

**EXPLORING ADOLESCENT MOTIVATION AND ENGAGEMENT DURING
CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS ABOUT SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY: THE ROLE
OF RISK AND SAFETY**

by

Jasmine D. Williams

Bachelor of Science, Virginia Tech, 2011

Master of Science, University of Pittsburgh, 2014

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
the School of Education in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

University of Pittsburgh

2018

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

This dissertation was presented

by

Jasmine D. Williams

It was defended on

February 9, 2018

and approved by

Ming T. Wang, Associate Professor, Department of Psychology in Education

Amanda Forest, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology

Ashley N. Woodson, Assistant Professor, University of Missouri Department of Learning,

Teaching, and Curriculum

Dissertation Advisor: Tanner LeBaron Wallace, Associate Professor, Department of
Psychology in Education

Copyright © by Jasmine D. Williams

2018

EXPLORING ADOLESCENT MOTIVATION AND ENGAGEMENT DURING CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS ABOUT SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY: THE ROLE OF RISK AND SAFETY

Jasmine D. Williams, PhD

University of Pittsburgh, 2018

This study examines the evaluative processes adolescents employ when deciding if, when, and how to engage in critical conversations (e.g., race talk) in the classroom. Specifically, I explore how risk/threat perceptions can impose barriers to learning and the coping mechanisms adolescents utilize when engaging in risky instructional interactions. Findings suggest adolescents evaluate risk based on the likelihood of the interaction to impede self-system, academic, and/or social goals and either approach or avoid learning tasks depending on their perceptions of the resources available to meet the demands of the risk. These findings have implications for understanding mechanisms of resistance and engagement in the classroom, as well as for informing efforts toward designing motivational interventions. Implications for future work examining how youth regulate multiple content goals in achievement settings, particularly in relation to their identity development and exposure to psychologically safe teaching practices, is discussed.

Keywords: adolescence, motivation, risk, safety, equity

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE.....	XI
1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	3
1.2 GUIDING DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORKS	6
2.0 REVIEW OF KEY CONSTRUCTS AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS... 	9
2.1 EXPECTANCY-VALUE THEORY	10
2.1.1 Cost as a barrier to engagement.....	11
2.1.2 State of the current literature examining cost perceptions of diverse youth.	
.....	14
2.1.3 Summary	15
2.2 FRAMEWORKS OF RISK, THREAT, & SAFETY	16
2.2.1 The potential impacts of risk and stress on Black youth	16
2.3 THE ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY IN RISK REGULATION	18
2.3.1 Summary	20
3.0 THE CURRENT STUDY	21
4.0 METHODS	23
4.1 PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS/SAMPLING PROCEDURES	24
4.2 RESEARCHER POSITIONALITY	25
4.3 PHASE 1 DATA SOURCES.....	27
4.3.1 Classroom observation	27
4.3.2 Daily student journal entries	28

4.4	PHASE 1 DATA REDUCTION: FIELDNOTE AND JOURNAL INTEGRATION TO DEVELOP THE FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL.....	29
4.4.1	Fieldnote analysis.....	29
4.4.2	Daily journal entry analysis.....	30
4.5	DATA SOURCE INTEGRATION: FIELDNOTE AND JOURNAL ENTRY ANALYSIS.....	32
4.5.1	Scenarios.....	34
4.6	PHASE 2 DATA SOURCES.....	35
4.6.1	Student survey.....	35
4.6.1.1	Expectancy-Value-Cost Motivation.....	35
4.6.1.2	Academic Engagement	35
4.6.1.3	Racial Identity	36
4.6.1.4	Self-esteem	36
4.6.2	Focus group interview	37
4.6.2.1	Introductory Activity: Classroom Risk Scenarios	37
4.7	PHASE 2 DATA ANALYSIS: DETAILING EMERGING THEMES IN ADOLESCENTS' EXPERIENCES OF RISK	38
4.7.1	Focus group interviews	38
5.0	FINDINGS	40
5.1	OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS.....	40
5.2	RQ1: HOW DO ADOLESCENTS DEFINE RISK IN THE CLASSROOM?	
	40

5.2.1	Hypothesis 1a: Adolescents will evaluate risk in terms of perceived emotional/ psychological costs, identity threat, and stress	40
5.2.2	Hypothesis 1b: Identity-related processes will be particularly salient to Black adolescents' evaluations of risk	41
5.3	RQ2: HOW DO ADOLESCENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF RISK INFLUENCE THEIR ENGAGEMENT IN LEARNING ACTIVITIES?	42
5.3.1	Hypothesis 2a: Adolescents will negotiate risk such that they will engage in self-protective strategies, such as divesting in classroom-based relationships, to avoid potential negative interactions.....	42
5.3.2	Hypothesis 2b: Black adolescents' coping responses to experiences of risk will vary dependent on their racial identities.	42
5.4	RQ3: HOW DO FEATURES OF THE CLASSROOM SOCIAL CONTEXT INFLUENCE ADOLESCENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF RISK?.....	43
5.4.1	Hypothesis 3: A history of instructional interactions in which adolescents are made to feel safe and supported will be associated with low risk perceptions and a greater likelihood to engage risk	43
5.5	SURVEY FINDINGS	43
5.6	FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS.....	45
5.6.1	Partial support for current conceptualizations of cost motivation	46
5.6.2	Re-defining cost to account for threats to multiple goals.....	49
5.6.2.1	Defining and avoiding risk	49
5.6.3	Approaching risky instructional interactions.	61
5.7	TEACHERS AS SOURCES OF RISK AND SUPPORT.....	69

5.7.1	Risk and challenging academic work.....	70
5.7.2	Balancing risk and safety during critical conversations	75
5.7.3	Creating psychological safety for engaging critical conversations	80
6.0	DISCUSSION	86
6.1	GENERAL IMPLICATIONS	87
6.1.1	Implication 1: Expanding the Definition of Cost Motivation	88
6.1.2	Implication 2: Understanding the Role of Contextual Factors as Part of the Evaluative Process.....	92
6.2	LIMITATIONS.....	95
6.3	DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE WORK.....	96
6.4	SUGGESTED ITEMS	97
APPENDIX A		99
APPENDIX B		112
APPENDIX C		114
APPENDIX D		117
APPENDIX E		137
APPENDIX F		146
BIBLIOGRAPHY		150

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Teacher Demographics	101
Table 2. Student Demographics at Glen Lake High School AY 2016-2017	101
Table 3. Focus Group Participants	102
Table 4. Lesson Observation Details	103
Table 5. Student Journal Responses-Code Frequency (greatest to least)	107
Table 6. Student Survey Responses-Classroom Means	108
Table 7. Examples of Student Explanations of Approach and Avoidance of Risky Instructional Interactions.....	109

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Data Collection & Analysis Overview Flowchart.....	100
Figure 2. Scenario 1 Featherstone’s Class – Topic of the Day (e.g., activity description).....	108
Figure 3. Proposed Conceptual Model.....	111
Figure 4. Phase One Codes	115
Figure 5. Phase Two Codes	116
Figure 6. For Featherstone’s Focus Groups (FG 1 & 2)	147
Figure 7. For Ross’ Focus Group (FG 3).....	148
Figure 8. For Whitaker's Focus Groups (FG 4 & 5)	149

PREFACE

This work was inspired by the many students I have been fortunate enough to work with over the past decade-their spirit, their curiosity, their drive. It is my sincerest hope that your voices are lifted, your ideas challenged, and your creativity cultivated.

My journey would not have been possible without the unwavering love and support from my family, friends, and colleagues who have become family over the past six years. There are not enough words to express the gratitude I have for you all.

Thank you to my chair, advisor, and friend, Dr. Tanner LeBaron Wallace, for exemplifying ambition and strength. My doctoral committee, Drs. Ashley Woodson, Ming T. Wang, and Amanda Forrest for their guidance and insight. The Hokies that started me down the research path and continuously supported me throughout-Dr. Julie Dunsmore, Dr. Ed Smith, Dr. Cherly Gittens, Dr. Karen Sanders and the IMSD/PREP family. My fellow Irvis fellows and diversity scholars-Drs. Kaylan Moore and Joshua Child; future Drs. Oscar Patron, Oscar Medina, Davonna Graham, Derric Heck, Ira Murray, Adam Alvarez, Jawanzaa Rand, and Nikki Cristobal-for always showing up and showing out. My ADP family-Dr. Hannah Sung, Jenn Briggs, Ashley Shafer, and Dr. Shannon Wanless-for always believing in me. My partner, Charles W. Allen, for your feedback and inquisitive spirit.

To my family, I hope that this work makes you proud and truly reflects the love, pride, and appreciation for my history and my people that you have instilled.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Engaging in learning is a risky endeavor. It requires one to reflect upon what they know to be true, which often disrupts those beliefs and integrates new knowledge and ideas (Greeno, Collins, & Resnick, 1996), a process of reflection, disruption, and integration that often evokes feelings of stress and anxiety (English, 2013). In addition to this normative stress, there is evidence that school, as the context for learning, becomes increasingly more challenging, socially, emotionally, and intellectually, as youth move through the middle and high school years (Eccles et al., 1993; Eccles & Roeser, 2011). These challenges include navigating more rigorous course work, shifting peer groups, as well as biological and developmental changes. The interaction of these academic pressures and socioemotional stressors creates a complex learning environment in which adolescents are faced with daily dilemmas regarding what to do, say, and think. In an effort to elucidate adolescents' sense-making around these dilemmas, this study aims to explore the features of instructional interactions that are considered risky to adolescents, how risk plays a role in Black youth's motivational processes, and what factors might play a role in ameliorating such risks.

Compounded by previously mentioned stressors, adolescence is also marked by a normative increase in self-awareness and cognitive capacities. During this developmental period, many youth begin to develop more nuanced understandings of racial politics in US society. This heightened awareness influences how they interact with peers and adults from different racial backgrounds (Cross, 1978; Tatum, 1997). Additionally, adolescent youth are developmentally predisposed to hyper attune to social cues that indicate acceptance and belonging (Eccles & Roeser, 2011; Steinberg, 2015). As such, instructional interactions that heighten awareness to

negative perceived social identities or threaten competence and belonging can impose barriers to engagement and learning (Langer-Osuna, 2011; Sherman et al., 2013). Decades of research on stereotype threat provides evidence to support this point. When an individual's social identity is threatened, or devalued, a hypervigilant/stress state is activated that serves to undermine performance (Steele, 2010). Thus, youth who identify with devalued social identities are often considered at-risk for negative educational outcomes.

In the fields of psychology and education, risk is often discussed in terms of a group characteristic. The label “at risk” is ascribed to specific youth based on their status as a low-achiever, reported engagement in delinquent behaviors (e.g., skipping school, drug use, or criminal activity), and/or possession of community and familial capital (e.g., growing up in poverty or in a family with limited English proficiency) and is considered to decrease their chances of academic success (McCann & Austin, 1988). It is the case that both an income and racial gap exist for rates of high school completion and indicate that poor, Black, and Latino youth are less likely to graduate from high school and, thus, are more susceptible to school failure (NCES, 2013; Milner, 2015). While an individual’s racial or socioeconomic background may be correlated with negative educational outcomes, what happens inside the school building, in classrooms, and with teachers has a profound influence on adolescents’ educational trajectories (Eccles & Roeser, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2009).

In this study, I argue that an adolescent’s “at risk” status alone is not sufficient information for understanding the dynamics of social interaction, cognition, and motivation in the classroom. I contend that adolescents’ perceptions of risk, defined as feelings of discomfort/distress as a result of the possibility of psychological harm (e.g., embarrassment, ridicule, de-valuation, or being perceived as incompetent), may be particularly important for understanding what adolescents say,

do, and think in the classroom. Theories of motivation frequently applied in school contexts often fail to fully account for the ways in which the impact of negative affective experiences, such as risk/threat, interact synergistically with complex goal systems and contextual resources to motivate behavior. This study builds on motivation research and the work of social psychologists in the areas of stereotype threat, stigma, and threat more broadly by examining how youth's interpretations of their classroom experiences influence if, when, and how youth engage in the classroom.

1.1 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

As K–12 schools move to purposefully incorporate issues of social justice and equity into the curriculum, it is becoming increasingly critical to advance understandings of the classroom as a context of risk. Within the classroom, risk functions in many ways to impact engagement and learning. Risk can be embedded in classroom curriculum, such as through content that explicitly addresses controversial and/or sensitive subjects that are salient to students' developing identities (e.g., racism, racial violence, and sexism). Not only does risk exist in the curriculum itself, but the way teachers enact curriculum influences students' perceptions of risk and psychological safety, the sense that one's identity, perspectives, and contributions are valued despite the experience or perceived possibility of psychological distress/harm (Williams, Woodson, & Wallace, 2016). Additionally, students' and teachers' individual perceptions of risk and safety condition if, when, and how information is shared during instruction, and these moment-to-moment decisions are consequential to learning.

Although there is a large body of literature describing the development of achievement motivation, most often defined as “performance on tasks which one could objectively succeed or fail” (Wigfield, 2015, p. 658), we know much less about motivational processes in the context of learning tasks in which performance is not clearly objective—for example, tasks that elicit strong emotional responses and that have direct implications for various aspects of adolescents’ developing identities (i.e., the kind of tasks that are likely to be found in social justice oriented-curricula). There is a consensus in the field of educational psychology that an individual’s self-beliefs, values, and goals are key motivational processes (see Wigfield et al. (2015) for a recent review). Much of this work has focused on actions and intentions on individual tasks (e.g., task persistence, homework completion, and grades) and/or within specific subject domains (i.e., whether to pursue a career in STEM). Nonetheless, some scholars have called for greater attention to the role of multiple content goals, such as belonging, safety and self-protection, as well as future goals, in students’ motivational processes (see Boekarts, de Koning, & Vedder (2006) and Wentzel (2000)). These scholars argue a multiple goals perspective that expands views of adolescent motivation in school beyond achievement goals and provides a more comprehensive framework to account for youth’s complex lives.

My argument is not intended to discount the influential contributions to the field made by scholars who have taken an achievement goals approach. Indeed, extant empirical evidence suggests that student outcomes, including performance and interest, are directly predicted by self-beliefs, values, and mastery and performance goal orientations (Eccles et al., 1983; Eccles, 1987; Maehr & Zusho, 2009; Wigfield & Cambria, 2010). Yet, as instructional interactions unfold, adolescents must make highly consequential decisions about what to do, say, and think on a moment-to-moment basis. For example, adolescents might ask themselves, “Should I put forth this

new idea?”, “How will they respond if I bring up this conflicting point?”, or “What did she mean when she said _____?”. Currently, theories of adolescent motivation at school provide little guidance for understanding the motivational implications of the moment-to-moment evaluative processes youth engage in during the learning process. There is still much to be learned about the lenses that shape youth’s interpretations of instructional interactions and how those interpretations, in turn, shape motivation and behavior in the classroom.

Within moment-to-moment interactions, adolescents must quickly assess their context and make decisions about how to respond. Research from affective and behavioral neuroscience reminds us that our motivations and goal-directed behaviors do not develop in isolation of social and cultural experiences but are the result of an intertwined process of perception and action (Immordino-Yang, 2011). Immordino-Yang (2008) described how this process is informed by the lenses we bring to bear in our interpretation of the social world—lenses that are shaped by our cognition, emotion, histories, cultural knowledge, and individual biology. For example, negative perceptions of social experiences, such as feeling discriminated against because of one’s race, may activate responses that serve to protect a sense of self-worth but might also misalign with other goals in the context, such as performing well (Murray, 2009; Sedikides, 2011). To illustrate this point, I will provide a hypothetical vignette.

Imagine a young Black girl, Valeria, who frequently raises her hand to contribute to class discussions but is often passed over by the teacher. She might evaluate her teacher’s behavior as discriminatory. Subsequently, to lessen the shame she feels, she begins raising her hand and seeking help less often. This behavior inhibits rather than supports her desire to learn and get good grades. Adolescents make interpretations of their interactions with teachers, peers, and course content daily. Empirical evidence suggests these interpretations can set off a chain of events in

which specific goals, such as self-protection goals, may be prioritized over other goals, such as achievement goals (Louro, Pieters, & Zeelenberg, 2007; Mansfield, 2012). As such, I contend that close attention to when, why, and how adolescents engage in risky learning opportunities can help us better understand motivation in terms of how youth co- regulate multiple goals. To explore these conjectures, I draw on theoretical approaches that prioritize adolescent meaning-making and that provide a guiding framework for organizing relations amongst context, interaction, and individual agency.

1.2 GUIDING DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORKS

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) seminal work introducing ecological systems theory to the field of human development is one of the earliest attempts to account for the interrelation amongst different contexts (e.g., family, school, workplace, neighborhood, and political climate) on shaping human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Since the introduction of ecological systems theory, many scholars have taken up its principles in their studies, as well as expanded upon the theory. Margaret Beale Spencer's Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems Theory (PVEST), in particular, has expanded upon ecological systems theory to provide tools for engaging in systematic investigations of human development that also attend to culture, sociohistorical realities, race, and identity (Spencer, Dupree, & Hartmann, 1997; Spencer, Harpalani, Fegley, Dell'Angelo, & Seaton, 2003). The PVEST model asserts that individual perceptions matter and can vary across people experiencing the same event or stimuli. PVEST also suggests that variability in subjective experiences accounts for differences in developmental

trajectories and outcomes, because adolescents are active agents in their own development who respond to the perceived affordances and constraints of their contexts (Spencer, 2006).

The concept of human agency, indeed, is a common theme in contemporary developmental theories that posit development is negotiated or co-constructed through interactions in context. Relational developmental systems theory adds specificity to theorizing about individual-context relations and the transactional nature of human development (Lerner, Lerner, Bowers, & Geldhof, 2015; Overton & Lerner, 2012). Relational developmental systems theory purports that mutually beneficial individual-context relations drive human development and change. That is, interactions between individuals and their context determine the rules for interacting in that space such that future behavior in a given context is contingent upon past experiences within that context. Furthermore, when individuals and contexts match, positive development and change occurs and vice versa. Thus, relational developmental systems theory helps to provide a framework for understanding the driving forces behind adolescents' decisions to act in particular ways (i.e., to speak up or not to speak up).

Recall the example provided earlier about Valeria, the Black girl who is rarely called on in class. After repeatedly being passed over by the teacher, Valeria begins to disengage from the classroom. The teacher might interpret her disengagement as indicative of a lack of value for education or laziness, and implicitly (or explicitly) begin treating Valeria less favorably than other students. Valeria believes she does not receive the same benefit-of-the-doubt given to other students when she turns in an assignment late. Here, we can see how Valeria's interactions in the classroom (i.e., not being called on and attributing it to racial discrimination) influence how she later behaves in that same context. We can also see how Valeria's change in behavior (i.e., choosing to disengage) initiates changes in her context how she and her teacher interact with one

another. Valeria's dilemma demonstrates how young people's interpretations of their experiences within a context influences their future goal-directed behavior, at times in ways that promote self-protective goals while inhibiting other important goals. This example also demonstrates the reciprocal relation between youth's actions and the affordances and constraints of the context.

Following in the traditions described above, I position youth as agents in their own development who not only react to the affordances and constraints in a given environment, but who also act upon the environment to shape their own development. I also take on a multiple goals perspective that recognizes the complex goal systems that govern adolescents' lives. In doing so, I attempt to reframe the conversation about risk in educational contexts from a term used to describe a supposed embodied characteristic of youth to a term used to describe an evaluative framework adolescents employ when deciding if, when, and how to engage. This reframing will allow for a more accurate investigation of adolescents' motivational processes during critical conversations.

2.0 REVIEW OF KEY CONSTRUCTS AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

Motivation research has contributed significantly to our understanding of factors that differentially predict achievement outcomes and the classroom characteristics that promote those factors. Nonetheless, there are still many questions to be answered regarding the impact of race and culture on motivational processes (Decuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2014; Graham, 1994). Research investigating mean-level differences in motivation and achievement outcomes between racial/ethnic minority and low-income youth, and White, more affluent youth tell us little about the subjective experiences of youth of color in U. S. public school classrooms. Research that treats race as a static demographic variable also, often unintentionally, contributes to the essentialization of youth's academic experiences. Furthermore, the existing risk of engaging in learning in the classroom, as previously described in the opening paragraphs, may be exacerbated by the unique social reality of schooling encountered by racialized youth, such as a cultural mismatch between school, home, and community environments (Ladson-Billings, 1995) and increased exposure to psychological threats (e.g., stereotype threat and identity threat (Purdie-Vaughns & Walton, 2010)). Therefore, a more nuanced examination of racialized youth's daily experiences in school, and specifically within the context of critical conversations about social justice and equity, serves to bring their voices to the center of theorizing about adolescent motivation and engagement.

To begin exploring the importance of racialized youth's meaning-making around their classroom experiences for motivational theory, this literature review will focus on two distinct bodies of work: achievement motivation and risk. First, I will discuss empirical evidence from studies grounded in Expectancy-Value Theory of motivation, highlighting new research on cost value and the relation between cost and risk. Next, I will discuss risk as it is related to social

interaction by focusing on the relations between (a) risk and stress and (b) risk and psychological safety.

2.1 EXPECTANCY-VALUE THEORY

Expectancy-Value Theory (EVT) suggests students' expectations for success in a domain (e.g., mathematics) and perceived value of that domain predict their subsequent motivation and engagement and ultimately their academic success (Eccles et al., 1983; Eccles, 1987; Wigfield, Tonks, & Clauda, 2009). A vast literature supports these notions. Specifically, expectancies and values refer to individuals' self-beliefs in relation to a task (expectancy) and individuals' beliefs about the task itself (value). Stated alternatively, expectancies represent how well someone believes they can complete a specific task and value represents subjective beliefs about the task itself. Overall, the data indicate the following: (a) expectancy and value beliefs are highly correlated within the same domain or task and (b) expectancies and values positively predict academic achievement and achievement-related behaviors (e.g., task persistence, choice, performance), and (c) expectancies and values together more strongly predict achievement than expectancies or values alone (see Linnenbrink-Garcia & Patall, 2015; Trautwein et al., 2012; Wang, 2012, for example).

In the traditional EVT framework, value is separated into four components: *attainment value*—how important and relevant success in the task is; *interest value* or *intrinsic value*—the perceived enjoyment one will experience from the task; *utility value*—perceived usefulness of the task; and *cost value*—what the individual may have to give up to be successful. Cost value has been the least studied of the value components. Until recently, few studies have empirically

examined how negative appraisals of value influence student motivation and engagement, however new evidence suggests cost is an important predictor of achievement-motivation related behaviors and academic success and is distinct from expectancies and values (Chiang, Byrd, & Molin, 2011; Flake et al., 2015).

2.1.1 Cost as a barrier to engagement

There has been recent renewed interest in the role of cost value in achievement motivation. These studies situate cost as a barrier to engagement, often in terms of the time, energy, and effort required for engagement. There is evidence to suggest youth can distinguish between different types of costs, including social, psychological, and physical costs, beginning in early childhood (Watkinson, Dwier, & Nielsen, 2005). Current conceptualizations of cost value account for this multidimensionality and define cost as “what is invested, required or given up to engage in a task” (Flake et al., 2015, p. 235). Barron and Hulleman (2014) introduced the Expectancy-Value-Cost (EVC) framework, which identifies cost value as its own multidimensional construct separate from, yet related to, both expectancies and values with differential prediction of overall motivation, performance, and interest. Building on the original EVT model introduced by Eccles and colleagues (1983), EVC claims there is a third factor that directly predicts motivation, engagement, and achievement that is based on a cost/benefit analysis of the task, activity, or subject domain in questions. EVC asserts this cost/benefit analysis is related to perceptions of the time, investment, and energy needed to be successful. Within the EVC framework (Barron & Hulleman, 2014), cost includes four subdimensions: task effort cost, outside effort cost, loss of valued alternative cost, and emotional cost; each dimension is negatively related to performance (Flake et al., 2015). Several studies exploring cost have found significant relationships between cost, academic

choices, achievement, and identity. The results and implications of these studies are discussed below.

Battle and Wigfield (2003) conducted one of the first studies that provided evidence of cost as a significant predictor of achievement-related behaviors. They examined the career choices of female undergraduate students ($N = 216$; 74% White, 12% Black, 9% Asian, 2% Hispanic) and found cost negatively predicted intentions to pursue a career in STEM. The survey developed by Battle and Wigfield operationalized cost in terms of four components: (a) personal effort; (b) loss of time for other valued goals; (c) the psychological cost of failure; and (d) success at what cost (i.e., participants' ambivalence towards the worth of pursuing graduate school given negative consequences associated with obtaining a graduate degree). Findings suggested perceptions of cost are related to identity conflicts between beliefs about what it means to be a member of a social group and future goals. The Battle and Wigfield measure has been adapted in numerous subsequent studies of cost and was influential in the development of the EVC framework.

For example, Perez, Cromley, and Kaplan (2014) investigated undergraduates' ($N = 363$; 55% racial/ethnic minority) achievement in chemistry and intentions to leave STEM majors across a single academic year. The full study examined the relation between identity development, motivational beliefs, achievement, and retention. Cost was assessed using a 20- item survey (adapted from Battle & Wigfield (2003)) designed to measure three dimensions of cost: (a) effort cost, (b) opportunity cost, and (c) psychological cost. Results indicated perceptions of cost differentially predicted intentions to leave STEM majors. Effort and opportunity cost were negatively related to retention such that participants who perceived the STEM major as requiring too much effort or taking too much time away from other valued activities were more likely to report intending to leave the STEM major. Psychological cost was not related to retention and

none of the cost dimensions were related to achievement. In addition, effort cost fully mediated the relation between identity development and career intentions such that participants who did not engage in identity exploration perceived more cost and were more likely to report intentions to leave STEM. Such findings suggest cost perceptions are intricately related to identity development processes. Furthermore, these findings corroborate findings from Battle & Wigfield (2003) and suggest cost is a significant predictor of career choice.

In the most extensive cost scale development effort, Flake et al. (2015) developed and empirically tested a 19-item survey based on the EVC framework. More like the Battle and Wigfield (2003) measure than Perez, Cromley, and Kaplan (2014), Flake and colleagues developed a survey with a four-factor model of cost, including task effort cost, outside effort cost, loss of valued alternatives cost, and emotional cost. They tested this measure on a sample of undergraduate students ($N = 123$; 71% female, 89% White) and found cost had a strong, negative relationship with expectancies and a moderate, negative relationship with values and achievement outcomes (e.g., long-term interest, overall motivation, and final grades). Contrary to Perez, Cromley, and Kaplan's (2014) findings, emotional cost was the most significant predictor of achievement. Mixed results regarding emotional/psychological cost suggest further work is needed in this area.

Indeed, emotional/psychological cost could be considered the most ambiguous cost factor within the EVC framework. Whereas qualitative findings often elicit themes around the salience of negative affective experiences broadly in evaluative processes (Watkinson, Dwier, & Nielsen, 2005; Zhu & Chen, 2013), quantitative studies often take an achievement-focused approach. For example, a validation study of the EVC model indicated expectancy, value, and cost were distinct factors in measuring motivation in middle school math and science (Kosokovich et al., 2015). Yet,

the four cost items did not tap into emotional cost but focused on the time, energy, and investment needed. The items used read: (a) My [math or science] classwork requires too much time; (b) Because of other things that I do, I don't have time to put into my [math or science] class; (c) I'm unable to put in the time needed to do well in my [math or science] class; and (d) I have to give up too much to do well in my [math or science] class. Flake et al. (2015) provided some evidence that emotional cost, defined as a negative psychological state that results from the effort put in to the task, may accumulate to have negative impacts on achievement. This operationalization of cost focuses squarely on tangible barriers associated with the task/domain. Such an approach ignores the nuance of psychological experiences in classrooms and the negative impacts of such experiences on student achievement outcomes (Sung, Wallace, Correnti, & Cohen, in preparation; Yeager & Walton, 2011). I argue that a risk perspective that prioritizes interaction may provide much needed insight into how emotional cost functions as a barrier to engagement.

2.1.2 State of the current literature examining cost perceptions of diverse youth

Findings suggest cross-racial/ethnic group differences in cost perceptions and motivational profiles. Conley (2012) found that cost was a significant distinguishing factor in youth's motivational profiles. Using cluster analysis ($N = 1,870$ 7th graders; 69% Latino, 17% Vietnamese), Conley identified seven different motivational patterns varying by goal orientations and value beliefs. Across profiles, higher cost was related to more positive and more negative affect. Among more positively motivated youth (i.e., more mastery-oriented goal orientations and higher value), low cost perceptions were related to less negative affect and higher achievement. Additionally, Vietnamese students were more likely to have low cost perceptions and demonstrated greater mathematics achievement than Latino students. As such, cost perceptions may not only be related

to identity development processes but may also be differentially-related to various racial/ethnic identities.

Research on achievement motivation does suggest racialized youth's social and cultural experiences exert significant influence on their expectancies and values in school contexts. For example, Irving and Hudley (2005) found a significant relation between African American high school males' beliefs about fairness and inequality and their expectancies for success, values, and educational outcomes. Youth who reported greater cultural mistrust had lower expectancies for educational success and less value for those outcomes. In addition, Taylor and Graham (2007) found a negative relationship between perceived barriers and achievement values for African American middle school boys. Although these studies were not conducted specifically within an EVC framework, their findings suggest unique relations between the schooling experiences of diverse youth, their identities, and their achievement outcomes. Such findings call for increased attention to racialized youth's psychological experiences in investigations of motivation, engagement, and achievement.

2.1.3 Summary

Engaging in the classroom is a choice adolescents make for themselves; it is a demonstration of their agency in shaping their own learning and development. Broadly, cost has been found to be a significant predictor of students' choices about when and how to engage (or not engage) in academic activities. Cost is a barrier to productive engagement and has been most popularly conceptualized as time, effort, and energy required that is perceived as wasteful or excessive, or as distracting from other activities (Barron & Hulleman, 2014; Flake et al., 2015). Despite evidence that fear of failure, embarrassment, or ridicule is related to motivation and performance,

there is little evidence surrounding the role of emotional cost. It may be the case that emotional cost perceptions are more fluid, or variable, than other cost perceptions (e.g., task effort cost), and thus less easily detected in global survey measures. A framework that prioritizes phenomenological experiences as opposed to tangible barriers is needed to explicate the role of emotional cost.

2.2 FRAMEWORKS OF RISK, THREAT, & SAFETY

Building on Le Fevre's (2013) definition of risk as the potential loss of something valuable including financial, physical, performance outcome, psychological, and social losses, risk is defined here as: *a situation that evokes feelings of discomfort/distress as a result of the possibility of psychological harm (e.g., embarrassment, ridicule, de-valuation, or being perceived as incompetent)*. This definition of risk implies personal assignment of value to an event, outcome, or interaction based on individuals' perceptions of self in relation to the social context and the task rather than the task alone. Employing a risk perspective to the study of emotional cost provides a way to highlight the nuance of psychological experiences and social interaction that likely inform perceptions of emotional cost. In addition, a risk perspective provides an alternative framework for understanding how identity informs motivational processes.

2.2.1 The potential impacts of risk and stress on Black youth

Research dating back to the 1930s indicates that when humans are at risk for potential physical or psychological harm our brain sends out signals that activate a threat response called "fight or

flight” (Cannon, 1932; Jansen, Van Nguyen, Karpitcky, Mettenleiter, & Loewy, 1995). The vast majority of these discussions have centered on behavioral responses to physical threats (i.e., defending one’s self vs. running away from the situation) rather than psychological threat (the terms risk and threat will be used interchangeably moving forward). A psychological threat can be considered any experience that evokes psychological distress and/or triggers a stress response—for example, taking a standardized test. There is a large body of evidence on the deleterious effects of stress on physical and mental health outcomes caused by experiences of psychological threat, including social identity threat and perceived discrimination (Berger & Sarnyai, 2014; Fuller-Rowell, Evans, & Ong, 2012; Williams & Mohammed, 2009). Despite compelling evidence that daily social interactions are laden with potential psychological threats and experiencing psychological threat leads to heightened stress and increased negative outcomes (see Adam et al. (2015) for a recent report), we still know little about how experiences of psychological threat influence motivation and engagement in classroom settings.

Research on stereotype threat has provided strong evidence that stress can have negative impacts on educational outcomes. Societal frames around who is smart and who has the ability to succeed academically often position low-income and minority youth as low achieving and incapable (Nasir & Shah, 2011). These stereotypes have been found to manifest as underachievement for these youth, a phenomenon known as stereotype threat (Steele, Spencer, & Aronson, 2001). The work of Steele (2010) and his colleagues has linked stereotype threat to experiences of psychological distress that serve to undermine performance. Similarly, developmental psychologists have found that experiences of racial hassles and discrimination are frequent among African American youth and can have negative impacts on their psychological well-being (Sellers, Copeland-Linder, Martin, & Lewis, 2006). Sellers et al. (2006) also suggested

that the process by which adolescents must interpret subtle discrimination, such as microaggressions, can deplete cognitive resources needed to engage in other activities, such as learning.

Research on the experiences of Black youth also indicates racial identity is central to processes of self-evaluation, interpretation of social interaction, and educational outcomes. In particular, racial identity can serve as a buffer against experiences of discrimination (Chavous et al. , 2003), is related to sensitivity to bias (Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998), and interacts with affordances of the context to promote or inhibit learning, such as matches between messages youth receive about their race from school and their own internal feelings (Byrd & Chavous, 2011). These processes are likely even more important when school curricula focus explicitly on the injustices suffered by members of racial groups with which students strongly identify (Tatum, 1992). Given that adolescence is a sensitive period for long-term, stress-related outcomes and that adolescents are particularly attuned to social cues implicating how they are viewed by others, exploring adolescent perceptions of risk in the classroom in relation to their racialized self-views may be particularly fruitful for advancing developmental and motivational theory.

2.3 THE ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY IN RISK REGULATION

As previously discussed, whether physical or psychological, human nature compels us to protect ourselves from harm. Under psychological threat, self-protection, the desire to protect one's identity and sense of self-worth, can maintain and repair self-esteem (Sedikides, 2011). However, the need for self-protection can also inhibit learning and performance by interfering with

neurobiological systems that regulate behavior. For example, Hodgins et al. (2010) found that participants under threat demonstrated greater biological and observational defense responses and performed more poorly on a behavioral task. The chronic need for self-protection has also been found to be detrimental to close interpersonal relationships such that it interferes with the development of belonging and connectedness (Murray, Holmes, & Collins, 2006; Murray, 2008).

There is some evidence that the need for self-protection can be counteracted by feelings of psychological safety (Foldy, Rivard, & Buckley, 2009). Psychological safety is defined as feeling supported to engage social and intellectual risks and is based in a sense that one's identities, perspectives, and contributions are valued despite the experience of discomfort/distress or the possibility of harm (Williams, Woodson, & Wallace, 2016). In her introduction to the special issue, *The Role of Psychological Safety in Human Development*, Wanless (2016) describes how perceptions of psychological safety influence an individual's agency to act in a given context such that psychologically safe individuals are more likely to engage in behaviors that support their growth and development despite experiencing risk. In this way, an individual's perception of psychological safety functions as a situational factor that conditions their behavior within that context. For example, in workplace settings, psychological safety manifests as creativity, innovation, and a willingness to take risks (Edmondson & Lei, 2014). Research within the field of education also indicates perceptions of psychological safety are related to positive outcomes such as engagement in classroom activities (Cooper, 2013; Patrick, Turner, Meyer, & Midgely, 2007) and increased academic motivation and achievement (Frazier et al., 2015).

Indeed, several scholars have found that feelings of safety manifest in classroom learning environments as productive learning behaviors indicative of risk taking, such as raised hands to ask a question, critiquing other's ideas, and engaging in discussion about controversial topics

(Dean & Jolly, 2012; Holley & Steiner, 2005). Williams, Woodson, and Wallace (2016) investigated how two 9th grade teachers supported psychological safety during classroom race talk. We found the extent to which the teachers demonstrated greater attunement, authenticity, and power sharing with their students, impacted how students engaged in the dialogue. All in all, the evidence suggests psychological safety facilitates interactions with the environment in ways that support growth and development and has the potential to ameliorate perceptions of risk.

2.3.1 Summary

Encountering threat, or risk, at school, work or home, is a common experience across marginalized demographic groups. Over time, the experience of stress related to threat can have negative implications for well-being including productivity and academic success. To protect our identities and sense of self-worth, we often engage in self- protective behaviors such as remaining silent when we disagree with peers or coworkers. While seemingly adaptive, the need for self-protection can be harmful. Self- protective behaviors often interfere with competing goals, such as performing well (achievement goals) or enhancing connectedness and belonging (social goals). Considering the goal conflicts that can arise under threat, understanding how youth negotiate risk in the classroom is crucial for de-mystifying the moment-to-moment decisions adolescents make regarding if, when, and how, to engage. Moreover, to fully understand psychological safety as a protective factor, it is necessary to explicate the ways in which risk manifests as threatening versus non- threatening in the classroom.

3.0 THE CURRENT STUDY

The purpose of this study is to explore the evaluative frameworks adolescents employ when deciding if, when, and how to engage in the classroom. Specifically, I aim to build theory on the role of risk in motivational processes by investigating the features of instructional interactions that are considered risky to adolescents, how risk plays a role in Black youth's motivational processes, and what factors might play a role in ameliorating such risks. To do so I ask the following research questions:

1. How do adolescents define risk in the classroom?

Hypothesis 1a: Adolescents will evaluate risk in terms of perceived emotional/psychological costs, identity threat, and stress.

Hypothesis 1b: Identity-related processes will be particularly salient to Black adolescents' evaluations of risk.

2. How do adolescents' perceptions of risk influence their engagement in learning activities?

Hypothesis 2a: Adolescents will negotiate risk such that they will engage in self-protective strategies, such as divesting in classroom-based relationships, to avoid potential negative interactions.

Hypothesis 2b: Black adolescents' coping responses to experiences of risk will vary dependent on their racial identities.

3. How do features of the classroom social context influence adolescents' perceptions of risk?

Hypothesis 3: A history of instructional interactions in which adolescents are made to feel safe and supported will be associated with low risk perceptions and a greater likelihood to engage risk.

Answering these research questions will: (a) help us better understand the relation between experienced interaction and adolescents' motivation-related behaviors; (b) provide insight into how diverse youth experience and interpret instructional interactions; and (c) contribute to theory on the role of emotional cost in achievement motivation by examining adolescents' experiences of risk.

4.0 METHODS

This study is part of a dataset being compiled to better understand how teachers and students differentially respond to interactions in the classroom. As Graue and Walsh (1998) described in their book, *Studying Youth in Context*, youth experience social contexts very differently from adults.

More often than not, children are placed into contexts over which they have little control—adults make most decisions for them. Unlike adults, who can choose to avoid situations that they find uncomfortable or threatening, children are constantly challenged to develop competence in settings over which they have very little control. (p. 12)

Thus, the data collected in this study serve to: (a) situate youth's phenomenological experiences within the local cultural context of the classroom and within larger society; as well as (b) elicit youth's meaning-making around their experiences. These aims were realized through the collection of multiple data sources including: ethnographic field observations in each focal classroom, journal entries from participant youth in each classroom, survey data of relevant theoretical constructs, and focus group transcripts from small group discussions with participating youth. Figure 1 displays an overview flowchart of data collection and analysis.

4.1 PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS/SAMPLING PROCEDURES

Participants were recruited through the Urban Teacher Training Program¹ (UTP). The UTP, in partnership with Empower Schools and Northeast University, prepares pre-service teachers to combat issues of social justice, equity, and poverty and race in middle grades and secondary classrooms. Empower Schools service low-income and minority youth across the county, which comprises of 42 school districts. At the time of the study, the student population across Empower Schools comprised of the following demographic breakdown: 73% racial/ethnic minority youth, 75% of students qualified for free and/or reduced lunch, and 13% had been diagnosed with special needs (Empower, 2016). I specifically focus on classrooms with UTP residents in the Humanities department at Glen Lake High School. This recruitment decision was made to eliminate potential confounds from variability across schools and subject domains. Moreover, the Humanities department at Glen Lake High School implemented a new curriculum for the 2016-2017 school year that focuses on world history and contemporary global conflicts in Grade 10, race, class, and gender in Grade 11, and critical perspectives on social justice and equity in Grade 12. The purposeful recruitment of classrooms from this Humanities department aimed to: (a) help to build on my prior work investigating psychological safety during race talk which examined teacher moves in 9th grade ELA classrooms (Williams, Woodson, & Wallace, 2016); (b) increase the potential that racialized interactions and/or interactions involving “risky” topics (e.g., social justice, politics, oppression) will be featured and salient; and (c) utilize the expertise of the committee members.

¹ Urban Teacher Training Program is a pseudonym. All proper nouns are pseudonyms to protect the confidentiality of participants.

Six teachers, three UTP residents, and their teacher mentors (experienced teachers serving in supervisory roles with the UTP residents) were recruited for participation in this study ($N = 3$ classrooms). The lead teachers included Mr. Featherstone, a White, male 11th grade History teacher; Mrs. Ross, a White, female 11th grade ELA teacher; and Ms. Whitaker, a White, female 10th grade ELA teacher. The UTP residents included Mr. Johnson, a Black male, Ms. James, a Black female, and Ms. Boyd, a Black female. Table 1 displays the name, grade, subject, and position of the teacher participants.

Students from each focal classroom were also recruited to participate in the study. School data records indicate a majority Black student population at Glen Lake High School (77.3 % Black, 14.2% White, 8.5% Multi-racial, 3.1% Hispanic/Latino; see Table 2 for a full demographic breakdown). Youth and their families were consented using an active consent process. The active consent process comprised of a letter from the researcher sent home with each student describing the study and including parental consent and child assent permission forms. Consent rates for each focal classroom ranged from 38–50%. Five seniors participated in the final focus group interview as a member check. Table 3 provides a roster for each focus group.

4.2 RESEARCHER POSITIONALITY

Engaging with qualitative work that focuses on the experiences of others requires one to be thoughtful and critical of their own personhood. According to Chiseri-Strater (1996), this reflection includes, but is not limited to, the researcher's own racial and cultural identities and familial, gender, class, and educational backgrounds. Milner (2007) described a framework of cultural and racial positionality that requires researching the self, the self in relation to others,

engaged reflection and representation, and shifting from understanding the self to understanding the broader system in which one is conducting research. A clear conceptualization of positionality is particularly relevant in education research because of the historic and pervasive systemic racism in US public schools. It is also important for addressing the preconceived notions education researchers often hold about teaching, learning, and what it means to be a student that are often based on their own past experiences as students themselves. As such, in the process of designing the data collection and analytic plan for this study, I have, and will continue to actively engage in critical reflection about my own identity and how that identity influences my observations, interactions with participants, and analysis.

I am a young Black woman with prior experience teaching and researching in urban public schools. These identities come with affordances and constraints in field research. My background in teaching has often afforded me quick entry with teacher participants, while my adult and researcher status at times is met with resistance by students, particularly, Black male students. I understand that although I may feel like an insider because of my racial identity and teaching background, I am still mostly perceived as an outsider to students. Therefore, I made specific efforts to build rapport with students such as engaging in informal conversations in the hallway and before and after class.

During data analysis, my own experiences as a Black student partially informed my interpretations of teacher actions and the data generated from student focus groups. I occupied white academic spaces throughout my K–12 education and continue to do so as a graduate student. These experiences led to a collaboration with Dr. Woodson on a special issue about psychological safety during classroom race talk. In high school, race talk was a mostly uncomfortable experience for me. I was often expected to have a well-formed opinion of what life was like being Black in

America, during a time when I was coming to figure those things out for myself. My teachers' abilities, or lack thereof, to facilitate an honest dialogue strongly influenced whether I chose to participate in those conversations. These past experiences not only influence my positionality in the field but have also informed my theorizing about risk, motivation, and engagement in the classroom.

4.3 PHASE 1 DATA SOURCES

The purpose of Phase 1 data collection and analysis was to gather information for the design and facilitation of focus group interviews. Ethnographic observation methods and open-ended surveys in the form of student journal entries were used to gather this information.

4.3.1 Classroom observation

In the participant observation tradition of ethnography, each classroom was observed in two units for three to four consecutive days for a total of six to eight days of observation for each classroom². The purpose of these observations was to generate a data record of instructional interactions for each classroom. These data records were used to help fill in the descriptive details of student journal entries (see the following section for more detail about this data source). Participant observation involves the systematic investigation of others' lived experiences in an effort to gain access to the meanings and interpretations of those individuals' (or groups') experiences (Graue

² Due to inclement weather, the number of observations varied slightly across classrooms. On several occasions school was canceled or on a two-hour delay, which significantly reduced the amount of instructional time.

& Walsh, 1998). To do so involves immersing oneself in the culture of the context and rich description of daily occurrences, activities, and scenes. I used jottings and fieldnotes to construct data records describing instructional interactions across the observational period for each classroom.

In accordance with recommendations from Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (2001), episodic fieldnotes were constructed from jottings recorded during field observation. Jottings of interactions, both observed and participatory, were developed into detailed fieldnotes and analytic memos within 24 hours of observation to optimize the detailed imagery and recall of events (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2001; Graue & Walsh, 1998;). For this study, interactions are defined as a social interaction, conversation and/or encounter between: (a) a teacher and one or more students; or (b) between a group of students. In my jottings, I made notes of the features of the interactions, such as antecedent events, who was involved in the interaction, the foci of the interaction (e.g., course content, social event, student behavior, etc.), as well as any emotion words used by the participants in the interaction. Participant observation allows the researcher to describe observable action, as well as patterns of interaction, and aids in the development of theory around processes of action and interaction (Glesne, 2016). Thus, engaging in participant observation allowed for stronger grounding of subsequent data collection in the actual lived experiences of the participants. Data generated from classroom observation were used to refine focus group questions and to develop materials for a focus group sorting activity.

4.3.2 Daily student journal entries

At the end of the class period on each observed day, youth participants were asked to complete a short journal entry reflecting on the class period. Specifically, youth were asked to “Describe the

interaction (conversation and/or encounter with your teacher and/or your teacher and other students) that stood out most to you in class today. What happened? Why does it stand out to you? Who was involved? Please be as descriptive as possible.” This prompt was designed to elicit youth perceptions of salient instructional interactions. Data from these journal entries were coded (described below) using interpretive qualitative coding methods and used as resources for constructing materials for the focus group sorting activity. See Appendix B for the full journal entry prompt.

4.4 PHASE 1 DATA REDUCTION: FIELDNOTE AND JOURNAL INTEGRATION TO DEVELOP THE FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

4.4.1 Fieldnote analysis

All completed episodic fieldnotes were compiled and analyzed using NVivo 11 to: (1) detail instructional activities and classroom norms; and (2) validate identification of the focal classrooms as engaging in a critical humanities curriculum. Specifically, structural coding processes (Saldaña, 2009) were used to analyze the fieldnotes. Analysis proceeded in the following order:

Step 1. Structural codes (see Appendix C for the full Phase 1 codebook) were applied to each fieldnote to develop a record of instructional formats and potentially risky interactions for each day of observation. Example codes include: (a) *interaction*-conversation and/or encounter between the teacher and one or more students, or amongst students; (b) *whole-class discussion*-everyone in the class is expected to be engaged in the same activity; (c) *truth sticks*- using popsicle sticks with student names to choose people for participation in the discussion; and (d)

disagreement-when students and/or a student and teacher openly disagree and engage each other's opposing views. The codes served to denote participation structures in the classroom and possible sites of risk and risk-taking.

Step 2. To provide evidence to support the claim that each of these classrooms was explicitly focused on issues of social justice and equity, the following instructional activities were compiled for each day of observation: *warm-up*-a short introductory activity designed to get students thinking about the topic of the day, *learning target*-statement describing what students will learn by the end of the class period, and *main activity*-instructional activity designed to help students obtain the learning target. For example, on day five of observation in Mr. Featherstone's class, the following was recorded (see Table 4 for a complete list of lesson observation details for each focal classroom):

Learning target: "I will examine the impact of Mamie Till Bradley's decision on the Civil Rights Movement."

Warm- up: What might these two images have in common?

Main Activity: Watch documentary on Emmett Till's murder and complete tweet sheets (a worksheet on which students recorded their reactions to the film using hashtags)

Artifacts (lesson plans, worksheets, etc...) were collected as available to supplement the fieldnote records.

4.4.2 Daily journal entry analysis

Journal entries for each classroom were analyzed to construct a corpus of "risky" instructional interactions for each classroom. The corpus of "risky" instructional interactions served to inform development of source material for the focus group interview. That process is described in detail

in the Phase 1 Integration section. Here, I will describe the analytic process for coding the journal entries.

Step 1. Student journal entries were copied verbatim into Microsoft Word such that each day of observation yielded one Word document with all journal entries collected for that day. The Word documents were uploaded to NVivo 11 for analysis. First-cycle coding included and emotion coding and descriptive coding. Saldaña (2009) described descriptive coding as the process of summarizing the basic topic of a passage or excerpt in a word or short phrase and emotion codes as labels for “the emotions recalled and/or experienced by the participant, or inferred by the researcher about the participant (p. 86).” These specific coding methods were chosen in an effort to describe the content of students’ responses. Emotion codes are especially useful for studies that explore participants’ experiences, thoughts, and actions.

Although the instructions for the journal entries were to “Describe the interaction (conversation and/or encounter with your teacher and/or your teacher and other students) that stood out most to you in class today.”, many students simply described what they did in class that day. The code activity description was applied at least once to each set of journal entries for the days observed. Some students, however, were reflective in their responses and discussed more substantive issues such as their emotional reactions to the subject matter, what they learned from the lesson, and disparities in participation (see Appendix C for a full list of Phase 1 codes). Take, for example, the following journal responses:

“What that stood out to me is that the same people talked the whole time and also, he [the teacher] pulled sticks.”

- Anonymous

“Today we had a deep conversation about Mamie Till’s son and what happened. He [the teacher] was very serious and obviously cared about our opinion and to prepare us for what happened to her son. It was sad and hard to see, Mamie needs more recognition then she has gotten.”

- Anonymous

Step 3. Journal entries that did not describe an interaction, as defined in this study or did not reference specific observed classroom activities were not included in second-cycle coding analysis. The remaining journal entries were coded using focused coding techniques (Saldaña, 2009) to identify frequently used emotion words or descriptors and salient themes across journal entries regarding the features of the interactions described and the content of students’ reflections. Examples of salient themes/categories include: *self-reflection*-students reflect on their own behaviors and engagement during class or students reflect on what they have learned or gained from the class; *group/class behaviors*-student references to group or whole-class level engagement in a discussion or activity; and *teacher involvement*-students reflect on teacher actions (or lack thereof) in discussions.

4.5 DATA SOURCE INTEGRATION: FIELDNOTE AND JOURNAL ENTRY

ANALYSIS

Phase 1 analyses (fieldnotes and student journals) were integrated using a convergent integration design (Creswell, 2013) to determine features of instructional interactions that might be considered risky by adolescents. Creswell describes convergent integration as the process by which data sources are merged “to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem” (2013, p. 26). Following these guidelines, overlaps in the patterns and themes that emerged from coding of

student journal entries, including emotions, conversation topics, and/or instructional formats that cut across descriptions of risky interaction, were merged with coding from the episodic fieldnotes to provide further description of the contextual features of identified interactions, themes, and patterns.

Analytic memos were constructed to document integration of the two data sources. Each memo focused on two questions: (1) What are students reflecting/reporting on most often in their journals; and (2) Which classroom activities are students referencing in the most frequent codes from journal reflections? Table 5 displays the top five most frequent journal codes for each classroom. Students across classrooms frequently reported on their own learning and engagement, classroom activities, and classroom-level engagement. The following codes were in the top five lists for each classroom, covering 15–35% of responses for each day of observation: *self-reflection*, *activity description*, and *group-class behaviors*. The codes, *interest* and *teacher involvement*, were in the top five lists for two out of the three focal classrooms. Cartoons and scenarios used in the focus group interviews were developed based on these codes.

Phase 1 analysis helps to answer research question three, “How do features of the classroom social context influence adolescents’ perceptions of risk?”. Information gained regarding the context of “risky” interactions from these analytic procedures served to extend understandings of sources of risk in the classroom and were used to refine source material for the focus group interviews. Specifically, identified patterns and themes were incorporated into classroom scenarios for an introductory sorting activity (described below) to the focus group. The scenarios helped to ground discussion prompts in adolescents’ lived experiences as all scenarios were tailored to fit observed events and journal responses. A scenario depicting the topic of the day (see Figure 2) was included in interviews for each classroom because of the unexpected journal

responses of describing the activity of the day and reporting on their own engagement. This was an attempt to distinguish whether specific kinds of activities generated more reflective student responses or if a design feature might explain the unexpected finding. Below is the written description for the scenarios distributed in Mrs. Whitaker's focus group interviews³.

4.5.1 Scenarios

1. You walk in to class and settle at your desk. After taking your seat, you look up at the board to find that today you all will be discussing war and genocide across the country.
2. Your class is having a whole-group discussion on the book you are reading. One of your classmates, Ron, gives his interpretation of the underlying theme, or message, from the book. Your interpretation is different from Ron's. After Ron, your teacher randomly calls on you to tell the class your thoughts on themes in the book.
3. It is Thursday and your class has been working in small groups all week. On Monday, your group is silent the entire time so you ask your teacher for help on a question you do not quite understand. On Tuesday and Wednesday, you try to encourage your group members to share their ideas and talk to one another, but you must rely on the teacher again. She (your teacher) starts telling you to ask your group and not her. By the time Thursday rolls around, you are beginning to feel hopeless that your group will ever truly work with one another.

³ Cartoons and written descriptions for each focal classroom are included in Appendices D with the interview protocol and E, respectively.

4.6 PHASE 2 DATA SOURCES

4.6.1 Student survey

A survey was administered to youth participants at the beginning of the focus group interview. Participants were asked to report on their motivation, engagement, self-esteem, and racial identity. Students are asked to report on these constructs because the experience of risk is theorized to be related to processes of motivation and engagement, as well as to identity beliefs. Research on risk regulation in close relationships (Murray, 2008) and self-protection (Sedikides, 2012) also suggest self-esteem plays an important role in individuals' cognitive, behavioral, and emotional responses to perceived threat. See Appendix D for complete measures with items.

4.6.1.1 Expectancy-Value-Cost Motivation

To capture students' motivation, a ten item scale designed to measure Expectancy-Value-Cost orientations was adapted and administered from Kosovich, Hulleman, Barron, & Getty (2015). Because of the nature of the research questions, emotional cost items ($N = 6$; Flake et al, 2015) was also included in the survey. Therefore, a total of 16 items students' expectancies, values, and cost were assessed. Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 with 1 expressing disagreement with the statement and 5 expressing high agreement. Example items include, "I know I can learn the material in this class." and "This class makes me feel too anxious" (respectively).

4.6.1.2 Academic Engagement

Items from the Student Math and Science Engagement Scale (Wang, Fredricks, Ye, Hofkens, & Schall Linn, 2016) were adapted and administered as part of the student survey. To reflect the

specific research questions of this study and to reduce the cognitive load on the participants, only items from the behavioral and emotional engagement subscales were used. A total of four items were adapted. To maintain consistency across the survey, engagement items were also rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = “Never” to 5= “Always.” Example items include “I put effort into learning in this class.” and “I often feel down when I am in this class.”

4.6.1.3 Racial Identity

Items from the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MMBI; Sellers, 2013) were adapted to measure adolescents’ racialized views of themselves and their group membership. The MMBI is a useful tool for measuring the significance and meaning of race. This study focused on three subdimensions: (a) centrality-the extent to which a person normatively defines himself or herself with regard to race; (b) private regard-the extent to which individuals feel positively or negatively towards African Americans as well as how positively or negatively they feel about being an African American; and (c) public regard-the extent to which individuals feel that others view African Americans positively or negatively. A total of 16 items were adapted for use across racial groups. Students were prompted to identify their racial group before answering the items, “How do you identify racially?” Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale. Example items include “I feel good about my racial group.” and “Society views my racial group as an asset.”

4.6.1.4 Self-esteem

Global self-esteem was measured using five items from Rosenberg’s widely used trait self-esteem inventory (Rosenberg, 1965). Items were measured on a 5- point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Example items include: “I feel that I am a person of worth.” and “On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.”

4.6.2 Focus group interview

Focus group interview methods were used to elicit adolescents' perceptions of risk in the classroom using the source material of interactions experienced. The process of identifying interactions experienced has been described during Phase 1 procedures. Focus group interviewing is a particularly useful method for exploratory research, because it allows room for flexibility and places participant perspectives at the center of dialogue and data collection (Hennink, 2014). In focus group interviewing, group interaction is used as a data source (Berg, 2009). As participants describe their experiences, build on each other's contributions, and refine their viewpoints, the researcher gains access to participant meanings. Through interaction, focus groups can "increase clarity, depth, and detail of discussion" allowing for diverse perspectives to be heard (Hennink, 2014, p. 3). Moreover, focus group interviewing is useful as a means of triangulation.

Focus groups of four to six students were conducted in each focal classroom within the month following the last observation. Lead teachers organized focus group participants to reduce the risk of negative peer relationships unintentionally influencing the dynamics of the interview. Each focus group was audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. Appendix E includes the full focus group protocol.

4.6.2.1 Introductory Activity: Classroom Risk Scenarios

In efforts to ground focus group discussions in youth's lived experiences, as well as encourage more active participation in the focus group, a sorting activity functioned as the introduction to the interview. Youth participants were instructed to sort three scenarios based on the scenarios being more or less likely to make them feel uncomfortable and most and least likely to change how he/she participates in class. The scenarios were designed following the procedures outlined above

and were depicted in comic and narrative form. To protect the confidentiality of participants, no scenario was a direct replication of interactions described in the journal entries. However, salient themes from previously collected data sources were used to modify the scenarios to reflect youth's lived experiences. Completed sorts were recorded by the interviewer. Students were permitted to leave their sorting out on the table to use as a reference during the focus group discussion.

4.7 PHASE 2 DATA ANALYSIS: DETAILING EMERGING THEMES IN ADOLESCENTS' EXPERIENCES OF RISK

4.7.1 Focus group interviews

Transcripts of focus group interviews were transcribed verbatim and uploaded into qualitative data analysis software for analysis.

Step 1. First cycle coding employed in vivo coding to “prioritize and honor the participants’ voices,” (Saldaña, 2009, p. 74). In vivo coding uses words and short phrases from the transcript to categorize and chunk data. This coding method resulted in a collection of excerpts describing participants’ thoughts and feelings, in their own words, in response to the interview questions.

Step 2. First cycle codes and identified excerpts were analyzed for second cycle coding. Second cycle coding employed focused coding methods to organize the data into relevant categories and themes around adolescents’ definitions of risk (RQ 1), the features of interactions that adolescents describe as risky (RQ 1 & RQ 3), adolescents’ emotional and behavioral responses to experiencing risk in the classroom (RQ 2), and the social context of classrooms that adolescents

perceive as risky (RQ 3). Focus group findings were integrated with Phase 1 findings to identify overlaps in patterns and themes regarding the research questions.

5.0 FINDINGS

5.1 OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

Findings suggest adolescents evaluate risk based on the likelihood of the instructional interaction to impede self-system, achievement, and/or social goals, and whether they approach or avoid learning tasks is likely dependent on their perceptions of the resources available to meet the demands of the risk. Analysis also revealed that when teachers provide safe and supportive classroom environments in which students perceive risk as a meaningful learning opportunity, students are more likely to engage risky interactions (e.g., publicly sharing their perspectives during race talk). Below is a short summary of findings as they are specifically related to each research question and hypothesis. A detailed analysis of these findings follows in the sections below.

5.2 RQ1: HOW DO ADOLESCENTS DEFINE RISK IN THE CLASSROOM?

5.2.1 Hypothesis 1a: Adolescents will evaluate risk in terms of perceived emotional/psychological costs, identity threat, and stress

There was evidence that adolescents evaluated risk in terms of perceived emotional/psychological costs (as previously defined and explained), as well as identity threat and stress. Evidence suggests adolescents define risk similar to current conceptualizations of cost but not when discussing critical

conversations about social justice. Self-system and social goals become salient factors for motivation and engagement within the context of critical conversations, and the evaluative processes for deciding if, when, and how to engage become more nuanced and complex.

5.2.2 Hypothesis 1b: Identity-related processes will be particularly salient to Black adolescents' evaluations of risk

There was little evidence to support my hypothesis that identity-related processes would be particularly salient to Black adolescents' evaluations of risk. Across classrooms and across racial/ethnic groups, students did not explicitly mention the impact of their racial identities on instructional interactions and their perceptions of risk. Rather, they alluded to the influence of their racial identities on whole class discussion. For example, Antoine's usage of "we" on page 57 of the Findings suggests membership to a racial group. It can also be inferred from his comments that a strong Black racial identity influenced students' reactions to discussions about poor treatment of Blacks by Whites. Further, one might also reasonably conclude that Francesca's comments about fear of offending her classmates stemmed from her experiences as a young White woman, which she explicitly acknowledged are markedly different from her mostly Black peers' lived experiences. Nonetheless, neither of these students named their racial identities as specific influences on their motivation and engagement despite explicit prompts from the interview protocol that defined identity as "how we define ourselves; based on our core beliefs, values, and goals, as well as how other people see us. Which can include our racialized, gendered, and classed identities." The evidence suggests the racial consciousness of youth of color and White youth is important to take into consideration when thinking about how adolescents evaluate risk during critical conversations.

5.3 RQ2: HOW DO ADOLESCENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF RISK INFLUENCE THEIR ENGAGEMENT IN LEARNING ACTIVITIES?

5.3.1 Hypothesis 2a: Adolescents will negotiate risk such that they will engage in self-protective strategies, such as divesting in classroom-based relationships, to avoid potential negative interactions

There is no evidence to suggest divesting in classroom-based relationships is a self-protective strategy adolescents employ. Instead, findings suggest positive classroom relationships are significant factors that influence both approach and avoidance of risk.

Findings do suggest adolescents engage in self-protective strategies to avoid potential negative interactions including: not speaking up when they disagreed with the teacher or peers, choosing not to share their perspectives if they thought they might offend someone, and sharing their thoughts through written assignments only the teacher would see but declining to participate in group discussion.

5.3.2 Hypothesis 2b: Black adolescents' coping responses to experiences of risk will vary dependent on their racial identities.

There is no evidence to suggest Black adolescents' coping responses to experiences of risk varied dependent on their racial identities. As students did not explore the role of their racial identities in depth in the interview and I was unable to construct focus groups based on the survey, this hypothesis was not fully explored. However, the findings do suggest a synergistic relationship

between adolescents' basic human desire to protect their identities and their approach to and avoidance of risky instructional interactions.

5.4 RQ3: HOW DO FEATURES OF THE CLASSROOM SOCIAL CONTEXT INFLUENCE ADOLESCENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF RISK?

5.4.1 Hypothesis 3: A history of instructional interactions in which adolescents are made to feel safe and supported will be associated with low risk perceptions and a greater likelihood to engage risk

Although there was evidence to support this hypothesis, findings revealed the relation between safe and supportive classroom climates and engaging in risky interactions is complicated. When students named their classrooms as “safe spaces” and their teachers as caring, they reported feeling more comfortable engaging in critical conversations about racism and sharing personal stories but also avoided specific interactions in an effort to maintain these positive relationships. Determining how teachers can balance risk and safety such that students have meaningful opportunities for growth and learning is a critical and timely endeavor.

5.5 SURVEY FINDINGS

Across classrooms, students participating in the focus groups reported above similar levels of expectancy, value, and engagement for the focal classroom of the study, as well as self-esteem

(See Table 6). However, independent samples t-test analysis revealed 10th graders (students in Whitaker's classroom) reported significantly higher levels of cost than 11th graders: for *cost*, $F(23) = 4.00$, $p = .018$, $M_{10} = 2.52$, $M_{11} = 1.62$; for *emotional cost* $F(23) = 2.58$, $p = .000$, $M_{10} = 3.28$, $M_{11} = 1.76$. The 11th graders' responses were combined into one group because there was cross-participation from those classrooms, and the lead teachers, Featherstone and Ross, often co-planned their curriculum. As mentioned in the methods section, cost motivation was measured using the recently validated Expectancy-Value-Cost scale, which taps into perceptions of effort and time cost (Kosovich, Hulleman, Barron, & Getty, 2015). Emotional cost was measured separately using items from a previous study that specifically addressed psychological costs (Flake, Barron, Hulleman, McCoach, & Welsh, 2015).

Several factors may account for findings indicating the 10th graders perceived greater costs than 11th graders, including the following observed differences in their learning environments: (a) the rigor of the coursework-the 10th grade classroom was designated an honors class; (b) the topics discussed in class-11th graders were exposed to more personally relevant topics (e.g., racism, sexism, and classism across U. S. history), while 10th grade curriculum focused on global issues of social justice; and (c) future orientation-11th graders are closer to graduation and may be less distracted by competing goals for belonging⁴. It is also the case that older adolescents are developmentally pre-disposed to be more worried about the future than younger adolescents (Louro, Pieters, & Zeelenberg, 2007; Mansfield, 2012). The qualitative findings described below help to elucidate the survey results. In the following sections I will provide examples of the various ways students discussed risk and risk-taking in the classroom, as well as provide insight into

⁴ This hypothesis was supported through member-checking in which the 12th graders described a gradual shift in priorities from 9th to 12th grade with academic and future goals becoming increasingly important relative to social goals.

differences in the classroom environments that may have contributed to adolescents' willingness to engage risk.

5.6 FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

Analysis indicated adolescents perceive risk in relation to threats to self-system, social, and academic goals. Stated alternatively, adolescents' decisions if, when, and how to engage involve a cost-benefit analysis of multiple goal systems, including: (a) self-system goals-to protect positive identities and self-integrity (i.e., "I am a good person"); (b) social goals-to maintain and increase belonging (i.e., "I have positive relationships with my peers"; and (c) academic goals-to achieve and make good grades (i.e., "I perform well here."). Evidence suggests this cost-benefit analysis is rooted in a basic approach-avoidance motivational system in which adolescents are motivated to avoid interactions they believe will lead to negative outcomes related to situationally relevant goals (i.e., others viewing them as incompetent) and approach interactions they believe will result in positive outcomes (e.g., respect and validation from peers and teachers). Table 7 provides a short summary of these findings.

Throughout this section, I use data generated from field observations and focus group interviews on adolescents' interpretations of instructional interactions to explicate how the analytic process led me to revise my conceptualization of risk. The study began with risk defined as feelings of discomfort/distress as a result of the possibility of psychological harm (e.g., embarrassment, ridicule, de-valuation, or being perceived as incompetent). Data analysis and a subsequent literature review led me to revise this definition to feelings of discomfort/distress as a result of the possibility of psychological harm (e.g., embarrassment, ridicule, de-valuation, being perceived as

incompetent, and non- belonging/social isolation) due to a conflict between self-system, social, and/or academic goals. Each data source is described in terms of the: (a) salient self-system, academic, and social goals at play; and (b) factors contributing to how these goals are threatened. In doing so, I provide evidence to demonstrate how a risk perspective indeed provides a more robust framework for understanding how negative affective experiences influence classroom behavior.

5.6.1 Partial support for current conceptualizations of cost motivation

There is some evidence adolescents conceptualize risk similar to the ways in which scholars have conceptualized cost motivation in achievement settings. For example, students in Whitaker’s ELA classroom spoke about struggling to balance coursework and out of school responsibilities. One student, Jamila, believed academics and sports could be equally beneficial in helping her obtain scholarships for college, and she aspired to excel in both arenas. She made the following comments when asked how the concept of risk (as originally defined in the study) applied to her experiences in school:

Jamila: In Whitaker’s class, everything—, it’d be like if I don’t do this and I go to practice, I’m at risk of getting a bad grade or something or getting yelled at by my coach. It’s just with them two classes for real, for real but mostly Whitaker. It’s a lot of risk I gotta take just for that class. She told me everything before I started that class, how hard it was, and then she goes, “Tell me when it’s your basketball season so we can work something out.” Then I told her, and it’s just—the work got more harder and stuff like that.

In this excerpt, Jamila described tension between the time needed to excel in Whitaker's class and her responsibilities as a member of a competitive basketball team. Specifically, she pointed to the potential consequences of prioritizing goals in one area over the other: "...it'd be like if I don't do this and I go to practice, I'm at risk of getting a bad grade or something or getting yelled at by my coach." Here, she suggested the time and effort needed to obtain a good grade in Whitaker's class would detract from the time she had available for basketball practice, which in turn, would lead to negative consequences from her coach. Alternatively, if she did not complete her coursework, instead attending practice, she risked receiving poor grades. As her grades were just as important to her as basketball, she cited failed attempts to work with Ms. Whitaker to figure out a plan to help her be successful at school and on the court, for example, "Then I told her [when it was basketball season], and it's just—the work got more harder and stuff like that." Jamila's dilemma could be characterized as an example of *loss of valued alternatives cost*—what is given up as a result of engaging in the task (Flake et. al, 2015)—because greater success in either valued domain (academics or sports) could lead to less success in the other.

Mya, also a student in Whitaker's class, described a similar tension between her household responsibilities and the time and effort needed to succeed academically. The following excerpt was her response to the question about how risk applied to her school experiences:

Mya: Then see in my house, grades are more important than how hard you try, 'cause I go home, and I do all that stuff that I was just talking about [preparing dinner and washing dishes], and then I do seven hours of homework on top of that. I still don't get enough done. I'm up 'til 2:00 in the morning, and then I come home, and they're, "Oh, why do you have a D in this class?" Did you not see me down in my room doing homework with three energy drinks? Whenever I joined honors, I

assumed that the work was gonna be harder ‘cause work for me has always been super easy. I could always breeze through it, but now, there’s just too much. It’s easy, but there’s a lot.

Mya described Whitaker’s class work as easy in the sense that it was not cognitively challenging but difficult in terms of finding enough time for completion. Earlier in the interview, Mya discussed her after school responsibilities as a caregiver to her younger siblings, because her Mom attended night school. The competing responsibilities of school and housework left Mya with insufficient time for completing her work and low achievement. Mya’s dilemma could be characterized as an example of *task effort cost*—the amount of time and effort required to be successful in the task (Flake et. al, 2015). In Mya’s opinion, Whitaker’s class was risky, because the task effort cost was too high.

Jamila and Mya’s comments about feeling overwhelmed with the amount of work required align with current conceptualizations of cost motivation (as defined in the expectancy-value-cost framework outlined in Chapter 2), which suggest performance on a task, or within a specific domain, can be partially predicted by individual’s perceptions of the time, energy, and effort required to be successful. These findings suggest adolescents’ perceptions of risk, at least to some extent, can be captured by existing frameworks of cost motivation in achievement settings. Consistent across the evidence presented here is a focus on distal goals and outcomes (e.g., as grades and securing funds for college)—potential risks associated with dilemmas in which negative consequences may have more immediate effects are not accounted for in the evidence presented here nor in the existing frameworks. In the following sections, I will explore how focusing adolescents’ discussions about risk on (a) instructional interactions and (b) learning in

the context of critical conversations suggests extending theories on cost motivation in achievement settings to consider goals beyond academic achievement.

5.6.2 Re-defining cost to account for threats to multiple goals

The definition of risk, feelings of discomfort/distress as a result of the possibility of psychological harm (e.g., embarrassment, ridicule, de-valuation, being perceived as incompetent, and non-belonging/social isolation) *due to a conflict between self-system, social, and/or academic goals*, was revised to include specific language around goal conflict to capture the various ways students characterized “risky” instructional interactions. As the focal classrooms in this study were purposefully selected because of their explicit focus on issues of social justice and equity, critical conversations about racism, sexism, and global issues were central to students’ learning experiences. In this section, I focus on the ways in which speaking up during critical conversations to share personal perspectives, thoughts, and opinions presented goal conflicts for youth. Specifically, I highlight the unique context for learning created by an explicit focus on critical issues and how risk is co-constructed between individuals, peers, and teachers within that context.

5.6.2.1 Defining and avoiding risk

Adolescents in Mr. Featherstone’s 11th grade U. S. Power Struggles class expressed contrasting views on the inherent risks of engaging in race talk. The White students, Brock and Heather, in focus group 1 (FG 1⁵) did not report finding the subject matter of race risky in and of itself but did report avoiding asking questions or sharing their thoughts for fear of negative feedback from peers.

⁵ Shorthand will be used to identify specific focus groups throughout this chapter. Refer to Table 3 for more information on the focus group composition and participants.

Black and White students in focus group 2 (FG 2) discussed navigating their peers' differential experiences of and opinions about race and racism as being uncomfortable and difficult. Here, I illustrate how these students described avoidance in service of managing others' perceptions of them, as well as maintaining positive relationships and group cohesion. In the first example, Heather was responding to the introductory sorting activity in which the students were asked to rank three scenarios (see Appendices D and E, respectively, for examples of the scenarios and cartoons) based on the likelihood of the situation to make them feel uncomfortable.

Heather: Okay. Let me re-rank these. I don't know. None of these would make me feel uncomfortable.

Interviewer: If you had to choose.

Heather: I guess. And the bottom row is –

Interviewer: And so, the bottom row is from left to right, least likely to change how you would participate in class to most likely to change. So –

Heather: But I think none of this would change anything.

Heather claimed that she did not find any of the scenarios to be “risky”. In the excerpt below, she further explained how she did not perceive any risks in her U.S. Power Struggles class, because she had become accustomed to talking about conflict and because the events they discussed were based in the past.

Heather: It's something that happens, like, every day. We talk about like, the civil rights movement a lot, so it doesn't make me uncomfortable, since we're usually talking about it.

Heather's seemingly unbothered attitude toward the subject matter as expressed here, "the civil rights movement a lot, so it doesn't make me uncomfortable," arose during later points in the interview as well. For example, the students were asked to think about the specific definitions of risk and identity ("how we define ourselves; often based on our core beliefs, values, and goals, as well as how other people see us.") outlined in the interview protocol, and to discuss the first school-related situation that came to mind. Again, Heather presented a nonchalant stance.

Heather: I feel like there's no risk in that class, since what is there to risk? All we're doing is learning about the past. Nothing really risky there.

Brock: Yeah. I mean, and just speaking the truth.

Heather: Yeah.

Here, Heather is attributing the lack of risk in discussing Civil Rights issues to the subject matter being based in the past. Interestingly, she discussed not identifying as White, or any race, later in the interview. Being color-blind, ascribing to a racial ideology that does not acknowledge or "see" race as a sociopolitical factor in modern society (Bonilla-Silva, 2014) and a lack of racial awareness, allows Whites to ignore the true impact of racism on people of color and how society operates, as well as impedes, their ability to empathize with those affected by racism (Milner, 2015; Sue, 2015). It may be the case that for students of color, especially those who consider their racial identities to be core parts of their identity, participating in race talk with peers who deny their existence as racial beings can present a significant threat to their self-system and social goals.

Indeed, there was evidence to suggest students perceived discussions about race and racism to be risky when their ideologies conflicted with other students' beliefs. Contrary to Heather's beliefs, White and Black students in FG 2 described how race talk did make them uncomfortable.

Take for example, Francesca's, a White, female student, response to a question about the difference between discussing controversial topics, like race and racism, compared to more neutral subject matter:

Francesca: Definitely. It's a really—it's like it's something that's going on currently, and everyone has different views, and everyone has been affected differently. So, talking about those kind of situations and the things that are happening, everyone's had a different experience. So, it's a little more of a tougher subject to approach without hurting someone else.

In the excerpt, Francesca described race talk, which is defined as public, discursive attempts to negotiate the “complex of meanings that surrounds the concept of race” (Taylor, 2013, p. 5) as “a tougher subject to approach.” She attributed the difficulty of race talk to its relevance to students' current lives and the unshared experiences and perspectives on race different students possessed. Other students in Francesca's focus group echoed these sentiments. In the following excerpt, Hakeem and Lisa discussed how Socratic Seminars, “a collaborative, intellectual dialogue facilitated with open-ended questions about text,” (Paideia, 2015), made them feel uncomfortable.

Hakeem: We had seminars, yeah, basically _____.

Interviewer: So what about the Socratic seminars?

Hakeem: Just certain people's opinions that I just like didn't agree with.

Lisa: Like opinions on racism [crosstalk].

Interviewer: So, Lisa had a comment about – can you say what you just said again?

Lisa: Like the seminars, like what you said, how people have like different opinions on race, that kind of made me uncomfortable in some situations.

In the examples above, students described their responses to critical conversations and engaging in race talk as the context for learning. In such a learning context, risk operates at two levels: there is inherent risk in the subject matter (racism) and, thus, risk in engaging in dialogue about it. Race talk is especially risky, because it violates societal and academic norms regarding politeness and what is considered valid knowledge (Sue, 2015). Indeed, several scholars have documented the potential cognitive and emotional stress evoked by engaging in race talk (Howard, 2008; Leonardo, 2002; Utsey, Gernat, & Bolden, 2003). By violating social and academic norms, exchanging stories, feelings, and meanings around race also presents threats to self-system and social goals. For example, the fear of speaking out and potentially communicating ideas that are perceived as racist conflicts with the innate motivation of the self-system to see one's self as good. Similarly, the fear of sharing ideas that would be perceived as wrong or incorrect may present a conflict with self-system goals by threatening one's identity as a competent person. In situations that elicit such conflicts, students may be motivated to engage in self-protective behaviors and avoid speaking up when they are unsure of how others will perceive their remarks. Instructional interactions in the context of race talk, then, should be analyzed with attention to the potential of features of the conversation to elicit self-protective behaviors.

Indeed, the public nature of classroom race talk is one of the many reasons it is difficult to execute in educational settings. In her description of situations that increase risk and the need for psychological safety, Wanless (2016) stated, "Some factors that may make moments feel higher stakes are when they are more public, more unclear, have more pronounced hierarchies, or have more salient or identity-related issues at play" (p. 8). To compound this issue, the unpleasant feelings race talk can evoke fear, guilt, disgust, and shame, not only pose threats to self, but can also have the potential to negatively affect established relationships. In my observations of Mr.

Featherstone and Mr. Johnson's interactions with their students, I documented the positive regard displayed amongst students and teachers, such as playful banter and special handshakes between Mr. Johnson and several of the students (Williams, 2017). The participants from Featherstone's class also described him and Mr. Johnson as caring and respectful. For example, one student described the difference between Featherstone and Johnson's teaching styles and other teachers' styles with the statement: "[it's] just the way he teaches, like he cares about how we feel and all that." The highly emotional nature of race talk may subject positive classroom bonds such as these to risk.

Specifically, engaging in race talk may threaten social goals such that students are motivated to remain silent in efforts to protect their friendships and overall group cohesion. In one of the excerpts above, for example, Francesca displayed awareness that her peers had experienced racism in ways that differed from her own experiences and discussed how talking about race opened doors for the potential to offend or upset others in her class. Tatum (1992) cites such feelings as a major source of resistance in engaging in learning about race and racism, "Many students, particularly White students, initially deny any personal prejudice, recognizing the impact of racism on other people's lives, but failing to acknowledge its impact on their own" (p. 5).

Hakeem and Lisa also discussed feeling uncomfortable when they disagreed with their peers' views on race and racism. Whether students reconcile such discomfort by approaching or avoiding risky interactions has implications for the potential of race talk to materialize into learning.

Despite some contrasting viewpoints on the inherent risk of conversations about racism, students in Mr. Featherstone's classroom broadly characterized risky interactions as interactions

that had potential negative consequences for group dynamics. That is, students described risky interactions as moments in which the decision to speak up could potentially offend another classmate or embarrass themselves. In the following example, Antoine, a Black, male student, countered Heather's assertion from the previous vignette that their US History classroom was void of risk because their conversations centered around the past.

Antoine: I mean, unless you asked the wrong question, then you don't know what the feedback's gonna be, so...

Interviewer: What do you mean by the "wrong question"? Tell me more about that.

Antoine: You don't want to ask a question that's gonna be too personal.

Interviewer: Too personal?

Antoine: Yeah.

Brock: 'Cause most kids feel embarrassed whenever they ask the wrong question. Like, they just don't participate at all.

Antoine challenged Heather's claim by asserting risk did exist when engaging in whole class discussions because of the potential for others to negatively evaluate what someone put out into the discussion. For example, if someone was to perceive a classmate's comments as incorrect or offensive, there is a chance one could receive negative feedback (i.e., they disagree or become upset). Antoine's perspective was similar to Francesca's beliefs from the previous vignette. In the following example, Antoine and Brock elaborated on the concepts of asking the "wrong questions" and "getting too personal" during whole group discussion. They described how students responded to such "risky" interactions (i.e., interactions that presented the potential for negative feedback).

Interviewer: Do you try to avoid getting personal at all times?

Antoine: Some don't know when to ask those, I mean.

Brock: You don't know, 'cause you're just speaking and it might slip out and then you don't realize it until you said it or until you finish a thought.

Antoine: You try to change the conversation if it gets too personal.

Gable and Berkman (2008) outline an approach and avoidance model of social motives and goals. The model describes how individual differences, environmental factors, and short-term social goals influence behavior in social situations. Based on the tenets of this model, adolescents may be likely to adopt avoidance goals during critical conversations about racism if their overall disposition toward belonging and past experiences in similar situations have led to undesirable outcomes (e.g., conflict). The threat of social rejection and negative evaluation also activates a physiological stress response such that adolescents may be motivated to avoid continuing interactions that evoke stress (Gable & Berkman, 2008). Antoine and Brock's remarks support these hypotheses. In the excerpt above, Antoine described avoidance motivation as aimed at protecting one's own and other's personal identities from negative feedback with the statement, "You try to change the conversation if it gets too personal." Considered with Brock's statement referring to accidental moments of getting too personal: "you're just speaking and it might slip out...", the boys seemed to be suggesting avoidance in service of preserving positive group dynamics in the classroom.

In our subsequent discussion about what defined a "wrong question" or getting "too personal," Antoine provided an example of a whole group discussion during Black History Month that became tense, particularly for Black students.

Antoine: I mean, for Black History Month, he was asking questions about what happened before. It was kind of personal, asking about our race and stuff.

Heather: I missed a lot of that.

Brock: Yeah.

Interviewer: Can you tell me more about that, Antoine? So, you said you guys were talking about during Black History Month, it got kind of personal?

Antoine: We were talking about what happened in South Carolina and all of that before –

Brock: Oh, Alabama. About the Freedom Riders and all that.

Antoine: Freedom riders and all that. Yeah.

Brock: And how like, basically, White people would treat Black people.

Antoine: And we's like, trying to talk – not trying to get too racist about it, asking questions, so we avoid asking some questions about it.

Interviewer: So, what types of questions did you avoid asking?

Antoine: Like, basically, like, how White people would talk to us. We would ask them questions, but you know, it was kind of personal. I didn't want them to tell us what they were saying. I mean, we already know, but some people feel some type of way when they tell us about it.

In his last statement, Antoine described not wanting to relive the trauma his ancestors experienced during the Civil Rights movement. He claimed, "I didn't want them to tell us [the students] what they [White people in the Civil Rights era] were saying." He then acknowledged the negative emotions he and some of his peers experienced when forced to relive Black trauma despite possessing prior knowledge about the horrific treatment of Blacks during that period, "I mean, we already know, but some people feel some type of way when they tell us about it." The phrase, "some type of way" is a Black colloquialism used to describe an event or interaction that

elicits strong feelings or emotions, usually negative emotions⁶. Here, self-protection goals to avoid psychological harm seem to be motivating students to avoid getting “too personal.” Avoiding risky interactions to protect self and others from psychological harm was a theme that emerged across focus groups in all three classrooms.

Although students in Ms. Whitaker’s 10th grade class described speaking up during discussion as both risky and not risky, our conversations converged on the role of peers in contributing to individual’s perceptions of risk. When adolescents described whole class discussion in Whitaker’s class as risky, they centered the conversation on how “bold” students, or students who openly disagreed with popular opinion (e.g., rape being a heinous crime) stirred up controversy and/or silenced other students. Consider the following responses to my final prompt in FG 4:

Interviewer: I just want you to look back at the two definitions of risk and identity. In thinking about the scenarios that we sorted, how might these definitions—so about risk, and risk-taking in the classroom, and about personal identities—how might they be related to the scenarios that we sorted?

Mya: Then a risk could be trying something that you didn’t do before. The quiet kids will speak up, and then the bold ones will just sit back and listen to what they have to say.

Chris: I feel like those with the more bold identity who always put their ideas up there and maybe have more of an aggressive tone when doing it show those kids who are quiet and wanna take the risk that maybe the risk isn’t worth it because as soon as you say something, this

⁶ The phrase “some type of way” was popularized by rap artist Rich Homie Quan’s summer 2013 hit song “Type of Way,” in which he uses the phrase to describe several complex emotions, including jealousy. The song reached Top 10 on Billboard’s Mainstream Hip Hop & R&B charts, as well as the Billboard Hot 100 list (Graham, 2013).

bold person is gonna come right after you and is gonna tear down your arguments. Well, there's no fun in that if you just say your argument and it immediately gets torn apart.

Karen: Or if you constantly share your argument and [they] always make a joke out of it, eventually, no one takes your argument seriously, so you don't wanna share out, so you think that everyone is just gonna laugh at it.

In the exchange above, Mya and Chris delineate specific typologies of student roles during class discussion: “quiet kids”-students who do not typically speak up and “bold kids”-students who consistently share their opinions during discussion, often in an aggressive manner. Their comments suggest the presence of “bold kids” creates a less safe environment for other students. Daniel described the “bold kids” behaviors as taking the enjoyment out of group discussion, “[bold kids] show those kids who are quiet and wanna take the risk that maybe the risk isn't worth it because as soon as you say something, this bold person is gonna come right after you and is gonna tear down your arguments.” Adding to the claims suggesting “bold students” behaviors negatively impacted other students' participation in class, Karen also spoke about classmates not taking each other seriously and the fear of embarrassment it caused, “you think that everyone is just gonna laugh at it.” She suggested this as motivation to avoid speaking up. These remarks suggest an alternative way peers influence each other during whole group discussions. Whereas adolescents in Featherstone's class seemed to be most concerned with everyone feeling comfortable and respected in the dialogic space, this group of students seemed to be describing a more hostile environment. In fact, another student in FG 4 from Whitaker's class specifically named the dilemma around speaking up or not speaking up during class discussion as a battle. The following excerpt is her response to the prompt: “Thinking about the definitions here [risk and identity], what is the first school-related situation that comes to your mind?”

Andrea: It's just varying opinions is the worst because if you say something and if the other person disagrees, then the whole class is just gonna pick the sides, and it's just gonna be—it'll start off as a discussion, then two seconds later, it turns into an argument. You gotta pick and choose your battles and which one you wanna argue.

Andrea's comments suggest a cost-benefit analysis like Mya's discussion about speaking up not being worth it for some students. Taken together, these excerpts suggest that fear of embarrassment and ridicule motivates students not to share during whole group discussions. Andrea specifically described how argumentative peers exerted power over the flow of conversation, "it'll start off as a discussion, then two seconds later, it turns into an argument," she claimed. The norms that govern participation in a dialogue or discussion versus an argument or debate seem to be influential for students' perceptions of risk such that when students notice dialogic characteristics of an argument or debate, such as individuals choosing a side or stance and deeming the opposition as wrong, they are less willing to share their thoughts and perspectives.

Here, students' explanations for avoiding discussion, or not speaking up, were less aligned with consistent themes that emerged in interviews with Featherstone's students. Whereas students in other focus groups often described avoidance as a response to perceived threats to social goals, such as fear of hurting someone's feelings, Ms. Whitaker's students attributed avoidance to the belief that their contributions would not lead to a productive conversation but instead to arguments and personal attack. The theme of protecting oneself from psychological harm is consistent across the evidence presented thus far. However, the attributions described here differ from the idea of avoidance that emerged in Featherstone's and Ross's focus groups in that the underlying goal of avoidance does not seem to be rooted in maintaining group cohesion or a sense of belonging but

in a lack of that cohesion. In the following sections, I explore factors that influenced students' decisions to approach risky instructional interactions.

5.6.3 Approaching risky instructional interactions

Adolescents' in Ms. Whitaker's class who cited participating in whole class discussions about "dark" or controversial topics (e.g., rape and genocide) as not risky reported prioritizing achievement over the risk of feeling uncomfortable. That is, students were not afraid to speak up during discussions, because they wanted to ensure they received good grades for participation. The following examples come from analysis of the transcript from FG 4 in which a new code⁷ "*achievement goals*" emerged. Achievement goals are students' references to grades as a motivator for classroom behavior. The following remarks were recorded during our discussion of the students' rankings of scenarios from least to most likely to make them feel uncomfortable in class and least to most likely to change how they participate in class. In the first example, Karen plainly stated that her participation in class would not change based on the sensitivity or controversial nature of the subject matter, because she is willing to do whatever is needed to get her grade.

Karen: I'll go ahead, I guess. When we're talking about genocide or something like that, or just doing a discussion in class about a project, I feel comfortable with it 'cause I'm—mostly because it's the grade, so that mean I'm gonna do it 'cause there's a grade.

⁷ When new codes emerged in later transcripts, previously analyzed transcripts were re-analyzed and the code was applied where applicable.

Karen's comments align with a traditional achievement motivation approach to learning broadly defined as goal-directed behavior in achievement contexts (e. g., schools or classrooms). As discussed in the literature review, there are several prominent achievement motivation theories, many with similar underlying premises and overlapping constructs. The distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is one such construct. Intrinsic motivation refers to engagement for the inherent interest and enjoyment of the task/domain, while extrinsic motivation refers to engagement in efforts to obtain reward or avoid negative outcomes (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In the excerpt above, Karen described her motivation for engaging in risky instructional interactions as externally motivated by her desire to obtain grades, "I'm gonna do it 'cause there's a grade." From an achievement goal theory perspective, some might interpret Interviewee 1's comments as a performance goal. Achievement goal theory posits that individuals' learning behaviors are motivated by two primary goals, or purposes: (a) mastery goals-the desire to further develop competence; and (b) performance goals-the desire to demonstrate competence (Elliot, Murayama, & Pekrun, 2011). Jamila's comments were very similar.

Jamila: Oh, well, I won't change how I participate for number one 'cause, like Karen said, it's a group. We're doing it as a group for real, and—because you know pride⁸ points. That's the main reason why I do it.

In the data presented here, students explicitly named achievement goals, both extrinsic and intrinsic, as the primary motivator for engaging in risky instructional interactions. This is not to suggest self-system and social goals are not still important motivational factors; however, receiving points toward their grade seemed to be the most salient goal informing their risk appraisal processes in this context. It is also important to note this segment of the transcript occurred at the

⁸ PRIDE points are given to students who demonstrate exemplary participation and engagement in class.

beginning of the interview before we discussed the definition of risk as it applies to this study. It may be the case that before prompted to think about discomfort or distress explicitly in terms of the possibility of psychological harm, students are more likely to interpret instructional interactions within a framework that more closely aligns with their existing schemas of schooling. The following examples provide further evidence to illustrate this point.

While several themes that emerged in Featherstone's and Whitaker's classes were also found in the analysis of transcripts from Mrs. Ross' 11th grade class (e.g., fear of offending, the role of personal opinions or getting personal in the classroom, and achievement), the adolescents in Mrs. Ross' class presented a more nuanced perspective on approach and avoidance of risky interactions. Featherstone's 11th grade students referenced avoiding risky interactions (i.e., not wanting to speak up during provocative conversations; FG1 17 references, 12.13% of coverage; FG2 7 references, 5.86% of coverage) at similar frequencies as Ross' students (4 references coded; 5.25% of coverage). Indeed, Ross' focus group participants acknowledged the discomfort in risky instructional interactions and the desire to avoid them, but these students also described engaging in these activities as a necessary discomfort to take on for learning, growth, and preparation for the future.

This difference was evidenced by two new child codes that emerged under the code *no risk*: (a) *focus on the teacher*-defined as the belief that what the teacher thinks matters more than the opinions of other students; and (b) *nothing to lose*-defined as the belief that students should not be afraid to speak freely about their thoughts because the negative reactions of other students do not matter in the long term; and (c) a third newly emerged code, *awareness*-defined as students' references to gaining awareness of societal issues and differences in each other's lived experiences through engaging in risky instructional interactions. These codes represent students' explanations

for approaching risky interactions. The following excerpt is an example of students in Ross' class discussing why they did not place strong emphasis on the opinions of other students when deciding if, when, and how to engage. These remarks followed another student's comments in which she named reading aloud and presenting in class as risky interactions.

Jerome: 'cause it's—I don't even know if it's just me or not, but I think I'm at the point where it's—

Bruce: There's nothing to lose.

Jerome: there's nothing to—there's no point because there's always a change in the atmosphere. We're gonna still be in these situations even as adults.

Steve: We about to be grown as hell.

Interviewer: [Laughter]

Steve: What's the point of worrying about somebody else's opinion, especially for something so literal?

Heather: After next year, I probably will never see you guys, so it really doesn't matter.

Steve: Meanwhile, you're 'posed to be focused on what the teacher thinks. All right, the teacher may giggle and laugh, but at the same time, she just might give you a A, you know what I'm saying? You may say something funny. You may mess up on accident. [Laughter] B, right on your paper.

Jerome: That's it. You're great. That's why we don't—that's why you're not supposed to care for it. You just gotta keep pushing it.

These excerpts highlight an alternative perspective for approaching risk. Here, students discussed approaching potentially risky interactions, or “pushing through”, because they believed

dealing with judgement would be a regular part of adult life. Jerome, Bruce, and Steve appeared to view their class discussions as practice for the future and the opinions of their peers as inconsequential to their academic success. It is important to note that the “risky” interactions discussed in this vignette were not specific to the context of critical conversations; however, the idea of judgement from others still emerged as a goal conflict for some students. Interestingly, once prompted to think about risk specifically in the context of Mrs. Ross’ class, Steve did identify giving one’s opinion as risky.

Interviewer: What about specifically, can you think of any risks that are specific to Miss Ross class?

Heather: Not really.

[Students are talking over one another]

Interviewer: The risk of giving your opinion? *[The interviewer revoices a comment she caught in the cross-talk]*

Steve: Yeah, that’s what it is. Maybe just, oh, yeah, somebody got—oh, Trayvon Martin. Someone says, “Maybe he deserved it.” That’s whenever it gets real big attention. That’s what I’m saying. That’s the risk of it. I don’t know if I should say this ‘cause I don’t want people over there judging me about my opinion of things, so Ima just keep it to myself.

Similar to the concerns raised by students in Featherstone and Whitaker’s classrooms, the fear of judgement contributed to Steve’s perceptions of risk within critical conversations. In the series of remarks following the excerpt above, Steve and Francesca expressed an appreciation for the opportunity to engage in critical dialogue.

Interviewer: How do you feel this idea of talking in a whole-group discussion with your class about issues of racism with Trayvon Martin or issues of sexism or classism?

Francesca: It gets interesting in our class. We're not super judgmental in there, I don't believe. We're just pretty chill. We talk about it.

Steve: It keeps you aware of everything that goes on throughout your society.

Francesca: It's good to talk about it.

Steve: It's a lot of things that happen in America that are realized and unrealized, and it lets you realize most of the things.

Jerome: ...they try to keep us in our emotions.

Unlike the previous discussion on reading aloud and public speaking in class broadly, Jerome and Steve referenced feelings of discomfort and heightened emotions when talking about issues of social justice. Despite the risk of judgement Steve acknowledged in the previous excerpt, he believed talking about critical issues was important for raising students' awareness, "It keeps you aware of everything that goes on throughout your society," he claimed. Francesca also found critical conversations to be useful in Ross' class which could be attributed to her perceptions of her peers as "not super judgmental" and "pretty chill." The public nature of classroom discussion and the touchy nature of social justice issues likely enhance adolescents' developmentally pre-disposed sensitivity to other's evaluations of them. Given the emphasis on peers found across focus groups, this point is explored further in the final example for this section.

It is the case that critical conversations about racism violate the academic protocol, or adherence to the principles of natural science such as objectivity, that is deeply ingrained in Western society's views about learning and knowing (hooks, 1994). Bryson, a Black male student in Featherstone's class, spoke about the importance of acknowledging many truths and grounding discussion in lived experiences when discussing critical issues.

Bryson: I feel that if people voice their opinion the right way the other person won't be offended that you said it.

Interviewer: Can you tell me more about the right way? What's the right way?

Bryson: You don't want to say it in the way that is like that sounds offensive. If you say, "This is my opinion. This is my past experience. This is what happened to me," It won't affect like --

Hakeem: Me. [Laughter].

Interviewer: Got you.

Bryson: Example A. But if you say it like, "This is the only way that I've known from my experience, so I don't really know where you come from," so this is like, "What am I supposed to do about that? This is my opinion."

Bryson was unique in this line of thought relative to his fellow classmates. His perspective could also be considered a violation of the academic protocol. Intellectualizing race talk, or de-personalizing the conversation and making it such that there are right and wrong responses (intentionally or unintentionally), may be one way that teachers and students attempt to reduce the risks associated with engaging in dialogue about race and racism. This finding is in line with Sue's work suggesting that race talk violates "the academic protocol." Sue (2015) writes,

The conditions that would facilitate a meaningful dialogue on race, for example, may be at odds with learning assumptions, policies, and practices of the academic environment (hooks, 1994; Palmer, 2007). What has been called the academic protocol, for example, emphasizes a learning environment characterized by objectivity, rationality, and intellectual insight and inquiry (APA Presidential Task Force, 2012; Young, 2003). Race talk, however, is highly subjective, is intense, relies on storytelling, and is highly emotive in nature. (p. 65)

Evidence to support this notion of violating the academic protocol is embodied in students' discussions of not wanting to offend other students, by asking the "wrong questions" or getting "too personal." The above excerpts suggest that adolescents' perceptions of risk in classroom race talk, to some extent, stem from tensions between the nature of race talk and internalized notions of what learning is supposed to look like in the classroom. For example, Antoine chose the specific language of debate to characterize race talk in his classroom.

Antoine: We do more about debates. We debate on stuff more than like, talk about it.

Brock: Yeah. I feel like that helps a lot with like, getting what point you want to get out, and most people don't participate in the Socratic discussion. I mean, sometimes I do, but sometimes I don't. Depending on how I feel that day.

Debate implies a specific right or wrong stance that is backed by objective evidence. Formally, debate is defined by Google Dictionary (n.d.) as "a formal discussion on a particular topic in a public meeting or legislative assembly, in which opposing arguments are put forward." What is unable to be made clear in the transcription is the confusion and uncertainty in Antoine's voice as he described their classrooms discussions on race as debates and not truly discussions at all. At another point in the conversation, Antoine responded to my inquiry regarding differences when they are most likely to speak up by saying, "I only talk when I know facts." Speaking up, or talking, without knowing the facts risks making oneself appear incompetent to teachers and peers within a traditional academic approach. As previously mentioned, race talk, however, violates the standard notions of what is appropriate academic/intellectual behavior. It may be the case that students' perceptions of risk are due in part to a lack of skills and awareness to reconcile this violation. The findings broadly suggest that to fully understand how adolescents' perceptions of risk motivate behavior, the dynamic ways in which achievement, social, and self-systems goals

influence one another should be taken into consideration. As teachers play an important role in adolescents' classroom experiences, how teachers support and/or inhibit students' co-regulation of achievement, social, and self-systems goals is likely key to understanding how risk operates in the classroom.

5.7 TEACHERS AS SOURCES OF RISK AND SUPPORT

In addition to providing details about their experiences of risk and decision points around engaging risk, students also provided insight into the important role of teachers in constructing risk. These discussions spanned critical conversations about social justice and engaging in intellectually challenging work. Not unlike engaging in critical conversations, taking on challenging academic work in which one can objectively succeed or fail involves a cost-benefit analysis of multiple goals, and there is a large body of literature describing the various mechanisms through which teachers exert influence on students' motivation and engagement (see Wentzel (2016) for a recent review). In the examples throughout this section, I will use data generated from fieldnotes and focus group interviews to explore the ways in which the focal teachers supported risk-taking through teaching practices that cultivated safe and supportive environments, as well as how teachers' pedagogical practices functioned as sources of risk. First, I will use two examples from Ross' and Whitaker's class to demonstrate how they influenced students' risk perceptions and risk-taking around writing tasks. Then, I will end the section with a discussion of the delicate line between constructing risk and safety during critical conversations about social justice and equity.

5.7.1 Risk and challenging academic work

During most of my time in Mrs. Ross' classroom (five out of six days of observation) the students were working in small groups and individually on essays detailing major themes (e.g., female unity and religion) in Alice Walker's critically-acclaimed novel, *The Color Purple*. On these days of observation, I recorded a general apprehension toward writing from the students (Williams, 2017). The students sulked in their seats, procrastinated by joking around, and even exclaimed self-deprecating beliefs about their writing abilities across the classroom (e. g., "I'm not good at writing!"). Because the emotional distress caused by writing appeared to be rooted in students' lack of self- efficacy, or competency beliefs, engaging in writing tasks emerged as a prevalent risk in Ross' classroom.

Interestingly, students discussed how their teachers' provision of choice was a significant factor in motivating them to approach the task of essay writing. Consider the following statements:

Steve: At least they give us freedom of it. They give you maybe three options if you—

Bruce: Yeah, instead of just giving you one choice that you maybe don't like

Francesca: They just give you the freedom to choose which one you wanna do and how you wanna do it.

Steve's choice of language, "At least they give us freedom of it," implied that choice helps make the task more approachable or enjoyable, despite his dislike for the activity. In the following excerpt, Bruce and Francesca agreed that choice did make them feel more comfortable with writing tasks.

Jerome: Yeah, even *The Color Purple* essay, we all had—we could make our own titles if we wanted to. I had “Inspiration and Independence,” you know what I’m saying? They just added ideas onto the things, and things like that.

Interviewer: Does that kind of freedom help you feel more comfortable with your writing?

Bruce: Very.

Francesca: Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: Okay. Okay.

It may be the case that autonomy-supportive teaching practices, such as providing choice, serve to help establish psychologically safe environments such that students are more willing to engage in risk. Consider the following remarks about how freedom and choice helped students feel more comfortable with their writing:

Steve: It feels more like a brainstorm with a lot of different people instead of—

Francesca: Everyone’s writing the same thing.

Steve: - yeah, like I’m in an office than having to do some paperwork or something.

Heather: It makes it easier on us, since we pick the topic and know what we are doing.

Francesca: Mm-hmm. Then we’re more interested in it.

Previous studies suggest perceptions of choice are important for adolescents’ motivation and engagement (Assor, 2012; Patall, Cooper, & Wynn, 2010; Williams, Wallace, & Sung, 2016). Specifically, when teachers provide meaningful choices, adolescents report greater interest, value, and engagement (Patall, 2013; Reeve & Jang, 2006). The data presented here, such as Francesca’s comment, “Then we’re more interested in it,” provides some evidence to support this point. Indeed, the literature on autonomy-support in secondary classrooms overwhelmingly suggests autonomy-

supportive teaching practices are beneficial for learning and achievement (Vansteenkiste, 2012; Wallace, Sung, & Williams, 2014). It may also be the case that when adolescents' basic need for autonomy is met, they are more likely to engage risks because they perceive greater control over the outcome and meaning behind the task.

Providing students with a greater purpose to anchor challenging academic work may be another way in which autonomy-supportive teaching practices support risk-taking. Fostering relevance and providing rationales are also autonomy-supportive practices that have been found to increase motivation and engagement. In fact, a recent special issue in the *Journal of Experimental Education* is dedicated to relevance in education. In the introduction to the issue, Albrecht and Karabenick (2018) described five approaches to relevance construction including direct communication or when students are "provided information regarding the value of engaging with a task" (p. 5). This type of relevance construction is exemplified in the interaction described below, in which Mrs. Ross explicitly told her students she was providing them a rationale for when, why, and how the skills they were practicing and developing through writing would be useful for them in the future (Williams, 2017).

The students are shuffling around slowly as if to delay beginning work on their essays. Mrs. Ross and Ms. James tried to improve morale. Mrs. Ross gives the students a rationale for how they might use what they are doing now in the future. "Using evidence to back up claims is good skill in general. If you need a raise, you will have to give your boss evidence to why you deserve it. [Backing up claims] is a good practice in general. There's your rationale." Ms. James adds, "Make them feel like they have to go get this book. [I want you to] drop the mic at the end of the essay!"

Given that adolescents in the latter years of high school are more likely to be future-oriented (Mansfield, 2012), providing a rationale for how a potentially risky activity is useful for their future selves may also support students in engaging risk. There is some evidence to support this contention. Although Bruce expressed annoyance with the amount of time spent on essays in Ross' class, he also conveyed an appreciation for the utility of writing tasks.

Bruce: They always keep talking about essays, essays, and essays. That's all we do. We do so much with essays.

Heather: I hate essays, too.

Bruce: It's a good thing, though, 'cause they're trying to make sure we succeed.

In a study of urban high school classrooms, Wallace and Chhuon (2014) found that adolescents were more likely to engage in classes where they believed their teachers were invested in helping them succeed and demonstrated a commitment to student learning. While there is no explicit evidence to determine the extent to which Ross' instruction impacted Bruce's beliefs about writing, his last statement, "It's a good thing, though, 'cause they're trying to make sure we succeed," suggests that he believed his teachers' emphasis on writing held meaning and purpose. Similarly, several students in Whitaker's class communicated appreciation for their teacher's efforts to help them succeed through honest and straightforward feedback, while others described her feedback style as a source of risk rather than support.

When asked to recall a time they felt uncomfortable in their classroom, students in Ms. Whitaker's focus groups mostly discussed the high demands of the coursework and the tough criticism of their writing often given by their teacher. Levi in FG 5 reported becoming anxious any time Ms. Whitaker would close the door when she was about to give the students feedback on their papers. Closing the door was an indicator that she was not happy with the quality of their writing

and, as phrased by Levi, that Ms. Whitaker was about to “start talkin’ that ish” to the class. “Talking that ish/mess/stuff/\$%@!” is a Black colloquialism referring to negative feedback or criticism delivered sharply, or in an insulting or disrespectful manner, and often with hyperbole. Kori described herself as becoming quieter in these moments and Lauren described a coping mechanism in which she would use self-talk to keep from “freaking out” for too long. Although they described these moments as uncomfortable, several students also expressed an appreciation for Ms. Whitaker’s feedback style. When I asked the students how they cope with hearing their teacher describe their work as making her want to drink bleach, Levi and Kori responded that such interactions motivated them to work harder and that it helped build a more positive relationship with their teacher.

Levi: It just makes me like her more ‘cuz—

Interviewer: Makes you like her more?

Levi: - she’s not afraid to be real. A lotta teachers will sugarcoat everything.

Kori: *(mocking other teachers)* “Well, there were some issues with your essays last night, and I just think you need to work on a couple things.” Ms. Whitaker is like, “Okay, so you see what had happened was”—and it makes—I think it pulls us closer to her. It’s a lot more personal.

Despite the anxiety provoked by Ms. Whitaker’s harsh criticism, students respected her and appreciated the honesty. Levi and Kori specifically claimed a more positive attitude towards the teacher because of her feedback style. For example, Levi claimed “It just makes me like her more.” In alignment with this perspective, research on culturally responsive classroom management identifies a specific teaching style, warm demanding, that conveys high expectations to students. The “warm demander,” an assertive teacher who communicates care and respect to

his/her students and maintains high expectations, is regarded as a core component of culturally responsive classroom management (Bondy, Ross, Hambacher, & Acosta, 2012; Ford & Sassi, 2012; Ware, 2006); however, there is some evidence that student responses to warm-demanding teaching styles vary (Garza, 2009; Howard, 2001). It may be the case that some students in Whitaker's classroom found her style of criticism to be just the kind of discomfort that is needed to push them toward growth and learning, while others experienced heightened risk.

5.7.2 Balancing risk and safety during critical conversations

Undoubtedly, students across classrooms suggested teachers contributed to their perceptions of risk. The ability to evenly distribute power amongst students has been cited as an important pedagogical move impacting risk and safety when facilitating critical conversations, such as race talk, in the classroom (Williams et al., 2016). It is also the case that teachers who engage in power sharing recognize the weight of their own power and their ability to influence students' perceptions of themselves and their peers, as well as students' behaviors (Dlamini, 2002; Milner, 2007b). In the following excerpts, participants from Mrs. Ross' class discussed how their teachers' personal biases contributed to their perceptions of instructional interactions as risky.

Bruce: When we learned about, like, *The Color Purple* and everything and race and all that, I feel like it was teaching us the class, but everybody too—a little too much of a personal opinion, getting involved, 'cause that's—they were like both women [fading voice].

Heather: I could feel the bias in that class.

Interviewer: [Cross talk]. Okay, so you felt that your teachers were biased in what they were saying?

Bruce: Mm-hmm.

Heather: Then Ms. James was biased about gentrification.

Bruce: We don't even talk about that one [gentrification].

Contrary to students' beliefs that teachers should not make their personal opinions explicit in their teaching, Mrs. Ross and Ms. James openly shared their views about controversial topics such as sexism and gentrification. Bruce's statement, "I feel like it was teaching us the class, but everybody too—a little too much of a personal opinion, getting involved," suggests he believed teaching should not be influenced by teachers' identities or personal beliefs. This perspective aligns with the academic protocol previously defined, which places objectivity at the center of teaching and learning. However, we know that critical conversations are highly emotive and deeply personal. As facilitators of these conversations, teachers likely experience tensions similar to those of their students (Sue, 2015). In the following example, Jerome explains how awareness of his teachers' personal views affected his participation in discussion.

Jerome: Yeah, they [Mrs. Ross and Ms. James] have a bold personal opinion.

Interviewer: Your teachers have very strong views, and so they'll make you feel like—

Jerome: Mm-hmm. It's not a bad thing, but knowin' [laughter] too much is gonna make me—yeah.

Heather: I feel like you shouldn't put your personal opinions into your teaching. It should be [cross talk].

While students like Jerome, did not think it was necessarily wrong for Mrs. Ross and Ms. James to share their opinions, he did note that knowing too much about his teachers' opinions influenced what he was and was not willing to speak about in class. Presumably, this is because

the teacher (as implied by previous discussions about focusing on teacher opinions over other students') has the power to determine students' grades and future success. One might be motivated to avoid interactions that would showcase a difference of opinion from the teacher and approach interactions that would be looked upon favorably by her. In the following example, I will explore how the alternative teacher behavior, not taking an explicit stance on issues, influenced students' perceptions of risk during critical discourse.

Students in Ms. Whitaker's class described how teachers playing "*both sides*" contributed to diminishing risk, as well as, increased risk by giving "bold" students a platform.

Mya: They bring up other points and try to get us to think about other details about the subject.

Karen: If you have different opinions, she'll—they play both sides, so it's not just one-sided.

Chris: They find the reasonable point in the crazy argument that this person brought up. They may not believe it, but they might say something for the right point that they brought up, they might find a reason why it could be a valid argument. Although they may not believe it, they'll still bring it up.

Mya: Mm-hmm, so that everyone's opinion is out there, yeah.

Karen: Valid.

The code, *both sides*, emerged from analysis of these excerpts and is defined as presenting multiple perspectives on an issue. Contrary to the previous discussion on teachers bringing too much of their personal opinions into their teaching, here students described teacher behavior that did not make explicit the teacher's own personal views. However, playing both sides does not necessarily mean students are not aware of teachers' personal views on controversial topics. For

example, Chris' comment, "...they [teachers] might find a reason why it could be a valid argument. Although they may not believe it, they'll still bring it up," suggests students understand discussions as intellectual exercises in which the teacher has a specific role to play that may or may not reflect her personal beliefs. I followed up with specific questions regarding students' feelings about the neutral approach.

Interviewer: What do you all feel about that approach? Do you like that they do it that way? How else would you—

Mya: Yeah, 'cause then no one's left out, and everyone's opinion is looked at as valid.

Karen: 'Cause they only—if they only played it from one side, the person that didn't get their side talked about—they would feel like, oh, that was dumb, I shouldn't have said it.

Jamila: I like the way that they do it so I understand where they're coming from, 'cause maybe the student that's telling me something—I'm not understanding it 'cause the teacher would be more educated than a student, and when the teacher's talkin' about, "Okay, I understand why they probably think that." They probably just didn't know how to word it.

Andrea: Teachers explain it better. When someone says something and it comes out the wrong way, then you gotta go on looking at them like they're crazy, and they're, "I need it that way, so you gotta take it like that."

Karen: Even if you say in a different tone that you didn't mean to say it, they'll explain what they actually meant by it.

Overall, the students seemed to believe that when teachers presented multiple viewpoints on an issue and remained neutral it was beneficial for the following:

(a) helping them to understand others' perspectives; e.g., "I like the way that they do it so I understand where they're coming from...."

(b) validating students such that all would feel included and valued despite their stance on an issue; e.g., "If they only played it from one side, the person that didn't get their side talked about—they would feel like, oh, that was dumb, I shouldn't have said it."

Nonetheless, one student described playing both sides as producing a caveat in which bold students felt further validated in their "wrong" opinions.

Chris: I think the only problem with that sort of method is if it is one of those person who is usually bold and usually says something out there, it gives them an extreme confidence boost and makes them just scream out their point is right. They won't bring up the points that Ms. Whitaker and Ms. Boyd bring up. They'll just keep saying their point is right.

Karen: They'll just dance around them—dance around the other argument. They'll just [say], "Well, no. I'm still right," but you're not.

Recall our earlier discussion about the negative influence of "bold" students, students who openly disagreed with popular opinion (e.g., rape being a heinous crime), on students' perceptions of risk in Whitaker's class. Students reported avoiding speaking up because of fear of attack or ridicule by bold students. Here, Chris described how this seemingly positive teacher behavior, playing both sides, inadvertently provided a platform for counter-productive student behaviors.

These findings may seem quite perplexing. They raise several important questions about the delicate line between risk and safety. Some might ask: Should teachers like Mrs. Ross and Ms.

James be authentic in their interactions with students and express their outrage with social issues? Has such authenticity become counterproductive? If so, when does it become counterproductive? It may be the opinion of some that it is beneficial for teachers to remain neutral on all subject matter so as not to interfere with students' individual learning and development. Does a neutral approach run the risk of sending the wrong messages to students? The data presented here cannot fully answer these questions. However, the data do highlight the need for future studies to disentangle the nuisances of teacher practice on risk and safety during critical conversations on social justice and equity. Efforts towards this end are already being made through the work of critical scholars such as Woodson and Duncan (2018, p. 109) who describe silence as "a retreat from the work of race talk that perpetuates the aggressions people of color face." In the chapter, they describe honesty and vulnerability from teachers as essential components of productive critical conversations and call for teachers to cultivate practices of psychologically safe classrooms in which mistakes and misunderstanding are treated as learning opportunities. The following examples help to provide some insight into how teachers can cultivate psychologically safe spaces in which students feel supported to engage risk.

5.7.3 Creating psychological safety for engaging critical conversations

Two major themes emerged across focus groups in Featherstone and Ross' classrooms regarding teacher behaviors that made critical conversations less risky: (a) students' trust in teachers' knowledge and abilities to facilitate race talk; and (b) appreciation for teachers who prepared them ahead of time when controversial or sensitive subjects were planned as the focal topic in class. These features were identified in the transcripts with the code, *preparation*. The following excerpt

is an example of students in Featherstone's class describing what made race talk easier in that class compared to others.

Interviewer: So, what do you think is different about Mr. Featherstone and Mr. Johnson's class, where that [students arguing] doesn't happen as much?

Antoine: They explained it.

Brock: Yeah.

Antoine: They explained it better compared to other teachers like –

Brock: You could say, "Oh, yeah."

Antoine: They have a lot of knowledge how to explain it to us.

Heather: And it's more like, the open air. Like, he knows like, this is what we're gonna talk about, so he makes it so that nobody gets offended about it.

In the above excerpt, Brock, Heather, and Antoine expressed a certain level of trust in their teachers' abilities to facilitate a dialogue on race that would contribute to their understanding and learning. Antoine specifically pointed to trust in Featherstone and Johnson possessing the requisite knowledge to engage students in critical discourse, "They have a lot of knowledge how to explain it to us." Heather raised points about the "open air" that their teachers were able to establish. In the next excerpt, the students draw more comparisons to other classroom environments in which race talk proved to be unproductive.

Brock: And then, he [the teacher] tells us the day before what we're gonna do the day coming –

Antoine: And that week, too, yeah.

Brock: Yeah, and the week, too, of what we're doing next week.

Interviewer: Hm-hmm. So, you're kind of prepared for the topics that are gonna –

Brock: He kind of prepares for it. I mean, most other classes don't tell you. You just get there, and you just like –

Heather: Well, that happened.

Brock: Well, that just happened, you know?

In the last three lines of the excerpt above, Brock and Heather provided examples from other classrooms of unproductive race talk, such as students generalizing to an entire racial group and being dismissive of evidence. For example, Brock stated “And then they [other students responding to a comment] go off and bring it to the class and just say, ‘All your race is about that and all that.’ That happens. Like, a lot.” Heather also provided the following example of how students in other classes had responded to her comments, “So, people would identify me as like, a White female, so if I would say something controversial about like, the Civil Rights Movement, they're gonna think, ‘Oh, she's White. Doesn't matter.’” The students in FG 2 also depicted their classroom as a comfortable space for engaging in critical conversations relative to their experiences in other classrooms.

Hakeem: He said we're going to feel discomfort, like that's one of the, what was it [crosstalk] rules? Yeah, it was one of the rules. I couldn't get the word, [laughter] the rules. So, you just expected that.

Interviewer: So, you were already ready, expecting to be uncomfortable?

Bryson: [Crosstalk] He let us know what was going to happen before we went into [inaudible]. So, we knew it was going to happen.

Interviewer: Okay, what's different about Mr. Featherstone or Mr. Johnsons' class than other classes where you do feel uncomfortable?

Lisa: I don't know, just the way he teaches, like he cares about how we feel

and all that. And I like that. Like most teachers don't.

Bryson: They just do something and expect you to take it [crosstalk], and want you to say nothing about it.

Lisa: Or even like with the whole hand raising thing like he makes sure that he calls on you.

Hakeem, Bryson, and Lisa also expressed appreciation for the preparation Mr. Featherstone and Mr. Johnson gave them for engaging in race talk. They referenced rules for discussion that helped them know what to expect from a dialogue on sensitive subjects. During my field observations, I recorded the following rules titled “Four Agreements” displayed on a large post-it chart in Featherstone’s classroom: (1) Stay engaged; (2) Speak your truth; (3) Experience Discomfort; (4) Expect and Accept Non-Closure⁹. There was also a classroom contract developed by the students along with Featherstone and Johnson that all members of the classroom signed (Williams, 2017d). These agreed-upon expectations seemed to play an important role for helping students grapple with the discomfort of engaging in race talk and supporting their willingness to be open to listening to their peers.

In sum, adolescents reported feeling that race talk in Featherstone’s class was less risky than other classrooms, because he and Mr. Johnson: (a) informed them of the topics of the day/week ahead of time so it wasn’t a surprise; (b) appeared to have sufficient knowledge and skills to facilitate race talk (i.e., they presented as true experts in the field); and (c) told students the kinds of emotions they might expect to feel (e.g., discomfort). Similar themes around teacher care and respect are evident across the focal classrooms. Establishing trust and mutual respect has

⁹ I later learned that the teachers had participated in a Courageous Conversations™ training for engaging in interracial dialogue. The four agreements are a component of the Courageous Conversations™ model.

been cited in the broader psychological safety literature as antecedents to risk taking (Carmeli, Brueller, & Dutton, 2009; Carmeli & Gittell, 2009;). Mrs. Ross' students specifically named their classroom a "safe environment" or a judgement-free zone characterized by trust. For example, Heather described her experience in Ross' classroom as generally positive, "I feel like we can just be ourselves in there. I feel like it's just a really safe kinda place." There is some evidence that this safe environment provided the context for engaging risks. The following exchange occurred during a discussion about sharing personal journals about their home and family life aloud in whole group discussions,

Interviewer: What do you think made it comfortable or okay for you to share that story?

Bruce: The reaction.

Steve: Well, she told you, "Don't judge somebody for what they're trying to say, 'cause it's their personal journal," so it's—she's basically trying to say it's crazy that they even got the balls to come up and share something so personal about them. Don't sit there and try to laugh about some of their daily problems that they have to deal with.

Bruce: I was [inaudible] the reaction—when people read it, they get—I feel like they gave the class—I know I did, but I think the whole class gave the positive vibe towards it, to basically tell them, "It's okay," and everything, so they felt more comfortable about that.

Heather: Felt like a safe environment, a judgment-free zone where we can all talk and see how we all relate to each other on a different level.

Francesca: Yeah. I feel like—I don't know. When I read, I felt like I just wanted to get it out there, "Hey, this is what happens," 'cause it's just—I felt like I was just, "Hey. I just wanna let this go." I know these people won't judge me

‘cause I’ve known them for a while, so it’s just—I felt comfortable with them at that point, and I felt like everybody in that room felt like they could just trust each other to listen, trust each other to understand, and—it felt like a really safe place, in my opinion.

In this excerpt, Steve described how Mrs. Ross and Ms. James established norms for participation in the activity:

she basically trying to say it’s crazy that they even got the balls to come up and share something so personal about them. Don’t sit there and try to laugh about some of their daily problems that they have to deal with.

He described the teachers as giving credit and respect to students who were willing to share and requested other students to show their peers that same respect. Francesca expressed comfort in knowing that there was genuine respect within the classroom when she said, “I know these people won’t judge me.... I felt like everybody in that room felt like they could just trust each other to listen, trust each other to understand....” The evidence suggests their perceptions of psychological safety supported their willingness to be vulnerable with their classmates.

6.0 DISCUSSION

Preparing youth for democratic participation and civic leadership by equipping them with the necessary critical thinking skills is one of many goals for educators in the 21st century classroom. This approach towards pedagogy and curriculum requires new lenses for thinking about how to engage youth in grappling with critical conversations about social justice and equity. The purpose of this study was to explore the evaluative frameworks adolescents employ when deciding if, when, and how to engage in the classroom with specific efforts toward building theory on the role of risk in motivational processes. The findings contribute a novel perspective for understanding how classroom contexts influence adolescent well-being by reframing the conversation about risk to highlight how adolescents' experiences of risk are socially constructed and negotiated. Taken with the literature on socio-psychological factors of motivation, the analysis discussed here offers a unique perspective for exploring adolescent motivation in the classroom.

Several methodological decisions contributed to the possibility of these implications. First, the purposeful selection of classrooms with an explicit focus on issues of social justice and equity provided a rich set of risky instructional interactions to discuss in student interviews. Second, the combination of ethnographic and focus group methods allowed the interpretation of the data to center on the phenomenological experiences of youth and their own agency in shaping their classroom experiences. As such, this study also has implications for informing efforts toward understanding mechanisms of resistance and engagement in the classroom and designing motivational interventions.

6.1 GENERAL IMPLICATIONS

The research questions driving this study emerged from a lack of clarity in the motivation literature on how features of moment-to-moment instructional interactions influence adolescents' decisions regarding if, when, and how to engage. Specifically, I critiqued motivation theory from an expectancy-value perspective that prioritizes distal outcomes and achievement-specific goals (e.g., grades, task completion, etc.). Because expectancy-value theories have been widely applied within STEM domains, studied regarding objective tasks, and examined as predictors of long-term outcomes (e.g., career choice and end-of-course grades), there is still much to be learned about how students' beliefs influence motivation and engagement in nuanced person-context interactions. To explore my contentions and research questions, I employed various qualitative methods in one urban high school.

Focus groups interviews with adolescents in Featherstone's 11th grade U. S. Power Struggles class, Ross's 11th grade American Literature class, and Whitaker's 10th grade Global Conflicts ELA class helped elucidate the complexity of adolescents' moment-to-moment decision making as students' experiences in these classrooms were grounded in critical conversations. The findings suggest adolescents' decisions regarding if, when, and how to engage are highly complex and require simultaneous attention to many factors including: (a) students' competing goals, particularly their self-system, social, and academic goals; (b) the social context and the quality of interpersonal relationships within that context; and (c) the identity-salience of course content and features of learning tasks (e.g., controversial subject matter and/or tasks with public aspects of performance). Students' descriptions of "bold" students also suggest individual personalities likely influence these processes. The following sections highlight the specific implications of the data

for expanding views of cost motivation to include multiple content goals and mechanisms of approach and avoidance.

6.1.1 Implication 1: Expanding the definition of cost motivation

Although the focal classrooms for this study were purposefully selected because of their explicit focus on issues of social justice and equity, when prompted to describe a time they felt uncomfortable in class, several students in the ELA classrooms described interactions that were not exclusive to the context of critical conversations. Students, such as Jamila and Mya in Ms. Whitaker's class, described interactions that closely aligned with current conceptualizations of cost, such as being assigned heavy workloads, having competing responsibilities at home that left little time for homework, and competing responsibilities with extracurricular activities. This evidence supports Hulleman and Barron's Expectancy-Value-Cost model which asserts that cost value is a distinct multidimensional factor, separate from expectancies and values, that involves a cost/benefit analysis of the perceived time, investment, and energy needed to be successful at a task.

Differences in 11th graders' (Featherstone and Ross' students) and 10th graders' (Whitaker's students) survey reports indicated greater perceptions of overall cost and emotional cost by Whitaker's students. As the 10th graders explicitly expressed task effort cost and loss of valued alternatives cost in the focus groups, as well as greater fear of embarrassment and ridicule during whole class discussion, considerations for measurement are discussed here. It may be the case that current cost measures do not pick up on cost perceptions related to non-achievement goals that can also have negative impacts on motivation such as social goals and self-protection goals. Greater emotional cost could be explained by emotional distress related to task effort and

loss of valued alternatives cost or anxiety related to the instructional interactions described in the focus groups. More proximal measures, repeated over time, such as surveys used within an intensive longitudinal designs (ILDs), are needed to empirically test these hypotheses. Such methods might also be useful for understanding how daily experiences of cost/threat lead to more stable expectancy-value-cost orientations. Suggestions for item revision and future research are discussed in the future work section.

In earlier chapters, I argued that the EVC model was limited in its ability to predict student behavior and outcomes, because it described a static evaluative process that ignored the highly consequential moment-to-moment decisions about what to say, do, and think that students make during instructional interactions. I also argued that adolescence, as a developmental period, exacerbates the inherent risk of classroom learning, because the adolescent brain is hypersensitive to social experiences that are consequential to acceptance and belonging. As does any task, taking on challenging academic work involves a cost-benefit analysis of goal systems; however, in learning contexts where tasks are evaluated on the correctness of student responses and/or adherence to a rubric, academic goals are likely the most salient. The evidence presented here demonstrated that relations amongst self-system, academic, and social goals shift in important ways when publicly speaking about sensitive subjects becomes the task at hand. There was evidence to support these contentions.

The standard operating procedure in U. S. public schools, known as the “academic protocol,” pushes forth ideals of objectivity and non-emotion (Sue, 2015). Students’ discussions around fear of offending, getting too personal, arguing, and a general discomfort during critical conversations about racism, sexism, and other issues of social justice demonstrate the ways in which such classroom dialogue exacerbate the existing risks associated with learning (e.g.,

integrating new information into existing schemas or sharing one's viewpoints publicly). Because critical conversations involve controversial issues without objectively right and wrong answers, students are tasked with regulating multiple goal systems simultaneously. Antoine's discussion of feeling "some type of way" when his class discussed the treatment of Black people during the Civil Rights era illustrated the salience of non-academic goals during race talk. Indeed, this study provided evidence that critical conversations constitute unique learning contexts for adolescents. Thus, traditional achievement motivation frameworks that prioritize academic outcomes and learning behaviors on tasks in which one could objectively succeed or fail are limited in their utility for explaining students' motivation in the context of race talk and discussions on issues of social justice.

Indeed, the salience of self-system and social goals in the cost/benefit analysis of deciding if, when, and how to engage was only present in adolescents' descriptions of instructional interactions that occurred in the context of critical conversations. For example, Francesca's repeated references to worrying about offending others, Antoine's descriptions of not wanting to get "too personal" and asking the "wrong questions," and Ms. Whitaker's students' apprehension toward speaking up about more controversial topics for fear of ridicule by peers. Evidence such as this led me to revise the original definition of risk that guided the study from feelings of discomfort/distress as a result of the possibility of psychological harm (e.g., embarrassment, ridicule, de-valuation, or being perceived as incompetent), to *feelings of discomfort/distress as a result of the possibility of psychological harm (e.g., embarrassment, ridicule, de-valuation, being perceived as incompetent, and non-belonging/social isolation) due to a conflict between self-system, social, and/or academic goals*.

The revised definition of risk highlights an explicit focus on multiple content goals, because the study revealed the source of distress often came from competing tensions between wanting to get good grades and being a good student by participating and preserving positive classroom-based relationships and self-views. The explicit focus on multiple content goals also suggests achievement goals are not always the only nor the most relevant goals for adolescents in achievement settings. Thus, I also suggest a broadened view of cost value as *a cost/benefit analysis of the time, effort, energy, and safety needed to successfully complete a task* is needed to fully account for the nuances of psychological experiences and social interaction that inform adolescents' evaluative processes during learning tasks, especially tasks that focus on issues of social justice and equity.

I propose a model that considers motivation and engagement a dynamic function of adolescents' co-regulation of self-system, academic and social goals and the affordance and constraints of the environment within that moment (see Figure 3). Other scholars have called for similar approaches to adolescent motivation that account for competing goals such as achievement, social goals, and leisure goals (Boekarts, de Koning, & Vedder, 2006; Hofer & Fries, 2016; Wentzel, 2000). The evidence presented here overwhelmingly suggests adolescents attend to multiple non-academic factors when deciding if, when, and how to engage. The extent to which these evaluations are conscious versus unconscious within the moment is still yet to be fully empirically tested. However, the stories of students like Jamila, Francesca, Antoine, Steve, and Bruce suggest adolescents' motivated behavior within moment-to-moment instructional interactions are strategic and context-dependent. Theories providing a multiple goal approach that attends to different content goals and more proximal outcomes can help to elucidate how

adolescents regulate simultaneously operating goal systems and cope with acute stress to promote learning.

6.1.2 Implication 2: Understanding the role of contextual factors as part of the evaluative process

If we consider adolescents' perceptions of risk to be derived from threats to goals rather than the fear of loss of something valuable (see Le Fevre's (2013) definition of risk on page 20), then understanding how the features of the context in which instructional interactions are embedded contribute to threat is critical for advancing theory. Students' descriptions of a safe classroom environment, caring teachers, and non-judgmental peers suggested adolescents are more likely to engage risk when positive social-relational factors are present. Indeed, the students explicitly described these factors as distinguishing characteristics between the classrooms in which they felt comfortable approaching risky instructional interactions and those in which they avoided risk. Research from social psychology on challenge and threat helps to explain how students' perceptions of the affordances and constraints of the classroom environment can influence their willingness to engage risk.

Blascovich and Mendes (2000) distinguished threat and challenge as separate person \times situation evoked motivational states involving affective, cognitive, and physiological processes. Challenge and threat are distinguished by the availability of resources to meet situational demands. Challenge occurs when an individual perceives the resources available to her are sufficient or exceed what is needed to meet the demands. Threat occurs when an individual perceives that the resources available to her are insufficient to meet the demands of the task. These motivational states are dynamic and goal-relevant, which means that states of challenge or threat can change as

resources become available or are depleted and cannot occur unless the situation is deemed as goal-relevant. In the proposed model, I distinguish between pathways to threat and non-threat. I specifically chose the language of non-threat rather than challenge to avoid surplus meaning in the field of education. Here, the terms are used interchangeably.

In his later work, Blascovich (2008) added specificity to his model. He suggested that to understand approach and avoidance motivation, the relations amongst individual's goals and the synergistic interaction of resources and demands must be considered. Stated alternatively, whether an interaction is construed as a challenge (i.e., motivation to approach) or threat (i.e., motivation to avoid) is dependent on: (a) the relevance of the potential outcomes of the interaction for an individual's goals; (b) the situational demands of the interaction; and (c) individual's perceptions of the resources available to meet the demands. In the context of social interaction, specifically, situational demands are evaluated based on perceptions of danger, uncertainty, and required effort (Blascovich, Mendes, Hunter, & Lickel, 2000), and resources refer to the knowledge and abilities relevant to situational performance, individual's dispositional characteristics, and perceived external support.

This framework can help us to better understand how teachers and peers influence adolescents' perceptions of risk if we consider relationships as resources. That is, it may be the case that adolescents consider socio-relational factors as resources that either hinder or facilitate risk-taking. Wallace (2016) provided support for this hypothesis in her description of the social-relational context for motivation. The framework delineates three tiers of social-relational motivational resources: (a) safety-referring to feelings that the classroom environment is safe and there is no need to be vigilant; (b) support-the feeling that one is respected and has opportunities for growth and development; and (c) self-transcendence-the feeling that one can act autonomously

and that what she does in her interactions is meaningful. Consider the excerpt from FG 4 in Whitaker's 10th grade class in which the students described speaking up during whole-class discussion as not worth it because "bold" students often turned differences of opinion into arguments and personal attacks. In this excerpt, the interviewees described an unsafe environment. The lack of safety as described in Wallace's framework would be demotivating and could also be considered a lack of resources within the challenge/threat framework. That is, without the social-relational resources of safety, the demands of the task (speaking up during whole group discussion) are greater than resources. This would lead to an evaluation of the situation as threatening and would lead to avoiding risk-taking.

Another example of how the social-relational context for motivation can help us better understand the relation between resources and demands in the context of risky instructional interactions is Bruce's explanation of having "nothing to lose" and engaging risk in Ross' classroom. Recall that Bruce described the act of sharing his thoughts and opinions publicly as helpful for preparing him for the future. Taken with other data that suggested a safe and supportive environment in Ross' classroom, Bruce's perceptions could be considered an example of self-transcendence in the Wallace framework. With the perceptions of safety, support, and self-transcendence as resources, Bruce would be motivated to engage risk as his perceived resources would be greater than the demands of the situation. Combining Wallace's (2016) social-relational context for motivation framework with Blascovich's (2008) threat framework provides a fruitful pathway for examining the role of social contextual factors in the evaluative process of if, when, and how to engage, though much further research is needed.

6.2 LIMITATIONS

Despite the implications of this study for advancing motivation and educational theory, there are several limitations to consider. First, each class was observed for six to eight days of instruction. This time length provided only a small snapshot of the kinds of instruction students were exposed to and the ways in which issues of equity and social justice were explored. In future work, longer observation periods that incorporate researcher-practitioner co-designed lessons may provide a richer dataset by allowing for observation of the same types of lesson formats (e.g., whole group and small-group) and coverage of content (e.g., race, violence, current events) across classrooms. Second, the lag between observations and focus group interviews varied across classrooms. Without evidence of the events that occurred in each class between the last day of observation and the focus group interview, there is no way to determine the extent to which those events influenced students' interview responses. Nonetheless, attempts were made through initial study design to minimize this threat to validity by tightly coupling segments of the interview with observed interactions.

Third, consent rates and focus group participation varied across classrooms. There is the possibility that more engaged students and students who were most comfortable discussing critical conversations are over-represented in the analysis. Additionally, theoretically-driven decisions regarding focus group composition were unable to be utilized because the student survey was administered during the focus group rather than prior to the interview. In future work, I would use contrast cases to highlight differences between groups. Specifically, I would design focus groups such that students with similar motivation, engagement, and racial identity profiles would be in the same group. In this way, focus group analysis could be contrasted to highlight differences across groups of students with high and low motivation and engagement, as well as with differing

racial identities. Last, there was only one class of underclassmen represented in the sample. Thus, it is difficult to make strong claims about developmental differences in perceptions of risk, although the senior member check did provide evidence to support some of the claims around future orientation and changes in the importance of social goals across the high school years.

6.3 DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE WORK

In my previous work, I have defined psychologically safe spaces for learning as environments in which students feel supported to engage intellectual and social risks. I am intentional in the inclusion of risk in this definition to counter simplistic notions of safety as comfort. As evidenced in the focal classrooms of this study, the activities that are necessary for learning and growth are not always comfortable, and as such, students should have opportunities to practice coping with discomfort. It is also important to note that perceptions of psychological safety are dynamic and shift in response to environmental cues. For example, the same student who feels safe enough to share her personal experience with racism at one moment may feel unsafe in the next. This nuance suggests the role of the teacher as the primary facilitator of dialogue is even more critical in the context of race talk and other critical conversations.

Overall, the findings suggest four key points: (a) individual students' perceptions of risk are important for determining how students interact within the context of critical conversations; (b) how perceptions of risk influence engagement in learning is, in part, dependent on the quality of classroom-based relationships; (c) the role of classroom-based relationships in adolescents' approach and avoidance of risk is highly nuanced in that it can both support and hinder risk-taking; and (d) grades matter-that is, the dominant perspective on schooling that centers high achievement

as the core goal operates across learning contexts. There is still much research needed to test the hypothesis proposed related to the implications of this study. Empirically testing the social-relational context for motivation as a resource is necessary to advance the framework as a motivational theory. Mixed methods in which rich qualitative data is combined with valid and reliable survey items will be critical towards these efforts. Most notably, quantifying risk as it relates to threats to self-system, social, and academic goals is an important next step for understanding how risk operates in the classroom. I conclude with suggested items for future inquiry.

6.4 SUGGESTED ITEMS

For capturing safety beliefs-one's identities, values, and beliefs are respected in the learning community:

1. I feel respected in this class.
2. I can be my true self in this class.
3. People respect me in this class.
4. I can openly disagree in this class without being ostracized.
5. People in this class are judgmental.
6. I feel judged for my opinions and beliefs in this class.
7. People in this class are open-minded.
8. I feel comfortable sharing my views and opinions in this class.

For ILD measures to capture risk-taking related to a specific task or learning activity:

Today in class I felt....

1. Speaking up/sharing was not worth my time [followed by a drop-down menu]
 - a. Because it doesn't affect my grade
 - b. Because I didn't want to offend anyone or hurt their feelings
 - c. Because I didn't want to start an argument with people who might disagree
 - d. Because I didn't want people to judge or criticize me
 - e. Other [write – in option]
2. Comfortable participating
 - a. Because I must participate to get a good grade
 - b. Because the conversation was interesting
 - c. Because I don't care what people think of me
 - d. Because I wanted to learn more
 - e. Because I thought what I had to say was important
 - f. Other [write- in option]

APPENDIX A

TABLES AND FIGURES

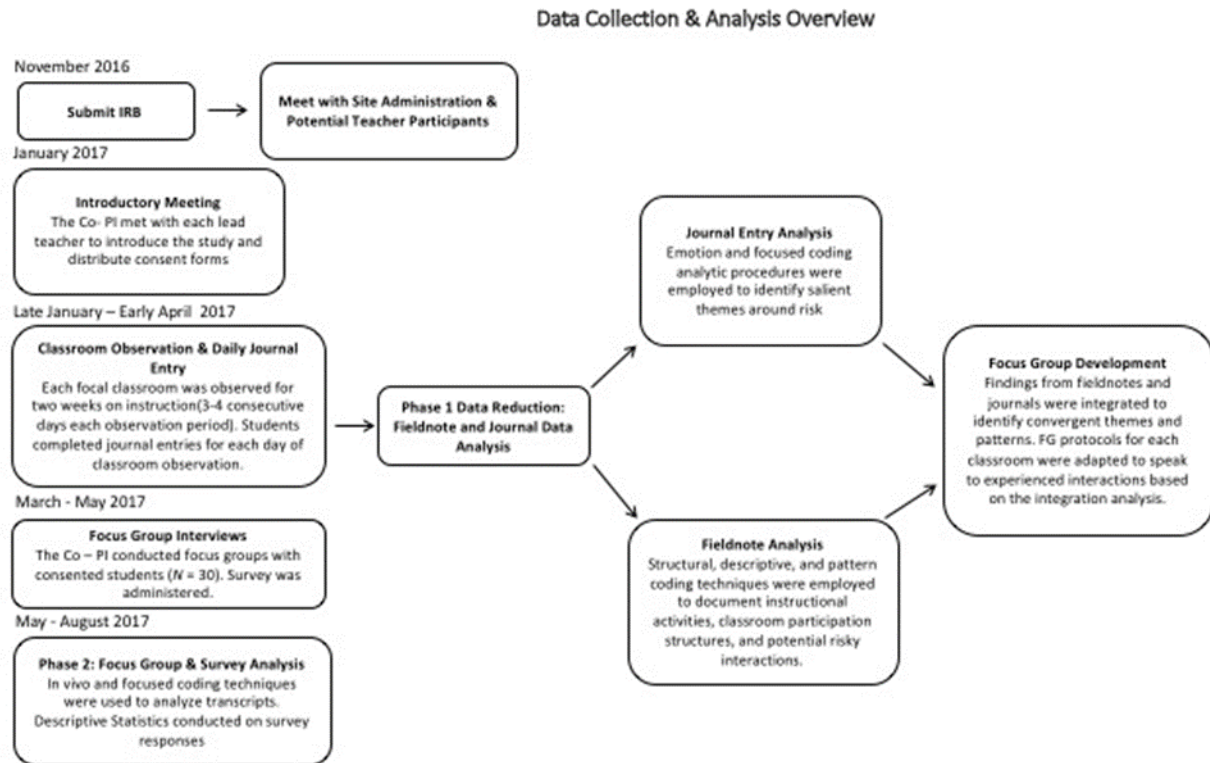


Figure 1. Data Collection & Analysis Overview Flowchart

Table 1. Teacher Demographics

Teacher Name	Role	Gender	Race/Ethnicity	Grade	Subject
Featherstone	Lead	M	White	11	US History
Johnson	Intern	M	Black	11	US History
Ross	Lead	F	White	11	ELA
James	Intern	F	Black	11	ELA
Whitaker	Lead	F	White	10	ELA
Boyd	Intern	F	Black	10	ELA

Table 2. Student Demographics at Glen Lake High School AY 2016-2017

Grade (<i>N</i> = 260 students)	Males (<i>N</i> = 119)	Females (<i>N</i> = 141)	Black (<i>N</i> = 201)	Hispanic/ Latino (<i>N</i> = 8)	White (<i>N</i> = 37)	Asian/ Islander (<i>N</i> = 2)	Pacific	Multi- racial (<i>N</i> = 22)	Special Education (<i>N</i> = 104)
9th (<i>N</i> = 86)	44	42	63	5	12	2		4	38
10th (<i>N</i> = 72)	34	38	52	1	15	0		4	32
11th (<i>N</i> = 57)	23	34	48	1	6	0		2	17
12th (<i>N</i> = 45)	18	27	38	1	4	0		12	17
Total (%)	45.8	54.2	77.3	3.1	14.2	.01		8.5	40

Table 3. Focus Group Participants

Focus Group	Date	Teacher	Grade	N	Student Name	Race	Gender
1	3/22/17	Featherstone	11	3	Heather	White	Female
					Brock	White	Male
					Antoine	Black	Male
2	3/23/17	Featherstone	11	5	Hakeem	Black	Male
					Lisa	White	Female
					Francesca	White	Female
					Jillian	Black	Female
					Bryson	Black	Male
					Francesca	White	Female
3	5/2/17	Ross	11	6	Bruce	Black	Male
					Jerome	Black	Male
					Heather	Black	Female
					John	American Indian	Male
					Steve	Black	Male
					Karen	Black/White	Female
4	5/10/17	Whitaker	10	6	Kyle	White	Male
					Jamila	Black	Female
					Chris	White	Male
					Andrea	Black	Female
					Mya	White	Female
					Levi	Black	Male
5	5/11/17	Whitaker	10	5	Tiffany	White	Female
					Cori	Black/White	Male
					Lauren	White	Female
					Bianca	Black	Female

Table 4. Lesson Observation Details

Classroom	Observation Date	Learning Target	Activity
Featherstone	1/30/17	I can dissect the film "Glory" for cultural stereotypes based on race and sacrifice for change.	<p><u>Warm-up:</u> "Take a look at this poster. What incentives were offered to Colored men who fought for the Union?" The class discussed student responses to the warm-up as a group before going in to the main activity for the day.</p> <p><u>Main activity:</u> watched the film, <i>Glory</i>, periodically stopping to discuss answers to questions on their film journal.</p>
Featherstone	1/31/17	I can dissect the film "Glory" for cultural stereotypes based on race and sacrifice for change.	<p><u>Warm-up:</u> "Why do you think the U. S. army would not commission Black officers?" The class discussed student responses to the warm-up as a group before going in to the main activity for the day.</p> <p><u>Main activity:</u> watched the film, <i>Glory</i>, periodically stopping to discuss answers to questions on their film journal.</p>
Featherstone	2/1/17	I can dissect the film "Glory" for the impact of African Americans on the Civil War.	<p><u>Warm-up:</u> "What scene in the movie have you liked the most and why?" Before the main activity, the teachers take the time to discuss a clean water crisis in the city.</p> <p><u>Main activity:</u> watched the film, <i>Glory</i>, periodically stopping to discuss answers to questions on their film journal.</p>
Featherstone	2/2/17	I can determine what parts of the South are being reconstructed after the Civil War.	<p><u>Warm-up:</u> "the Union has reformed the United States. Where would you start rebuilding the country?"</p> <p>Student poll: (a) socially, (b) economically, (c) politically, and (d) military occupation.</p> <p><u>Main activity:</u> watching the end of the film</p>

Table 4 continued

Featherstone	2/21/17	I will examine the impact of Mamie Till Bradley's decision on the Civil Rights Movement.	<p><u>Warm-up:</u> What do these two images have in common? How do you think they are connected? [An Image of the Derelict Bryant Grocery Store, and the Image of Young Mamie and Baby Emmett are projected].</p> <p><u>Main Activity:</u> watched a documentary and Emmett and Mamie Till; students completed and shared tweet sheets describing their reactions</p>
Featherstone	2/22/17	I will identify the influence of Diane Nash and her importance to the Freedom Riders.	<p><u>Warm-up:</u> Jot some thoughts, Prepare to share..... What do you see? [see artifacts in Nvivo].</p> <p><u>Main Activity:</u> viewing of Emmett Till's body; watch documentary on Freedom Riders</p>
Featherstone	2/23/17	I will retell Alice Walker's impression on the Civil Rights Movement.	<p><u>Warm-up:</u> Analyze this quote..... "No person is your friend who demands your silence, or denies your right to grow."</p> <p><u>Main Activity:</u> finish the Freedom Riders Documentary</p>
Featherstone	2/24/17	I will retell Alice Walker's impression on the Civil Rights Movement.	<p><u>Warm-up:</u> Return to your groups from Yesterday to Begin Yesterday's lesson....</p> <p><u>Main Activity:</u> read Alice Walker's poem, "Don't Despair," and discuss as a group three things to teach the class based on their part of the poem, two questions they have, and the most interesting thing they learned.</p>
Ross	3/14/17	N/A	<p><u>Warm-up:</u> N/A;</p> <p><u>Main Activity:</u> watching the film, <i>The Color Purple</i> -and discussing key events as a class; film and book analysis compare and contrast sheet</p>

Table 4 continued

Ross	3/16/17	I can analyze one of the major themes or symbols in the Color Purple and use textual evidence to support my claims.	<u>Warm-up:</u> "What do you think was the most important theme in <i>The Color Purple</i> ? <u>Main Activity:</u> introduce and review the essay requirements and grading rubric; work in small groups to begin planning for writing
Ross	3/20/17	I can analyze one of the major themes or symbols in the Color Purple and use textual evidence to support my claims.	<u>Warm-up:</u> "Women are like teabags, you never know their strength until you put them in hot water." <u>Main activity:</u> work in small groups on their essays
Ross	3/23/17	I can analyze one of the major themes or symbols in the Color Purple and use textual evidence to support my claims.	<u>Warm-up:</u> N/A <u>Main activity:</u> work in small groups on their essays
Ross	3/24/17	I can analyze one of the major themes or symbols in the Color Purple and use textual evidence to support my claims.	<u>Warm-up:</u> N/A <u>Main activity:</u> work in small groups on their essays
Ross	3/27/17	I can analyze one of the major themes or symbols in The Color Purple and use textual evidence to support my claims to create a final essay.	<u>Warm-up:</u> "What do you want the readers to take away from your essay? How are you showing this in your essay? <u>Main activity:</u> work independently or with others on their essays
Whitaker	2/6/17	After reviewing "theme", I can begin to develop my inferencing skills by taking explicit notes on inferences.	<u>Warm-up:</u> "Did you enjoy the Socratic Seminar or would you prefer to write a response to the questions instead? <u>Main activity:</u> book exam on Tasting the Sky; floabulary video on making inferences
Whitaker	2/7/17	N/A	<u>Warm-up:</u> What's going on in this picture? (see Nvivo for picture)

Table 4 continued

			<u>Main Activity:</u> working in small groups on literature packets
Whitaker	2/8/17	With my literature circle group, I can closely read a fiction text to infer the story's theme.	<u>Warm-up:</u> WOTD is Anguish, Go back to your text on page 156, based on how it is used in the text, create a working definition. <u>Main Activity:</u> working in lit circle groups on the packet
Whitaker	4/10/17	I can identify the stages of genocide in my respective region by analyzing a 3rd person account of the event.	<u>Warm-up:</u> Choose from a list of different definitions for matricide (See Nvivo for full example). Write a list of things you already know about genocide and a question you still have. <u>Main Activity:</u> test prep, take an old Keystone exam and annotate it.
Whitaker	4/11/17	I can identify the stages of genocide in my respective region by analyzing a 3rd person account of the event.	<u>Warm-up:</u> Do you believe an artist (musical or visual) should always be able to exercise their freedom of speech, no matter the message? <u>Main activity:</u> analyzing the work of Simon Bikindi-a Rwandan musician who is currently on trial for inciting Rwandan genocide
Whitaker	4/12/17	I can prepare for the Keystone by analyzing poetry using Keystone questions and testing strategies.	<u>Warm-up:</u> What is most difficult to you about reading poetry? <u>Main Activity:</u> self-scoring Keystone prep responses
Whitaker	4/13/17	I can prepare for the Keystone by analyzing poetry using Keystone questions and testing strategies.	<u>Warm-up:</u> How does the mood of a survivor story change when written in 3rd person vs. 1st person? <u>Main activity:</u> reviewed anonymous students' response to the Rwandan genocide poem; continued Keystone prep by reviewing an old exam and talking through mistakes and flawed thinking

Table 5. Student Journal Responses-Code Frequency (greatest to least)

Rank	Featherstone	Ross	Whitaker
1	Self-reflection 1a. behavioral engagement 1b. takeaways 1c. preference	Activity description 1a. whole class 1b. small group 1c. naming*	Activity description 1a. whole class 1b. small group 1c. naming
2	Activity description 2a. whole class 2b. small group	Self-reflection 1a. behavioral engagement	Group class behaviors 2a. behavioral engagement 2b. disaffection 2c. strategies 2d. prosocial engagement
3	Group class behaviors 3a. behavioral engagement 3b. prosocial engagement 3c. disaffection	Group class behaviors 3a. behavioral engagement 3b. prosocial engagement	Self-reflection 3a. behavioral engagement 3b. takeaways 3c. preference
4	Interest	Teacher involvement 4a. encouragement*	Teacher involvement
5	Uneven participation	Other	Interest



Figure 2. Scenario 1 Featherstone's Class – Topic of the Day (e.g., activity description)

Table 6. Student Survey Responses-Classroom Means

Class	N	Expectancy	Value	Cost	Em. Cost	Engagement	Self-Esteem
Featherstone	9	3.79	3.48	1.61	1.73	3.68	3.80
Ross	5	4.07	3.33	1.65	1.80	3.60	3.68
Whitaker	11	4.09	4.58	2.53	3.28	3.60	3.86

Table 7. Examples of Student Explanations of Approach and Avoidance of Risky Instructional Interactions

Classroom	Focus Group	Student Participant	<i>Self- System</i>	Goal System	
				<i>Social</i>	<i>Academic</i>
Featherstone	2	Francesca		“So talking about those kind of situations and the things that are happening, everyone’s had a different experience. So it’s a little more of a tougher subject to approach without hurting someone else.”	
Featherstone	1	Antoine		“You try to change the conversation if it gets too personal.” “It’s just varying opinion is the worst because if you say something and if the other person disagrees, then the whole class is just gonna pick the sides, and it’s just gonna be—it’ll start off as a discussion, then two seconds later, it turns into an argument. You gotta pick and choose your battles and which one you wanna argue.”	
Whitaker	4	Andrea			
Featherstone	1	Brock	“‘Cause most kids feel embarrassed whenever they ask the wrong question. Like, they just don’t participate at all.”		

Table 7 continued

Whitaker	4	Chris	<p>“maybe the risk isn’t worth it because as soon as you say something, this bold person is gonna come right after you and is gonna tear down your argument.”</p> <p>“That’s the risk of it. I don’t know if I should say this ‘cause I don’t want people over there judging me about my opinion of things, so Ima just keep it to myself.”</p>	
Ross	3	Steve		
Ross	3	Steve		<p>“you’re ‘posed to be focused on what the teacher thinks. All right, the teacher may giggle and laugh, but at the same time, she just might give you a A.”</p>
Whitaker	4	Jamila		<p>“I feel comfortable with it</p>

Table 7 continued

‘cause I’m-
mostly
because it’s
the grade,
so that
mean I’m
gonna do it
‘cause
there’s a
grade.”

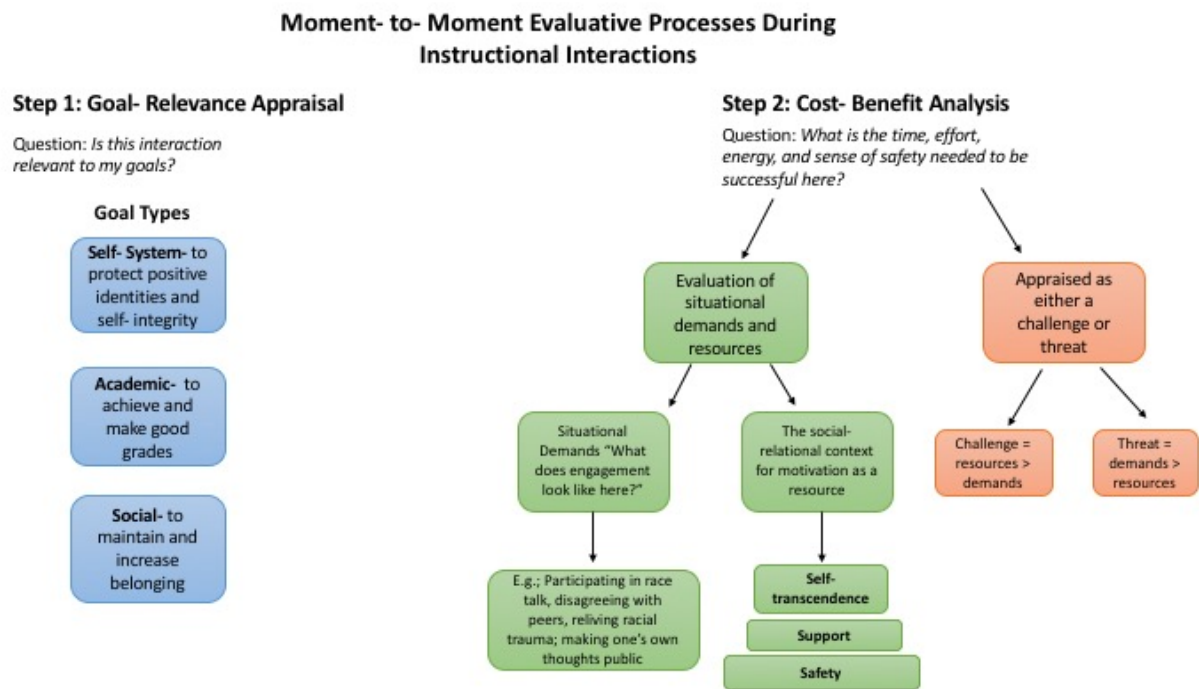


Figure 3. Proposed Conceptual Model

APPENDIX B

DAILY JOURNAL PROTOCOL

General Instructions: This notebook is for you to record your personal thoughts. Whatever you write in here will be kept anonymous, unless you choose to share it with others. Please feel free to share your honest thoughts and opinions.

Daily Prompt: Below, please describe the interaction (conversation and/or encounter with your teacher and/or your teacher and other students) that stood out most to you in class today. What happened? Why does it stand out to you? Who was involved? Please be as descriptive as possible.

Checklist: Please place a check on the line next to the statements that apply to the interaction you described above.

This interaction happened.....

During an activity? _____

During a lecture? _____
At the beginning of class? _____
In the middle of class? _____
At the end of class? _____

These people were involved in the interaction.....

Just my teacher? _____
Other kids in my class? _____
My teacher and other kids in my class? _____ how many other kids? _____

APPENDIX C

CODEBOOK

Code Structure	Code	Definition	Coded Sources
Level 1_parent code Level 2_child code Level 3_sub code	interaction	conversation and/or encounter between the teacher and one or more students, or amongst students	Fieldnotes
	<i>individual work</i>	students are working individually on an activity	
	<i>small group work</i>	students are working in groups of 2-6 on an activity	
	whole class discussion	everyone in the class is expected to be engaged in the same activity	
	<i>calling out</i>	students call out freely	
	<i>truth sticks</i>	using popside sticks with student names to choose people for participation in the	Fieldnotes
	<i>raising hands</i>	students raise their hands to signal wanting to enter the discussion; teacher calls on students with hands raised	
	disagreement	when students and/or a student and teacher openly disagree and engage each other's opposing views	
	activity description	when students simply describe the activity/and or assignment and/or what they	
	<i>whole class</i>	reference to a whole class discussion/activity	
	<i>small group</i>	reference to a small group discussion/activity	Journals
	<i>naming</i>	saying what stood out to me was _____	
	group/class behaviors	student references to group or whole class level engagement in a discussion or	
	<i>behavioral engagement</i>	students reflect on class or group level behavioral engagement (e.g., paying attention, participating, completing work)	
	<i>disaffection</i>	student references to negative aspects of behavioral, emotional, and cognitive	
	<i>prosocial engagement</i>	student references to prosocial behaviors indicative of respect for one another (i.e., sharing, listening, etc.)	
	<i>strategies</i>	students acknowledge differences in strategies for completing assignment and/or describe the strategy their group used to complete the assignment	
	desires	students reflect on how they would change the class or what they wish would	
	interest	topics, interactions, scenes etc. that students specifically identify as interesting or report positive emotional engagement; content/course related	
	other students comments	students reflecting on the input or contributions of other students	
	personal connection	when students make personal connections between classroom activities and their lived experiences	
	raw reaction	students' initial emotional responses to images, audio, and or text	
	<i>disturbed</i>	students express discomfort or uneasiness	Journals and Fieldnotes
	<i>sympathy</i>	students feel bad for oppressed persons	
	<i>upset</i>	students express sadness or anger	
	<i>annoyed</i>	students display behaviors indicative of irritation (e.g., eye rolling, teeth sucking,	
	self-reflection	students reflect on their own behaviors and engagement during class or students reflect on what they have learned or gained from the class	Journals
	<i>behavioral engagement</i>	students reflect on their own behavioral engagement (e.g., paying attention, participating, completing work)	
	<i>takeaway</i>	students reflect on what they have learned or gained from the class	
	<i>preferences</i>	students reflect on their personal preferences regarding academic tasks	Journals
	uneven participation	student references to and/or observations of differential power balances in group dynamics or discussion	
	confusion	students express confusion; e.g., not understanding what is going on in activity or the purpose of an activity	Journals and Fieldnotes
	teacher involvement	students reflect on teacher actions (or lack thereof) in discussions	Journals and Fieldnotes
	<i>discipline</i>	interactions in which the teacher disciplined students	
	<i>influence</i>	reflection on how the teacher influences or could have influenced a specific	
	<i>encouragement</i>	when teachers provide affective or instructional support	Journals
	out there	when students reference to being open, putting themselves out there	
	making assumptions	when the teacher makes assumptions about students' prior knowledge and/or feelings regarding a subject matter	Fieldnotes
	refusing to participate	when a student/s refuse to participate in a discussion and/or activity	Fieldnotes
	reluctance	when students are hesitant to share their ideas/thoughts	Fieldnotes
	ridicule	teacher and/or students are dismissive or poke fun at someone's contributions to the discussion	
	even participation	students reflect on participation being distributed evenly across students	Journals
	concerns	when students reflect on their fears or worries	Journals
	distractions	when students reflect on aspects of the classroom culture and/or people that hinder them from getting their work done	Journals

Figure 4. Phase One Codes

Code Structure	Code	Definition
Level 1_parent code	no risk	interactions that are perceived as not risky
		teacher matters more than other students; explanation for why students shouldn't worry about other students' opinions and shouldn't feel that judgement is risk
		idea that even though you might be afraid of someone else's reaction to your thoughts, there is nothing to lose if there is a negative reaction; explanation for why instructional interactions aren't risky
Level 2_child code	<i>focus on the teacher</i>	
Level 3_code	<i>nothing to lose</i>	
	avoidance	not engaging in race talk to keep from hurting another student's feelings or any kind of discomfort
		students acknowledge diversity in experiences of racism and prejudice; this acknowledgement serves as a barrier to engagement in race talk as students do not want to invalidate other's experiences
	<i>different experiences</i>	not wanting to get called out for saying the "wrong" thing; avoiding personal attack
	<i>fear of disagreement</i>	
	<i>fear of embarrassment</i>	
	<i>fear of judgement</i>	
	<i>fear of offending</i>	
	<i>time and place</i>	
	<i>too personal</i>	
	<i>wrong questions</i>	
	intellectualizing race talk	understanding race talk as an objective and academic matter rather than a personal, subjective matter
	contending with different opinions	student discussions about dealing with differing opinions about the subject matter
	achievement goals	students references to grades as a motivator for classroom behavior
	preparation	teachers knowledge and preparedness to facilitate race talk, as well as how teachers prepare students for race talk
	positive TSR	students perceive respect and care from the teacher
	teacher encouraging disagreement	perceptions that the teacher wants students to disagree and challenge one another
	pos. change in participation	interactions that would have a positive effect on participation
	neg. change in participation	interactions that would have a negative effect on participation
	dismissive teacher	when students feel ignored by the teacher
	no effect	interactions that would no affect engagement
	"the recent"	students express desire to connect subject matter to what is going on in the world today
	individual preferences	when engagement is dependent on individual student
	seeing themselves	students reported more positive engagement when they could relate to the subject matter
	grounding talk in personal experiences	using one's own lived or vicarious experiences of racism as basis for an argument
	negative emotions	references to being upset- sad, mad, scared, or worried
	personal bias	putting personal opinions in to teaching
	awareness	students references to gaining awareness of societal issues and differences in each other's lives through risky instructional interactions
	the future	references to the future- their future selves, how classroom tasks will matter in the future
	<i>"Where's the future"</i>	students' desires for academics to connect to their future selves
	positive emotions	references to experiencing positive emotions in the classroom- happy, glad, proud
	safe environment	a classroom that is non-judgemental, where students trust each other and their teachers, and students feel they can be themselves
	risk	reference to the stated definition of the study
	both sides	presenting multiple sides to an issues
	choice	when teachers provide choice in the classroom
	teacher emotions	references to teachers' positive and negative emotions

Figure 5. Phase Two Codes

APPENDIX D

STUDENT SURVEY

Adolescent Motivation and Engagement

Start of Block: Block 7

Hello! This survey is about you and your experiences in this class. No one outside of the research team will see your answers. Please feel free to share your honest opinions and feelings. Thank you for your time!

Your Full Name (Last Name, First Name)

Let's start. Tell me how well the following statements describe you.

End of Block: Block 7

Start of Block: Default Question Block

I know I can learn the material in this class.

- ☐ I can learn the material extremely well. (1)
 - ☐ I can learn the material very well. (2)
 - ☐ I can learn the material moderately well. (3)
 - ☐ I can learn the material slightly well. (4)
 - ☐ I cannot learn the material. (5)
-

I believe that I can be successful in this class.

- ☐ I can be extremely successful (1)
 - ☐ I can be very successful (2)
 - ☐ I can be moderately successful (3)
 - ☐ I can be slightly successful (4)
 - ☐ I cannot be successful (5)
-

I am confident that I can understand the material in this class.

- ☐ I can understand the material extremely well (1)
 - ☐ I can understand the material very well (2)
 - ☐ I can understand the material moderately well (3)
 - ☐ I can understand the material slightly well (4)
 - ☐ I cannot understand the material (5)
-

I think this class requires too much time.

- ☐ This class requires way too much time (1)
 - ☐ This class requires a little too much time (2)
 - ☐ This class requires too much time (3)
 - ☐ This class requires slightly too much time (4)
 - ☐ This class requires just the right amount of time (5)
-

Because of other things that I do, I don't have time to put into this class.

- ☐ I have way too many other things to do to put time into this class (1)
 - ☐ I have a little too many other things to do to put time into this class (2)
 - ☐ I have too many other things to do to put time into this class (3)
 - ☐ I have slightly too many other things to do to put time into this class (4)
 - ☐ I have just the right amount of other things to do. (5)
-

I'm unable to put in the time needed to do well in this class.

- ☐ I am never able to put in the time needed to do well (1)
 - ☐ Most of the time, I am unable to put in the time needed to do well (2)
 - ☐ About half of the time, I am unable to put in the time needed to do well (3)
 - ☐ Sometime I am unable to put in the time needed to do well (4)
 - ☐ I am able to put in the time needed to do well (5)
-

I have to give up too much to do well in this class.

- ☐ I have to give up way too much to do well (1)
- ☐ I have to give up a little too much (2)
- ☐ I have to give up too much to do well (3)
- ☐ I have to give up slightly too much to do well (4)
- ☐ I do not have to give up much to do well (5)

End of Block: Default Question Block

Start of Block: Block 1

Next, rate the following statements based on your feelings toward this class.

This class is emotionally draining.

- ☐ Extremely Draining (1)
 - ☐ Very Draining (2)
 - ☐ Moderately Draining (3)
 - ☐ Slightly Draining (4)
 - ☐ Not draining at all (5)
-

This class is exhausting.

- ☐ Extremely Exhausting (1)
 - ☐ Very Exhausting (2)
 - ☐ Moderately exhausting (3)
 - ☐ Slightly exhausting (4)
 - ☐ Not exhausting at all (5)
-

This class is frustrating.

- ☐ Extremely Frustrating (1)
 - ☐ Very Frustrating (2)
 - ☐ Moderately Frustrating (3)
 - ☐ Slightly Frustrating (4)
 - ☐ Not frustrating at all (5)
-

This class is stressful.

- ☐ Extremely Stressful (1)
 - ☐ Very Stressful (2)
 - ☐ Moderately Stressful (3)
 - ☐ Slightly Stressful (4)
 - ☐ Not at all stressful (5)
-

This class makes me feel anxious.

- ☐ Extremely Anxious (1)
 - ☐ Very Anxious (2)
 - ☐ Moderately Anxious (3)
 - ☐ Slightly Anxious (4)
 - ☐ Not at all anxious (5)
-

I think this class is important

- ☐ Extremely Important (1)
 - ☐ Very important (2)
 - ☐ Moderately important (3)
 - ☐ Slightly important (4)
 - ☐ Not at all important (5)
-

I think this class is useful.

- ☐ Extremely useful (1)
 - ☐ Very useful (2)
 - ☐ Moderately useful (3)
 - ☐ Slightly useful (4)
 - ☐ Not at all useful (5)
-

I think this class is valuable.

- ☐ Extremely Valuable (1)
- ☐ Very Valuable (2)
- ☐ Moderately Valuable (3)
- ☐ Slightly Valuable (4)
- ☐ Not at all valuable (5)

End of Block: Block 1

Start of Block: Block 2

For the next few questions, rate how often the following statements apply to you.

I feel good when I am in this class.

- ☐ I always feel good when I am in this class. (1)
 - ☐ Most of the time I feel good when I am in this class. (2)
 - ☐ Half of the time I feel good when I am in this class. (3)
 - ☐ Sometimes I feel good when I am in this class. (4)
 - ☐ I never feel good when I am in this class. (5)
-

I look forward to coming to this class.

- ☐ I always look forward to coming to this class. (1)
 - ☐ Most of the time I look forward to coming to this class. (2)
 - ☐ Half of the time I look forward to coming to this class. (3)
 - ☐ Sometimes I look forward to coming to this class. (4)
 - ☐ I never look forward to coming to this class. (5)
-

I put effort into learning in this class.

- ☐ I always put effort into learning in this class. (1)
 - ☐ Most of the time I put in effort into learning in this class. (2)
 - ☐ Half the time I put in effort into learning in this class. (3)
 - ☐ Sometimes I put effort into learning in this class. (4)
 - ☐ I never put effort into learning in this class. (5)
-

I participate as much as I should in this class.

- ☐ I always participate as much as I should in this class. (1)
- ☐ Most of the time I participate as much as I should in this class. (2)
- ☐ Half of the time I participate as much as I should in this class. (3)
- ☐ Sometime I participate as much as I should in this class. (4)
- ☐ I never participate as much as I should in this class. (5)

End of Block: Block 2

Start of Block: Block 8

In the next section, rate whether you agree or disagree with the statement.

On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (5)
-

I feel that I have a number of good qualities.

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (5)
-

I am able to do things as well as most other people.

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (5)
-

I feel that I am a person of worth.

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (5)
-

I take a positive attitude toward myself.

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
- ☐ Strongly disagree (5)

End of Block: Block 8

Start of Block: Block 3

For the last section, please answer the following questions and choose the response that best represents your beliefs.

How do you identify racially?

- ☐ Black or African American (1)
- ☐ White (2)
- ☐ Hispanic or Latino (3)
- ☐ Asian/ Pacific Islander (4)
- ☐ American Indian/ Alaskan Native (5)
- ☐ Other (6)

End of Block: Block 3

Start of Block: Block 4

I feel good about my racial group.

- ☐ I feel extremely good about my racial group. (1)
 - ☐ I feel very good about my racial group. (2)
 - ☐ I feel moderately good about my racial group. (3)
 - ☐ I feel slightly good about my racial group. (4)
 - ☐ I do not feel good about my racial group. (5)
-

I am proud to be a member of my racial group.

- ☐ I am extremely proud to be a member of my racial group. (1)
 - ☐ I am very proud to be a member of my racial group. (2)
 - ☐ I am somewhat proud to be a member of my racial group. (3)
 - ☐ I am slightly proud to be a member of my racial group. (4)
 - ☐ I am not proud to be a member of my racial group. (5)
-

I feel that members of my racial group have made valuable contributions to this society.

- ☐ Members of my racial group have made a great deal of valuable contributions to this society. (1)
- ☐ Members of my racial group have made many valuable contributions to this society. (2)
- ☐ Members of my racial group have made some valuable contributions to this society. (3)
- ☐ Members of my racial group have made a few valuable contributions to this society. (4)
- ☐ Members of my racial group have made any valuable contributions to this society. (5)

End of Block: Block 4

Start of Block: Block 5

In general, others respect members of my racial group.

- ☐ Other respect members of my racial group a great deal. (1)
 - ☐ Others somewhat respect members of my racial group. (2)
 - ☐ Others neither respect nor disrespect members of my racial group. (3)
 - ☐ Others respect members of my racial group people a little. (4)
 - ☐ Others do not respect members of my racial group. (5)
-

In general, other groups view members of my racial group in a positive manner.

- ☐ Other groups view members of my racial group in an extremely positive manner. (1)
 - ☐ Other groups view members of my racial group in a somewhat positive manner. (2)
 - ☐ Other groups view members of my racial group as neither positive nor negative. (3)
 - ☐ Other groups view members of my racial group in a somewhat negative manner. (4)
 - ☐ Other groups view members of my racial group in an extremely negative manner. (5)
-

Society views members of my racial group as an asset.

- ☐ I strongly agree (1)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
- ☐ Strongly disagree (5)

End of Block: Block 5

Start of Block: Block 6

Overall, being a member of my racial group has very little to do with how I feel about myself.

- ☐ Being a member of my racial group has a great deal to do with how I feel about myself. (1)
 - ☐ Being a member of my racial group has a lot to do with how I feel about myself. (2)
 - ☐ Being a member of my racial group moderately has to do with how I feel about myself. (3)
 - ☐ Being a member of my racial group has little to do with how I feel about myself. (4)
 - ☐ Being a member of my racial group has nothing to do with how I feel about myself. (5)
-

In general, being a member of my racial group is an important part of my self-image.

- ☐ Being a member of my racial group is extremely important for my self-image. (1)
 - ☐ Being a member of my racial group is very important for my self- image. (2)
 - ☐ Being a member of my racial group is moderately important for my self-image. (3)
 - ☐ Being a member of my racial group is slightly important for my self- image. (4)
 - ☐ Being a member of my racial group is not at all important for my self- image. (5)
-

I have a strong sense of belonging to my racial group.

- ☐ I have an extremely strong sense of belonging to my racial group. (1)
 - ☐ I have a very strong sense of belonging to my racial group. (2)
 - ☐ I have a moderately strong sense of belonging to my racial group. (3)
 - ☐ I have a slightly strong sense of belonging to my racial group. (4)
 - ☐ I do not have a strong sense of belonging to my racial group. (5)
-

Being a member of my racial group is an important reflection of who I am.

- ☐ Being a member of my racial group is an extremely important reflection of who I am. (1)
- ☐ Being a member of my racial group is a very important reflection of who I am. (2)
- ☐ Being a member of my racial group is a moderately important reflection of who I am. (3)
- ☐ Being a member of my racial group is a slightly important reflection of who I am. (4)
- ☐ Being a member of my racial group is not at all an important reflection of who I am. (5)

End of Block: Block 6

APPENDIX E

FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOLS

Focus Group Interview Featherstone

Introduction

Hi everyone. First, I want to start by thanking you all for coming today. For those who may have missed my previous introduction or just forgot, my name is Jasmine Williams and I am working on my PhD in education at the University of Pittsburgh. As you all might recall, I have spent some time observing in your classroom. Today, I am interested in learning more about what your classroom is like from your perspectives. Specifically, I am interested in hearing about your experiences interacting with your teacher. I do not work for your school and I will not share anything that is said here with anyone outside of this group. So I hope that you all feel comfortable being open and honest with me about your experiences. We are going to start with a sorting activity and then I have some questions we will discuss as a group. I will be taking some notes as we talk today but to make sure I get everything, I will be recording our conversation. Is that ok with everyone? Alright. So what questions do you have for me before we begin?

Introductory Data Generating Activity: Classroom Scenario Q- Sort

Let's get started. Each of you have a stack of cards in front of you. This stack contains two sets of 3 cartoons. These cartoons represent hypothetical instructional interactions. Go ahead and take a look. Read the scenarios for each cartoon carefully. I will give you about 5 minutes to look them over. When you are done familiarizing yourself with the cartoons/scenarios, just look up from your seat.

Ok. Now that we are familiar with the cartoons, I am going to ask you to rank them. In the top half of your desk/space tape, rank the cartoons in order from least likely to make you feel uncomfortable to most likely to make you feel uncomfortable. Place the scenario you feel is least likely to make you feel uncomfortable at the farthest left piece spot and the one that is most likely to make you feel uncomfortable at the farthest right spot. **Demonstrate how it should be sequentially ordered for the students.** Below that row, use the second set of pictures to rank the scenarios in order of least likely to change how you participate in class after that type of experience to the most likely to change how you participate in class. When you are done, raise your hand and I will come over to take a picture. You will get a chance to discuss your reactions to the activity in the next part of our discussion.

Scenarios

4. You walk in to class and settle at your desk. After taking your seat, you look up at the board to find the topic of the day is violence during the Civil Rights Movement.

APPENDIX B

5. Your class is having a whole- group discussion on a film. One of your classmates, Ron, gives his interpretation of the underlying theme, or message, from the film. Several other students are talking and it is hard to hear what Ron is saying. No one seems to be paying attention. After Ron, your teacher randomly calls on you to tell the class your thoughts on the message from the film.
6. It is Thursday and your class is reviewing the warm-up. Your teacher asks for volunteers to provide their answers. You raised your hand to volunteer Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, but you were not called on. You raise your hand again today, but your teacher does not call on you.

Semi-Structured Interview

How do adolescents define risk in the classroom?

Let's start with the top row and the cartoon/picture you placed on the far left. Think about the scenario in that cartoon. **REPEAT for second row.**

1. What about that cartoon made you place it there? How is it different from the other cartoons?
2. How would you feel if you were the student in that scenario? What would you do?

I have two definition up here on the board. I am going to remove the paper over it and read it aloud. You can follow along as I read. **The following definition of risk will be displayed *a situation that evokes feelings of discomfort/distress as a result of the possibility of psychological harm (e.g., embarrassment, ridicule, de-valuation, or being perceived as incompetent).* The following definition of identity will be displayed *how we define ourselves; based on our core beliefs, values, and goals, as well as how other people see us. Can include racialized, gendered, and classed identities.***

3. Thinking about the definitions here, what is the first school-related situation that comes to your mind?
4. How do you think that situation might differ from when your class talks about subjects like Civil Rights?

APPENDIX C

How do adolescents' perceptions of risk influence their engagement in learning activities?

5. In those situations, what do you do/what are you thinking? How do you cope?
6. If you could change the situation, how would you change it?

APPENDIX D

How do features of the classroom social context influence adolescents' perceptions of risk?

So thinking about your class,

7. Tell me about a time when you can recall feeling uncomfortable or anxious?

APPENDIX E

- a. What stands out to you about that moment/event?
8. When I visited your class and reviewed your journal reflections, I noticed that on the days you all talked about women's role in the Civil Rights movement (Emmett Till and his mother & Diane Nash), you wrote more about what you learned from class that day or something that inspired than you did when watching Glory. What was different about those units/days in class?

Before, we end our discussion. I want you to look back at the definitions on the board one more time and the cartoons we sorted. How might these definitions relate to the scenarios?

9. Any final thoughts?

That was a great discussion. Thank you again for your time. You all have been so helpful. Here is my card, feel free to contact me if you have any questions, comments, or concerns. I hope you enjoy the goodies in your bag!

Focus Group Interview Ross

Introduction

Hi everyone. First, I want to start by thanking you all for coming today. For those who may have missed my previous introduction or just forgot, my name is Jasmine Williams and I am working on my PhD in education at the University of Pittsburgh. As you all might recall, I have spent some time observing in your classroom. Today, I am interested in learning more about what your classroom is like from your perspectives. Specifically, I am interested in hearing about your experiences interacting with your teacher. I do not work for your school and I will not share anything that is said here with anyone outside of this group. So I hope that you all feel comfortable being open and honest with me about your experiences. We are going to start with a sorting activity and then I have some questions we will discuss as a group. I will be taking some notes as we talk today but to make sure I get everything, I will be recording our conversation. Is that ok with everyone? Alright. So what questions do you have for me before we begin?

Introductory Data Generating Activity: Classroom Scenario Q- Sort

Let's get started. Each of you have a stack of cards in front of you. This stack contains two sets of 3 cartoons. These cartoons represent hypothetical instructional interactions. Go ahead and take a look. Read the scenarios for each cartoon carefully. I will give you about 5 minutes to look them over. When you are done familiarizing yourself with the cartoons/scenarios, just look up from your seat.

Ok. Now that we are familiar with the cartoons, I am going to ask you to rank them. In the top half of your desk/space tape, rank the cartoons in order from least likely to make you feel uncomfortable to most likely to make you feel uncomfortable. Place the scenario you feel is least likely to make you feel uncomfortable at the farthest left piece spot and the one that is most likely to make you feel uncomfortable at the farthest right spot. **Demonstrate how it should be sequentially ordered for the students.** Below that row, use the second set of pictures to rank the scenarios in order of least likely to change how you participate in class after that type of experience to the most likely to change how you participate in class. When you are done, raise your hand and I will come over to take a picture. You will get a chance to discuss your reactions to the activity in the next part of our discussion.

Scenarios

7. You walk in to class and settle at your desk. After taking your seat, you look up at the board to find that today you all will begin working on an essay discussing issues of sexism and racism.

APPENDIX F

8. Your class is having a whole- group discussion on a film. One of your classmates, Ron, gives his interpretation of the underlying theme, or message, from the book you are reading. Several other students are talking and it is hard to hear what Ron is saying. No one seems to be paying attention. After Ron, your teacher randomly calls on you to tell the class your thoughts on the message from the film.
9. It is Thursday and your class has been working on writing an essay all week. You raised your hand to ask for your teacher's help on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. She did not get to you each time, and even after she did come over to you, you still did not feel any better about the assignment.

Semi-Structured Interview

How do adolescents define risk in the classroom?

Let's start with the top row and the cartoon/picture you placed on the far left. Think about the scenario in that cartoon. **REPEAT for second row.**

10. What about that cartoon made you place it there? How is it different from the other cartoons?
11. How would you feel if you were the student in that scenario? What would you do?

I have two definition up here on the board. I am going to remove the paper over it and read it aloud. You can follow along as I read. **The following definition of risk will be displayed a situation that evokes feelings of discomfort/distress as a result of the possibility of psychological harm (e.g., embarrassment, ridicule, de-valuation, or being perceived as incompetent). The following definition of identity will be displayed how we define ourselves; based on our core beliefs, values, and goals, as well as how other people see us. Can include racialized, gendered, and classed identities.**

12. Thinking about the definitions here, what is the first school-related situation that comes to your mind?
13. How do you think that situation might differ from when your class talks about subjects like sexism, racism, or classism?

APPENDIX G

How do adolescents' perceptions of risk influence their engagement in learning activities?

14. In those situations, what do you do/what are you thinking? How do you cope?
15. If you could change the situation, how would you change it?

APPENDIX H

How do features of the classroom social context influence adolescents' perceptions of risk?

So thinking about your class,

16. Tell me about a time when you can recall feeling uncomfortable or anxious?

APPENDIX I

- b. What stands out to you about that moment/event?
17. When I reviewed your journal reflections, I noticed that many of you all talked about your teachers helping you or encouraging you, can you tell me more about how your teachers affect your level of comfort/discomfort?

Before, we end our discussion. I want you to look back at the definitions on the board one more time and the cartoons we sorted. How might these definitions relate to the scenarios?

18. Any final thoughts?

That was a great discussion. Thank you again for your time. You all have been so helpful. Here is my card, feel free to contact me if you have any questions, comments, or concerns. I hope you enjoy the goodies in your bag!

Focus Group Interview Whitaker

Introduction

Hi everyone. First, I want to start by thanking you all for coming today. For those who may have missed my previous introduction or just forgot, my name is Jasmine Williams and I am working on my PhD in education at the University of Pittsburgh. As you all might recall, I have spent some time observing in your classroom. Today, I am interested in learning more about what your classroom is like from your perspectives. Specifically, I am interested in hearing about your experiences interacting with your teacher. I do not work for your school and I will not share anything that is said here with anyone outside of this group. So I hope that you all feel comfortable being open and honest with me about your experiences. We are going to start with a sorting activity and then I have some questions we will discuss as a group. I will be taking some

notes as we talk today but to make sure I get everything, I will be recording our conversation. Is that ok with everyone? Alright. So what questions do you have for me before we begin?

Introductory Data Generating Activity: Classroom Scenario Q- Sort

Let's get started. Each of you have a stack of cards in front of you. This stack contains two sets of 3 cartoons. These cartoons represent hypothetical instructional interactions. Go ahead and take a look. Read the scenarios for each cartoon carefully. I will give you about 5 minutes to look them over. When you are done familiarizing yourself with the cartoons/scenarios, just look up from your seat.

Ok. Now that we are familiar with the cartoons, I am going to ask you to rank them. In the top half of your desk/space tape, rank the cartoons in order from least likely to make you feel uncomfortable to most likely to make you feel uncomfortable. Place the scenario you feel is least likely to make you feel uncomfortable at the farthest left piece spot and the one that is most likely to make you feel uncomfortable at the farthest right spot. **Demonstrate how it should be sequentially ordered for the students.** Below that row, use the second set of pictures to rank the scenarios in order of least likely to change how you participate in class after that type of experience to the most likely to change how you participate in class. When you are done, raise your hand and I will come over to take a picture. You will get a chance to discuss your reactions to the activity in the next part of our discussion.

Scenarios

10. You walk in to class and settle at your desk. After taking your seat, you look up at the board to find that today you all will be discussing war and genocide across the country.

APPENDIX J

11. Your class is having a whole- group discussion on the book you are reading. One of your classmates, Ron, gives his interpretation of the underlying theme, or message, from the book. Your interpretation is different from Ron's. After Ron, your teacher randomly calls on you to tell the class your thoughts on themes in the book.
12. It is Thursday and your class has been working in small groups all week. On Monday, your group is silent the entire time so you ask your teacher for help on a question you do not quite understand. On Tuesday and Wednesday, you try to encourage your group members to share their ideas and talk to one another, but you must rely on the teacher again. She (your teacher) starts telling you to ask your group and not her. By the time Thursday rolls around, you are beginning to feel hopeless that your group will ever truly work with another.

APPENDIX K

Semi-Structured Interview

How do adolescents define risk in the classroom?

Let's start with the top row and the cartoon/picture you placed on the far left. Think about the scenario in that cartoon. **REPEAT for second row.**

19. What about that cartoon made you place it there? How is it different from the other cartoons?
20. How would you feel if you were the student in that scenario? What would you do?

Prompt scenario two: How would your reaction be different if your teacher said there were no right or wrong answers?

I have two definition up here on the board. I am going to remove the paper over it and read it aloud. You can follow along as I read. **The following definition of risk will be displayed a situation that evokes feelings of discomfort/distress as a result of the possibility of psychological harm (e.g., embarrassment, ridicule, de-valuation, or being perceived as incompetent). The following definition of identity will be displayed how we define ourselves; based on our core beliefs, values, and goals, as well as how other people see us. Can include racialized, gendered, and classed identities.**

21. Thinking about the definitions here, what is the first school-related situation that comes to your mind?
22. How do you think that situation might differ from when your class talks about subjects like war, murder, and genocide?

APPENDIX L

How do adolescents' perceptions of risk influence their engagement in learning activities?

23. In those situations, what do you do/what are you thinking? How do you cope?
24. If you could change the situation, how would you change it?

APPENDIX M

How do features of the classroom social context influence adolescents' perceptions of risk?

So thinking about your class,

25. Tell me about a time when you can recall feeling uncomfortable or anxious?

APPENDIX N

- c. What stands out to you about that moment/event?

26. What about group work? How does that influence your risk taking? What makes you want to participate in your group vs. not?

APPENDIX O

27. When I reviewed your journal reflections, I noticed that many of you were more interested in lessons with open-ended responses such as deconstructing the lyrics from the Rwandan song and trying to interpret photos from the news. Can you tell me more about how you feel during those kinds of lessons?

APPENDIX P

Before, we end our discussion. I want you to look back at the definitions on the board one more time and the cartoons we sorted. How might these definitions relate to the scenarios?

28. Any final thoughts?

That was a great discussion. Thank you again for your time. You all have been so helpful. Here is my card, feel free to contact me if you have any questions, comments, or concerns. I hope you enjoy the goodies in your bag!

Focus Group Interview Seniors Member Check

Introduction

Hi everyone. First, I want to start by thanking you all for coming today. For those who may have missed my previous introduction or just forgot, my name is Jasmine Williams and I am working on my PhD in education at the University of Pittsburgh. As you all might recall, I have spent some time observing in your classroom. Today, I am interested in learning more about what your classroom is like from your perspectives. Specifically, I am interested in hearing about your experiences interacting with your teacher. I do not work for your school and I will not share anything that is said here with anyone outside of this group. So I hope that you all feel comfortable being open and honest with me about your experiences. We are going to start with a sorting activity and then I have some questions we will discuss as a group. I will be taking some notes as we talk today but to make sure I get everything, I will be recording our conversation. Is that ok with everyone? Alright. So, what questions do you have for me before we begin?

Have students introduce themselves.

Semi-Structured Interview

How do adolescents define risk in the classroom?

I have two definition up here on the board. I am going to remove the paper over it and read it aloud. You can follow along as I read. **The following definition of risk will be displayed a situation that evokes feelings of discomfort/distress as a result of the possibility of psychological harm (e.g., embarrassment, ridicule, de-valuation, or being perceived as incompetent). The following definition of identity will be displayed how we define ourselves; based on our core beliefs, values, and goals, as well as how other people see us. Can include racialized, gendered, and classed identities.**

29. Thinking about the definitions here, what is the first school-related situation that comes to your mind?

APPENDIX Q

How do adolescents' perceptions of risk influence their engagement in learning activities?

30. In those situations, what do you do/what are you thinking? How do you cope?

31. If you could change the situation, how would you change it?

APPENDIX R

How do features of the classroom social context influence adolescents' perceptions of risk?

So thinking about your class,

32. Tell me about a time when you can recall feeling uncomfortable or anxious?

APPENDIX S

d. What stands out to you about that moment/event?

Before, we end our discussion. I want you to look back at the definitions on the board one more time and the cartoons we sorted. How might these definitions relate to the scenarios?

33. Any final thoughts?

That was a great discussion. Thank you again for your time. You all have been so helpful. Here is my card, feel free to contact me if you have any questions, comments, or concerns. I hope you enjoy the goodies in your bag!

APPENDIX F

CARTOONS AND SCENARIOS

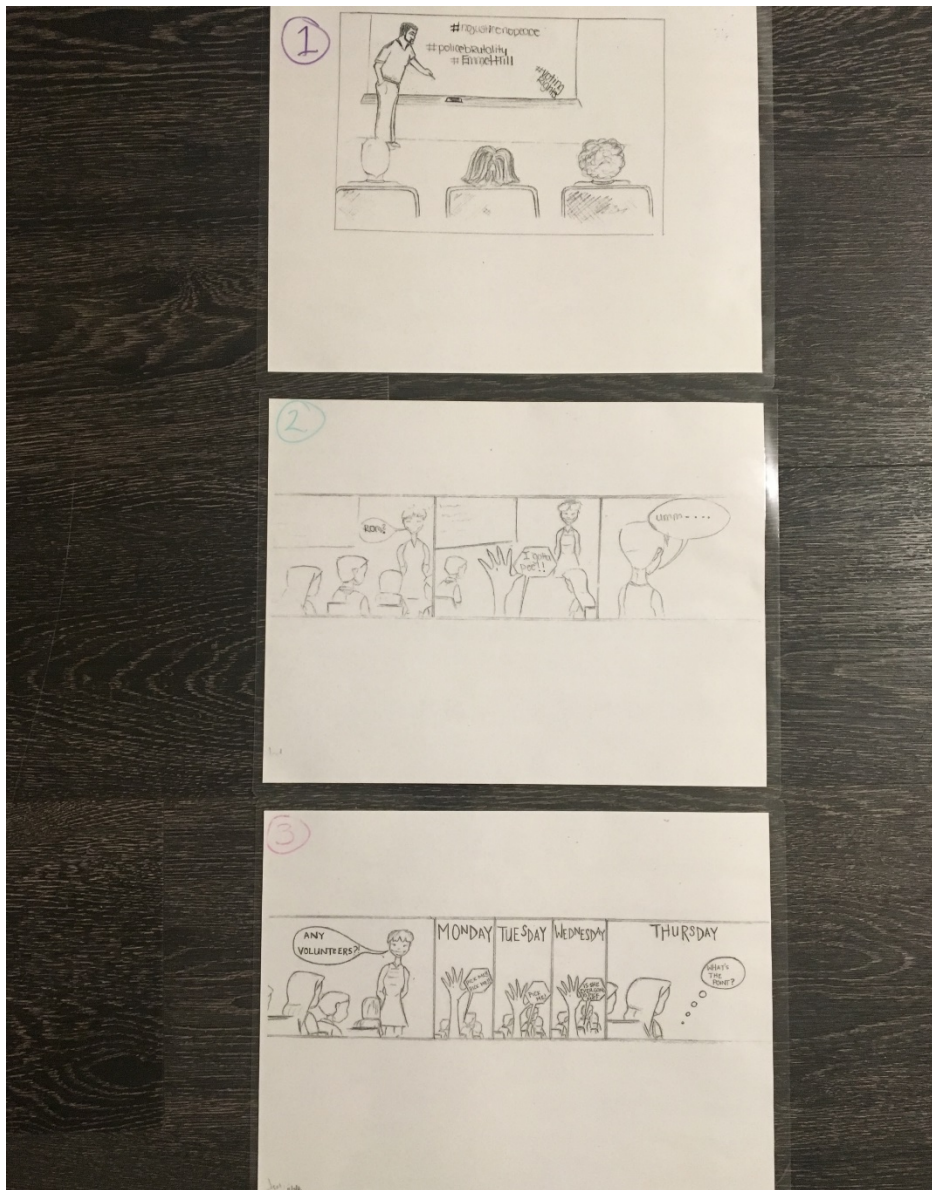


Figure 6. For Featherstone's Focus Groups (FG 1 & 2)

For Featherstone's Focus Groups (FG 1 & 2)

1. You walk in to class and settle at your desk. After taking your seat, you look up at the board to find the topic of the day is violence during the Civil Rights Movement.

2. Your class is having a whole- group discussion on a film. One of your classmates, Ron, gives his interpretation of the underlying theme, or message, from the film. Several other students are talking and it is hard to hear what Ron is saying. No one seems to be paying attention. After Ron, your teacher randomly calls on you to tell the class your thoughts on the message from the film.

3. It is Thursday and your class is reviewing the warm-up. Your teacher asks for volunteers to provide their answers. You raised your hand to volunteer Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, but

you were not called on. You raise your hand again today, but your teacher does not call on you.

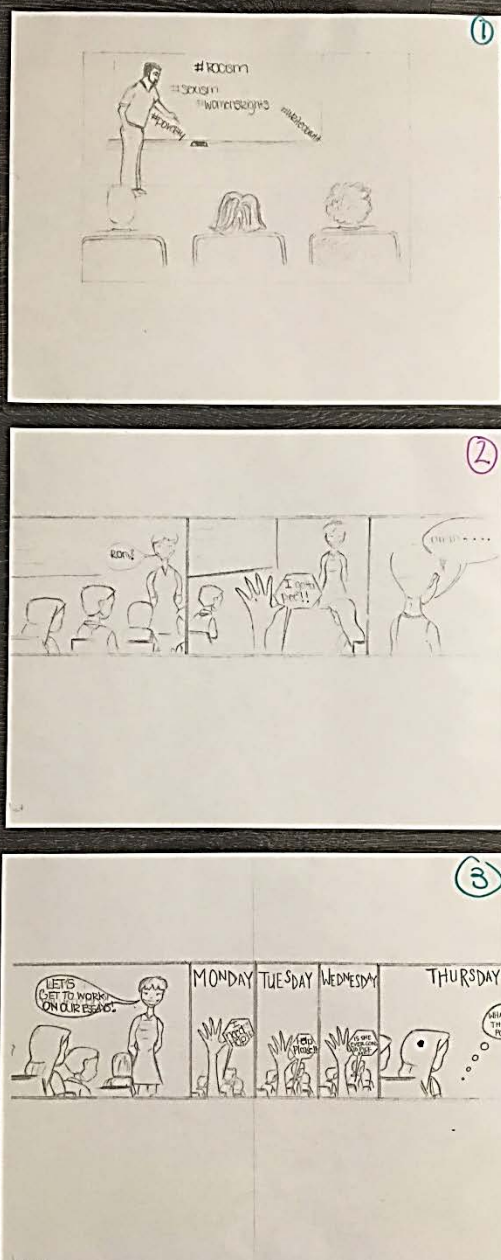


Figure 7. For Ross' Focus Group (FG 3)

For Ross' Focus Group (FG 3)

4. You walk in to class and settle at your desk. After taking your seat, you look up at the board to find that today you all will begin working on an essay discussing issues of sexism and racism.

5. Your class is having a whole- group discussion on a film. One of your classmates, Ron, gives his interpretation of the underlying theme, or message, from the book you are reading. Several other students are talking and it is hard to hear what Ron is saying. No one seems to be paying attention. After Ron, your teacher randomly calls on you to tell the class your thoughts on the message from the film.

6. It is Thursday and your class has been working on writing an essay all week. You raised your hand to ask for your teacher's help on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. She did not get to

you each time, and even after she did come over to you, you still did not feel any better about the assignment.

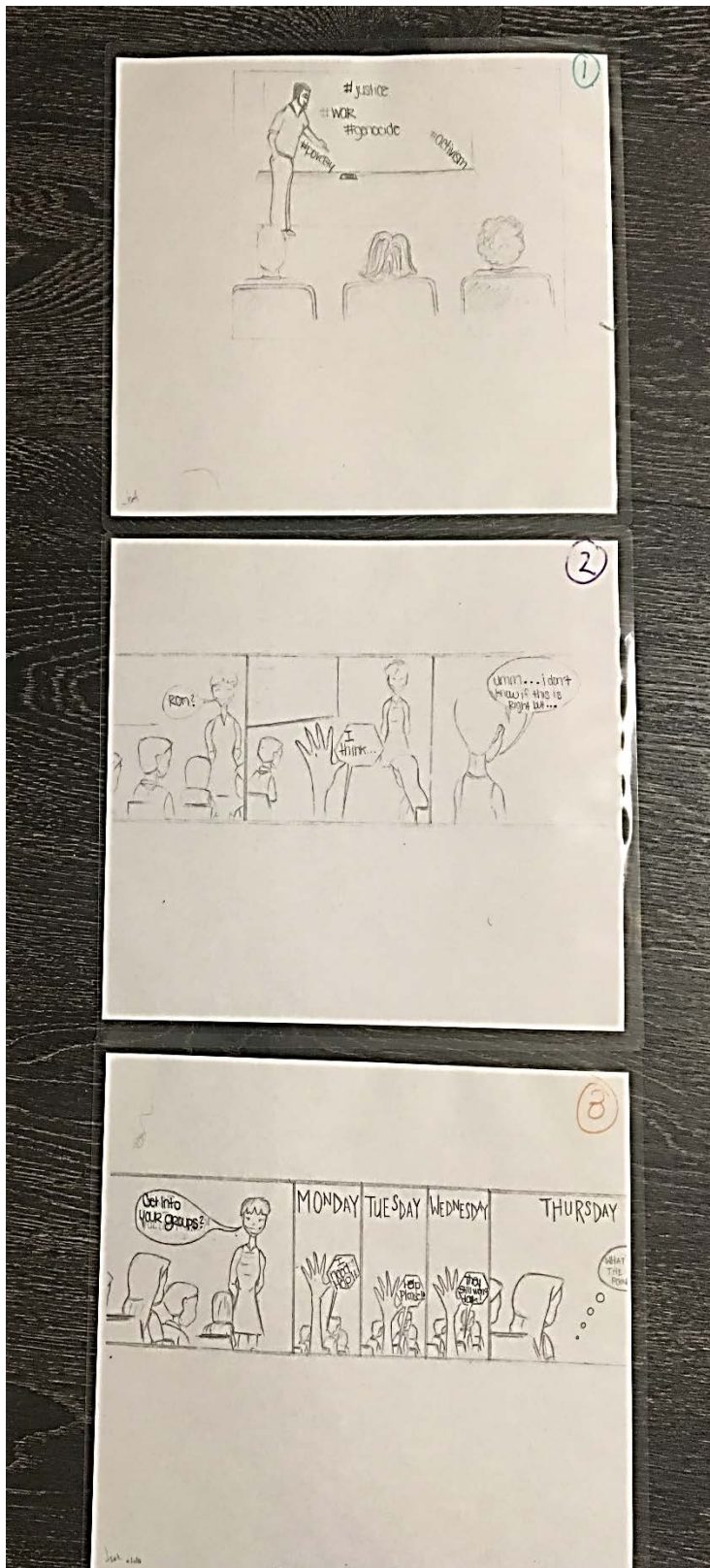


Figure 8. For Whitaker's Focus Groups (FG 4 & 5)

For Whitaker's Focus Groups (FG 4 & 5)

7. You walk in to class and settle at your desk. After taking your seat, you look up at the board to find that today you all will be discussing war and genocide across the country.

8. Your class is having a whole- group discussion on the book you are reading. One of your classmates, Ron, gives his interpretation of the underlying theme, or message, from the book. Your interpretation is different from Ron's. After Ron, your teacher randomly calls on you to tell the class your thoughts on themes in the book.

9. It is Thursday and your class has been working in small groups all week. On Monday, your group is silent the entire time so you ask your teacher for help on a question you do not quite understand. On Tuesday and Wednesday, you try to encourage your group members to share their ideas and talk to one another, but you must rely on the teacher again. She (your teacher) starts telling you to ask your group and not her. By the time Thursday rolls around, you are beginning to feel hopeless that your group will ever truly work with another.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Albrecht, J. R. & Karabenick, S. A. (2018). Relevance for learning and motivation in education. *The Journal of Experimental Education*, 86(1), 1-10.
- Assor, A. (2012). Allowing choice and nurturing an inner compass: Educational practices supporting students' need for autonomy. In S. L. Christenson, A. L., Reschly, & C. Wylie (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Student Engagement* (pp. 421-439). New York: Springer.
- Barron, K. E. & Hulleman, C. S. (2014). Expectancy-Value-Cost model of motivation. In J. S. Eccles & K. Salmelo-Aro (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2nd Edition: Motivational Psychology. Elsevier.
- Battle, A., & Wigfield, A. (2003). College women's value orientations toward family, career, and graduate school. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 62(1), 56-75.
- Berg, B. L. (2009). Focus group interviewing. *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*. 7th ed. (pp. 158-189). New York, NY: Pearson Education Inc., Allyn & Bacon
- Berger, M., & Sarnyai, Z. (2015). "More than skin deep": Stress neurobiology and mental health consequences of racial discrimination. *Stress*, 18(1), 1-10.
- Blascovich, J. (2008). Challenge and threat. In A. J. Elliot (Ed.), *Handbook of Approach and Avoidance* (pp. 431- 446). New York, NY: Taylor and Francis group.
- Blascovich, J. & Mendes, W. B. (2000). Challenge and threat appraisals: The role of affective cues. In J. Forgas (Ed.), *Feeling and thinking: The role of affect in social cognition* (pp. 59 – 82). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Blascovich, J., Mendes, W. B., Hunter, S. B., & Lickel, B. (2000). Stigma, threat, and social interactions. In T. F. Heatherton, R. E. Kleck, M. R. Hebl, & J. G. Hull (Eds.), *The social psychology of stigma*, (pp. 307-333). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Boekaerts, M., de Koning, E., & Vedder, P. (2006). Goal-directed behavior and contextual factors in the classroom: An innovative approach to the study of multiple goals. *Educational Psychologist*, 41(1), 33-51.
- Bondy, E., Ross, D. D., Hambacher, E., & Acosta, M. (2013). Becoming warm demanders: Perspectives and practices of first year teachers. *Urban Education*, 48(3), 420-450.
- Bonilla-Silva, E. (2014). *Racism without racists: Color-blind racism and the persistence of racial inequality in America*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1986). Ecology of the family as a context for human development: Research perspectives. *Developmental psychology*, 22(6), 723.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by design and nature*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P. A. (2006). The bioecological model of human development. In R. M. Lerner (Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology*, (pp.793- 828). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Byrd, C. M., & Chavous, T. (2011). Racial identity, school racial climate, and school intrinsic motivation among African American youth: The importance of person–context congruence. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 21(4), 849-860.
- Cannon, W. B. (1932). *The wisdom of the body*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co.
- Chavous, T. M., Bernat, D. H., SchmeelkCone, K., Caldwell, C. H., KohnWood, L., & Zimmerman, M. A. (2003). Racial identity and academic attainment among African American adolescents. *Child development*, 74(4), 1076-1090.
- Chiang, E. S., Byrd, S. P., & Molin, A. J. (2011). Children’s perceived cost for exercise: Application of an expectancy-value paradigm. *Health Education & Behavior*, 38(2), 143-149.
- Chiseri-Strater, E. (1996). Turning in upon ourselves: Positionality, subjectivity, and reflexivity in case study and ethnographic research. In P. Mortensen & G. E. Kirsch (Eds.) *Ethics and representation in qualitative studies of literacy*, (pp. 115-133). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers in English.
- Conley, A. M. (2012). Patterns of motivation beliefs: Combining achievement goal and expectancy-value perspectives. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 104(1), 32.
- Cooper, K. S. (2012). Safe, affirming, and productive spaces: Classroom engagement among Latina high school students. *Urban Education*, 48(4), 490-528.
doi:10.1177/0042085912457164
- Cross, W. E. (1978). The Thomas and Cross models of psychological nigrescence: A review. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 5(1), 13-31.
- Dean, K. L., & Jolly, J. P. (2012). Student identity, disengagement, and learning. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 11(2), 228-243.
- DeCuir-Gunby, J. T. & Schutz, P. A. (2014). Researching race within educational psychology Contexts. *Educational Psychologist*, 49 (4), 244 – 260,
doi:10.1080/00461520.2014.957828.

- Dlamini, S. N. (2002). From the other side of the desk: Notes on teaching about race when racialised. *Race, Ethnicity, and Education*, 5(1), 55- 66. doi: 10.1080/13613320120117199
- Eccles, J. S. (1987). Gender roles and achievement patterns: An expectancy value perspective. *Masculinity/femininity: Basic perspectives*, 240-280.
- Eccles, J. S., Adler, T.F., Futterman, R. Goff, S.B., Kaczala, C.M., Meece, J.L., & Midgley, C. (1983). Expectancies, values, and academic behaviors. In J. T Spence (Ed.), *Achievement and Achievement Motivation* (pp. 75-146). San Francisco: W. H. Freeman.
- Eccles, J. S., Midgley, C., Wigfield, A., Buchanan, C.M., Reuman, D.R., Flanagan, C., & Iver, D. M. (1993). The Impact of stage-environment fit on young adolescents' experiences in schools and in families. *American Psychologist*, 48(2), 90–101.
- Eccles, J. S. & Roeser, R. W. (2011). Schools as developmental contexts during adolescence. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 21(1), 225–241.
- Elliot, A. J., Murayama, K., & Pekrun, R. (2011). A 3 x 2 achievement goal model. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 103(3), 632- 648. doi: 10.1037/a0023952.
- Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., Shaw, L. L (1995). *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- English, A. R. (2013). The problem of continuity, the need for struggle, the role of tact. In *Discontinuity in Learning: Dewey, Herbert, and Education as Transformation* (pp. 16-54). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Flake, J. K., Barron, K. E., Hulleman, C., McCoach, B. D., & Welsh, M. E. (2015). Measuring cost: The forgotten component of expectancy-value theory. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 41, 232-244.
- Foldy, E. G., Rivard, P., & Buckley, T. R. (2009). Power, safety, and learning in racially diverse groups. *Academy of Management and Learning Education*, 8(1), 25-41.
- Ford, A. C., & Sassi, K. (2014). Authority in cross-racial teaching and learning (re)considering the transferability of warm demander approaches. *Urban Education*, 49(1), 39-74.
- Fuller-Rowell, T. E., Evans, G. W., & Ong, A. D. (2012). Poverty and health: The mediating role of perceived discrimination. *Psychological Science*, volume, issue, page # doi: 0956797612439720.
- Gable, S. L. & Berkman, E. T. (2008). Making connections and avoiding loneliness: Approach and avoidance social motives and goals. In A. J. Elliot (Ed.), *Handbook of Approach and Avoidance* (pp. 203- 216). New York, NY: Taylor and Francis Group.

- Garza, R. (2009). Latino and White high school students' perceptions of caring behaviors: Are we culturally responsive to our students?. *Urban Education*, 44(3), 297-321.
- Glesne, C. (2016). *Becoming Qualitative Researchers: An Introduction*. (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Graham, N. (2013). *Rich Homie Quan Talks 'Type of Way' Success & Career Start*. Retrieved from <https://www.billboard.com/articles/columns/the-juice/5687167/rich-homie-quantalks-type-of-way-success-career-start>.
- Graham, S. (1994). Motivation in African Americans. *Review of Educational Research*, 64(1), 55- 117.
- Graue, M. E., & Walsh, D. J. (1998) *Studying Children in Context: Theories, Methods, and Ethics*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Greeno, J., Collins, A., & Resnick, L.B. (1996). Cognition and learning. In B. Berliner & R. Calfee (Eds.), *Handbook of Educational Psychology* (pp. 15-46). New York: Simon & Shuster MacMillan.
- Hall, W. M., Schmader, T., & Croft, E. (2015). Engineering exchanges: Daily social identity threat predicts burnout among female engineers, 6(5), 528–534.
<http://doi.org/10.1177/1948550615572637>
- Hennink, M. M. (2014). *Focus Group Discussions: Understanding Qualitative Research*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Hodgins, H. S., Weibust, K. S., Weinstein, N., Shiffman, S., Miller, A., Coombs, G., & Adair, K. C. (2010). The cost of self-protection: Threat response and performance as a function of autonomous and controlled motivations. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 36(8), 1101-1114.
- Hofer, M. & Fries, S. (2016). A multiple goals perspective on academic motivation. In K. R. Wentzel & D. B. Miele (Eds.), *Handbook of Motivation at School* (2nd ed.; pp. 440- 458).
- Holley, L. C., & Steiner, S. (2005). Safe space: Student perspectives on classroom environment. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 41(1), 49-64.
- hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*. New York, NY: Taylor and Francis Group.
- Howard, T. (2008). Who really cares? The disenfranchisement of African American males in preK-12 schools: A critical race theory perspective. *The Teachers College Record*, 110(5), 954-985.

- Howard, T. C. (2001). Telling their side of the story: African-American students' perceptions of culturally relevant teaching. *The Urban Review*, 33(2), 131-149.
- Immordino-yang, M. H. (n.d.). Toward a Microdevelopmental, Interdisciplinary Approach to Social Emotion. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1754073910361985>
- Immordino-yang, M. H. (2008). The smoke around mirror neurons : Goals as sociocultural and emotional organizers of perception and action in learning, 2(2), 67–73.
- Irving, M. & Hudley, C. (2005). Cultural mistrust, academic outcome expectations, and outcome values among African American adolescent men. *Urban Education*, 40(5), 476–496. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0042085905278019>
- Jansen, A. S., Van Nguyen, X., Karpitskiy, V., Mettenleiter, T. C., & Loewy, A. D. (1995). Central command neurons of the sympathetic nervous system: Basis of the fight-or-flight response. *Science*, 270(5236), 644.
- Kosovich, J. J., Hulleman, C. S., Barron, K. E., & Getty, S. (2015). Developing a practical measure of motivation: Expectancy-Value-Cost in middle school science and mathematics. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 35(5-6), 790-816.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). *The dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American children*. 2nd edition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Langer-Osuna, J. M. (2011). How Brianna became bossy and Kofi came out smart: Understanding the trajectories of identity and engagement for two group leaders in a project-based mathematics classroom. *Canadian Journal of Science, Mathematics and Technology Education*, 11(3), 207-225.
- Leonardo, Z. (2002). The souls of White folk: Critical pedagogy, Whiteness studies, and globalization discourse. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 5(1), 29-50.
- Lerner, R. M., Lerner, J. V., P Bowers, E., & John Geldhof, G. (2015). *Positive Youth Development and RelationalDevelopmental-Systems*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Linnenbrink-Garcia, L., & Patall, E. A. (2016). Motivation. In E. M. Corno, L., & Anderman (Ed.), *Handbook of Educational Psychology* (3rd ed., pp. 91– 103). Routledge.
- Louro, M. J., Pieters, R., & Zeelenberg, M. (2007). Dynamics of multiple-goal pursuit. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 93(2), 174.
- Mansfield, C. (2012). Rethinking motivation goals for adolescents: Beyond achievement goals. *Applied Psychology*, 61(4), 564-584.
- McCann, R. A., & Austin, S. (1988). At-Risk Youth: Definitions, Dimensions, and Relationships. <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED297196.pdf>

- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*. (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Milner, H. R. (2015). *Rac(e)ing to class: Confronting poverty and race in schools and classrooms*. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.
- Milner, H. R. (2007a). Race, culture, and researcher positionality: Working through dangers seen, unseen, and unforeseen. *Educational Researcher*, 36(7), 388-400.
- Milner, H. R. (2007b). Race, narrative inquiry, and self-study in curriculum and teacher education. *Education and Urban Society*, 39(4), 584-609.
- Murray, S. L. (2009). When Self-protection hurts: Satisfying connectedness motivation in close relationships. In W. L. Shah, James Y., Gardner (Ed.), *Handbook of Motivation Science*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Murray, S. L., Holmes, J. G., & Collins, N. L. (2006). Optimizing assurance: The risk regulation system in relationships. *Psychological Bulletin*, 132(5), 641.
- Nasir, N. S., & Shah, N. (2011). On defense: African American males making sense of racialized narratives in mathematics education. *Journal of African American Males in Education*, 2(1), 24-45.
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2013). *Dropout Rates*. Washington, DC: Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=16>.
- National Paideia Center. (2015). *How to teach a socratic seminar*. Retrieved from <https://www.paideia.org/about-paideia/socratic-seminar/>.
- Overton, W. F., & Lerner, R. M. (2012). Relational developmental systems: A paradigm for developmental science in the postgenomic era. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 35(05), 375-376.
- Patrick, H., Turner, J., Meyer, D., & Midgley, C. (2003). How teachers establish psychological environments during the first days of school: Associations with avoidance in mathematics. *The Teachers College Record*, 105(8), 1521-1558.
- Patall, E. A. (2013). Constructing motivation through choice, interest, and interestingness. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 105(2), 522.
- Patall, E. A., Cooper, H., & Wynn, S. R. (2010). The effectiveness and relative importance of choice in the classroom. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 102(4), 896–915. doi:10.1037/a0019545
- Perez, T., Cromley, J. G., & Kaplan, A. (2014). The role of identity development, values, and costs in college STEM retention. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 106(1), 315.

- Purdie-Vaughns, V., & Walton, G. M. (2011). Is multiculturalism bad for African Americans? Redefining inclusion through the lens of identity safety. In L. R. Troop & R. K. Mallet (Eds.) *Moving Beyond Prejudice Reduction: Pathways to Positive Intergroup Relations* (pp. 159-177). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Reeve, J. & Jang, H. (2006). What teachers say and do to support students' autonomy during a learning activity. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 98(1), 209-218.
- Rosenberg, M. (1965). *Society and the adolescent self-image*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25(1), 54-67.
- Saldaña, J. (2009). *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. Washington, DC: Sage.
- Sedikides, C. (2011). Self-Protection. In J. P. Leary, Mark R and Tangney (Ed.), *Handbook of Self and Identity* (pp. 327–353). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Sellers, R. (2013). The Multidimensional Model of Black Identity (MMBI). Measurement Instrument Database for the Social Science. Retrieved from <https://www.midss.ie>
- Sellers, R. M., CopelandLinder, N., Martin, P. P., & Lewis, R. H. (2006). Racial identity matters: The relationship between racial discrimination and psychological functioning in African American adolescents. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 16(2), 187-216.
- Sellers, R. M., Smith, M. A., Shelton, J. N., Rowley, S. A., & Chavous, T. M. (1998). Multidimensional model of racial identity: A reconceptualization of African American racial identity. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 2(1), 18-39.
- Sherman, D. K., Hartson, K. a, Binning, K. R., Purdie-Vaughns, V., Garcia, J., Taborsky-Barba, S., ... Cohen, G. L. (2013). Deflecting the trajectory and changing the narrative: How self-affirmation affects academic performance and motivation under identity threat. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 104(4), 591–618. <http://doi.org/10.1037/a0031495>
- Spencer, M. B., Dupree, D., & Hartmann, T. (1997). A phenomenological variant of ecological systems theory (PVEST): A self-organization perspective in context. *Development and Psychopathology*, 9(04), 817-833.
- Spencer, M. B., Harpalani, V., Fegley, S., Dell' Angelo, T., & Seaton, G. (2003). Identity, Self, and Peers in Context. *Handbook of applied developmental science: Promoting positive child, adolescent, and family development through research, policies, and programs*, Publisher & Location 123.
- Spencer, M. B. (2006). Phenomenology and ecological systems theory: Development of diverse

- groups. *Handbook of child psychology*. Publisher & Location
- Steele, C. M. (2010). *Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.
- Steele, C. M., Spencer, S. J., & Aronson, J. (2002). Contending with group image: The psychology of stereotype and social identity threat. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 34, 379-440.
- Tatum, B. (1992). Talking about race, learning about racism: The application of racial identity development theory in the classroom. *Harvard Educational Review*, 62(1), 1-25.
- Tatum, B. D. (1997). *"Why are all the Black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?": And other conversations about race*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Taylor, A. Z., & Graham, S. (2007). An examination of the relationship between achievement values and perceptions of barriers among low-SES African American and Latino students. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 99(1), 52-64. <http://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.99.1.52>
- Taylor, P. C. (2013). *Race: A philosophical introduction*. Malded: Polity.
- Trautwein, U., Marsh, H. W., Nagengast, B., Lüdtke, O., Nagy, G., & Jonkmann, K. (2012). Probing for the multiplicative term in modern expectancy-value theory: A latent interaction modeling study. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 104(3), 763.
- Utsey, S. O. & Gernat, C., & Bolden, M. A. (2003). Teaching racial identity development and racism awareness training in professional psychology programs. In G. Bernal, J. Trimble, F. Leung, and K. Burlew (Eds.), *Racial ethnic minority psychology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Vansteenkiste, M., Sierens, E., Goossens, L., Soenens, B., Dochy, F., Mouratidis, A., & Beyers, W. (2012). Identifying configurations of perceived teacher autonomy support and structure: Associations with self-regulated learning, motivation and problem behavior. *Learning and Instruction*, 22(6), 431-439.
- Wallace, T. L. (2016). *A model of social and relational context for motivation*. Unpublished manuscript, Psychology in Education Department, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA.
- Wallace, T. L., & Chhuon, V. (2014). Proximal processes in urban classrooms: Engagement and disaffection in urban youth of color. *American Educational Research Journal*, 51(5), 937-973.

- Wallace, T. L., Sung, H. C., & Williams, J. D. (2014). The defining features of teacher talk within autonomy-supportive classroom management. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 42*, 34-46.
- Wang, M. T. (2012). Educational and career interests in math: A longitudinal examination of the links between classroom environment, motivational beliefs, and interests. *Developmental Psychology, 48*(6), 1643.
- Wang, M. T., Fredricks, J. A., Ye, F., Hofkens, T. L., & Linn, J. S. (2016). The math and science engagement scales: Scale development, validation, and psychometric properties. *Learning and Instruction, 43*, 16-26.
- Wanless, S. B. (2016). The role of psychological safety in human development. *Research in Human Development, 13*(1), 6-14.
- Ware, F. (2006). Warm demander pedagogy: Culturally responsive teaching that supports a culture of achievement for African American students. *Urban Education, 41*(4), 427-456.
- Watkinson, E. J., Dwyer, S. A., & Nielsen, A. B. (2005). Children theorize about reasons for recess engagement: Does expectancy-value theory apply. *Adapted Physical Activity Quarterly, 22*(2), 179-197.
- Wentzel, K. R. (2000). What is it that I'm trying to achieve? Classroom goals from a content perspective. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 25*(1), 105-115.
- Wigfield, A., Eccles, J. S., Fredricks, J. A., Simpkins, S., Roeser, R. W., Schiefele, U. (2015). Development of achievement motivation and engagement. In R. M. Lerner & M. E. Lamb (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology and developmental science* 7th ed., Vol. 3. (pp. 657- 700). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Wigfield, A., & Cambria, J. (2010). Expectancy-value theory: retrospective and prospective. In S. Karabenick & T. C. Urdan (Ed), *The Decade Ahead: Theoretical Perspectives on Motivation and Achievement* (Advances in Motivation and Achievement, Volume 16), Emerald Group Publishing Limited, pp. 35-70.
- Wigfield, A., Tonks, S., & Klauda, S. L. (2009). Expectancy-value theory. In K. R. Wentzel & A. Wigfield (Eds.) *Handbook of motivation at school*, (pp. 55-75). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Williams, D. R., & Mohammed, S. A. (2009). Discrimination and racial disparities in health: evidence and needed research. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine, 32*(1), 20-47.
- Williams, J. D., Wallace, T. L., & Sung, H. C. (2016). Providing choice in middle grade classrooms: An exploratory study of enactment variability and student reflection. *The Journal of Early Adolescence, 36*(4), 527-550.

- Williams, J. D. (2017). [Fieldnotes collected during on-site research in Pittsburgh, PA]. Unpublished raw data.
- Williams, J. D., Woodson, A. N., & Wallace, T. L. (2016). "Can we say the N-word?": Exploring psychological safety during race talk. *Research in Human Development, 13*(1), 15-31.
- Wolff, B., Knodel, J., & Sittitrai, W. (1993). Focus groups and surveys as complementary research methods. In D. L. Morgan (Ed.) *Successful focus groups: Advancing the state of the art* (pp. 118-136). Washington, DC: SAGE Publications.
- Woodson, A. N. & Duncan, K. E. (2018). When keepin' it real goes wrong: Race talk, racial blunders, and redemption. In C. C. Martell (Ed.), *Social Studies Teacher Education: Critical Issues and Current Perspectives* (pp. 101 – 112); Charlotte, N.C: Information Age Publishing, Inc.
- Yeager, D. S., & Walton, G. M. (2011). Social-psychological interventions in education: They're not magic. *Review of Educational Research, 81*(2), 267-301.