortable making an attempt at it." And I also bring in a lot of positive talk. There's a whole lot that has to go behind it and you have to make them feel like they can do things, you know. It's it has to be a whole part of your program. Every part of it has to be about elevating your students. Understanding where they're at, understanding where they've been. They haven't been challenged in many cases. Just the simple things, you know, I feel obligated to do my best at that point and anywhere I can.

This description of positive talk involves Anthony understanding where his students "are at" and challenging them, yet providing them with the support they need to meet these challenges. This priority aligns with the literature discussed regarding the first pillar, or main component of CRP discussed in the review of the literature (see Section 2.4.1) that describes culturally relevant teachers as "demanding but facilitative, supportive and accessible both personally and professionally" (Gay, 2010, p. 56). Both of the above passages show Anthony's desire to elevate his students, which is matched by the high expectations he holds for himself and his student. Such high expectations are met with challenges, however. As he indicates in the second passage above, Anthony contends that to be effectual, high levels of support and high expectations need to permeate the thoughts and actions of other teachers in his school. As discussed in Section 4.6, however, this is not always the case. In the next section, I discuss two more classroom practices of Anthony's that he and I discussed, collaborative grouping and using test assessments to inform instruction.

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4.3.4   Other Classroom Practices

Anthony has also found collaborative grouping to be an effective pedagogical strategy in his classroom, particularly for his English Language Learners (ELLs). He explains that some of his ELL students have just moved to the county where others have been living in the Unites States for a couple of years. Thus he talks to their English as a Second Language (ESOL) teacher quite frequently to make sure he understands the students' English language and overall academic levels and "how much of a challenge they are willing to meet." Some students have already been grouped together for a couple of years by the time Anthony has them in eighth grade, and because these students are used to working together and helping one another, he begins the year by placing them in the same group. He furthers that this year, as the year progressed, he noticed a student who "was carrying the other ones" in her group. Therefore, he moved her into a group of higher-level students:

> I pulled her out, put her in a different group with some kids that had personalities that are very warming, who are very welcoming, patient. They're going to converse with her. And I can see her growth right there. It's really interesting because her test scores are going up now because I pulled her away from that group and I'm stretching her a little bit where she's not, you know, so focused on trying to pull everyone up. Now she's being challenged a little bit with her group. She's seeing things a little different.

Anthony also explains that he adheres to one of the key aspects of collaborative grouping (also referred to as cooperative learning), which is making sure that each group member has a clear and meaningful role, each of which includes very specific tasks (Bower & Lobdell, 2005; Tomlinson, 1999). He admits that this requires a lot of planning on his part because he must determine the tasks for each role. As discussed in the review of the literature, when planning the

group activities, he must also consider students' cultural frames of reference, including but not limited to their modes of communication, understanding and learning.

Collaborative grouping is one means of differentiating the learning process and as indicated in the literature review, when students in the group are given equally respectful activities they are likely to value their own learning process (Tomlinson, 1999). Also discussed in the literature review is the idea that working on meaningful activities in a group helps students build relationships and learn how to take responsibility for one another's learning while engaging in civil discourse (Banks 2007; Grant & Sleeter, 2011). Therefore collaborative grouping, when planned carefully, not only helps students learn social studies content (Bower & Lobdell, 2005) but also is an authentic way to develop and maintain a caring and relationship-based classroom.

Anthony's description of his ELL group also aligns with the literature. As discussed in Section 2.5.1, cooperative learning is known to be an effective learning approach for ELL's that fosters bilingual skills in social studies classrooms (Cruz & Thorton, 2009). ELL students working with other ELL's are given the opportunity to develop higher order thinking skills as they listen an communicate their thoughts to one another, which would not be the case in a teacher-focused classroom spoken in English. When students are moved into groups whose native language is English, they are then given the opportunity to engage in collaborative verbal interaction to varying degrees (Cruz & Thorton, 2009). Anthony was quite pleased with the female student's growth when he moved her to a more challenging group. This shows both his awareness of students needs and his willingness to keep all students moving up each of their trajectories.

Yet another responsive practice of Anthony's is how he uses test scores to inform his unit planning and his instruction. He discussed why it is essential to do so as well has his frustration with other teachers in his school that do not view it as important. As he described:

I know this is another debate as far as what scores measure, but it's the reality of where we're at and they do have some validity behind them. If you have a subgroup lagging behind, you have to go into the classroom with a conscious effort: "My Hispanic students are struggling in this area. I need to do something for them to address their need." And some teachers feel "Well, you know. I'm just gonna deal with everybody," but its like no, not everybody's struggling, *this* [emphasis added] group is struggling, you can't do everything to address everyone, but when your making your unit plan, you've got to take that into account, "How am I going to bring everyone to this level of mastery?" And it's hard for people to have that conversation.

This scenario shows that Anthony considers what specific groups, in this case his ELL students, need in his classroom. As Short (1991) contends, this is particularly difficult for teachers because they need to determine if a student has not mastered the content or if the language barrier is impeding the students' ability to learn the content. For Anthony, the test scores show a discontinuity that he knows needs to be explored and acted upon. While he finds it important, he claims that not all of the teachers in his building are willing to address such specific needs. Perhaps this is because they do not have the knowledge or skills necessary to engage in this practice, or they do not feel they have the time and energy required to address them. Whatever the reason, the fact that not all teachers share these same priorities is a significant challenge to Anthony's culturally relevant practices (see Section 4.6). It is also of note that using test scores to inform his planning and instruction is a practice he attributes to learning in his teacher

education program at State U, a relationship discussed in Section 4.5.   First however, I review a few more elements of Anthony's culturally relevant teaching, which include building relationships with his students and helping them negotiate mainstream society.

4.4   ANTHONY: BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AND HELPING STUDENTS NEGOTIATE MAINSTREAM SOCIETY

Described below, the following scenarios resulted from my asking him how helps them in negotiating mainstream society.   This, as well as building respectful relationships with and among his students, was a major theme surrounding Anthony's practices:

> T: How do you help your students of color negotiate mainstream society?
>
> A: That's a challenge. I have a group of girls on our team. And when we come back from break, they are *loud*, just super *loud* [emphasis added].   But understanding culture.   Loud talk is a part of African American culture. But having those conversations like, "Ladies, do you realize how loud you are? Is anyone else screaming like that?"
>
> T: Is that insulting to them?
>
> A: I know two were offended by it. And I think it makes it easier for me because I'm Black. And to be honest, I didn't care that they were offended, because if you act a certain way, whether you like it or not, whether it's right or   wrong, people will label you a certain way. And they have to understand that. And you know I have one on one conversation sometimes, where I'm trying to help them understand that you can't put yourself in that situation where you're singling

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yourself out. And once again, I can have that conversation easy being a Black male, but there are times where I will address my entire class and this is how I do it: I'll say "What are some things that people say about students your age, teenagers your age? What are some stereotypes people have about you?" And they'll start naming them: "Oh we don't' take life serious and all we do is play video games," and so we'll go through the list. And after that I'll tell them: "I'll tell you one thing about a stereotype. When people stereotype they're saying that this is how *this* group is, this is how *these* [emphasis added] individuals are and if there is one exception to the rule, than it makes the entire thing untrue." And we'll have that conversation. But I'll tell them at the same time, I know we live in a society where sometimes we'll say "I don't care what people think about me," but you have to understand that what people think about you is very important, and I'll put it on me. "If I came to class with a gold necklace on, you know, I use slang in every lesson, my pants were sagging, what would you think about me?" And I always throw a joke in there. I try to use a lot of humor. And I tell them: "You have to be very careful how you present yourself – very careful. Its' not just about – some of my kids call me the Team Dad, because I'm always talking to them about certain things.

This description demonstrates how Anthony engages his students in individual and group conversations that address human difference, stereotype awareness, and conflict. He wants his students to realize that although stereotypes are inaccurate and unfair, members of society will often judge them based upon these stereotypes. This scenario shows how complex it can be to help students of color negotiate mainstream society while not stripping them of their identity or in this case, inadvertently forcing African American women to adopt an identity in which they are "silenced" (Fordham, 2000). Since the institution of school is Euro-American and

patriarchal, White middle class femaleness is the gendered norm, therefore Fordham (2000) finds that to be academically successful, African American women need to either silence themselves and fade into the background to "conceal their female voice" (p. 338) or imitate the voice, thinking, speech, and writing patterns of White males (Fordham, 2000). In this way, African American females must "pass" for something they are not, either a White American female or a White American male, in order to succeed in school.

Fordham (2000) explains what a painful socialization process this is for African American females, which is part of the reason I asked Anthony if they were offended by his comments. Anthony's initial response to my asking him about teaching his students how to negotiate mainstream society is that it's a challenge. As I explain throughout this chapter, Anthony is aware of the delicate balance of teaching his students of color this skill without shaming or humiliating them in the process. His experience as an adult Black male in the military, university and now in the institution of school means that he has personally had to strike this balance, which may put him in a more empathetic position than a White person. As a male however, he does represent the ongoing patriarchal structure of schooling (Fordham, 2000). Recall also in Chapter Two that Manfra (2009) found that one teacher realized that what she perceived as her African American students as talking rudely and out of turn was actually a difference in communication styles that she eventually used as a pedagogical approach. As further discussed in Chapter Eight, Anthony's scenario above seems indicative of a broader issue as to where the line is drawn between what consists of helping students of color negotiate mainstream society and what is considered stripping a person of their cultured identity.   In addition to what negotiating mainstream society means, another question to ask is who decides. Certainly this is often at the individual discretion of the teacher, which makes critical

consciousness-raising as well as culturally relevant approaches essential for TEP to address (see Chapter Eight).

In the following excerpt, Anthony describes a situation in which he felt he needed to teach his students about respecting one another. For Anthony, this instance also relates to teaching them how to negotiate mainstream society:

> Like one kid, little boy was walking out of the class and he grabbed a little girls bun and he squeezed it, and I told him "Don't. Touch. Her." And he's like "What you talking [about]" and I'm like "No, you keep your hands to yourself. That's not how we're going to joke." And I had a conversation with her as well: "Look, you… [Gestures around his body] 'Boundary. Don't touch me ever, for whatever reason.' As a young lady you have to set up that boundary with young men." So I'm always trying to have one on one conversation with them so they understand that it's important how you present yourself to people, it's really important, especially as minorities. And one thing I was thinking about throughout this entire discussion is that it doesn't make it easier because I am Black. I think it does, but I also know teachers that are not minorities, who can still [do it]. And it really comes down to trust.

In this passage, Anthony uses circumstance to teach his students about the importance of setting physical boundaries. Anthony's intention is to help them identify the behavior, explain why he holds these expectations for students, and raise their stereotype awareness, as opposed to simply admonishing them or punishing them without explanation. As discussed in the review of the literature, Grant and Sleeter (2011) pose that culturally relevant teachers use opportunities like these to create a community of learners instead of using a system of rewards and punishment that will likely result in students simply withdrawing from engagement or acting out. Conversations

such as this and the others described above are an important component of community building and working towards educational equity because it is through this awareness that Anthony helps students learn how to negotiate mainstream society (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2010). Unfortunately, we don't know the extent to which students partook in the exchange or if the conversation was more authoritative in nature, in which case would not be a characteristic of a community oriented classroom. As evidenced later in this section, however, we see that Anthony does work to instill the value of trust and respect with and among his students. Also, when he helps his students develop the skills needed to negotiate mainstream educational society, it is not at the expense of cultural assimilation or personal humiliation (Gay, 2010). Furthermore, Anthony's approach to teaching multiple perspectives (see Section 4.3.1) indicates that makes a conscious effort not diminish the culture, race, or ethnicity of the student but includes it as a valued aspect of students' identities (Gay, 2010). Because of Anthony's adherence to these values, I contend that his teaching style is most likely firm but not authoritative.

Anthony works to develop trust and the respect with and among his students of varying cultures. In doing so, his students are more likely to feel understood and validated as cultural beings and to trust that his expectations exist because he wants them to succeed. By having open conversations with students, he builds a more community-oriented classroom and is apt to facilitate student discourse on racial and cultural topics that are difficult for many Whites and people of color to have. In these ways, Anthony invites students to analyze stereotypes critically, negotiate mainstream society, and develop a community-oriented classroom; all of which are practices of a culturally relevant teacher (Gay, 2000; Grant and Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2010).

I asked Anthony if it was more difficult to help Hispanic students negotiate mainstream society, since he was not as familiar with their cultural norms as he might be with the African American community, understanding that no culture is monolithic. He responded that there is a lot about his Hispanic students that he is learning and explained why it was so important to attend school events and be involved with the community:

There are a lot of things that I am learning about. That's why it's important for me to go to events. That's why it's important for me to be involved. Because I'm not Hispanic, so there has to be a true trust right there. Because many of those kids have been labeled as: "They're not gonna get it." So that's where you really have to bring in the parents. You really have to be involved. Really, it has to be more than "I just see you as a student in row five, second seat." The Hispanic community, they really need to know you care. And the biggest thing I've learned with them is respect. Respect is so important. If they don't respect you and they don't think you care, they're not going to show up to your tutorial session [after school]. Why? Why would they if you don't help them? I'm speaking about my school right now. Some students don't come or don't reach out because they feel like they're so far behind that they don't want to feel, they don't want you to think that they're not intelligent.

Anthony has learned that it is important for the Hispanic community to know that he genuinely cares about their children. Parental involvement is a theme that materialized throughout our conversations and is further described in Section 4.4.6. At this point, however, Anthony went on to discuss how the care involved in building a one on one relationship is essential to his building trust with all of his students, which in turn encourages and supports their engagement:

And that's why you need to build an entire program where there's that respect and they

know you care. "If my daughter did this I would say the same thing I'm saying to you."

That one on one relationship has helped me. Its, "Caroline, what's going on with you

today? You're normally smiling. You are totally upset. Okay. Caroline, yes I know I

just gave you silent lunch. But you know what? You're gonna serve your silent lunch,

and we've got to move on, you can't be upset with me the entire period." You know, just

trying to develop that relationship, because they'll tune out if they don't think you care.

If they don't think you care, if its' not relevant, they don't want to have anything to do

with it. I mean it takes a lot, and it can be overwhelming at times. So I can understand

why some teachers don't go to that extent.

Building trustworthy relationships with each of his students is integral to Anthony's practice and

a foundation of CRP (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings 2010). Anthony also

prioritizes teaching his students respect for one another's culture. If students in his class are not

treating each other respectfully, he addresses it immediately but is careful not to publicly

humiliate them. As he explains, he would have a class-wide conversation about respect: "I

always bring it back to the students and ask, What if a student would say something about *your*

[emphasis added] culture? How would *you* [emphasis added] feel?" He also notes that when

students make culturally insensitive comments it is in part because they feel comfortable enough

with each other to make comments that might be inappropriate. In these instances, he focuses on

teaching them the social norms of what he believes is appropriate and non-appropriate ways to

communicate in the classroom. Essentially, the above passages demonstrate ways in which

Anthony works to build caring relationships with and among his students (Gay, 2010; Grant &

Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings 2010). With this aspect in place, it is easier to utilize a strength-

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based, student centered and community-oriented approach (Banks, 2007; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2010).

The final aspect of negotiating mainstream society that Anthony and I discussed is code switching. Addressed at the beginning of the year, Anthony expects his students to use academic language but is careful not to instill shame in how his students naturally speak. Instead of just *telling* his students to use academic language, he helps them *develop* this skill through scaffolding:

This is where I have to be careful. I never want to humiliate a kid. So there's times where sometimes I will let some things go depending on what were doing. Like, tomorrow, we're on the Trail of Tears. Today we took some notes to get our background information and tomorrow were going to dig deeper into it, were gonna watch a video on YouTube called, "*They Knew it was Wrong*" and then have a deliberation, so before we even start, expectations. And part of expectations is communicating [that I expect] clear academic language. And when I say academic language it kind of gives them that cue. I always tell them to be professionals, be respectful, no slang, and I'll talk to them: "Sometimes we talk a certain way around our friends, but that's not how we should communicate in the classroom." And it's hard because you become uncomfortable, because I don't want them to feel shame. I try to give a really generic schpeal where I'm touching all those things. And it's been successful. I remember one time we were talking about juvenile justice. I think we did a case study about a kid and we were trying to decide on probation or detention and they had to pick a side, so they were going back and forth. Now during that, I let them just kind of go, you know. But when we had to do our reflection, I pointed out "Okay guys, you know, I really let you go at it. Now here's

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the deal. I want you to write how you feel, but this time you need to use academic language." And now that we've [already] had that conversation about academic language, the next time we did it, I was like "Ok, remember when we did the last one, I kind of let you guys go at it, now this time we're going focus on using academic language to make your argument." And I try to connect that to "You know you guys are going to have to take a writing exam, so you need to understand these things when your making arguments. You're going to need to practice talking it out right now so it's easier when you're writing." So we kind of ease into it, you know?

The way that Anthony engages his students in learning and enacting language appropriateness based on the situation, as opposed to a prescriptive "right way" verses "wrong way" to speak aligns with the literature of CRP (Delpit, 1995; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011). Anthony also feels that his expectations for academic language needs to be clear and consistent, for example when students send him a message on the interactive school website, they are expected to use academic language.

Clear, consistent, and high expectations for both academic work and social interactions were major themes throughout Anthony's and my conversations. All of the scenarios in this section indicate that it is quite important for Anthony to address these expectations directly with his students without humiliating them. As he explains, "I will have your back, but that does not mean you get to do whatever you want." To construct fair and valid expectations, however, Anthony must have some depth of knowledge regarding his students and their lives outside of school, therefore Anthony's perceptions of his students' families and communities are discussed in the following section.

4.5 ANTHONY: KNOWLEDGE OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITIES: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS

When I asked Anthony to tell me about his students' families and communities, he explained that he tries his best to "be in tune" with the African American community, the White community, and the Hispanic community. He attends all of the school events and often holds teacher- parent conferences with the rest of his team, sometimes four or five times a week. He describes parental involvement as quite high and finds that strong connections between parents, teachers, and students positively correlates to student levels of accountability:

> The more we meet with parents, the more you establish that relationship and the student understands that you can't hide behind the fact that your parents speak Spanish and not English. I mean we'll get them in here. "I know your mom. I see you sitting right there and your crying because she told you that if you didn't take your education seriously what was going to happen." So you know that wall is gone right there "You're not hiding behind that one any more." It helps so much because they know, we'll get mom right back in here you know? (Laughter). It helps because their parents start getting more involved and I'm not pulling all the weight as a teacher. You know "Your mom told me to call her back any time there's an issue, so do I need to have that conversation?" so you know it helps.

Anthony finds that for most of his students, when parents are involved it helps him hold students accountable. Unfortunately, some of the teachers in his school believe that the parents do not care, which Anthony finds frustrating:

> Some peers of mine say "Well their parents don't care." And I say "Well, you've got to reach out to them. Because their understanding is that *you're* the teacher and that's *your*

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[emphasis added] territory. So once you bring them into that conversation, they

understand that we're all going to play a part, and you'll see things change.

Anthony expressed concern about his Hispanic students and parents in particular because they

tend to give deference to the teachers to the point of being submissive. Therefore at times he

feels the need to encourage his students to bring their concerns to the attention of administration:

You have some teachers who may treat them like they are from Mars. I find myself

stepping into situations like that a lot, but I don't come out and say "You shouldn't do

this," but you know I simply stand behind this kid. And people get the picture…you

know sometimes it's easy [for teachers] to not put as much effort into some kids when

you don't feel like their parents are going to be kicking their door down.

Anthony's experience is consistent with the literature on the involvement of parents of color.

Educators often misinterpret parents' discomfort or lack of trust in the school system as a lack of

care. For example, Fordham (2000) contends that since features of parental support and

nurturing are not culturally universal, there are misconceptions for both students and teachers as

to how parental support is enacted. These differences make it imperative for teachers to

consistently connect with families and communities so they can more accurately understand their

thoughts and actions. This will help both parties move towards developing genuine relationships

built upon clearer understandings, respect and trust (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2007, Ladson-

Billings; Milner, 2010).

Anthony uses what he knows about his student's lives to inform the expectations that he

has for his students. Anthony realizes however, that he must consider the lives of his students

when deciding on his expectations. For example, when his students leave school, many of them

have responsibilities such as taking care of siblings and family members. As a result, they may

not be able to stay after school for tutoring or detention or have sufficient time to complete large amounts of homework. Moreover, if his students are struggling with reading comprehension, Anthony is careful not to send them home with homework that they do not understand, because then they will not even attempt to complete it. Below, Anthony describes how he uses knowledge of his students to create a solution to these challenges and maintain student accountability for homework:

> This is my rule for homework, it has to be relevant, it has to be something that is not going to take them longer then maybe 30 minutes and it has to be something that we've already covered in class – a skill they've already developed. And when I assign it, I run through all of those things: "This is why were doing this, this should take you about 15 minutes." And now I'm to the point where I'm on that trajectory and I'm getting them to where I want them to be. Now I'm asking them, "How long do you guys think this will take? 15 minutes? Ok can you guys do 15 minutes? Yea? Ok so anybody that doesn't do 15 minutes, shame on you."

Although he considers the students lives in making decisions, he rues that this is often a struggle in terms completing the Greenfield Studies Curriculum. For example, since many of his students do not have access to technology at home, he knows his current research project will take longer than the two weeks the state has allotted for the unit, because it must be completed during school hours. Challenges such as these require him to constantly engage in a "balancing act."

Despite these curricular challenges and some resistance from the school community, Anthony clearly views parents as a crucial component of effective instruction and seeks out opportunities to understand his students' communities, both of which are important aspects of CRP (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings 2010). As discussed on page ten of

this Chapter however, using students' funds of knowledge (Gonzolez, et al., 2004) in his daily instruction are an aspect of his culturally relevant practice that Anthony believes he needs to improve upon. Other challenges, as well as supports, to Anthony's engagement in culturally relevant teaching are described in the following section.

4.6   ANTHONY: SUPPORTS AND CHALLENGES TO CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Although I formally asked Anthony what he found to support and challenge his culturally relevant practices, both of these aspects were discussed several times throughout all of our conversations. Supports and challenges revolved around the three themes of the school community, personal challenges within his classroom, and pressure form external entities, each of which is described in the sections that follow.

4.6.1   Attitudes and Non-Actions of the School Community

The first challenge to practicing CRP as described by Anthony was the attitudes and non-actions of the members of his school community. As discussed in Sections, 4.3.4 and 4.5, Anthony expressed frustration with his colleagues who were resistant to using test scores to inform their instruction of subgroups and his colleagues who did not reach out to parents because they wrongfully assumed that student parents did not care. He also expressed frustration towards several building teachers who actually promote students' learned helplessness by "babying them," or in other words, not maintaining high expectations for student behavior and academic

work. The third problematic non-action and accompanying attitude held by teachers was their failure to provide students with opportunities to learn the multiple perspectives of women and people of color, presumably because they do not find these perspectives a priority within their respective social studies curriculum. Anthony finds that students in his school suffer when other teachers do not use test scores to inform subgroup instruction, do not reach out to parents, do not maintain high expectations, and do not offer students the viewpoints of women and people or color. Anthony believes that the lack of consistent culturally relevant practices among teachers at his school negatively impacts those who try to engage in it. Anthony does find support, however, in his lead building administrator, as well as some other teachers, all who share the mindset that CRP is essential to students' academic and personal growth.

Because of Anthony's culturally relevant mindset, he was selected by his head principal to be the social studies team leader. In this role, Anthony is charged with the task of helping other teachers engage in the types of practices that he does, which at times is challenging:

> I get it, and I have the ability to try to help others get it also. But in some ways it holds you back, because your administration sees that you get it, and if you have the type of principal that I have, you are going to be put into leadership roles where you can help bring others along. But at the same time, when you're put in that leadership role, I don't really want to be a Lone Ranger. Like I want to do so much more, but because I am a leader within the school, I can't go too far off the range, if that makes any sense.

Anthony explains that although administration wants him to "bring others along" with culturally relevant practices, the team is also "encouraged to be on the same page." Since at this point in time Anthony finds these two charges as relatively incongruous, Anthony describes his work with other teachers on CRP as a "long, engaging process."

Anthony's comments in the passage above also speak to the tension between his role as culturally relevant teacher leader and his not wanting to be the Lone Ranger, which in part goes back to his concern over not being perceived as pushing a Black agenda. This is a difficult position for him to be in, especially because he holds himself accountable to the culturally relevant practices he learned at State U:

So this is my struggle with education sometimes, I think at some point people need to be told, "You need to do this. This is what we're going for, you're *here* – get *here* [emphasis added]." I really am at a point where I am a little tired of dragging people along. And after four years if someone still has the same issues with making things culturally relevant, now we've got a problem where you're dragging everyone else behind. Whereas I said, I am slowly pulling people along, [but] now I'm starting to drag. It's that integrity thing, where I feel if I know what I should be doing, and I'm not all the way there, I feel like I'm not being true to what I've learned. I'm not being true to the program. I know better, and I'm not right there. So it's a process. I don't want to go too far so I don't seem like the Lone Ranger, but I don't want to move too slow because I know where I should be. So I do as much as I can in the classroom, and I do a whole lot in my classroom, but its just bringing others along. That's a big challenge.

Despite this dilemma, Anthony says that he generally feels comfortable in his leadership role because he has taken the time to know and understand his school community. For example, this year he and the members of his eighth grade team together have made a conscious effort to maintain higher expectations for students' academics and behavior and to hold students accountable to these expectations. Rules and consequences for turning homework are the same in each classroom of the team, and each member of the team is willing to work with the students

during lunch and Saturday school, which they divide among themselves on a rotation basis. By being unified, Anthony thinks his team gives students necessary consistency and support, while keeping them accountable:

> At the end of the day, we're going to be asked: "What have you done?" What are we gonna say, we gave them a zero? That's not going to work, so we've [his eighth grade team] put things in place. Last year we had a lot of kids failing and this year we have all those things in place and what we noticed this year is that around November time, there was an entirely different climate in our hallway. Kids know their going to be held accountable, whereas last year I was nervous all the way up until April. I was like oh my gosh, were gonna have some issues. We still have some we're dragging along, but for the most part, were working as a team where its not one person trying to carry the burden all by themselves. In middle school it really does take a team effort, because it's really hard to do on your own. You can do a lot of things on your own, but when your dealing with things it helps to have a team.

Anthony has found that consistent and high expectations for student work and behavior across his eighth grade team have made positive and significant changes in his eighth grade teams' environment. This supports the notion discussed in the review of literature that when teacher expectations increase, the achievement of their students does as well (Gay, 2010). While consistent expectations are a hallmark of creating an effective classroom environment (Boyton & Boyton, 2005; Lemov, 2010), ensuring that expectations are culturally relevant and uniform across teachers adds a layer of necessary complexity. Perhaps however, the unification of expectations will foster the self-efficacy needed for teachers to sustain these expectations over time. Although Anthony's leadership role and the common vision shared by his eighth grade

team supports his enactment of culturally relevant practices, he does encounter difficulties with his own practices in his classroom, as discussed below.

4.6.2   Challenges within the Classroom

Earlier, Anthony described the difficulties posed by the Greenfield Studies Curriculum because it did not provide information and perspective on women and people of color. To provide multiple perspectives, Anthony has to bring them into his curriculum as supplementary reading for students to endeavor under the guise of the school's overarching push towards literacy. Once again, he finds that this sometimes poses a challenge for him, because he needs to maintain the stance of a team player on the social studies content area team. As Anthony explains:

> I feel like I bring more to the table, and if I wasn't there, they [students] wouldn't even get that [multiple perspectives]. But the struggle sometimes is that I plan with my social studies content team, and there has been times where I've brought in resources and said: "Maybe we can do this, or maybe we can bring in some issues that women had to face during this time period or maybe bring in some things that African Americans faced or Hispanics." And they are very uncomfortable with it.

The literature specific to social studies and United States History discussed in Chapter Two of this paper highlights the importance of purposefully connecting students of color to the curriculum to content to foster engagement and personal identification within the field of U.S. History (Journell & Castro, 2009; Martell, 2013). ELL students also need to connect their own funds of knowledge to social studies curriculum so they can connect to the background knowledge necessary to understand many of the concepts taught in social studies, particularly U.S. history (Cruz & Thorton, 2009; Short, 1994, Short & Fitzsimmons). Despite this, one

reason Anthony's colleagues do not see the need for including multiple perspectives may be because they have not had the same type of teacher training that Anthony has had. They may not be familiar with CRP and may not deem it important because it is not in the state curriculum. Perhaps they recognize its importance but feel limited by the fact that students take state assessments aligned to this curriculum and their teaching will be evaluated upon this assessment. Moreover, even for Anthony, when he does bring multiple perspectives into the curriculum, he has found challenges in doing so. Teachers not trained in CRP may not be comfortable with these challenges or know how to approach them. For example, the scenario below highlights how bringing in multiple perspectives can challenge his personal comfort level:

> There was once student who kind of called me on it too. I always remember that student. We were – actually I was trying to be like, be careful, but I was *too* [emphasis added] careful. We were talking about slavery, and what I was trying to get the kids to understand was that this was just how people thought during this time period. I was trying to be really careful. I didn't want to make anyone uncomfortable, right? But I had this kid and she was saying "Well Mr. Smith, you call it. You gotta say it's wrong though, right? Like at some point you do have to come around and say it was wrong." And I kept sticking to the line that people didn't feel it was wrong. But she was like "No. It was just wrong."

Anthony explained that he then referred back to his resources from State U:

> So that's when I started pulling out all the books from grad school, and I was like, ok how am I going to handle this? I've got to read. You know those things are important. How am I gonna address this? This kid has called me out, and she's absolutely right. So you know, I've found that if I start developing that type of environment [of multiple

perspectives] in the beginning, and *I* [emphasis added] don't live up to it, the students will call me out on it. I don't want to have any experiences like that again! I mean I work really hard to make sure I'm honest. Absolutely honest, you know, and wrong is wrong. Even when we're bringing out those multiple perspectives.

Anthony's willingness to reflect upon his own culturally relevant practices, utilize the resources from his TEP at State U, and adjust his teaching demonstrates that he is willing and able to meet the ongoing challenges of CRP. More on the development of Anthony's reflective practices and how they relate to his culturally relevant practices are discussed in Section 4.8.

4.6.3   Pressure from External Entities

The last challenge Anthony discussed was the pressure he feels from external evaluators who do not understand the culture of his school. As a focus school, Anthony explains, a variety of individuals come to the school to review data and "see what's going on" although they do not conduct classroom observations. Anthony finds that because these individuals do not understand the schools' overall culture, their feedback is somewhat disconnected:

I can recall some meetings where we are being told we are not developing in a lot of areas, but at the same time, you know, we're moving in the right direction. Well, you have someone on the outside that comes in, doesn't understand your school culture, doesn't understand that walk that you've been through, doesn't understand how much it took you to get from A to B, even though you should be at C at this point, but it took a while to get to B. And they come in and they just – just tear it down. And that's hard, you know? They don't understand the school's culture. They don't understand some of the instructional decisions that I made. They don't understand that I had to really tell this

kid where Maine's at, you know? So I understand what you're [they are] saying about how I should have structured this, but, on the other hand, have a conversation with me. There has to be some type of understanding of the culture before any outside source can come in and give help, because if you don't understand the culture of the school, it makes it hard.

Although Anthony is frustrated by the lack of contextual understanding from external entities, it is not because he is unwilling to consider constructive feedback. He simply feels that the feedback from those outside the building disconnected, almost irrelevant, because in essence they are not considering the "trajectory" of his students the way that he does. Anthony would also prefer these agencies provide more resources and support:

And that doesn't mean that schools that struggle in some areas should be handled with kid gloves, because you do have to have those tough conversations. You have to be straightforward if you're supposed to be a support person, but support means support, you know? Bring me something to the table also. Don't just come tear us down, support us. And I'm not saying that's everyone's situation, but I've encountered situations like that where I've had to kind of change the conversation from their coming in and just attacking– "You're not doing this. You're not doing that." To like: "Okay, I get you. Thank you for your feedback, but in addition to that, you know, you say you have resources? Let's talk about those resources."

Anthony's frustration goes back to how a teacher's sense of efficacy impacts his practice. The external evaluator's perceived lack of contextual understanding described by Anthony might create a sense of helplessness for some teachers because they have been judged as ineffectual. Anthony's earlier descriptions of teachers lowering their standards, or "babying" their students

could be a result of this sense of helplessness. As Anthony discussed, his culturally relevant practices, which include bringing in multiple perspectives, taking students along a growth trajectory, and relying on parental and community involvement seems to be viewed by many in his building as "going off the reservation." Combined with the fact that by Anthony's own account, CRP requires considerable time and effort, it is easy to understand why a teacher in this position would abandon a culturally relevant approach because they are not supported in their work. Even teachers who begin their careers engaging in CRP might find it difficult to maintain if they feel they are being judged on indicators the teacher does not believe accurately measures their students' growth and their own teaching abilities by external entities who they perceive as oblivious to how their specific context impacts teaching and learning. More on these implications are discussed in Chapter Nine.

4.7   ANTHONY'S FUTURE PLANS

Anthony will be returning to State U for his school leadership credentials within the next two years. Anthony still desires to work with low- income students and families of color, but is interested in leading a building with his culturally relevant vision. He believes that will have a greater broader impact in this role than he does now as a teacher with one classroom.

There were numerous times throughout our conversations when Anthony described his culturally relevant teaching practices as "hard," "tough," "overwhelming" and that it "requires a lot more work." I finally asked Anthony if he thought he could maintain his current teaching practices or if he thought he would eventually "burn out." As he explains:

T: So if you didn't have plans to be a principal, do you think you would burn out, or do you think you would have enough to stick with it?

A: Um, I would – In all honesty I would burn out. I can't [sighs]. I don't see myself being able to keep this pace up for a long time, you know? And I just want to be completely honest. That's another reason why I feel like "Okay. I'm doing a lot." You know, I just left the building and I'm sitting in a little parking lot right now. It's a lot, you know? And I feel like – I actually got to a point this year where I had to tell myself "Okay. Now, remember, you're a teacher. You're trying to make changes that are more so on the administrative side. If you want to do that, go for it, but it's going to be really hard." Something as simple as making a curriculum map for the entire school, a real one. We can make these. We're a middle school. And I was really about to make that push you know, like "Let's do it." But I had to ask myself "Okay, when are you going to do that? Tell me when you're going to do that, because you know you still have to grade those essays, and you need to do that *right now* [emphasis added]. You know, you can't [do the curriculum map]." I have to ask myself "What's in my realm and what's in the administrative realm?" And that's what has made me come to that conclusion. Like, "Okay, you need to make that move. If you want to do all this stuff right here, then it's – you got to come out of the classroom eventually," you know?

T: Right.

A: So I know I would burn out, because I know me as a teacher. Like, I want to do so much more. And not to say that teaching's not a complete joy to me. I love teaching. You know, I *truly* [emphasis added] love it. But I see myself wanting to do so much more, you know? And I would – Yeah, I would burn out if I – if I kept this

pace. You know, I can't keep it up a long time. And the problem is that there's so many

times that I've seen need in this school, and I've said, "Okay, I'll do it." And I was

actually talking with a colleague tonight, and she does a lot of stuff also. And we

actually had that conversation this week, you know, "We can't keep up this pace. We

need some things off." You know, I mean, you just have to. And then that – that desire.

Okay, like, I know that if I don't do this, no one else is going to put that much into it, you

know, so it's a lot. It's a big balance, you know?

Anthony's answer to my question exemplifies why teachers need support and resources to help

them move from culturally relevant mindsets to engaging in the work of CRP. As Anthony has

expressed, culturally relevant practices need to be consistent across the social studies curriculum,

across content areas, and across teachers. This requires a common vision for CRP that is shared

by administration, teachers, staff, and ideally the community served by the school. Anthony

aims to be a building leader with such a vision.

5.0   LAUREN BECHTOL

I just love my students. When I got this job, the principal at the time said, "The students are incredible. They're like puppy dogs and kittens." And that's true. I'd say 95 percent of my students I just absolutely love. I get kind of silly with them sometimes, because they kind of bring out the kid in me. I just love being around them every minute.

This chapter is comprised of five main sections that provide both results and analysis of my conversations with Lauren. The first section describes Lauren's life experiences that led her to her undergraduate teacher education program (TEP) and her master's degree program. Sections two and three contextualize her current school, classroom, and the relationships with and among her students. In section four, I provide details on Lauren's culturally relevant classroom practices. In the final section, I discuss challenges to Lauren's culturally relevant teaching. Each of these sections provides insight as to how Lauren approaches her CRP but often encounters challenges in doing so. Lauren's perceptions about her TEP are discussed in Chapter Seven.

5.1   LAUREN: LIFE EXPERIENCE PRIOR TO HER TEP AND STATE U

Lauren is a White, married female in her late twenties with a six-month-old daughter. She grew

up in a suburb outside of Chicago and she and her family moved to a southern state, from this

point forward referred to as "Chardon," when she was in middle school. Lauren explains that in

Illinois her family owned a home, but they were lower middle class. This changed, however,

when her father took a more lucrative job as a director of sales for a mobile phone company in

Latin America and they moved to Southern Chardon. Here, she says, they lived in a "very

wealthy neighborhood." In addition to living in an area with higher levels of SES, Lauren

describes a contrast between living in Illinois where she "didn't know what diversity was" and

southern Chardon, where her neighborhood and school were racially and culturally diverse.

Lauren views her life pre and post Chardon as personally significant in that she was bullied in

Chardon:

> When I was in sixth grade and I moved I did not look like the rest of the kids. I was
>
> wearing shoes from Wal-Mart, long jean shorts, and a big t-shirt with a dog on it, and all
>
> the kids in sixth grade – all the girls were wearing, like, platform shoes, and they had
>
> designer jeans on and Nautica jackets, and they all had their hair done and their fake
>
> nails. And they just made so much fun of me. I was kind of a tomboy, and that was cool
>
> in Illinois. Nobody ever said anything. But it was this big, big focus on the girls that I
>
> went to school with. It was very easy to make fun of me, and I let them. You know, I
>
> gave into it and let them do it. I didn't stand up for myself.

Lauren notes that most of her friends in middle and high school, who like Lauren were in the

school band, were mostly White. When she describes her family, she says that there are several

inter-racial relationships and based upon how her family interacts, their views on people from other cultures is "a non-issue."

Lauren attended "Chardon State University" where as a saxophone player she originally studied to be a music teacher. She recalls playing teacher as a child in her basement with her stuffed animals or with her brother and his friends, as well as giving her mother piano lessons. Unfortunately, due to an accident, Lauren was unable to complete the music program at Chardon State and thus decided to go into "my next favorite thing, which was history." She also recalls her eighth grade teacher as being quite influential in developing her interest in social studies. After completing her undergraduate degree in social studies education at Chardon State, she taught at the same middle school in which she had done her yearlong pre-service placement, which was also the same middle school she had attended as an adolescent. When she and her husband moved to Metropolis, she completed her Master's Degree in Social Studies Education at State U. She selected State U over another prominent university in Greenfield, from this point forward referred to as the University B, because she thought she would learn more about teaching in Metropolis if she attended an urban-focused school. Currently, she teaches at a school that will be referred to as Dewberry Middle School, where she has taught for the past four years.

5.2   LAUREN'S GENERAL TEACHING CONTEXT

Lauren teaches 8th grade Greenfield State Studies at Dewberry Middle School, a Title I public school serving grades six through eight located about 25 miles from downtown Metropolis. Like Anthony, her school is a Title I focus school (National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES], n.d) meaning that the State Educational Agency (SEA) has identified it as either having the largest in school gaps between the highest achieving and lowest achieving subgroup(s) or having low achievement in its subgroup(s), either of which is determined over a course of several years by proficiency on state assessments (United States Department of Education, n.d). For Lauren, this means that state has been "watching us like a hawk" for two years.

The student population of Dewberry Middle School is 1,424, with 62% of students listed as Hispanic/Latino, 23% as African American, 9% as Asian/Pacific Islander, 4% as White, 2% as Multiracial, and .2% as American Indian/Alaskan (NCES, n.d). The percentage of students with free/reduced lunch is 94%. Lauren says that she has "never seen a more diverse place than my classroom, and this is urban – even though we're in the suburbs." She explains that although the county is in a "wealthy district," it is broken into clusters, with her school located in a "poor cluster." She notes that the area is often referred to as "ghetto" in direct contrast to the wealthy county in which her school is actually located. Lauren explains that students who live near the school typically live in apartments close to the highway. There is also a refugee center near the school; thus her school has students from Vietnam, El Salvador, Mexico, Columbia, and Bosnia. According to Lauren, many of her students are bused in from a different district because their home school was deemed failing by the state and therefore eligible to attend her school.

At the time of our first interview, Lauren taught four Greenfield State Studies classes: two gifted and two sheltered English as a Second Language (ESOL). Each of these classes has

about 35 students. Lauren's fifth class is Extended Learning Time, an enrichment class for a small group of gifted students. She explained that she is not ESOL certified, and although there is an eighth grade social studies teacher who is ESOL certified, "They don't want her to have the classes because of her past test scores. That's what I've been told. So they give them to me." Lauren says that she works with the ESL teacher often but does not have access to her presence in the classroom regularly. When I talked to Lauren several weeks after our first interview, she explained that her class schedule had changed because "Our school is in a serious state of implosion right now."

Like Anthony, Lauren does not use a textbook for her four Greenfield State Studies courses because she finds it un-relatable to her students. Therefore, she creates what she believes to be more effective ways of engaging her students, particularly with reading and vocabulary. More details on Lauren's teaching practices are discussed in Section 5.4. First, however, it is necessary to gain a deeper understanding of Lauren's teaching context in terms of relationships with and among students.

5.3   LAUREN: RELATIONSHIPS WITH AND AMONG STUDENTS

Lauren has genuine affection for her students and told me how much she loved her students several times throughout our conversations. She likes teaching eighth grade because she finds they understand her humor and therefore she can have fun joking with them in class – an element she finds crucial to maintaining student interest. At the beginning of our first conversation, she showed me a hand-crocheted stuffed unicorn that one of her students made for Lauren's four-month-old son who had been sick. Lauren's students recently nominated her for teacher of the

year for the county and when she did not win, she says they were upset. Lauren believes that her students respect her and explained that her students often emailed her during her maternity leave because they were struggling in school:

> I got so many e-mails and just kids begging me to come back because they weren't learning. I came back a week before their final exam and did an intense review with them, and they said that they learned more in that review than the entire semester.

Although Lauren seems to have positive relationships with her students, she explains that there is quite a bit of tension between different groups of students both in her class and school-wide.

Lauren first talked about the tensions between African American students and Hispanic students, which she says is prevalent in the school. She believes that they are vying for power in the school, but that this is not likely gang-related since most of the African American students are bused in from other counties. Nevertheless, she says they are constantly fighting. One classroom example includes an activity in which she required them split into two groups to discuss their stance on gun restriction, debate the issue, then vote on the issue. As Lauren explains:

> And the debate got a little bit ugly in one of my classes because one student said, "Well, you know, I'm from _ County, which is in Metropolis and I know a lot of people who steal guns." And then another African-American student said, "And then we sell them to the Mexicans." And then a Mexican student said a comment and that comment sparked something, and I had to end the debate – that happens a lot.

Lauren also explained that there were two warring Hispanic gangs in her school, but she did not think that her African American students were involved in gangs. In contrast, Lauren says these tensions do not exist in her gifted classes, even though they too are comprised of many Hispanic

and African American students. Lauren attributes this to the fact that the gifted group has been together since the first grade; therefore, they know one another very well and are comfortable with each other. Lauren notes that the tension between groups is "just an observation" of hers but it has never been addressed by the school administration, during school meetings, or in professional development.

Lauren claims that bullying is a significant problem in her school among all students. She explained that although 96% of her students are on free and reduced lunch, some students have very nice clothes and shoes and that these students "really parade that stuff around to the students who truly cannot afford things, and it can get pretty nasty." Furthermore, all students take a student engagement survey three times a year as part of county protocol. The survey includes questions about how students feel in classes, what their relationships are like with their teachers and other students, and if they feel safe in the school. According to Lauren, surveys consistently indicate that students do not trust each other and do not feel comfortable around their peers. Lauren notes how this school wide problem impacts her classroom:

It's very difficult. I've always been pretty good with classroom management, and it's part of the buy-in. But there have been numerous fights in my class, and I mean, it's just – I do what I can. I try to keep students separated when I know [they do not get along]. I have a very close relationship with the seventh grade teachers, so before the year starts, they tell me who cannot be with each other. And it's hard. It's very difficult to move a student from class to class if there's a behavior problem, because chances are if there's a behavior problem here, they have issues with a lot of students in school, and we have a lot of 15, 16-year-olds here. And so there's a lot of issues between students. We're actually going through a situation right now where there's an entire class of students who

are just very terrible with each other. Individually they're great. They just – and we

can't put them anywhere else because they have a lot of issues with each other.

In a later conversation I had with Lauren, she thought that the situation had gotten worse for the

eighth grade, noting that the "bad" students were starting to upset the "good" kids, because the

entire grade was getting in trouble:

The kids who are behaving and doing what they're supposed to be doing are getting

really upset with the other kids because they're ruining everything for them. They're not

allowed to walk in the hallway anymore. They're having all these activities pulled from

them, and the issue is grade wide because there are so many students who are

misbehaving. So I feel like it's becoming the "good" students versus the "bad" students.

The good students don't come, and they're going to never be able to do anything fun.

They're never going to get their privileges back because the bad students keep ruining it

for them. That's just a recent thing that's been going on.

Lauren's explanations of these tensions are upsetting to her, and the stress in her voice is

palpable. Her contextual descriptions provide insight into how difficult it can be for low-income

multicultural students who feel the need to compete with each another for resources and seek

dominant status in the school. Even though Lauren cares about her students, these school-wide

issues impact teaching and learning in her classroom. Analysis of how these factors play out in

Lauren's classroom is further discussed in Sections 5.4.3 and 5.4.4.

In spite of tensions in the school, Lauren's approach to her classroom practices is

definitely student centered and strengths- based. In the next section, I describe how Lauren uses

her students' strengths and funds of knowledge to teach them background information and

engage them in activities and assessments. This is followed by examples of how Lauren also

works to help students understand multiple perspectives and discuss issues of inequity, although these components of her teaching have proven to be a challenge.

5.4   LAUREN'S TEACHING PRACTICES

When I asked Lauren to tell me about her teaching practices, her first comment was, "I try to make it fun." Lauren's passion for her students and her teaching was evident throughout our conversations and I would describe her as straightforward and energetic. Lauren's spiritedness is partly fueled by the tensions she describes with administration (see Sections 5.5.1 and 5.5.3), but she is equally as passionate about her relationships with her students and how she approaches teaching them.

In general, Lauren's discussion of her practices can be characterized as a strengths-based and student-focused. For instance, Lauren begins each school year by administering a multiple intelligences quiz to her students to gauge their learning styles and strengths. She also observes her students' strengths throughout the year and uses this knowledge to inform how she delivers background information, plans class activities, and plans formative and summative assessments. Her classroom practice centers on using students' funds of knowledge and student choice to differentiate her instruction and promote what she refers to as "buy-in" or engagement. The subsections that follow describe these practices.

It is important to note that Lauren teaches two distinct groups of students: her gifted students, who are mostly African American and Asian, and her English Language Learners (ELL), the majority of whom speak either Spanish or Vietnamese and are newer to the country than her gifted students are. Lauren speaks minimal Spanish and does not speak Vietnamese.

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When appropriate, distinctions are made between these two groups, as well as her enrichment class, throughout this chapter.

This section is divided into four subsections: the first two describe how Lauren teaches background information and how she uses students' funds of knowledge and strengths for activities and assignments. The third and fourth sections provide examples of how she engages students in learning multiple perspectives and discussing inequity, as well as the challenges encountered in these processes respectively.

5.4.1   Teaching Background Information

To explore Lauren's approach to providing background information, it is helpful to understand how her students relate to Greenfield State Studies. Early in our first conversation, she noted the difficulty in getting her ELL students to "buy-in" to Greenfield State Studies:

> It's really difficult. They don't know American history, and the Greenfield history curriculum is based on the assumption that students got American history in fourth grade, so it's basically American History with focus on Greenfield, but we don't spend lots of time on things like the Revolution or the Civil War or basics of government because they should have gotten that in elementary school. So we focus a lot on Greenfield, and students who have moved here from other countries don't know American history, they don't care about American history, and they really don't care about Greenfield and its history, so it's a very difficult thing to get them to buy in.

Because of this, Lauren says she spends most of her time figuring out how to make it fun for her ELL students, otherwise she finds they are not likely to engage in classroom activities. Lauren contrasts this with her gifted students; most of whom emigrated to the U.S. eight or more years

ago and says they already have more "buy-in" to learning Greenfield State Studies. For both groups, Lauren explains that she teaches "All hands on to get them up and moving," because "It is impossible to have them sit and just do something from the textbook." For example, to help students learn basic background information, Lauren uses jigsaws in place of lectures and notes for her gifted students, and often utilizes stations for her ESL students: "In my ESL classes, I'll put stations around the room with information and have the kids moving from station to station and comparing notes and collaborating, and then afterwards we go over them together." Since stations can be administered in different ways, I asked Lauren if she had them move individually from station to station or if they did so in groups. As Lauren explains:

Depending on the size of the class and the information, what I do mostly is have groups go around the classroom. Sometimes I'll even throw a jigsaw in there if I feel feisty. But that's in the past. The groups that I have this year, I have too many low-level ESOL students, and they can't bring that information back to their groups [on their own], so it's mostly just one large group kind of traveling from station to station [going to all of the stations].

In regards to specific examples of the types of background information and activities she provides at each station, Lauren explains:

Last week we just did – we're talking about foundations of government, so one station was organization of the government, one station was the Constitution, one station was political parties, one station was checks and balances, one station was separation of powers. And this is the introduction to our government unit.

Lauren then handed me a copy of the worksheet that students used as they moved around the room from station to station and elaborated:

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Since this was in place of notes, it's just a basic note outline, but there's some drawing, there's coloring. There's a lot of examples to real world. A lot of times, we'll do vocabulary this way instead of – I really dislike textbooks, so I'll give them something like that, and they'll be these posted around the room where they have definitions, examples, pictures. So it just kind of depends on what we're doing and what they have to get from it.

Lauren's approach to providing background material for her students is based on her disdain for the traditional method of using textbooks and lecture. She does not find the text relatable for students, and based on her experience she finds students more engaged when physically active. She also uses games like Pictionary or Password to review material already learned in order to "keep it fun." When Lauren assigns readings, she researches to find supplementary materials to "pull from other cultures" because these "mean something to my students."

Literature on differentiated instruction cites both stations and jigsaws as valuable alternatives to lecture and note taking, (Tomlinson, 1999). In this example, all of Lauren's students complete the same worksheet by moving from station to station; thus, it is not technically differentiated. However, she does plan her stations with multiple intelligences in mind by providing pictures, offering examples, and allowing them to draw or color, as opposed to simply reading and writing definitions or concepts. She also recognizes the need for most of her students to remain active and provides them with this type of learning environment. In these ways, she is using her students' learning styles to inform her instruction, which is representative of CRP (Banks, 2007; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2010) and is also recognized as effective practice in the social studies classroom (Bower & Lobdell, 2005).

Lauren's observations of her ELL's engagement in Greenfield State Studies are consistent with the review of the literature. First, she notes that her students are at a disadvantage because they missed fourth grade history class and therefore lack the knowledge and understanding of concepts that the eighth grade curriculum assumes they will already have (Cruz & Thorton, 2009; Short, 1994, Short & Fitzsimmons). Secondly, Lauren says that her students do not relate to the textbook and the overall Greenfield State Studies curriculum, which concentrates on the perspectives of White males and is heavily focused on military aspects of the Civil War. This is also consistent with literature discussed in Chapter Two that found U.S. History textbooks focused on military and political history hard for ELL's to interpret (Grant, 2001). Therefore, for a teacher to be effective she must try to help students make connections because the simple delivery of historical content through reading or teacher lecture is not adequate (Cruz & Thorton, 2009; Short, 1994). Lauren has responded to this challenge by creating varied approaches to help her students learn the background information required by the curriculum.

Since Lauren discussed different reading strategies and activities utilized between her ELL and gifted classes, I asked her about the expectations she has for her ELL students. Lauren feels conflicted about how to maintain high expectations while still making sure they understand the background information in the readings:

> I feel like sometimes I water it down because of the language issue. And I'm kind of torn by this, because I have very high expectations for them because I know that they can do it, but I also am aware that our end-of-the-year test is not that hard. In order to pass, they need 51 percent. So in my opinion, I do water it down so they can actually understand it, and I know that they'll still do okay on the test, even though my expectations might be

higher. And my gifted students, I go above and beyond. But those are very diverse classes as well. They just speak the language much, much better. But I think my expectations are – I guess I – I guess I could say I water it down a little bit, especially with the readings. I do a lot of read along, popcorn, kind of elementary things, strategies with those ESL classes because you have to.

Although maintaining high expectations for students is one practice that a culturally relevant teacher engages in (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011), this excerpt helps us understand why teachers may choose less rigorous readings or reading activities for students with lower English proficiency. There seems to be a fine line between meeting students needs at a reasonable level while still pushing them to their highest capabilities, even for a teacher like Lauren who recognizes and utilizes students' strengths and funds of knowledge (see Section 5.4.2). Lauren is aware of the fact that some of her ELL's may be capable of more challenging readings and reading strategies, but seems to be guided by the fact that a large number of students (ten or more) with lower proficiency need more elementary strategies to comprehend some of the readings. She admits the impact of test scores on these choices, but does not necessarily feel good about it. Again, this shows the conflicts experienced by a teacher who in many ways still practices culturally relevant teaching.

Lauren also believes that using collaborative grouping is essential for background information activities for both ESL and gifted students because it increases engagement for both groups. She notes that it is crucial for her to allow her ELL's to help one another by teaching each other vocabulary and basic concepts in their primary language and she also has students of varying language acquisition translate for each other. In this way, Lauren provides opportunities for students to listen to and communicate their thoughts to one another in their native language,

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which would not be the case in a teacher-focused classroom centered on lecture and note-taking in English (Cruz & Thorton, 2009). Collaborative grouping was also described in the review of literature as one means to develop a more community-oriented classroom versus a competitive one (Ladson-Billings, 2010). It also provides opportunities for scaffolding content knowledge and English language skills for ELL's as students work together in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978). Finally, by engaging her students in cooperative learning, Lauren helps them learn how to take responsibility for one another's learning while engaging in civil discourse, which creates a community of learners (Ladson-Billings, 2010) and is a foundation of a culturally relevant social studies classroom that helps students learn how to participate in a democracy (Banks 2007; Grant & Sleeter, 2011).

5.4.2   Using Funds of Knowledge and Students Strengths for Activities and Assignments

Lauren explained that she uses a lot of sports, family, and food analogies to help her students understand certain concepts because her students relate to and enjoy discussing these topics. A sports fan herself, Lauren played soccer when she was younger. She gave the example of when she taught seventh grade world cultures at the school two years earlier and she was able to make connections between rivalries over colonial exploration and the rivalry between Real Madrid and Barcelona. At this time she also discussed how she likes to learn their language and has her low-level ELL's students teach her in their own language:

> I like to learn their language, have them teach me things in their language, because if they
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> can teach it to me in their language, then I know they're getting the information. And I
>
> speak a little German, so I like to teach them in German also, and it's – we're kind of
>
> sharing culture, because I'm very different from these students.

She furthered that in many instances her students with higher ELL proficiency will serve as translators. When I asked Lauren if she addressed code switching with her African American students, she said she did not experience this aspect in her teaching because most of her African American students were in her gifted classes and already used academic language.

Lauren also uses the family unit to help students learn certain concepts, because she says the family is an important part of students' lives:

> Their family makeup, they have a lot of brothers and sisters. A lot of them live with extended family. So we bring the family unit into a lot of things that we do. Very few students of mine don't have families. That is one thing about my population of students – they're very family-oriented. They take care of their families; their families take care of them. And we know this because of those student engagement surveys. I bring a lot of that into the classroom.

Lauren then gave the example of how she helped them understand the concept of familial piety in China:

> I asked them to give me stories [about family]. And they all could identify this idea of respect towards their family and the importance of that in the Eastern world because they have that same respect, whereas I admitted our families where I grew up in Chicago, it wasn't like that.

Lauren mentioned that connections between aspects of her students' culture, or funds of knowledge, and the concepts taught in class were easier for her to make when she taught seventh grade Eastern cultures as compared to Greenfield State Studies. Nonetheless, she works to learn about her students and use what she knows about them throughout her teaching practices. This indicates that on a basic level, Lauren is identifying what funds of knowledge her students hold

and then using this as a bridge to the concepts learned in social studies class (Gonzolez et al., 2004; Grant & Sleeter, 2011). She admits that this is more difficult for her to do with Greenfield Studies, but the fact that she values making these connections means she will likely build more of these bridges as she continues teaching the subject matter.

In regards to using her students' strengths to inform her instruction, Lauren seemed quite impassioned by her students' creativity, their use of technology, and their ability to work well together in groups as definitive strengths. She expanded upon why she thinks they are so creative:

They're very creative in many different ways, whether it's musically, artistically, and just writing or – they come up with scenarios and stories that just astound me. And I think that it has to do with a lot of their backgrounds, what they've experienced before, what they haven't experienced, and what they think that experience would be. They just get so creative with it. And I think they also don't – they're not spoon-fed a lot of stuff. They have to learn it out – learn it on their own, and I feel like that harbors their creativity a lot.

Using these strengths, Lauren usually allows her students to choose their classroom activities and assignments. As Lauren explains:

When I give them assignments, like they're usually free-reign. You can pick one of these five things and just show me how you know the information, whether it's drawing, writing a story, writing a song. So we do that a lot, so they're very familiar with, you know, I can show you the information I know by writing a rap.

Lauren went on to talk about a student who had written a rap about Congress over the weekend and shared it with her the day before our first conversation. Even though this was not an assignment, Lauren said it was "One of the best things I've ever heard." When I asked Lauren

what parameters she gave for these assignments, she noted that they are quite basic and went on to discuss their interest in technology and again, their creativity:

> Make it appropriate and do what you want to show me. I have students that are very into technology and they make a lot of videos using some Internet programs that I have no idea how to work. And we show them in front of the class. I mean these kids are very creative. So any time we do a big project, no two students have the same project, because they're always just coming up with all sorts of stuff.

When Lauren and I discussed how she assessed her students on these assignments, she gave more detail:

> It's like a skeleton rubric. I say, "Whatever you're choosing to do needs to include these," whatever we're doing. So right now they're doing a project about President Roosevelt in Greenfield. And so I gave them basic instructions. You can make a blog. You can make a Tumblr. You can make a Facebook page. You can make a scrapbook. You can write a song. You can do whatever you want, but you need to answer these three questions about his time here in Greenfield, and if you can answer those questions, and they're not just recall questions. They're questions that they really need to consider, like, "How did being in Greenfield affect FDR? How did FDR affect Greenfield by being here?" And that's not a discussion that we necessarily had in class. It's what they need to pull. And if they can convince me in whatever it is that they give me, that's more how I grade it. If I can see that they know what they're talking about, it's more that rather than, you know, you're grade rubric where it says, "You get 5 points if you give this." It's not like that. It's more of, "Prove to me what you know using your strengths."

Lauren also commented that her students' ability to work in groups is one of their biggest strengths. I asked Lauren how this was possible given the tensions between students in her school. As she explains:

> I'm pretty particular with my groups. I pick them. There are certain students that I make sure that just are not together. But even if they don't know each other or aren't friends, they'll figure out how to be friends or how to get it done. It's never that awkward silence where nobody wants to talk, nobody wants to do anything. They're always willing to get it done and to talk about it, always talk about it.

Lauren's descriptions of the class activities above provide many examples of culturally relevant teaching as outlined in the review of the literature. First, she is differentiating her instruction, in this case both process and product, according to students' funds of knowledge, interests and strengths by providing them with choices, which makes their work much more meaningful to them and increases the likelihood of completion (Cruz & Thorton, 2009; Tomlinson, 1999). She is also enabling them to feel a sense of ownership and pride in their work in part by having them present their work to one another (Tomlinson, 1999) and reinforces a sense of class communalism, another essential area of focus for culturally relevant teachers (Ladson-Billings, 2010).

Third, Lauren holds high expectations for the activities and projects as indicated in her description of what she wanted her students to understand or explore about the relationship between FDR and Greenfield that was beyond mere recall. This is an important distinction to consider, since earlier she discussed how this is more difficult to do when helping students learn background information. Thus we see that she does have high standards for her students and is aware of their importance. Finally, these student-centered projects serve as more authentic

assessments of her students' learning, because she is allowing them to as she says, "Prove to me what you know using your strengths." Recall that alternative assessments provide ELL's a forum from which they can demonstrate the social studies content knowledge and skills that they have learned (Cruz & Thorton, 2009). Lauren finds this to be true for *all* of her low-income students of color, which is consistent with Loewen's (2010) assertion that students in the social studies classroom should be given more opportunities for authentic, student-centered assessments.

5.4.3   Providing Multiple Perspectives: Examples and Challenges

When we discussed the inclusion of multiple perspectives, Lauren again noted that this was easier to incorporate when she taught seventh grade Eastern cultures since learning about other cultures is built into the curriculum. She finds multiple perspectives more difficult to include in her Greenfield Studies class. Nevertheless, she gave an example of when she asks students to take on the perspective of Native Americans during Removal:

> Pretty much my entire unit with Removal is writing journal entries or drawing – whatever their strength is – from the perspective of Native Americans. And I ask a lot of questions like, "If the government of Dewberry County said that all Latinos had to leave today, how would that affect your family? How would you feel?" And they really like doing that. It definitely gives them a lot of perspective.

She also has students take on the perspectives of enslaved and free Africans, but this can be challenging for her. As she explains:

> Because we are Greenfield history, we talk a lot about slavery and coming from Africa. So we tap into that resource a lot. We do a lot of, um, you know, "What if you were in

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that situation? And what if you were a free African-American living in the South? I feel like I give them the opportunity to be the center of [attention], for everybody to think what it's like to be them. But I've heard a lot of my other students saying, "Well, why can't we do this about my group?" And it's hard… I use it because, you know, it's Greenfield history. So I try and do that a lot, but it's almost like walking on eggshells, because I feel like if I do something like that, it's going to upset another group. So tapping into culture and stuff, it's kind of hard to do because of that risk. So I don't do it as much as I'd like to, I guess, is what I'm saying.

In a later conversation, she reiterated this challenge, "The question I always get is, what about Mexicans? Well, there really weren't many Mexicans here yet." Since few Mexicans had yet to move to Greenfield at this historical time period of the curriculum, Lauren finds it challenging to include this group's perspective compared to the perspectives of African Americans. Because of the tension between African American students and Hispanic students throughout her building (see Section 5.3), Lauren finds that including *all* cultural groups is essential, but not easy.

Another activity that provides students the opportunity to take on multiple perspectives, although not *cultural* perspectives per se, is called the "Six Hats" activity.

Each hat represents a different way of thinking, so there's like, a physical way of thinking about something, an emotional way of thinking, a positive way, a negative way. And I present them with a problem or some situation. And, depending on the size of the class, I might have them at a station set up for each hat, and when they go they have the same situation, but they have to think about it a different way. Or sometimes I'll put them in a group of six, and each student has one hat that they wear, and they have to come up with some sort of a way to solve the problem together with the individual ways of thinking.

Lauren further explained that she often will match a student's strength to a specific hat or way of thinking and puts them into groups accordingly where, as she says they "come up with some really incredible things, ways of thinking." She says she determines this strength from the multiple intelligences quiz she administered earlier in the year as well as observations she has made throughout the course of the year.

Thus far, Lauren has only used the "Six Hats" activity with her gifted students. She said that she could do it with her other students, but would have to "change it up a lot." When I asked her about using this activity to take on *cultural* perspectives, she reflected that this would be a good activity for her other classes, particularly when they studied The Civil Rights Movement, because she could have students take on the perspective of Mexican Americans in addition to African Americans during this time.

The Six Hats activity provides another example of how Lauren's teaching is characterized by a strengths-based approach, which is one foundation of CRP (Banks, 2007; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2010). In regards to providing multiple perspectives of culture, Lauren values this practice and at times includes activities designed for students to understand different perspectives; however, this does not seem to be a focal point of her practice. Lauren admits that she would like to include this more, but personally finds this difficult due to the tensions between groups in her school. These tensions indicate how important it is to provide her students with the opportunity to begin to understand the historical perspectives and current experiences of one another's cultural and racial groups. These tensions also suggest how important it is for social studies educators to facilitate dialogue regarding social foundations and societal inequities. As discussed earlier, this civil discourse is a critical

component of CRP and essential to the function of a democracy (Banks 2007; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Hess, 2002; 2004)

At one point during conversations, Lauren commented on her students' awareness of racial inequality. It was just after Martin Luther King Day, and Lauren made note of the previous day's lesson:

I had the students write their own *I Have a Dream* speech. And I was reading through them today, and so many of them said, "I wish that Martin Luther King's dream was achieved," because they still don't feel like there's equality. And it's not even necessarily their race that is not getting it, but they see it everywhere. They see it in the classroom. They see it outside. So they're very aware of that.

I also asked Lauren about her survey in which she answered "Strongly Agree" to the prompt, "I guide my students towards critically analyzing the current social, economic, and political inequities in the country and the world at large." She explained that in her enrichment class, she has her students read a lot of current events articles and watch newscasts to "know what's going on in the world" and to "identify different biases." She noted that this group of students is fairly gifted, because the lower levels of students needed enrichment time for math and language arts. Lauren does engage her other students in discussions about inequity in her other classes, although as discussed below, they focus more on school and local issues.

5.4.4 Discussions on Inequity: Examples and Challenges

Lauren talked about two specific instances in which she has class-wide discussions about inequity. The first she thought was quite thought- provoking for her students and the second was a discussion she found to be more challenging. In the first example, she used topics related

to the students and Dewberry School as an entry point, and then the conversation extended into issues concerning Dewberry County and Metropolis:

L: We talked about free and reduced lunch and their feelings on it and also parental responsibility and truancy: whose responsibility is it? So there was that aspect. You know, is it the parent or the student's responsibility? And also with the free and reduced lunch, should students be offered free and reduced lunch if they're buying Jordans? And they really had good debates, "Well, you know, a lot of these students maybe don't need free and reduced lunch but some students are truly functioning much lower socioeconomically than others, but we're all treated poor. You know, everybody here– Everybody knows our cluster's the poor cluster – But are we?" So they all had very different things to say about that. A lot of them didn't believe that we are considered the "Ghetto" cluster. That's just the county's idea of what we are. It was an interesting debate. I pulled maps to show the socioeconomic areas of metro Metropolis, and they were very confused as to why here in Dewberry County, why we're considered low socioeconomic [status]. And it's just very interesting to see their reactions on that. "We can afford the Jordans, and we can afford the Abercrombie."

T: Do you talk about why those notions exist?

L: Well, we talk about a lot of that with Greenfield history and kind of like White flight and a lot of just historical stuff I bring into it. But we do talk about, you know; let's think about Metropolis public schools. There's [wealthy area in north Metropolis], and then there's [poor area in South Metropolis]. Just because it's Metropolis and Metropolis is considered a wealthy area. But you know, you have very different areas in one region. So we just talk about our town and the differences and I try to help them understand why

this is considered a Title I school, why we get this funding, why we can't use the funding to get more teachers, and why we have to use it for this and that. Just really openly talking about it.

The point of Lauren's conversation with her students was to help them learn and discuss inequities in their community and the region of Metropolis. Although the impact of the conversation cannot be evaluated here, Lauren thought it was a good conversation and that she has a lot of open conversations with her students. Although she said that conversations like these often occur naturally and are impromptu, in the following example Lauren describes a time when she planned for a discussion on a crime that just occurred in the area. This also posed some difficulty for Lauren:

Well the big thing is they all wear Jordans now. They're like 150 bucks. So I pulled this article. And that kind of got me thinking, "Well, let's talk about it," so I did pull an article. It was in Metropolis. And there was a new type of Jordans coming out at our main mall, and there was a crime; it was a shooting. And it wasn't in the news. And I tried to use that as, like, "Well, let's talk about this." But then they all just started arguing and talking about the shoes and saying, "Who cares if Black people shoot Black people. It doesn't matter." And then it just – I literally became this, "Oh, I don't want to be talking about this anymore. It's uncomfortable." They did not take it the way I wanted them to take it. So that was the only time I ever really planned on doing something with that. Otherwise, it's a very organic conversation.

This scenario offers a few lessons on class discussions of inequity. First, as discussed in the review of literature, understanding the sociocultural inequities of students and their families is an important prerequisite to CRP because it helps teachers understand how students' experiences

might impact their choices, behaviors, and reactions to one another (Banks, 2007; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Milner, 2010). Based upon our conversations and her screening survey, Lauren has at least a base level of critical consciousness; however, she may have used this to better anticipate her students' reactions. This further suggests that "having" critical consciousness, or a culturally relevant mindset does not necessarily mean that a social studies teacher is able to conduct topic or issue-based discussions effectively or even be prepared to address critical topics as they occur spontaneously in the social studies classroom. This notion is substantiated by social studies research that finds the effective facilitation of discussions requires insightful preparation and carefully constructed practices that go beyond merely asking questions and getting answers (Hess, 2004), especially in a culturally diverse classroom (Hess, 2004; Wilen, 2004). Further implications for teacher education relative to discussion practices are discussed in Chapter Nine.

Second, both of the above scenarios highlight why it is so important for culturally relevant teachers to develop trusting relationships with their students. A teacher who purposefully builds caring and respectful relationships with her students is more likely to have impactful conversations with them about subjects that are "touchy," place students in vulnerable positions, and/or make students feel defensive. Students are more likely to open up in conversations like these when they trust that the teacher's intention is not to judge them. Despite the fact that she was uncomfortable with the direction of the conversation, Lauren was at least willing to take the risk of having these discussions with her students because she had already built trustworthy relationships with them based upon mutual respect. The fact that she had difficulty facilitating this conversation among students confirms why relationship building *among* students is an essential facet of CRP (Alder, 2002; Banks, 2007, Gay, 2010; Grant &

Sleeter, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2010; Milner, 2010; Valenzuela, 1999) and shows how challenging this can be when group tensions permeate an entire grade or the whole school.

5.5 LAUREN: CHALLENGES TO CULTURALLY RELEVANT TEACHING

In addition to her struggles outlined in the sections above, it was evident throughout our conversations that Lauren faces other challenges to her engagement in CRP. The first of these is what she feels is a lack of support for her ESL students. Second, the lack of parental involvement also poses a challenge. This aspect came about during a general conversation we had about the difficulties faced by many of her students' families and communities, which in turn impact their involvement with the school. Finally, Lauren finds that the most significant challenge to her culturally relevant practices is the lack of administrative support. The following subsections describe each of these three challenges.

5.5.1 Lack of Support for ESL Students

A significant challenge discussed by Lauren is the overall structure of her ESL students' coursework, which changed after her initial principal left the school. The first two years she taught at Dewberry, students new to the U.S. were pulled from their social studies and science classes to take an English skills course. In math and language arts, these students also had an ESL push- in teacher in addition to the content teacher to help them in these courses. Lauren explained that when the new lead administrator came two years ago; she changed this structure

so that all level one ESOL students took both science and social studies but not English. Although there is an ESOL support person in the building, students do not have an ESOL teacher in their social studies class. Lauren believes her students have suffered academically due to this change. As she explains:

> I had one sixth- grade class that year, I had them in seventh grade, and then I had them in eighth grade last year when I moved up here. I saw them grow so much. Our writing scores were phenomenal. They pulled that program away two years ago, so these students never got that. They sit in social studies class and science class having no idea what's going on. They're sitting in classes of 35 to 40. I'd say in one of my classes, there's nine students who don't speak any English, and they're bored. They have no idea what's going on, and it's not *their* [emphasis added] fault – they're not getting any help.

Lauren also explained that in sixth and seventh grade, students are not required to pass a state mandated test for science and social studies, and that in eighth grade they are required to pass their classes but technically do not have to pass the state exam for social studies to move to the next grade. I asked Lauren to clarify her position as to if she thought that students did not need to learn the state's history because it was more important that they learn English. Her response highlights the essence of this challenge:

> It's not that I don't think it's important for them to learn Greenfield history, only because that's – if this is an American history class, it'd be one thing. [But] they don't need this information. Students who are level one, entering-the-country don't even have to take this test, so sitting in here; they're not getting a good [education]. Yeah, they're getting vocabulary, but they're getting vocabulary like, "international cotton expedition." None of those words mean anything to them. They need to be getting, like, "literacy,"

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"segregation," things like that. But, unfortunately – Yeah, we talk about those in my class, but they took Greenfield history in fourth grade also, so they're expected to know those things. So my students who are coming in from other countries who don't know those things are lost. They don't even know where Greenfield is in America. This means nothing to them. It would just, in my opinion, be so much more helpful if they could be getting English language skills so that when they do sit in a history class, they know what segregation is.

This passage speaks to the lack of curricular meaning as well as prerequisite content knowledge faced by ELL's new to the country as discussed in earlier in this chapter. It also helps us understand why Lauren feels that her students would be more successful under the previous structure. In our first conversation, Lauren explained the ESOL teacher had "begged" the lead administrator to reinstate the old program for the past year and a half. Lauren expounded on data she and ESOL teacher compiled and brought to her principal as well:

We looked at their data from the first two years and how they did, having those two years of English language skills, and that group – the ESL group did phenomenal. And we compared it to the percentages of the seventh grade group who did not get that program, which are my eighth graders today. And the data was very different. And so we just used that data just to show her those types of skills are necessary. They need to know it, and they can't survive sitting in a classroom if there's no support.

Lauren expressed her frustration at her administrator's dismissiveness of the former structure. She passionately described the plight of an ESL teacher, who she found crying in the hallway on the day of our first conversation:

Today we actually had our eighth grade writing test. Right before I picked you up, I just

caught her in the hallway crying because she feels we have pushed these kids so hard but

haven't given them what they need. We write in boot camps, where they met after school

twice or three times a week and on Saturdays, and these kids don't have any fun

connections to classes because they're taking extra math classes and extra writing classes.

But really, they're burnt out. And we push them so hard that she feels like we failed

them. And what we saw with that program we had before – we took them out of the

classes that they didn't need because they don't have to pass those classes. So they're not

getting what they need and they're being pushed so hard… They're silent in the

hallways. They have no time to talk to their friends, so when they are in the class, they

are talking like crazy. So we feel like we worked them too hard and they just were

exhausted. So she was really upset because she doesn't think that we had a good passage

rate at all compared to last year's kids who had that program with the other principal.

When I asked her if these program changes were due to financial reasons or a difference of

philosophy, she thought it was the latter. In our second conversation, Lauren indicated that the

principal had recently created an elective class for English language skills, which indicated to

Lauren that perhaps she was beginning to see the value in the former structure. However, the

ESOL teacher did not accept the offer because she was soon leaving the school: "She's actually

leaving our school because of this, because it's a huge problem. Everything that they're not

doing for our students, she just can't even work with it anymore because it's terrible, what we're

not doing for them."

5.5.2   Lack of Parental Involvement

When we discussed her students' families and communities, Lauren first stated that almost all of her students had families, that they were very family- oriented, and that in addition to having many brothers and sisters, many of them lived with extended families. As discussed in Section 5.3.2, she uses the family unit to help her students understand certain concepts. Lauren believes that parents and families care about their children's education:

> They take care of their families; their families take care of them. And we know this because of those student engagement surveys. And, yes, their parents don't contact us and it seems they don't care about education, but as a family, we know that they do care, so we bring a lot of – well, I bring a lot of that into the classroom.

Despite this belief, Lauren notes a lack of parental involvement and support. Reasons for this include the socioeconomic struggles of families, the language barrier, difficulty contacting parents, and the fact that she believes many teachers in her building are condescending to parents. In regards to struggles faced by her students and their parents, Lauren explains:

> From what I've gathered based on parent conferences and such, many of our parents are working two or three jobs. Our students are raising their brothers and sisters. A lot of my students have jobs as well. School is just not the number one priority in their lives. We also have a lot of gang involvement at this school, and that plays into factor. It seems like we have two Hispanic gangs that seem to be kind of competing a lot, and I don't really know the names of them. We have a zero tolerance policy here, and if there's any gang symbolism or colors or anything, they're pulled immediately, so I surprisingly don't see it a lot, but I know it's going on at home. But we don't – which I find strange – we don't get a lot of education ourselves on it [gangs], which is something I wish that our

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school provided, because we have a lot of girls getting pregnant because of gang initiation. In the past four years that I've been here, I've had nine students, nine girls, who have been pregnant. Some of them come back to school; some of them don't.

Lauren also discussed the challenge of the language barrier:

Most of our parents do not speak English, and it's very difficult to contact them. The community – our principal goes out to apartment complexes and speaks to parents. I'd say five or six people will show up. So there's a group of people who want to try, who want to get involved, but they just don't know how because they – it's a difference of language. It's very different.

Lauren explained that the school has translators who speak Vietnamese, Farsi, Korean, and Spanish who are all willing to help contact parents; however, even when a translator is available to call home, students' home phone lines are often disconnected or the students have moved. She noted that this was especially true for her Spanish-speaking students. To encourage family involvement, Lauren says that her school has "a great community outreach program" with a community liaison:

We have an entire person who that's their entire job is reaching out. All of our correspondence goes home in Spanish and English. We have things like math and science night, open houses, curriculum night, and concerts. We have all sorts of stuff. And I play with the students at our band concerts, and there's a ton of parents there. It's jam-full. But when it comes to academics, not so much. I think in my curriculum night this year I met three parents.

Lauren thinks that parents are aware of these events because the school sends home flyers, text messages, and e-mail blasts. The school also has a website. Thus, she contends that there is

another reason why parents feel comfortable attending non-academic events but do not attend academic meetings:

> I do know that conferences are intimidating because a lot of parents don't want to be yelled at, you know, "Why aren't you doing your job?" And I know that a lot of parents – there is a good amount of teachers here who kind of speak down to parents without knowing their story, and I know that there's a lot of parents who just choose not to come in because they don't want to be yelled at by teachers. And I don't blame them. You know, we don't know their life.

Lauren seems to understand that there are profound circumstances for the lack parental involvement versus a simple lack care; nevertheless, she is still frustrated by the end result. She notes that her students from Vietnam, whose parents are very involved in the school, acquire English very quickly and test into gifted courses after about one year. Lauren sees how much her Vietnamese parents "push education and are very involved" and compares this to the experience of her Hispanic students. However, she says, "It's not necessarily a cultural thing. It's more of – they have more important things that have to be done is what it is, [in order] to survive."

Lauren's contemplations about parents and families and their lack of involvement show the challenges faced by teachers of low-income students of color when considering how to be involved with households and the community. As noted by Lauren and in the literature (Gibson, 1997), parents are often disenchanted or intimidated by an institution that has historically failed them, as well as by teachers who admonish them. Also recall that many of Lauren's African American students are bused in from several different counties, thus adding another challenge of how to make connections with families and communities unless they come to the school.   These

circumstances have implications for TEPs and professional development, as I discuss in Chapter Nine.

Lauren believes that hardships faced by her students' households contribute to the lack of school involvement of both students and their households. She explains that since most of her students come from single parent homes, they must work, take care of family members, and/or turn to gangs, because they are simply trying to survive. Lauren does not assume, however, that her students' families are facing hardships because of laziness or some sort of cultural pathology. As demonstrated earlier, she views her students' families as cultural capital. Furthermore, her comments about students' households did not seem inadvertently or blatantly judgmental, and when Lauren talked about how much she enjoyed her students, I did not find these comments inadvertently or blatantly condescending either. She could however, benefit from more knowledge on how social constructs and institutions impact her students. For example, Lauren herself finds it unusual that she has never had any professional development regarding her students' gang involvement.

5.5.3   Lack of Administrative Support

When I specifically asked Lauren about what challenges her engagement of CRP, she initially mentioned an overall lack of support at the county level, noting that since the county she teaches in is wealthy, they did not understand her needs as a teacher of low-income students of color. For example, although the county was sending her school some smart boards, she would rather have professional development in learning more Spanish, learning about her students' gang life, or learning new teaching techniques to "get them interested in being here."

When I asked her what supports her teaching, Lauren replied, "It's all just personal, wanting them to do well." She also stated that her only source of support came from other teachers in the building who were "passionate" and "very dedicated people." As she explains:

This is a very difficult school to work at. All the teachers here are very young. They are the hardest working people I have ever met in my entire life, super dedicated. Two years ago, three of the four teachers on my team went to the hospital for panic, blood pressure, or heart attack. So it's [support] all coming from teachers. It's not coming from administration.

Lauren then contrasted the current lack of administrative support with the support she felt under her former principal. As she explained:

He actually was a professor at State University. He came here and he turned the school around in four years. Incredible. And he decided that his job was done here and he wanted to go to another low-income school and turn it around. And he's in his second year at that school and making a lot of progress. But this school, all the progress he made is just gone. And I spoke with him a while ago, and he slightly regrets leaving because of all the hard work we all put into it. And all the teachers that he hired, half of them left last year. The other half are probably leaving this year because there's just no support.

At the time of our first interview, Lauren had plans to meet with her old principal who works in an urban high school in Metropolis in hopes that she can transfer to his school. As she explains, "[The school is] also low income, very diverse, but he just has a very different philosophy on how to deal with it. When he was here, this school was incredible, so it's really gone downhill."

6.0   ASHLEY MONTGOMERY

I feel like every time I plan a lesson I want people to feel like I want to be culturally relevant. And I always ask for their suggestions. So I would say, you know, "We're all doing this together. I want it to be fun for you. I don't want history to be boring. I want you to do it the way that you're good at it."

This chapter is comprised of five main sections that provide both results and analysis of my conversations with Ashley. The first section describes Ashley's life experiences that led her to her undergraduate teacher education program (TEP), her master's degree program, and her doctoral studies. Section two contextualizes her current school and classroom. In section three, I provide details on Ashley's culturally relevant classroom practices and in section four and I talk about Ashley's relationships with her students and her communication with their families. In five, I discuss challenges to Ashley's culturally relevant teaching and the final section outlines Ashley's future plans in education. Each of these sections provides insight as to how Ashley approaches her culturally relevant pedagogy and the challenges in doing so.   Lauren's perceptions about her TEP are discussed in Chapter Seven.

6.1 ASHLEY: LIFE EXPERIENCE PRIOR TO ATTENDING STATE U

Ashley is a married White female in her late 20's. She grew up in a university town in Greenfield about 208 miles away from State U. According to Ashley, the town is made up of approximately 20,000 people and more than 20,000 university students. Throughout our conversations, Ashley described this town and her family background in several interesting ways that warrant discussion.

Ashley explained that there has always been a schism between the locals, who live far out of town and are more social and politically conservative, and the university professors and their families, who are socio-politically more liberal. When she was young, Ashley attended a Dewey Laboratory school that was connected to the university, as did her grandfather. After she attended the school for six years, however, the school closed because the local community no longer wanted to spend their tax dollars on the financial support of the school. Ashley says this was despite the fact that "People wanted their children to go there. And everyone that went to that school with me, we were all honor graduates from our large high school. The one high school in our town."

Another important aspect of Ashley's town and her family is its history of racial segregation and blatant racism. In 1969, her grandfather helped open a private high school, which Ashley says was in direct response to desegregation and a common trend in the South in 1969. Interestingly, however, Ashley did not attend this private high school because her mother did not like the school when she had attended it. As Ashley explains, "She didn't really have any friends because it was such a different [higher] social class." Ashley explained that another reason she attended the local public school was because it provided her musical opportunities that the private high school did not.

Several times during our discussions, Ashley described growing up with racist comments made by her family and local community members as the norm. During her middle school years, Ashley was not permitted to invite her "school friends," who were her African American classmates from Girl Scouts and cheerleading, to her home. Although Ashley went to public high school with 70% African American students, none of these students were in her classes because they were tracked in the "tech-prep" classes; thus, she did not know any African American students at school. Ashley explains how she felt about racism during this time:

> And I would say that I was nice, like even when my family would often make [racist] comments growing up, I never made any comments or said things like that. I just always felt like it was wrong, internally, to treat people like that, and so I might have been associated with people that made comments at school, but I would never be the person that would say the comments.

Ashley grew up in a very religious family, and during her undergraduate work was part of a church related program, Cross-Trainers, in which she mentored a primary school aged, low-income African American female. This was a transformative experience for Ashley that sparked her interest in teaching students of color as well as later decisions to attend State U and change her teaching context from an all White rural school to a diverse urban high school in Metropolis.

In regards to her socioeconomic class, Ashley discussed that even though her father's family was from a relatively high SES, she did not view her immediate family as particularly wealthy, because most of her cultural capital came from her grandparents. As she explains:

> I thought my socioeconomic status to me has always felt more inflated because of my dad's parents. We lived in a normal sized home and I always had nicer things than people that lived in my exact neighborhood because my grandmother would buy them for

me. Like, I had the nicest clarinet in the band. My grandmother bought that. Then my other grandmother would pay for private tumbling, cheerleading lessons and tennis lessons. When my parents got divorced, I mean, it was different, but I still appeared to be in a higher socioeconomic class than I really was.

Ashley expounded on the fact that her family is conservative in regards to political, economic, and social issues. Many of the conservative values Ashley was raised upon are in direct contrast to her culturally relevant teaching and social justice in general. Ashley admits that at times this creates internal conflict for her as well as somewhat of a division between her and her family. The impacts of Ashley's internal struggle on her culturally relevant teaching are discussed later in this chapter as well as in Chapter Eight.

After spending her first year of undergraduate school at the local university, Ashley transferred to a larger university (from this point forward referred to as University B) in the state of Greenfield for the remainder of her undergraduate work. Originally she wanted to study marketing or accounting, but found that she did not enjoy those courses as much as her government and political science courses. Since she did not want to be a lawyer, she perused the university's book of majors and thought that she would like teaching social studies and be successful at it. She actually wanted to teach government, since as a child she did not particularly like history: "I hated history growing up. I always felt like it was these rich people, plus my teacher was horrible, but I hated it, and when you read it, it's so boring." This disdain for history, as well as her early schooling experiences at the lab school, would later have a major influence on her culturally relevant practices. After beginning her coursework in teacher education, she continued to feel quite drawn to teaching and remained in the teacher education

program (TEP) at University B, where she earned a B.A. in political science and her B.S. Ed. in social studies education with an English as a Second Language (ESOL) endorsement.

While working on her master's degree Ashley taught full time in an all White rural school. Noting her desire to learn more about diversity and urban education, Ashley subsequently enrolled in State U where she received her Specialist's Degree and eventually took a teaching position in a high school in Metropolis. She is currently a doctoral student studying Social Studies Education at State U and a remains a full time secondary social studies teacher.

6.2   ASHLEY: GENERAL TEACHING CONTEXT

This is Ashley's second year teaching U.S. History and World History at a large charter high school in the Metropolis Metro Area. "Charter High School" is an International Baccalaureate school of about 1,634 students. The student body is approximately 42% White, 29% African American, 21% Latino/Hispanic, 4.3%, Asian/Pacific Islander, 3.4% Multiracial and .1% American Indian/Alaskan. Thirty-three percent of students are eligible for free or reduced lunch (National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES], n.d). Ashley contends that students are bused in from areas that are typically segregated schools that are either predominantly African American or White. Busing also results in her charter school being much more racially and socioeconomically diverse than the area in which it is located. In regards to socio-economic status, Ashley says that her students are "extremely spread out," and even though the houses around the school are "huge," her Hispanic students, the majority of whom are zoned for the school, are from lower income households.

Ashley's school has an extended day, and after school she coaches the women's tennis team. As Ashley explains, she teaches several different types of classes:

> I teach U.S. history for second period. Third period, I'm in a classroom while the teacher is teaching U.S. history and I'm the ESOL teacher. We're in a push in. Then I teach U.S. history again, and that time I have a teacher helping me and we're teaching half special education and half general education kids. Then I teach sheltered world history which is just ESOL in the room. And then I teach one more U.S. history, part special ed, part gen ed. And there is no teacher in the room with me.

Ashley also has an additional class in which she prepares ESOL students for standardized testing. Although the students in her ESOL classes are primarily Latino/Hispanic, Ashley says that students in her general education classes and her push-in class represent the overall demographics of the school. Her history classes are made of mostly eleventh graders and her sheltered ESOL world history class is made up of mostly tenth graders. This is a small class, with approximately ten students. Her general education classes are larger. Like Anthony and Lauren, Ashley does not use the assigned textbook, but instead relies on her content and pedagogical knowledge to create lessons that she feels are more impactful for her students' learning than the text. She also contends that this more adequately prepares them with test-taking skills necessary to do well on standardized exams.

6.3   ASHLEY'S TEACHING PRACTICES

Ashley's explains that her teaching practices are an amalgamation of all of her TEP, her Masters and Specialist Degrees, and the courses she continues to take in her doctoral degree. The impact of all three of these education programs on her current practice is discussed in Chapter Seven. Another point of interest discussed in Chapter Seven is the tension between her more recent recognition of the structural inequities based upon race, sociocultural, and/or linguistic status and how this awareness often clashes with the conservative values on which she raised.

Ashley believes that she has to make her U.S. history class fun for her students so they are more open to learning U.S. history and geography. When she speaks about her teaching practices, Ashley often says that she seeks to empower her students of color. Descriptions of her classroom practices are organized into the following categories: one, providing multiple perspectives and teaching students how to be critical of the curriculum order to negotiate it; two, varying assignments and assessments and providing students with choices; three, teaching students about inequity; and four, helping students negotiate mainstream society.

6.3.1   Multiple Perspectives and Critiquing Significant People, Events, and Themes in U.S. History

When Ashley and I first discussed her teaching practices, she explained that the curriculum does not include the perspectives of women and people of color beyond those who are merely highlighted in little boxes or in the margins of the U.S. history book. Therefore she does not use a textbook, but rather engages students with primary sources, supplemental readings, and a variety of activities to help them critique the U.S. History curriculum and critically evaluate the

people, events and concepts in her U.S. history curriculum. Ashley firmly believes that these practices empower her students of color. As she explains:

> I love to make the kids feel powerful about things that happen and for them to feel like they can criticize whoever they want. Like, Andrew Jackson—do you think he's a hero or do you think he's a villain and why? And we always evaluate the Greenfield curriculum. Like, why is the Trail of Tears not in the U.S. history curriculum for [Greenfield]? Because the [people of Greenfield] did it. And like, with the kids, we pick out something Greenfield leaves out. Like, I showed them, "Why do you think that we don't include things? Because we're Greenfield and we're super conservative and we don't." I think it's ridiculous that the Trail of Tears is not in the Greenfield curriculum. They said they learn it in eighth grade, but I really wanted to incorporate my students into my class, bring people in, women, African-Americans, or Latinos.

Another strategy Ashley uses is having her students read children's books relevant to U.S. history. Often this is because she can find children's books that are written from the multiple perspectives of people of color. At other times, Ashley uses children's books because they provide her students with the opportunity to evaluate how history is presented to younger children in the United States. For example:

> Well, I use a lot of children's books, and I use those to have the kids evaluate what they are learning when they are small children and, like, why we get these perceptions that Christopher Columbus was a good man when he killed all these people. Or they can decide that. So I use children's books. We evaluate, like are they good or bad and I use that a lot because it's easier for me to bring people into the curriculum and accommodate all different reading levels in the classroom.

Ashley explained that students are given different books based upon their individual reading levels. Although the process of researching and selecting a variety of books can be time consuming, she finds this approach much more effective and engaging than the curriculum provided. She also has been able to build her library of books over the course of the past four years, which she says makes it easier over time.

Additionally, Ashley uses jigsaws to help students learn background information by giving each group a reading from a different perspective, whether this is from a person or about an event. She also cites several resources, such as the work of historian Howard Zinn, as helpful in providing her students with a variety of perspectives. This helps her students develop critical thinking skills while offering them viewpoints outside of the traditional textbook narratives:

> We do a lot of jigsaws where I have the kids read different parts of (inaudible) time. I do a lot of news articles, things from PBS. Different things from different time periods comparing and contrasting, like, a story that might put Thomas Jefferson in a good light and a story that might put him in a poor light and have the kids decide what they think. I try to bring in as many sources as I can. I also use different things from [Howard] Zinn. I have a Zinn comic book, *From Imperialism On*. It's awesome. I use a lot of comics for reading because I feel like my kids are at a lower reading level than they should be so… and do you know the University of Virginia made these things called *Chester the Crab*, and this crab goes through this historical times. So they read that. It's funny. And they might compare that to Howard Zinn's cartoon that is asking different questions throughout.

In addition to reading multiple perspectives, Ashley finds it important for her students to share their thoughts and opinions about these multiple viewpoints:

And we just have a lot of discussions. I might say, read this brief on the Spanish American War that I'm going to give you. It's going to have no bias, really. It's just going to tell you the facts. And I want you to think, should we have entered the war? What would you have done? And let's discuss. Sit with people that are alike in the same opinion. And then, I try to tell them when they give me opinions for things that I don't want them to know what their friends put because I don't want them to decide their opinion based on their friends. And then I split them up based on their opinion, so we move around a lot. They sit in groups.

Ashley also offered another example of this in a later conversation:

And so when they're, like, assessing whether or not Christopher Columbus was good or bad and they're reading these different perspectives. [Was he] a hero or a villain? Reading these different accounts, they're getting all the different parts – tell me about the Columbian Exchange. Was that positive or negative?

In many ways Ashley's practices of providing multiple cultural and racial perspectives and contrasting viewpoints, then engaging her students in critique, is a variation of what is discussed in the review of the literature as "doing history" by Loewen (2010). Her students are learning about people and events through resources outside of the curriculum that allow them to critique how and why history is presented in particular ways. She explains that her intention behind this approach is to have her students explore the historical myths present in, and parts of history eliminated from, current U.S. history textbooks and develop critical thinking skills. This is consistent with Loewen's (2010) philosophy on how social studies education should be approached to avoid the "tyranny of coverage" in which the vast amount of material in a history textbook must be covered, leaving students either overwhelmed or disinterested. Ashley

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contends that her students are much more engaged in this type of work than they would be with reading and lecture and that critiquing U.S. history is empowering for her students of color, because as Ashley says, "I feel like it's empowering for them to see the White man isn't always the best or is the best."

6.3.2   Various Activities and Assessments for Empowerment

As mentioned in Section 6.3.1 and throughout our conversations, Ashley consistently used variations of the word "empower" to describe the intentions behind her teaching practices. This section offers a variety of examples what that means to her in regards to classroom activities and assessments, including: offering students choices in projects, engaging students in meaningful activities that use their funds of knowledge, strengths, and interests; allowing students to demonstrate their understanding in multiple ways; and utilizing interactive notebooks. Since Ashley uses her activities as both formative and summative assessments, it is often difficult to distinguish between the two; thus, they are discussed together in this section.

Ashley's overall approach to teaching is based upon the premise that "If the kids can connect to it, they'll remember it. Telling them what it is isn't going to [teach them]. They're not going to remember it." She claims that she has never lectured in her classroom, but that she provides students with meaningful activities so they will connect to the material taught. Below, Ashley describes how she engages students in various types of projects:

> I also always try to have things where kids pick things that are empowering to who they are, so they feel like they've aided in the history of our country. Also, we do a lot of projects. They create children's books, different models, plays, screen writes. Or letters that maybe if we actually did have letters from that time period, what would they have

said? Especially Native Americans, because a lot of that stuff was destroyed. What would it have been like to have been them?

Ashley also described a project she assigned in her U.S. history classes in with both native speakers and ESOL students are enrolled. This example demonstrates how she allows all students some degree of choice in their research topic as well as how she engaged her ESOL students in using their funds of household knowledge to complete the project:

We did a project at the beginning of the year. My native speakers picked different sports teams that were named after historical events and talked about why they would do that. Was that a positive or a negative? Well, that would have been really hard for the ESOL students because they don't know the sports teams to begin with because they just came, and also, I didn't want there to be an extreme disconnect.   Some of them were really far-fetched. You had to really research why these sports teams were named after historical events in history. So for them, for my ESOL kids, we did a comparative study of their home countries to the United States, like, as far as colonization, women's rights, alcohol, public schooling. And they compared this to their home country. So that was really cool. They also got to involve their parents into the curriculum. Because a lot of times, the parents feel like maybe they couldn't help, even though they really could. But this time, they were a powerful resource. "Mom, did women get to vote where we're from? Mom, when did women get to vote? Mom, did they ever have any alcohol here or were we ever a colony?" And that also made them feel powerful. Like, my Ethiopian student was so excited to find out he had never been a colony but the United States had been controlled before. So he felt empowered. And countries that allowed women to vote earlier [than

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the U.S], that was empowering. And also, just different laws that had been set [in their

native country]. So it was a great project.

Ashley asserts that engaging students in meaningful activities is empowering because it helps

them connect to the material and demonstrate their understanding in ways the lecture and

multiple-choice exams cannot.   She prefers her students create their own way to express their

understanding of the material taught:

> And I always ask for their suggestions. So I would say, you know, "We're all doing this
>
> together. I want it to be fun for you. I don't want history to be boring. I want you to do
>
> it the way that you're good at it."

For example, Ashley gives her students the autonomy to create their own projects. As she

explains, "I say, 'Represent – just show me that you've learned this any way you want. You

design the project.   You create the rubric.   Then we're going to go over the rubric together.'   In

another example, Ashley described a lesson in which she and her students discussed a political

cartoon regarding imperialism and asked students to create their own cartoon to show how they

understood imperialism. Then the class went around the room and voted on whom they thought

made the best cartoon. As Ashley showed me a picture of one student's cartoon on her Iphone,

she detailed:

> And so this kid drew Pac-Man, and the U.S.A. is eating Puerto Rico, and the students
>
> voted him as best cartoon. And he was so happy because this is in the push-in class [and
>
> he was ESOL].   He won.   He wanted me to take his picture to save it, because the
>
> students didn't know who did which one.   They just put the dry-erase boards out and
>
> everyone went around and they voted. And he won and he was like, "They voted for me
>
> and I'm ESOL!"   You know, [I know that] he understands. Like, if you can draw that

and you have Puerto Rico as, like, going in [to Pac-man's mouth], you know what imperialism is.

The above assessment activity demonstrates Ashley's overall approach to teaching. She tries to find ways for students to connect to material, make meaning of it, and demonstrate their understanding of themes in ways she believes are more authentic as compared to the assessment results of multiple-choice tests. Ashley contends that not only is this approach engaging for her students, but also it actually helps them remember information necessary to pass standardized exams because "They might not know the answer, but they might be able to connect it to something they learned to figure it out." For example, Ashley discussed a candy bar activity she uses with her students on Valentine's Day to help them learn about and remember U.S. Presidents:

So I do this thing on Valentine's Day every year where you pick one president, and you have to buy a candy bar that represents him. And it can't just be like, oh, he likes almonds. The piece of the candy bar has to represent his presidency. So they learn, and they have to present this. And all the kids in the room, they learn. So, I gave the example of Jimmy Carter and he would be like Mr. Goodbar, and he would was like the good old boy after Nixon. He was a peanut farmer, but then you go deeper into it. So the kids will, like, take an Almond Joy and will take it completely apart and they'll say like, this represents, like, the hurdles that he had to come over. And so the kids, when they do that, then I feel like they always – they said to me last year when they were taking that test at the end of the year, they're like, "I remember there was this question about Grover Cleveland, and I was like, remembering eating these Skittles and I remembered what [another student] said, that he represented these different things."

Ashley furthered, "I try to get them to dive in and not telling me just what the answer is. Like, I really want them to understand the symbolism or the connection to the thing. And the kids, you know, they really seem to like that." Below, Ashley outlines another teaching activity she believes her students find interesting and gives her an authentic assessment of their understanding.

> I have them read primary documents or speeches without the names of the person or the author on them and ask them, "What's happening? Who do you think is saying this? What do we know about this person from this writing?" I feel like then they connect and can remember it later. Sometimes I'll take the names off of presidents' speeches and ask them to evaluate the speech and sometimes they realize they like a president they didn't think they liked.

Despite Ashley's wide array of activities and assessments often led by student choice, she does experience challenges from time to time. For instance, Ashley described a lesson in which she engaged her ESOL students in a simulation that required her to take on the role of a different person. Unfortunately, her students did not understand why she was acting so strangely, resulting in their frustration and misunderstanding of the concept she was trying to help them experience. Ashley is also mindful not to generalize her students of color in regards to aligning their strengths with particular activities:

> I hate when people generalize and they will write these things like, "African-American children learn best from singing songs." You can't generalize. Sometimes I'll have them write rap songs. But that doesn't work for every group, not even every class in the whole day. Different classes. Different makeups.

Finally, Ashley uses an interactive notebook as a means of formative assessment. It also helps Ashley and her students stay organized. The interactive notebook, which is a three ring binder, is where students keep all of their class readings, daily work, and assignments. Ashley provided these for her students. She explains that the left side of the notebook is where she "gives them information" such as the readings, and the right side of the notebook is where her students show her that they understand the information:

So if I said, "Create a Tweet about this activity. Like, tweet about what this person might say." Or, like, we just did FDR and Hoover, so we had to use the hash tag "TeamHoover" or "TeamFDR." Like, "If you were an FDR when FDR was running against Hoover. If they had Instagram, what would they be taking pictures of?" So they already have the knowledge of what it is, and so on the right side, they're putting that stuff. Or create a CD. If there was a CD or if there was a song from today that you think you could relate back to how it represents what we're talking about. Like, "What song would that be and why? It's something I've done before and stopped and then done again. This time of the year, like, March, some of the kids are over it. Some of the kids still really like it. I don't know; I just go back and forth. I just like the idea of it all being together [in the notebook].

Ashley finds the notebook makes collecting student work more efficient and likes the fact that she does not have to bring loose papers home anymore. She then explained more ways in which she uses the notebook:

And you turn in your notebook on test day and I grade certain things. Or I give a pop quiz, and you can use your notebooks. So I'll say, "Turn to page 12 in your

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notebook. Tell me how these are…you know, maybe some examples of words you would use to describe this event," things of that nature.

The variety of activities and autonomy Ashley provides her students are representative of what Ashley believes are her students' strengths. She says that her students exceptionally creative:

The kids, the stuff they create is insane to me. Like, when I say represent – just show me that you've learned this any way you want. You design the project. You create the rubric. We're going to go over the rubric together, and the stuff they come in with, I'm constantly like, I can't wait to take this to a conference.

Ashley also finds her students are very open-minded and interested in reading and learning about other countries and the countries that their classmates are from. Ashley believes that since her school is an IB school, students attend with this expectation. Finally, Ashley also commented on her students willingness to have fun in history class: "And when I tell them that I'm trying to do all this fun stuff because I want school to be fun, then they're like, really open to that being fun too."

At first glance, Ashley's descriptions of her classroom activities and assessment may seem like a constructivist approach that is not necessarily culturally relevant. Constructivist classrooms are student-centered, interactive, and include a variety of activities and assessments outside of lecture, discussion, and testing. Teachers following constructivist principles promote student choice and autonomy, and the classroom environment adheres to some democratic principles such as choice (Brooks & Brooks, 1999; Dewey, 1938). Given this, it can be inferred that culturally relevant teaching is in some ways grounded in constructivist ideals and methods; however, as discussed below, there are some critical distinctions. In Ashley's case, although her classroom is based upon constructivist principals, in many ways it is also culturally relevant. For

example, Ashley does not view mainstream White middle class culture as superior and does not seek to teach or instill this value in her students. Recall in Section 6.3.1 the ways in which she seeks to provide her students with multiple perspectives because she wants them to connect to material to develop critical evaluative skills regarding U.S. history content, as well as to develop general critical thinking, writing, and discussion skills. In this way, Ashley's practice is culturally relevant (Cruz & Thorton, 2009; Journell & Castro, 2009; Loewen, 201; Martell, 2013; Short, 1994). Ashley also uses her ESOL students' funds of knowledge to complete research assignments and affords *all* of her students opportunities to demonstrate their understanding by using their strengths and interests, both of which are important area of focus for culturally relevant teaching. (Banks, 2007; Cruz & Thorton, 2009; Gay, 2010; Gonzolez et al., 2004; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2010; Short, 1994). Yet another feature of Ashley's teaching that distinguishes itself as culturally relevant is how she works to help her students of color recognize societal inequities and negotiate mainstream society, as described in the following section.

6.3.3   Teaching about Inequity

Ashley is very open with her students about racism throughout U.S. history and prioritizes its focus and discussion. During one of our conversations, Ashley lamented the fact that she had to teach WWII in a three-day period, as well as shorten all of her subsequent units already planned, because of school cancellations due to inclement weather. She expressed that this was frustrating because she was unable to discuss Jim Crow and Civil Rights within the context of WWII. Below, she shares her alternative plans to do so closer to the end of the year:

So I'm not happy with that. But what I'm going to do? We have five weeks at the end of the year. I'm just going to teach Civil Rights different and do all this African-American minority culture in my classroom and bring it back then. I still tried to speak to the fact that Jim Crow was still taking place [during WWII] while African Americans were fighting overseas: "How would you feel if your husband died for our country and you couldn't eat in a restaurant?" I try to bring these big racial issues up, because I feel like it's impactful to the kids and people should know that. Because a lot of times you're in wartime. No one's talking about Jim Crow, but it's still taking place. So I try to talk about that stuff, because I feel like they've all heard about Pearl Harbor a million times, so we didn't even discuss what happened on that day. We discussed that the Japanese came, but then we talked about what in the world was America thinking with putting Japanese-Americans into internment camps. And then there's a home battle going on, which is race. Racism caused the Holocaust, slavery, Trail of Tears. I try to take them through all that, because that's more important than knowing, like, December 17, 1941. You need to know that that's when the United States went crazy and put people that looked Japanese into camps and tried to say it was fine because they still got to go to school and work. Put them behind a barbed wire fence. I mean it wasn't that long ago.

This passage indicates that at least on some level, Ashley recognizes the historical nature of structural racism and wants her students to understand it as well. She finds that her U.S. history curriculum largely ignores these themes and therefore uses it as a focal point in her classes as another means of empowerment.

Ashley described other conversations about inequity held in her classroom, including the local gerrymandering of school districts, how her students of color are treated outside of school,

and how they feel about the majority of their teachers being White. Another conversation Ashley has had with her students is staying in school. She explained how her classes made a list of why students leave school:

> We make lists all the time. Like [about], why do people leave school? What are we going to do to get them to stay in school? What can I do to make them want to come to school every day or help them come to school every day? Is there something I can give the social worker to help them with to make school something they can do?

Conversations like these demonstrate Ashley's care for her students and her willingness to talk with them about issues specific to students of color. Ashley mentioned another topic of discussion: "Just perceptions people have. Like, we talk about what things people might think about you because of who you are before they even meet you. And I think it appeals even to the White students because I'm White." Ashley elaborated on this last point by explaining that she "[doesn't] look like someone that's like this super social justice advocator." She explained that her White students find her relatable because she dresses professionally and she is "not some raging person that's out in the streets, like, screaming and stuff." The following quote provides more contextual understanding as to what she meant by these comments:

> I feel like – I saw this bumper sticker the other day. It said don't judge my prejudices by my outfit, and I wanted to put that [on my car] because sometimes people come up to me and make comments like, "Oh my gosh. That's a Black kid. And I'm like, "What?!" and their response is, "Oh. You're one of *those* [emphasis added] people. Like, when people say that, I'm like, no. I love *all* [emphasis added] kids.

This brings up an interesting notion regarding Ashley's views on what social justice advocators look and sound like. It also speaks to the struggle she encounters between her conservative

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upbringing and her current culturally relevant teaching (see Chapter Seven). Given this tension, it is not surprising that at times Ashley's language signifies that she holds some deficit perspectives or that she is on some level engaging in White savior response. However, Ashley recognizes her White privilege, is cognizant of these issues, and seeks to work through them as she engages in CRP. Conversations between Ashley and I about these issues are explored more deeply in Chapter Seven. For now, however, I assert that Ashley's classroom practices are indeed culturally relevant. The continual development of cultural and racial consciousness, as well as culturally relevant teaching, is a lifelong process that requires a commitment on the part of the teacher for constant reflexivity that Ashley demonstrates. As Milner (2010) suggests, where you come from is not as important as the self-examination of your racial and sociocultural beliefs and the culturally relevant teaching processes you elect to engage in. Therefore, to claim that Ashley is not culturally relevant because she is a work in progress would be short sighted and inaccurate.

Although Ashley certainly works to help her students identify inequities and negotiate mainstream society, the impact of these conversations on her students is unknown. As earlier discussed in Section 6.4.4, however, she likely has developed a rapport and level of trust at least with some students to have the types of class-wide conversations she describes. Building trustworthy relationships with students that respect their cultural backgrounds and identities is another central tenet of CRT as discussed in the review of the literature (Banks, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 2010; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011). Furthermore, it would seem that class discussions on inequity would help her students better understand one another, and therefore help build respectful relationships among students as well – another area of focus in a culturally

relevant classroom described in the review of the literature (Alder, 2002; Banks, 2007, Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2010; Milner, 2010; Valenzuela, 1999).

Ashley's conversations about inequity in her classroom indicate that racial and cultural consciousness, authentic relationships (Banks, 2007; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Milner, 2010) and education for teachers on how to plan for controversial conversations in a social studies classroom (Hess, 2004; Wilen, 2004) together are more likely to result in effective discussions about societal inequities than if only one or two of these elements are present. When conversations such as these are approached in this manner, they are also more likely to promote a positive sense of community, which was discussed in the review of the literature as a central tenet of CRP (Grant & Sleeter, 2011).

6.3.4   Helping Students Negotiate Mainstream Society

When I specifically asked Ashley how she helps students negotiate mainstream society, she mentioned that she encourages her ESOL students to question the teacher and tries to help them understand that they have the right to do so. She believes that they are too reverent to teachers, including her. As Ashley notes, "They never want to tell me what lessons they don't like. They're very … It's a different respect level." Ashley also mentioned that she was in the process of contacting the parents of her African American students to suggest their child take higher-level courses. As she explained:

> We have course verification this week adding kids, and I e-mailed tons of African-American parents because the kids didn't want to take these AP electives or these other classes that I knew they could take. And so I feel like it's not in the culture of the school or any public school for minority groups to take these higher-level classes. So I spent my

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weekend e-mailing these moms and dads saying, "Hey. I think your daughter would be awesome in this class. She really thinks a lot, and AP Psychology could be really cool for her." And so some of the parents never even thought about it for their own children. Because I feel like sometimes White students take classes they shouldn't take because they're trying to socially segregate themselves. Or the parents are. And then some of those minority students that *should* [emphasis added] take them don't because they don't feel welcome in that environment because you have to act too White in the classroom of those rooms.

In this way, Ashley is attempting to address the opportunity gaps created by underrepresentation of students of color in higher-level coursework as discussed in Chapter Two (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

Perhaps the most significant way in which Ashley helps her students of color negotiate mainstream society is how she prepares them to take multiple choice tests so that they will do well on the state assessment. She asserts that this is in large part due to cultural testing bias (see Section 6.6) and the fact that multiple- choice exams do not accurately reflect her students' knowledge and skills. Thus she feels the need to help her students of color learn how to negotiate mandated exams. Below, Ashley describes one of the test taking tips she gives her students:

When you take the state test at the end of the year, I can promise you that the White man is good in every question, so you better just circle where he is right there. Like, if they ask you, "Did imperialism help or hurt the United States, you better say that it helped the U.S., you know?"

Although Ashley prioritizes authentic assessments that she feels empowers her students, she does require her students to take multiple-choice exams in part to help them practice test-taking skills. She also notes that since she has 180 students, Scantron (multiple choice) exams are sometimes necessary even though she says using them "makes me feel like a bad person." In her class however, Ashley also provides her students with the opportunity to explain their reasoning behind a wrong answer by placing their rationale on a sticky note and giving the exam back to her. As Ashley explains, "If they can tell me what's wrong with this question and why they answered the way they did, I will give them partial points back with no argument." Ashley will then also explain to the class why a certain answer is correct and that on the state exam there are right and wrong answers. In doing so, Ashley helps her students develop the skills necessary to take multiple-choice assessments.

Ashley's experience with content bias and her students' difficulty taking standardized multiple-choice exams is consistent with the literature on low-income students of color and standardized social studies exams (Loewen, 2010). Therefore, how she helps them develop test-taking skills while still providing deeper learning opportunities is significant.

6.3.5   Other Means of Empowerment

Another example of Ashley's means to empower students is that she has organized a group of ESOL students to be mentors at the predominantly Hispanic middle school that their siblings attend. At the time of our conversations, she was still waiting for logistics to be worked out with her principal. Ashley believes mentoring is very important to the positive development of her ESOL students. She asserts that by helping younger students, her high school students will recognize that they have knowledge and skills that are quite valuable for younger students to

learn, an experience Ashley believes is quite empowering her students. Ashley's desire to organize a mentoring project is consistent with her own positive mentoring experiences described in Section 6.1. Literature on the effects of mentoring on positive youth development supports the notion that Ashley's organization of this experience could be quite beneficial for both groups of students provided the program goals, atmosphere, and activities are well-constructed (Allen & Eby, 2003; King, Vidourek,, Davis & McClellan, 2002)

According to Ashley, she often shows her students' work at conferences, and her students take great pride in this. This topic of conversation came about when she was talking about her students' creativity:

> I'm constantly [telling my students] like "I can't wait to take this to a conference. This is awesome. Everybody is going to be so jealous of y'all." When I'm going to present at a conference, I'll take their work, and I tell them, "I'm going to show this to people," and they love it. And whenever I'm out doing some trainings for the county, they want to know, like, did I take their work? [They are] like, "This is a good one. You're going to take this to a conference, right?" and I'm like yeah, I'll take it. And they want people to see what they've done, and so they like that because I am really open about that. They all know I'm in school working on my PhD, and they think that's cool.

In this way, Ashley is empowering her students because they see that their work in her classroom matters to the world outside of the school. Her students have the opportunity to feel ownership and pride in their work and realize that their identity as a social science student, and therefore as person in general, are relevant outside of her classroom. As highlighted in Chapter Two, positive identity development is essential in a culturally relevant classroom (Ladson-Billings, 2010),

6.4   ASHLEY: RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS

Throughout all of our conversations, Ashley often used the word love to describe how she feels about her students: " I love them so much. Sometimes kids or teachers make jokes that it's better to be a minority in my room than a White student. But that's not true. I love all kids." She furthered that she wants her students to know that she cares about them: " I really do care about you. I love you. I love you guys." When I specifically asked Ashley to tell me about her relationships with her students, she said that they were "very good" and explained:

> I would say that most of the kids would say that I'm overly nice, and I feel like my relationship is good with almost all of my students. Maybe one or two, it's like you have that, but every day is like a new day, so I don't care what they did the day before. And they know that because they come in and I always say like, "Hello, my favorite people in the world." And stuff like that.

Ashley values her students' input in regards to her teaching and believes that it is her responsibility to make class enjoyable so that her students want to attend class and learn. As she explains:

> One of the comments I get – I always survey my kids, which I think makes them know that I really care. Like, what lesson do you hate? What do you love? What am I doing? Do you think I respect you? One kid wrote, "Any teacher that will ask if you think I respect you, of course I respect you, because to me, teachers don't write that," which is probably true.

Ashley furthered that she does not have problems with students "who are said troublemakers in other classes." When she asks her students about this she says, "They're like, well, I would never cuss *you* [emphasis added] out." She then commented:

> I was out for two days two weeks ago and one of my ESOL kids got suspended, and the first thing he said was, "I was so glad you weren't here because then you didn't know and I didn't have to feel bad, but I went home from school." And I was like, well, what did you do? He was like, "I'm not even going to tell you."

Ashley's comments and scenarios above indicate that she values interpersonal relationships with her students. Ashley also encourages autonomy because her students often create their own projects and ways to express their understanding of the material taught. In this way, Ashley's students recognize that she values them and respects them. As Ashley notes:

> I just try to value all of them and their input and when I give them their activities for a project or a mini class protect, I say, "If you have something better, tell me. [But] You need to do it."

Ashley asserts that since she makes her classroom activities fun, students often do not want to leave the room because "They want to keep going." When her students do not participate in class, Ashley tries to find our why rather than admonishing them for not doing so. As she explains:

> I ask, "Did something happen that made you not want to be in the class? Do you want to talk to me? Or is today just, like, a day you're not in it? Or like, what life thing is happening?"

When students are disinterested or miss school, Ashley often calls home to inquire as to why. She uses the assistance of a bilingual translator for her ESOL students and those students who

are not ESOL but whose parents do not speak English. Finally, Ashley also considers the reasons why they may not want to engage in school. For example, many of her students work until late at night:

> Because I never had to work in high school, so I don't know what that's like. I always try to think about that when people say things about students. Do you really know what that's like? I don't know what that's like to have to do that. I have no idea. So I try to always to give them the benefit of the doubt. And also, I don't want school to be so stressful that they drop out.

As previously mentioned in Section 6.3.3, I was curious as to whether or not her love for her students was coming from a place of pity or inherent condescension, which makes authentic, reciprocal relationships between low-income students of color and their teachers difficult to cultivate (Gay, 2010; Grant and Sleeter, 2011). Since high expectations are an important aspect of maintaining a caring but demanding, relationship in a culturally relevant classroom (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011), I asked Ashley how she feels about whether or not she was upholding high standards for her students. Ashley reflected:

> I don't know. I feel like sometimes that maybe I don't challenge them enough maybe outside of the classroom, but then I think about how a lot of minority students work, and so I feel like by giving these assignments that they have to do at home, it's like making another race, like, segregation in the classroom when they come back and I say, "Who did this?" And it's the White students who did the work because they're not the ones working until 11 o'clock at night most of the time. But minority students, a lot of them are working. So… I don't know. If it's something that I don't think is important for them to know, then maybe not, but I do feel the kids know my expectations or beliefs of

looking at how people are treated and how things in society happen and why we think these things happen. That's what's important to me. That they're not just leaving saying, "Oh, you know, this person did this, but [they know] how did that impact people now? How did slavery impact us today?" So I think my goals throughout the year are to really make them think. And think besides themselves, like, not just about themselves but other racial groups.

This passage demonstrates that Ashley is clear about she deems important for her students to learn in her class and expects that they will leave her class able to think about social structures and their implications on different cultural and racial groups. This, combined with her practices already discussed, indicate that she does not simply feel sorry for students and continues to work towards authentic culturally relevant practices. Ashley is involved within the school community as well by serving as coach of the women's tennis team. In addition to her students and the school community, Ashley focuses on positive communication with families. As discussed in the following section, however, this can be challenging.

6.5   ASHLEY: POSITIVE COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

As described in Section 6.2, the structure of Ashley's magnet high school is such that although some students live in the neighborhood in which the school is located, many do not. As she explains, "They come from all over." She notes that her ESOL students are "completely different," noting that at Thanksgiving when she asked her students what they were thankful for, many of them said, "having water."

Ashley explains that parental involvement at her school is mixed. While some parents email her frequently, there are others who are difficult to contact. One reason for this difficulty as described by Ashley is that parents want to be more involved but are working a lot. She furthers:

And some parents, you know, they're working a lot. They want to be there, but they can't. Or maybe it is something that happened to them in the past with, like, a teacher, being oppressive to them and making them feel that they weren't welcome in the school. Like, there has to be some type of experience that made you not want to be a volunteer and come up here or, like, you know. So it is harder to contact some of the students' parents and I would say that it stinks because it's usually the students that aren't doing well in school. It's harder to contact their parents. Either their parents are working all the time because they need to or they move a lot, they have different addresses, things of that nature.

When I asked Ashley what she does to try to reach out to these parents she said that she sends letters home with her students and sends a weekly email to their parents that describes what they did during the week – ways in which they could help the student at home along with resources to do so. She wants parents to know "Just how much I care about my kids." She also finds it important to send a few positive comments home each week and keeps a checklist to ensure she has sent something positive home for each student. Ashley expounds upon the importance of never "contacting a parent with negative information before I'd ever send out something positive because I wouldn't want them to think, 'Oh, she naturally hates my kid.'

In addition to sending letters home, Ashley holds parent meetings at school. She recognizes that her method of parental contact is not perfect because "There's some parents that

we just never get in contact with." She notes however, that "A lot of kids that are coming are being bussed in. If their parents wanted them to be bussed, they had to sign up at the office." For Ashley, this indicates that parents do care about their children even though she cannot get in contact with them.

6.6   ASHLEY: CHALLENGES TO CULTURALLY RELEVANT TEACHING

As described by Ashley, the most challenging aspect to her culturally relevant teaching is by far the state exam her students are required to take at the end of the year. This section highlights this challenge as well as exam content bias, and issues specific to Ashley's ESOL students.

Ashley finds the state social studies exam a significant challenge to her culturally relevant teaching for several reasons. She explained that for social studies, the state exam consists of 20% of a student's grade for the course as decided upon by the county and that this exam is taking the place of the high school exit exam. Because it is a high-stakes exam, she and the other social studies teachers can often become stressed out about "covering" all of the material that will be on the exam. In the passage below, Ashley discusses how she works to thwart these tendencies as well as why she thinks she has an easier time doing so than some of her colleagues:

> I think lot of people deal with the notion, "Do you want to go depth or do you just want to be spread wide?" What I tell people is that I feel like if the kids can connect to it, they'll remember it. And so when students are assessing whether or not Christopher Columbus was good or bad or a hero or a villain – reading these different accounts,

they're getting all the different parts and, like, tell me about the Columbian Exchange. Was that positive or negative? Who did it hurt? Then they remember, like, what they wrote. And also, I feel like for me, I'm teaching what I feel they need to know to be successful. And then, like, I add in a lot of things. Like, write these postcards as if you were in World War I when it started here in the United States. So that's covering, like, a lot of different things. You have to cover certain – I put certain things in to cover in the assessment or in the assignment, and so I feel like it is stressful because it is so quick. I would love to spend more time with Lincoln and Roosevelt, Theodore Roosevelt. It's fast, but I feel like if you just tell it to them, they won't remember it. And I feel like if you don't feel comfortable in the practice, you won't do it. And I feel like I knew going in [to her current school] that there was going to be opposition to what I was doing, but I was going to do it anyways. And I have a lot of people that question what I do. And last year was my first year teaching public school, and everyone was like, you'll change, and then I got the highest test scores in the school.

When Ashley mentions "feeling comfortable in the practice," she is referring to her teaching practices as discussed in Section 6.3, including teaching through multiple perspectives, engaging students in various activities as one means of empowerment, and teaching students about inequity. As discussed in Chapter Seven, Ashley is comfortable engaging in CRP because she feels her attendance at a Dewey Lab school a child, as well as the constructivist principals she learned from her TEP and later throughout her higher education, has enabled her to use constructivist methods to engage in culturally relevant teaching. She also attributes her ability to teach this way to her first three years of teaching in a private school where she could develop her

own curriculum and not be as concerned with testing. According to Ashley, "If I had started teaching at a school with high-stakes tests, it would have been different."

When she has to go over content quickly in her classroom, Ashley at least attempts to make sure that her students understand how things relate conceptually, versus asking them to memorize facts:

Like, I kind of went over World War II quickly, and then yesterday, we were tested over it. I gave them a bunch of words in, like, groups, and you had to tell me how they're related and why you think I picked those words to go together, as well as what other terms you would add in. So if they had some type of understanding they will be able to do it.

A second challenge regarding the state exam entails content bias. Ashley recalled that a gentleman who was responsible for writing the state exam had visited classrooms in her school who left a session early because as she says, "I thought he was going get killed, like, in the class. We found out he wasn't even a teacher." She furthered that in her graduate course; the class evaluated the state exam and found "questions that only people that were White would know." For example, she explained how one question referenced a stadium downtown that many White students and students of color would not understand because they were from rural areas or could not afford game tickets. Questions such as these make Ashley feel test anxiety for her students because she knows they will have difficulty understanding the questions. She expressed that she also has heightened awareness regarding test items now that she is an ESOL teacher:

Like, when a teacher says something, I'm like, wait. That makes no sense to someone that doesn't know. I have 12 people reminding me every day, "Why do people say that's

plain?" And I'm like, "What do you mean?" They're like, "Plain baked potato. I thought

a plane was in the air." And I say, "I got ya. It makes no sense."

Challenges specific to Ashley's ESOL students surfaced several times throughout our

conversations. Although her school is an IB school that she believes is welcoming to many

different types of students, Ashley asserts:

> I think the ESOL kids are the ones that get the brunt of things because they can't speak
>
> for themselves. I mean, they can speak, but you know. I feel like our special ed group,
>
> which is another subset of exceptional children, they do come from pretty affluent
>
> families, and they fight for their kids to get all this stuff. I feel like a lot of times
>
> accommodations aren't given [to her ESOL students] because no one's coming up here to
>
> say, "Hey, you didn't give Johnny his accommodations."

Because Ashley seemed to specifically mention her ESOL students more frequently than her

African American students, I asked her why this might be so. Ashley explanation exposed

another challenge to her culturally relevant practices:

> A: It's easier for me to incorporate African-Americans into my curriculum than it is Latin
>
> American.
>
> T: Why is that?
>
> A: Because they don't have writings. Like, I can't find books. It's really hard to find
>
> books, empowering Hispanic-American books about historical events. Whereas with all
>
> major historical events, there's tons of African-Americans involved, but at least there's
>
> someone that's written one or two books on the issue. And so it's easier for me to
>
> include them in the curriculum. And we don't have many instances of [Hispanic] people.
>
> I mean if we looked in Congress at the amount of people that are Hispanic it's extremely

low. There's Sonya Sotomayor on the U.S. Supreme Court, but I can only talk about her

so much.   But I feel like that by adding any minority group – Going out of the way

makes all minority groups feel better because they [students] see what I'm trying to do. I

think so.

6.6.1   Other Challenges to Culturally Relevant Teaching

Ashley described a few other aspects that are challenging to her culturally relevant practices. The

first of these was finding reading sources that are interesting and relatable for her students that

also align with their various reading comprehension levels. She also has to be careful to assign

them in such a way so as not to make those at a lower reading level feel inferior to other

students. The second aspect she mentioned as challenging are the instances when her students

are unresponsive, especially since she puts a tremendous amount of time and effort to make the

class engaging for them. In the passage below, she expresses those frustrations:

> I always say, "This is our classroom. This is our stuff, just us." And I never have said
>
> this to kids, but you think when kids are having a day when they're not wanting to do [the
>
> work] like, [I say to myself] "I can be like everybody else and I could just bark this stuff
>
> at you and I can make you be silent in your seat." But I'm not doing that. Like, I'm
>
> doing this for you. But obviously I do not say that.

In addition to time and effort in planning lessons, Ashley furthered that sometimes maintaining

the emotional energy required to uphold caring relationships with her students can leave her

feeling drained:

> Like, I really, really care about you and I really care about where you end up and I really
>
> care. I say stuff like that like one on one. "I really care what you want to do, what your

life is like, what's happening at home, like, how's your mom feeling?" Stuff like that. But some days it's exhausting to teach that way.

Despite these challenges, Ashley has found some strategies to mitigate these types of stressors. She finds the interactive notebook an efficient way to grade classwork, which counts as half of her students' grades. Also, Ashley offered that when her students worked "autonomously in the classroom, the class is actually easier to run." She also notes that at times they prefer to work without her help:

Like, when my kids are independently engaged and working on something, that's easy. All you've got to do is just walk around and see if they need help. Sometimes they don't. Sometimes they don't even want to talk. They're all trying to get this thing done.

6.7   ASHLEY: SUPPORTS TO CULTURALLY RELEVANT TEACHING

In addition to her in-class strategies, Ashley and I discussed other supports of her culturally relevant teaching. For Ashley, these include keeping a flexible, open mind to new classroom practices, surrounding herself with like-minded colleagues, and noting the support of her general school context. In regards to remaining flexible, she discussed how important it is to remember that "Not everyone that's of the same race is the same." She expounded on how important it is to be flexible during the school day:

I feel like just being flexible. Because, like, in second period I might do something and I'm, like, oh, my God. That sucked. Then you feel bad. I just wasted their time. They didn't get out of it what I wanted them to. And then you change it for later in the day. Or you know, you have this one group and they're really going to want to work on you this,

you know. So just making sure you're changing stuff as it goes. Like, how the information is given out.

Ashley also believes her willingness to try new strategies and her openness to the methods taught in her TEP help support her culturally relevant teaching. When I specifically asked Ashley about outside supports, she noted the support of a likeminded colleague at her school that had graduated from the same TEP program as Ashley. Also, since Ashley has always attended graduate school at night, she finds that her colleagues at school provide her a network for sharing ideas and experiences. Finally, Ashley mentioned the fact that she taught at an IB school as supportive, since the students who chose to go there are excited to learn about other peoples' countries and cultures.

6.8   ASHLEY'S FUTURE PLANS

One major topic of mine and Ashley's conversations was the fact that she will not be teaching secondary social studies after this school year, as she will pursue a professorship as a teacher educator after she completes her Ph.D. This is significant for a few reasons. First, Ashley asserts that because she knows she is leaving, she is more willing to teach what she believes is important versus "covering" the material that is going to be on the state tests. Ashley claims this is a significant pressure felt by the other the teachers in her school. Also, Ashley recognizes that she will not have to be concerned with her salary being tied to the performance of her students, which she says is another pressure soon to be felt by the teachers in her school. Ashley also explained that compared to teachers in her building whose primary source of income is their teacher's salary; she does not need to work because her husband is financially secure. For all of

these reasons, Ashley is comfortable teaching in ways that are viewed as unconventional by many others in her school. Ashley engages in culturally relevant teaching because she believes it to be the most effective means of instruction and learning. She notes the security of having the attitude that, " I don't care if they fire me."

Ashley's reasons for leaving secondary teaching are twofold. First, noting the external pressures placed on high school teachers and her current 7:30 AM to 10:00 PM schedule, she believes that a professorship is more conducive to having children and raising a family. Second, Ashley believes that she can make a broader impact on the lives of her students if she chooses to be a teacher educator or an administrator. Below, Ashley describes her mixed emotions about leaving teaching, as well as why she thinks she will have a greater impact outside of the classroom:

> I feel like I can't do what I want to do when I'm in the classroom now, which is sad because I don't think everybody needs to leave teaching. I just had this long meeting with the administration this week. And being an administrator, I could fix that [some of the challenges for her ESOL students]. I could make a family-oriented program, like, for ESOL students. I don't have the power to do that in my current role. So things like these injustices that I see that I could possibly try to fix or mandate. And I guess that's oppressing other people, but I don't know. And I knew I wanted to be a teacher educator for a long time, even though I haven't been a teacher for very long. So I think I'll be sad, but I just feel myself getting more frustrated with the system and thinking I could fix something, but I can't fix it when I'm here. Because I'm just [in] my classroom. My classroom can be this great place, but the schools, or the county or the state. The kids leave my room and they get put somewhere else where they have all the same issues.

Ashley's desire to move out of the classroom, as well as the challenges and supports she discusses, speaks to the need to more effectively support the work of culturally relevant teachers – an implication discussed in Chapter Nine.

7.0   PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

In this section, I describe how each of the three selected secondary social studies teachers detail their teacher education programs (TEPs).   During our conversations, each was asked to discuss their TEP in general, specific courses in their TEP that helped them think about and learn how to teach low-income students of color, and what from their coursework they currently draw from or use in their teaching practices as they relate to teaching low-income students of color.   To prefece this section, it is important to remember that according to their survey responses, all three teachers reported taking coursework in Critical Race Theory, Minority Education, and Multicultural Education during their teacher education programs (TEPs).   Anthony and Ashley also indicated taking Critical Theory and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in their TEP; thus, questions specific to coursework was a pertinent line of inquiry.

This Chapter is divided into three sections, one for each teacher.   For Anthony, two clear themes arose regarding the focus of his TEP at State U, including building self-awareness and meeting the needs of diverse students.   Thus, his section is divided into two subsections. Significant life experiences discussed by Anthony are highlighted, as they were poignant parts of self-discovery for him during his TEP. The two sections on Lauren and Ashley are organized a bit differently, however. During my discussions with Ashley and Lauren, it was apparent that their current culturally relevant teaching practices were also influenced by coursework taken at higher education institutions (HEIs) they attended after completion of their TEP.   The sections

on Lauren and Ashley are both divided into three subsections. For Lauren, the first discusses her TEP at "Chardon State" and the second describes her Masters of Education in Social Studies from State University. Based upon these experiences, I draw conclusions in the third subsection about the importance of connecting a culturally relevant mindset, or cultural consciousness to teaching practices. The section on Ashley is divided into two subsections. In the first, I discuss her perceptions of her TEP and Masters Degree completed at "University B," as well as her Specialist's Degree and current work towards her Ph.D., both which occurred at State U. In the second section, I detail an ongoing personal transformation experienced by Ashley, because it directly impacts her culturally relevant teaching. The data from this chapter are then utilized to draw analysis and implications in forthcoming chapters.

7.1 ANTHONY'S TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

When we conversed about his teacher education program at State U, two main themes arose: building self-awareness and addressing the needs of diverse students. More specific details are discussed in each of the following two sections. Of note is the fact that while discussing his TEP, Anthony never mentioned his student teaching experience, other than the fact that he found it valuable to have been assigned to an urban school for an entire year versus only one semester.

7.1.1   Building Self-Awareness

Throughout our conversations, Anthony was passionate about how the reflective class activities in his coursework helped him uncover his own personal biases and understand how his life experiences shape his attitudes towards others. Anthony's childhood, characterized by poverty and family instability, impacted his desire to reach low-income students of color and provide them with the encouragement that he did not feel he had early in his education. But it was during his coursework at State U when Anthony recognized how two specific life experiences influenced his attitudes towards others and his approach to teaching.

The first experience was in fifth grade when his teacher called him nigger, although he was not supposed to hear it. Anthony, upset and crying, yelled out to her, "I heard what you said!" although the teacher denied it. This moment was exceptionally hurtful for Anthony. It also sheds light upon why he does not want his students to feel humiliated or shame, especially when discussing sensitive topics such as stereotyping or what is considered appropriate behavior. Another significant event for Anthony was when he was working towards a promotion in the U.S Marines and one of his friends told him, "I want you to be careful, because we were in this conversation and one of the corporals at the time said, 'We're going to make sure this N doesn't get the position.'" Such a pivotal and discriminatory event likely serves as motivation for him to encourage his students of color, yet to maintain high expectations as discussed in Chapter Four.

Anthony explains that by exploring his own past during his TEP, he can now recognize when he needs to keep these past hurts in perspective. One example he gave is when he interacts with parents and other teachers who question his credentials to teach, simply because he is a Black male. Anthony also told me that sometimes people new to the school assume he is a janitor, a member of support staff, or a special education teacher, again based upon the fact that

he is a Black male. He explained that while earlier in his life he would have been much more negatively affected by these instances, he is able to be more patient with the situation now that he has a better understanding of himself and others.

In addition to exploring his feelings surrounding these racist experiences, Anthony explained that from the onset of the program at State U, the classroom activities forced him to address his own biases. For him the most difficult challenge was facing his negative feelings towards homosexuality:

I can remember this activity we did. I think this was maybe the first or second week in grad school, and it was an activity that made you take a deep look into who you are. And it helped me bring out some of the biases. I had to deal with that within me. Because now when I'm looking at a 12-13 year old whose having some life struggles and you think about what can happen as they're coming into awareness of who they are. I can have a totally negative impact on that kid or I can have a totally positive impact. So I had to address that.

He further recalled a professor who encouraged him approach these issues and help him understand that his biases would ultimately impact his teaching:

How she taught that part, is that it wasn't about attacking who you are, it's about understanding who you are, because when you encounter something that goes against what you may believe, how you feel about certain groups, certain social issues, how are you going to deal with it? Who I am will come out in the classroom somehow, some way.

Anthony's journey in self-awareness development is consistent with the literature discussed on unlocking critical consciousness and building the foundations necessary to engage in CRP. Although he could not remember the exact details of the course reading or activities, they seem

to have involved self-examination activities and narratives like those described by Cochran-Smith (2004), Gay & Kirkland (2003) and Milner (2003) in the review of literature. Anthony also noted one professor in particular who was able to help him understand how his biases and past experiences ultimately make their way into his instruction.

7.1.2   Addressing the Needs of Diverse Students

In addition to his knowledge of self, Anthony described how his program at State U focused on how students in the MAT program would have to address the needs of diverse students. He says that it was discussed in "every single class in our MAT program" and gave some examples. For instance in his reading literature class, Anthony was required to build his own library on the Website goodreads.com. He read 25 books (some of which were children's literature), summarized each, and showed how he would be able to connect each book to a diverse group of students.   In his social studies education courses, thinking in terms of diversity and bringing multiple perspectives into the curriculum was "always a part of it. " Anthony described other examples within the context of his social studies courses:

> We had to build in our won DBQ (Document-Based Questions) where we bring in the multiple perspectives for diverse learners. So you had to make sure you design it so that it you are speaking to every subgroup within your classroom. When we did our unit planning, part of the reflective piece on the unit plan was, "Ok now that you have your assessments, take a look at your students and break them down into subgroups.   Which subgroups did the best?   Which subgroups have areas for improvement, and that important question, why?   Why do you think this subgroup performed better than this subgroup?"   So it forced you to address those things, so now when you go back to teach

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it again, you are addressing those things. So it was absolutely embedded in every one of our classes that we took. Every one of our core classes –our mandatory courses for the program, the only time I really did not experience that is if I was taking a history class outside of the College of Education. But as far as all the classes that were through the College of Education, diversity was a part of everything. Diversity, how are you going to reach that diverse group of students? Cultural bias. (Sighs). I'm forgetting some of those terms, but being culturally relevant.

Although Anthony could not remember the names of these courses, he believes the program set him up to better understand himself and become more aware the needs of diverse learners. Today, this keeps him analyzing how he approaches culturally relevant practices. As he reflects:

So, I think that was what we did from that point on. Understanding who we were and then and how you gonna reach those kids that may not have that background information. That some students may not share the same life experiences that other students may have. And how are you going to reach that student and how are you going to make it relevant to them? Like when you're talking about James Oglethorpe, well who is James Oglethorpe and who cares? How are you going to make this relevant to every culture? And it's hard. You know it's hard, but I do feel like I walked away with the skill set of being able to do that.

Anthony also posits that it was during his student teaching experience when he was able to connect both the reflective work and the practical application of the culturally relevant teaching he was learning about in his coursework. The following exchange between the two of us highlights the impact of the assigned reflective pieces during his student teaching that would have a lasting impact on his practice:

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A: Not just like at the surface, but to kind of complicate things as far as how – look at the culture of your school. Look at how the needs of the students are being addressed. Are they being addressed? It was that constant reflective piece. So within the classroom we're talking about diversity constantly, talking about culture and how to be culturally relevant constantly, and then in your practicum, your being asked, how does this align with what were talking about in the classroom? And always that next step, how would you do it different, you know, that *why* [emphasis added] question. So I think more than anything else it helped me to just be aware. And for most people once you have that awareness…

T: You can't get rid of it! (Laughter)

A: No you can't! It's almost an integrity thing. Whereas if I went through a program and these things weren't taught – what am I held accountable to? I don't know if that makes any sense, but I will say it's a constant work in progress. I'm learning. I'm trying my best every year to do a little bit more.

These comments indicate that from Anthony's perspective the program included elements of self-discovery, followed by exploration of classroom diversity and how to meet the needs of diverse students. Anthony's previous comments indicate that prior to entering the classroom, MAT students were asked to design lessons and activities that addressed these needs and included multiple perspectives. In other words, after developing a culturally relevant mindset, MAT students learned how to develop culturally relevant lessons. Then, during pre-service teaching, students were asked to reflect upon the practical application of CR practices and theories learned about during coursework as well as why or why not certain groups of their students were learning the desired background information and skills. These reflective activities,

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which occur throughout each of the program elements, indicate that the State U program focuses not only on how to "do" CRP, but also on the development of reflective practitioners. Reflective practice has long been touted as essential to a teacher's growth and needs to be so engrained in her practice that is a natural part of her teaching (Schön, 1987). For candidates and teachers who practice CRP, reflective practice also includes identification and analysis of the impact of culture and race on all aspects of their teaching and students' learning relative to the curriculum, lesson and activity design, assessments, expectations for behavior and academic work, relationships with students, parents, and the community. Anthony's reflective practices enable him to engage in CRP and work towards maintaining its characteristics as described in the review of the literature. The connection between reflection and practice is essential to the praxis of CRP and his (Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Grant & Sleeter, 2010). It is significant to note that he also found it valuable to have been assigned to an urban school for an entire year versus only one semester.

For Anthony, his program also helped instill a sense of accountability, or moral obligation to engage in CRP, and he mentioned holding himself accountable to CRP a few times throughout our conversations. He contends that colleagues from his MAT program and current school colleagues with similar mindsets and priorities help him stay true to his culturally relevant practice and he finds this support quite valuable. In general, Anthony believes that his teacher education program left him very prepared to teach social studies to low-income students of color in a diverse classroom. In his own words:

> I walked away really comfortable. You know I always said I felt prepared. Of course, I
> wasn't an expert on everything, but I felt like from day one I could handle any situation
> and I was well prepared to teach for social justice – to teach any culture. To have a
> classroom where every culture feels like their contributions to history is relevant. Even

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when it comes down to when we are talking about Civil Rights where one of my White students may feel uncomfortable, and its like, "Well you have to feel uncomfortable, because we're going to talk about the concept of group think. We're going to read a text where individuals have said well you know, if everyone around me was doing this, and if I wouldn't have gone along with it... [it would have been a problem.] And you know it takes a lot of work up front, but you know we've got to bring out all those perspectives and I really feel like the program taught me how to do that. It really did. It really did.

7.2   LAUREN: TEACHER EDUCATION AT CHARDON STATE AND MASTERS OF EDUCATION IN SOCIAL STUDIES FROM STATE UNIVERSITY

As discussed earlier in Chapter Five, Lauren received her Bachelors Degree in Science in Secondary Social Studies Education from "Chardon State University," which is located in the southeastern region of the U.S. Lauren then spent a year teaching at the same middle school in which she had completed her yearlong pre-service placement. When she and her husband moved to Metropolis, she completed her Master's Degree in Social Studies Education at State U. She selected State U over another the "University of Greenfield," because she thought she would learn more about teaching in Metropolis if she attended an urban-focused school located in the city. The two subsections below describe her impressions of each of these programs.

7.2.1 Lauren: Teacher Education Program at Chardon State

According to Lauren, her TEP has since been merged with another program at Chardon State and is unlike the program she attended. When I asked Lauren to tell me about her teacher education program, her first reaction was less than favorable:

> At Chardon State University, it was a joke. In my senior year, the last semester before student teaching were the important classes. Methods of Inquiry, Assessment. One of those classes, literally, the only thing I remember learning is that staple removers, you don't – you're not supposed to remove it from where the staple is up front. You're supposed to go to the back of the staple. That's what I remember from that class. I don't remember learning anything useful. My classroom assessment class was taught by somebody who didn't know how to assess. The tests were all the same. They were not differentiated. I felt so unprepared when I went into my student teaching.

I asked Lauren about the coursework relevant to CRP she indicated on her survey that she had taken during her TEP. She explained that she had taken coursework in minority education, multicultural education, and that she had learned about critical race theory, but did not remember anything from her coursework. She furthered:

> But I feel like all of that stuff was, you know, here's a textbook. Read a little bit about it, and, you know, we'll take a test. We'll talk about it briefly. There was no experience. I never once felt like there was any practical application. Not practical at all.

Lauren explained that she learned everything she needed to know about teaching during her student teaching practicum. Below, she describes the experience with her mentor teacher, who was also Lauren's teacher when she had attended the school:

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I learned every single thing that I needed to know in those three and a half months. And she threw me into the wolves. I mean, she was like, "you have two days to observe, then I give you one class for that week, and that second week you're in." And I was terrified. I freaked out, but it was the only way to really understand and know what I was doing and experience it. I mean I had to do open house. I had to do parent conferences. I had to do parent phone calls. And it was scary, but nothing else that I did at Chardon State prepared me for it.

After she graduated from her TEP program. Lauren taught at the same middle school for one year, but taught low-income African American and Hispanic, mostly Cuban, students. This was in contrast to her practicum, in which she taught gifted students who were White and wealthy. Lauren expressed, "It was a very different experience for me. I loved it." When she moved to Greenfield, she found that diversity in Metropolis was different than Chardon, as she explains, because students of color in Metropolis seemed less wealthy than students of color in Chardon. It was at this time she decided to return to school for her master's degree in social studies education.

7.2.2 Lauren: Masters Degree in Social Studies Education

Similar to her experiences at Chardon State, Lauren did not feel like she received much practical training specific to urban education in her Masters Degree in Education from State University.

I don't really feel like it was an urban education program after graduating. Just like Chardon State, I took multicultural education, but it was a lot of reading about different races. But it wasn't anything practical or useful, in my opinion. I did take a class in grad school about urban education, but it was more policy than actually what's going on in the

classroom. And that was helpful to understand why some schools are the way they are, but it did not help me.

Lauren discussed how since she already had two years of teaching experience prior to attending State University, she did have a much better understanding of child psychology and other topics discussed in courses and that she took her work much more seriously in graduate school. However, it seems that she was not getting what she desired from much of her graduate coursework:

I had a very different outlook. I took it way more seriously, and I did get things out of it, although not the culture of what I was going to experience stepping into an urban classroom. I didn't have to do any fieldwork at all at State University. It was just like, "Hey read these books and let's talk about it." I learned a great deal, but it was nothing that prepared me for being here [at an urban school]. I would say that my graduate history courses have helped me much more than my education courses, just because I learned more content. I just figured, you know, going to an urban education program, I would learn more about urban education and not just, yeah, theory. I needed practicality because I'm not going into administration; I'm not going into higher ed. I want to teach in a classroom, and I don't feel like I really got prepared for that.

I asked Lauren if there was anything specific from her graduate coursework that helped her to learn more about teaching students of color. As she recalled it was her Greenfield State History Class that provided her with the most practical experience:

L: My Greenfield history class had a lot of that, because it was brought up, how do you deal with these controversial issues like slavery in your classrooms today when they're so diverse?

T: So what was that teacher like?

L: He was amazing. He's involved with the Greenfield Trust, and he is the head of the Greenfield Race Riots Museum Foundation. So it's very important to him, talking about race riots, and that's such a big deal even today. We did a lot of comparing. It wasn't an education course, but most of the people in there were teachers or in teacher prep. And so we had to do lesson plans in that class, and he wanted us to focus on, "How can you relate this to your students today?" That kind of stuff. And since there's so many racial issues in Greenfield history, it all tied together.

A second example Lauren remembered was in a social studies education course in which she had to build a webquest type of project about a minority group. Lauren selected Jewish Americans throughout history, but explains that she "went all the way back to the Inquisition." However, this was the only other specific reading or assignment that she could recall. I also asked Lauren if she remembered any activities that asked her to engage in self-reflection or interrogating her own biases during her graduate work. As Lauren recalls:

Nothing really that deep where it was, like, my own. There was a lot of like, "In your past experiences," but my past experiences were teaching in an all-White school, and I didn't have experiences, so there was nothing to kind of get me to think deeper. My reflections were just, I went to an all-White school, and when I was little, there were two Jewish kids. Those are the two things that I always thought about in grad school when we talked about diversity.

In a later conversation, I asked Lauren to think about why she might not have been able to reflect upon race and culture:

T: Was it just not a good assignment, or do you think that you were just young and couldn't go deeper? Because I know for me, when I was young, I don't think I'd be ready for some of that stuff.

L: Yes. I think it's a little bit of both. I think that I wasn't, um – I wasn't prepared to think about that. Having been inexperienced in it, I wasn't prepared to really think that deeply. Um, but I don't think I was given any tools to teach me how to prepare myself to do that. I wasn't told or taught or, you know, somebody scaffolding me and, "Okay. You don't feel like you have those experiences, but what about this?"

Since many of Lauren's approaches to teaching are culturally relevant, I asked Lauren how she learned about how to use students' strengths to inform her instruction. Lauren responded that all of her techniques are based upon what she had learned in her student teaching or her gifted endorsement class. The gifted endorsement class was a yearlong professional development course she was required to take in order to be certified to teach gifted education. As Lauren explains:

That class gave me a lot of different strategies that I never used before that, yes, they were used – geared towards gifted, but I kind of re-wrote them and use them with my ESL kids and with all my classes, but also with my student teaching. I would say 99 percent of everything that I've learned or do, I got from my student-teaching experience.

Lauren's reflections on both her TEP and M.Ed. programs are insightful in a few different ways. First, her references to the significance of her student teaching practicum align with the literature that this is perhaps the most crucial element of one's TEP experience (Berry, et al., 2008; Darling-Hammond, 2006, 2011; Levine, 2006). This also substantiates the notion that coursework on CRP and the practicum experience needs to be deliberately linked philosophically

and in practice in order to develop high implementing teachers (Banks, 2007; Cochran-Smith, 2000, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Nieto, 2000; Peterman, 2008; Solomon & Sekayi, 2007; Ukpokodu, 2007). More importantly, however, Lauren's descriptions of her current teaching and former schooling provide important insights regarding the development of both culturally relevant mindsets and culturally relevant practices.

7.2.3   Lauren: The Importance of Connecting Mindsets and Practice

First, Lauren herself admits that she was perhaps not developmentally ready in undergraduate school to embark on the road to critical consciousness but eventually found herself teaching in a diverse urban environment. As discussed in the review of the literature, coursework that tries to raise a pre-service teacher's cultural awareness is often met with outward conflict or in Lauren' s case, perhaps inadvertent resistance (Milner, 2010). Part of Lauren's resistance was based on the fact that she did not find the development of self-awareness connected to utility in the classroom. As discussed in Chapter Nine, this has implications for how TEPs approach culturally relevant teaching, because the development of critical consciousness or a culturally relevant mindset is not always linear and is instead a life-long work in progress. Therefore, even if students in TEPs do not reach the desired levels of critical awareness, this does not mean that the new teacher is incapable of reaching higher levels of awareness as they progress throughout their teaching careers. According to Lauren, her programs did not help her develop high levels of consciousness, yet as demonstrated in Chapter Five, in many ways she does have a culturally relevant mindset and engages in CRP. It is quite likely that there are other teachers like Lauren, which has implications for TEPs and professional development (See Chapter Nine).

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Second, based upon Lauren's experience, how TEPs engage students in learning CRP in terms of lesson planning, activities, and providing multiple perspectives in the social studies classroom is a critical component of the program. Although today Lauren is able to incorporate what she learned in her gifted education courses into her lessons for all students, she claims that these connections were lacking in her TEP. In Lauren's graduate program, she appreciated how these connections were deliberately made in her history coursework. Lauren also makes a significant claim that neither her TEP nor her graduate program provided her with adequate scaffolding in how to think more deeply about the impact of her life experiences on her biases and create culturally relevant lessons. As discussed in the review of literature, there is already ample research on how TEP's begin to develop critical consciousness. Thus the importance of scaffolding how to teach culturally relevant planning is further discussed in Chapter Nine.

7.3 ASHLEY: TEACHER EDUCATION AND MASTERS DEGREE FROM UNIVERSITY B, SPECIALIST'S DEGREE AND CURRENT PH.D. CANDIDATE AT STATE UNIVERSITY

Ashley attended "University B," a large research university in the state of Greenfield, where she received her B.A. in political science and her B.S. Ed. in social studies education with an English as a Second Language (ESOL) endorsement. She went to State U for her Specialist's Degree in Social Studies Education and is currently working towards her Ph.D. in Social Studies Education. Although Ashley contends that her teaching practices are based upon all of her educational experiences, she was able to provide insight regarding her experiences at her TEP and ESOL courses at University B. These are described in the first subsection below.

Throughout her Specialist and PhD programs, Ashley began a significant transformation, which has moved her towards cultural and racial consciousness, although this has been somewhat of personal struggle, as discussed in the second subsection below.

7.3.1 Teacher Education Program and Master's Degree from University B

While enrolled in her TEP in social studies education at University B, Ashley was also taking masters level coursework for English as Second Language Endorsement, which she finished after completing her TEP program. When she first attended University B, Ashley felt culture shock because it is quite different from her small hometown. Although she says the student body was primarily White, she found that many students had different life experiences than she and also came from families with more financial assets. Nevertheless, the racial and cultural homogeneity of University B would be one of the main reasons she later attended State U.

During her TEP, Ashley majored in both social studies education and political science. She took many courses on teaching U.S. History as well as fifteen upper level courses in political science as required for her double major. Ashley explained that ten upper level courses are required in the student's focus area for the TEP, and five more courses beget the double major. When Ashley describes the teachers and coursework at University B, she often used the word "progressive," citing the names John Dewey and Walter Parker and the fact that "all" of her TEP professors were from The University of Wisconsin-Madison. Essentially, Ashley was taught through a student-centered, constructivist framework that views the classroom as a social space for learning (Brooks & Brooks, 1999; Dewey, 1938). Ashley furthered that when she began reading the work of Dewey in her TEP, she realized that the elementary school she attended as a child was based upon this type of teaching. Because she had already experienced what is was

like to learn from constructivist methods, learning how to teach in this manner felt natural to her. Ashley contends that she learned "a lot" in her teaching methods classes, because teachers regularly simulated various types of lessons so that "Everything we did was a teaching method."

Ashley's TEP was selective. She explained that after sophomore year, each student in social studies education was required to write a rationale for why they should continue the program. When Ashley was a sophomore, only twenty-five out of fifty students were selected to continue in the program. Ashley finds this selectivity reflects the high value the program has for teachers. According to her, "And it also valued that teachers aren't dumb. Like people that got in and kind of tried to play the game, but then they couldn't do it." Additionally, Ashley found the small program size beneficial, was pleased that her professors from Wisconsin learned from "all the greats in the social studies world," and felt well supported because her professors were extremely invested in the program. Ashley posits that the interconnectedness between the undergraduate TEP, master's level programs, and doctoral programs, also made her feel associated with a professional group.

Although Ashley had two, sixty-hour practicum experiences in urban schools for social studies and ESOL, it was her twelve-week pre-service experiences that she says were most influential. Ashley posits that she learned how to be comfortable teaching a progressive, or constructivist, classroom not only because of her own education, but also because her mentor teacher was an expert in this type of teaching. As Ashley explains:

> She was extremely progressive and she taught all AP. She had super high scores. She didn't lecture and that's how I knew that I could [do it]. And she did all progressive teaching, and she had gone to [University B]. And [UB] tries to place people with graduates from their program because they know it's hard if you go into a student

teaching classroom and you're not with someone that supports your methods, which happens to some people, and then they don't ever do them ever again. They feel discouraged. So this lady was incredible. She's won teacher of the year many times since then.

Based upon these comments and her teaching practices discussed in Chapter Six, the continuity between her TEP and her student teaching experience has had a direct impact on her current constructivist teaching practices, as well as her ability to merge constructivism and culturally relevant teaching today. It is important to note that Ashley interviewed for this placement because the mentor teacher required it, even though this placement was her second choice. In fact, Ashley explained that each student in the program ranks which partner schools they prefer to work in and students with a higher grade point average are more likely to be placed in the school of their choice. While this speaks to the selective and competitive nature of the program, according to Ashley, it results in less qualified students placed in urban schools because most students do not request to teach in urban areas. As discussed in the following section, Ashley originally wanted to teach all White students as well until she was further into her ESOL endorsement program. In addition to student-centered methods, Ashley commented that her mentor teacher also taught her ways in which to consider students' lives in her teaching, for example when considering giving homework:

She used to tell me like, "Even though this is AP, you can't give these kids homework." Some of the kids had two jobs or something, you know. So sometimes, obviously, she gave more reading and stuff than a normal class, but it was so interesting to see her do this and then have these awesome results.

Ashley asserts that other aspects of practicum, including reflective journaling about her teaching practices and the positive feedback and support she received from her clinical supervisor were also significant to her development.

Ashley's experiences at University B align with the literature in three broad ways. First, the fact that Ashley's coursework and the practices of her mentor teacher were well aligned yet again substantiates the notion discussed above and in Chapter Two that this integration is critical to the positive development of new teachers (Banks, 2007; Cochran-Smith, 2000, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Nieto, 2000; Peterman, 2008; Soloman & Sekayi, 2007; Ukpokodu, 2007). In Ashley's case the integration was based more upon constructivist principles that would later be applied to her practice of CRP. Second, the selectivity of Ashley's TEP is consistent with the work of Darling-Hammond (2010), which found effective TEPs to be quite discerning when selecting their candidates. Lastly, Ashley's mention of reflective journaling indicates early exposure to this practice is likely to produce reflective teachers (Grant & Sleeter, 2010).

Although Ashley says she took one or two undergraduate courses on Critical Theory, her coursework on Culturally Relevant Teaching was specific to her ESOL program. These were master's level classes she took both during and after her TEP. Ashley recalls an assignment in the first semester of her ESOL program that asked her to make a schema about her life history. She found the professor effective at helping students to identify how their identities were formed and the many differences between students in the class even though they were all White. Ashley also reflected upon an assignment in which she was asked to interview an African American student from her hometown to inquire as to how it felt to be a person of color in that town. Ashley remembers being frustrated because she did not know any African Americans she could

call to interview for the assignment even though she says, "my high school was 70% Black." Ashley was disheartened by this fact.

Also in her ESOL program, Ashley took three classes based on culture in the classroom and linguistic abilities, and the focus of these courses was on how to bring students' culture into her daily lessons. Ashley felt that culturally relevant teaching was well integrated into her ESOL program, remarking, "Also [in these courses] with planning a lesson, what are you going to bring in that's going to make students want to read this?" Although she proceeded through her culturally relevant coursework at University B, Ashley had not yet gone through the personal transformation, or consciousness-raising that she would later embark upon once she attended at State U. Nevertheless, Ashley asserts that her TEP and masters degree from University B provided her with a foundation that allows her to feel comfortable with culturally relevant teaching in her current environment, especially when she compared herself to her colleagues who graduated from other TEP's.

7.3.2 Personal Transformation

As mentioned above in Section 7.3.1 and Chapter Six, Ashley first taught in an all White private rural school for three years. Originally, she desired to teach all White students through a multicultural framework to teach them about societal inequities faced by people of color. It was not until later that she wanted to teach in a more diverse environment. As Ashley reflects:

> And so at the beginning I was really for teaching at all-White environments. I really felt like no one had told me these things, and I was so enraged. And then I feel like a White person telling another White person is much more powerful in that kind of instance than a minority person. At the time I was teaching in these all-White schools I was thinking, "I

want these kids to find social issues and fix them." So that's what I focused on when I was doing my Specialists. And so I really wanted to do that, and I did. I feel like [now] I'm at this really diverse school. Like, when I was applying for schools, I never did want to be in an all-minority school because I wanted to be in a school that was, you know, racially diverse, so I could see how these kids are. Because that's the real world. We're all interacting with different people. We're not only working in an all African-American or all Latina American, Latino or, you know, White person's place. I mean, sometimes that happens, but ideally that won't be the case.

Ashley left University B to attend State U for her Social Studies Specialist program and her PhD versus continuing on with her studies at University B, even though as she contends University B is a higher ranked institution. In part, Ashley attributes this to the fact that University B was not diverse. Once she began at State U, her racial and cultural consciousness shifted dramatically and her previously held conservative ideology changed as well. I asked Ashley why she thought this transformation began at this particular time as opposed to during her coursework on culturally relevant teaching, which she had already taken during her TEP. The following conversation between the two of us offers insight into this question:

T: So you said you took a lot of classes on multicultural education or race in education when you were at [University B] but that you didn't really go through your transformation in terms of how you viewed race and culture until you went to State U. Is that correct?

A: Yeah.

T: Okay. And so why do you think it wasn't until that time that you went through that transformation? Like, if you're looking back at yourself now, why do you think that it took until then?

A: I think because at UGA you have this all-White class talking about how we're trying to do things for people. You know, it's almost like this White savior mentality, which I hate. But then you go to State U, and there are minorities everywhere, which is awesome, but it's like, these are real issues. This is someone else speaking about what happened when they were a child. Like, they're much more passionate about it.

Ashley's reflections are interesting since as noted in Chapter Six, there were times during our conversations where it seemed she might be operating and teaching through a White savior mindset. Therefore, I asked Ashley if she felt that element was present in her teaching. Ashley explained:

Oh, well, yeah. I knew from the beginning, and I still try to – I don't want to be this White savior. I think that people in minority groups are capable of raising up and empowering the group. But I think sometimes it's harder because people at the top, who are primarily White, don't want to listen to them. Like, so I have this big issue with my ESOL program, and I feel like the kids are being oppressed by the program because it's not offering all the things that we could offer them. I feel like if I'm a White woman and I'm bringing this up to other White people, they're like, "Oh, yeah!" But maybe if a Latina woman did that, they would think she was just being more critical because it's her own race. And so I feel like that's the White savior mentality, but I don't want to think that I'm, like, coming in and saving this group of people. They don't need me to save them. I'm just trying to speak where people will listen to me where maybe they would

not listen to that person. Because when you stick up for minorities, people listen to you sometimes.

Ashley then gave many examples of how the Whites in this particular region of the Southeast have historically oppressed people of color and said they continue to "control the game around here." Therefore, she feels that the many conservatives residing in the state are more likely to listen to Whites than to the members of the oppressed groups. She notes the fact that even in some of her school meetings, others are willing to at least recognize and discuss injustices with her in ways that she does not believe they would do with others.

Ashley also talked about changes she has undergone in regards to some of her political leanings:

So I think that was the biggest change for me going from – I would say I was super conservative. I didn't want to give anything to anyone, and now I would not say that I'm like an extreme liberal, by any means. I'm more moderate, but when it comes to children, it's, like, give them whatever they need. Like, any bills regarding children or assistance to children or anything like that, paying their families. Because people always make me so frustrated when they don't want to give to people. I'm like, who's going to raise the child? Are you going to, like, put them in foster care?

In a later conversation, I asked Ashley if she associated liberalism with giving money to people, to which she elaborated:

Originally I would say I feel like liberals give more money away, even though the Republicans would claim to be more states-based. And so I mean, Christians are called to give money to the poor, and I feel like liberals answer that call even though the majority of Republicans probably would claim to be Christian.

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She then went on to discuss the political parties and White privilege:

> I think about when I teach the different parties, you see this common trend where the Democratic party are more willing to help the minority group, more willing to give money to people in need. Whereas the Republican Party or the old like, Southern Democrats from World War II, that's more like, "I'm a farmer. I've worked hard. I've done all this stuff. Like, I've made due on what I have. Other people just need to get a job." What they don't see is that White privilege. Because if you're poor and you're White, you're still higher in society. But people don't see that. I mean, there's so many books on that. You know, just being White. And that's what I think helped me a lot when I was growing up, too. I mean, my parents have been married and divorced multiple times. If that was an African-American family, people would make all these comments.

Ashley discussed that growing up in her religious family, she learned that donating time and money to charity was a noble act, but giving money in the form of tax dollars spent on education or social programs was undesirable because an individual does not have the right to choose whether or not they would like to contribute. As Ashley asserts, she no longer shares this viewpoint and now sees some of her family members as hypocritical:

> But I think about how farmers use the system all the time. Like, I still have tons of farmers in my family, and if it doesn't rain and there's a huge drought, we get money for that. Or of your crop doesn't yield correctly, you get money for that. That's government assistance, but they see it different because they worked. The money the crops didn't yield, and they had to put money into it. But people do that [work and still receive assistance] all the time. You know, African-American people. But I think that's where it

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gets associated. And then, you know, Southern Republicans in my town, vote against themselves all the time. Like, the stuff my parents vote for, I'm like, "This is not helping you. Like, I should be voting for that because I'm in a higher income bracket than you. You should not be."

The ideologies Ashley was raised upon and how they relate to her changing attitudes is significant. She still seems to battle White savior response and admits that she still has a difficult time deciding whom to vote for on Election Day. Although she selects who she thinks will address educational issues, she remains conservative on other social issues, which creates tension for her. Her changing viewpoints have impacted how Ashley relates to her family. Ashley finds that she is unable to discuss many issues and sometimes feels herself pulling away from her parents:

My parents don't even ask about my research. One, I think they think I'm like, some raging liberal person and probably think I'm trying to kill any Republican, and I'm not and I'm more moderate. They don't even ask, and I think it's because they don't feel like they would understand, even though it's not that hard.

Similar to her ESOL program at University B, Ashley asserts that coursework in both her Specialists program and her PhD at State U integrate culturally relevant teaching into the entire program. She notes the literature she read for her coursework, specifically Social Foundations of Social Studies, History of Social Studies, and Sociology of the Inner City Child, has left her feeling passionate about "speaking up for people."

Ashley's changing attitudes, while still in progress, are interesting to ponder. Recall in the review of literature that Haberman (1991) calls into question whether or not a university can really teach cultural awareness, noting that life experience is the most influential piece of

predisposition towards cultural responsiveness. In spite of the fact that she grew up in a racist family and community, both Ashley's HEI and teaching experiences seem to have had a positive impact on her ability to be a culturally relevant teacher. Thus, implications of this process on TEPs and professional development are explored in Chapter Nine.

8.0   CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS OF ANTHONY, LAUREN, AND ASHLEY

As detailed in Chapters Four, Five, Six, and Seven, the three secondary social studies teachers in this study represent an array of life experiences. These experiences, combined with their education, teaching contexts, and current levels of cultural and racial consciousness, frame how they think about and engage in culturally relevant practices. This chapter provides analysis of the most significant themes regarding how the selected social studies teachers describe their thoughts about and engagement with culturally relevant teaching.

In the first section, I describe participants' varying dimensions of racial and cultural consciousness and assert that critical consciousness is an ever-evolving process that helps us understand teachers' choices regarding their culturally relevant practices. For the teachers in this study, the inner processes of building racial and cultural consciousness is influenced by environmental factors such as family and TEP, which in turn influences teacher's choices in salient ways. This section helps to answer Research Question #1: "What factors influence the early formation, development, and evolution of culturally responsive teaching among the three selected secondary social studies teachers?" Research Question #3: "What from their higher education experiences do the selected social studies teachers draw from to put culturally responsive teaching into practice?" is also discussed in this section as well as throughout this chapter.

Sections 8.2 through 8.4 provide analysis of Anthony, Lauren, and Ashley's culturally relevant classroom practices and serve to answer Research Question #2: "How do the selected social studies teachers perceive their engagement with culturally responsive pedagogy in their practice?" In Section 8.2, I focus upon how the selected teachers deliver social studies content and denote factors that influence these choices, namely school context and teacher education. In Section 8.3, I assert that the application of culturally relevant teaching for the social studies teachers in this study occurs via constructivist activities and assessments. Since Anthony, Lauren, and Ashley have commonalities and distinctions regarding which constructivist practices they utilize, relationships between teachers' choices and their levels of racial and cultural consciousness, life experiences, and TEPs are explored. In Section 8.4, the classroom practices of discussing societal inequities and negotiating mainstream society are analyzed. For the former, I posit that three factors: comprehension of the historical and structural nature of inequity, student trust of the teacher and her intentions, and teacher training and practice focused on structuring controversial conversations, together critically impact the quality of these conversations. I then describe teachers' experiences in helping students negotiating mainstream society. This illuminates questions to consider regarding its meaning and how it is taught.

In Section 8.5, I summarize teachers' perceptions of their relationships with students and their families and how the perceived challenges of low-income students of color affect teacher expectations for students. This helps to answer Research Question #4: "What are the challenges and supports are present in context of practice of culturally relevant teaching for the three selected secondary social studies teachers," which is elaborated upon in Section 8.6.

The thematic findings from each section of this chapter have implications for teacher education, ongoing professional development, and administrative leadership that support the

culturally relevant practices of secondary social studies educators, all of which are discussed in Chapter Nine.

8.1   RACIAL AND CULTURAL CONCIOUSNESS IS AN EVOLVING PROCESS

In this section, I discuss the varying levels of racial and cultural consciousness of each of the three teachers. By exploring the different experiences of participants, I have found that the development of racial and cultural consciousness is an ever-evolving process for culturally relevant teachers. For the teachers in this study, early development of sociocultural consciousness was influenced by early life experiences, family values, and their TEP, all of which impact their past and current pedagogical choices. By offering insight as to how teachers' sociocultural consciousness first developed and continue to evolve, I then examine how these processes impact teachers' choices regarding culturally relevant practices, which are as discussed subsequent sections throughout this chapter.

Anthony, who does not own the White privilege or power that Ashley and Lauren do, has very high levels of cultural and racial consciousness. As discussed in Chapters Four and Eight, he largely attributes this to life experiences with a "very troubled" upbringing, the lack of positive educational experiences as a child, and the prejudices he has faced throughout his lifetime as an African American male. Because of these experiences, he is impassioned with the culturally and racially relevant curriculum his teacher education program (TEP) espouses, which is why he selected State U. Although Anthony's life experiences contribute to his high levels of racial and cultural consciousness, he asserts that his TEP instilled his ability to reflect upon how his experiences would impact his teaching and learning. He was adamant that the self-

examination activities, a major focal point of his TEP, undoubtedly provided the foundation for his culturally relevant practices. Anthony believes his MAT social studies program at State U had successfully helped him build self-awareness and learn how to meet the needs of diverse learners in his classroom. He continues with these practices today.

Ashley recognizes her White power and privilege and the access to social capital she has benefitted from throughout her lifetime. Recall that Ashley grew up in a racist household and community although she inherently understood that racism was wrong and did not like it as a child she (see Chapters Six and Seven). Today, she has high levels of consciousness but has had the opportunity to been able to interrogate her Whiteness and other biases for a very long period of time, in fact over nine years in four different higher education programs. Despite this, she seems to have some White Savior tendencies that are likely due to her Christian conservative upbringing. This tension between the values of her Christian conservative upbringing and her critical consciousness means that Ashley remains a work in progress, although she is quite aware of this.

Since race has been a prominent factor in both Anthony and Ashley's lives as children and now adults, this may be why both gravitate towards a deeper understanding of Whiteness and structural racism as it relates to teaching and learning, despite the fact that their early life experiences with race were quite opposite. Likewise, since race "was never an issue" for Lauren growing up, it is logical that she might not have recognized the significance of culture and race as a child nor as undergraduate in her TEP. Our conversations indicate that during her TEP she may have been inadvertently resistant to coursework that would likely have helped develop her critical consciousness. At that the time, however, she did not understand how it connected to what she thought she needed to know about how to teach her students, or in other words, its

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application was missing for her. As I discussed in Chapter 5, Lauren admits that she may not have been developmentally ready for this type of self-exploration. This is not to say that Lauren does not now hold some level of critical consciousness. It was clear on her initial screening survey as well as throughout our conversations that she is aware of how race and structural racism impacts her teaching and learning, although she did not express this in the same level of detail as Anthony and Ashley. Lauren seems to be more utilitarian in nature in that if she does not see how theory relates to teaching practices, she does not find it helpful.

Although the levels of cultural and racial consciousness among the three teachers are unique and varied, their life experiences indicate that a teachers' consciousness can form, develop, and evolve throughout a teacher's lifetime. As mentioned in the review of the literature, Haberman (1991) calls into question whether or not cultural awareness can actually be taught, citing that PSTs who come to their TEP may not be capable of developing critical consciousness because their core values are already instilled. The experiences of Lauren, Ashley, and Anthony indicate that not only are values malleable, they can change long after a pre-service teacher (PST) has left her TEP, especially if foundational work has already been established. For example, although she was inadvertently resistant to building critical consciousness during her TEP, Lauren is currently aware of the impact of race and culture on her students' learning and demonstrates many salient aspects of culturally relevant teaching. She is now able to use her more recent education on differentiated instruction for gifted students and apply it to teaching *all* of her low-income students of color. This suggests that as a teacher matures and continues to work with low-income students of color, she may be more capable of consciousness-raising than she was as a younger adult.

In the case of Ashley, her cultural awareness began during her ESOL courses, however she explains that *significant* development of critical consciousness as it relates to culture and race did not begin until later in her enrollment in State U for her Specialists Degree in Social Studies and her Ph.D. in English as a Second Language (ESOL). Earlier during her TEP, Ashley's recalls that reflective journaling of her constructivist classroom practices was a significant part of her development as a teacher and as a result, reflection is embedded into her practice. Currently, Ashley is able to combine these reflective practices with her more newly formed sense of identity and cultural awareness and thus reflect upon her culturally relevant practices.

Similar to Lauren, Ashley's development of critical consciousness continues to evolve. Anthony shared that introspection of his biases against homosexuals did not begin until his TEP, which he attended in his late twenties. This provides evidence that Like Lauren and Ashley, Anthony's critical consciousness continues to develop. Anthony also provides an example of how beliefs and values can be reexamined throughout a person's lifetime. Recall in Chapter Four that during his TEP he was forced to interrogate his bias against homosexuals and recognize how his attitude may negatively impact his teaching and his students learning. This experience provides an example of how a person is capable of reflexivity at various stages throughout their lifetime.

What the experiences of these three social studies educators indicate is while pre-service teachers' (PSTs) values may be deeply entrenched upon their arrival to their TEP, critical sociocultural awareness can begin to form and continue to evolve during their TEP as well as throughout a teacher's lifetime, provided the opportunities for consciousness-raising continue. Cultural awareness can in fact be altered, although such reflexivity may not take place until later in life or later during teachers' experiences with low-income students of color. This has

implications for both TEPs and teacher professional development (see Chapter Nine). In the next several sections, I demonstrate how critical consciousness impacts teachers' choices in their culturally relevant practices. Other factors influencing practices, such as TEP and context are also analyzed.

8.2   HOW SOCIAL STUDIES CONTENT IS DELIVERED IN CULTURALLY RELEVANT CLASSROOMS

This section explores the major themes regarding how all three teachers describe their content delivery. Specifically, this includes the provision of multiple perspectives, supplemental readings, and background information. Two factors that influence these choices, school context and teacher education are also discussed. These factors are important to contemplate because they offer implications for teacher education and professional development specific to secondary social studies education.

8.2.1   Multiple Perspectives and Supplemental Readings

The literature discussed in Chapter Two highlights the importance of purposefully connecting students of color to the curriculum content to foster engagement and personal identification one cornerstone of culturally relevant practice (Gay, 2010), particularly in the in the secondary social studies and U.S. History classroom (Journell & Castro, 2009; Manfra, 2012; Martell, 2013). The practices of social studies teachers in this study support this notion. In fact, none of the selected social studies teachers use the textbooks provided by their school, even though the text is a major

component of the course curriculum. This is in large part because all three assert that the historical perspectives of people of color and women are gravely ignored in their provided texts and curriculum albeit those who are minimally highlighted in little boxes or in the margins of the history book. Participants assert that the text is un-relatable to students and beyond the reading comprehension level of some, particularly those with limited English language proficiency. Therefore, each teacher reports spending considerable time and effort researching and locating supplemental reading sources, for example primary sources, to provide students with engaging material. All three teachers also noted primary source documents and supplemental readings from the historical perspectives of Hispanics as much more difficult to find than those of African Americans. This is significant since all three teach a significant number of Hispanic students (see Chapters Four, Five, and Six for school and classroom demographics).

For Anthony and Ashley, the provision of multiple perspectives is a clear priority and one of the major aspects of their teaching. Anthony makes this a priority even though he is forced to provide multiple perspectives as supplements under the guise of a building- wide literacy focus as opposed to this being a central part of the social studies curriculum. One reason for this is because other teachers on the school's social studies team view multiple perspectives as superfluous since the state exam prioritizes other aspects of the Greenfield state curriculum, for example, Greenfield military history. Anthony also feels he needs to be careful to reflect upon how he approaches multiple perspectives with his students, because he does not want to be viewed by students or teachers as pushing a "Black Agenda." Nevertheless, Anthony strongly believes that helping his students make connections between their culture and the curriculum is essential to their understanding of and engagement in Greenfield and U.S. History and therefore it is central to his practice. Anthony's emphasis on providing multiple perspectives despite these

challenges is reflective of his TEPs focus on addressing the needs of diverse learners. In his methods courses, Anthony was asked to create lessons with multiple perspectives, so he is now able to apply this skill in his teaching. He was continually asked to reflect upon if and how his lessons were culturally relevant during both his coursework and his practicum experience, thus honing in on its importance. Anthony surmises that these embedded reflections upon culturally relevant practices, particularly during his practicum, were a crucial foundation to his culturally relevant approach.

In her eleventh grade classes, Ashley engages students in "doing history" (Loewen, 2010) as described both in Chapter Six and the review of literature. This entails engaging students with primary sources, supplemental readings, and a variety of activities to provide them with multiple cultural and racial perspectives and contrasting viewpoints to help them critique the U.S. History curriculum and critically evaluate people, events and concepts throughout U.S. history. In doing so, Ashley intends for her students to explore the historical myths present in, and parts of history eliminated from, current U.S. history textbooks and to develop critical thinking skills. Like Anthony, Ashley contends that her students are much more engaged in this type of work than they would be with reading and lecture. Another strategy Ashley uses for delivering content material is providing her students with children's books relevant to U.S. History. Often this is because she can more easily find children's books of various reading levels that are written from the perspectives of people of color. She then uses these books as an opportunity for students to evaluate how history is presented to younger children in the United States in order to identify biases. Although the process of researching and selecting a variety of books can be time consuming, she finds this approach much more effective and engaging than the curriculum provided.

Like Anthony, Ashley's teaching practices align with what she was taught in teacher education coursework, however, recall in Chapter Seven that Ashley felt that that culturally relevant teaching was better integrated into her ESOL coursework as compared to her TEP program. The main components of Ashley's ESOL courses included how to bring culture into daily lessons; therefore, she has had a lot of practice learning how to supplement readings with culturally relevant content.

Lauren also asserts her students are not engaged in the text and she uses her own primary sources, supplementary materials and activities in place of the textbook curriculum. Similar to Anthony, she finds the Greenfield Studies curriculum heavily concentrated on White men and the Civil War. This supports Grant's (2001) findings that U.S. History textbooks focused on military and political history are often difficult for English Language Learners (ELLs) to interpret, therefore delivery of historical content through reading or teacher lecture is inadequate. Lauren engages her students in learning about the perspectives of people of color related to the curriculum, such as Native Americans on the Trail of Tears, and the perspectives of free and enslaved Africans. However, Lauren discussed the provision of multiple cultural perspectives as more of a challenge than did Anthony and Ashley. As discussed in Chapter 5, there are high tensions between the African American and Hispanic students in Lauren's school, and she feels these tensions could be exacerbated if she does not spend equal time and attention on each cultural group. Since as noted by all three participants, resources on the historical perspectives of Hispanics are limited compared to those on African Americans, finding resources on the perspectives of Hispanics is difficult, particularly during the time period covered in the Eighth Grade Greenfield State curriculum. Lauren explains that because of this, providing equal time

and attention on each of these two cultural perspectives is challenging, so sometimes she elects not to commit to this practice as much as she would like to.

In Lauren's case, her school context significantly impacts her decisions regarding providing multiple perspectives. The school-wide group tensions, combined with Lauren's perceived lack of administrative support and effectiveness (see Chapter Five) likely hinders her desire to take more risks in providing multiple perspectives, thus it is understandable why Lauren finds this challenge difficult to address. The social tensions between cultural groups, however, demonstrate why it is important to engage students in multiple perspectives so they can gain a better understanding of one another's histories and therefore one another. In contrast, Ashley teaches older students at an International Baccalaureate (IB) school which already values and focuses upon multiple perspectives, thus she does not have this added challenge. Anthony finds this aspect of his teaching a balancing act as well, because he is somewhat concerned with being perceived as pushing a "Black Agenda" and risks alienation from his colleagues. For Lauren and Anthony then, offering multiple perspectives requires more risk-taking than it does for Ashley, even though Anthony's culturally relevant practices are well supported by his administration (see Chapter Four).

Lauren's difficulties may also be a reflection of her experiences in teacher education. Anthony and Ashley cited that learning how to provide multiple perspectives was a main component of their teacher education, even though for Ashley this occurred via ESOL coursework. The commitment and training in these programs surely supports their ability to include multiple perspectives in their practice. Contrary to Anthony and Ashley, Lauren did not mention learning this skill in her TEP. Although she recognizes its importance now, it may be that Lauren's lack of preparatory experience in this area is another reason why she finds it

difficult to implement this in her teaching context. Perhaps she did not discuss this aspect of her TEP because it was not offered or because her inadvertent resistance at the time resulted in her inability to see why multiple perspectives were important.

The experiences of the selected social studies teachers suggest that school and classroom context, teacher education, and cultural awareness at the time of their TEP, are interrelated and impact the provision and teaching of multiple perspectives, which is a major component of CRP in a social studies classroom (Journell & Castro, 2009; Manfra, 2012; Martell, 2013). This provides evidence that working on racial and sociocultural consciousness over time is essential, as is preparing current and future teachers to include multiple perspectives, helping them anticipate challenges, and learning to problem-solve when these challenges arise (see Chapter Nine).

8.2.2 Teaching Background Information

Connecting students' background knowledge to new content knowledge is a primary aspect of social studies education, and for the three selected teachers, history class. According to participants, making these connections accessible to their low-income students of color is critical for their understanding, engagement and long-term academic growth in social studies. Lauren and Anthony both commented that their students' lack of background information makes it difficult for them to help students connect to the content and develop an understanding of broader historical events and concepts. Lauren specifically mentioned that her ELL students new to the United States have difficulty finding meaning in Greenfield State Studies, a challenge reflective of the literature on ELL's difficulties specific to the U.S. History classroom (Cruz & Thorton, 2009; Short, 1994, Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). Therefore, when Lauren assigns

readings, she researches to find supplementary materials because they "mean something to my students."

Lauren delivers content knowledge through stations or jigsaws because she finds they are more engaged when the "are up and moving" instead of just sitting and reading the textbook or listening to lecture and taking notes. In the beginning of the year, Lauren gives her students a multiple intelligences quiz and then monitors how they best engage in learning background information throughout the year. She then uses this information when creating her stations and provides students with opportunities to draw pictures, graphics, or provide examples in order to engage with the text. Students then move from station to station, compare notes and collaborate, and then go over the information together as a class. Lauren also uses jigsaws in place of lectures and notes for her gifted students, and in previous years has done so with her ELL students with higher language proficiency.

Ashley also uses jigsaws to deliver background information, as well as an interactive notebook where students keep all of their class readings, daily work, and assignments. She explains that the left side of the notebook is where she "gives them information" such as the readings, and the right side of the notebook is where her students show her that they understand the information. Anthony described utilizing Document-Based Questions (DBQ's) aligned with his supplementary reading materials and class discussions to help students learn background information.

As described in the conceptual framework, a student-centered classroom, and thus a culturally relevant classroom, provides multiple perspectives (Gay, 2010) and uses strategies such as jigsaws, stations and DBQ's to provide students with more ways of connecting to the material and thus learning it Tomlinson (1999). The choices made by Anthony, Ashley, and

Lauren of how to deliver background information align with this practice and can be traced to some part of their teacher education, although not necessarily their TEP. Lauren's use of jigsaws, stations, and multiple intelligences to inform her planning comes from what she learned in her gifted certification program. She uses these strategies throughout all of her classes because she finds they help her students connect to the material. Anthony stated that his TEP emphasized the fact that low-income students of color do not share the experiences of others, thus to address the needs of diverse students, supplemental readings are needed. In his TEP, he was taught how to find supplemental readings and build his own DBQs – practices that he uses in the classroom today. Ashley's constructivist-focused TEP helps explain her choices of interactive notebooks and jigsaws that are student-centered. In fact, as the selected participants described their culturally relevant teaching, it became evident that each uses constructivist practices throughout classroom activities and assessments, some common and some divergent. These practices are discussed in the next section, followed by analysis of how individual consciousness, life experiences, education, and contextual factors may impact these choices.

8.3   CONSTRUCTIVIST PRACTICES AS THE BEDROCK FOR CULTURALLY RELEVANT ACTIVITIES AND ASSESSMENTS

All three social studies teachers described using constructivist practices in their classrooms. As I assert in the review of the literature, when constructivist activities (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011) are combined with cultural and racial consciousness and practices that are caring and relationship-based and community oriented, the result is culturally relevant teaching (Banks, 2007; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Milner, 2010). Therefore, the

application of culturally relevant teaching of social studies knowledge and skills in large part occurs via constructivist practices. Anthony, Lauren, and Ashley have similarities and differences regarding which constructivist practices they utilize. These practices, namely student-centered activities and assessments, collaborative grouping, and scaffolding are described in the paragraphs below. This is followed by a discussion of why the teachers in this study may have elected to detail particular practices over others based upon their cultural consciousness as well as life and educational experience.

8.3.1 Student-Centered Activities and Assessments

Both Ashley and Lauren adamantly remarked that making their class fun for students was critical to engagement. This requires considerable time and resources for both women to create student-centered class activities and assignments. Both teachers identify what funds of knowledge their students hold and then use this as a bridge to the concepts learned in social studies class. Lauren explained that she uses a lot of sports, family, and food analogies to help her students understand certain concepts because her students relate to and enjoy discussing these topics. This seems to come from her authentic desire to connect students to the material and not from a deficit perspective or inadvertent condescension (see Chapter Five). An example described by Ashley includes her ESOL students' household funds of knowledge for a research project in which they completed a comparative study of their home countries to the United States on issues such as colonization, women's rights, alcohol, and public schooling. Students were asked to interview family members as part of their research, and Ashley believes this was an empowering activity for students and their households.

Both of the examples described by Lauren and Ashley demonstrate how they identify students' funds of knowledge from the home and use this to build the bridges for border crossing – a practice described in the review of the literature as promoting relatable and thus successful teaching and learning for low-income students of color (Gonzolez et al., 2004; Grant & Sleeter, 2010) that helps ESOL students relate to and learn the background knowledge necessary to understand many of the concepts taught in social studies, particularly U.S. history (Cruz & Thorton, 2009; Short, 1994, Short & Fitzsimmons).

A second major component of both Ashley and Lauren's constructivist, culturally relevant approach is using students' strengths in designing and assigning activities and assessments. Students are given the autonomy to choose how they will demonstrate understanding of classroom concepts, themes or topics studied through whatever medium they can best express themselves. This is true for both less involved daily activities, which are formative assessments, as well as larger scale projects, which are summative assessments. Examples include students creating a make-believe Tweet or a Facebook page, an Instagram, a blog, a scrapbook, creating a cartoon, or writing a song. In each of these examples, students are asked to express their understanding of the historical concepts learned in class. For a less involved formative assessment, students might be asked to demonstrate knowledge of what was learned that day. For more detailed summative assessments, both teachers use rubrics and/or lists of high-level questions that not only require students to demonstrate understanding but to also use inductive or deductive reasoning, analyze, or make predictions, which are standardized skills in social studies education (National Council for the Social Studies [NCSS], 2002, 2010). Both teachers assert these activities more accurately reflect students subject mastery and social studies skill development than do multiple-choice exams.

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Consistent with the literature in Chapter Two, these practices are referred to as differentiated instruction (Tomlinson, 1999) and are used by culturally relevant teachers (Grant and Sleeter, 2010) in the social studies classroom (Manfra, 2012). Teachers that use differentiated instruction acknowledge the importance of helping her students make sense of their own ideas. This means they need to understand her students' cultural frames of reference, including but not limited to their modes of communication, understanding and learning, in order to plan how she will differentiate her content, process or product (Tomlinson, 1999).

Ashley and Laurens' classroom activities utilize student-centered, strengths-based approaches, which was described in the review of the literature as one of the central components of culturally relevant teaching (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2010). Students are encouraged to use their own funds of knowledge, interests and strengths during the learning and assessment, which makes their work meaningful and increases the likelihood of completion (Cruz & Thorton, 2009; Tomlinson, 1999). Both teachers also provide students with opportunities to present their work to one another, thus they are given a chance to feel a sense of ownership and pride in their work (Tomlinson, 1999). This approach also builds a more community based classroom as opposed to a competitive, individualist classroom, which is yet another major area of culturally relevant practice (Ladson-Billings, 2010).

Anthony admits that he does not use his students' funds of knowledge or different modes of instruction as much as he would like (see Chapter Four). Recall that it was not until after his first year of teaching that he realized he was not discussing people of color or women as much as he thought he should and upon this recognition he altered this practice. Anthony is deeply committed to these and other culturally relevant principals as they were taught to him in his TEP and finds that with each year of teaching he is more able to attend to important aspects of his

CRP because he is more comfortable with the content. Anthony also reports engaging in other aspects of CRP that Ashley and Lauren did not mention or emphasize, as discussed in the two subsections below.

8.3.2 Collaborative Grouping

Although all three teachers mentioned using collaborative grouping, Anthony and Lauren elaborated more upon this aspect of their constructivist practice. Lauren claims it is essential to the engagement of both her ESOL students and her gifted students. She allows her ESOL students to help one another by teaching each other vocabulary and basic concepts in their primary language and also has students of varying language acquisition translate for each other. Anthony described the effectiveness of intentionally grouping students in ways that would enhance their academic abilities. He considers students' cultural frames of reference, including but not limited to their modes of communication, understanding and learning, and he makes sure that each member has a clear and meaningful role that includes very specific tasks. These practices are consistent with what factors are known to provide meaningful collaborate group experiences for students (Bower & Lobdell, 2005; Tomlinson, 1999), although Anthony admits that for him this requires a significant amount of planning.

As discussed earlier in Chapters Four and Five, collaborative grouping is one means of differentiating the learning process and as indicated in the literature review, when students in the group are given equally respectful activities they are likely to value their own learning process (Tomlinson, 1999). Also discussed in the literature review is the idea that working on meaningful activities in a group helps students build relationships and learn how to take responsibility for one another's learning while engaging in civil discourse (Banks 2007; Grant &

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Sleeter, 2011).   Therefore collaborative grouping, when planned carefully, not only helps students learn social studies content (Bower & Lobdell, 2005). but also is an authentic way to develop and maintain a caring and relationship-based classroom that helps teach students how to participate in a democracy (Banks 2007; Grant & Sleeter, 2011). This is not only a foundation of a community of learners in culturally relevant classroom (Ladson-Billings 2010), but also one of the primary goals of social studies classroom (NCSS, 2002). Therefore, Anthony and Lauren's use of collaborative grouping helps promote this aspect of a culturally relevant classroom.

As discussed in Section 2.5.1 of the literature review, cooperative learning is also known to be an effective learning approach for ELL's that fosters bilingual skills in the social studies classroom (Cruz & Thorton, 2009). ELL students working with other ELL's are given the opportunity to develop higher order thinking skills as they listen and communicate their thoughts to one another. When students are moved into groups with students whose native language is English, they are then given the opportunity to engage in collaborative verbal interaction to varying degrees (Cruz & Thorton, 2009).   Thus, Lauren and Anthony are working to meet the needs of their students by providing opportunities for them to listen and communicate their thoughts to one another in their native language. This would not be the case in a teacher-focused classroom centered on lecture and note taking in English (Cruz & Thorton, 2009).

8.3.3   Scaffolding

Anthony was the only teacher to discuss how he uses scaffolding to help students learn content knowledge and develop social studies skills. Much of Anthony's practice centers around meeting students at their ability level and as he terms it, "move them up their own trajectory." In Chapter Four, I detailed how Anthony models and then scaffolds his students work with DBQ's

by using his students' existing frame of reference and then working with them on their interpretation and analysis skills over an extended period of time. After modeling and scaffolding, students work in the Zone of Proximal Development until eventually they are able to do the work independently (Vygotsky, 1978). Anthony explains that this learning process not only requires planning out the steps of students' trajectories but also reviewing when necessary in order to move them forward. In this way, Anthony is being responsive to his students' needs and teaching them based upon what he understands these needs to be.

8.3.4   Teacher Choices Regarding Constructivist Practices

Why particular teachers in this study may have elected to detail certain practices during our conversations is worth consideration. For example, Anthony is the only teacher to talk about scaffolding, but this is not surprising when considering his recollections of childhood when his teachers did not know how to engage him and scaffold his learning. Contrarily, as White middle class females, neither Ashley nor Lauren experienced Anthony's struggles with poverty, familial instability, and the racial discrimination that Anthony finds so poignant. Thus they may not connect as much to the importance of this practice or did not find it significant enough to talk about it as a central part of their teaching low-income students of color.

Given Ashley's TEP, which was steeped in constructivist or progressive social studies principles, as well as her childhood attendance at a Dewey school, it is logical that she understands how to use students' strengths and feels comfortable designing activities and assignments that allow a significant amount of student autonomy while maintaining guidelines and expectations. Ashley also notes her TEP coursework and student teaching practicum were well integrated in terms of using constructivist teaching methods in the social studies classroom,

which means she has utilized this approach as a teacher for several years. Although her journey into cultural awareness and identification of funds of knowledge occurred outside of her TEP program, she is able to combine all of these aspects and engage in culturally relevant practices.

In Lauren's case, she does not view her strengths-based practices nor her use of students' funds of knowledge as at all connected to her TEP at Chardon, nor most of her Master's program at State U. She attributes these specific practices to the training she received in her year- long gifted certification program and finds ways to connect these practices to *all* of her low-income students of color. For Lauren, these practices seem to stem from a place of contextual necessity, or in other words doing what works for her kids. Since she is passionate about their learning, she develops practices based upon how she thinks they can best learn.

This comparison demonstrates why it is critical to one, recognize that levels of racial and cultural competence evolve over time and two, why teaching PSTs how to apply culturally relevant mindsets through the use of constructivist teaching practices is so critical. For instance, in the case of Lauren, she claims that she did not learn anything of value in her TEP's multicultural education courses nor did she find any utility in these courses. Lauren explains that when activities entailed self-examination, professors did not scaffold activities in ways that helped her think more deeply. She also found that her coursework relevant to CRP entailed talking about theories but not discussing how they connected to classroom practice. As discussed in Chapters Five and Seven, Ashley may have been inadvertently resistant and/or simply not developmentally capable of engaging in reflexivity at the time she was enrolled in TEP. To further contemplate this, consideration of two possible scenarios is helpful. In the first, it may be that Lauren did indeed internalize some notions of cultural awareness or consciousness throughout her TEP and her M.Ed. and is unaware of it or does not see how this

earlier development may in fact impact her current teaching. This is why considering critical consciousness as ever evolving is important because if she was involved in self-examination today she may be more able to see how it impacts her teaching and her students learning. These reflections could have a significant positive impact on her current culturally relevant practices. In the second scenario, perhaps Lauren may have been able to think more about her current notions and life experiences regarding race and culture if her program had more deliberately focused on how to connect a culturally relevant mindset to teaching practices. This might include teaching students how to use students' funds of knowledge to plan strengths-based lessons, how to provide multiple perspectives and engage students in "doing history" (Loewen, 2010) during her methods courses (see Chapter Nine).

The experiences of Ashley and Lauren indicate that if TEPs help PSTs connect critical consciousness to the constructivist practices discussed in Section 8.3 (also see Chapter Four, Five and Six), PSTs may be less resistant because they recognize a tangible linkage between theory and practice. If PSTs maintain resistant, at the very least they will learn sound constructivist practices such as student-centered activities and assessments, collaborative grouping, and scaffolding while embarking upon consciousness-raising that may eventually develop as they continue teaching. This has implications for professional development, because evolution of consciousness is contingent upon future opportunities for teachers to engage in reflexivity and learn more deeply about sociocultural, racial and structural inequities. Implications of these assertions are expounded upon in Chapter Nine.

In addition to how teachers in the study described providing social studies content and utilizing constructivist practices, teachers elaborated upon two other classroom practices central

to the culturally relevant teaching of social studies. Discussed below, these include discussions of inequity and teaching students how to negotiate mainstream society.

8.4 OTHER CLASSROOM PRACTICES: DISCUSSIONS OF INEQUITY AND NEGOCIATING MAINSTREAM SOCIETY

As highlighted in the review of the literature, discussions with students about societal inequities is an important means of building one of the major components of a culturally relevant classroom in that it is community- oriented with an eye toward social justice (Ladson-Billings, Gay, Grant & Sleeter, 2011). Another means by which classroom teachers can work towards social justice is helping low- income students of color negotiate mainstream society (Gay, 2010). In this section, I briefly explain how teachers describe both of these practices in their classrooms (see Chapters Four, Five and Six for more detail). Based upon these experiences, I then discuss three factors that seem to greatly impact the effectiveness of conversations about inequity. This is followed by a synopsis of how teachers discuss the different yet equally important ways in which each helps his or her students' negotiate mainstream society and questions that arise regarding these practices.

8.4.1 Considerations for Discussions of Inequity

All three of the selected social studies teachers report having conversations with their students about racial and social inequalities albeit with varying degrees of perceived success. Based upon these experiences, I posit that three factors may have a significant positive impact on these types

of conversations. These include a teacher's keen understanding of the historical and structural nature of inequity, student trust of the teacher and her intentions, and training and practice for the teacher in engaging students in controversial conversations.

Anthony discussed at length how he engages his students in individual and group conversations that address human difference, stereotype awareness, and conflict. He wants his students to realize that although stereotypes are inaccurate and unfair, members of society will often judge them based upon these stereotypes. For Anthony, these conversations are essential to teaching his students how to negotiate mainstream society, although he is mindful of how he approaches this topic because he says it important that he never humiliates a child. Anthony explains that by having open conversations with students, he builds a more community-oriented classroom and tries to facilitate student discourse on racial and cultural topics that are difficult for many Whites and people of color to have. In these ways, Anthony invites students to analyze stereotypes critically, negotiate mainstream society, and develop a community-oriented classroom; all of which are practices of a culturally relevant teacher (Gay, 2000; Grant and Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2010). Although Anthony notes that he may have an easier time having these conversations because he is Black, he contends that there are White teachers in his school who are able to do this effectively as well.

Ashley is very open with her students about racism throughout U.S. history and prioritizes its focus and discussion. Ashley recognizes the historical nature of structural racism and wants her students to understand it too. She finds that her U.S. history curriculum largely ignores these themes and therefore uses it as a focal point in her classes. Ashley also described conversations about contemporary inequity held in her classroom, including the local gerrymandering of school districts, how her students of color are treated outside of school, how

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they perceive people view them, how they feel about the majority of their teachers being White, and why some of them have trouble staying in school. She indicates that her students enjoy these conversations and are quite involved in them.

Lauren also discusses inequity in her classroom, although she says these conversations have had mixed results. Lauren explained that discussions with her students about White flight, socioeconomic status and racial inequities at the school, local, city, and state levels were effective and thought provoking for her students. When she planned discussions concerning a local crime, however, this instigated racial tensions between the Hispanic and African American students in her class, which she found quite challenging. After this she felt uncomfortable having these types of conversations, which is why she now elects to discuss issues as they arise versus planning for them in advance.

The experiences of all three teachers suggest three things to consider regarding discussions of inequity that promote students' understanding of one another and of broader societal inequities. First, a teacher needs to have an understanding of the historical and structural nature of inequity in order to teach it. Perhaps one reason why Anthony and Ashley have an easier time with these conversations is because they have higher levels of critical consciousness and knowledge of structural inequalities. Anthony also views these conversations as integral to his students' development of the ability to negotiate mainstream society, whereas the other teachers did not mention this. Similar to some of Anthony's other pedagogical choices, this is probably because he has a more personal understanding of its importance than Ashley and Lauren. Thus, levels of critical consciousness, or at least the ability to look at inequities outside of a White middle or upper class lens, impact the quality of these types of conversations. This supports what is already known about CRP in that it requires high levels racial and cultural

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consciousness on the part of the teacher (Banks; 2007; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2010; Milner, 2010).

Another factor that helps encourage meaningful conversations on inequity is the students' trust of the teacher and her intentions. It is logical that if students feel the teacher is blatantly or inadvertently condescending they will not be open to such discussions. All three teachers seem to have authentic relationships with their students, which is why these discussions are able to take place, even if to varying levels of perceived success. These experiences further support the notion that authentic and trustworthy relationships between a teacher and his students is a critical area of culturally relevant practice (Banks, 2007; Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Milner, 2010).

A third important consideration for discussions on inequity in the social studies classroom is training and practice. Lauren sometimes finds discussions on inequity challenging because of the tensions among racial groups in her school and classroom. Although discussions about conflicts and social inequity are not easy in any context, this demonstrates why it is for K-12 teachers to learn how to plan for controversial conversations in diverse social studies classrooms (Hess, 2004; Wilen, 2004). While cultural consciousness and trustworthy relationships with students are needed, knowing how plan for these discussions is a critical skill that is often neglected (Bickmore & Parker, 2014). Furthermore, diverse public school classrooms rarely have opportunities for these types of discussions, even though they are viewed as a "key element of democratic citizenship education that is frequently advocated in scholarship…" (Bickmore & Parker, 2014, p. 291). This is significant because as discussed in the review of the literature, a culturally relevant teacher teaches her students that while they do not need to agree with one another's perspectives, they do need to understand why different

things makes sense to different people and that arguments naturally occur as people have different ideas about what is fair based upon their life experiences (Grant and Sleeter, 2011). By addressing human difference and raising stereotype awareness a culturally relevant teacher helps her students develop self-esteem, build empathy, affirm each other's beliefs, and build caring relationships. By modeling and scaffolding civic discourse, she teaches her students how to participate in a democracy (Banks 2007; Grant & Sleeter, 2011). Additionally, these conversations help "students make connections between their community, national and global identities," (Ladson-Billings, 2010, p. 38) and guide students towards critically analyzing the current social, economic, and political injustices in their communities, the country, and the world at large (Grant and Sleeter, 2011). These are extensive and profound responsibilities for the culturally relevant teacher. Thus, the seriousness of preparation and ongoing training for this type of classroom engagement should not be overlooked (see Chapter Nine).

8.4.2   Approaches to Teaching Students how to Negotiate Mainstream Society

Negotiating mainstream society was also noted in the review of literature as a way to help promote social justice in a culturally relevant classroom (Gay, 2010). Both Anthony and Ashley note its importance, but approach this aspect of their teaching in different ways. Exploring these differences is important because it calls into question how teachers decide what it means and what these practices entail. Although Lauren indicated engaging students in negotiating mainstream society on her inventory survey, I mistakenly did not make an inquiry as to her approach during our conversations. I later emailed her regarding this inquiry, but I did not receive a reply as to her approach to this practice. Therefore, analysis is limited to Ashley and Anthony.

One major way in which Ashley helps her students of color negotiate mainstream society is how she prepares them to take multiple choice tests so that they will do well on state assessments. Although Ashley typically utilizes more authentic assessments that use her students' strengths, she sometimes requires her students to take multiple-choice exams to help them develop test-taking skills. To learn these skills, Ashley first helps students identify how to answer questions that have White Eurocentric, middle class bias even before taking the tests. After they take the test, Ashley reviews with the entire class why certain answers are correct, but she also gives her students the opportunity to justify an incorrect answer for possible bonus points. Another way in which Ashley helps her students negotiate mainstream society is that she contacts the parents of her African American students to suggest their child take higher- level courses. In this way, Ashley is attempting to address the opportunity gaps created by underrepresentation of students of color in higher- level coursework as discussed in the literature review (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

In addition to the conversations he has with students on stereotype awareness, Anthony supports students learning how to negotiate mainstream society by helping them develop the ability to code-switch. Addressed at the beginning of the year, Anthony expects his students to use academic language but is careful not to instill shame in how his students naturally speak. Instead of just *telling* his students to use academic language, he helps them *develop* this skill through scaffolding and helps them identify when it is appropriate to switch back and forth (see Chapter Four). Anthony and Ashley also mentioned that they have to encourage their ESOL students to question the teacher and help them understand that they have the right to do so. This is because both believe that their Hispanic students and families are overly reverent to teachers and administrators and as a result often do not get their needs met.

Besides this last commonality, Anthony and Ashley's differences in focus demonstrate that how to teach low-income of students to negotiate mainstream society is an important line of inquiry. It brings into question who or what groups of people in the educational field and in general society decides what it means and what these skills "should" actually entail. Presumably Anthony determines what his students need to know based upon his own life experiences. Fortunately, Anthony is very conscientious when he helps his students develop the skills needed to negotiate mainstream educational society so that it is not at the expense of cultural assimilation or personal humiliation, an important aspect of culturally relevant teaching (Gay, 2010). Ashley's focus on testing preparation and getting her students to think about higher level courses is likely due to her HEI experiences that taught her how to identify these biases. Therefore, if teachers are ultimately the arbiters of what is valued mainstream behavior in their classrooms, what is deemed mainstream behavior in their TEP, by school building leadership, and society in general has ramifications. As mentioned in Chapter Four, negotiating mainstream society should not be a means by which to strip a person of their cultured identity (Fordham, 2009; Gay, 2010). In what he terms *culturally sustaining pedagogy*, Paris (2012) asserts that CRP needs to be extended further so that it "seeks to perpetuate and foster – to sustain – linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of the democratic project of schooling (p.93). If this is a priority for teaching low-income students of color, then how and what we teach them regarding this aspect of schooling is a very serious area of future study.

8.5 RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

Culturally responsive classrooms are foremost based upon authentic, trustworthy relationships between teacher and student, student and student, and teacher and families (Alder, 2002; Banks, 2007, Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2010; Gutierrez et al. 2009; Ladson-Billings, 2010; Milner, 2010; Valenzuela, 1999). Relationships provide the foundations from which teachers can build a strengths-based, student centered and community oriented classroom. Therefore in this section, I discuss how participants in this study talk about their relationships with students, followed by descriptions of how teachers' experience familial involvement. Thirdly, I turn to how teachers talk about maintaining expectations. This is discussed here because all three teachers in large part determine expectations based upon knowledge of their students' lives outside of school. Because these last two aspects are at times challenging for these teachers, insight as to some of the challenges experienced by the selected social studies teachers in building familial relationships and maintaining high expectations can be gained.

8.5.1 Relationships with Students

All three social studies teachers seem to genuinely value and enjoy the relationships between themselves and their students (see Chapters Four, Five and Six). All three were very passionate about their students, student learning, and their own teaching practices. For example, Ashley and Lauren frequently used the word *love* to describe how they feel about their students, both mentioned that think students "respect" them, and both have been told by students that they learn more in their classes than in their other classes. Students' comments are probably related to the fact that both teachers take responsibility for making class enjoyable so that students want

to engage in their classwork. For Ashley and Lauren, engagement is contingent upon activities and assessments that are student-centered and strengths based by using students' funds of knowledge and providing them with a good deal of autonomy. These practices reflect the literature on CRP because it validates students' existent knowledge and cultural frames of reference as legitimate, making students are more inclined to view learning as a fulfilling process that supports a community of learners (Gonzolez, 2004; Gutierrez et al. 2009; Ladson-Billings 2010).

Anthony noted that students refer to him as the "Team Dad." Similar to Ashley and Lauren, he is dedicated to his relationships with students and their learning, but he describes this differently. He is deeply committed to being a supportive, yet demanding adult in his students' lives. In fact, Anthony was the only one of the three that emphasized the importance of positive talk and demanding expectations for behavior in addition to academics. Anthony views positive talk as an essential element of his teaching and works to instill the belief in his students that they "can do it." It also involves him understanding his students' lives and academic abilities so he knows how to challenge them and provide the support they need to meet these challenges.   This commitment comes from his reflections upon growing up a low-income African American child and how different he thinks his life would be had he not encountered an adult figure in high school that encouraged him to apply himself. Because of this experience, Anthony says it is important that he expresses his belief in students' abilities. These priorities allow Anthony to work on one of the main areas of practice of CRP in that he is a caring person and uses positive talk to build students' confidence. Anthony is what Gay (2010) describes as "demanding but facilitative, supportive and accessible both personally and professionally." (p. 56) While Lauren and Ashley may very well use positive talk in their classrooms; they did not identify it as one of

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their main practices in their classrooms. Of important note is that Anthony is the only teacher who emphasized how he works to develop trust and the respect with and *among* his students of varying cultures. In doing so, his students are more likely to feel understood and validated as cultural beings.

Differences in how teachers in this study talk about their relationships with students once again suggest that life experiences, which are largely informed by factors such as race, socio-economic status, and gender impact teachers' choices for how they approach and perceive relationship building and determine what their students need. Both females grew up middle to upper middle class, whereas class and race-wise Anthony's youth is more similar to the current experience of his students. Although Anthony is open about that the fact his life experiences directly impact his emphasis on positive talk and expectations for behavior, these choices may also be impacted by the fact that his TEP clearly emphasized meeting the needs of diverse students, or it may be that his school administration emphasizes positive talk more than Ashley and Lauren's.

8.5.2   Relationships with Families

All three teachers believe the development of positive relationships with students' families is an integral part of teaching and learning and all three firmly believe that students' parents care about their child's education. Despite this, each experiences a different level of familial engagement. Anthony reports high levels of involvement, Ashley says that parental involvement at her school is mixed, and Lauren experiences the lack of parental involvement as a significant challenge to teaching. Below, I discuss teacher's relationships with parents and families as they

provide examples of potential supports and contextual difficulties encountered by culturally relevant teachers.

When I asked Anthony to tell me about his students' families and communities, he explained that he tries his best to "be in tune" with the African American community, the White community, and the Hispanic community. He attends all of the school events and often holds teacher-parent conferences with the rest of his team, sometimes four or five times a week. He describes parental involvement as quite high and finds that strong connections between parents, teachers, and students positively correlate to student levels of accountability for academic work and the ability to meet behavioral expectations. Anthony asserts that some of the teachers in his school believe that the parents do not care about their children. This frustrates Anthony because he thinks these attitudes perpetuate lack of involvement on the part of both students and their families.

I asked Anthony if it was more difficult to help Hispanic students negotiate mainstream society, since he familiar with their cultural norms as he might be with the African American community, with the understanding that there are variations within culture. He responded that there is a lot about his Hispanic students that he is learning and explained why it was so important to attend school events, be involved with the community, and make sure the Hispanic community to knows that he genuinely cares about their children.

Ashley says that while some parents email her frequently, there are others who are difficult to contact and some who she can never get in contact with. She believes this due to the fact that they work many jobs, move frequently, or have experienced teachers as condescending; all of which contributes to their inability or unwillingness to visit the school. Nevertheless, Ashley sends letters home with her students and sends a weekly email to parents that describes

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what they did during the week, ways in which they could help the student at home, and suggestions for resources. Ashley says she wants parents to know, "Just how much I care about my kids." She also finds it important to send a few positive comments home each week and keeps a checklist to ensure she has sent something positive home for each student. Ashley also holds parent meetings at school but notes, "There's some parents that we just never get in contact with." However she points out that in order to attend the IB school, parents had to go to the school to enroll their children and that many of these same students take the bus from relatively distant areas of Metropolis to attend the school. For Ashley, these behaviors indicate that parents care about their children even though she cannot get in contact with them. Ashley coaches two team sports and is working on the creation of a mentor program for her ESOL students in which they tutor elementary or middle school ESOL students.

Lauren posits the family unit is an important aspect of her students' lives, because her students indicate as such on their yearly engagement surveys administered by her school. This is why she often uses the family unit as a fund of knowledge in her teaching. As she notes, "Yes, their parents don't contact us and it seems they don't care about education, but as a family, we know that they do care, so we bring a lot of – well, I bring a lot of that into the classroom." Lauren often calls home, uses the help of a translator, and notes that her school has a strong community outreach program. Nevertheless, familial involvement is still challenging for Lauren. Lauren believes that financial and social hardships faced by her students' families contribute to the lack of school involvement of both students and their households. She explains that since most of her students come from single parent homes, students must work, take care of family members, and/or turn to gangs, because they are simply trying to get their financial needs met. Lauren does not assume, however, that her students' families are facing difficulties because of

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laziness or some sort of cultural pathology, in other words she does not seem to harbor notions of deficit. Additionally, Lauren cites the language barrier; difficulty contacting parents, and the fact that many teachers in her building are condescending towards parents as compounding reasons for the lack of parental involvement. Lauren partakes in after school events and plays alongside students in their band concerts, but her newborn baby has recently limited her ability to involve herself in after school activities.

Anthony, Lauren and Ashley's reflections upon students and their families demonstrate the benefits and challenges of parental involvement. Although all three are clear that higher levels of involvement are positively related to student engagement, Anthony is the only teacher to report high levels of parental or family engagement. While this may be due to a variety factors, Anthony's diligence, combined with the fact that he is a person of color who grew up in a low-income household, certainly impacts his approach and may make him more relatable to parents. As noted by all three teachers, other teachers in their buildings are condensing and even admonishing towards their students' parents, and all three assert this contributes to parents not wanting to engage with teachers and the school in general. This is supported by the literature that finds low-income parents of color often disenchanted or intimidated by an institution that has historically failed them, as well as by teachers who admonish them (Gibson, 1997).

Ashley and Lauren's contemplations about the parental lack of involvement demonstrate potential challenges for teachers of low-income students of color when considering how to be involved with households and the community. Another factor that places Lauren and Ashley at a disadvantage is that many of their students are bused in from several adjacent different counties. This creates another issue regarding how to make connections with families and communities unless parents physically visit the school or teachers visit the home. Lauren and Ashley's

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challenges with familial involvement have important implications for how current and future teachers are taught to work with such challenges and how they are supported in this practice by building administration.

Although I asked all three teachers to "Tell me about your student's communities and their families," none of them referred to neighborhoods or community entities such as church or community-based organizations (CBOs), even though research has long heralded strong the benefits of strong connections between schools and CBO's (Heath & McLaughlin, 1994). Because a teacher's relationship with her students, parents, families, and community is a central facet of a culturally relevant classroom that works towards social justice (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings 2010), implications for these relationships relative to schools and TEPs are considered in Chapter Nine.

8.5.3 Expectations for Students

Since high expectations are essential to maintaining a caring but demanding relationship in a culturally relevant classroom (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011), I asked all three teachers if they thought they were able to maintain high expectations for their low-income students of color. It should be noted that this inquiry occurred within the context of different topics of conversation for each of the participants. Since Lauren discussed different reading strategies and activities utilized between her ELL and gifted classes, I asked her about the expectations she has for her ELL students. Lauren feels conflicted about how to maintain high expectations while still making sure they understand the background information in class readings, so she sometimes uses elementary level reading strategies with her ESOL students. She gives her gifted classes, which are also diverse, readings that require higher levels of comprehension. As discussed in

5.4.1, this poses a dilemma for her. At times she thinks she should make readings more challenging for her ELL students, but she wants to make sure they understand the information before moving on to more difficult concepts.

When I asked Ashley how she feels about whether or not she upholds high standards for her students, she reflected that in terms of homework, she does not assign it very often because many of her low-income students of color work after school and she knows they will not have time to complete it. It terms of classwork, she upholds that students learn what she prioritizes:

> I do feel the kids know my expectations or beliefs of looking at how people are treated and how things in society happen and why we think these things happen. That's what's important to me. That they're not just leaving saying, "Oh, you know, this person did this, but [they know] how did that impact people now? How did slavery impact us today?" So I think my goals throughout the year, are to really make them think. And think beside themselves, like, not just about themselves but other racial groups.

Ashley is clear about what she wants her students to know and is confident in her priorities, which are culturally relevant.

For Anthony, clear, consistent, and high expectations for both academic work and social interactions were major themes throughout Anthony's and my conversations. The teaching scenarios described in Chapter Four indicate that it is very important for Anthony to address these expectations directly in order to teach stereotype awareness and help students negotiate mainstream society, but he is careful not to humiliate his low-income students while doing so. Like Ashley and Lauren, Anthony uses what he knows about his student's lives to inform the academic expectations that he has for his students. Because his students have responsibilities after school such as taking care of siblings and family members, Anthony realizes they may not

be able to stay after school for tutoring or detention or have sufficient time to complete long homework assignments. Anthony explains that challenges such as these require him to constantly engage in a "balancing act" between maintaining high expectations, yet being realistic.

All three teachers were contemplative when talking about how to uphold high expectations while keeping these expectations reasonable. Although maintaining high expectations is highlighted in the literature on CRP (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011), knowledge about exactly how teachers do this, or what this actually means in secondary education is significant because it has implications for how teachers are being prepared to address this issue. In fact, preparing future teachers and supporting current ones to address likely challenges in positive ways is critical to their ability to maintaining CRP. Thus in the next section, I explore what Anthony, Lauren and Ashley describe as challenges to their culturally relevant teaching.

8.6   CHALLENGES TO CULTURALLY RELEVANT TEACHING

The three secondary social studies teachers in this study discussed various challenges to their culturally relevant practices. Some of these are shared and others are unique to the individual and their school context. The purpose of this section is to summarize the challenges expressed by teachers to consider if or how these can be further studied and addressed in TEPs, professional development, and other relevant contexts (see Chapter 9). Challenges discussed in this section include those specific to the classroom, the lack of support from other teachers or

building administrators, pressure from evaluative entities, the lack of family involvement, and finally the emotional drain of maintaining a culturally relevant classroom.

As highlighted earlier in this chapter, all three teachers find that their textbook and curriculum lack the perspectives of women and people of color; therefore each spends considerable time researching in order to provide students with engaging resource that offer multiple perspectives. Even when providing these perspectives however, challenges do occur. For example, Anthony described an instance in which a student challenged some of his notions regarding slavery because he was not outwardly admitting that slavery was wrong. Anthony needed to refer back to his TEP resources to determine how to best handle the situation (see Chapter Four). As an African American who regularly involves the historical perspectives of persons of color, Anthony expresses his perpetual concern of being perceived by both students and parents as pushing a "Black Agenda." When Lauren planned a current event discussion that entailed race, tensions between racial groups already existent in the school escalated in her classroom. Seemingly, she did not have the access or ability to utilize resources at her school or from her educational experiences that might help her address this matter or even plan for this type of escalation (see Chapter Five).

Also relative to classroom practices, both Anthony and Lauren assert that their eighth grade students' lack of background information, such as where some of the fifty states are located, makes it difficult for them to help students connect to related yet conceptually more involved content. Lauren and Ashley further contend that finding reading sources that are interesting to their ESOL students and align with their various reading comprehension levels is quite challenging.

All three teachers expressed the lack of support in their buildings, either on the part of administration or other teachers, as challenging to their culturally relevant practices. One building challenge firmly noted by both Lauren and Ashley is the lack of school- wide support of their ESOL students. Lauren asserts that earlier ESOL programs extant under the previous administration were more effective then those under the current administration. Ashley believes that if she were in an administrative role, she would employ family oriented programs that would be of great benefit to her ESOL students whom she also feels are not well-served by her school.

Anthony and Lauren noted other difficulties within their building contexts. Anthony believes that the lack of consistent culturally relevant practices among teachers at his school negatively impacts those like him who work to engage in it. He finds that other teachers do not use test scores to focus on the learning of their subgroups, do not provide multiple perspectives, and tend to teach learned helplessness because they do not maintain high and consistent expectations for academics and behavior. As the leader of the social studies team, Anthony explains that his administration wants him to help other teachers engage in culturally relevant practices while at the same time the team is encouraged to be like-minded. Since at this time Anthony finds these two charges as incongruous, Anthony has to concern himself with being perceived as pushing a "Black Agenda." For Lauren, she views her greatest challenge by far the overall lack of administrative support. She notes school-wide behavior issues, tensions between cultural groups, lack of support for her ESOL students, and the lack of professional development as inhibiting her ability to teach and her students' opportunities for overall development.

Ashley and Anthony also cited external pressures as challenging to their culturally relevant teaching. For Ashley, her greatest challenge is the state exams, which she believes place undue pressure on teachers and students and do not represent students' actual learning. Ashley

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works to help students learn test- taking skills and posits that if students connect to the material well, they will remember it and be able make the necessary content connections during the test. Additionally, she notes that she does not feel the same stress in regards to student testing that other teachers in her building do, partly because she is leaving the field of secondary education. Anthony also reports that outside evaluators' lack of contextual understanding results in unrealistic academic expectations that place undue pressure on teachers and administers in the school (see Chapter Four).

As discussed above in Section 8.5.2, Anthony, Ashley, and Lauren believe that familial involvement is critical to students' abilities to feel connected to the school and thus related to academic growth. Although all three teachers report working to connect, develop, and maintain relationships with students' parents and families, both Ashley and Lauren note the lack of parental involvement as a significant challenge to their culturally relevant teaching. Even though Anthony states that parental involvement for him is high, he does not think other teachers in his school reach out to parents as often he does. He finds this problematic because students are not afforded the consistency needed to promote familial engagement. Lastly, it is critical that all three teachers acknowledge the lack of understanding if not condescension of teachers in their building towards parents of their low-income students of color as a major reason for the lack of familial involvement.

The final challenge expressed by all three participants is maintaining the emotional, mental, and physical energy required developing and maintaining a culturally relevant classroom. Although each teacher is passionate and committed to their students and this approach to teaching, the experiences of the three teachers in this study indicate that building and upholding caring relationships with and among students and their families requires a significant

amount of time and emotional energy. Second, finding resources that provide multiple perspectives, designing lessons that are strength-based and student centered and effectively address societal inequities is time consuming, demanding and sometimes challenging. This is why when discussing factors that support their culturally relevant teaching, all three teachers noted like-minded teachers and administrators as their number one source of support or lack thereof. In fact, like-minded colleagues were the only factor mentioned when I specifically inquired as to supports of enacting culturally responsive pedagogy.

Of crucial note is the fact that Anthony and Ashley plan on leaving secondary teaching relatively soon. Anthony wants to be a building administrator and Ashley seeks a professorship. Both openly question whether or not they could maintain their current teaching practices over an extended period of time because of the time and emotional energy required. Lauren is hoping to transfer to a different school attended by low-income students of color but led by her old building principal, because she believes her teaching will be better supported. This final challenge, as well as the others described in this section, signifies that culturally relevant teaching may only be able to exist in the classroom for a fixed amount of time or in episodic fashion if other teachers and administration do not support it. This has important implications for the preparation and ongoing professional development of building administration as well as teachers.

8.7   CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I analyzed the most prominent themes regarding how the selected social studies teachers describe their thoughts about and engagement with culturally relevant teaching. This study demonstrates that the early life experiences of the selected secondary social studies teachers, combined with their education, teaching contexts, and current levels of cultural and racial consciousness, frame how they think about and engage in culturally relevant practices. Analysis of how the teachers in this study experience the phenomenon of culturally relevant teaching and their higher education provides us with implications and areas of future research to improve our understanding and enactment of culturally relevant teaching to promote social justice.

9.0   RESEACH IMPLICATIONS AND AREAS OF FUTURE STUDY

In this chapter, I first discuss implications of my research for teacher education programs in general and then teacher education programs specific to secondary social studies education. Next, I discuss implications specific to the professional development of culturally responsive teachers and their communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1998). This is followed by a discussion of more broad-scale implications. Recommendations are made throughout each of these sections. I close by suggesting future areas of research necessary to help further develop and sustain culturally relevant teaching.

9.1   IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

This research indicates that to prepare future teachers of low-income students of color, teacher education programs should continue with coursework that helps students embark on development of critical consciousness and sequentially proceeds from knowledge of self, to a better understanding of "other". If work on critical consciousness and understanding structural oppression takes time to evolve, then structuring coursework that begins with reflexivity and then moves outward from self-examination to broader sociocultural understandings is important. For example, this might take the form developing racial and social consciousness as already discussed in by scholars in Chapter Two (Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Milner, 2010). From here, an

understanding of ecosystems theories of human development (Brofenbrenner, 1994) would help students understand how these systems guide their students' growth. Next, the specific challenges encountered by many living in urban poverty (Luthar & Goldstein, 2004; Seaton, 2007; Small &Newman, 2001) would help pre-service teachers understand the greater systemic forces impacting their students and their families. This would provide a grounding from which teachers can better comprehend and hopefully address their the choices and behaviors of students and their families in deeper ways that go beyond feeling sorry for poor people or victim blaming. Along those same lines, PSTs need the opportunity to understand twentieth century structural racism (Katznelson, 2005) to move out of deficit models of viewing low-income people of color. From here, students may have an easier time processing broader conceptualizations of power, oppression, and social justice as discussed by advocates such as Freire (1970). By building a sequence that moves from "inner to outer" that is broad in scope, TEPs can help students better understand themselves, their current and future teaching context, and society in essential ways that impact their views of teaching and learning. Such an approach may also help PSTs problem solve for the challenges specific to this teaching environment, such as how to increase parental involvement.

To embrace and enact culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP), it is necessary for a practicing teacher or PST to comprehend the basic sociocultural constructs that undergird culturally responsive ideology and consistently reflect upon their own identity and belief systems as they relate to these constructs. A sequence of coursework or topics within coursework such as the one outlined above suggests that PSTs' growth in these areas is more likely to occur over the course of a multi-year TEP as opposed to a one-year program such as a Masters in Arts in Teaching (MAT) program.

Finally, this study finds the development and evolution of critical consciousness is a life-long process. As such, TEP instructors will also need opportunities to consistently ponder and evaluate their own biases and engage in reflexivity on an ongoing basis both with one another and with their students. This supports earlier work of both Ukpokodu (2007) and Nieto (2000) who state the need for teacher educators to enlist on the same journey of life-long reflexivity as their students and *with* their students.

9.2   IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS SPECIFIC TO SECONDARY SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION

Findings from this study suggest four implications for teaching CRP in secondary social studies teacher education: one, TEPs should continue to involve PSTs in the work of providing their future students with multiple perspectives, two; connections between a culturally relevant mindset or sociocultural consciousness and constructivist practices need to be deliberate and scaffolded for PSTs, three; PSTs need preparation and experience in engaging students in discussions of inequity, and four; as earlier studies indicate, CRP and its accompanying critical consciousness needs to be all-encompassing and program-wide (Banks, 2007; Cochran-Smith, 2000, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Nieto, 2000; Peterman, 2008; Solomon & Sekayi, 2007; Ukpokodu, 2007). Each of these aspects is discussed below.

9.2.1 Implications for Secondary Social Studies Teacher Education: Multiple Perspectives

Providing students with the historical and current perspectives of women and people of color is a basic foundation for the practices of two of the three of the selected social studies teachers, and a lesser practice of the third teacher. This practice is supported in the literature on culturally relevant secondary social studies in-service teachers (ISTs) (Journell & Castro, 2009; Manfra, 2012; Martell, 2013). Therefore, the work of Loewen (2010) is an appropriate area of focus for secondary social studies teacher education. In addition, secondary social studies TEPs may want to consider requiring at least one content area course, for example a period of U.S history, that is framed through the lens of a historically marginalized group. Whether this course is specific to a group of persons of color or a women's' history course that recognizes intersectionality, PSTs would benefit from a deeper understanding of why providing multiple perspectives is an essential part of teaching U.S. History and social studies in general. It would also serve to further develop their critical consciousness and knowledge of historical and structural oppression of people of color.

To provide students with multiple perspectives, teachers in this study use supplemental readings and primary source documents. Deciphering and analyzing these documents is a common practice in social studies classrooms today, as evidenced by their emphasis on the Advanced Placement Exam in some states (personal communication, October 7, 2014). Therefore, culturally relevant social studies teachers may want to continue to use these readings not only for the essential perspectives they provide, but also so that low-income students of color develop a skill necessary for success in today's classroom. TEP programs might continue to use the works of Loewen (2010) to help PSTs learn how to engage their students in using primary source documents that focus on persons of color throughout U.S. History. Finally, all three

teachers in this study noted that finding primary source documental and supplemental material relevant to Hispanic Americans is a more challenging task when compared to other groups of color such as African Americans. Thus, TEPs might consider how to help PSTs locate and vet resources for this group in particular.

9.2.2   Implications for Secondary Social Studies Teacher Education: Constructivist Practices

In addition to courses that develop consciousness and help teachers learn how to provide multiple perspectives, this research demonstrates that social studies methods courses may want to address how PSTs learn to meet the needs of diverse students during their planning and enactment of classroom activities and assessments. Findings from this study show that this can be done effectively through a constructivist approach to teaching.

In a constructivist approach, a teacher first seeks to understand her students' ways of knowing and being in the world (Dewey, 1938). It is then the responsibility of the teacher to provide meaningful experiences, or activities that connect students' ways of knowing and being to the new content and skills to be learned (Brooks & Brooks, 1999; Dewey, 1938). To tend to this in culturally relevant classroom, a teacher needs to develop critical consciousness and prioritize individual, authentic relationships with students, their families, and their communities (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings 2010). Using what she knows about her students, she can then engage them in constructivist experiences in the social studies classroom that are student-centered, interactive, and include a variety of activities and assessments outside of lecture, discussion, and testing (Brooks & Brooks, 1999).

In this study, both Lauren and Ashley demonstrate how they identify students' funds of knowledge from the home (Gonzolez et al., 2004; Grant & Sleeter, 2010), identify their strengths and interests in designing and assigning differentiated activities and assessments (Tomlinson, 1999), and afford students the autonomy to choose how they will demonstrate understanding of classroom concepts, themes or topics studied through whatever medium they can best express themselves. This student-centered, strengths-based approach is supported in the review of the literature as one of the central components of culturally relevant teaching (Gay, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2010). Both teachers also provide students with opportunities to present their work to one another, thus they are given a chance to feel a sense of ownership and pride in their work (Tomlinson, 1999). This approach also builds a community-based classroom as opposed to a competitive, individualist classroom, which is yet another major area of focus in the practice CRP (Ladson-Billings, 2010).

Anthony used other aspects of constructivist practices, including modeling and scaffolding social studies skills and the skills needed to code-switch between African American Vernacular English and what is termed academic language. Anthony and Lauren also use collaborative grouping, which is another constructivist practice (Bower & Lobdell, 2005). Collaborative grouping, when planned carefully, not only helps students learn social studies content (Bower & Lobdell, 2005) but also is an authentic way to develop and maintain a caring and relationship-based classroom that helps teach students how to participate in a democracy (Banks 2007; Grant & Sleeter, 2011).

These findings demonstrate that constructivist lesson activities and assessments are one means by which TEPs can help PSTs apply their evolving culturally relevant mindset into actual practice. While some PSTs may be able to make the connection between critical consciousness

and lesson planning on their own, hoping for this is simply too great of a risk. Just like K-12 students, new teachers learn a new skill well through modeling, scaffolding, practice, and reflection (Vygotsky, 1978). Therefore, coursework in social studies methods might provide this learning experience for their PSTs. Ways to do this are described in the following paragraphs.

First, PSTs could provide examples of ways in which current secondary classroom teachers use their students' ways of knowing and experiencing the world in their planning of activities and assessments. This may be in the form of reading through practicing teachers lesson plans and having opportunities to discuss instructional choices with the teachers who created them. Or, as I described in the review of the literature, TEPs can also engage students in lesson using web-based representations of current K-12 teachers in actual practice as well as subsequent interviews with the practicing teacher and her students, all of which the university-based instructor utilizes in their teaching methods courses (Zeichner, 2010). PSTs would also benefit from observing classrooms of teachers viewed as successful teachers of diverse students, as well as community immersion (Cochran-Smith et al., 2004; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Zeichner, 1993). From these examples, TEPs can then model and scaffold what it means to plan culturally relevant lessons.

Modeling and scaffolding in methods or "teaching lab" can take on several forms. TEP instructors can model this practice with an actual lesson by using what she knows about the culture of her students, even if the class is racially or culturally homogenous, in order to highlight how differences in thought, pathos and ethos between her students affected her teaching choices. Also, similar to how TEPs teach other methods in social studies education courses, instructors can help students plan lessons for a real or fictitious group of students with the aid of their instructors and classmates during class. Then, they can teach their peers in order

to practice engaging in a constructivist lesson that addresses the needs of diverse learners. This is similar to what was described in the review of the literature by Safford and Bales (2011) to help new teachers engage in CRP. After teaching each other their lessons, discussions and feedback can then take place with classmates and the instructor.

After modeling and scaffolding, ideally the PST should then be given the opportunity to plan culturally relevant, constructivist lessons during a methods course that coincides with a teaching practicum or student teaching placement. PSTs can implement these lessons in their field site classroom and purposely reflect upon to what extent and how their lesson met the needs of their low-income students of color. Discussions and feedback during the PSTs coursework can then take place with classmates and the instructor based upon these guided reflections. When possible, videotapes of PSTs engaging in these lessons can also be viewed and reflected upon in class so that PSTs can learn from one another's practices. Through this process, the PST can one, experience how their students and themselves experience the world and what this actually means in relation to their teaching and learning, two; learn from the experiences of their classmates, and three; practice giving and receiving feedback regarding teaching practices. All of these skills are important for the formation of reflective, culturally relevant teachers.

The findings in this study are consistent with the literature claiming that coursework that is well integrated with the PSTs practicum has a long-lasting impact on a new teachers practices and that a mentor teacher has tremendous impact on a new teacher's practices (Darling-Hammond, 2003). Thus an optimal educational experience for the PST would be to place him with a culturally relevant mentor teacher whose practices mirror those included in the PST coursework on culturally relevant, constructivist practices. Since tutelage under a practicing culturally relevant teacher may not be available, however, connecting the development of critical

consciousness with culturally relevant practices during TEP coursework is essential. If connections between consciousness-raising and culturally relevant teaching methods are made more explicit, young teachers who are either developmentally incapable or unwilling to engage in reflexivity may be less inclined to abandon their formation of critical consciousness because they get to experience how culture effects teaching and learning in concrete ways. Findings from this study also support the literature indicating that students benefit when asked to reflect upon the practical application of culturally relevant practices and theories learned about during coursework as well as why or why not certain groups of their students are learning the desired background information and skills (Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Grant & Sleeter, 2011).

I do not contend that approaching culturally relevant teaching through constructivist activities and assessments such as those used by the teachers in this study are prescriptive. In fact, the very nature of constructivism is contingent upon the teachers' understanding the multidimensionality and fluidity of *each* child's mindset, which includes factors such as race, culture, socio-economic status, family, gender, and sexual orientation. Thus constructivist practices allow for autonomy and creativity for both teacher and low-income students of color to meet their needs and move them along their individual "trajectory" as so well stated by Anthony in this study. As Ashley mentions, "different classes, different make-ups" means that she differentiates her own culturally relevant, constructivist practices.

Ideally, a culturally relevant teacher extends constructivist teaching because he or she is operating with high levels of critical consciousness and an understanding of historical and structural inequities experienced by low-income people of color. It is with these foundations from which he can build more authentic relationships with students and communities that are not based in deficit notions.

9.2.3 Implications for Secondary Social Studies Teacher Education Programs: Preparing Teachers to Engage Students in Discussions about Inequity

Findings from this study demonstrate that it is important for secondary social studies educators to learn how to adequately prepare for discussions on inequity. Otherwise, the outcome may not be a rich or thought provoking discussion, but an unfocused or even hostile one. This defeats the purpose of teaching students about societal inequities, which is a significant practice to culturally relevant pedagogy in the secondary social studies classroom. It is through these discussions that students not only learn about inequity and social justice, but also where adolescent students learn to have controversial or difficult conversations that promote civic discourse and therefore a successful democracy (Banks 2007; Grant & Sleeter, 2011).

In the field of social studies education, Bickmore and Parker (2014) illuminate the fact that opportunities for ethnically and economically diverse students in public schools to engage in discussion-based pedagogies on social and political issues are rare. This is despite the fact that "Dialogue about social and political conflicts is a key element of democratic citizenship education that is frequently advocated in scholarship…" (p. 291) In their review of the literature, the authors build on research claiming that although teachers report that they would like to include more of these types of discussion in their classrooms, various school factors such as feeling constraint due to standardized testing and the lack of professional development in this area inhibits their engagement (Bickmore & Parker, 2014). Furthermore, the authors state that "A too-often neglected element of conflict dialogue is preparation…" and that it requires guided practice and skills. Bickmore & Parker (2014) also refer to the earlier work of Parker and Hess (2001) that called for in-service and PST training in learning "steps and alternate processes for discussing conflict and facilitating dialogic processes" (p. 296). The experiences of the three

secondary social studies teachers in this study support the notion that dialogic conversations requires surgical planning, attention to nuance, and "imagination and emotional engagement, not just rational cognition" (p. 297). This helps ensure that every student voice is heard and that:

> Conflict talk, whether for post-incident peacemaking or for pro-active democratic education, may build upon the power of emotion as well as reason, in ways that build upon (and are complicated by) diverse social experience and inequality. (p. 297)

Thus, TEP coursework for PSTs and professional development for in-service teachers that helps teachers learn at least one method by which to engage in dialogues on inequity is crucial to the development and sustainability of a culturally relevant social studies classroom. There are various models in the literature that could be explored and utilized by TEPs, which promote cooperation and understanding over competition (Bickmore & Parker, 2014). How this is taught in coursework could follow the same processes as I described above in Section 9.1.2 to include modeling, planning and scaffolding, experiences teaching one another with opportunities for purposeful reflection, and feedback during coursework. Similarly, engaging secondary students in these types of discussions under the tutelage of the mentor teacher to be followed by purposeful reflection on how the experience impacted students would be optimal.

9.2.4 Implications for Secondary Social Studies Teacher Education Programs: Anticipating Challenges

Challenges to the culturally relevant teaching of the secondary social studies educators in this research included those specific to the classroom, the lack of support from other teachers or building administrators, pressure from evaluative entities, the lack of family involvement, and

finally the energy required to maintain a culturally relevant classroom. Therefore, TEPs might consider ways in which it can help PSTs anticipate these challenges and work through them.

For example, to help PSTs anticipate challenges within the classroom, TEP coursework can use the same techniques discussed in Section 9.1.2, such as using the web-based representations of current K-12 teachers in actual practice and interviewing teachers about how they problem solve or address classroom specific challenges (Zeichner, 2010). Based upon the findings from this study, TEP coursework might also model and scaffold ways in which PSTs can prepare for students' lack of needed background information, difficulties specific to ESOL students in the social studies classroom, and how to locate resources that provide multiple perspectives.

Involving students in simulations of likely scenarios for not being able to get a hold of parents, how to engage in parent phone calls and conferences are also important. Once in their field placement or practicum, coursework that requires PSTs to reflect and discuss how PSTs approach and solve problems for specific challenges might help students address similar challenges once practicing teachers. Community involvement for two of the teachers in this study has an added layer of complexity because students are bused in from numerous areas of the city. Nevertheless, findings from this study also indicate that PSTs would benefit from community involvement as discussed in the review of the literature that places the teacher candidate in the community in which they will be teaching (Sleeter, 2000, Smaller, 2007; Paccione, 2000). This helps students gain a clearer understanding of their teaching context and able to make the community connections necessary to bridge the cultural divide and build trust between the teacher and the community surrounding the school. It also helps students learn

about the interests of students and their families – which is essential to CRP (Grant & Sleeter, 2011).

9.3   IMPLICATIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURALLY RELEVANT EDUCATORS

Findings from this study also have several implications for the professional development provided to current teachers of low-income students of color, many of which are similar to those already discussed in regards to TEPs. These include the development of critical consciousness and knowledge of sociocultural inequities, as well as the social studies teaching practices of providing multiple perspectives, using constructivist practices to support culturally relevant activities and assessments, and engaging students in discussions about inequities.

Findings from this study indicate that teachers need opportunities throughout their careers to form, develop, or extend their critical consciousness. Therefore, districts and building leaders interested in supporting culturally relevant practices may want to engage teachers in professional development that focuses on this ever-evolving process regardless of which level or dimension of consciousness teachers are currently operating in. Structures for this aspect of professional development might follow a similar model as those discussed in Section 9.1 to include exploration of self and moving outwards to understanding, "other," community context, and larger societal inequities.

While ongoing professional development in consciousness-raising and knowledge of sociocultural inequities is important for classroom practices, this may also improve teachers' attitudes towards students' families and their communities. All three of the selected social

studies teachers in this study believe that other teachers in their school are condescending towards parents and falsely assume that parents do not care about their children. The teachers in this study believe these deficit attitudes contribute widely to parent's lack of involvement. Therefore, practicing teachers may have a more informed understanding of parents' (and students) choices if given if given the opportunity to learn about ecosystems theory and (Brofenbrenner, 1994) challenges specific to in the urban context (Evans & English, 2002; Luthar & Goldstein, 2004; Seaton, 2007; Small &Newman, 2001) and factors that promote resilience (Brendtro & Longhurst, 2005) and positive coping (Turner, Kaplan, & Badger, 2006).

Specific to social studies and similar to the formation and evolution of crucial consciousness, helping teachers find resources and ways to engage students in multiple perspectives should not cease at the teacher education level. Professional development for educators could further these endeavors as well. The same is true for helping teachers learn and/or extend their use of constructivist practices to support their culturally relevant teaching and engagement with students in discussions on inequity. Professional development could follow the model outlined above for TEPs (Vygotsky, 1978) to take the form of collegial modeling, scaffolding lesson plans, and implementation of activities with students. Purposeful self-reflection and dialoguing with teachers and administrative colleagues on if or how the activities and assessments met the needs of diverse low-income students of color could follow this. Furthermore, as the teachers in this study note, the school community and building leadership greatly impacts their ability to engage in CRP.

9.4   IMPLICATIONS FOR COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

Teachers in this study reported like-minded colleagues as their primary, if not their only support to their culturally relevant teaching. Likewise, they noted the lack of support from other teachers or building administrators as a challenge to their engagement in CRP. Therefore, in order for new and veteran teachers to develop and sustain culturally relevant practices, they would benefit from a formalized "community of practice" in which collective learning and the social processes of the group are just as important as the knowledge or skill being explored (Lave & Wenger, 1998). In a community of practice, a group shares interests and sustains a practice in a common enterprise (Lave & Wenger, 1998). Through consistent interaction and collaboration, the group is then able to "undertake larger or more complex activities." (Lave & Wenger, n.p, 1998) A community of practice such as this requires building and district leadership that is also supportive of culturally responsive pedagogy and social justice.   To do this effectively, administrators and building staff likewise would be engaged in the same life-long journey of reflexivity as teachers and should understand what culturally relevant teaching entails for teachers inside and outside the classroom. Coursework on culturally responsive educational leadership and teaching would help school leaders understand CRP and expand their ability to support it.

A community of practice would also help educators address the challenges of CRP. In addition to classroom challenges and the lack of support from other teachers or building administrators, the secondary social studies teachers in this study also included pressure from evaluative entities, the lack of family involvement, and the energy required to maintain a culturally relevant classroom as barriers to engagement in CRP. A community of practice is

important because together the group can problem-solve and work towards alleviating these issues in ways that an individual teacher cannot.

9.5 BROADER IMPLICATIONS

The experiences of teachers in this study support the idea discussed in the review of the literature that urban teacher education programs need to work towards social justice through a multicultural framework that encompasses the three program components of curriculum, coursework, and the pre-service clinical experience (Banks, 2007; Cochran-Smith, 2000, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Nieto, 2000; Peterman, 2008; Solomon & Sekayi, 2007; Ukpokodu, 2007). When all three of these components are aligned, there is a greater likelihood of a positive impact on teacher training and ultimately teacher practice. Furthermore without an all encompassing framework, programs will simply continue to ill prepare teachers to work with diverse groups in general, and especially with those living in urban poverty (Nieto, 2000). Unfortunately, although this type of ubiquitous program is the ideal, most pre-service students, the majority of whom are female, White and middle class, falsely assume that they will never teach in an urban school (Fuller, 1994; Ukpokodu, 2007) and thus may not select a program that is focused on teaching low-income students of color. Therefore, the experiences of the teachers in this study support Ukpokodu's (2007) contention that *all* programs should approach teacher education through a multicultural framework. Findings from this study also demonstrate that *all* programs need to focus upon social justice (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Nieto, 2000; Peterman & Norgdren, 2008; Solomon & Sekayi, 2007) and seek out and recruit teachers who are persons of color and thus more reflective of the students they teach.

Otherwise, we risk the perpetuation of ill-prepared teachers in urban schools as well as rural and suburban schools that are increasingly diverse (Education Commission of the States [ECS], 2013).

9.6   AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Areas of future research regarding culturally relevant teaching are vast, but necessary. In order to address educational equity, more research needs to be conducted on many of the aspects related to culturally responsive teaching, including: content-specific teacher practices, how in-service teachers' practices are impacted by their teacher education programs, the perceptions of students and their communities, and how communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1998) might better support CRP.

First, more studies are needed to understand how secondary teachers engage in culturally relevant teaching as it relates specifically to their content-area. This will provide more examples of concrete practices and content-related nuances and challenges from which TEPs can better inform their own curriculum and instruction. For example, in addition to practices in social studies education, this study yielded important questions about what negotiating mainstream society looks like and who has the power to decide on its meaning. Secondly, as Sleeter (2000) and Cochran-Smith, et al (2004) note, we need to know more about how culturally relevant teachers were trained and what it is from their teacher education program they currently draw from. While this study was designed to address this gap, much too little is known about if or how current practices relate to teachers' prior education. Third, studies on culturally relevant teachers should also include input from students, their families, and communities. How these

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individuals and groups experience culturally relevant teaching would provide a broader understanding of its impact on students' schooling experiences and provide information on what practices are most effective.

Another area for study includes professional development and communities of practice. How in-service teachers engage in consciousness-raising and learning culturally relevant practices is important to investigate so that professional development can also engage in effective curriculum and instruction, not unlike TEPs. Additionally, how teachers are supported in their practices in their schools and districts is crucial information for sustainability. Therefore, how building and district leadership is trained and then engages in culturally relevant leadership is also an important area of study. Similar to teaching, we need to know what such leadership (and hopefully the communities of practice they support) actually looks like to determine what is effective and might be modeled for other school communities.

9.7   FINAL REFLECTION

In the introduction to this paper, I discussed my passion for this study as a former secondary social studies teacher of low-income students of color. My good intentions and interpersonal skills at that time were no match for my lack of understanding of structural inequities and lack of critical consciousness. Currently, my hope is that in some small way this study contributes to our understanding of ways in which teachers can engage in culturally relevant practices so that as a teacher educator I (and we) can better prepare future teachers with the "big skills" necessary to match the "big heart" of an effectual educator. I look forward to my future work in this field.

APPENDIX A

SCREENING DEVICE: TEACHER ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES INVENTORY

(TAPI)

Section I (General Attitudes and Beliefs)+

Part 1: Please state your level of agreement with the following items.

(Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)

      1. My students' culture brings a lot of value to their education.

      2. The fact that I am a different ethnicity than that of my students has little influence on

my teaching.

      3. I identify ways that the school culture (e.g. values, norms, and practices) is different

from my students' home culture. *

      4. I continue to examine my own beliefs about race.

      5. I think White people enjoy privileges that minority groups do not.

Part 2: Please state your level of agreement with the following items.
(Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)

1. I think about how the culture of my students impacts their thoughts, feelings, and actions in my classroom.

2. I continue to examine my attitudes towards different races and ethnic groups.

3. I acknowledge cultural differences between my students and me but try not to judge them.

4. It is important to enhance students' self- esteem by valuing their cultural background in the classroom. *

5. Acknowledging the ways that the school culture is different from my students' home culture will minimize the likelihood of discipline problems. *

SECTION II (Communication and Learning styles)
Please state your level of agreement with the following items.
(Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)

1. Understanding the communication preferences of my students will decrease the likelihood of student-teacher communication problems. *

2. By comparing and contrasting my communication style with those of my students, I can examine how my students negotiate between their home and school.

3. I try to help my African American students develop the ability to code-switch, or move back and forth between African American Language and Standard American English. (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Not Applicable)

4. A person's culture impacts how they interpret and analyze new information.

5. The likelihood of student-teacher misunderstandings decreases when my students' culture is understood. *

SECTION III (Approaches to Teaching: Using Funds of Knowledge, cultural frame of reference for scaffolding and the Zone of Proximal Development)
Please state your level of agreement with the following items.
(Often, Sometimes, Rarely, Never)

1. I use my students' cultural background to help make learning meaningful. *

2. I utilize my knowledge of my students' home environs during my planning.

3. I specifically use the knowledge I have of my students' cultural backgrounds when I teach them new concepts or skills.

4. I explain new concepts using examples taken from students' everyday lives. *

5. I use examples that are familiar to students from diverse cultural backgrounds. *

6. I incorporate a variety of modes of instruction to help build bridges between my students' culture and mine. *

7. I try to improve my teaching by learning about what is considered valued knowledge in my students' homes and communities.

8. I use the knowledge I have of my students' culture to more effectively engage in social studies content knowledge.

9. I use the knowledge I have of my students' culture to more effectively engage in social studies skill building.

10. I teach students about the contributions of minorities to the social studies. *

11. I critically examine the curriculum I teach to determine whether it reinforces negative cultural stereotypes. *

SECTION IV (Relationships)
Please state your level of agreement with the following items.
(Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)

In my classroom…
1. It is essential that I develop a personal relationship with each of my students.

2. I consciously focus on building student-to-student relationships and encourage them to be responsible to one another.

3. It is important that I help my students develop self- esteem.

4. It is important that I help my students build empathy.

5. It is important that I help my students affirm each other's beliefs, and build caring relationships.

6. I help my students learn how to take responsibility for each other.

7. I help my students learn how to partake in civic discourse.

SECTION V (Social Justice)
Please state your level of agreement with the following items.
(Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)

1. In my classroom, I specifically address social, economic, and political inequities in society.

2. I guide my students towards critically analyzing the current social, economic, and political inequities in:

   A. Their communities

   B. The country

   C. The world at large

3. I consider what specific student groups of color in my classroom need while simultaneously teaching them how to negotiate mainstream educational society.

SECTION VI (Community)
Please state your level of agreement with the following items.
(Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)

1. I find ways to interact with my students' parents.

2. I find ways to cultivate relationships with my students outside of my classroom.

3. I find ways to interact with members of my students' community.

4. Establishing positive home-school relations will increase parental involvement. *

SECTION VII (The Achievement Gap)
Based upon your knowledge and experience, why do you think that the achievement gap between low-income students of color and their White middle-class counterparts persists?

SECTION VIII Demographics and Characteristics
Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

1. What is your first name?
2. What is your age?

18 to 24
25 to 34
35 to 44
45 to 54
55 to 64
65 to 74
75 or older

3.What is your race? Mark one or more.

White
Black or African American
Asian
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
American Indian or Alaska Native
Other

12. How many years have you been a teacher?

0-4 years
5-7 years

8-10 years
11 or more years

4.Which of the following best describes the type of school you teach in?

Large, urban, public school
Small, urban, public school
Charter school
Private school
Other (please specify)

5. Please indicate the subject areas and grade levels that you currently teach.

13. What is the approximate racial make-up of the students in each of the following:

	Over 75% minority students	Over 50% minority students	Less than 50% minority students	Less than 25% students
Your classroom				
Your school				
Your district				
Other (please specify)				

14. Which of the following best describes the race or ethnicity of your students of color?

Most of my students of color are African American
Most of my students of color are Latino/a
My students of color are diverse/There is not a dominant minority group
Most of my students of color are neither African American nor Latino/a (please specify below)
Other (please specify)

8. Did you attend a teacher education program at a college or university?

15. Please indicate which of the following topics were included in the coursework of your teacher education program.

Critical Theory
Critical Race Theory
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy
Minority Education
Multicultural Education
None of these were included in my program.

10. Have you partaken in any professional development session(s) that have focused specifically on race, culture, or ethnicity as they relate to education?

16. Would you be willing to participate in an interview?

*Item from Siwatu, 2007
+ Headings in parentheses note alignment with conceptual framework and are not included in the Survey Monkey edition.

APPENDIX B

CONVERSATOIN GUIDES: INTERVIEWS

I. Informal Introductions and Brief Discussion

II. Introduction to the Interview

Thank you for participating in my dissertation study and taking the time to speak with me. This interview is designed to learn more about how secondary social studies teachers enact culturally relevant teaching and if and how these practices have been influenced by their coursework during their teacher education program.

I want to let you know that all of the data that I collect are kept strictly anonymous: I will not use any names or other identifying information in any of my writings or reports.   I will also not report what teachers, schools, or districts that I have visited.

Usually I tape my interviews, so that I can fill my notes in later. This ensures accuracy.   Do I have your consent to tape record this interview?

Do you have any questions for me before we begin?

IV. Main Content

Item	Theme
Tell me about your background or life experiences prior to entering your teacher education program. Tell me about what brought you to your teacher education program.	Life Experience and Predispositions
Tell me how your students' race and culture impact your teaching of social studies. Possible Prompts: • Lesson plans • Unit plans? • Classroom activities? • Class readings? • Student projects? • Any thing else in your curriculum? How might you describe the relationships between you and your students? Between your students? What do you perceive to be your students academic strengths? Social or other strengths? Can you tell me about your students' communities? Your students' families?	Teaching Practices
Now I'm going to shift gears and ask about your TEP and your coursework. Looking back, Tell me about your teacher education/preparation program certification.	Teacher Education Program

Possible Prompts: Size, location, coursework, structure of field placement, mentor teacher	
Can you describe/tell me about specific courses in your preparation program that helped you think about and learn how to teach low-income students of color. Possible prompts: Significant readings, Classroom activities, Discussions/Conversations in and out of the classroom What it is from your coursework and HEI experience that you use or draw from or use in your current teaching practices as they relate to teaching low-income students of color. 　　　　Possible prompts: • Lesson plans • Unit plans? • Classroom activities? • Class readings? • Student projects? • Any thing else in your curriculum? • Other experiences? What is the name of the Higher Ed Institution that you attended for your teacher education program?	Pre-service Coursework
What helps you in your teaching efforts as they relate to teaching low-income students of color? Possible prompts: 　　school administrators 　　district administrators 　　colleagues 　　The school community 　　Students' families 　　Students' communities or neighborhoods 　　Students 　　Others? Similarly, tell me about the challenges you experience in your practices as they relate to teaching low-income	Supports and Challenges

students of color?	
Same prompts as above	

Thank you so much for taking part in this interview process. I think you have given valuable insight as to what CRP actually looks like in the classroom as well as information on the relationship between teaching practices and teacher training in culturally relevant teaching! Would you mind if I contact you for any clarifications to ensure that my interpretations of our discussion are accurate?

(Also, discuss if they would like my final paper emailed to them, as well as any other relevant information).

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