Critical Conversations in Online Reading Groups: Narratives of Sociopolitical Awareness

Vanessa Winn, University of Dayton
Jody Googins, Xavier University

Abstract

In this study, we share narrative findings that highlight the nuance of what happens when our goals, as teacher educators, are to engage students in sociopolitical consciousness raising (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 476) during online reading groups. We focus on the story of two reading groups to illuminate the nuances of group dynamics and sociopolitical consciousness raising in context. The first group was committed to the professionalism of teachers and engaging in a supportive and collegial graduate class experience but understood as largely non-political. The second was critically engaged and critically reflected on their school contexts and complicity in inequitable power relations in schools. Reading group conversations, interpreted as non-political and political, is the focus of our critical analysis and discussion of the implications of our study. Recommendations and implications for teacher educators who seek to foster sociopolitical consciousness raising in collaborative group conversations in online graduate education are shared in the conclusion.

Keywords: *reading groups, narrative inquiry, culturally relevant pedagogy, sociopolitical*

Introduction

In the fall of 2020, the social and political conditions of communities and beyond seeped into the walls of classrooms and schools, creating an environment in which students, teachers, administrators, parents, and communities at large were once again confronted with the reality that education is always socially and politically positioned. The Covid-19 pandemic, the death of George Floyd and the ensuing social and civil unrest, and the push to colonize curriculum all collided as schools and teachers prepared their instruction for the 2020-2021 school year. As teacher educators, our preparation was similarly influenced by the events and conditions that were, and are still, pervasive in society. In the Fall of 2020, Researcher 2 began to, intentionally, through the lens of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP), "deconstruct, construct, and reconstruct" (Ladson-Billings, 2006, p. 32) a History and Philosophy of American Education graduate course for pre-service and practicing teachers to engage in much-needed and ongoing critical conversations about race, ethnicity, class, sexual identity, gender, language, nationality, learning differences, religion, and age in education.

Researcher 2's commitment to embedding principles of CRP, that make sociopolitical realities visible (Ladson-Billings, 1995), in combination with the development of collaborative,

online learning structures—conceptualized as powerful learning communities around books—are the focus of this study. We find that using these lenses to theorize pedagogical engagement opens up space for conversations about inequity that engages graduate students in conversations about the historic and contemporary sociopolitical contexts of education as well as theory and pedagogy in the practice of teaching. Furthermore, in this study, we share narrative findings that highlight the nuance of what happens when our goals, as teacher educators, are to engage students in socio-political consciousness raising (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 476). What this sounds like and how the narrative arc of a group does the work of discussing inequality in educational contexts helps us understand what happens during these kinds of assignments online.

In this study, we have engaged in a narrative inquiry because as writers and readers we love stories. We find that we understand much more about the power of our pedagogical choices, the experience of educators, and the potential impact of experiences like reading groups in our classes through story. After all, "Narrative research is deeply rooted in who we are as humans because narrative is the most fundamental means by which we human beings understand who we are" (Kim, 2016, p. 297). Furthermore, we argue that our humanity is essential to our teaching and thus to understand who we are and how students experience education is inevitably connected to our teaching practice (Freire, 1998).

Literature Review

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) in Course Design and Teacher Education

In the early 1990s, Dr. Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995, 2006) illuminated the concept of culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) in the lexicon of educational researchers. CRP is a pedagogical framework that centers on three guiding principles that she expanded on in 2006: academic achievement, cultural competence, and sociopolitical consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2006). CRP "primarily seeks to influence attitudes and dispositions, describing a posture a teacher might adopt that, when fully embodied, would determine planning, instruction, and assessment" (Aronson & Laughter, 2016, pp. 166-167).

Rigaud and Googins (2022) address the importance of engaging with pedagogy—even at the graduate level—that is culturally relevant. As research informs our practice, we understand that culturally competent teachers need to be "exposed to the reality of culture and systemic oppression" in the lives of children in the United States (Delpit, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 2006 as cited in Rigaud & Googins, 2022). "Unfortunately for many citizens—particularly those marked as poor, Black, Brown, immigrant, queer or trans—State power has only increased their vulnerability, making their lives more rather than less unsafe" (Hill, 2016, p. xix). As arms of the state, schools are not places where all students matter or thrive (Love, 2019). Understanding, recognizing, and addressing inequalities is not done accidentally. "Educational justice is going to take people power" (Love, 2019, p. 9).

As teacher educators, we cannot be "neutral" in our approach to teacher education. The curriculum we design is complicated and human (Pinar, 2019). The democratic ideals that we pursue through the acknowledgement of power and the politicization of curriculum are not neutral; and the exposure to the complicated sociopolitical realities of education are foundational to the development of teachers who can be culturally responsive and relevant. According to Kincheloe (2008), "the recognition of these political complications of schooling is the first step for critical

pedagogy-influenced educators in developing a social activist teacher persona" (p. 2). And in the context of this course as a history class in education, we contribute to this work.

Powerful Learning Communities

A powerful learning community (LC), as described by Lenning, et al. (2013) is "an intentionally developed community that exists to promote and maximize the individual and shared learning of its members. There is ongoing interaction, interplay, and collaboration among the community's members as they strive for specified common learning goals" (Lenning et al., 2013, p. 7). LCs are often utilized in schools and school districts, and in higher education learning environments. Integrating LCs into a graduate level course with intentionality in "group organization, facilitation, tasks/techniques provided by the instructor or facilitator, and timely process orientation and training provided to the group" (Lenning et al., 2013, p. 7) can have positive implications for not only the duration of the course and the course content, but also for the graduate students as they engage in critical work in their schools and classrooms, often in larger learning communities of which they are a part. For this course, we conceptualize book clubs as powerful learning communities.

LCs, PLCs and CRP

Powerful learning communities literature is identified under two frameworks in this review. One framework is Lenning et al.'s (2013) powerful learning community (LC). However, we acknowledge and embrace that more commonly in schools, the PLC acronym refers to the phrase professional learning communities (PLC). Under both acronyms: LCs and PLCs, powerful learning communities have been implemented to meet a wide range of goals and purposes towards CRP in the literature. PLCs have been implemented with teachers in public school settings (Guerrero et al., 2016-2017; Scanlan et al., 2016), higher education (Ball, 2016), and specifically teacher education (Allen & FitzGerald, 2017; Heineke, 2014; Jacobs, 2019; Moore, 2018). The range of emphases for these studies include learning about cultural care (Allen & FitzGerald, 2017), addressing opportunity gaps between K-12 students (Guerrero et al., 2016-2017; Scanlan et al., 2016), supporting teacher candidates' dialogue about culturally relevant literature (Heineke, 2014), student teachers' actualization of CRP in urban settings (Jacobs, 2019), and examining in-service teachers' cultural awareness (Moore, 2018).

Towards these purposes, PLCs have been generative spaces for the intentions of CRP. Findings such as Allen and FitzGerald's (2017) study show that there were changes in teachers' behavior management approaches and student behaviors that improved the learning environment for students in school after teachers engaged in PLCs about cultural care. Preservice teachers who read and discuss culturally relevant literature about English learners [sic] better understand the lived realities of English learners in ways that informed their thinking about diverse students and their life experiences (Heineke, 2014, p. 125). "Critical moments" (Jacobs, 2019, p. 1531) from teaching practice raised in group discourse, also called "authentic conversations" (Moore, 2018, p. 248), open up opportunities for teachers to engage "deeply" in "issues of culture, classroom practice, and expectations" (Jacobs, 2019, p. 1531). Furthermore, as Jacobs (2019) shares, teachers who talk with each other about their school experiences in urban settings encounter ideas that are "complicated" and negotiate "drawing on and pushing back against the deficit perspective that so frequently surrounds discussions of Urban Education" (p. 1540).

Group conversations not only drew dialogue about teaching practice, they also prompted critical self-reflection about "their family history, and raising families. Educators acknowledged how their experiences [represented] their cultural norms and values" (Moore, 2018, p. 248). And Ball (2016) argues that students in higher education who experience CRP in their classwork are more "motivated and engaged" and "in a position to become strong, successful leaders" after time spent working collaboratively on projects that are responsive to community needs (p. 5).

In aggregate, the benefits of engaging in CRP through powerful learning communities have positive, specific outcomes in the particular context in which they are engaged. This does not, however, exclude the ways in which researchers identify areas for further growth and need for additional education, experiences, and even more PLC-style engagement with CRP. Guerrero et al. (2016-2017) shared in their findings that the social context of the studies sometimes inhibits the effectiveness of PLCs engaged in CRP because important stakeholders frame culturally responsive and relevant pedagogies in deficit thinking—as a way of "'fixing' 'broken students' from particular communities" (p. 6). Other researchers find that while teachers acknowledge or name the importance of CRP in their PLC groups, applying those beliefs to practice are inconsistent, not demonstrated, or still framed as next steps in the process (Guerrero et al., 2016-2017; Jacobs, 2019; Moore, 2018; Shaw, 2020).

The CRP framework is built upon diverse research agendas across multiple content areas and varying implementations of CRP. CRP is both specific and contextualized in practice. Thus, we expect that although there is established research at the intersection of powerful learning communities and CRP, we argue that our study contributes to this literature as uniquely positioned in an online-only program with graduate students across academic disciplines and from across the United States. However, even if we uncover redundancy of site or course delivery method, the need for culturally relevant education is ongoing and intentionally designed to be "replicated in our contexts" (Aronson & Laughter, 2015, p. 200).

The Study

As teacher educators, engaged with the social and political lives of teachers and students and committed to developing culturally responsive educators, we share the findings from our study of a pedagogical practice in an online graduate class: reading group meetings. Over the course of three semesters, we studied group conversations in the History and Philosophy course designed by Researcher 2. As we listened, we wondered. What are the conversational similarities and differences operationalized by groups? How does studying their dialogue indicate to us that we may need to encourage more critical engagement? How might we predict the ways in which a group attempts to remain "neutral" in their engagement? Can patterns that align with larger ideological ideals or known expressions of bias help us anticipate the ways that teachers and teacher candidates acknowledge sociopolitical issues, but avoid connection to them in education?

To better understand our pedagogical responses and responsibilities, we focus here on the story of two reading groups. One is a reading group committed to the professionalism of teachers and engaging in a supportive and collegial graduate class experience. The other is critically engaged and pushing themselves to critically reflect on their school contexts and complicity in inequitable power relations in schools. These group conversations become the focus of our narrative analysis and discussion of the implications of our study as teacher educators who intentionally foster critical conversation in reading groups.

Methods and Methodology

The Course Context

History and Philosophy of American Education is a graduate course required in all graduate education programs at Researcher 2's mid-sized private institution in the Midwest. The course is classified as a "Foundations" course, and it seeks to broadly discuss both historical and philosophical implications for American education. Researcher 2 began teaching this course in the summer of 2020 and implemented her own pedagogical choices for the structure of the course as informed by CRP and powerful learning communities, described above. The course consisted of three primary elements: week-to-week modules, reading groups, and a final group project.

Participants

For this study, sections offered in the fall of 2020, the spring of 2021, and the first summer session of 2021 were included. Researcher 2 emailed all members of each section to ask for informed consent to participate in the study. She requested consent to examine one-pager reflections, their final philosophical reflections, the final discussion prompt, and reading group meetings. The total number of students who enrolled in the included sections was 83. Of the 83 pre-service and practicing teachers, 67 consented to participate in the study. In seven out of 17 possible groups, all members consented to participate. Eleven of the participants were male, and 56 were female. The racial make-up of the participants reflects the teaching field in the United States generally, in which 82% of teachers are White, and 18% are Hispanic, Black, or other (U.S. Department of Education, 2016, p. 6). Any additional racial information risks identifying individuals in the study. The participants represented all ten graduate programs offered at the institution, and the practicing teachers had between one year of experience and 20+ years of experience. Sixteen participants were pre-service teachers. Participants currently taught in, or were planning on teaching in, early childhood, elementary, middle, and secondary education levels, or they were planning on pursuing a position in administration. Participants represented several geographical regions in the United States, including the Northeast, the Midwest, the Southeast, and the West. In the narratives analyzed here, 9 participants are represented in two reading groups.

Methodology

The paradigm for this study is an interpretivist inquiry. According to Quantz (2017) interpretivism seeks to provide "a description of a particular, concrete event or culture" (p. 2). Interpretivism does not claim that its observations and conclusions are the rule; instead, interpretivism seeks to illuminate concepts "in the form of ideal types, typifications, understandings, or exemplars that provide a way to talk about social phenomena" (p. 3).

An interpretivist, or constructivist, paradigm aligns with the research methodology selected for the data in this study: narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). In the instructional design, Researcher 2 chose a group assignment asserting and believing that knowledge is "not only in the mind of the individual, but also [socially constructed]" (Glesne, 2016, p. 9). Furthermore, in community with one another in reading groups, focusing on sociopolitical consciousness-raising in education, we both assert that "consciously engaging" with texts "is a social act and takes place as we dialogue and negotiate with others" (Lewison et al., 2015, p. 15).

The focus of this study are two narratives about two different reading groups. These are not representative of all groups or conversational outcomes. They are examples of sociopolitical consciousness raising in the context of an online graduate assignment that we use to interpret the outcomes of our CRP and powerful learning community course design aimed towards confronting the social and political realities of education historically and in the present.

Reading Groups

The element of the course studied here are the reading groups. In literature, these are also called literature circles and book clubs. This assignment required students to hold five reading group meetings (four meetings for the summer section) and discuss two self-selected readings from a list of sociopolitically oriented history and contemporary educational issues texts (see Appendix 2). The reading group meeting assignment (Figure 1) was the following:

Figure 1: ***Reading Group Meeting Assignment***

This is the ___ of five required reading group meetings. Please meet in an online forum and screencast roughly 10 minutes of the meeting. Please note - the meeting will need to be much longer than 10 minutes, but you only need to submit 10 minutes (any longer is difficult for you to submit because the file is often so large). For this meeting, please select 2 readings (or more) per meeting from the reading bank (Appendix 2). In preparation for each meeting, it is expected that group members will have read the selections carefully. In addition, group members should prepare the following prior to the meeting: Five takeaways from the reading. Three specific ideas from the readings that might inform classroom practice and/or interactions with students. One question about the reading for the group. While you do not have to go through each of these points systematically, it is good to be prepared. Try to let the conversation build organically, using what you have prepared to spur more conversation. It is also very important that you all connect the readings to your own practice/pedagogy. The meetings/discussions are an opportunity to do that work prior to the final assignment.

Data Analysis: Arriving at Narrative Inquiry

In the first round of this interpretive inquiry, we engaged in thematic coding. But once the initial findings from "well-codified themes" (Saldaña, 2016, p. 289) were identified, we decided that for this project, in which we seek to understand what culturally relevant conversations sound like and how this assignment played out online with graduate students, that discussing in vivo codes and general themes did not fit the purpose of the analysis. Rather, we identified two groups whose experience we chose to highlight in narrative form.

We chose the narratives of two specific groups identified as Group 5 and Group 7 to illuminate the specific experience of working in a group and engaging in critical conversation. We hope that "the power of their stories… evoke the vividness of lived experience" (Berger & Quinney, 2005, p. 9). Using narrative inquiry and narratology, we offer "renderings" (Eisner, 1998,

2002; Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997) of Group 5 and Group 7. The text that follows is one which Lawrence-Lightfoot and Hoffmann Davis (1997) might call "one of *authenticity*, capturing the essence and resonance of the actors' experience and perspective through the details of action and thought revealed in context" (p. 12).

To construct the narratives of Group 5 and Group 7, the recordings of all reading group meetings for Groups 5 and 7 were watched, annotated, and storied. Group 5 had 5 meetings. Group 7 had 4 meetings. The first round of viewing the recordings of their meetings was for the purpose of restorying and determining a chronology of the group meetings (Creswell, 2013, p. 190). During second round viewing, the stories of the group and individual quotes of narrative were culled to identify both "unique and general features" of the group experience (Creswell, 2013, p. 191). From the memos and in vivo quotes, an analysis of Group 5 and Group 7 focused on the "what" that was spoken; in other words, this is a thematic analysis (Riessman, 2008 as cited in Creswell, 2013, p. 192). But in interpretation of the group, we also focus on "how" the groups constructed their conversations and how specific rhetorical strategies influence "what" was addressed in conversation (Riessman, 2008 as cited in Creswell, 2013, p. 192).

As narrative researchers, we "try to interpret meanings through an analysis of plotlines, thematic structures, and social and culture referents" (Kim, 2016, p. 190). This action of interpretation is constantly in motion, constantly occurring, as we conceive of our research, listen to our subjects' stories, and compose our research texts. Kim (2016) asserts that "we narrative inquirers do not stand outside in a neutral, objective position, merely presenting or analyzing 'what was said,' says Reissman (2008 as cited in Kim, 2016, p. 190)" (p. 190). Instead, we are constantly at work "finding narrative meaning" (p. 190), constructing a text as "a way of understanding human experience through stories that, in turn, help us better understand the human phenomena and human existence" (p. 190). As we listened to the group meetings of the participants of this study, our desire to trouble the conversations, to provide an interpretation of sorts, of the social phenomena that was occurring within and between groups, became increasingly more complex. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) assert that narrative inquirers ask questions throughout the stages of narrative inquiry about how to position their "work socially and theoretically" (p. 136). In the construction of these narratives, we worked to authentically share the lived experiences of the group members, as the meetings progressed.

Researcher Positionality

Both researchers can be described as white, able bodied, cisgender women. Researcher 1 self identifies as a former early childhood teacher in several locations in the eastern United States, but has spent six years preparing preservice teachers in leadership and social justice education broadly in the Midwest. As a book club regular, primarily professionally, she has been studying the dynamics of book clubs of diverse literature for the last four years. Researcher 2 was a high school teacher in the Midwest for 18 years; she has spent three years preparing preservice teachers. As a former English teacher, Researcher 2 engaged in literature circles and book groups in her pedagogy, and is drawn to storytelling. She identifies as a narrative inquirer in her research. These researchers' personal and professional roles are shared here to contextualize the researchers.

Member Checking

Members of both Groups 5 and 7 were contacted for member checking. One participant from Group 7 confirmed that the narrative reflected her experience in the group and offered no

edits or clarification. The researchers received no additional feedback from Group 5. All names have been replaced with pseudonyms of the researchers' choice.

Narrative

Group 5

Group 5 consisted of five practicing and pre-service teachers. In this rendering of their meetings, they have been assigned the following pseudonyms: Julie, Sue, Lindsay, Anne, and Jen. Group 5 spent a good deal of time getting to know each other in their early meetings, listening intently to each other's experiences and teacher stories. After reading Sonia Nieto's (2014) *Why We Teach Now*, Julie asked the group, "Why do you all teach?" They each listened intently to each other, often repeating what resonated in another's answer and then adding on with their own thoughts, experiences, and beliefs.

The conversations grew to resemble a group of old friends getting together for a casual book club. Even at the group's very first meeting when they met with each other and Researcher 2 to establish group and meeting norms and goals, there quickly grew an enthusiasm and comfort in the exchanges, despite no previous connection. When discussing both curriculum and professional standardization that was discussed in Brian Schultz's (2017) *Teaching in the Cracks*, for example, the group pushed back on a tendency to being "put in a box" and shared ways they, as teachers, "break out of these boxes."

Through the group's five reading group meetings, their conversations about their teaching lives persisted. When the texts they read for a particular meeting pushed them to wade into uncharted territory, though, perhaps into conversations centered on race, the tone of the conversation tended to shift. In discussing bell hooks (1994), the group grappled with the idea that hooks was "tormented by the classroom reality… that often used the classroom to enact rituals of control that were about domination and unjust exercises of power" (p. 5). Sue "was shocked," sharing that in 1994, in her own schooling experiences, she had no sense of this oppression for students of color, much less for entire schooling structures. When one of the members read the quote, "The classroom began to feel more like a prison, a place of punishment and confinement rather than a place of promise and possibility" (hooks, 1994, p. 4), the group evaded the racialized experiences of bell hooks; rather they generalized her observations into a conversation around curriculum and standardization, a teaching experience they all shared. Lindsay noted that school often starts fun but "becomes a prison for some." The conversation flowed when they were able to talk about the teaching profession and pedagogy, about their experiences. Beyond sharing their own experiences, awkward silences occurred.

In one conversation, the group was reflecting on the text *Being Bad: My Baby Brother and the School-to-Prison Pipeline* (Laura, 2014). The conversation began by examining the term "school-to-prison pipeline." Only one member of the group, Lindsay, had ever heard that term before. At one point, Anne said, "I am left overwhelmed. This is so huge and systemic. What do we do?" Jen said, "I work in an all-White environment." This part of the conversation was tepid, a break from the typically friendly, flowing conversations the group had. There was an overwhelming condemnation of the conditions and practices that bolster and maintain the school-to-prison pipeline, but there was also a noticeable discomfort with the group's lack of knowledge and experience with populations that are marginalized by zero-tolerance discipline policies and special education labeling practices.

Lindsay met this conversation head-on, stating that many Black students' needs are not met by White teachers, especially in "low-income, inner city" environments. She spoke of the pervasive labeling of students as discipline problems and "bad kids." In Laura's (2014) text, though, she spends time comparing how she and her brother took such different paths in life, an interesting study in family dynamics. Instead of following Lindsay into the critical conversation of race, discipline, and oppressive teaching practices, the rest of the group turned to the question of family dynamics, how siblings often take different paths in life despite similar upbringings. It was a safe detour, a route that could continue to include analysis of the text but that could avoid the elephant in the room, the overwhelming systemic racism that Laura (2014) illuminates in her brother's school experiences.

In Group 5's final meeting of the semester, they discussed Richard Milner's (2016) *Start Where You Are but Don't Stay There.* After weeks of relatively "safe" conversations that had dips into more critical topics examining inequities, Milner's (2016) text prompted the group into a deep dialogue about language and diversity. When discussing the education debt, which Milner (2016) illuminates through an examination of the terms "achievement gap" and "opportunity gap," Anne reflected that the entire examination of this language was "eye opening." She stated that "this is all new" and "I wouldn't know any of this without classes like this." Lindsay highlighted the four questions that Milner (2016) asks in his introduction:

> (1) To what extent is achievement synonymous with learning? (2) What does it mean to learn and achieve in one school community in comparison to another? (3) Who decides what it means to achieve and why? (4) How do (and should) we address the kind of learning that never shows up on achievement measures- including high stakes tests? (p. 4)

Milner (2016) contextualizes those questions through a diversity lens, asking readers to engage in a "paradigm and mind-set shift" (p. 4). Through Lindsay's prompting, Group 5 connected, fully and for the first time in their conversations, how teaching can be a "practice of freedom" (hooks, 1994, p. 4) when teachers are, in Lindsay's words, "culturally responsive and not tied to a certain curriculum [that is oppressive]."

When the Spring 2021 semester ended, Group 5 shared that they had plans to get together and continue their learning community. At this time, we cannot confirm that they followed through on this plan, but we understand that this group enjoyed their time together and found the potential for ongoing professional value in their meetings.

Group 7

Group 7 consisted of four practicing and pre-service teachers. In this rendering of their meetings, they have been assigned the following pseudonyms: Chelsea, Kaitlyn, Sean, and Beth. Group 7, it seemed, did not need significant time to get to know each other in their reading group meetings. In their first meeting, Chelsea, in essence, dove right in and began an important conversation about the language that we use in schools and with children. Specifically, she troubled the concept of "school safety" and the way schools might use this language to control students. Christopher Emdin (2016), in *For White Folks Who Teach in the Hood… And the Rest of Y'All Too*, one of the group's first text selections, references some schools' use of zero-tolerance policies and lockdown procedures as akin to prison-like conditions. He says that schools use "the innocuous term *school safety*" (p. 6) to justify these kinds of procedures and policies. One of his students said

school safety is a "nice-sounding code word for treating you like you're in jail or something" (p. 6).

Chelsea immediately connected Emdin's (2016) text to her school's four "rules," one of which is "Be Safe." Chelsea said that she has heard teachers say things like, "Is your body safe?" She asserted that what these teachers really meant is, "Is your body doing what I want it to do right now?" In response to this, Kaitlyn said, "Is it about safety or is it about control?" Chelsea even shared that she took her concerns about School Safety language to a building leadership meeting, asking her colleagues to re-examine their language and its use in their building.

Meeting one went on like this, with each of the group members connecting the reading to their practice in school, their desire to make change in their environments. Kaitlyn connected to Beverly Tatum's (1997) metaphor of cultural racism being like smog. She read this quote:

> Cultural racism—the cultural images and messages that affirm the assumed superiority of Whites and the assumed inferiority of people of color—is like smog in the air. Sometimes it is so thick it is visible, other times it is less apparent, but always, day in and day out, we are breathing it in. None of us would introduce ourselves as "smog-breathers" (and most of us don't want to be described as prejudiced), but if we live in a smoggy place, how can we avoid breathing the air? (Tatum, 1997, p. 6)

Kaitlyn concluded that if teachers don't examine their own biases, they are basically smog-breathers, reinforcing cultural stereotypes and hegemony.

She illustrated this by sharing a story about a teacher who exhibited a micro-aggression when commenting loudly on the smell of a child's lunch, a child who was Indian. Kaitlyn watched the episode and was appalled by the teacher's words, but she acknowledged that it was something that happens often in schools. Sean stressed how much children internalize when events like that happen, stressing the lack of representation of people of color in the faculty of his school. The conversation soon turned to curriculum and the importance of representation in books teachers have in their classroom. In meeting one, the group members were open, honest, attentive, inquisitive, and critical in their conversation. They acknowledged the enormous role that teachers must play in dismantling racism in schools.

Group 7's second meeting continued to explore curriculum and representation through bell hooks' (1994) *Teaching to Transgress* and Mara Sapon-Shevin's (2007) *Widening the Circle*. Kaitlyn immediately acknowledged that while Sapon-Shevin's (2017) text was relatable for her, hooks' (1994) scholarly and passionate narrative struck a chord. The historical perspective that hooks (1994) illustrates caused Kaitlyn to acknowledge the "grief experienced" during desegregation by Black students for whom Black teachers were a "tool for liberation." The entire group acknowledged how viewing desegregation from the lens of a Black person completely changed their perceptions and challenged their previous beliefs and knowledge about what they were taught concerning desegregation.

Chelsea even expressed that if someone had asked her, just a few weeks ago, if desegregation had been positive or negative for Black students, she might have thought about Ruby Bridges being flanked by police, but that she would have certainly concluded that desegregation was overwhelmingly positive. In this conversation, Chelsea questioned how she could have ever made such casual assumptions and supported assimilation in schools without truly examining what that meant. Sean again connected the text to representation, to including diverse voices in the classroom so

that all students could see themselves in the curriculum. Beth, who acknowledged how "eye-opening" all that they were reading and learning for their groups was, connected hooks' (1994) engaged pedagogy and the act of "*value*[ing] everyone's presence" (p. 8) to the inclusive practices that Sapon-Shevin (2007) writes about. Meeting two again stressed how they, as teachers, had an important responsibility in the work of anti-racism.

By the time Group 7 held meeting three, their familiar banter was warm and encouraging. They began this meeting with friendly pleasantries, but, as usual, dug into the reading almost immediately. The group continually became more and more comfortable in their conversations of difficult subjects. In meeting three, they were examining Richard Milner's (2016) *Start Where You Are but Don't Stay There* alongside Castagno's (2014) *Educated in Whiteness*. Kaitlyn chose the readings for this meeting and was anxious to talk about Milner's (2016) discussion of the "opportunity gap" versus the term "achievement gap." They found a balance in what they perceived to be "technical" in *Educated in Whiteness*, citing phrases like "Niceness as a mechanism of whiteness in schools" (Castagno, 2014, p. 8), to what they viewed as "conversational" in Milner's (2016) text.

They said Milner (2016) provided a model of sorts for what this work "actually looks like." Chelsea admitted that Castagno's (2014) text made her "almost self-conscious," but that Milner's (2016) text was "encouraging in the sense that wherever you are right now is okay and that progression is unfinished… Five months from now you don't want this to be where you are." Kaitlyn added, "He framed it as progress, which is encouraging." They expressed an ease in Milner's (2016) perceived message. This ease did not last long, though, because Sean brought the group back to Castagno's (2014) text and challenged the group to critically think about Castagno's (2014) notion that:

> We come to learn how popular educational discourses get employed in contradictory ways, how potentially transformative educational agendas get taken up in ways that run counter to the initial intent, and ultimately, how individuals with good intentions can produce structures that harm children. (p. 1)

Sean highlighted "niceness" and "good intentions" as ideas that lead to the labeling of students as "students beyond help," a reference to a story about a principal that was in Castagno's (2014) text.

As the meeting continued, issues like the racial demographics of teachers, the tendency to place Black students into subjective disability categories, and the importance of maintaining high expectations for *all* students were discussed at length. At one point Beth commented, "Even though these conversations are really hard to have, they are really, really important." The group's exchanges were natural and expressed care. They listened intently to each other and expressed value in what each member had to say. At one point, one group member's screen froze for a few seconds. When it came back, Chelsea said, "Can you please repeat what you said because it seems really valuable."

In the fourth and final meeting for Group 7, they acknowledged how much they had each learned in their conversations with each other. Crystal T. Laura's (2014) *Being Bad: My Baby Brother Chris and the School-to-Prison Pipeline* provided the group with a narrative, a story, they could share and engage with. Kaitlyn connected it to the documentary *13th* and recommended that others watch it. Chelsea expressed how much she appreciated that Laura (2014) wove data into Chris's story. Chelsea said she had begun having conversations with her colleagues and building

leaders about their equity efforts, and that Laura (2014) had armed her with data to share "as she argues with others about this."

The group highlighted Laura's (2014) quote that what Chris really needed was "a space of belonging and authenticity where he hoped to achieve some realistic power over the world within which he lived" (p. 27). Chelsea said, "We can do this in schools. We can create this space." The conversation continued by examining William Ayers' (2019) essay, "I Shall Create! Teaching Toward Freedom" that is featured in Lisa Delpit's (2019) *Teaching When the World is on Fire*. Sean highlighted Ayers' (2019) assertion that "Every student who comes through the classroom door is a three-dimensional human being like myself, and a person of infinite and incalculable value, someone to be treated with awe and respect, humility and patience."

This final conversation was almost a review of all they had not known before, of the "vastness and deepness of it all," in Kaitlyn's words. Beth, who most often listened and then validated her peers' points-of-view admitted, "I feel such a naivety about the realities of [all this]." Chelsea said she now knew she had been "beautifully sheltered, horribly sheltered, guiltily sheltered" from the systemic racism that "has oppressed for years." The group, bonded through their mutual condemnation of "sheltered Whites," finished by expressing that they would not be satisfied with just "progress," referring to their earlier conversation around Milner (2016). They would stop at nothing short of a "transformation."

In her end of semester reflection, Chelsea poignantly said, "Frankly, I'm not sure if we'll ever talk again when this course ends. I am, however, sincerely grateful for the conversations and time we had together and the impact they had on me as an educator. Even when it was graded, even when we didn't see eye to eye, I had my tribe[1] and there was no doubt we were #bettertogether."

Discussion

At the beginning of this study, we believed our data analysis would reveal evidence of sociopolitical consciousness raising within our participants. When we began analyzing and coding the data, it was apparent that sociopolitical consciousness raising had occurred for many of the participants, but a different phenomenon of interest began to emerge. Kim (2016) asserts that "we cannot assume that our research phenomenon will be the same one that was explained clearly in the proposal" (p. 206). Instead, "It is highly recommended that we identify our inquiry phenomena as they appear in the data during data analysis" (p. 206). Using Kim's (2016) "Narrative Data Analysis and Interpretation" (p. 185) as a guide, we assert that narrative inquiry is both a phenomenon and method; when we analyzed our data, we sought to both name the phenomenon we were studying as well as engage in narrative coding "to find narrative meanings" (p. 206).

In this process, we first asked, "What is my narrative inquiry about? What experience am I studying?" (Kim, 2016, p. 206). In the stories of the two groups, as they progressed from meeting to meeting, we were able to identify ideologies of individualism, of niceness, and of whiteness, as well as anti-racism and shared responsibilities for curriculum and schools. The groups' discourses often straddled the borders of non-political vs. political engagement. In the context of this study, "political" can be defined as a dynamic of power. Educators' decisions about school and curriculum "all hold profound political implications" (Kincheloe, 2008, p. 8) because they impact "power and how it is distributed and engaged in the world of education and life in schools" (p. 9). We

1. This is a direct quote from the participant. However, we understand that the term "tribe" is used outside of an indigenous people's context and marginalizes indigenous sovereignty (Reese, 2017).

called non-political conversation, in other words moments when teachers did not identify themselves as teachers involved in the power dynamics of race, class, gender and other aspects of social power in schools as "safe," while political conversation could be seen as sociopolitical engagement, or sociopolitical consciousness.

So while our data analysis certainly revealed sociopolitical consciousness raising, our analysis also illuminated the conversations themselves, the ways in which the participants navigated difficult (or political) issues and dialogue. Our phenomenon became the conversations themselves, the choices the participants made in their engagement level, in their willingness to concede that they would or would not remain stagnant in their work as teachers to create equitable spaces for all their students.

After establishing our phenomenon as the conversations themselves, the complex stories of the groups' words and actions, we worked through a process of narrative coding, "to find narrative meanings" (Kim, 2016, p. 206). Using Connelly and Cladinin's (1990) three analytical tools for narrative inquiry, *broadening, burrowing,* and *storying and restorying*, we paid attention to "storylines that interweave and interconnect, gaps or silences that become apparent, tensions that emerge, and continuities and discontinuities that appear" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 131). As we moved from field texts to research texts, the stories that are shared in this paper, we used the analytical tools to "seam together" (Kim, 2016, p. 207) the stories.

As we *broadened* the lens around the groups' stories, we returned to both the political and social climate surrounding the participants and the class itself, and the intentions of the class instructor, Researcher 2, as she chose the pedagogical method of reading groups, a powerful learning community, that engaged in the principles of CRP with the use of sociopolitical texts. Using the tool of *burrowing*, we can "focus on more specific details of the data" (Kim, 2016, p. 207). Group 5 and Group 7 both engaged in collegial, productive conversations about their lives as teachers, and the challenges and rewards of their jobs. Both groups' conversations discussed critical issues that emerged from the texts. When we listened closely, though, we found nuanced differences in how Group 5 and Group 7 engaged in their conversations. Group 5 warmly discussed their classrooms, the challenges of teaching, and issues around curriculum. But they were reluctant to leave those "safe," shared spaces. When one member of Group 5, Lindsay, attempted to begin a discussion about discipline policies that disproportionately affect students of color, as illuminated by Crystal T. Laura (2014) in her narrative about her brother Chris, the group instead began to discuss sibling dynamics, highlighting how Chris and Crystal T. Laura's paths were divergent. Conversely, when Group 7 discussed the same text, Chelsea shared that she had begun having conversations in her building about their discipline policies and how they might be inequitable. They conceded that the issues they were exploring had a daunting "vastness and deepness" that presented great challenges, but that they were determined to enact a "transformation" in their environments.

It is in the burrowing that we began to recognize the slight differences in the directions and tones of the meetings. Group 5 was often "shocked" or "saddened" when reading about inequitable classrooms. Group 7 was action-oriented and determined in their responses. Group 5 avoided discomfort; Group 7 welcomed it. As teacher-researchers, we knew the story was in how these meetings unfolded and we could learn how sociopolitical consciousness raising could occur in this type of pedagogical structure if we *listened* to these slight nuances.

Using the tool of *storying and restorying,* we created "renderings" (Eisner, 1998, 2002; Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997) of the two groups' meetings "so that the significance of the lived experiences of the participant[s] comes to the fore" (Kim, 2016, p. 207). We created the two separate narratives to highlight the nuanced, different ways in which the groups approached their

conversations and the texts. Group 5, all committed and seemingly excellent teachers, were all very *nice* in their conversations (Castagno, 2014). They dug into shared issues they all experienced as teachers and women. They expressed a desire to continue to learn about the issues that were illuminated through the texts. They seemed to be genuinely invested in the activity of reading groups. If one were to read about Group 5 in isolation, not alongside the narrative of Group 7, one might believe the goals of the course had been met; the students engaged in conversations as a group around sociopolitical issues. It is the introduction of the story of Group 7 that disrupts that notion. Group 7 was committed to moving beyond "niceness" and "whiteness" (Castagno, 2014), to acknowledge, in Kaitlyn's words, "that wherever you are right now is okay and that progression is unfinished… Five months from now you don't want this to be where you are." Group 7 was action-oriented, moving beyond simple conversations to apply what they were learning to their classroom environments.

The stories of the two groups highlight how using CRP in course design, specifically constructing powerful learning communities that engage in sociopolitical texts, can garner diverse outcomes. While both Group 5 and Group 7 expressed great satisfaction in the reading group experience, as did all the reading groups we studied, it was Group 7 that fully embodied the goals of the course and the aspirations of the instructor. In a narrative inquiry, Kim (2016) prompts researchers to answer the question of "So What?" (p. 230). The sharing of the stories of Group 5 and Group 7 can be justified on many levels, answering the question of "So What?" Kim (2016) suggests that "narrative inquirers need to attend to three kinds of justification: *the personal, the practical,* and *the social*" (p. 231). She adds "another justification, *the scholarly*" (p. 231). We contend that this narrative inquiry matters on all these levels.

On a *personal* level, as teachers, teacher educators, and mothers, we are drawn to creating, and then studying, pedagogical structures and activities that engage pre- and practicing- teachers in critical conversations that can be emancipatory. It is at the heart of our work. On a *practical* level, studying a course that uses CRP as its lens, one that also implements powerful learning communities as a strategy for students to construct knowledge, is valuable to our own practice and to others' practice. The *social* justification for this study emphasizes that classrooms and schools are inherently socially and politically positioned, and it is imperative that we prepare teachers to flourish in this environment, to recognize the power structures that are at play in our classrooms, and to learn to dismantle structures that oppress students. Finally, the *scholarly* justification for our study re-emphasizes the need to research how we can prepare teachers for environments that are becoming increasingly volatile and burdensome. Researching pedagogical strategies that incorporate CRP and engage teachers in critical conversations can contribute to a larger body of work to support teachers as they enter into political spaces.

We understand that reeducating teachers about the history of education, raising sociopolitical consciousness, and aligning teacher education pedagogy with CRP cannot be done or holistically accomplished in one semester (Aronson, et al., 2020). The sociopolitical realities that continue to persist both within our school walls and in larger society, as described in the introduction to this paper, challenge us to create and recreate teacher education programs that engage in culturally relevant and culturally responsive practices and simultaneously prompt educators to see their sociopolitical landscape clearly and participate in equitable education.

Conclusion

Even with intentional course design and pedagogical structures in place, we are reminded by this study that we cannot simply fill students with the "attitudes and dispositions" (Aronson &

Laughter, 2016, p. 166) to influence culturally responsive school spaces. We are also reminded that there are "first steps" in developing culturally responsive teachers. According to Kincheloe (2008), "the recognition" of sociopolitical issues in education is that first step (p. 2). And Group 5 was taking that first step. Yet, the "people power" (Love, 2019, p. 9) we need in schools may be located in the action-oriented Group 7. We wondered: are there patterns that align with larger ideological ideals or known expressions of bias that might help us anticipate the ways that teachers and teacher candidates acknowledge sociopolitical issues, but avoid connection to them in education? We learned from studying two groups, who might have otherwise been lost in a sea of thematic-coding, that reading groups that we previously described vaguely as "safe" and "not there" are re-organized in this analysis as either politically engaged and even responsible for school systems, or acting non-politically and as individuals.

One of the ways we plan to move forward in our pedagogy with reading groups is with specific prompts at points of potential intervention. When reviewing and giving feedback about reading group meetings, we might say something like, "I notice that you all spent significant time talking about the dynamics of siblings in families. While interesting, I wonder if this is what Laura (2014) would want to be your key takeaway from this text?" Or, "You are so effective at sharing personal experiences, do you have any personal experiences that might help further illustrate how the dynamics of racism play out in your school experience?" Pointing graduate students back towards the political, while still engaging on a personal level might have made a difference in the learning that Group 5 had in this class. Group 7 was stopping at nothing short of "transformation." Yet, how might we think about follow up support for a powerful learning community like this? Is it collaboration with colleagues in our teacher education and teacher leadership departments that carry on this work? Or does it end with a sense of responsibility and that's enough for a first step? We believe that this kind of deep research findings in our own pedagogy challenge us to keep asking critical questions about what we do to create learning environments that are potentially transformative, even when students enjoy assignments and express satisfaction with our coursework.

References

Allen, E. J. & FitzGerald, A. M. (2017). Cultural care and inviting practices: Teacher perspectives on the influence of care and equity in an urban elementary school. *Journal of Invitational Theory and Practice (23)*, 5-26. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1184560

Aronson, B. & Laughter, J. (2015). The theory and practice of culturally relevant education: A synthesis of research across content areas. *Review of Educational Research, 86*(1), 153-206. DOI: 10.3102/0034654315582066

Aronson, B., Meyers, L. & Author 2. (2020) "Lies My Teacher [Educator] Still Tells": Using Critical Race Counternarratives to Disrupt Whiteness in Teacher Education. *The Teacher Educator, 55*(3), 300-322. http://dx.doi.org.libproxy.udayton.edu/10.1080/08878730.2020.1759743

Ball, C. L. (2016). Sparking passion: Engaging student voice through project-based learning in learning communities. *Learning Communities Research and Practice (4)*1, Article 9. https://washingtoncenter.evergreen.edu/lcrpjournal/vol4/iss1/9/

Berger, R.J. & Quinney, R. (2005). Storytelling sociology: Narrative as social inquiry. Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Castagno, A. E. (2014). *Educated in whiteness: Good intentions and diversity in schools.* Minnesota.

Clandinin, D. J. & Connelley, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. Josey Bass.

Creswell, J.W. (2013) Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches. Sage.

Delpit, L. (2006) *Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom.* The New Press.

Eisner, E.W. (1998). The enlightened eye: Qualitative inquiry and the enhancement of educational practice. Merrill.

Eisner, E.W. (2002). The educational imagination: On the design and evaluation of school programs (3rd ed.). Merrill Prentice Hall.

Freire, P. (1998). *Pedagogy of freedom: Ethics, democracy, and civic courage*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Glesne, C. (2016). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction* (5th ed.). Pearson.

Guerrero, C., Shahzazarian, A. & Brown, M. F. (2016-17). Queer(y)ing culture through professional learning communities: A reimagining of culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy. *Urban Education Journal (13)*2, 1-11. https://urbanedjournal.gse. upenn.edu/volume-13-issue-2-winter-2016-17/queerying-culture-through-professional-le arning-communities

Heineke, A. J. (2014). Dialoging about English learners: Preparing teachers through culturally relevant literature circles. *Action in Teacher Education, 36*, 117-140.

Hill, M. L. (2016). *Nobody: Casualties of America's war on the vulnerable, from Ferguson to Flint and beyond.* Atria.

Jacobs, K. B. (2019). 'So why is it okay here?' Literacy candidates grappling with culture/ culturally relevant pedagogy in urban fieldsites. *Urban Education (54)*10, 1520-1550. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085918772621

Kim, J.H. (2016). Understanding narrative inquiry. Sage.

Kincheloe, J. L. (2008). *Critical Pedagogy* (2nd ed.). Peter Lang.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. American Educational Research Journal, 32(3), 465–491. https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831203 2003465

Ladson-Billings, G. (2006). "Yes, but how do we do it?" Practicing culturally relevant pedagogy. In J. Landsman & C. Lewis (Eds.), White teachers / Diverse classrooms: Creating inclusive schools, building on students' diversity, and providing true educational equity (pp. 29-41). Stylus Publishing.

Lawrence-Lightfoot, S. & Davis, J.H. (1997). *The art and science of portraiture.* Jossey-Bass.

Lenning, O. T., Hill, D. M., Saunders, K. P., Solan, A. & Stokes, A. (2013). *Powerful learning communities: A guide to developing student, faculty, and professional learning communities to improve student success and organizational effectiveness.* Stylus.

Lewison, M., Leland, C. & Harste, J. C. (2015). *Creating critical classrooms: Reading and writing with an edge* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Love, B.L. (2019). *We want to do more than survive: Abolitionist teaching and the pursuit of educational freedom*. Beacon Press.

Moore, B. A. (2018) Developing special educator cultural awareness through critically reflective professional learning community collaboration, *Teacher education and special education (41)*3, 243-253.

Pinar, W. F. (2019). *What is curriculum theory?* (3rd ed.). Routledge.

Quantz, R. (2017). Written lecture #3: On interpretive discourses [PDF document].

Reese, D. (2017, February, 17). Lane Smith's new picture book: There Is a TRIBE of KIDS (plus a response to Rosanne Parry). American Indians in Children's Literature. Retrieved from https://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/search?q=tribe

Rigaud, V. & Googins, J. (2022). Disrupting institutional racism in higher education: Beyond the cultural keeping in curriculum. In D. Bender-Slack & F. Godwell (Eds.), *Towards anti-racist educational research: Radical moments and movements.* Lexington Books.

Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Scanlan, M., Kim, M., Burns, M.B. & Builleumier, C. (2016). Poco a poco: Leadership practices supporting productive communities of practice in schools serving the new mainstream. *Educational Administration Quarterly, (52)*1, 3-44.

Shaw, J. T. (2020). Urban music educators' perceived professional growth in a context-specific professional development program. *Journal of Research in Music Education, (64)*4, 440-464. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022429419889295

U.S. Department of Education. (2016). The state of racial diversity in the educator workforce. https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/highered/racial-diversity/state-racial-diversity-workforce.pdf

Vanessa Winn, Ph.D., is an assistant clinical professor in the primary licensure program at the University of Dayton in Dayton, Ohio. Her research interests include curriculum, critical theories, and critical pedagogies in preservice teacher education. Previous publications include qualitative studies of critical literacy and curriculum theorizing.

Jody Googins, Ph.D., is an assistant professor and director of the Secondary Education department at Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio. Her research interests include teacher and curriculum stories, equity, and culturally responsive teaching. Previous publications include qualitative studies of teachers' and administrators' experiences in classrooms and schools, how pre-service and practicing teachers engage in and experience reading groups and books groups, and curriculum theorizing.

Appendix A: *Reading Groups Reading List*

This is the Complete list of the History and Philosophy of American Education Excerpt Reading Bank, which includes all text excerpts used in semesters since summer 2020. The reading bank was comprised of excerpts, namely the introduction and/or the first chapter of the following texts:

Being Bad: My Baby Brother and the School-to-Prison Pipeline - Crystal T. Laura (2014)
Democracy and Education - John Dewey (1916/2011)
Educated in Whiteness: Good Intentions and Diversity in Schools - Angelina E. Castagno (2014)
Experience and Education - John Dewey (1938/2015)
For White Folks Who Teach in the Hood… and the Rest of Y'all Too - Christopher Emdin (2016)
"I Shall Create! Teaching Toward Freedom" - William Ayers (2019) in Delpit, L. (ed.) *Teaching When the World is on Fire*
Is Everyone Really Equal? An Introduction to Key Concepts in Social Justice Education (2nd ed.) - Ozlem Sensoy & Robin DiAngelo (2017)
Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom - Lisa Delpit (2006) *For this text, "The Silenced Dialogue: Power and Pedagogy in Educating Other People's Children" was used.
Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, and Civic Courage - Paulo Freire (1998)
Reaching and Teaching Students in Poverty: Strategies for erasing the opportunity gap (2nd ed.) - Paul Gorski (2018)
Start Where You Are but Don't Stay There: Understanding Diversity, Opportunity Gaps, and Teaching in Today's Classrooms - H. Richard Milner IV (2016)
Teaching in the Cracks: Openings and Opportunities for Student-Centered, Action-Focused Curriculum - Brian D. Schultz (2017)
Teaching to Transgress; Education as the Practice of Freedom - bell hooks (1994)
Teaching With Vision: Culturally Responsive Teaching in Standards-Based Classrooms - Christine E. Sleeter and Catherine Cornbleth (eds.) (2011)
To Teach: The Journey of a Teacher (2nd ed.) - William Ayers (2001)
We Want to do More Than Survive: Abolitionist Teaching and the Pursuit of Educational Freedom - Bettina L. Love (2019)
"Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?" And Other Conversations About Race - Beverly Tatum (1997)
Why We Teach Now - Sonia Nieto (ed.) (2014)
Widening the Circle: The Power of Inclusive Classrooms - Mara Sapon-Shevin (2007)

Appendix B: *Assigned Books Referenced in Data Findings*

Ayers, W. (2020). I shall create! In L. Delpit (Ed.), *Teaching when the world is on fire* (pp. 3-15). The New Press.

Castagno, A. E. (2014). *Educated in whiteness: Good intentions and diversity in schools*. University of Minnesota Press.

Delpit, J. (2019). *Teaching when the world is on fire.* (L. Delpit Ed.). The New Press.

Emdin, C. (2017). *For white folks who teach in the hood… and the rest of y'all too: Reality pedagogy and urban education.* Beacon Press.

hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*. Routledge.

Laura, C. T. (2014). *Being bad: My baby brother and the school-to-prison pipeline*. Teachers College Press.

Milner, H. R. IV. (2016). *Start where you are, but don't stay there: Understanding diversity, opportunity gaps, and teaching in today's classrooms.* Harvard Education Press.

Nieto, S. (2014). *Why we teach now.* Teachers College Press.

Sapon-Shevin, M. (2007). *Widening the circle: The power of inclusive classrooms*. Beacon Press.

Schultz, B. D. (2017). *Teaching in the cracks: Openings and opportunities for student-centered, action-focused curriculum.* Teachers College Press.

Tatum, B. D. (1997). *Why are all the black kids sitting together in the cafeteria: And other conversations about race*. Basic Books.