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The Racial Discourses of Teacher Education Students in the Urban Southwest

Virginia Necochea

Virginia Necochea
Candidate

Language, Literacy, and Sociocultural Studies
Department

This dissertation is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication:

Approved by the Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Ruth Trinidad Galván, Chairperson

Dr. Sylvia Celedón-Pattichis

Dr. Nancy López

Dr. Amanda E. Lewis

THE RACIAL DISCOURSES OF TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS IN THE URBAN SOUTHWEST

By

VIRGINIA NECOCHEA

B.S., Psychobiology, University of California, Los Angeles, 1995
M.A., Foundations of Education, University of New Mexico, 2001

DISSERTATION

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Dedication

Para mi compadrito Tomas Vigil y nuestro carnalito Raúl García Atilano,
que en paz descansen siempre.

Ya resuenan los clarines
En el cuartel general
Soldados armas al hombro
Oigan el clarín sonar

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First and foremost, this work is dedicated to *mis abuelitos - David, Ramona, José Candelario, y Irene*. *Que en paz descansen.*

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This work is for all of the beautiful teachers out there - past and present - who in spite of the consequences and backlash, dare to teach in a manner that inspires all of the young

minds who pass through their doors (como mi hermana Cara Esquivel). Thank you for not buying in or selling out, and for continuing on in the battle against the racial beast.

But most importantly, this is for all of those powerful students who despite the oppression and systemic sickness, stick through it and persevere. Keep your heads high, your minds sharp, and your hearts strong!

Tiauih!

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to understand the racial discourses of teacher education students (TES) in the urban Southwest. This study is needed given the current post-racial or 'we're beyond race' climate in the U.S. (Bonilla-Silva, 2009). This study adds to the discussion of whether or not TES are really 'beyond race.' By critically analyzing TES' racial discourses it is hoped that a deeper understanding can be gained as to how this specific population both conforms and resists current racial discourses in the US.

Because discourse reveals how people understand and represent the world, interviewing participants was a key method used in this study. In this qualitative study, 17 participants participated in two 60-120 minute semi-structured interviews. Participants were purposively drawn from a pool of over 150 students enrolled in an elementary teacher education program within a large, urban Southwestern university.

Interviews with participants revealed that the racial discourses of TES fell along a spectrum that encompassed Non-Critical/Conformist discourses to Critical/Non-Conformist discourses. Their position along the spectrum depended on many variables that impacted and

influenced their racial discourse and ideology such as family, schooling, peers, etc. The other major finding was that the more Critical/Non-Conformist TES experienced what I have referred to as racial witnessing events - i.e. defining moments where an individual experiences a strong event in which they (or someone they care deeply about) were racialized, *Othered*, and/or treated differently (usually negatively) because of their racial group, racial affiliation, etc.

In conclusion TES both conform and resist larger racial discourses. Some TES adhered to problematic racial discourses such as the continued use of stereotypes and colorblind ideologies, while others were more critical and questioned the function of race and racism in the US. This study sheds light on the need for teacher education programs to invest greater time and energy in creating curriculums and programs that would enable TES to better understand the existence of a larger racial hierarchy in society and its impacts on their discourse and ideology. The ultimate hope would be for the disruption of problematic racial discourses and ideologies within teacher education programs across the nation.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

> In the new America that presumably began on November 4, 2008, racism will remain firmly in place and, even worse, may become a more daunting obstacle. The apparent blessing of having a black man (and I should truly say "*this* black man") in the White House is likely to become a curse for black and brown folks. (Bonilla-Silva, 2009, p. 212, italics in original)

"Everyone is equal now so race doesn't matter," "I don't have a racist bone in my body," and "We have a Black president now what more do you want?" Each of these statements exemplifies much of the discourse that is taking place in the field of education – specifically among teachers, preservice teachers, and teacher education faculty alike. It has become all too common to hear 'well-intended' individuals boast of a new generation that is beyond racist thinking and racist practices. This new generation, Millennials and Generation Z, have grown up in the post-civil rights era and has known and lived a much different reality than prior generations. The line of thought follows that somehow they are 'free' of any type of thinking that is even remotely racist. In fact, the media and many others have been promoting and proclaiming that we are now living in a society that is "post-racial" or beyond race (see Bonilla-Silva, 2009). Statements such as the ones mentioned in the beginning of this paragraph are then used by many individuals to validate and perpetuate these supposed post-racial claims.

But as an educator and woman of color who is interested in the field of critical race studies and has worked in the field of education for over fifteen years, I have witnessed numerous types of events that contradict proclamations of an actually existing racial utopia.

While on the surface many of the teacher education students (TES) I have worked with boast of racial views that are more open and accepting, the racial ideologies expressed in their assignments and in more in-depth conversations stand in stark opposition to their claims. Take the following example as one among the many that I have witnessed over the years. On this occasion I had made it a point to share with my students enrolled in the science methods class I was teaching that semester the numerous statistics that clearly demonstrated the low numbers of Latina/os and African Americans in the sciences. Specifically, I shared data on the extremely low number of tenured science faculty who were Latina and/or Black women. This data led to an intense discussion in which many students expressed defensiveness, and some went so far as to question my sources and credibility as an educator. One white female student in particular alluded to President Obama and said, "But aren't we beyond all of this now?" Another white student said to me, "Well aren't you biased sharing this data because you're Hispanic or Chicana or *what* are you again?"

Because of time constraints, I did not have the opportunity to discuss the issues at hand as thoroughly as I would have wanted, but I still left the class feeling that crucial points had been made to not only raise awareness in my students but also to challenge their thinking. In our class meeting the following week, two of the white female students who had been the most defensive did not look in my direction for the duration of the entire class. They sat with their arms crossed staring at the ground for a full two and a half hours. I not only felt frustration but also deeply hurt that students who had previously been so friendly and engaged in the course had now chosen to retaliate against me and blatantly disrespect me in this manner.

I want to make it clear that these contradictory events have not been limited to whites for I have heard many of the same problematic post-racial claims made by my students of color. I must admit that the first few times I witnessed my students of color exhibit behaviors I thought would be particular to only my white students, I was quite disturbed and moderately distraught. I am compelled to share an event that happened during the same semester but in another section that I was teaching. In the middle of what seemed to be a good discussion regarding the prevalence of racial inequity that continues in the science professions, a Native New Mexican[1] (Hispanic) female said to me that she did not understand why we were discussing racism in class. She went on to state that she had never experienced any type of discrimination and used her 'success,' and mine, as examples of how things have changed. For a brief moment her statement caught me off guard, but I proceeded to share with my class the existence of a racial hierarchy in our society where whites dominate and the rest of us groups of color fall beneath leaving us to fight with each other over the scraps. I went on to explain that people of color also have personal and collective investments in maintaining the current racial hierarchy and that this is more true for some groups of color than others. The student stared at me in disbelief and frustration for the remainder of the class. Her retaliation did not stop there for she made it a point to severely critique my class and my teaching in every single assignment she turned in for the remainder of the semester.

I have to say that this is definitely not the first time I have witnessed 'friendly' students (both white and students of color) enter my class very engaged only to turn defensive and exhibit great animosity towards me once I bring up the topic of race in class. The superficial "hey we're all equal now so can't we just get along" inevitably turns to "well

[1] It should be noted that Native New Mexican usually denotes a person who claims Spanish ancestry in New

what's wrong with *those* people" and "if *they* only cared about the education of their children." What has become apparent to me is that the race-neutral ideologies that TES display, quickly crumble when they are pushed a bit further with more critical questioning of the existence of a racial structure in our society. This has especially been the case when I have questioned their own personal racial positions and investments in the racial structure. The racial utopia quickly turns to racial animosity, denial, and defensiveness, reminding me of some type of Dr. Jekyll/Mr. Hyde transformation.

Because of these experiences and many others, I was mostly interested in studying and analyzing what I considered to be problematic racial discourses exhibited by both white TES *and* TES of color. It is important for people to realize that while racism is mostly a white problem, it is also a problem that resides in our communities of color for whites *and* people of color have internalized and accepted the current racial hierarchy (Bonilla-Silva, 2009). It is a social order where whites sit at top and other racial groups fall to their respective rung based on their investment, alignment, and complicity with the continuation of white supremacy. Thus, this study sought to problematize the racial discourse of teacher education students of various racial affiliations. Specifically, I was interested in how TES make sense of the racial world and what kind of racial discourses they used to explain racial phenomena in schools and society. By exploring these types of questions and issues I was able to reach a greater understanding of how racial groups conform to or resist the contemporary racial arrangement that exists in society.

Statement of the Problem

Before tackling problematic racial discourses, it was vital to not only acknowledge but also understand that we live in a racialized social system (Bonilla-Silva, 1996). This not

only pertains to the U.S. but the globe over (Allen, 2001; Mills, 1997). Many contest this by arguing that our social systems are primarily economically structured and driven, but those individuals who belong to the field of critical race studies take the firm stand that *race* is the primary organizing factor of every single facet of social life (Bonilla-Silva, 1996; Leonardo, 2009; Mills, 1997). Taking the position that our societies are racially structured is vastly different from simply stating that racism is present. Although many readily agree that racism continues to be present in US society, this does not mean that people understand the structural foundation of race. As Bonilla-Silva (1996) has argued, race is an independent criterion that has created a racially structured vertical hierarchy in society. This hierarchy in turn has created positions of subordination and superordination in society that have been racially determined. Because we live in a white supremacist system, the white group continues to occupy a superordinate position above all other racial groups. Blacks have been relegated to the bottom of the racial hierarchy by whites and other invested racial groups and thus have the least access to the material and social privileges of being "white." All other racial groups fall along various positions within the hierarchy and thus reap different rewards according to how close their position is to the white group, which is determined by factors such as skin color and/or complicity (Hunter, 2005).

Another crucial piece to understanding race as a social structure was the understanding that race is not simply a passive phenomenon. From its very inception it has taken the active strategizing, participation, and continuous buy-in from individuals, racial groups, key institutions, government, etc. to continue the racialization of human bodies in society. Race and therefore a racial social system are not natural. In fact, race is outright *unnatural* meaning that it only exists because of its human creators. Race is *synthetic* in that

it is completely human made. Moreover, it is interesting to note that in spite of race being defined as a social, political, and historical construct, it continues to be treated as something non-constructed and as natural to human life. It actually has become unnatural *not* to regard individuals and groups as belonging to a set racial group with supposedly defined characteristics.

One of the most effective ways that race continues to be naturalized and normalized is through the maintenance of an accepted racial discourse in society. Most people in the US and across the globe learn and come to accept a racial discourse that teaches individuals the proper public racial script. This racial discourse has shifted over time and largely reflects the politics of specific historical times. For example, the dominant racial discourse prior to the Civil Rights movement was one that reflected much overt racist talk and racist actions. During the time of Jim Crow racism (Bobo & Smith, 1998) it was considered normal and politically correct for individuals to speak of Blacks and Mexicans in blatant derogatory terms and to also carry out many atrocities against groups of color. The period after the Civil Rights movement caused a shift in this overt racial discourse to one that was more subdued and covert that has been referred to in the literature as laissez-faire racism (Bobo & Smith, 1998). Over time this has shifted as well and the newer racial script in the era of the Millennials has come to embody a meritocratic and largely colorblind ideology (Bonilla-Silva, 2009; Leonardo, 2009). Although much of the current racial discourse has continued to reflect laissez-faire racism (Bobo & Smith, 1998), it also now includes an ideological position that has been referred to by the media and others as “post-racial” (Bonilla-Silva, 2009). The term post-racial alludes to this idea that somehow society is "beyond race." Thus issues of race and racism become further downplayed and readily brushed aside as being less

important when compared to other more 'pertinent' issues such as the economic crisis the US is facing. In these allegedly post-racial times it has become politically *in*correct to bring up issues of race and racism.

Although many have tried to contest this, schools function as key institutions that continue the reproduction of race in society (Lewis, 2003). The US school system has accomplished this mostly by continuing the promotion and maintenance of the accepted racial discourse. That is, the US school system continues to teach children that human bodies naturally belong to racial groups and that there is a hierarchical order to these groups. Children will go through their entire schooling learning to treat race as something normal and as a natural part of being human. Within the school system, it is the teachers that act as the primary agents in teaching this proper public racial discourse to children. And even though many teachers will claim that they are not aware of this role, they nonetheless participate in re-creating a racialized society by not problematizing and disrupting the white supremacist racial discourse that dominates in the US and in our nation's entire school system.

Because teachers are socialized in a white supremacist system, it made sense that the majority of this population internalized much of the racial discourse that was part of it. It was vital to understand that much of the racial discourse (and thus racial ideology) that teachers brought with them to the class had been reinforced and solidified within the teacher education programs in which they received their preparation. In fact, teacher education programs also act as a key piece in the continuation of a racist ideology that provide the underlying grammar for the overarching racial discourse that dominates in the US. Because teacher education programs (including those that employ multicultural approaches), have not worked to actively disrupt racial discourses, they ultimately serve to reinforce very

problematic racial ideologies held by individuals who ultimately teach *our* children. This has turned into a vicious cycle where white supremacist ideologies continue to be recreated and supported by even those teachers who claim they have only the best intentions. And thus by the time teacher education students enter the workforce, it becomes quite a task to disrupt and transform firmly set racial discourses.

The position I take in this study is that if we better understand the racial discourses and ideologies of teacher education students, then more effective methods could potentially be created that would disrupt the vicious cycle. The fact remains that a truly race critical[2] discourse has definitely not been welcomed in teacher education programs and that instead they have opted to embrace programs and curriculums that continue to push and promote meritocratic and colorblind ideologies (e.g. watered-down multicultural education and diversity curricula). These quick-fix programs have had the effect of ultimately reinforcing problematic mind-sets of teacher education students who then in turn teach children the same problematic ways of thinking and being. As Althusser (1971) argued, schools function as an ideological state apparatus (ISA) and thus teachers must understand that they are part of this larger monster – i.e. the entire educational system. And if the school system functions as an ISA, it has been its primary agents - teachers - that have worked to inculcate individuals with what have been viewed as correct morals and standards.

Ideologies can no longer be viewed as '*just* ideologies' the way many in education and beyond so simplistically have stated. Ideology not only guides our thinking, but, determines and shapes it. Ideology is not simply a by-product of one's thinking but a creator

[2] I intentionally have chosen to use the phrase "race critical" instead of "critical race." This is mainly because critical has been in a sense coopted; I use race critical meaning that I come from the position that I am critical of race itself.

of it as well (Leonardo & Allen, 2008). Ideology is powerful in that it not only belongs to the realm of thought but determines human action as well. And because ideology determines and defines human actions, it has inevitably resulted in material consequences as well. These material consequences range from where and under what conditions individuals are forced to live under, to the schools they attend, to the quality of healthcare they receive, to ultimately the quality of life they will have.

We are always immersed in ideology and thus ideology is not something that should be brushed off or downplayed in any way for it has been all too common to hear statements in research such as "don't worry everyone has an ideology" as if this somehow lessens its importance and especially the need to critique it. If anything, the very fact that everyone is immersed in ideology should automatically point to the absolute need of its critical analysis.

What became important to study then was not only if teacher education students' racial ideologies and discourses worked to recreate and maintain the larger racialized social structure in place within the US, but what role the teacher education program played so that we could hopefully cause a significant rupture in this cycle. What became apparent was that instead of allowing teacher education programs to continue to be breeding grounds for agents invested in racial reproduction, we should aim to make teacher education programs sites for transformation. Instead of teacher education programs remaining in complicity with unequal and oppressive social systems in the US they should seek to dismantle the white supremacist structure by disrupting the problematic racial ideologies of its students. Maybe if we accomplished this, the vicious racial cycle could begin to be disrupted and dismantled.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to collect data on the racial discourses of TES in the urban Southwest. Because discourse reveals how people come to understand and represent the world, interviewing participants was a key method used in this study. Discourse was important in that it encompasses our tool for communicating with others (language) but also in that it is connected to issues of power (Fairclough, 1995; Foucault, 1972). Discourse is not simply "talk." It not only conveys our thoughts and needs to others but has also functioned as a powerful tool for great violence committed against *Others*. This violence should not be understood as solely a physical violence but takes other forms such as the discourse created by dominant groups to normalize and criminalize poverty, discrimination and oppression. By directly communicating with participants, I was able to better understand and analyze the racial ideologies that were part of their everyday discourse. This allowed for a more in depth picture of how TES conformed to and/or resisted the dominant racial discourse present in society.

Although there were studies that have focused on TES' racial *attitudes*, to my knowledge, this was the first to focus on racial discourse in this specific area of the Southwest and with this specific population. Therefore it added more complexity to the research conducted on teacher education students. It moved the analysis from simplistic solutions offered to explain racist attitudes to a more complex discussion of discourse and its relation to a larger, racialized social system (Bonilla-Silva, 1996). Because this study took place in a majority-minority state, it generated interesting data within and across racial groups such as Whites, Hispanics, Mexicans, and Chicanos. This study moved away from

the typical black-white binary that has tended to limit racial understanding to dynamics between only whites and Blacks.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study was that it demanded a closer and more critical examination of TES' racial discourse. This was something that has been needed given the current post-racial or "we're beyond race" climate (Bonilla-Silva, 2009). This study added to the discussion of whether or not TES are really beyond race. By analyzing TES' racial discourse a better understanding was gained as to how this specific population both conformed and resisted the current racial discourse in the US.

By having framed race as a social structure (Bonilla-Silva, 1996), a better understanding was reached regarding the role TES have played in the continuation of a racialized social system. Many studies have pointed out the racist 'attitudes' and negative stereotypes held by TES, but many did not include a more complex look at racial discourses and how discourse has functioned as an integral part of a larger racialized social structure in our society. This study moved beyond presenting racist discourses as coincidental and/or trivial and instead pushed the discussion to a more critical level where discourse was considered a vehicle for the reproduction of a set racial hierarchy in our society.

It was my hope that this study would contribute to much needed change in teacher education programs across the nation. Specifically, the goal would be to push teacher education programs beyond the current superficial multicultural education models that ultimately serve to reify the current hierarchical racial order in the US by not questioning the structural foundation of race. Because teacher education programs play a significant role in the development of the nation's future teachers, the position is taken that this is a key site

where race disruption can occur. Because TES will presumably be responsible for the education of children, changing their racial discourses can prove to be an effective weapon against racial reproduction.

This study also moved research beyond the Black-White binary dominant in discussions of race. By looking at the racial discourses across and within other racial groups such as Hispanics and Mexicans, this study contributed to the analysis of how racial groups not only understand but also conform to and resist their positions along the current racial hierarchy (Bonilla-Silva, 2009). Finally, because this study used a critical lens to analyze racial discourses, it contributed to research in the field of critical race studies.

Research Questions

1. What were the racial discourses of urban Southwestern teacher education students? What did participants' racial discourses reveal about their racial ideologies generally and towards education?
2. How did the ideologies of the participants conform to and/or resist the larger racialized social system?

Key Terms

Race – In this study, race was defined as "socially determined categories of identity and group association" (Bonilla-Silva, 1996, p. 472) that are based largely on perceptions of an individual's phenotype. As Bonilla-Silva further argued, "the placement of people in racial categories involves some form of hierarchy that produces definite social relations between the races" (p. 469). Although race is a social construct, it has very real material effects on racial groups, especially on those placed in subordinate positions.

Racialized Social System – At the same time that race was created in society, a racialized social system (Bonilla-Silva, 1996) also emerged. A racialized social system is "*the totality of the social relations and practices that reinforce white privilege*" (Bonilla-Silva, 2009, p. 9, italics in original). A key component of this perspective is that race possesses "an independent structural foundation" (Bonilla-Silva, 1996, p. 467-468), meaning that it determines and shapes all aspects of social life and has direct material consequences for racial groups.

Ideology – I used Leonardo and Allen's (2008) definition of ideology. "Ideology is defined as the problem of social relations of domination made intelligible through discourse. Ideology includes multiple responses to social relations of domination, sometimes distorting an accurate understanding of them and sometimes penetrating their structures" (p. 416). As Leonardo and Allen (2008) further argue, "Ideology is a way of reading the world and becomes a particular position that people take up through discourse" (p. 416).

Discourse – As Fairclough (1995) stated, "'discourse' is [the] use of language seen as a form of social practice" (p. 7). Borrowing from Foucault's concept of discourse, Fairclough further states that discourse is "the ordered set of discursive practices associated with a particular social domain or institution (e.g. the lecture, the seminar, counseling, and informal conversation, in an academic institution), and boundaries and relationships between them" (p. 12). Moreover, it is vital to understand the interconnectedness of discourse and ideology. As Leonardo (2003) states, "It should be made clear from the outset that ideology is not discourse, or vice versa" (p. 10) but that "ideology is understood, perpetuated, or challenged through discourse" (p. 18).

Research Design

In this qualitative study, 17 participants participated in two 60-120 minute semi-structured interviews (Participant 14 completed Interview 1 only). Participants were purposively drawn from a pool of over 150 students enrolled in an elementary teacher education program within a large, urban southwestern university. As previously mentioned, the main goal of this study was to better understand the current racial discourses and ideologies of teacher education students (TES).

The questions asked sought to elicit discourse that reflected the participants' spoken and underlying racial ideologies. This study moved away from the general 'yes or no' and/or 'agree/disagree' race questions used in past studies. For example, instead of asking participants a question that resulted in a vague yes or no response (e.g. "Do you believe everyone, regardless of race, deserves an equal education?"), participants were asked more specific questions (e.g. "Would you be comfortable teaching in a school with a predominately African American student population?"). Because discussions on race tend to trigger mild to severe discomfort and defensiveness for some individuals, care was taken to minimize this as much as possible. One way I achieved this was by providing an environment where participants felt safe (e.g. by assuring their anonymity and held interviews in a familiar setting) to dialogue and express themselves openly without scrutiny or repercussion.

The interviews were transcribed by a professional transcription service and were uploaded to a qualitative data analysis program called Atlas.ti. I then analyzed the data for emergent patterns and trends using critical discourse analysis (see Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk,

1985, 1992, 1993) to interpret and reach a more complex understanding of the racial discourses embedded in the interview responses.

Limitations of the Study

Every study has inherent limitations. One limitation was that this study included only an interview portion. The inclusion of a detailed pre-interview survey would have added greater depth and breadth. Observations of teacher education courses (such as DIV 101 and Field Experience Seminars) within the semester that the study took place would also have provided another perspective of how the TES interacted with one another and their instructor. I also would have liked to interview key faculty within the program and course instructors (e.g. DIV 101). This study was also conducted in only one specific region in the Southwest, but it is my goal in future studies to include other areas in the urban Southwest. Lastly, this study focused on teacher education students and not on teachers in actual classrooms. It would be interesting and necessary to replicate this study with the actual teacher workforce in order to provide a glimpse of the racial discourses of this population.

In almost every study there is the issue of potential researcher bias (Fine, et al. 2000). Of course, I agree with most qualitative researchers and would say that this could present a potential problem, but also agree that researcher bias can never be completely controlled, it can only be mitigated and hopefully kept in check throughout the course of the study. Keeping this reality in the forefront, I took every necessary step in the interview process and the analysis of the data to constantly remind myself of the "why" behind my study and reminding myself of the importance of representing the participants in the most honest and accurate manner. Some of the ways this was achieved was by relying on more than one

interview for data collection; by conducting a thorough and complete reading of the transcripts; and by being honest and open with the findings that emerged from the data.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Discourse and Ideology

If our goal is to reach a fuller and more complex understanding of why TES and people in general continue to uphold and demonstrate racist thinking and practices, research must incorporate larger discussions on the vital role ideology and discourse play in shaping and determining racist "attitudes[3]." Many studies in the field of education tend to rely on the analyses of attitudes to explain racism. But, an attitudinal analyses cannot be the only method used to explain away negative, ignorant, and/or backward racist thinking. Because this study seeks to break away from what I consider a more superficial type of analysis, I instead use literature on ideology and discourse to help me reach a more complex and critical understanding of teacher education students' racial thinking.

As Eagleton (1991) argues, there is no one single definition of ideology for it is a text woven together that encompasses many conceptual strands. In his book, *Ideology: An Introduction* (1991), Eagleton presents six fundamental definitions (pieces) to understanding ideology and these are the pieces that I will use in order to reach a more complete understanding of what ideology entails. First of all, Eagleton states that ideology is "the general material process of production of ideas, beliefs and values in social life" and includes "the whole complex of signifying practices and symbolic processes in a particular society" (p. 28). From this very first piece we can see how far removed ideology is from the simplistic definitions commonly offered that work to dismiss and undermine its importance. Statements such as "everyone has an ideology" and "you're being too ideological,"

[3] Attitude is the term commonly used in the literature but this study will instead employ ideology and discourse.

demonstrate the ignorance of the individual who uttered such senseless statements. Yes there is truth to the trite saying 'everyone has an ideology,' but this should not be used to diminish the importance of the concept of ideology and the urgent need for its analysis. Everyone has an ideology because we are all part of a larger society that has inculcated us with philosophies and doctrines that greatly influence how we then choose to see and understand our lives and the lives of others. As Eagleton (1991) argues, it is vital that we not empty the concept of ideology of its meaning and importance.

Second, ideology "symbolize[s] the conditions and life experiences of a specific, socially significant group or class" (Eagleton, 1991, p.28). As Eagleton (1991) argues, this term "socially significant" is important in that ideology involves and concerns itself with larger groups in a society. The weight of ideology should not be used to explain the thinking present in an afterschool chess club or the group of first-grade teachers in a particular school. Of course all of the individuals within these smaller groups are ruled by ideologies but it is important to clarify that ideology in its more complex form is involved with understanding the patterns of thinking that guide the actions of large and significant social groups such as racial groups or the population of preservice teachers in the US (who most happen to be white middle-class females). Along with this second point comes a third piece that states that ideology involves "the *promotion* and *legitimation* of the interests of such social groups in the face of opposing interests" (p. 29, italics in original). This point is extremely important in that it brings to the conversation the question of power and domination. Ideology is not simply a worldview that individuals and groups come to passively hold but involves questions of *how* and *why* we arrived at our specific ideologies and especially what we choose to subsequently do as individuals to uphold and transmit ideologies that serve to

benefit larger dominant social structures and also the social groups we belong to (such as our racial and/or ethnic group). Ideology is intricately involved with the maintenance of interests and can "be seen as a discursive field in which self-promoting social powers conflict and collide over questions central to the reproduction of social power as a whole" (Eagleton, 1991, p. 29).

Fourth, ideology "is not simply a matter of imposing ideas from above but of securing the complicity of subordinated classes and groups" (Eagleton, 1991, p. 30). The question then to ask is how do imposing ideologies secure complicity from subordinated groups? One of the main ways that this is achieved is through the creation of false illusions that then lead to individuals believing in the ruling ideologies. Take for example the achievement ideology that has become such a part of our society and in our educational system (Akom, 2008). People and groups have been manipulated into believing that society for the most part, functions in a fair and just manner. In this meritocratic system, individuals who 'work hard' will be justly compensated in life. This ideology has taken such a stronghold in our communities and schools that it is almost impossible to convince its followers that society functions otherwise. The fifth point that Eagleton makes reinforces that "ideology signifies ideas and beliefs which help to legitimate the interests of a ruling group or class specifically by distortion and dissimulation" (p.29). Again, ideology works largely through manipulation, deception, and distortion.

Although there is great manipulation involved in the transmission of ideologies, we cannot ignore the uglier side of this and that is people and groups strategically *choose* to remain in their state of complicity and conformity with ruling ideologies. It is crucial to understand that social groups are not complete victims who passively succumb to the

manipulations of ideology (although upon confrontation many of these individuals adamantly cling to this illusion). Social groups and individuals *choose* to conform to and/or resist larger systems of oppression because there is something to be gained whether this comes in material form and/or in greater social benefits. Dominant ideologies cannot be reproduced unless there is some type of buy-in from the groups under its rule and it is crucial to not misrepresent individuals and groups as passive victims who are subjected to ruling ideologies. Buy-in comes in many forms and one of these forms is a conscious buy-in whereby people and/or groups choose to remain complicit with dominant ideologies because there are benefits to be reaped and thus there is a vested interest. What is then crucial to note is that there are strategic reasons why people cling to their ideologies even if people are conscious of the fact that their ideologies promote oppression and injustice. As Eagleton (1991) rightly states,

> In fact, the majority of people have a fairly sharp eye to their own rights and interests, and most people feel uncomfortable at the thought of belonging to a seriously unjust form of life. Either, then, they are counterbalanced by greater benefits, or that they are inevitable, or that they are not really injustices at all. It is part of the function of a dominant ideology to inculcate such beliefs. It can do this either by falsifying social reality, suppressing and excluding certain unwelcome features of it, or suggesting that these features cannot be avoided. (p. 27)

The last piece that Eagleton (1991) includes speaks to the structural and systemic nature of ideology. Ideology should not be confined to the individual level or even the group level for it functions above and beyond. Ideology organizes the systems, institutions, groups, and the lives of individuals that belong to a society. Thus ideology "retains an emphasis on

false or deceptive beliefs but regards such beliefs as arising not from the interests of a dominant class but from the material structure of society as a whole" (Eagleton, 1991, p. 30). What is key to understand then is that there is a material structure to ideology and that is what makes it so powerful. "Ideology is not (a) baseless illusion but a solid reality, an active material force which must have at least enough cognitive content to help organize the practical lives of human beings" (Eagleton, 1991, p. 26). Again, it is crucial to understand that this material structure goes beyond the individual and group level. It operates at the societal and global level and this structure in turn dictates the ideologies that are present among significant social groups and the individuals within these groups.

With all of this said, the question remains – how do we come to know and understand an individual's and/or a group's ideologies? Is an individual's or group's ideologies completely transparent and readily available to others, especially to critical researchers? The reality is that much of our ideologies are not always transparent, sometimes not even to ourselves. To a large extent, our ideologies remain trapped (and even hidden) in our minds and thus part of the answer to understanding ideologies resides in an excavation of human discourse. And thus in this study it is discourse that provides a path that allows us to know and become more intimate with an individual's and/or group's ideologies.

For the purpose of this study, discourse could be understood as the use of "language in particular contexts, complete with implicit and explicit standards for usage, concepts, and meaning" (Leonardo, 2003, p. 11). What this implies is that every context contains its correct and acceptable norms for how, why, and when we communicate. There is for example, a specific and acceptable discourse that pervades in teacher education programs as opposed to the discourse that is found in medical schools. The effects of discourse also

function above this level in that there are larger discourses that guide and determine other discourses. For example, both of these groups mentioned although they pertain to distinct academic groups, are familiar with, practice, and uphold a mostly white middle-class discourse because the individuals in these groups come from this racial and economic group. At this level then their discourses coalesce and are very similar.

Leonardo goes on to argue that, "discourse has ideological effects but is different from ideology. Through discourse, ideology is made known as an intelligible process" (Leonardo, 2003, p.11). From this we can glean that discourse is not ideology and ideology is not discourse, *but* they are intimately connected. We therefore begin to decipher and more fully understand an individual's and a group's ideologies by analyzing their discourses. In a sense, our discourse reveals our and others' ideologies and thus provides a glimpse of the "particular position subjects [choose to] take up and from which they read social life" (Leonardo, 2003, p.22). Because "ideology is a reading of the world from a particular place in that world" (Leonardo, 2003, p.22), it then allows us to broaden our understanding of what drives and determines human thought and behavior. In particular, this is where this study diverged from much of the previous research. Instead of relying on attitudes and attitudinal change to understand thinking, I use discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 1985, 1992) to broaden and complicate my understanding of TES' ideologies (in this case, particular to race).

To continue this discussion, discourse not only refers to spoken language but also encompasses what is written and what resides within the realm of our thoughts – those that are uttered and those that remain locked in the confines of our minds. Our discourses do not come to existence in a vacuum but are determined and guided by larger societal forces. We

learn to use and enforce certain discourses that are deemed most worthy and desirable in society. We are not completely free to choose our discourses but as previously mentioned, we make decisions (whether conscious or not is irrelevant) to accept or reject society's dominant discourses that are forced upon us as we progress (or maybe regress) through the system.

Discourse, like ideology, entails issues of power (Foucault, 1972) and privilege. As Leonardo (2003) states, "ideology [and discourse] is a tool not only for communication, but also for domination and liberation. For it is in language that human subjects understand their relationship to relations of power" (p. 15). And thus the vital question remains – what serves as a primary driving force in subjugating individuals and groups into learning discourses and ideologies? One part of the answer lies in the educational system for it is through the system of school that we learn to accept the dominant discourses and reigning ideologies (Althusser, 1971) that solidify specific power relations in society. As Althusser states,

> The reproduction of labour power thus reveals as its *sine qua non* not only the reproduction of its 'skills' but also the reproduction of its subjection to the ruling ideology or of the 'practice' of that ideology, with the proviso that it is not enough to say 'not only but also,' for it is clear that *it is in the forms and under the forms of ideological subjection that provision is made for the reproduction of the skills of labour power* (p. 129, italics in original).

But from here we must push further and argue that it is not only the `labour power' or the `skills of labour' as Althusser states that is reproduced by ideological subjection, but it is about race and racial power as well if not more so. Continuing with Althusser's argument,

the educational system has become the reigning enforcer of indoctrinating individuals with the ruling ideology.

This brings us back to the discussion of TES and how they play a fundamental role in the continuation of the indoctrination of the masses with what are viewed as the correct and desirable discourses and ideologies. Whether they claim to be conscious of this or not, by being educated (or better yet, trained) in programs that uphold and reflect dominant discourses and ideologies, TES function as the agents for these larger systems. This complicity is compounded by the fact that the majority of TES have been and continue to be white, middleclass females and thus it seems natural and normal to 'pass on' their ideologies to their students, whether their students happen to mirror their group or not. Because TES will eventually hold positions of power[4] as classroom teachers, they are part of an important group in our society. This group of future teachers does hold substantial power in that they serve as part of what Althusser (1971) refers to as an "ideological apparatus," which in this case is the educational system. As Althusser argues, "an ideology always exists in an apparatus, and its practice, or practices" (p. 156). Thus this ideological apparatus – our schools, serve to uphold bourgeois or the dominant ideologies of the time which continue to be those belonging to the white racial group. It is this connection of ideology and discourse and not a reliance on attitudes that led to a more critical understanding of TES' racial ideologies.

[4] Although the amount of power is continuously contested, it is imperative to recognize that it is a position of power relative to others nonetheless

Ideology, Discourse, and Race

The previous section discussed the connections between ideology and discourse but now we need to move the discussion to a more critical level and contemplate how race factors into the discussion. We need to analyze how race, specifically a racialized social system (Bonilla-Silva, 1996) translates to ideology and discourse. Questions to keep in the forefront range from how does race function ideologically and discursively to why this is important to include in discussions pertaining to education, schooling, TES, and teacher education programs. Although many try to argue away any direct correlations with race or prefer to downplay or completely ignore its impact, race greatly affects the current reigning ideologies and what are considered the 'acceptable' discourses in society (and especially what is considered as acceptable discourses in teacher education). In fact, it should be considered a direct correlation. The more race is present in a society, the more of its effects will play out and be present in an individual's and group's ideologies and discourses. This is true because the fact of the matter is that society (and the globe over) reflects what Bonilla-Silva (1996) describes as a racialized social system. Our entire society is racially structured and based on a hierarchical system that governs almost every single aspect of human life and assigns an individual's worth according to where their group has been placed on the metaphorical racial ladder. Whites and lighter-skinned groups have strategically placed themselves on the highest end of the racial ladder; groups such as Latinos fall toward the middle; and Blacks and other darker-skinned groups have been relegated to the bottom (Bonilla-Silva, 2009). This assigning of human worth based on this hierarchy results in very real material and social consequences. The higher you are situated on the racial ladder, the more material wealth and social resources (such as better access to good schools) individuals within these groups will

have and of course, the lower the position you are forced to on this ladder, the less material wealth and social resources you will have (Bocian, Ernst, & Li, 2006; Massey & Denton, 1993; Oliver & Shapiro, 1997).

As a result of living in this racialized social system a type of cycle has emerged whereby our ideologies and discourses are racialized while at the same time our ideologies and discourses work to uphold race and a racialized system as well. Race functions discursively and ideologically while simultaneously our discourses and ideologies are racially motivated and driven. It has become a never-ending cycle. This is why I have become so fascinated with how everyday discourse bespeaks our true thoughts and philosophies regarding how we view and deal with race and racism. This especially has become the case with the student teachers I have worked with. What do their everyday discourses tell us about their racial motives and their racial thinking and how do these discourses in turn play a significant role in the perpetuation of a racialized educational system and society?

Again, because one cannot directly measure a person or group's ideologies, the answer lies in the analysis of everyday discourse. As discussed in the previous section, our discourse provides a window to even the most deep-seated and hidden ideologies. As van Dijk (1992) argues, it is nearly impossible for most people to maintain what are considered politically correct discourses in conversations and interviews dealing with race. The ideologies hiding behind our performed conversations become unmasked with prodding. With more specific questioning, the race-free façade of most individuals falls apart. This is exactly what I encountered time and time again in my classes when the topic of race surfaced and in conversations with student teachers and faculty within teacher education programs.

Although many of these students (and faculty) made attempts to preserve their racist-free image, especially in the presence of an instructor of color, this quickly came undone in even slightly heated discussions regarding race in schools and society.

Given the fact that race governs and is present in all facets of human life, it is most logical that race would be a primary lens (frame) in this study. Because we are immersed in a racialized social system, it would be an outright impossible task to extract ideology and discourse from the overarching racial effects. I firmly believe that this extraction would be unattainable because race, ideology, and discourse in many ways are fused together and virtually inseparable. Because I take the position that not only ideology but discourse itself functions as one of the main vehicles used to perpetuate a racialized social system, then a race-centered discourse analysis is used to offer a more critical understanding of the discourses and ideologies of TES.

Race is a function of discourse and discourse is a function of race, they exist in a symbiotic relationship. This is what makes discourse such a powerful weapon for the maintenance of race. The racialization of human bodies and accepting racial hierarchies become normalized through the discourses presented as 'normal' in our society. Discourses that work to uphold a white supremacist system are present everywhere, especially in U.S. schools. The current racial discourse used in schools teaches children to accept that the white race is the model race and it also teaches them to accept their respective position along the racial hierarchy depending on what racial group they are classified in. Most children, especially white children, grow up thinking that to be racialized is natural and so is belonging to a racial hierarchy where white or its likeness, is superior to all others.

Thus one of the fundamental questions guiding this study is to further understand how through discourse TES conform to and/or resist a white supremacist racialized social system. By analyzing the discourses (specific to race) of TES, this study captures more than just a glimpse of the current racial ideologies of this specific population who soon enough would become part of the teacher workforce responsible for teaching (or better yet, indoctrinating) our children with discourses that could ultimately serve to perpetuate a white supremacist racialized social system.

It is also important to note that this study uses a more critical approach to race by utilizing an analysis of discourse and ideology as opposed to relying on an *attitudinal* analysis. I am not interested in studying the attitudes of TES towards race but instead my interest lies in reaching a fuller and deeper understanding of their discourses and ideologies. This study is also *race critical* which I view as distinct from other trendier and coopted 'critical' race approaches. A truly race critical study is just that, *critical* of race itself. Race critical differs in many ways from what has become the trendier 'critical race' approach that at times fails to adequately question race and instead might continue to find comfort within an ethnicity/culture-based paradigm. Race critical differs in that it firmly understands that race is unnatural in every way but that nonetheless it is a social construct with *real* material consequences (Leonardo, 2009). A race critical approach demanded an analysis at the structural level of race. A structural analysis of race goes beyond a simple awareness that racism continues to exist in our society. It does not detach racism from its origins and that is the strategic creation of race itself by Europeans who became "white" over the time they were conquering, brutally murdering, enslaving, and colonizing their opposition – the *Others*. A structural analysis does not hesitate to recognize that white supremacy is the "unnamed

political system that has made the modern world what it is today" (Mills, 1997, p. 1). Furthermore, a structural analysis does not merely mention the existence of white privilege but brings it to the forefront of discussion and connects it back to the existence of a white supremacist system. As Leonardo (2009) states, "the concept of white supremacy names the group in question. It is unequivocal in its political capacity to name whites as the group enforcing its racial power" (p. 121). Instead of falling back on what can be limiting discussions regarding the existence of white privilege, a more race critical analysis outlines exactly what it means to reside in a white supremacist society that created white privilege in the first place.

A race critical approach breaks away from the continual portrayal of whites as ignorant of race and/or as innocent victims of this white supremacist system that they work to uphold. If we are to break away from current problematic racial discourses, honest discussions must invoke whites' complicity with the reproduction of a racialized system, whether they claim awareness of it or not. Whites for too long have gotten away with playing their 'ignorant of race' card. In reality, whites are far from being unfamiliar with the consequences and effects of race. One need only engage in a more critical discussion regarding race and the façade of their innocence and ignorance fades to the background. As Leonardo (2009) points out, "for a group that claims racial ignorance, whites can speak with such authority and expertise when they do not like what they hear" (p. 114). Thus, this study positions whites in a place of knowing and demands greater accountability.

Along this same line of reasoning, a race critical approach also holds people of color accountable for playing the 'ignorant of race' card themselves. How many times have we heard less critical folks of color downplay the importance of race as if they were siding with

the white clan? Of course we will always see the detrimental effects of internal colonization but what I am referring to goes beyond that. It speaks to people of color who seem to actively work against any in-depth discussions involving race and racism. It is absolutely frustrating to engage in pointless, no-win discussions with whites, but something else and something so utterly hurtful when it involves people who you would assume are on the same side. A race critical approach also includes discussions on inter- and intra-racial group conflict and divisions which tend to be left out in most of the research. The main focus tends to be on the Black-White binary with little discussion or analysis on the binaries between and within racial groups. These discussions prove important to include if we want to move beyond the glossing over our own problems. Race critical entails not only being critical of whites but also of ourselves and how we as people of color do things to perpetuate a racist social system.

Teacher Education Students, Ideology, Discourse, and Race

The primary purpose of this section is to provide an overview and analysis of research that focuses on teacher education students and race and to also discuss the strengths and limitations of this research. I initially begun the search for relevant literature using keywords such as "pre-service teachers," "ideology," and "race," but this did not return many studies. After some investigation, I realized that most of the research in this area instead used the term "attitude" and thus my online search was refined. I resumed the online search using keywords such as "pre-service teachers," "teacher education students," "race," "racial attitudes," and "racial perceptions." This proved to be more fruitful.

This literature review has the following questions in mind: What do we currently know about teacher education students' racial attitudes (specifically regarding their thinking

and behaviors)? What theoretical frameworks have been used to analyze, examine and discuss teacher education students' racial attitudes and have these understandings and approaches been used to minimize or avoid the salience of race? Have any studies incorporated discussions and/or analyses using the concepts of ideology and discourse? How critical has the research been on the concept of race itself? That is, is the concept of race questioned and/or critiqued at all or have previous studies for the most part served to reify the naturalization of race?

I also discuss and propose the need for a more critical analysis that goes beyond the realm of current attitudinal research. Ultimately, it is my hope that one can clearly see that an aim of this literature review is to move the current understanding of teacher education students' racial thinking (attitudes) to a more critical[5] level in regards to race. This could be done by utilizing and incorporating discussions connected to ideology and discourse so that we can more fully understand how these connect to the perpetuation of a racialized social system in the US. Again, it should be noted that attitude was definitely not my term of choice for this study, but reflects what has been used in the literature and field of teacher education.

Studies focused on teacher education students' racial attitudes were definitely not new and actually evolved over time. With that said, many of the first studies I found that focused on teacher education students' racial attitudes were published in the 1990's with a few being published in the early 2000's (Easter, Shultz, Neyhart, & Reck, 1999; Groulx,

[5] It should be noted that the word 'critical' has been overused and misused across various fields within education, teacher education being no exception. This overuse has resulted in the watering down of the very essence and importance of the word critical. Thus, in this work I am aiming to more accurately capture the weight of the word critical.

2001; Mason, 1997; Shultz, Neyhart, & Reck, 1996; Wolffe, 1996). This rise in interest in racial attitudes and/or racial perceptions was correlated with teacher education's interest and concern specific to the racial attitudes of their student teachers especially given the realities of rapidly changing demographics. The rise of studies focused on better understanding racial attitudes of student teachers connected back to many large-scale attitudinal survey studies conducted during the 1990s that demonstrated attitudinal discrepancies between whites and groups of color (see Gomez, 1993 for an insightful overview of the various studies focused on racial attitudes during that time period). As a result, the field of education witnessed a significant increase in white educators, white scholars, and white researchers suddenly become more concerned with the 'racial attitudes' or 'racial perceptions' of their mostly white student teachers. Various studies within the field of teacher education focused on showing a positive increase in teacher education students' attitudes proving that this population had gained more sensitivity toward people of color (Easter et al., 1999; Groulx, 2001; Mason, 1997; Shultz et al., 1996; and Wolffe, 1996).

I divided the research I found into two main categories that I labeled as "The First Wave" and "The Second Wave." Dividing the research into two groups was important because there was a distinct difference between the two that I explain in the proceeding sections.

The First Wave of Studies

The studies included in what I called the First Wave primarily focus on issues dealing with negative attitudes, racism (although not really labeled as such), and preservice teachers. Specifically, these studies focus on attitudinal change. For the most part, these studies relied heavily on the use of "urban" and "inner-city" field experiences and/or multicultural

education trainings and courses as a means to elicit positive change in teacher education students' attitudes towards diversity and students of color (see Easter et al., 1999; Groulx, 2001; Mason, 1997; Shultz et al., 1996; Wolffe, 1996). Overall this desire to elicit change in teacher education students' racial attitudes signaled that at least there was a greater move towards an awareness that a "problem" existed and that there was a need for some type of resolution[6]. That is, a significant number of educators and researchers within the field of teacher education realized and accepted that a significant amount of their white student population harbored negative perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs towards diversity and people of color, and thus there was a desire to promote attitudinal change by some means (see Gomez, 1993 for discussion of many of the attitudinal surveys during that time period). Many teacher education programs resorted to the use of field experiences in urban and inner-city schools and/or courses incorporating multicultural education as tools to sensitize their mostly white students.

In the research presented, there exists a range in the duration of the urban field experiences teacher education students underwent. Some were extremely short-term consisting of a 2-day field experience (Wolffe, 1996) to a 'longer' field experience where students worked in a designated 'urban' or 'inner-city' school 2 days per week for a total of 8 weeks (Mason, 1997). Both of these studies focus on addressing the following question: What effect did an urban/inner-city field experience have on the racial attitudes of preservice teachers?

The results reported in the Wolffe (1996) study were very positive. Data analysis was based on a mixed-method approach in which preservice teachers who participated in the two-

[6] This observation will also have to be researched further.

day urban field experience filled out an attitude survey and wrote a paper on their overall field experience. "A one-tailed T-test for dependent samples on the survey scores showed a significant difference in the change of attitudes held by the [sic] those who went to Cincinnati [the site of the urban school]" (Wolffe, p. 104). Furthermore, Wolffe found that "for a few participants the trip was so transforming that they made comments stating that they were reconsidering the possibility of teaching in an urban setting" (p. 105).

It was interesting to note that throughout the article, although fairly short, Wolffe steered clear of any direct reference to people of color and instead chose the term 'urban' to refer to minority students and/or people of color. This is very reflective of what was considered to be the correct racial discourse in the field of education during that particular time (later 90's).

The guiding questions in the Mason (1997) study were similar to Wolffe's in that the researcher was trying to gauge if "pre-service teachers' attitudes toward inner-city, low-income, and minority students improve[d] as a result of completing an inner-city field experience" (p. 31). In this study pre-service teachers were required to spend "two full days a week working with elementary students in one self-contained classroom under the supervision of the classroom teacher and a faculty member from the university's department of teacher education" (p. 32). Their entire practicum lasted eight weeks. Seventy-five out of the 176 students participating in this program were placed in "inner-city" schools that had significant student populations of low-income African-Americans and low-income Hispanics. All of the pre-service teachers had been given a pre- and post-questionnaire that was intended to assess their attitudes towards "inner-city teaching." Overall, Mason found that students in the urban field experience group reported that they "gained more knowledge than did the

suburban field experience group about students from different cultural backgrounds" (p. 36) from both their methods classes and their field experience. It should be noted that along with their "urban" field experience, these pre-service teachers were required to take methods courses that included issues regarding diversity and multicultural education. This requirement and the longer duration of the field experience differentiated this study from extremely short two-day quick-exposure method used in the Wolffe (1996) study. Both the Wolffe and Mason study were attempting to demonstrate the importance of (white) pre-service teachers undergoing urban field experiences. Mason left us with the following concluding thought:

> Overall, this study supports the general value of field experiences in teacher preparation and, in particular, within urban settings. The debate surrounding their content and purpose will no doubt continue, but rather than dismissing the impact of field experiences on the formation of positive attitudes toward urban schools and students, it would seem more worthwhile for future research to examine the nature of those experiences to determine their value. (p. 39)

Mason brings up a good point in that field experiences need not be completely discredited and discarded but definitely need to be further analyzed and even critiqued.

Shultz et al. (1996) and Easter et al. (1999) did not subject participants to a field experience of any type but instead as a result of a questionnaire advocated for the use of multicultural courses/education in combination with "a variety of experiences that would bring preservice teachers into contact with cultural groups different from their own" (Shultz et al., 1996, p. 1). Both of these articles were based on the same data set and were both primarily interested in examining "the attitudes and beliefs of a large sample (N=300) of

preservice teacher education students regarding culturally diverse students and teaching in an urban environment" (Shultz et al., 1996, p. 3). The researchers' rationale for the need for improved teacher education programs was that because so few of the future teachers are people of color themselves, then (white) teacher education students needed 'help' in changing their negative views towards diversity and children of color. Shultz et al. stressed that "failure to acknowledge these attitudes and beliefs perpetuates many of the problems that plague teacher preparation for diversity" (p. 2).

It was interesting to note that Easter et al. (1999) found that "96% of these students believed they could teach in a classroom of diverse students or had no preference concerning where they would teach in spite of the fact that only 22% of the students had any life experience in an urban environment" (p. 211). Self-reports such as this one need to be further analyzed for their underlying rationale. Statements such as these could be taken in at least two ways. Either this statement is indicative of preservice teachers who are very willing and receptive to urban settings and urban people or this is simply and utterly a false statement reflecting ignorance and naiveté. Easter et al. do include in the discussion that beliefs are not always easy to change but they still end their article with the following statement: "By changing the beliefs of tomorrow's teachers, the American educational system will take its greatest stride toward meaningful reform in a culturally diverse society" (p. 218).

Groulx (2001) had a similar study to Shultz et al. (1996) and Easter et al. (1999) in that the focus was primarily on comparing "education students' attitudes toward working in urban schools as they entered teacher preparation and later after student teaching" (p. 60). The participants in the study completed a questionnaire that included "5-point Likert-type scales" (p. 68) and a second part in which participants had to rate "14 school characteristics

regarding ethnic and socioeconomic diversity, school safety, parental involvement, and student achievement and motivation levels" (p. 68). What is important to note is that the initial sample of participants and the post student teaching sample that completed the questionnaire were distinct in that "their field experiences had varied markedly, with respect to working in urban or multicultural settings" (p. 66). As a researcher, this raises a flag in regards to the comparability of the two groups. Groulx openly stated that it should be of no surprise to have found that "only 7 of the 112 [initial sample of] participants rated teaching the Hispanic or African American neighborhood schools as equally or more comfortable or interesting than teaching in suburban or private schools" (p. 79). Groulx admitted that most disturbing were the "12 students who rated their interest and comfort in teaching at the African American school at the bottom of the scale, and 10 of these offered no elaborative comments" (p. 79 and p. 83). Groulx concluded that her "study made it clear that our preservice teachers did not approach their profession at all ready or willing to face the challenges of urban schools." However, she went on to say that "through field experiences based on planned collaboration and reflection," preservice teachers can become more confident, committed, and ready "to succeed in teaching in all kinds of schools" (p. 88).

The aforementioned studies conclude with trying to remain hopeful that the racial "attitudes" of preservice teachers had undergone change as a result of some type of exposure to the Other. To begin with studies such as these, work from the unifying assumption that their mostly white students harbored negative attitudes and beliefs simply because they had not been sufficiently exposed to "urban" and/or "inner-city" schools and people. Both of these terms serve as code words in the literature for people of color or places inhabited by people of color. Moreover, the reasoning followed that white teacher education students had

these negative attitudes because it was the result of an *individual's* outdated beliefs and/or misunderstandings regarding people of color. "White students simply do not understand or don't know folks of color," and thus the thinking followed that with a short course or workshop focused on diversity and/or more direct contact with 'urban' students white teacher education students would become race-conscious and more sensitized to the needs of the diverse populations they would ultimately end up working with.

The aforementioned studies all invariably made the claim that teacher education students' attitudes towards people of color *had been, or can be, significantly changed* using an exposure-based approach. The following quotes sum up the main arguments made in this research:

> Through field experiences … we can facilitate confidence, commitment, and readiness to succeed in teaching in all kinds of schools (Groulx, 2001, p. 88).
>
> This study demonstrates that a well planned, short-term field experience which engages students in careful reflection can positively influence their attitudes of and expectations for students enrolled in integrated urban schools (Wolffe, 1996, p. 106).
>
> It was concluded that, given the cultural attitudes, beliefs, and perspectives with which teacher education students entered their respective programs, additional emphasis in multicultural education was needed to assist them in gaining the knowledge and attitudes they need to teach in a rapidly changing society (Shultz et al., 1996, p. 1).

But despite the hopefulness and "positive attitude," I am left with questions and concerns, especially as an educator and researcher of color. Is it simply a question of lack of

exposure to the Other that resulted in negative attitudes or is this telling of a much larger ideological and societal issue? Would more direct contact and experiences with urban and/or inner city students and schools automatically create more racially sensitized teachers who in turn would be more inclined to consider teaching in urban environments and now understand and appreciate children of color? As Groulx (2001) states, "There is a growing agreement that direct experience and sustained human contact are key elements for facilitating multicultural understanding" (p. 64). This statement forces me to ask 'growing agreement' amongst who and what exactly would a 'multicultural understanding' entail? What remains prevalent in my mind is this approach really enough to create and instill deep change in TES and do quick-fix exposure methods solve the 'problem' of negative racial attitudes?

One of the last articles I found was very informative in that it provides a synthesis of many other studies that also focused on preservice teachers and diversity. One of the main questions that Gomez (1993) posed in her article was the following: "Who are the prospective teachers in the United States and what are their perspectives on the diverse children they teach?" (p. 459). Gomez refers to various studies (e.g., Goodlad, 1990; Grant & Secada, 1990; Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Study, 1991; Paine, 1989; Sears, 1992; and Zeichner, 1992) that surveyed the attitudes prospective teachers and/or novice teachers (those who had completed one year of teaching) had toward issues of diversity and children of color. To no surprise, many of the results demonstrated an array of negative attitudes. Based on her analysis of numerous studies, Gomez reported that there was "no isolated component, no single course or lone field experience of teacher education, [that] can provide adequate reform" (p. 471). Ahlquist (as stated in Gomez, 1993) voiced that "she may have expected too many changes in students' thinking in too brief a period of time" (p.

465). Ladson-Billings (as stated in Gomez, 1993) also reported "no significant differences in the subsequent attitudes and beliefs of pre-service elementary teachers who took her course and those who did not" (p. 466).

Gomez asks a very important question: "Why are the perspectives of prospective teachers so difficult to alter?" (p. 468). This question leads right to the heart of the matter and entails a discussion missing in the literature presented so far. The studies in the first wave had yet to include any critical discussion of white privilege, white domination, white supremacy, whiteness, and the relation of these critical topics with the racist tendencies inherent in the white group itself. How is it possible to begin to even answer this question without engaging in these more critical issues?

The Second Wave of Studies

The studies within what I refer to as the 'Second Wave' used a much different approach to understanding teacher education students' racial 'attitudes.' In general, these studies argue that white teacher education students' racial attitudes are largely shaped by systemic white privilege (see Levine-Rasky, 2000; Lewis, Collins, & Pitts, 2000; Marx, 2004; Rezai-Rashti & Solomon, 2004; Solomon, Portelli, Daniel, & Campbell, 2005). The second wave of studies mark a definite progression from their predecessors in that they began to include discussion of white privilege and whiteness – concepts not yet specifically addressed in the previous studies (First Wave). Many of these newer studies move beyond portraying quick fix solutions as something that could readily solve distorted racial attitudes to instead analyzing more of the complexities underlying and associated with negative racial attitudes. Thus there is a clear move away from attributing racist attitudes with instances of outdated individualistic beliefs and/or the result of lack of exposure to people of color. It is

important to point out that these studies no longer use "attitudes" in their research but instead incorporated concepts such as perceptions (Lewis et al., 2000), value systems and beliefs (Levine-Rasky, 2000), and discourse (Solomon et al., 2005).

It is important to ask what the impetus was that led to such a definite change in this specific field of research. What was happening (academically) at the time (the 2000's) these newer studies emerged? The introductions of these studies answer this question and connect their new angle for understanding teacher education students' racial attitudes with the emergence and rise in interest in whiteness studies, in Critical Race Theory, and the impact this had on the awareness and discussions of white privilege within the field of teacher education. As one study states, "Critical whiteness studies has arrived" (Levine-Rasky, 2000, p. 263) and another study states the following:

> As teacher educators, our work is informed by the importance of deconstructing whiteness in the academy and society in general. In making whiteness, and more so, white privilege, visible, we hope to interrogate and change the construction of whiteness as an unmarked narrative, invisible category, and white privilege as unearned and unmeritocratic. (Solomon et al., 2005, p. 148)

With educators, scholars and researchers in the field of teacher education now willing to engage in a more critical analysis of white privilege and whiteness, the approach they used to understand students' racial attitudes underwent a definite transformation. Instead of continuing to use and rely on limited exposure-based approaches in creating supposed attitudinal change, the whiteness-studies based research more critically explore the reasons underlying *why* negative perceptions and beliefs towards diversity and people of color persist. As Levine-Rasky (2000) state, "In teacher education, critical whiteness studies reflect the

realization that the failure of equity education initiatives is attributable to a misidentification of change object" (p. 263). This statement is indicative of the fundamental change that occurred. That is, educators and researchers in the field were now turning the tables so to speak and re-directing more of their gaze *towards* the teacher education students themselves. Maybe the problem did not solely reside in the court of the "Others," the "urban", and the "inner-city," but resided within the population of teacher education students themselves. The predominately white teacher education student population was now being held partially accountable for the "race problems" encountered in education.

Instead of continuing to promote more exposure (short-term field experiences) and more multicultural knowledge as the solution to help teacher education students better understand students/people of color, the whiteness-based studies instead wanted students to become aware of and engage with the existence of whiteness and their own white privilege. As Rezai-Rashti and Solomon (2004) state, "Interviews with white candidates reveal their lack of awareness of white privilege, fear of Blacks based on selective experiences, and little more than curiosity about the racial 'other'" (p. 74). Many of these studies now made a clear connection between whiteness, white privilege, and the persistence of teacher education students' negative racial attitudes. Take the following as an example:

> If white students and educators are to become empowered critical analysts of their/our own claims to know the privileged world in which their racial interests function, then such privileges and injustices they reap for others would necessarily become the objects of analyses of structural racism. (Roman, 1993 as stated in Rezai-Rashti & Solomon, 2004, p. 86).

Most of the studies in this second wave used in-depth interviews and/or surveys to explore how whiteness and white privilege informed teacher education students' racial perceptions and beliefs (see Levine-Rasky, 2000; Lewis et al., 2000; Marx, 2004; Rezai-Rashti & Solomon, 2004). Thus as part of the interviews and/or survey, participants were asked questions that would reveal each participant's understanding of whiteness and white privilege. It was interesting to note that the only study to include the specific questions that were asked of participants was the Lewis et al. (2000) study that utilized a three-part open-ended questionnaire to gauge the perceptions preservice teachers had of African American students' ability to succeed in math and science. The omission of the questions (even to give the reader a general idea of questions) asked of participants in the other studies could lead to an interesting interpretation and left one wondering how exactly were racial perceptions and awareness of white privilege gauged?

Instead of using interview or survey responses, Solomon et al. (2005) used students' written responses to Peggy McIntosh's article, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack," as a means to analyze the strategies teacher education students specifically used to avoid addressing and engaging with whiteness and white privilege. "Employing discourse analysis, the candidates' responses to the article were analyzed for the ideas, messages, values, beliefs and worldviews (ideological system) they reflect." (Solomon et al., p. 152). What was also unique about this study was that all of the members of the research team "were members of racialized and minoritized groups" (p. 152). I am certain that this significantly impacted the framing and analysis employed in the study for this article was the most critical in regards to issues of race and racism because it connected white teacher

candidates' discourse of denial to "ideological incongruence, liberalist notions of individualism and meritocracy, and the negation of white capital" (p. 147).

For the most part all of these studies (some more so than others) moved towards a more critical direction in their analysis of teacher education students' racial perceptions and beliefs. No longer were the researchers content with superficial multiculturalism and the glossing over of what are labeled as "bad attitudes." Researchers now had become more candid and direct in accepting that most of the education pre-service teachers had received was "characterized by an emphasis on 'celebrating' diversity and difference as opposed to promoting critical analysis of issues of systemic and institutional racism within schools" (Rezai-Rashti & Solomon, 2004, p. 76).

Researchers within this second wave were definitely beyond the awareness-was-enough mentality. Many voiced that awareness was simply one of the steps that was needed to help pre-service teachers move towards becoming more critical and also addressed the fact that true change required time and commitment. As Marx (2004) stated:

> Despite the enthusiasm of participants at the conclusion of this study – and my own upon hearing their impressive insights – it must be emphasized here that understanding, problematizing, subverting, and otherwise dealing with white racism needs to be a conscious and *continuous* effort. (p. 41, italics in original)

But despite the fact that overall these studies were more critical in nature than the first wave, they still left out what I believe is a crucial piece needed to elicit greater understanding of how race and racism operate in schools and society (to be discussed in the proceeding section).

Overall Critique

> How can *Whites* claim to believe in racial equality and yet oppose programs to reduce racial inequality? Why is it that a large proportion of *Whites*, who claim in surveys that they agree with the principle of integration, … continue to live in all-White neighborhoods and send their kids to mostly White schools? (Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000, p. 51, italics in original)

Despite the 'good' intention behind both the first and second wave of studies focused on teacher education students' racial attitudes, they must be further analyzed and critiqued as to what they are ultimately claiming and perpetuating. To begin with, despite the fact that many self-proclaimed "critical" educators would now question such a positive correlation between a short-term urban field experience or diversity appreciation course and a change in attitude, the fact remains that teacher education programs across the nation continue to meet their multicultural or diversity National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) quota in this manner. In fact, many teacher education programs use the 'significant results' obtained from short-term urban field experiences to boast of a more racially sensitized student teacher cohort that is in turn (at least on paper) suddenly more willing to work with "urban" schools and "urban" students.

But we must question whether or not this sudden willingness to work with the "urban" is sincere and if these positive responses indicate real ideological change? One reasonable conclusion that could be drawn to explain these positive responses is that field experiences and/or multicultural trainings *teach* student teachers the more politically correct answers that need to be offered or uttered when asked about diversity and people of color. That is, exposure results in teacher education students learning to report positive attitudes

towards "urban" students and schools. As one of the participants state in the Wolffe (1996) study, "Before I went to (Cincinnati) I never thought about teaching in this type of school. Now I think maybe this is something I might want to consider" (p. 105). Again, do responses such as this one indicate ideological shifts or do they indicate the learning of 'politically correct' answers to the questions subsequently asked? The results of the Easter et al. (1999) study support this observation as well. That is, 96% of the student teachers who participated in their study responded that they believed they could teach 'diverse' students but only 6% reported they "wished to continue in an urban environment" (p. 211). What this signifies is a contradiction between what they consider the 'correct' response to be and what they actually would do. One is left wondering about the true intentions and beliefs of many student teachers who participated in these studies.

Ultimately programs that include quick-fix solutions to solve the problem of what appear to be racist teacher education students can ultimately end up perpetuating the 'race problem' by deflecting attention away from the real race issues. As Solomon et al. (2005) argue,

> The continued focus on multiculturalism as the solution to all the inequities of the education system continues to be a liberalist trope that limits and restricts transformation and ensures the systems of domination and oppression remain in place. In addition to this, it placates its proponents with the idea that something is being done thereby eliminating the need for any real interrogation of the role of systems of domination or of whiteness and its attendant systems of power. (p. 165).

The particular point Solomon et al. (2005) made that "it placates its proponents" is most accurate. Many within the field of teacher education continue to believe that programs are

acting equitably and or are accepting of diversity because they include some type of urban field experience and/or a diversity course that students are required to take (but as we will see later, many students dislike).

Another problematic aspect of the exposure-based approaches is that they tend to rely on superficial understandings of not only race but of attitudes as well. It is at this precise point that I want and need to diverge from using "attitudes" in my study for I consider using the term "attitude" as limiting in many ways and I also believe that the use of this term is a reflection of the overall criticality of a study. First of all, we must question what is meant by "attitude" and why the literature focused on attitudes in its research and analyses. It seems most logical that especially the studies presented in the first wave used attitudes in their research because that was the term of choice in the 1950s and continued on over time (Richardson, 1996). It was in the 1990s that the concept of beliefs "gained prominence in the literature" (Richardson, 1996, p. 102). As Richardson states, "Attitudes and beliefs are a subset of a group of constructs that name, define, and describe the structure and content of mental states that are thought to drive a person's actions" (p. 102). Although I partly agree with this definition, I found it to be limiting for it did not invoke any discussion surrounding systems of domination in place in society nor did it invoke questions of power and privilege, particularly ones that may exist at the level of the unconscious. Even though Richardson and other researchers agree that attitudes and beliefs are "important considerations in understanding classroom practices and conducting teacher education designed to help prospective and in-service teachers develop their thinking and practices" (p. 102), this acknowledgement does not have the same depth as the concept of ideology. But it may very well have been that choosing to focus on attitudes and beliefs was strategic in that these

terms did not drag in the same 'elephants in the room' as using ideology would. Attitudes and beliefs tend to be presented as something particular to only an individual and as simplistic behaviors that could be readily changed or redefined whereas researchers that use ideology understand that this is not so straightforward. Thought processes and behaviors are much more complex.

By consciously choosing to incorporate ideology and discourse into the discussion, researchers take a position that reflects an understanding that attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs transcend beyond the realm of the individual. There is no such thing as an attitude or belief that is formed in a vacuum free from the effects of other social systems in place. Human thinking, as discussed at the beginning of this chapter, is intimately connected to ideology and as Foucault (1972) argues, it is unequivocally tied to questions of power. Thus using ideology demonstrates an understanding of how dependent our thinking is on larger, dominant structural systems in society. Continuing to present an attitude or belief as individualistic and independent trivializes the larger forces that determine and guide every single human thought and action.

As far as the second wave of studies is concerned, while it is a giant step forward to connect teacher education students' racial biases with inherent white privilege and whiteness, the overall analyses offered is still missing crucial elements. Racist attitudes, and for that matter race itself, do not simply exist without reason, context, agency, and/or structure. Discussions cannot continue to present race and racism as normal and natural parts of society. When research discusses race and racism without problematizing the continued existence of race itself, it ultimately perpetuates the naturalization of race. Thus what is needed is for research to center its critique on *why* race exists in the first place and not begin discussions in

the middle of the conversation. By that I mean we cannot rid society and/or preservice teachers of racist discourse and ideologies if we do not first rid society of race, which is simply impossible. Even when researchers are extremely critical of the existence of whiteness and of white preservice teachers and their racist thinking and practices, it still leads us to a dead end because the very existence of race is not analyzed or questioned. This is the case even when research agrees and acknowledges that race is a social-political construct. Yes, there is the unanimous agreement that race is created, something human-made, but many studies still root their arguments immersed within a diversity-approach and/or a multicultural education paradigm that do not take firm antiracist and abolitionist positions. Within antiracist and abolitionist research, the aim is not only to question race, how it works strategically, and who most benefits, but the ultimate aim is the *annihilation* of race itself. Antiracists and abolitionists realize that we cannot ever do away with racism without the destruction of race (Leonardo, 2009). Arguing otherwise is similar to someone arguing that it is possible to end classism without getting rid of the class system itself. Classism exists because class exists and similarly racism exists because race exists. We cannot rid ourselves of the effects unless we rid ourselves of the cause. We cannot cure the symptoms unless we address the root of the problem. Again, sheer impossibilities. Thus when one takes on an antiracist and abolitionist position, there is an understanding that taken alone or in a piecemeal fashion, single courses aimed to sensitize TES to diversity, field experiences aimed at quick-fix exposure methods, etc. cannot completely do away with racist discourse and ideologies. The fact remains that racism will continue to exist and rule as long as race exists. Given this reality our teacher education programs can strive to work with their TES so that they can understand the racial structure inherent in society and begin to analyze its

ramifications. What programs can aim to do is to lead TES to a path where they will move beyond awareness to a place where they problematize the effects of living in a racialized society. Although programs may not ever alone reach complete obliteration of racist thinking, they can serve to create a new teacher workforce that takes an active role in the disruption of problematic racial cycles.

Approaches that center on and are content with merely having white teacher education students 'realize' or even accept that they hold unearned white privileges, would not in the long run effect much change (if that is the goal of the program to begin with). Approaches such as these, although more accepting or even 'critical' in appearance still would provide teacher education students with simplistic understandings that white privilege and whiteness 'just happen.' It would be as if white individuals suddenly awoke from a foggy haze and were surprised by the fact that they had white privilege when in fact they created white privilege to begin with (and still work to maintain it). It rings something like, "Hey, who put that white privilege in my pocket?" This mindset has allowed people to forget that they have a vested interest in maintaining their white privilege by consciously or unconsciously accepting a white supremacist system. Moreover, at the same time white privilege exists whether it is acknowledged or not, the fact remains that they are *not* really white, meaning that all of these practices and ideologies perpetuate the fraud that there is something called a "white" person. Antiracist and abolitionists would further argue that white actions are not just about perpetuating privilege, but they are also about perpetuating the alliances and control mechanisms to keep those identified as white and all other racial groups codified in something called a "race." We have to understand how race is used to separate, segregate, divide, and ultimately conquer. In order for society to stop white

privilege, it has to stop the individuals from *becoming* "white," or for that matter the becoming of any other race.

Furthermore if researchers point out that whiteness and white privilege are 'systemic' problems, this is still not enough for it does not provide a deeper, structural analysis of what 'systemic' entails. Disconnecting 'systemic' from an understanding that racism is a product of the continued existence of race downplays the connection between the two. Preservice teachers need to understand that racism is "only part of a larger racial system" (Bonilla-Silva, 1996, p. 467) and thus we cannot reduce racism to a 'powerful belief' or even a 'powerful ideology.' As Bonilla-Silva (1996) so succinctly states in his groundbreaking theoretical piece, "Rethinking Racism: Toward a Structural Interpretation," "until a structural framework is developed, analysts will be entangled in ungrounded ideological views of racism" (p. 475). Yes, racism *is* an ideology but there is a structure in that it is race that continues to be reproduced because there are investments and interests and this is what reproduces the relation of race.

Thus, the position taken in this study is that it is not possible for teacher education programs and their TES to fully understand the complexities of racism if the practice continues of reducing it to simplistic beliefs *disconnected* from the larger structure that created it. What is necessary then is for programs to theorize along with their students what is meant by a structural approach to race so that we can really move beyond awareness and its resulting stagnation. What seems to be the core of the problem is that along with TES developing awareness of white privilege and whiteness, teacher education programs must also understand and analyze the existence of race itself and how it continues to define every single social system the globe over (Mills, 1997). If teacher education programs seek to only

develop awareness or a superficial acceptance of diversity, they will continue to perpetuate and reinforce the larger racial system rather than aiding of its obliteration altogether.

Thus what I am arguing is that instead of remaining stuck in notions of awareness and self-reflection, we need to start from the fact that people (both white and non-white) are invested in their status along the racial hierarchy and they strategize to maintain or elevate their status because that is how the system works. A racialized system does not continue to function smoothly because people are unaware of their unearned privileges but rather because people have been engaged in continued vested acts that are pro-race.

Along with a critical, structural understanding of racism, teacher education students must also come to fully 'realize' and analyze *how* white privilege is created and upheld by members who stand to benefit the most from this white privileged society (Bonilla-Silva, 2009; Leonardo, 2009). White teacher education students must not *only* suddenly become aware of their white privilege but they must confront, battle, and abolish their own and their group's active role and participation in maintaining a white supremacist social system in our society. As people of color within teacher education programs we are not exempt from the task of auto-critique and reflection. We must also confront our own investment in the racial hierarchy and analyze how our positions exclude and/or hurt other racial groups or negatively impact people within our own racial groups (e.g. as in the case of lighter-skin privileges). Thus what we must recognize and discuss within our programs is the complicity that is required in order to uphold and reproduce the racial system, by whites and people of color as well. What teacher education programs and TES themselves must understand and discuss is that whiteness and white privilege do not result from some type of spontaneous generation.

Its continued existence requires active and strategic participation from members who most benefit from it and from those who are also reaping advantages from its effects.

Studies and teacher education programs need to address race more specifically and understand that racism is less about individual feelings of animosity and more about relationships between racial groups (Blumer, 1958). In this way, races are objects that people make meaning of from their own particular status location in a racial hierarchy (Bonilla-Silva, 2009). Blumer (1958) conveyed these relationships as a "sense of group position," which consists of conceived images about one's own racial group in relation to other groups. The relational images of a sense of group position represent that nature of group-to-group relations, expressing notions of higher or lower status levels (Bobo, 1999). Thus, a sense of group position forms the basis for how members of one race act towards members of various other races (e.g., *choosing* whether or not to go to school with people of another race and/or *choosing* in what neighborhoods to reside in). This is a point that was not thoroughly addressed in any of the studies, but it is fundamentally important in analyzing how groups 'see' each other along the hierarchy. This point is important for TES because how they see themselves in relation to other racial groups will directly impact how they subsequently behave and interact with their students, many of who will be children of color.

Most of the studies adhered to the typical binary used in much race-related research. That is, results are usually based on a black-white binary and/or all people of color lumped together versus whites. As an educator in the Southwest, I view this typical binary as problematic in that it excludes much of the student population I work and live with. In this study I deviate from the typical Black/White binary and include TES reflective of the demographics of the state and of the teacher education program. It is vital to include

discussions of racial dynamics that exist between whites and Hispanics, but also understand the racial dynamics that exist within the very diverse 'Hispanic' group such as racial discourses and racial ideologies that reveal practices within the Hispanic group - e.g. distancing between Hispanics, Mexicans, and Chicanos. Studies should seek to further understand the negative racial ideologies that not only exist between whites and other racial groups, but also among and between racial groups. How have members of racial groups internalized many of the negative racial images created as a way to oppress and divide racial groups and what is being done to disrupt this?

Concluding Thoughts

If our ultimate aim is to reach transformation of thought and practice in the educational system and especially within teacher education programs, then there exists a pressing need for more research that focuses on teacher education students' racial ideologies and discourses and how these connect to the maintenance and perpetuation of a race-based educational system and society. Many would argue that the educational system is not that powerful, but as Althusser (1971) argued, schools (and educational programs) operate as a type of Ideological State Apparatus (ISA) and as such they serve to indoctrinate individuals into believing, accepting, and carrying out the dominant ideologies of a white hegemonic society.

Because in this study I took the position that schools function as an ISA, then I firmly state that it is not enough for teacher education students and teacher education programs to simply pay lip service to the existence and continuation of racism in our school system. It is not enough to claim to be aware, sensitive, and/or antiracist or to say things such as, 'I don't see color, I see children.' If anything, these statements commonly used by educators

continue to reveal much about the underlying ideologies prevalent among even the most well intentioned educators.

As Bonilla-Silva (2009) poignantly discusses in his book, racism cannot and does not exist without the active participation of *racists* in our society and this directly applies to the current situation we are seeing in teacher education. The continuation of racism in our nation's schools including teacher education programs, cannot exist without the active participation of key players who work and strategize to uphold a race-based system – this includes faculty, teachers, and teacher education students who continue to be complicit with a white supremacist system regardless of whether they claim to be conscious of it or not or racist or not. In all, merely claiming to be anti-racist or 'aware' of white privilege will do nothing to solve the 'race problem' in education. The reality is that racism cannot be undone or destroyed in our schools and society unless we *abolish* race itself (Leonardo, 2009). Working at a level that only mentions racism or that claims that racism is 'wrong,' ultimately results in a complicity with and continued perpetuation of this racialized society.

This literature review makes the attempt to elaborate on the connections between ideology, discourse, and race. Our ideologies become known through our discourse and our discourse is determined by our ideologies. Their existence and maintenance is cyclical in nature, one always informing the other. Discourse and ideology as such, are intricately connected to race, its very inception and its continuous recreation. Because of the ideologies and discourses that rule our society, the socially fabricated notion of race is real and dangerous. Race is used to determine the worth of every single individual that walks upon our planet. Because of the power race has on our lives, it is necessary that we understand how it functions and who it ultimately serves to benefit. Our everyday discourse and our

ideologies work to uphold a racially structured society and thus this study seeks to better understand these connections with the aim of disruption.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

Research Design

In this qualitative study, 17 participants took part in two 60-120 minute semi-structured interviews. Participants were purposively drawn from a pool of over 150 students enrolled in an elementary teacher education program within a large, urban university located in the Southwest. As previously mentioned, the main goal of this study was to better understand the current racial discourses and ideologies of teacher education students (TES) in this specific time in which colorblind and post-racial ideologies are firmly in place and in this specific geographic region. The research questions guiding this study were the following:

1. What were the racial discourses of urban Southwestern teacher education students? What did participants' racial discourses reveal about their racial ideologies generally and towards education?
2. How did the ideologies of the participants conform to and/or resist the larger racialized social system?

In this study I utilized primarily critical discourse analysis (van Dijk, 1993, 1992, 1985a/b; Fairclough, 1995) to analyze the interview data. CDA allowed me to reach a better understanding of the prevalent racial ideologies among TES in this particular teacher education program.

Sampling procedures. Recruitment took place in the seminars TES are required to take concurrently with their student teaching (field placement) and also in one section of DIV

101[7]. The entire elementary teacher education program consists of three consequetive semesters. Students typically apply to the teacher education program when they have fulfilled most of the undergraduate requirements and thus complete the last 3 semesters of their undergraduate degree in the teacher education program. Students are not considered teacher education majors until they are officially accepted to the teacher education program. Every semester, TES are divided into three different groups depending on what semester of student teaching they are completing. That is, TES completing the first semester of student teaching will be in Semester 1; those completing the second semester will be in Semester 2; and those completing the third and final semester of student teaching will be in Semester 3. Each of the cohorts are required to take a seminar in conjunction with their student teaching. This seminar is a 1-2 unit course that provides a forum in which TES can share their experiences completing their field work. Seminars are largely discussion-based. Typically, there are 55-75 students enrolled in each seminar. As part of the requirements of the teacher education program, all of the participants were simultaneously completing their field placement requirement[8]. Teacher education students also choose an endorsement area. The TES who choose a bilingual education and/or TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) endorsement are generally placed in a the same cohort within their particular semester because the classes they are required to take primarily focus on bilingual education and TESOL[9].

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[7] DIV 101 is the one "diversity" class TES are required to take to meet the requirements of the teacher education program as mandated by NCATE

[8] This is important to note because their actual experience in schools would have given them more insight into the 'real' world of teaching and would also have given most of them direct experience with 'urban' schools and 'urban' students (again, urban being a code word for a person of color - or commonly referred to as 'minority')

[9] At the time when this study took place, TES in the bilingual/TESOL cohort were required to take the same courses as general education students; however, they are exempt from taking DIV 101 because they are required to take additional courses in Bilingual/TESOL

When I presented the information to the students in their seminars and in one section of DIV 101[10], it was vital to not make students feel coerced in any way to participate in the study and it was also made clear that there were no penalties or repercussions for not participating and/or if they chose to withdraw from the study once it was underway. Recruitment consisted of sharing with students the overall rationale for my study and what participation in the study would entail (i.e. expected to commit to two 60-120 minute interviews that would take place during the semester). Those who were interested in participating were given the option of either emailing me or calling me directly.

Research participants. Table 1 below provides information on each of the 17 TES who participated in the study. The age range of the participants in this study was 21 to 49. Most of the participants were representative of newer generations currently attending teacher education programs across the country (16 of the 17 participants were between the ages of 21 and 35). As described in Chapter 1, most of the participants would be categorized as Millennials. 15 of the participants were female and 2 of the participants were male. This gender breakdown is reflective of the continued demographics that exist in the teacher workforce within elementary education. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) 2013 report on the characteristics of public and private schools, 89% of primary public school teachers were female. 11 of the participants self-identified racially as non-white and 6 of the participants identified as white. Of the 11 non-white participants, 8 would be generally categorized as Hispanic/Latino, 3 biracial (2 participants were Hispanic/White and 1 was Black/White), and 1 multiracial (East Indian/Hispanic/Irish). Among the Hispanic/Latino participants, there were a variety of self-identifying labels

[10] I was not the instructor for any of the courses in which I recruited TES for the study

chosen by the participants themselves which reflects the diversity that exists within the very nonmonolithic "Hispanic" category. The Hispanic/Latino participants self-identified as Spanish, Mexican, Chicana/o, Hispanic, Guatemalan, and American-Mexican[11]. 9 of the participants were Semester 3 and 8 of the participants were Semester 1. Lastly, 7 of the participants were in the TESOL/Bilingual Education cohort and 10 of the participants were in the general cohort.

Table 1 - *Study Participants*

Pseudonym	Age[12]	Semester	Cohort	White/Non-White[13]	Self-Identification for Non-White Participants[14]
Ria	22	1st	General	Non-White	East Indian/Hispanic/Irish; Mexican/Spanish (Native New Mexican)
Briana	25	1st	General	Non-White	American-Mexican; Mexican
Nora	22	1st	General	Non-White	Hispanic; Hispanic
Stephanie	24	1st	General	Non-White	Black/White; N/A
Dayna	34	1st	General	White	-
Karen	35	1st	General	White	-
Amber	22	1st	General	White	-
Jane	21	1st	General	White	-
Frank	29	3rd	Bilingual	Non-White	Chicano/Mexican American; Chicano
Rachel	24	3rd	General	Non-White[15]	Hispanic; Spanish and Mexican
Sofia	21	3rd	General	Non-White	Hispanic; Chicana
Carlos	25	3rd	TESOL/BIL. ED	Non-White	Hispanic, Chicano
Marie	23	3rd	TESOL/ESL	Non-White	Hispanic; Guatemalan
Emma	22	3rd	TESOL/ESL	Non-White	Hispanic; Spanish

[11] Briana self-identified as American-Mexican and not Mexican-American because she stated that she was American first.
[12] Age at time of study
[13] Response to question - "How do you self-identify? White or Non-White?"
[14] Response to question - "If you chose Non-White, how do you usually self-identify racially?" and "If you are a person of Hispanic/Latino origin, how do you usually self-identify? (e.g. Mexican, Chicana/o, Spanish, etc.)"
[15] Although Rachel self-identified as Hispanic only, she did state that her father was white.

Pseudonym	Age[12]	Semester	Cohort	White/Non-White[13]	Self-Identification for Non-White Participants[14]
Isabel	22	3rd	TESOL/ESL	Non-White	Hispanic; Mexican
Claire	49	3rd	TESOL	White	-
Hannah	21	3rd	TESOL/BIL. ED	White	-

Role of the Researcher

First and foremost, I took the position that there can be no such thing as the neutral and/or objective researcher. As researchers who are above all else human beings, we too carry our 'ideological baggage' everywhere we go. Even though we may aim to, we cannot despite all of our academic reasoning and rationale leave our ideological baggage at the door. Every aspect of our study (from its inception, its design, and to its completion) would in someway be affected by who we are, how we think, how we act, and how we believe things should work in the world. That is, we are always under the influence of ideology. Our ideologies are always at work whether we claim to be conscious of it or not. The fact that I *chose* to study racial discourses and racial ideologies for my dissertation already speaks to my political and social position as a researcher. One can easily conclude that this study does not align itself with supposedly benign views that a researcher can somehow be apolitical, detached, and/or neutral. What I do firmly believe is that we can aim to be aware of our inherent position of power throughout the research process and constantly hold ourselves accountable to act ethically, honestly, and justly towards our participants. We need to take the time throughout the entire study to constantly question ourselves and the underlying motives that guide our research and the decisions we might make. To me, this is what it means to act as a *conscientious* researcher – not a neutral one. As Leonardo (2003) states, "Instead, research can justify its knowledge production in ethical terms, that is, by self-

reflecting on the political consequences of the research product and project. What is the knowledge for? How does this knowledge enable people to become more politically responsible subjects?" (p. 59). These are the types of questions a researcher should keep in mind throughout the process instead of buying into notions of neutrality or objectivity.

In my interviews I adopted what Ruth Frankenberg (1995) referred to as the "dialogical" interview approach in her book *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness*. Frankenberg states, "rather than maintaining the traditionally distant, apparently objective, and so-called blank-faced research persona, I positioned myself as explicitly involved in the questions, at times sharing with interviewees either information about my own life or elements of my own analysis of racism as it developed through the research process" (p. 30). Thus instead of taking on the role of the "blank-faced researcher," we can instead choose to interact with participants. I actively worked to take on a more dialogical approach and found myself continuously engaged with the participants throughout every interview. What this entailed was breaking away from the rigid and predetermined list of questions asked in a set order. A dialogic approach instead allowed the interview to flow because questions were not confining. Although I did have the interview questions tucked away in a folder, I did not have to glance at the sheets of paper. I would review the questions prior to each interview and after a couple of sessions it became fairly easy to recall the questions without referring to the sheets of paper. Having conducted prior qualitative-type interviews, the interviews in my study felt different, in a sense more liberating. I honestly believe that this had a significant impact on the comfort level of my participants who many stated that they had enjoyed participating in the study. One described the interviews as 'therapeutic' in that she felt she was able to work out emotions and ideas that she had not

been able to address for various reasons with the instructor of her DIV 101 course. Other participants had also mentioned that they were able to discuss race related issues more openly with me because I was not their instructor and thus a potential impact on their grades was not an issue.

As part of a dialogical approach, I also encouraged participants to ask clarifying questions when needed and to feel free to ask me questions as well. Participants were encouraged to further dialogue on any of the questions posed to them during the study and to express any concerns or suggestions regarding any of the questions posed and/or the study itself. I strongly believe that this openness, honesty, mutual respect, and my own active participation were fundamental elements that ran throughout the research process and added to the credibility and validity of the study.

Although I used a dialogical approach in my research and the interview process was successful, there always remain inherent power dynamics and differentials between the researcher and the researched. There is no doubt that interviews have allowed for a great and significant shift from traditional quantitative methods (Kvale, 2006). As Kvale argues, "The neglect of domination in interviews may be supported by empathetic dialogical conceptions of the research interview as a conflict- and power-free zone" (p. 483). All researchers must understand that interviews and dialogues are not one and the same. In a dialogue all parties can potentially have a greater share of whose voice is represented in the conversation, but in an interview it is the researcher who ultimately dictates the questions that will be asked and where the conversation will head. It is problematic to simply equate an interview to a dialogue or a conversation and thus a conscientious researcher should always recognize the inherent position of power she/he will always have in an interview. Some of the ways we

can be mindful of this inherent differential is to constantly reflect on the overall purpose of the study before and after the actual interview and to always remind oneself that it is largely because of the participants that we are able to complete our studies. Many of our studies would not be possible without the participation of individuals who believed our work worthy enough to invest their time and energy. We have to also remember that we are human and thus no study can be perfect but we should always aim to treat our participants with respect and dignity even though we may not completely agree on various issues. Each participant at minimum deserved to be listened to and to be treated in a professional and respectful manner.

Semi-structured Interview Method

Prior to the interviews participants were asked to sign a consent form and filled out a brief demographic sheet that asked them a few questions related to their identity and background (see Appendix A). Upon completion of the data collection phase, the participants were assigned a pseudonym and interviews were de-identified. The original paperwork containing participants' confidential information has been securely stored in a locked file cabinet only accessible by the researcher.

At the time of the first interview[16], each of the participants was reminded about the overall purpose of the study, reassured of their anonymity, and encouraged to provide the most accurate and honest answers to each of the questions posed (see Appendix B for a complete list of interview questions). I also informed them that they were welcome to ask me questions during the interview process, especially if they were unclear of a question. The interviews were all semi-structured in form and used as previously stated, a dialogical

[16] Recruitment for the study took place early in Spring semester 2013; interviews began in that same semester and were finalized over the summer of 2013

approach. This allowed participants to feel more at ease during the interview process and resulted in very fruitful and engaging interviews. Semi-structured interviews also allowed for follow-up questions and greater interaction between the participants and me. Each participant was interviewed two different times with the exception of Nora who did not respond to my follow-up email attempting to schedule the second interview. I decided on 2 separate interviews because of the number of questions and because each interview had an overarching goal. The overall goal in interview 1 was to establish rapport and an increased comfort level with each participant. Most of the questions asked during interview 1 focused on their background, schooling, family, and overall thoughts on education. Most of the questions asked in interview 2 focused on race and their experiences specific to race. I believed that participants would be more willing and comfortable in talking about race during interview 2 because of the comfort and rapport established during interview 1.

I also believed that two separate interviews resulted in more elaborate answers as opposed to participants possibly feeling overwhelmed midway if only one long interview were held. Having two distinct interviews allowed the participants to think more about the study, the questions, and the themes that were covered, especially during the time between the two interviews. In this manner, participants were given the opportunity to touch back on any of the previous questions asked during their first interview. Some of the participants would elaborate on a previous question during interview 2. Without two distinct interviews, this would not have been possible. I also believe that having 2 interviews allowed for a greater connection with each participant, especially in terms of establishing more trustworthiness and a greater level of comfort. Each interview lasted anywhere between 60 -

120 minutes. All of the interviews were conducted on campus in a conference room located in the education building participants were familiar with.

Interview data were key for the critical discourse analysis of participants' discourse and how it supports and/or refutes current racial ideologies. All interviews were recorded using an MP3 electronic recorder and all audio files have since then been deleted. Audio files were professionally transcribed and were then uploaded to a qualitative software program called Atlas.ti. Atlas.ti allowed all of the data to be stored in one space called the Hermeneutic Unit (HU). Atlas.ti creates its own internal data recovery systems so no flash drives were needed to store back up files. All participant information (such as transcriptions and Atlas.ti files) are password protected and stored in a computer only accessible by the researcher.

Data Analysis

What was of utmost interest in this study was TES' racial discourse and racial ideologies. Racial ideology refers to the specific perceptions and guiding beliefs one group has towards other racial groups. In particular, the mind-set individuals had towards people of color or 'minorities' as these groups are commonly referred to, was the primary focus in the analysis of data. As Haney-Lopez (2010) argues, "One can understand (racial) ideology as a normatively laden framework for understanding and acting in the world" (p. 1061).

Even though the current climate in the US lends itself to being described as more sensitive, accepting, and/or aware of people of color, we have to question whether these claims are accurate and whether or not present-day society is truly 'post-racial' or beyond issues of race? Again, the fundamental question that was being addressed in this study was - what does the racial discourse and racial ideologies of TES in the urban Southwest look like

and does their discourse conform to or resist larger ideologies in place such as colorblind ideologies? Would the racial ideologies of TES be consistent with previous findings in what has been coined as a supposed 'post-racial' climate? This was an extremely important question to ask regarding this population for many of them would at some point be tasked with teaching children of color.

Gauging racial ideology is not an an easy task primarily because asking questions focused specifically on race tend to conjure up uneasiness and discomfort. Much of this connects back to the current post-racial moment where it has now become the norm not to directly talk about race or even talk about race at all. As Bonilla-Silva (2009) states "the post-Civil Rights era has made illegitimate the public expression of racially based feelings and viewpoints" (p.11). In the minds of general society, an open dialogue and discussion centered on race would contradict the 'post-racial' times we are in (see Bonilla-Silva, 2009 for an in depth discussion of this phenomenon). Seen from this perspective, individuals have come to believe that race is reinforced if we talk about it. With this in mind, it was crucial to make participants feel comfortable so that they would in turn provide the most open and honest responses.

Theoretical frameworks. Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Critical Social Theory (CST) were the primary lenses of interpretation informing this entire study. For those of us who align ourselves, and our work with CRT, it is no longer a question of proving whether racism exists. Instead, we take the stand that race *is* the most signficant social reality. Race impacts and defines every single aspect of our lives.

> Race's full force cannot be grasped by examining the consequences of particular discriminatory episodes, but must be measured in the folds and knots of a whole

> social fabric woven and rewoven with reinforcing racial bands" (Haney-Lopez, 2010, 1056).

As Haney-Lopez and other race scholars argue, race is not about individual tendencies or examining institutions in isolation. Race is structural and thus has the power to not only impact but also determine our fate in the US (Bonilla-Silva, 2009; Leonardo, 2009). A racial structure encompasses the education we will be offered, the healthcare we will receive, where we will live, our work and professional experiences, our children's lives, and so on. This reality applies whether the individual is white or a person of color, for we are all subjected to an overarching racialized social system (Bonilla-Silva, 1997). And although many white folk continue to deny that race impacts their lives and/or even see themselves as a racial group, it is the "white" group that has the most power in the perpetuation of the white supremacist racialized system we live under. It is important to point out that by white supremacist, race researchers are not referring to hooded men with burning crosses, we are alluding to a system in place where "white" remains dominant.

> White supremacy reassure[s] whites that nature, not their willingness to commit violence in service to their self-interest and in derogation of the humanity of others, ordained their privileged position as well as the degradation and exploitation of nonwhites. (Haney-Lopez, 2010, p.1061).

By using CRT as a framework, I am drawing upon a vast amount of research and literature that has sufficiently 'proven' that this racialized system continues to exist. The ultimate hope of most critical race theorists is to dismantle this oppressive system and transform our lives as racialized beings.

With CST, I take the position that our research and our work should always be embodied within a critical analysis and should always strive for social transformation. In education, those who use CST as a framework are concerned with inequities and we aim to create change at the institutional and systemic level. Similar to the CRT folks, "critical social theorists are not in the habit of justifying that oppression exists, but prefer describing the form it takes" (Leonardo, 2004, p. 13). Thus, we no longer work at the level of creating awareness but, instead, work to dismantle these unjust systems with the hope of transforming them. The word "hope" is very important to point out because although critical race theorists and critical social theorists are in constant battle with powerful systems that keep many of our people downtrodden, we continue to have "hope" that one day we will witness true racial disruption leading to transformation.

Critical discourse analsyis. Questioning aimed at disrupting the proper racial public script was in line with the method of analysis utilized in this study - critical discourse analysis (CDA) because it takes the position that discourses are not only forms of human interaction or mere social practices. Discourses express and convey meanings that allow us to catch glimpses of and understand how people make sense of the world around them, that is, their ideologies. In this sense, discourse is much more than the word(s) and/or text itself. I relied heavily on the work of Teun van Dijk (1993, 1992, 1985) and Norman Fairclough (2003 and 1995) to inform my understanding of what CDA entails and what it expects.

As van Dijk (1985) succinctly states, discourse is "a form of social interaction" (p. 3). This then means that discourse not only encompasses grammar, structure, sentence sequence, intonations and deflections, etc., but also entails context and issues of power, privilege, dominance, subordination, and oppression. Moreover, "utterances are not just static verbal

objects but ongoing dynamic accomplishments, that is, forms of action" and thus "discourse [is] … a form of action" (p. 3). This understanding changes the way discourse is traditionally approached in research and moves away from treating it as "a simple enterprise" (p. 10). As van Dijk (1985) states, "Discourse analysis provides us with rather powerful, while subtle and precise, insights to pinpoint the everyday manifestations and displays of social problems in communication and interaction" (p. 7).

Van Dijk utilizes critical discourse analysis (CDA) as not only a means to analyze text production and communication, but also as a way to better understand how they are always embedded within a social context. As van Dijk (1985) states, "We only tell a tiny fragment of the story if we do not specify how such discourse details serve a function in the creation, the maintenance, or the change of such contextual constraints as the dominance, the power, the status, or the ethnocentrism of one of the participants" (p.5). This connects to what van Dijk (1985) refers to as ideological analysis that "views discourse as an expression of class conflicts, false consciousness, exploitation, or power relations in society" (p. 8). The ultimate goal in ideological analysis is the unveiling of all that underlies discourse such as class and racial conflicts, inherent asymmetrical power relations, and repressed ideologies.

I used CDA in not only the interview process, e.g. to formulate my questions and then how I asked race-based questions during the interviews, but especially so in the subsequent analysis of the data. The use and reliance on CDA was key in this study for it allowed a deeper understanding of the connections between discourse, ideology, and race. CDA is not about the mechanics of writing, it is about better understanding the patterns we find in discourse that provide us with an idea of underlying existing ideologies.

It is important to note that CDA is not equivalent to discourse analysis (DA). What both DA and CDA do have in common is that discourse is considered much more than simply the expression of one's views and opinions. Discourse analysis in general is about analyzing larger patterns inherent in talk and text. But, researchers who use CDA are distinct in that they are interested in how discourse is connected to and contributes "to the reproduction of relations of power" (Fairclough, 1995, p. 18). CDA is "an analytical framework - a theory and method - for studying language in its relation to power and ideology" (Fairclough, 1995, p. 1). Thus, CDA is powerful for those engaged in work and research that seeks to problematize, disrupt, and transform larger hegemonic forces in society. CDA provides the framework and theory needed to guide us through a more thorough analysis of how discourse is not solely about language and text, but about how discourse functions to uphold dominant power structures across all facets in society.

Using CDA, I attempted to "gain deeper insight in the way discourses express and manage our minds" (van Dijk, 1993, p.148), specifically in regards to TES and their understanding of race and racism. As van Dijk argues, "text and talk play a vital role in the reproduction of contemporary racism" (p.145). In fact, "discourse lies at the heart of racism" (van Dijk, p.145), meaning that discourse has been a primary vehicle for the perpetuation of racism. "Text and talk" have functioned as primary means to teach children about the race and the racialization of bodies. Discourse is used in this hegemonic system to continue the vicious cycle of race and racism. This is why CDA has been so important because it has led researchers to make the connection between discourse, ideology, power, and the perpetuation of racism in our society. CDA allows us to more fully understand and reaffirm the role

discourse plays in the racial structure. That is, we can better understand how discourse has been used to uphold the racial structure in our society and globally.

CDA also teaches us that nothing about discourse is accidental or trivial. Every sentence and every word contains so much meaning and reflects how we have come to understand the world and subsequently our interaction with others around us. CDA does not disconnect discourse from its social and historical context. If anything, it demands that the researcher closely examine and understand the context and moment in which particular discourse resides. To separate discourse from the context in which it was spoken, written, and/or gestured, would be to gloss over the ever-present relations of power that exist in our everyday lives. This is why using CDA was fundamental in this study - it was the analysis of discourse utilizing a critical approach founded in the examination of power relations in a particular historical moment and within a specific geographical location. CDA accepts the fact that within discourse there are thoughts that remain repressed and/or hidden within the speaker's words, this is true whether one is conscious of this or not. Thus, in my study I was very interested in understanding what those 'between-the-lines' thoughts disclosed about the TES racial ideologies.

Using CDA as a framework and method, I analyzed the discourses as reflected in the interviews of the 17 TES who participated in this study. By doing so, I did not treat their discourse as simply uttered words to convey attitudes, outlooks, and/or opinions. Instead, their discourses were approached and interpreted as indicative of the underlying ideologies they used to understand race, racial groups, and how they in turn positioned themselves in relation to others. Specifically, during the analysis phase, I paid close attention to not only the words that were uttered but also to changes in tone, pitch, facial expression, pauses,

silence, etc. CDA teaches us that analysis does not reside in the superficial reading of text and talk. If I were to gain a deeper understanding of TES underlying ideologies, it was vital to delve into questions that broke from the possibility of offering superficial answers. We cannot begin to understand racial ideologies from yes/no survey-type questions. For example, many of the statements uttered by TES could not be read on a superficial level. Keeping this at the forefront the questions asked of TES were not yes/no questions and I believe broke from the common questions asked in race-related surveys.

As researchers who utilize CDA we must also take into account the context and time in which the text and talk occurred. Removing discourse from its context would be removing a fundamental piece of analysis. I kept this in mind while listening to the audio files of the interviews and throughout the various readings of the transcripts. Thus as I analyzed the data I kept in mind that for the most part these students were immersed in a political time that boasted of a post-racial moment and that they were also students in a program that had become known for its tendency to not deal with race or race-related issues. I kept detailed notes within Atlas.ti regarding any details that were important to a specific point in an interview - e.g. long pauses, hesitations, re-directing of questions, avoidance of questions, changes in comfort level, etc. Coding took place within Atlas.ti and this led to the organization of important themes that emerged - e.g. use of problematic racial discourse, critical thought regarding race, adherence to stereotypes, etc. Atlas.ti was powerful in that I could filter out and analyze very specific codes and themes. For example, I used the code 'semantic move' to label the times when semantic moves were used. Semantic move was broken down even further into the types of semantic moves observed - e.g. minimization of race, naturalization, abstract liberalism, post-racial moment, etc. CDA entailed the analysis

of discourse at several levels and brought in discussions of power and privilege. Researchers who rely on CDA would readily agree that there is no one single, correct interpretation - thus interpretation and analysis is always multi-dimensional. Those who use CDA also understand that discourse and its analysis is always political, asymmetrical, power-driven, and power-laden.

As researchers we understand that truth is an elusive quest. As Habermas (1989) argued, "truth can be guaranteed *only by that* consensus which might be reached under the idealized conditions to be found in unrestrained and dominance-free communication" (p. 314, italics in original). However, because we do not live under idealized conditions that are unrestrained and dominance-free, our language does not and cannot convey absolute truth. Thus in this study, I attempted to make sense of and unravel the many layers of 'truth' contained within the racial discourse of TES. Specifically, I used CDA as a means to engage with the texts produced by my participants' discourse. This approach shaped the themes constructed surrounding their racial ideology.

This entire study and the subsequent analysis were all set within the context of education. That is, the majority of the questions, especially the race-based questions, were connected to the educational system because we need to continue to connect how the educational system in the US functions as a racial state apparatus. My intention was to better understand the racial discourses of TES in relation to education and how these discourses subsequently reify the current racial hierarchy as set within a racialized structure. Most importantly, how did the TES understand and interpret the educational system in the US and its connection to a larger racialized structure?

Importance of political climate and geographic space. Because the analysis was framed within CDA, the geographic place and the current social, racial, and political climate in which this study occurred are important and must be acknowledged. This is why a significant amount of analysis has included the current post-racial moment that we are in. It is vital to understand that the racial script of the times is covert and seeks to immerse itself within a liberal rhetoric of tolerance and acceptance whose defining moment lay within the election of President Barack Obama in 2008 (Apollon, 2011; Bonilla-Silva, 2009; Haney-Lopez, 2010). This understanding was important during the analysis of the interview transcripts because I entered that phase knowing that the participants have been immersed in this frame of thinking and speaking. The racial discourse of TES would most likely not resemble the discourse of previous racial moments in history such as prior to the Civil Rights movement and immediately after. The discourses of these specific TES would reflect the larger thought patterns of Millennials who have grown up *post* post-Civil Rights.

The geographic location in which this study took place is also important to address within a CDA framework. The Southwest continues to undergo a great demographic shift as indicated by significant increases in the Hispanic population as recorded in Census data over the years (Apollon, 2011). However, this increase in Hispanics across cities and states in the US has not been well received in all locations. In fact, one could argue that the demographic shift has heightened animosity towards groups of color, particularly those perceived to be immigrants and/or children of immigrants (Huntington, 2004). This heightened animosity against groups of color is witnessed through increased cases of racial profiling (e.g. as in Arizona), increased incarceration rates for men of color (Haney-Lopez, 2010), increased

deportations across the US, stricter immigration laws and subsequent penalties if laws and policies are broken, etc.

The state in which this study took place is a space that has not been free of this heightened animosity against groups of color and immigrants. Accompanying its title of majority-minority state, the state has seen increased deportations rates in recent years (TRAC Immigration, November 2013). There continue to be obvious racial and class divisions across the largest school district in the state that I personally witnessed as a teacher working within the district. There is also a particular discourse that promotes and upholds a notion of a harmonious 'tri-cultural' state of Whites, Hispanics, and Native Americans. This tri-cultural 'harmony' is not only frequently depicted in souvenirs and in literature for visitors, but is found in artwork (e.g. famous contested mural housed within the largest higher education institution in the state) and has also been adopted by schools and teachers across the state.

The use of the terms Hispanic, Spanish, and Spanish American are also interesting aspects of this particular area. Being Spanish is a source of pride for many families who claim to have been here for generations upon generations. This source of pride and connection to Spain and self-identification as Spanish is often associated with distancing from other Hispanics in the state such as Mexican Americans, Mexicans, Chicanos, and other Latino immigrants. There is a clear distinction among the terms and not used interchangeably. The use of the terms Spanish and Spanish American became prominent over time and heightened during its quest for statehood. Families who were in the region wanted to distinguish themselves from what were viewed by incoming Whites as 'dirty Mexicans' or 'Greasers.' The following excerpt illustrates the thought at the time and can provide a context to better understand the political and racial climate of this region:

> In 1850, the U.S. Congress declared ... a federal territory, but there were explicit debates in Congress and the press about the desirability of annexing a region populated with Mexican and Indian peoples marked as racially inferior within the nineteenth-century American racial order. (Gomez, 2001, p. 1400).

As the quest for statehood increased, so did the strategic distancing from what were considered inferior groups. Thus Hispanic, Spanish, and Spanish American became frequently used as a means of distinguishing from Mexicans and from Native Americans. This self-identification as Spanish or Spanish descent is very important to note. Moreover, the term Hispanic does not have the same connotation as the use of Hispanic in other states, especially as used along the West Coast. Hispanic in this geographic region is commonly used as a way to make clear to others that the person is *not* Mexican.

At the time of study the 17 participants were students attending an elementary teacher education program in a large institution in the urban Southwest. Although the institution is categorized as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), it has been critiqued for its low Hispanic retention and graduation rates (see El Centro de la Raza Data & Program Outcomes, 2011-2012). The teacher education program boasts of a curriculum founded in diversity yet as many other programs across the nation, it only requires one "diversity" course as mandated by National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Part of the rationale that the teacher education program uses for requiring only one diversity course is that "diversity" and "social justice" are integrated throughout all of the classes students take regardless of the subject area. For example, in this type of approach all methods classes including courses such as mathematics and reading methods, the faculty or instructor should be integrating issues related to diversity and social justice into the course. However, from

the many conversations I have had with TES, instructors, and faculty, this is rarely the case. If this practice were truly taking place, the discourse of TES would be vastly different and reflective of greater awareness and possibly critical thought.

Trustworthiness

There were several aspects that added trustworthiness to this study. First of all each of the TES participated in two separate 60-120 minute interviews. Having two separate interviews provided sufficient interview data for each participant. In this manner I was also able to observe and analyze if there were any drastic changes between the two separate interviews for each individual participant. The average total interview time for each participant ranged between 120 - 240 audio minutes (Nora was the only TES who participated in only one interview).

Immediately after each interview I would also write down my thoughts and observations in an electronic field journal that I kept password-protected on my computer. I purposely chose not to jot down any field notes while the interviews were taking place because I did not want to interfere in any manner with the actual interview process and the comfort of the participants. These journal entries allowed me to more vividly recall various instances that took place during the interviews. This was a space in which I was able to write down all of my reflections and where I would pose follow up questions and ideas. Within Atlas.ti I also kept memo entries that were connected to specific quotes and codes. These memos added to the entries kept in the field journal. Again, memo entries allowed me to write down specific thoughts and questions that I had in regards to the interview data.

Prior to beginning the interview process, I informed each of the participants that they had the right to review any of the transcripts, audio files, and analysis that took place within

the study. I encouraged each of them to contact me if they wanted to review any of the study data and/or if they had any questions or concerns. I was not contacted by any of the study participants.

My work experience as a field liaison for the teacher education program, specifically in field services, added to the trustworthiness of this study. Being a liaison for many years gave me deeper insight as to how the program was run and also provided me with a great amount of direct interaction with hundreds of TES during that time. Not only was I the person responsible for visiting many TES in their classrooms located at their respective field placements, but I also had previously served as an assistant in their field experience seminars. I also had prior experience teaching the science methods course TES were required to teach. All of these experiences gave me prolonged contact and what I regard as an insider position with respect to the teacher education program at this specific higher education institution in the urban Southwest. It should be noted that I was not the instructor for any of the classes in which I recruited TES for participation in this study.

Limitations of the Study

All studies are limited in scope including this one. I acknowledge that the field of education and teacher education encompass many different focus areas such as that of class, gender, ability, language, etc., but this study focused on mostly one specific factor - that of race. Although race does intersect with many of these other focus areas, I chose to primarily focus on discourse specific to race. Although all of these focus areas would be interesting angles to take in studies similar to this one, I believe that a race-based approach is much needed during this supposed post-racial moment.

There were only 17 participants in this study. Recruitment took place in 3 different teacher education courses with a pool of over 120 potential participants but these 17 reflect the individuals who were most interested in this study and who were willing to invest time and energy in participating. It could also be argued that TES might have been reluctant to participate in this study because of its focus area although care was taken to not focus on solely race during the recruitment presentations.

Interviews were the primary method for the collection of data. All of the participants filled out a short demographic survey prior to interview 1. Using at least one other method such as a more detailed survey with race-based questions, classroom observations, and/or use of vignettes could have added greater depth to the study. This study represents my positionality as a woman and educator of color and also my interest in race-related issues within the field of education.

Concluding Thoughts

The discourses of the TES were embedded within this historical time, in this geographic space in the urban Southwest, and within this particular teacher education program. All of these factors were important to keep in mind in order to reach greater insight as to the discourses and ideologies of the 17 participants. This study was organized in the following manner. Chapter 1 provided an introduction and an overview for the study. Chapter 2 encompassed the literature review that provided the context and theoretical framework used in this study. Chapter 3 explained the research methodology employed in this study. Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 were both findings chapters which provide a discussion of the main themes that emerged in the study. Lastly, Chapter 6 summarized major findings

from this study, discussed possible implications for future research in teacher education, and presented concluding thoughts.

Chapter 4

Findings I

> I don't see how racism is still existing for whites against other people. I don't see it. Because I have never been racist against anybody you know? Knowingly or unknowingly. I'm very, very actively anti-racist but I'm not allowed to not be racist for that class because I am white, I am discriminated against. (Jane, White, 1st Semester).

> We live at a time when politicians, the media, and practitioners are increasingly confident in their assertion that race no longer matters, is irrelevant in comparison to class, and that white children are the new race victims (Gillborn, 2008, as quoted in Gulson et al., 2013, p. 475).

Our discourse serves as a window to how humans understand the world around us and how we in turn choose to interact and position ourselves in relation to others. In other words discourse serves as a window to ideologies (Eagleton, 1991). As Leonardo (2003) states, "We know the effects of ideology as actualized in language, or discourse" (p.13). Thus the key to reaching a clearer and more in depth understanding of human ideologies is through a study of discourse. Discourse allows us to more fully know the inner-workings of the human mind. Our innermost thoughts related to not only race, but all else as well, can be unraveled through discourse. Discourse should not be so simplistically equated to language and text. As van Dijk (1985) argues, discourse "is not just a verbal object but essentially a form of social interaction" (p.2-3). Because discourse is a form of social interaction it entails issues of power, privilege, dominance, subordination, and oppression.

As discussed throughout the preceding chapters, ideology cannot be limited to an individual's thought process alone for it functions as a powerful force in our society. Ideology has long been the weapon of choice for those who remain in power and if we are to have any significant impact on those who remain relatively untouched in their positions of power, we must thoroughly analyze how, as Haney-Lopez (2010) states, ideology has become commonsense.

> When most successful, however, ideologies achieve the status of commonsense: an accepted, taken-for-granted ideational matrix that operates as an unconscious baseline for judging what is normal, moral, and legitimate in the world. (Haney-Lopez, 2010, 1061).

Because dominant ideology, including racial ideology, has reached the status of commonsense in society, as critical-minded educators and researchers we must continue our work to problematize and refute this status.

Given that discourse analysis is one of the most effective manners to better understand the inner workings of teacher education students (TES), what did the discourse of the 17 TES who participated in this study reveal about their ideologies – specifically in regards to race and their understanding of how race works in our respective lives, in education, and in society in general? How did the TES conform to or resist the larger racialized social system? Did the TES adhere to a largely "we're beyond race" or post-racial rhetoric that has become prevalent in our society, or did they resist this type of thinking? The following sections address these questions.

The Racial Discourses of Teacher Education Students in the Urban Southwest

The overall intention behind this study was to engage in in-depth interviews that would allow for a greater understanding of what these specific TES thought about race and issues related to race. The following offers a snapshot of current racial thinking for this specific group of participants attending a teacher education program in this specific geographic region of the Southwest.

> I struggle to separate it [the continued 'failure' of groups of color] from the culture and I don't know why because like you're saying, "I'm not that way," which I totally get. And neither is Barack Obama. He's not that way and he's not coming out a black ghetto, you know. Like, so I get it, that it's not color but it's definitely like this thing is tied to the culture. (Claire, White, 1st Semester).

As previously mentioned, the election and then subsequent re-election of President Barack Obama brought with it an onslaught of post-racial rhetoric especially as seen in the writing of pollsters and mainstream media newscasts, op-eds, etc. Pollsters, mainstream media, and right-wing commentators took advantage of President Obama's election and created a hype and frenzy regarding race, or better yet, that we are over race.

> Tuesday was a bad day for America's racial grievance industry. … The existence of racism in America has long been used by some civil rights leaders and the political left as an all-purpose explanation for racial disparities (The Wall St. Journal, November 6, 2008 as quoted in Apollon, 2011).

Following the 2008 election, many have jumped on the 'post-racial' band-wagon and have worked to spread the message loud and clear that President Obama was a crucial turning

point in terms of race relations in the US, meaning that if citizens elected a Black man to be their president, then the logical conclusion was that race no longer mattered.

Since President Obama's election and re-election it is common to hear statements such as "race no longer matters" or "racism is a thing of the past," across generations. We continuously hear and see these mainstream messages that Millennials and Gen Z no longer think in terms of race or that race does not impact their dating patterns and/or the formation of friendships. Apollon recognizes this when she states:

> Unsurprisingly, public opinion surveys provide evidence that young people are more open-minded than their parents' or grandparents' generations about inter-racial friendships and relationships. However, too many journalists, political commentators and even researchers read too much into this inter-racial open-mindedness and label young people today as "post-racial," either explicitly or implicitly. Combined with Barack Obama's victory in the 2008 presidential election, recognition of the national demographic changes we are currently experiencing through millennials has fed into a common narrative in mainstream media that race and racism are no longer significant barriers to success in our nation (Apollon, 2011, p. 3).

This post-racial rhetoric was central in my thinking as I entered the interviews – would these post-racial notions hold true? Are these statements that are being widely circulated in the media and society accurate? Is it certain that because Millennials and Gen Z's have grown up *post* post-civil rights that their mindset, discourse, ideologies, and interactions would greatly differ from previous generations? Or, is it the case that underneath the superficial appearance of acceptance and tolerance, there continue to exist deep-seated problematic racial ideologies?

What I consistently found was that the racial discourses of this particular group of teacher education students attending a teacher education program in an urban Southwestern part of the United States clearly demonstrated that the majority of them were not as "beyond race" as touted by the media, politicians, and society in general. That is, race *continues* to matter. Although there was some variance across the 17 participants[17], many of them continue to exhibit discourses that are problematic in regards to race. This ranged from upholding ideas that race no longer mattered (i.e. buying into post-racial rhetoric and colorblind ideologies), limited knowledge of how race operates on a structural level, to blatant racialized comments in regards to groups of color. Often time during the interview process the following questions raced through my mind: "Am I really hearing these problematic statements?" "How is it possible that a future teacher, who at some point will have the obligation to teach children of color, can think in such a narrow-minded way?" Although at times it was challenging for me as a woman of color to listen to many of these problematic discourses, overall I gained greater insight as an educator. I also strongly believe that my teaching style and pedagogy have been impacted as well largely because of what I learned through these interviews[18].

Three main themes related to racial discourse emerged from the critical analysis of over 2000+ audio minutes of interview data and they serve to organize the chapter:

I. Continuation of problematic racial discourse (*still* not beyond issues of race) as made evident by -

[17] I want to state that there were 6 participants who actively resisted larger racial social norms. Their ideologies reflected not only greater awareness in regards to how race functions in society, but they actively questioned systems in place. I call these 6 participants - Los Conscientes - and they will be discussed in greater length later in this chapter.

[18] These themes will be discussed in greater detail in the conclusion.

a) Reverting to overtly problematic racial discourse

b) Continuation and persistence of a colorblind discourse

c) Adherence and persistence of Bonilla-Silva's four racial frames

1. Abstract liberalism

2. Naturalization

3. Cultural racism

4. Minimization of race

d) Other semantic moves used to uphold a colorblind ideology

II. Limited understanding of race as a social hierarchical structure; and

III. Racial awareness and critical thought fell along a spectrum ranging from non-critical to critical.

I. Continuation of problematic racial discourse (*still* not beyond issues of race).

What became most apparent during the analysis of the interview data was that the discourses of TES continued to be immersed in a quagmire of problematic racial ideologies. This was in spite of attending what would be considered a "pro-diversity" teacher education program within an institution that also highlighted the promotion of diversity in their mission statement and was located in what has been categorized as a majority-minority state. Even with all of these factors in place the discourses of many of the TES continued to be tinged with what would be considered outdated beliefs especially in this supposedly post-racial moment. Upon analysis of the interview data, it became clear that having grown up *post* post-Civil Rights had not automatically changed or done away with dominant problematic racial ideologies in this representative sample of younger generations in the US. TES of today were as impacted by problematic racial understandings as the TES of the past.

Each of the numerous problematic racial statements made by TES could be categorized as either reverting back to an overtly problematic racial discourse, the continuation and persistence of a colorblind discourse, and/or reflecting the acceptance of current post-racial discourse.

a. Overtly problematic racial discourse. This categorization does not require as much explanation. The statements that reflected overtly problematic racial discourses were just that - *overt* and *problematic*. These statements were not couched within either colorblind and/or post-racial rhetoric, the statements uttered were direct and upfront. Take the following quote as indicative of an overt problematic racial statement directed at immigrants:

> I wasn't born in this country and I didn't want anyone to think of me like some illegal immigrant here in the country taking things. (Marie, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

Marie, although she self-identified as Hispanic, specifically Guatemalan, was concerned that she would be categorized by others as an "illegal immigrant." This statement highlighted her awareness of the tense racial dynamics between Hispanics and immigrants from Mexico and other Latin American regions in the state. Many would automatically assume that because Marie was Hispanic and was born in Latin America that she would not use the problematic and politically incorrect terms "illegal immigrant" and that she would demonstrate greater understanding regarding the complex issue of immigration. The other thing we need to draw attention to in this statement is how Marie phrases "taking things." By including these two words in her statement Marie has reinforced a very problematic and unfounded view towards immigrants. First that immigrants are here in the country *taking* things, and second, that immigrants are not viewed as contributing to the country when in fact it has been documented that immigrants contribute greatly to the US economy. Although Marie did

demonstrate some awareness regarding the persistence of racism in the US and generalizations made regarding people of color, most of her responses reverted to explanations that were founded on meritocratic beliefs. The following quote reflects Marie's adherence to the belief that education is the great equalizer. Marie does not refer to other variables that impact a student's success life. This is evident in Marie's statement:

> It‘s this vicious cycle that keeps going. They think this is their only pathway and that’s what keeps going and I think of how I was saying before, education, educating young members. They’re going to become adults eventually and being able to instill values and creating education that’s fun for students and engaging. They’re going to become members who are going to double think their situation. "Hey, I can get out of this." I think it all starts with education at the younger level and transforming the idea of what’s your next step after high school.

Marie held to the achievement ideology firmly in place in schools that continues to uphold Horace Mann's teaching that education is the “the great equalizer.” Marie was stating something that countless teachers, prospective teachers, and faculty continue to believe and reify. But upon analysis of this statement it is clear that Marie's belief that education is the solution is devoid of any discussion of other systemic variables that impact families and students. Marie does not question how the 'vicious cycle' is tied to other societal factors and forces that are often out of the control of the very people impacted.

The following excerpt was taken from one of the interviews with Claire who was a white woman in her late 40s. Claire had grown up in New Orleans and many of her statements were riddled with problematic assumptions especially in regards to Blacks but also include other groups of color. In this specific instance Claire was talking about her field

placement teacher who was an older Hispanic woman teaching in a predominately Hispanic serving elementary school:

> But academic-wise, academically, she's a nightmare. It's a nightmare, she doesn't even speak proper English. And she'll default to "Oh, I learned Spanish first and la, la, la" ... She'll say things like, "Breathe in, breathe in to your diagram." Instead of your diaphragm, she'll say, "Breath in to your diagram." Like she's telling them the wrong thing, like it's not even a diagram, it's a *diaphragm*! You know things like that. Or she'll mispronounce words, she says vocabolary [sic] for vocabulary. She doesn't articulate vocabulary, *vocabulary*. So at first that really stressed me out. She said vocabolary [sic], you know, and I just thought, "oh, my gosh," because sometimes the way you talk sort of gives people a sense of, is she not bright or, you know what I mean? (Claire, White, 3rd semester).

For some this statement might appear as a justified critique of Claire's Master Teacher (MT) and how teachers must model "correct" speech to students. But, when the statement is placed into context and notice is taken of the continued statements Claire made in regards to her MT, they can readily be considered overt and problematic racial statements. Claire's statement highlights the negative attitudes individuals across the US including teachers have towards English language learners (Walker, Shafer, & Iiams, 2004). It also reflects how language is used as a code to racialize and talk negatively about people of color (Bonilla-Silva, 2009).

The following quote illustrates how individuals in this specific geographic area do not see the need to know more about Blacks. The relatively low population of Blacks living in this area is continuously used as a justification for not having to learn or address race issues related to Blacks.

> My first questioning of it was why are we learning about all these black kids? We don't, we don't have no one. We have a small population [of] African Americans and all the readings we were doing was about Portland or, you know, all these, um, African American dominated areas. I was like I don't understand. (Dayna, White, 1st Semester).

Even though Dayna's discourse throughout both interviews demonstrated greater awareness in comparison to the other TES in the study, the statement she made was consistent with the common view held by Whites that "race" is often about Others and that race does not need to be addressed or integrated into the curriculum if people of color are not present and/or part of the larger community (Lewis, 2004). This line of thinking was also demonstrated by Amber's following comment.

> If you're teaching in a primarily White student body or classroom, it's not going to be as present [issues related to diversity]. I don't think that necessarily there's going to be as much desire to learn about multicultural viewpoints either because you know, I think, in maybe some of the nicer schools out here with more resources, a lot of it you know, is achievement driven, success driven, how do I get the highest grade in blah class. (Amber, White, 1st Semester).

Jane, a white female in her first semester consistently reflected what could be considered the most overt and problematic discourse among the 17 participants. Jane many times resorted to the use of stereotypes to explain differences she observed in regards to people of color and she questioned why the diversity class was a required part of the teacher education program. Jane did not conceal her resentment towards DIV 101 and as she stated

in the following comment, she had no problem labeling issues dealing with diversity and race as B.S.

> I'm going to have to be like, “Yes, I am picking on your child because she is a Muslim I am sorry, I do that, I hate Muslims," you know, like you're gonna [sic] have to learn how to deflect and to agree with something that you don't agree with. You have to pretend how to do that, but I don't think that's the right class. We are going to figure that out as teachers on our own that we are gonna [sic] need to learn how to pretend to agree and to pretend to be politically correct even if we know it's total B.S. (Jane, White, 1st Semester).

Jane's overt and problematic manner of addressing race and racism was not the general finding across the other 16 participants. Other TES exhibited a range of problematic racial discourses but were definitely not as overt as Jane's. Most of the discourses of the TES reflected the persistence of colorblind ideologies.

b. Continuation and persistence of colorblind discourses and ideologies.

> "The problem of the twenty-first century will be the problem of color blindness"
>
> (Fair, 1997 as stated in Lewis, 2004, p. 624).

> So yes there can be like a positive aspect of it [culture] but it’s like who really cares who you are? I want to know you as a human being not as some race that you’re supposedly under. (Marie, Hispanic, 3rd semester).

> I don't really remember what the demographics were when I was little. I guess I didn't really pay attention. I don't know. See that's the problem and that's kind of the issue I guess I have with my diversity class because I feel like I always grew up like in a diverse like - I mean I think it's always been super diverse because I never really

> knew that there was a difference between like different colors of skin. (Nora, Hispanic, 3rd semester).

The prevalence of a colorblind ideology in society has been defined and thoroughly investigated by critical researchers across various disciplines (Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Lewis, 2004; Leonardo, 2009; Haney-Lopez, 2010). The stronghold of a colorblind ideology remains in effect and continues to impact the lives of both people of color and whites alike. Whites and 'confused' people of color use discourses laden with colorblind ideologies to downplay and dismiss race-related issues. As Haney-Lopez (2010) states in the following excerpt, colorblindness has become so normalized and 'successful' that it is treated as 'commonsense.'

> Colorblindness portrays every explicit use of race as morally and hence also politically and legally wrong. For many, colorblindness serves as a form of commonsense - the idea that even remedial uses of race are wrong has become a contemporary bromide in little need of explanation or defense. This taken-for-granted quality is a hallmark of a successful ideology: it performs sense-making, problem-solving work while seeming unquestionable and obvious. (p. 1061).

As argued by a vast number of race critical researchers, a colorblind ideology has been firmly in place for decades and has replaced overt displays of racial ideologies with more insidious and covert forms.

Although the term "colorblind" has been introduced and studied in some teacher education programs across the country, the practice of a colorblind ideology remains firmly in place in the field of education. Many teachers, student teachers, and higher education faculty would be easily found guilty of professing a colorblind rhetoric. As someone who

was responsible for visiting numerous classrooms across the largest district in the state and who worked with hundreds of teacher education students over the years, I bore witness to the continued trite remarks uttered by those in the field of education - "I don't see color, I see children" or the other favorite, "my students are like a rainbow and I love them all!" What many TES and other educators do not realize (or consciously do not acknowledge) is that by stating such apparently benign comments, they are actively working to perpetuate a colorblind ideology in which well-intended individuals claim to not see or even think about "color" (code word for race). The argument follows that by talking about race, we continue race. If we acknowledge racism, then we are strengthening it.

> Contemporary colorblindness is a set of understandings -- buttressed by law and the courts, and reinforcing racial patterns of white dominance -- that define how people comprehend, rationalize, and act on race. As applied, however much some people genuinely believe that the best way to get beyond racism is to get beyond race, colorblindness continues to retard racial progress. (Lopez, 2006 as stated in Leonardo, 2009, p. 131).

Leonardo argues, "race should not be seen, talked about, and race-talk should not be heard with too attentive of an ear because it is tantamount to victimology: see no race, speak no race, hear no race" (p. 131). The following excerpt from Jane's interview clearly illustrates her firm belief that we can solve the problem of racism by not talking about it.

> I think that the more we focus on race, the more prominent in becomes. In other words, if we continue to promote that racism still exists, it will. And it was a, it was a quote by Morgan Freeman, actually, where they asked him about black history month and what he thinks of it. And he says “I think it’s ridiculous.” And they said well

> why? And he says “Because we have black history month. Why do we need our own specific month? Why can’t we, you know, why can’t black people have every month of the year as well as white people?” And they said well, how else are we supposed to, you know, promote anti-racism? How else are we supposed to support diversity? And he says “Stop talking about it.” In other words, if we make, you know, racial studies very, very important, then we’re focusing and further separating it. (Jane, White, 1st Semester).

Jane as many others across the nation took Morgan Freeman's quote on Black History month and race out of context. Jane focused her attention on the sound bite that went viral and was used by many post-racial advocates to justify their claims that the best way to rid society of racism is to "just stop talking about it." Jane and others did not listen and/or watch the entirety of Freeman’s interview and his final thoughts were conveniently omitted from the interview most individuals did watch. In that same interview, Freeman pointed out that we needed to stop attaching color labels to people - i.e. racializing bodies. Jane's quotation reflects the depth of her understanding of how to put an end to race and racism - "stop talking about it."

c. Adherence and persistence of Bonilla-Silva’s four racial frames.

> "A new powerful ideology has emerged to defend the contemporary racial order: the ideology of color-blind racism" (Bonilla-Silva, 2006, p. 25).

It has been almost a decade since renowned sociologist Bonilla-Silva published the first edition of *Racism Without Racists*. In his profound book, Bonilla-Silva successfully argues how racism continues to exist throughout the years largely because of a racialized structure firmly in place in the US. This racialized structure began with the colonization of

the Americas and it continues to be perpetuated and upheld by ideological structures widely disseminated and transmitted through discourse. Bonilla-Silva goes on to explain how racism continues to function as if there were no racists upholding and creating the practice. Most people will acknowledge the existence of some forms of racism but the majority of them, especially whites, see themselves as not being racist and/or neither practicing racism. Bonilla-Silva's book explains how there are four central frames that are key to understanding how the dominant racial ideology of colorblindness works and is upheld. Those four frames as outlined in the book are - abstract liberalism, naturalization, cultural racism, and minimization of racism. These frames refer to the manner in which whites and people of color 'talk' about race. But again, talk is not solely talk when placed in the context of a racial social structure. Talk is reflective of discourse and discourse is reflective of ideology and ideologies are used to maintain the racial order in society.

Analysis of the discourse of TES in this study reflects the persistence of these four central frames. It is powerful to understand how these four frames continue to apply today and provide a framework to analyze how individuals and groups transmit their colorblind ideologies during what has been erroneously called the 'post-racial' era. Much of the interview data consistently upheld and adhered to Bonilla-Silva's work and was especially true for the TES whose discourses reflected greater conformity to larger racial ideologies. There were numerous examples found across participants that support Bonilla-Silva's central frames of colorblindness.

1. Abstract liberalism. The central frame of abstract liberalism describes how whites put on the appearance of being rational and moral while simultaneously upholding racist views. Bonilla-Silva (2006) states that abstract liberalism "is the most important, as it

constitutes the foundation of the new racial ideology" - that of colorblindness. Liberalism has been often connected to being 'progressive' and to social reforms but in a colorblind ideology "central elements of liberalism have been *rearticulated* in post-Civil Rights America to rationalize racially unfair situations" (Bonilla-Silva, 2006, p. 28; emphasis in the original). Notions of liberalism and progress are commonly used by whites to defend their views opposing affirmative action and justification of their largely segregated housing practices based on a rationalization of individual choice and individual freedom. People who cling to this view consider affirmative action as giving unnecessary preferential treatment to individuals and groups of color. These people vehemently cling to ideas of individual choice and meritocracy.

> But there's scholarships that say "Only Hispanics," "For Hispanics Only." But I've lived here all my life. I can play a Hispanic in a movie. So it's, it's kind of like that parallel. By neglecting one side you're neglecting this side, you're empowering this side... over-empowerment. It's like over-compensation. It's hard to obtain a balance. (Dayna, White, 1st Semester).

Dayna's statement reflects the thoughts held by many regarding affirmative action. That is, because society adheres to meritocratic ideals it is common to hear whites and people of color state that scholarships designated for specific ethnic groups is a form of 'preferential' treatment. Remarks such as Dayna's are commonplace and rarely are these comments problematized by the person who made the statement or those on the listening end. For example, did Dayna spend time analyzing statistics that demonstrate which racial group receives the most scholarships? Did Dayna think about the historical events that led to Hispanics (and other racial groups) being notoriously underserved in terms of educational

opportunity and access to scholarships? I have to also state that Dayna was one of the most progressive white participants and thus it cannot be assumed that progressive students completely understand how meritocracy works and how it is connected to the larger racialized system.

Moreover, much of the discourse used within an abstract liberalism frame is immersed within meritocratic beliefs. Meritocracy has become so intertwined with colorblindness and is commonly used as a means of dismissing any type of racial difference or injustices. Success is connected to an individual's worth and own accomplishments and is largely detached from any type of systemic effects. Within a meritocratic frame if a person of color did not succeed in school or in life, it cannot be in any way connected to the racialized system in place, it is because they did not work hard enough. The following statements exemplify adherence to these beliefs:

> I think if you work hard enough and like I said, if you act properly and you work hard enough and you have that goal and that dream to be something, you can be it. I've seen plenty of people of color; we've got a Black president and we have a Mexican governor or Hispanic governor. I think she's Mexican, isn't she from a Mexican heritage? Well, her last name is …., so okay well I mean we've got a Hispanic governor, we've got a Black president. I see people all the time in really good jobs that are minority races. (Jane, White, 1st Semester).

How many times have we heard comments such as this one stated by Jane in classrooms and across other educational spaces? Comments such as this one reflect the continuation of a strong meritocratic ideology that resides within the field. Jane uses Barack Obama's success as an example that is frequently used against other people of color - if a Black man became

president of the US then what excuse do other people of color have? As Apollon (2011) points out in her Millennial study the following belief plagues society, "if a Black man could ascend to the presidency, all young Black men could experience similar achievements in a host of fields if they only tried harder" (p. 4). Marie follows along the same thought process as Jane when she states that she believes it's a poor excuse when individuals state that being white is an advantage in society.

> I think it's a personal thing. I don't think you should say being white's an advantage because I think that's a poor excuse for, um, saying I can't accomplish these goals. And so I disagree with that being white is an advantage because I think it, case by case, a person of any color can get where they want to be. So I think it's a poor excuse to say that. (Marie, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

Again, these statements reflect the continued adherence to meritocratic ideals. A meritocratic ideology has been used by whites and people of color to dismiss complaints by others that the system functions in favor of the dominant group. Many claims of discrimination or of racist practices are brushed off and/or minimized using the main argument that people do not succeed because of their own incompetence and/or lack of effort.

2. Naturalization. The central frame of naturalization "allows whites to explain away racial phenomenon by suggesting they are natural occurrences" (Bonilla-Silva, 2006, p. 28). Whites justify racial inequities as something that just happens because 'difference' between and among racial groups is viewed as normal and natural. The following statements serve as examples to illustrate common thoughts that are used as part of the naturalization frame: "Blacks prefer to hang out and live around Blacks and whites prefer to hang out and live around whites," and "people naturally segregate themselves based on race, it's normal." But

are these tendencies normal or have they been imposed upon us by the larger racial structure that governs society and our lives? The following statements by Marie and Briana highlight this tendency to naturalize and normalize race.

> But yeah you can definitely see like there was like separations by like color of skin. However, there wasn't ... it just happened that way. I think like people naturally do that no matter where you are. You just group with people who you're similar with. Um, the beliefs you have, you just naturally group together. (Marie, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

> If you go into you know with Blacks and Hispanics it's always they live in like the bad part of town. You know like the ugly part of town, they don't have, they're always struggling to pay bills or you know, the kids have to work or I mean kids, you know in high school. (Briana, Hispanic, 1st Semester).

Part of our work as critical educators should require a closer examination of the numerous statements that work to naturalize and/or normalize race. We must pay close attention to how TES use these types of arguments to justify discrepancies that exist in society. When statements such as these are made, TES should be led to discussions that require them to think more critically. For example, do groups of color separate themselves (as seen in housing, schools, etc.) because of a natural occurrence or is this separation connected to larger societal forces? TES must realize how the naturalization of race works to uphold racism and racist practices. TES must learn that race is not natural, it is synthetic, human-made. Unless TES gain the firm understanding that race is a social construct, there will be a continued tendency to use these types of arguments.

3. Cultural racism. The frame of cultural racism "relies on culturally based arguments … to explain the standing of minorities in society" (Bonilla-Silva, 2006, p. 28). Much of the discourse within this frame resorts to the reliance of stereotypes to explain differences whites see. The line of thinking is "It's not that *I'm* racist, it's just part of *their* culture." Many of the TES used stereotypes as a way to justify their reasoning and/or was a typical response when asked race-related questions during the interviews. Claire exhibited one of the most disturbing and problematic discourses. The following quote reflects Claire's use of stereotypes when talking about Native Americans.

> And as far as the Native American population, I don't really know. I know that alcoholism plagues this you know, like you define a Native American, you can't define a Native American without factoring the idea of the alcoholic issue that just plagues them. And, I don't know if that's, I don't know what to think about that really. You just kind of are driving along and you see people on the street corner and you know, you just kind of make those sort of assessments. (Claire, White, 3rd Semester).

Did Claire truly believe that you cannot "define a Native American without factoring the idea of the alcoholic issue" as she states? How many Native Americans did Claire know? Claire was narrowly defining an entire racial group based off of her limited sightings of Native Americans near the university who were struggling with alcohol. Was it fair and just for Claire to make such generalizations of an entire group of people? Obviously the answer to this is a resounding NO.

Amber who generally reflected greater awareness of race and racism also resorted to the use of stereotypes to explain her own limited thinking towards groups of color.

> I've noticed that there are certain things which I noticed, certain cultural things, because um, you know, we'll have uh, maybe a couple of African-American basketball players, hanging out in the sub and when they're talking to each other they'll yell across the way and for me that's incredibly frightening because you don't do that where I'm from or in my family. So I was like, oh my God, what's happening? A fight is about to break out. And I'll see them like high five and I'll be like, oh, oh okay, it's fine. It's just me. But if you don't know that, you know, your mind goes into a state of panic and you know, if you see it happen enough or you see a pattern, you begin to think, oh, well everybody's like this. So I think, maybe that's part of the reason why. You know, you see more, uh, African-Americans, Native Americans, Hispanics in jail is because the culture is so different, you get set into a pattern. (Amber, White, 1st Semester).

Although it is true that there are greater numbers of Blacks and other racial groups who are incarcerated in comparison to whites, this idea that people of color belong in jail or should be jailed becomes commonplace and normalized (Haney-Lopez, 2010). Other TES such as Emma openly stated that she believed stereotypes have not ended.

> Because, see, and unfortunately, it always goes back to a stereotype, but the reason that we have the stereotypes is because time and time again, the statistics prove that the stereotype hasn't really ended. (Emma, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

Dayna who also demonstrated greater awareness of race and racism resorted to the use of stereotypes as well when talking about Blacks who she said were her friends.

> I've always like questioned my black friends, like "Why do you guys...why you guys so loud?" "Why are you always yelling, you know?" And she's like "I just yell.

> That's the way we do things" or...and even my African American friend who went to school here and she was raised here, she's just been here all her life. She is a stereotypical African American young lady. You know what I mean? Like it's kind of like how do we get away from stereotypes when it's...that's what you're fed and so that's what you believe you are. Does that make sense? (Dayna, White, 1st Semester).

Dayna states that her Black friend who was raised in this area was a "stereotypical African American young lady." First of all, what does this even mean and what does this statement say about Dayna's racial discourse and her racial ideology? If the people she refers to were friends, would she be presenting them in such an erroneous light?

All of the preceding statements exemplify how many TES continue to uphold a cultural racism frame where stereotypes are frequently used to justify discrepancies that exist among racial groups. In many of these statements there is a lack of deeper analysis of how discrepancies such as educational attainment, incarceration rates, morbidity, poverty levels, etc. are connected to a larger structure. There is minimal analysis of how systems work to dictate and recreate what are superficially viewed as 'cultural' differences (e.g. Blacks and Hispanics want to live in lower-income areas). We must become familiar with how prevalent this type of thinking is among TES (and across educational programs) and what we can do to disrupt this and hold students accountable to greater critical self-reflection and ideological change.

4. Minimization of racism. This central frame explains how whites use arguments to dismiss race because race is no longer considered an important issue in society. Racism is treated and regarded as a thing of the past and outdated beliefs are unnecessary and unwelcome. Whites also commonly use the idea that 'things are better now for people of

color' so why are they complaining? In this case, the argument quickly shifts the discussion of a race-related issue to what is referred to as 'throwing out the race card.' In the following instance, Jane states how she considers the required diversity class unnecessary because racism no longer exists.

> I have never seen racism towards any other race either. Even when I lived in like frickin' [sic] Nebraska where everybody's white, you know, like, the black kids were not treated any differently, the Hispanic kids were not treated any differently. So I'd never seen it or experienced it. It was like it really was something of the past. It was like yeah we used to treat other races differently but now, it's different now. Everyone is equal, everybody, you know? (Jane, White, 1st Semester).

Jane's statement reflects an all too common argument that is used to dismiss race and racism. The following is what Carlos responded when I asked him if he thought he would be treated differently in spaces where there were primarily white people -

> I think I'd get more stares whatever, but as far as like being treated differently, I think it's not to like that level, you know, it's, um, what is it, I don't, I don't know how that would look, I mean, because I go, I'm not over there all the time, but when I'm over even in the mall and stuff, I just kind of keep to myself and I don't notice anybody or whatever. I'm just kind of off in my own world, but, I think I get treated, you know, a little bit differently. (Carlos, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

Notice how Carlos uses diminutives such as "little bit" to downplay the effects of race. In his mind he was treated only a "little bit" differently so that lessens the harm and effects of race.

Arguments that fall under the frame of minimization of racism allow whites to make claims that people of color are being too sensitive or using race as an excuse. Minimization

of race has allowed people across various fields, professions, and disciplines to brush off any race-related issue as someone's personal problem. Pertinent issues brought up in regards to race (e.g. discrimination in the workplace or racist discourse in the class and curriculum) are seen as conflictive and unnecessary especially during this post-racial moment.

d. Other semantic moves used to uphold a colorblind ideology. Apart from the persistence of Bonilla-Silva's four central frames, there were other semantic moves that TES used as means to deploy an adherence to a colorblind rhetoric and ideology. Semantic moves have been used to describe a discursive practice that is used to 'move' or deflect the conversation away from race, to distance oneself from being seen as potentially racist, and/or as a way to dismiss race altogether. As Bonilla-Silva (2006) states, "whites rely on 'semantic moves' or 'strategically managed ... propositions'" to state their racial views. "The moves act as rhetorical shields to save face because whites can always go back to the safety of the disclaimers ('I didn't mean that because, as I told you, *I am not a racist*')" (Bonilla-Silva, p. 57, emphasis in original).

One of the most interesting semantic moves utilized by TES in this study was using the Southwest as a means to dismiss and/or deny the possibility of racism. That is, in the minds of many TES this geographic space is considered accepting of diversity because of its majority-minority state status. In the minds of many no one living in the state could possibly be racist and/or racism simply could not be the issue. In the following quote Dayna uses what she sees as her love for Southwest culture as means to question the topic of whiteness presented in her DIV 101 course.

> Sometimes we don't understand the concepts that are presented to us in DIV 101 like whiteness. Um, especially for us that are white. We don't understand that concept

> because we're immersed into a diverse and a very uniquely diverse culture. And so, um, that was an extremely tough subject for me, like now looking back I feel bad 'cause I was very, like, "What in the world are you talking about?" I was angry. It made me angry because I love my Southwest culture and I guess I don't identify with whiteness because I love the culture that's here. And so, with such loaded terms being exposed to us it's...this state is a very unique place. (Dayna, White, 1st Semester).

Jane continues this line of thinking when she states that the class was addressing and targeting the 'wrong crowd.'

> It did make me think and I think, like, as teachers we are addressing the wrong crowd as to like, "Well, you know, you're white and you're racist 'cause honestly if we want to teach in the Southwest we're not racist. So but I mean there's gonna [sic] be other people that we're going to encounter that are. (Jane, White, 1st Semester).

Here Marie directly uses the predominately Hispanic state example to minimize possible experiences dealing with race and racism -

> And I mean I think maybe if you outside more of the world to experience, I bet you by go along the East coast and I'm sure I'd experience it a lot more. But I think because I'm in a predominantly Hispanic state, I kind of been lucky to not experience racism. (Marie, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

Marie believes that problems associated with race and racism would be more prevalent in other states such as those along the East Coast but not in our majority-minority state. It is interesting how Marie considers the East Coast less diverse when in fact many states such as New York would be considered more diverse in comparison to this geographic state.

As shown in these examples, TES believed that racism was not a problem because they lived in the Southwest. Many automatically think that states and communities with greater diversity should somehow be free of race and racism but this is not the case. Having the accolade of being a majority-minority state has not done away with problematic racial discourses and ideologies. Care needs to be taken to not use supposed 'diversity' as a way to dismiss race and racism.

Class was also used as a way to get out of a race-based response or to deter the conversation away from race. Several times during various interviews TES offered a class-focused response instead of race. A few of the TES discussed how class and race were intertwined but usually class was used to explain racial differences in society. The following quotes from Marie and Claire illustrate this tendency to resort to class-based arguments.

> I think it's just the whole idea the rich keep getting richer and it's just this whole cycle of minorities going through the motions "I'm destined to go through this" and no one's really stepping out of that cycle. And I, I still don't think it's a disadvantage. I think it's just the way things are. People are just going through the motions of life. And the rich keep getting richer and it's just hard to get out of that cycle. (Marie, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

Marie's superficial analysis of class speaks volumes, especially when she states that she does not think that being minority is a disadvantage. In not only this instance but others as well, Marie downplays and even rejects the notion of white privilege and its inherent advantages. Throughout both interviews Claire made continuous references to class, especially in regards to her own family.

> We've always been below the poverty line in my family, my kids and I. But you look at them -- and I don't know if you've seen them all -- but you don't see poor. You would never look at my twins and think they were any different than some engineer or some doctor's kid. You just wouldn't. (Claire, White, 3rd Semester).

As Haney-Lopez (2010) states, "Despite this entwined relationship [between class and race], progressives now commonly suggest that, for politically strategic reasons, the focus should be on more 'universal' approaches aimed at assisting society's most disadvantaged, without a distracting and politically unpopular focus on 'particular races'" (p. 1051). This of course meaning that the push is for society to not focus on race because it is distracting. Instead the push is towards class-based arguments that can be used as a means to overshadow and steer attention away from race critical approaches.

Reverse racism was utilized as a semantic move by the white TES in this study. Resorting to reverse racism has been a manner in which whites can quickly turn race-related issues around as a means of claiming that they (whites) are not the one's who are racist, it is people of color who are the racists.

> I tell people I did not know racism until I moved here. Then it was directed towards me and that the Hispanic culture is extremely racist against the white culture, the white population, not culture, population. (Jane, White, 1st Semester).

What remains so dangerous about a colorblind ideology is that those very people who actively work to not see "color" are the same people who profess to be our allies. That is what has made the inner workings of a colorblind ideology so effective and simultaneously so deadly. Whites and 'confused people of color' (Bonilla-Silva, 2006) can assuredly stand in front of us race critics and claim that they refuse to see or talk about race because it is only a

means of reinforcing it. As Haney-Lopez (2010) argues, colorblindness has become the "weapon against race-conscious remediation" (p. 1062).

As happens to all ideologies over time, they are part of larger paradigm shifts and the election and subsequent re-election of President Barack Obama has allowed the continuation of a colorblind ideology while opening the door to a new twist marked by a post-racial discourse.

> Combined with Barack Obama's victory in the 2008 presidential election, recognition of the national demographic changes we are currently experiencing through millennials has fed into a common narrative in mainstream media that race and racism are no longer significant barriers to success in our nation. (Apollon, 2011, p. 3).

In present-day society, dominant racial ideologies have shifted from the mindset that "color" (code word for race) is not seen and/or not thought about, but now "color" (race) is no longer a significant issue in the US. A colorblind ideology has worked to downplay race but now we are dealing with an even deadlier racial ideology that dismisses and/or denies race altogether. This buy-in to a post-racial ideology manifested itself in many of the statements made by TES.

> And so to throw somebody who has never probably even thought about race their entire lives or if they have they're like, "Yeah we are all equal now, racism does not exist anymore;" to throw them into this scenario of like you're racist because you're white and racism does still exist." You're like, "Whoa, slow down, give me evidence of how racism still exists!" (Jane, White, 1st Semester).

> Um, I think that that mentality [racism] is going away a lot. I think our generation is different. I do. It's different because we have, I think our generation doesn't really, doesn't really look at it [interracial dating and marriage] as a bad thing anymore. I mean, we're all mixed of some sort now. There are very few of us that are solid white or solid black or solid Hispanic like anything you know? (Ria, Biracial - Indian/Hispanic, 1st Semester).

This is fundamental to the post-racial argument that is being made - individuals shouldn't just not see race, but it is now to be regarded and treated as a distraction. Thus when individuals bring up the issue of race, they are readily confronted with the post-racial discourse that has moved beyond 'can't we all just get along' to 'why do you keep bringing up something that doesn't even matter anymore?'

Many of the participants clearly demonstrated a buy-in to the post-racial ideology that has become prevalent during this time in our society. It is apparent that public racial discourse has shifted over time from being filled with overt racial slurs to one that is guised in a discourse laden with a belief that race and racism are things of the past. As made evident by the some of the TES, race is dismissed or brushed off because as the dominant ideology has transmitted to individuals across society, race and racism are things of the past.

II. Limited understanding regarding the structural foundations of race in society.

"Race in the United States functions as a form of social stratification: racial categories arise and persist in conjunction with efforts to exploit and exclude" (Haney-Lopez, 2010, p. 1027)

What became most apparent during the discourse analysis of the interview data was that TES, including those who were more aware and critical of the persistence of racism, overall, had a limited understanding of how a racial structure operates in society. That is, the

discourse of the majority of the TES revealed that they did not understand racism beyond something that is confined and limited to individuals with problematic and/or aberrational attitudes. Although racism was acknowledged by some of the TES, it was not analyzed on a larger, systemic scale or even at an institutional level. For the most part, racism continued to be treated as simply an unwanted byproduct of race that was mostly regarded as a natural and normal occurrence but was not problematized at a deeper level on how it connected to and dictated larger social, political, and economic forces.

As Marie described in the following statement, many individuals see racism or 'lack of equality,' as a problem residing within people of color themselves. As Marie stated, people of color cannot reach 'their destination' or full potential because we 'can't get out of that label.'

> I mean it's definitely just so sad that people of color think that's just like their destination. They think that they can't get out of that label, and it's just a mentality. I think it's a huge thing about mentality and who's supporting you. Do you think outside of the box and outside of that label? I just think a lot of people underestimate minorities and I mean, it's just like a tricky question ... and I think we're just still growing through that idea of what's equality. (Marie, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

From this limited perspective racism is seen as something that people of color need to get beyond and is not connected to a larger structure in place in society that works to determine the fate of groups of color. This viewpoint is one that continues to be widely held and is used as a way to point the finger away from a white dominant system and back to people of color. That is, people of color are considered responsible for their own fate and oppression. A common statement rings - 'if only *they* changed their attitude.'

Class, described previously as being utilized as a semantic move, becomes important here as well. Like many individuals, TES in this study resort to class-based arguments as a means of explaining or excusing themselves from addressing race-related issues. Class is commonly used to overshadow the existence of a racial structure or as a way to trump the 'race card.' Take Jane's statement as indicative of this limited understanding -

> They're not...they don't have one single, political agenda that they're trying to get across with like people with studies like this. If they grouped into poverty level, I might have listened. But the fact that they're grouping it by race shows me that they already have an agenda to prove. And so that automatically shuts people off. People that are like well, you know I don't think that it has to do with racism. I don't think that people are racist anymore. We all agree that there is a system, obviously, that shows that there's a system, but the fact that they grouped it by race shows me that they've already got something to prove and they're not going to listen to anybody else. (Jane, White, 1st Semester).

Although Jane utilized the word 'system' in her statement and goes as far as stating, "we all agree that there is a system," she does not explain what that system actually is, how it works, and/or what exactly she is referring to. Throughout both interviews Jane consistently downplayed any acknowledgement and understanding that there could be a racialized system in place. If anything, Jane considered those who are critical of race as having a set 'political agenda,' as if those who utilize class-based arguments or any other type of argument do not have 'political agendas' of their own. What was most revealing in this statement was how Jane stated that if the statistics were grouped by race then it showed her that 'they've already got something to prove.' This reflected how Jane had a firmly held preconceived notion that

anything connected or categorized by race was already biased. In this sense, Jane demonstrated both an overt racial discourse and an acceptance of a post-racial discourse that did not even allow the possibility of race and racism to be addressed.

What was interesting to note was that even TES who had demonstrated greater awareness and critical thinking also had a limited understanding of how race and racism operates. Isabel, a TES who consistently demonstrated greater awareness and critical thought exhibited thinking that went beyond seeing people of color as the source for their own oppression but her understanding was still limited and resorted to a class-based explanation. Here I had asked Isabel if she thought that whites were privileged.

> I don't think they're privileged necessarily, but sometimes it might seem that way because, well I mean, there's a separation even in the Southwest. All the ones, like all the white kids are like in the Hills and all the Mexicans are in the Mesa and I mean you see it not because they're preferenced [sic], it's just because of their society, of the economic status that their parents have. I mean it's not impossible for a Hispanic or like any other color to go to the Hills and actually be okay over there, but I mean it's something that you rarely see. (Isabel, Mexican, 3rd Semester).

I went further and asked Isabel to explain why 'it's harder for us' and why we continue to see such staggering differences across the board. But again, although Isabel was definitely aware that it was not something inherent in culture or racial group, she did not explain race and racism as part of a structure or even system in place.

> It's not that we're lazier, it's just that we have other obstacles to go through. I mean they only have one obstacle, graduating from high school, getting a good job. For us it's graduating, working, um, like a lot of other things. A lot of them have kids to take

> care of and then they don’t have time. They don't have papers. Even that, little things like that they don’t have papers. If they don't have papers, even if they try to go beyond, it’s impossible. (Isabel, Mexican, 3rd Semester).

Carlos, a self-identified Hispanic who grew up in and attended schools in what would be categorized as a low socioeconomic status (SES) area with a predominately Hispanic population, did not attribute differences among schools in the district as being evidence for 'showing favoritism' for one specific race over the other.

> I don’t know if they’re showing favoritism like for one race over the other. I mean it should be equal you know. Um, but I mean that’s kind of scary when you think about it because this school has predominately one specific race and they’re not the supreme race you know, it’s just like these kids are just being set up for failure you know. (Carlos, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

What is interesting to note is that in the same statement Carlos does allude to 'these kids are just being set up for failure' indicating that he did have some understanding as to how 'something' is being done to students of color and is not something that resides within them. Throughout both interviews with Carlos he would explain things with a rather limited understanding of a racial structure but then at times would follow up with demonstration of some awareness that race had something to do with forces outside of the individual. Here I had asked him why students of color were not 'succeeding' at the same level as white students.

> I think it’s lack of support or, like, parents, parental support, or even economical support. I think it’s just down to that, you know? Because even like graduating from high school and I don’t know if I talked about this, but like we weren’t encouraged to

> go to college or anything, we were just like graduating with the bare minimum. (Carlos, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

Emma who often resorted to meritocratic explanations stated that she had learned about similar statistics connected to race in a political science class[19]. Emma alluded to race being a factor but again her explanation was devoid of reflecting a deeper understanding of how race works.

> I took a political science class and we kind of touched on this. Our teacher showed us a bunch of tables like this. Statistics and percentages of different things and he was saying um, that uh, socioeconomic status, level of education, all of those things play a role in determining like who is dominant. And the race that always comes out on top is Caucasian and so I think some of it is racism. Even though we say it's being eliminated, it's still there in our society and so I think that racism is a part of it. (Emma, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

This limited knowledge of what a racial structure signifies was also made evident by the TES lack of understanding of how a white supremacist system is connected. That is, in a society with a racial hierarchical structure in place, there is always a dominant, ruling, and/or supreme race. In the case of the US and across the globe as well, the dominant race continues to be the white race (Bonilla-Silva, 2009; Leonardo, 2009; Mills, 1997).

Again, white privilege and whiteness were simply byproducts of racism but were not understood as required parts of a racial structure. In the following statement it was evident

[19] For one of the questions in the interview I had shown TES tables with test scores for students in this geographic location that had been broken down by race. It was a clear way to demonstrate to TES how disparate the test scores were when categorized by racial group. After looking over the table I would follow up asking the TES to explain why they thought we consistently see this breakdown and what explains this occurrence.

that Jane demonstrated no understanding of how the white race benefits daily from the current racial structure.

> Like I hear all these people, like, why do we have Black history month why can't we have White history month? So, but that's, you know, it's politically correct to have Black history month but not White history month, everybody is like, "Oh well all the other 11 months are white history month," No they're not! I don't spend a whole month of my life researching George Washington and all of these white people that did great things, you know. (Jane, White, 1st Semester).

Again, Jane did not understand how whiteness functions within the current racial structure. She could not see (or did not want to acknowledge) how whiteness operated in the educational system. Jane, as many other individuals in the US, refused to or did not have the understanding to be able to acknowledge how whites benefit across all systems in place in the US because all systems (educational, healthcare, housing, prison, political, economic, etc.) reside under a governing white-dominated racial structure (Bonilla-Silva, 2006).

A few of the more aware and critical TES made reference to white privilege and/or associated discrepancies with race but not in relation to a racial hierarchical structure in place.

> We did the double dip analysis which we looked at different schools and statistics and things like that. Um, what surprised me the most in that project I clicked on schools in Little Rock, Arkansas it was on the Great Schools website, so I ordered it, you can order them by city, by whatever, I ordered them by the Great Schools grade basically so it was a one to ten scale and I picked, randomly just clicked on, there was nothing on the screen other than their Great Schools number, the name of the school and the city that it was in. And I clicked on a ten, I clicked on an eight, I clicked on a two and

> I clicked on a one. And, the ten and the eight were 98 percent white and the two and the one were 98 percent Black. And it was like, okay, first of all, why is there not a bigger mix of kids in both schools? And, you know, second of all you can see that these, these black schools are in the poorer neighborhoods and they instantly, you know, well, they're in poorer neighborhoods, they're not gonna [sic] do as well, they set them on a vocational track or they, or they expect less from them or, you know, things like that and that just, it drives me so crazy. I hate that. I think that, you know, our whole nation is built on standing for everybody that comes here deserves the same sort of education. And the fact that the people who are more behind are being kept behind instead of, you know, given the extra help, it just, it drives me nuts. And I think, I think it is still a huge problem. (Ria, East Indian/Hispanic/Irish, 1st Semester).

Ria, who was one of the more aware and critical TES in the study, made the clear connection to race but again did not relate these discrepancies to a structure in place. Race was obviously a factor in her mind but Ria continued to believe that the nation functions justly as evident in her statement- "our whole nation is built on standing for everybody that comes here deserves the same sort of education." If our nation was truly built on affording everyone with justice and a fair opportunity then we would not continue to see such great racial segregation in schools as Ria had researched.

Frank, who self-identified as Chicano, was one of the most critical participants in the study. He continuously made references to race being a significant factor in society. In the following excerpt Frank demonstrated an awareness of a structure in place in which whites benefitted.

> Well if you take it back to the Europeans coming to this land, it was - "oh my God look at these savages, look at these trees, let's cut them down. Let's take advantage. Let's say, okay yeah we'll let you be a part of this, but at the same time treat them like shit." I think, well from the start the power structure was always White. Um, acceptance wasn't welcomed. Uh, you could be a part of this, but you can't be a part of this. You know, um look at slavery in the South. You're going to do all of our work for free. Uh, slavery ended, but it still kind of continued. Just there were different methods of doing it. Let's pay people seven bucks an hour to work at McDonald's instead of 14 bucks an hour. Let's um do that, so if you're getting paid seven bucks an hour, you can't afford you know, a nice place. You could afford a nice place, but you can't afford a nice place, like mine. You can't, you can't live in the same neighborhood as I do. You can live in this neighborhood though. Um, you can't shop at the same market where I get organic healthy food, but you can shop at this market. (Frank, Chicano, 3rd Semester).

In this statement Frank demonstrated a deeper understanding that begins to make a connection to a larger structure of opportunity in place that is race-based. Frank was one of the only TES to make this type of connection and he attributed this learning to the DIV 101 class he was required to take as part of the teacher education program, but he also stated that he had learned about white privilege and race in a Chicano Studies course he had taken during his undergraduate education.

III. Racial awareness and critical thought fell along a spectrum ranging from non-critical to critical. What I found as I was interviewing the participants and analyzing the interview data using critical discourse analysis (CDA) was that although I used specific

examples in the above discussion of adherence to colorblindness and other racial frames, TES varied in their understanding regarding race and racism in our society. There was not a clear-cut, either-or scenario. That is, the 17 TES could not be readily categorized as racist or anti-racist. Instead, from out of the 2,000+ interview minutes, emerged a type of spectrum[20] that would reflect their overall understanding of how race functions in our society (See Figure 1). This understanding should not be simplified to mean whether or not an individual superficially agrees that racism is part of our lives and world. What this spectrum reflects is the level, depth, and extent to which an individual understands *how* and *why* our society racializes bodies. This point is important for there is a distinction between an individual stating racism exists compared to an individual expressing how race is a determining factor in people's lives.

[20] I created this spectrum to illustrate the findings that emerged from the analysis of the interview data

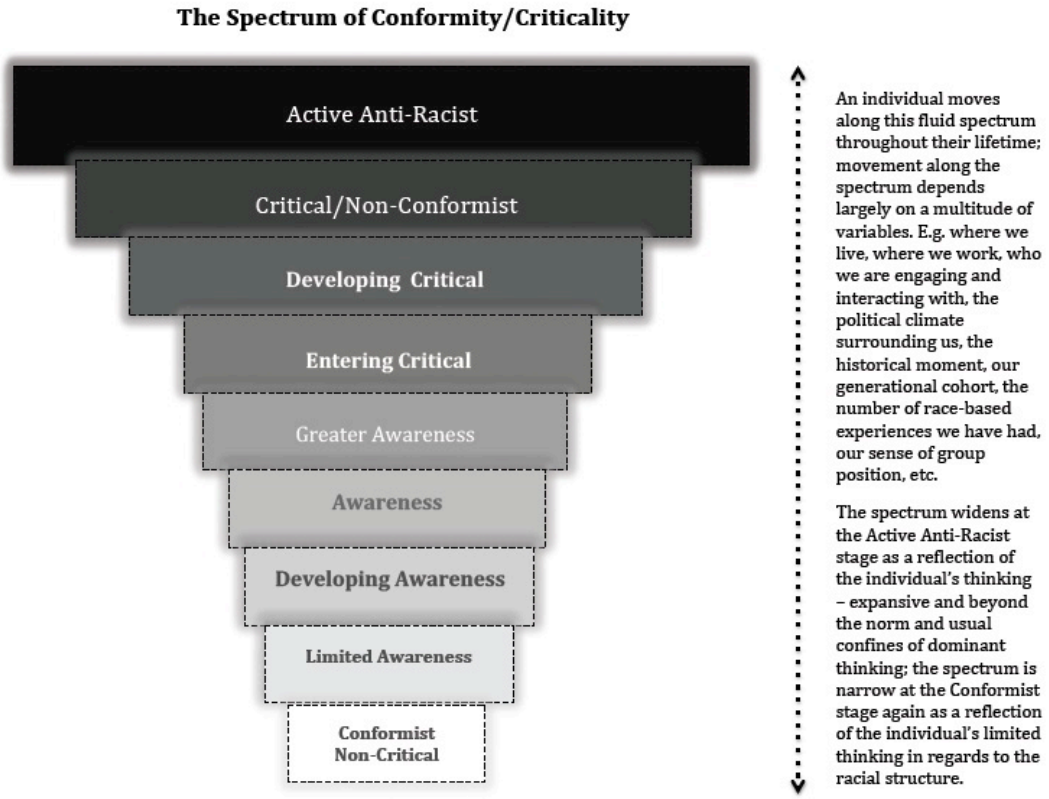

***Figure 1*. The Spectrum of Conformity/Criticality.**

This spectrum is not only applicable to the participants in my study, but holds for all of us. Where we find ourselves along the spectrum will encompass and reflect the following:

- Previous experiences that have dealt directly or indirectly with race or being racialized;
- Interpretations of those racialized experiences;
- Influence of families' racial ideologies;
- Amount and significance of interactions with other racial groups;
- Impact of peers and their own racial and social grouping;

- Position along the racial/social ladder (where society has positioned us and where we attempt to position ourselves as well);
- Type of education we have received (e.g. critical, reflective, conformist, etc.).

The above bulleted list reflects some of the most impactful variables that largely determine our position along the spectrum. Our position will also reflect our understanding of the world around us, and our understanding of how that world functions in relation to race.

There is not one sole variable that will determine a person's position but instead is a blend of many. Take for example one of the participants in the study – Marie (see Appendix C for detailed information on the 17 participants). Marie's discourse at times reflected an adherence to the use of stereotypes and the naturalization of race but at other times her discourse moved away from this tendency and instead reflected questioning. Thus using this spectrum to understand Marie's racial discourse and ideology made more sense. Having grown up in a relatively conservative and religious family, with a mostly private education, and the fact that Marie had been adopted as a child by a white father and Hispanic mother from her homeland in Central America, greatly influenced her and limited the formation of a deeper racial understanding. Marie's discourse and ideology often times reflected that of a person vested in a largely meritocratic and colorblind system. But, there were also moments during the interviews when Marie's discourse reflected more recent influences from her peers in the bilingual cohort she was part of in the teacher education program and that in a sense served to disrupt some of her own thinking regarding race. Given the many variables impacting Marie's ideology, using this spectrum made greater sense in that it could reflect how Marie's racial discourse and ideology fell along a range. Marie's racial ideology, as others, was not fixed. Instead, her ideology could shift and develop. This spectrum allows us

to break from the confining either/or and black/white dichotomies that tend to govern our thinking.

It is also vital to note that our positioning along the spectrum is not permanently fixed or static. Our position is fluid, dynamic, and depends largely on the current emotional, mental, and intellectual state we are in. This state depends on many things - the dynamics of where we live, where we work, who we engage with, the political climate surrounding us, the historical moment, our generational cohort, the number of race-based experiences we have had, and how we in turn interpret those experiences, etc. Seeing and treating the spectrum as fixed would signify to lose hope that people can change, especially for those that fall on what would be considered the more conformist end of the spectrum.

Because discourse reflects ideological positions (Eagleton, 1991; Leonardo, 2003), then discourse can be used to understand the relative discursive position of an individual along the spectrum at a particular phase or stage in their lives. For example, growing up in a lower-class family amidst the chaos and complexities of the urban giant of Los Angeles, I tended to remain in the Awareness range of the spectrum. This was largely due to the constant witnessing of disparities and the reality of inequity that continuously reminded me of what should be my place in society. Because of courses, professors, and peers who continuously challenged my thinking, I made my way into the Critical zone of the spectrum but this should not be interpreted in any way to mean that I have reached a final destination. As race critical educators we understand that becoming and continuing on to the active anti-racist path requires a life-long commitment. Reaching a type of final destination would be idealistic and we must question if that is even a possibility.

Again, the spectrum is fluid in nature and we can throughout our lifetimes, move along the spectrum. Our movement along the spectrum will depend largely on the variables aforementioned. As in the example of Marie, the position of an individual can reflect a range on the spectrum. It is important to note that boundaries are not always clear-cut, they can be blurred and/or overlap. The boundaries in Figure 1 are blurred and dotted lines have been used as a representation of this fluidity and to underscore that rigid boundaries do not exist. One should also note how the spectrum is narrow at the Conformist/Non-Critical stage and steadily widens as we reach the Active Anti-Racist stage. This was intentionally included to reflect how individuals who struggle at the Conformist/Non-Critical stage display largely narrow-minded thinking in terms of how clearly they understand how race functions in society. The spectrum greatly widens at the Active Anti-Racist stage to reflect the expansiveness in an individual's understanding of the hierarchical nature of race in society. The colors chosen also put a spin on the typical "black is bad" mentality. In this spectrum, black is used to represent the stage (Active Anti-Racist) we are striving to reach as race conscious individuals.

As race critical and caring educators, our work and teaching is centered on helping and motivating our students and those around us to move upwards on the spectrum. This is especially true if our students find themselves bound and struggling within the Conformist/Non-Critical stage. We also cannot use an individual's racial/ethic grouping as an indicator of where they will be on this spectrum. That is, we should not automatically assume that students of color would always be more aware or more critical than their white peers. To assume this would be a great error. In this study for example, there were 3 white participants – Hannah, Dayna, and Karen – whose discourses reflected greater awareness and/or more

race critical ideologies than some of the other students of color (e.g. Marie, Emma, and Briana). This again can be attributed to the type of education Hannah, Dayna, and Karen had received, their prior experiences involving race/racism, the presence of critical-minded peers and significant others in their lives, interracial friendships and relationships, etc. These variables combined had served to significantly impact each of these women's understanding of how race functions in society.

Explanation of the spectrum of conformity/criticality. Before beginning this section I wanted to stress that this spectrum is in no way intended as a judgment of the participants in my study. I intentionally moved away from 'assigning' the participants a set position on the spectrum. I chose to use a spectrum as a visual representation of my findings because it best captured the variation that existed among the participants. I also felt a spectrum was appropriate because spectrums capture and/or represent movement, seldom are they used as fixed locators. As educators we should move beyond these static positions and fixed categories and that was the intention behind the spectrum that emerged. What I realized during the interviews, especially with participants who tended to conform and subscribe to dominant racial ideologies was that they struggled with many issues. Some of these issues related to their education and teacher training, but others went beyond the scope of school and the classroom. What was also powerful was the realization that we are all struggling along this racial road. For the participants who conformed the most, the use of the spectrum was not intended as a negative reflection of who they were as an individual; instead, it was a powerful reflection of the larger impact of systems (especially the educational system and how it works as an Ideological State Apparatus; see Althusser, 1971) and the hierarchical society in which we live.

What this spectrum can do is to help us realize that there is no clear-cut/black or white, especially in regards to race. For the most part our students cannot be viewed as either racist or not. There is an in-between and this in-between reflects where most of our students will be. This spectrum can be used to help students (and others) reflect on where they are, *why* they are there, and where they want to strive to be.

Conformist/non-critical end of the spectrum. Individuals positioned along the Conformist/Non-Critical end of the spectrum tend to have discourses that exhibit the following characteristics: explanations and responses to race-related questions and issues that conform to dominant ideologies – e.g. an almost exclusive meritocratic manner of thinking ("Work hard and you'll make it") and an adherence to colorblind ideologies ("I don't see color, I see people"); not viewing race as a significant problem in society – e.g. "we're beyond race" mentality; not believing that race and/or racism impacts an individual's and/or a group's relative success in society ("It's not about race, it's about how hard you work); and tendency to place the "blame" on individuals in regards to their situation in society (i.e. work/profession, health, education, etc.). Much of the discourse that Conformist/Non-Critical individuals use is based on stereotypes and the essentialization of racial groups, meaning that they ascribe defining characteristics to an entire racial group – e.g. all Latinas are mothering types; all Chicanas are aggressive; all Native Americans are alcoholics, etc. Individuals in the Conformist/Non-Critical stage do not question the role of the larger society in regards to race. That is, how society has created race as a means of oppressing and categorizing humans and that systems such as the educational system work to uphold and perpetuate race. Race is simply not questioned and/or viewed as problematic. If anything, race is naturalized and viewed as unproblematic.

The following statements by Jane and Claire exemplified discourses largely confined along the Conformist/Non-Critical stage -

> "Does racism still exist?" Without fail every white kid said yes, every Hispanic, black, and Asian kid said no. So I am seeing that a lot of kids come into this, or a lot of students come into this class with the preconceived notion, racism is something in the past, it's something that doesn't exist. At least in the context that it used to... what it used to mean. That's what I am saying how it has changed over the course, racism of the civil rights era, the lynching, burning, name-calling, hiring practices that stuff does not exist anymore obviously. Um, but if you start out by saying, you know, "Racism still exists, every white person is racist and you guys should all stop it." They're going to be like, "Whoa! Where is all of this coming from, you know." (Jane, White, 1st Semester).

> It's [lack of 'success' and what Claire regarded as problematic attitudes] tied to the black culture. You know, and the Hispanic in L.A., it's tied to the Hispanic culture. It just is and I don't know if that's, is that just money, is that attitude? (Claire, White, 3rd Semester).

These quotes were representative of many of the statements made by both Jane and Claire in response to race-related questions. Although there is hesitance to quickly label Jane and Claire as racist individuals, their racial discourses could easily be considered the most problematic out of the 17 total participants. The following was Claire's response when I asked her about interracial marriage.

> Oh, they [Claire's parents] would have freaked out ... They would have freaked out. I would have never dreamed of that. Like, in my mind, that would have been like a not

> okay thing. You know, the kids would come out mulatto, God forbid. (Claire, White, 3rd Semester).

The following was Jane's description of the DIV 101, the one required diversity class:

> I was pretty skeptical about it [DIV 101 course], I was like, "Oh geez, we're gonna [sic] go in and hear how hard it's to be a poor little black kid blah, blah, blah, blah." (Jane, White, 1st Semester).

Given the reality that Jane and Claire were caught in this Conformist/Non-Critical stage, what were the variables that contributed to their limited and narrow-minded understanding of race? In this case both participants were white females; both came from religious homes; both had conservative parents who had clearly exhibited overt racist discourses; schooling and parenting that did not confront conformist ideologies; a general lack of significant interactions with other people of color; and a lack of critical-minded peers and/or significant others in their lives[21]. All of these variables combined contributed greatly to Jane and Claire's limited knowledge regarding the impact of race in schools and society and served to reinforce a problematic racial understanding for both participants. That is, instead of learning to question how race functions as a key organizing factor in our society and schools, both Jane and Claire learned that race was no longer an important issue to address while simultaneously believing that societal problems were related to a person's race. The following statements can serve as examples of the racial discourse and racial ideologies both Jane and Claire were exposed to in their home environment that impacted their own views on race -

[21] All of these variables had been mentioned and discussed by Claire and Jane during their interviews.

> And like I was gonna [sic] say about my dad, my dad freaked out when the black family moved in to the neighborhood. He freaked out and he would tell you that he wasn't prejudice against the skin color but he was really angry about crime. He was angry that he lived in a city that he had friends who were shot dead in the street because of the black culture and he blamed that on the black culture. And so, it was hard for him. And so then as his kid, having that being modeled for us, it was hard to separate. It's very hard to separate yourself from color. (Claire, White, 3rd Semester).

> My mom did a whole bunch of research because we had money when we moved here. My dad got a better job so we went from being really poor when I was in elementary/middle school to being pretty wealthy. And then we found out we were zoned for Bernardino and my mom did a bunch of research and found out that Bernardino high school is zoned for gangs. And it's known for violence and known for drugs and stuff like that. And we were like, "Mom we are not going to get involved in gangs, we don't want to go somewhere else." She was insistent that we did not go to Bernardino high school, she went into the River Ranch district and argued with the superintendent and chewed him up one side and down the other and made sure that we got into River Ranch high school which was the best in the state. (Jane, White, 1st Semester).

There was a significant age difference between Jane and Claire. Jane at 21 years old would be categorized as belonging to the Millennial cohort or even Generation Z while Claire at 49, was an older student who would fall into the previous Generation X category. It is important to note this difference in generational cohort between Jane and Claire because as mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, the erroneous assumption would be that Jane,

because she was a Millennial/Gen Z, would have reflected a more liberal discourse accepting of diversity and the Other. Instead, Jane exhibited one of the most problematic racial discourses laden with stereotypes and an almost non-existent analysis of the impact and power of race in society. The following was Jane's response when I had shown her the table of test scores in this geographic region broken down by race (see Appendix C for table).

> I think that it's easy to look at a study like this and go yes, the minority races are being discriminated against. But then you have to look at how many of these schools were in a poverty area? How many of these schools had horrible teachers? How many of these schools were in an area that didn't speak English, you know? So, I mean, it's really easy to look at like a bunch of statistical studies and say yes, there is a change, there's a difference between the groups, but what I'm saying, like the political agenda these teachers have ...they get a hold of these studies and go we have to change the world. We have to change the system and then they come in; they say "well, look at these studies." And we're like well, that one could be explained by poverty level. No, it can't because it has to be race. And they're so focused on race that there's no other option for them. And I describe it very much like religion 'cause [sic] I'm very anti-religion, too. (Jane, White, 1st Semester).

It is vital to note the vehement anti-race stance that Jane takes. Her explanations point to every other factor except that of race. Even when shown credible studies and statistics that demonstrate racial disparities, Jane refused to recognize it. Her continuous accusation throughout both interviews was that people who were critical of race had a set political agenda and Jane refused to listen or possibly learn from the information that was being

shared. This also served as a prime example of how it should not be automatically assumed that newer generations are more racially aware, accepting, and/or 'beyond race.'

Claire, on the other hand, at times demonstrated some awareness but her responses remained immersed within a problematic frame.

> There was always racial tension and nobody ever had to say it. It's just in the culture. Like somebody should have beaten it out of me but it was there, it was like, you can't, you know. And then I remember my dad, not that he ever said, "Black people are horrible or they're black or it's their skin color," but the crime rate when you're talking about these low test scores, well, in New Orleans, the crime rate is tied to their color, too, big time. (Claire, White, 3rd Semester).

Claire exhibited more awareness of how class and socioeconomic status impacts individuals but as mentioned previously, her awareness was tinged with many other problematic notions regarding race such as the use of genetic explanations and adherence to stereotypes. The following was Claire's response when I asked her why we continue to see discrepancies between whites and people of color -

> And I don't know if I have, if I've really even explored it deeply enough in my own self to really, you know, but off the cuff why? I definitely think a combination of, of things. And I think that money is just right even with some of the other ones. I think it's personal value systems, I think it's cultural beliefs, um, I think it's a lack of opportunity or, or the not lack of opportunity, you know, the opportunity is available. Um, I think there are a variety of things that are shaping. I think it's rooted in, um, in history. Um, I think it's rooted in class systems and how people have treated each other over the millennium, you know, I think things get passed down. I think it's

> genetic, you know, I think there's just a multitude of factors and I think socioeconomic status just by itself, how much money you have, and what kind of place you are ranked in society, um, is just pretty much at an equal level with some of these other things that, you know, that's what I think. (Claire, White, 3rd Semester).

Her understanding of why we continue to see race-based discrepancies such as in test scores, housing, etc. was completely devoid of any racial analysis. Claire expressed how class impacted individuals but she did not translate any of this deeper understanding of the capitalistic system to race and the racial structure. Claire did not address or understand the intersections of race and class.

Limited awareness. Individuals positioned along the Limited Awareness stage of the spectrum tend to have discourses that exhibit many of the same characteristics as those in the Conformist/Non-Critical (e.g. ascribing to meritocratic and colorblind ideologies; not believing that race is a significant problem; use of stereotypes; and essentializing of racial groups). What makes them distinct from being positioned strictly in the Conformist/Non-Critical end, is that their discourses are not as problematic and confined. That is, these individuals exhibit at least the beginning of an awareness that goes beyond the complete blaming of an individual or group and that goes a bit beyond explaining societal discrepancies (e.g. test scores, educational success) with solely problematic race-based and/or cultural explanations.

The following statements exemplify racial discourses along the Limited Awareness stage on the spectrum -

> I took a political science class and we kind of touched on this. Um, and our teacher showed us a bunch of tables like this. Statistics and percentages of different things

> and he was saying that socioeconomic status, level of education, all of those things play a role in determining like who is dominant. And the race that always comes out on top is Caucasian. Um, and so I think some of it is racism. Even though we say it's being eliminated, it's still there in our society and so I think that racism is a part of it. (Emma, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).
>
> So I think the hard part for me because I don't really like having a diversity class just because for me I've grown up in a diverse atmosphere and when I grew up, I didn't even know that until I went to Texas State my freshman year and I saw how segregated it still was. I had people in my dorm hall "oh, do you see those black people at the party?" It's like what? Did you really just say that? And but it's very conservative there. It's very segregated still. It's very strange and like all the girls in my hall were all white and I'm half Mexican and I guess that's another hard part too is like I don't go with like my Hispanic culture at all because I don't know that. That's my father's side and I just did not get along with my father. But when I went out there like here I don't look very Hispanic because I'm very light complected [sic] and I don't speak Spanish or any of that but when I went to Texas State it was like, "oh you're Mexican" or "oh, this and that" but I mean compared to them I was super dark because they're all like platinum blonde hair like really white. (Nora, Hispanic, 1st Semester).

The discourses of these two participants - Emma and Nora - reflected racial thinking that did not completely fit the Conformist/Non-Critical end. This was mostly because they had demonstrated at various points during their interviews ideas that went beyond a strict conformity with dominant problematic racial ideologies and that reflected at least a limited

awareness of larger forces at play in society that influence our lives on a daily basis. Nora and Emma were at the brink of beginning to enter a tug-of-war with the questioning of larger dominant ideologies.

> Yeah. It makes me mad because we've been learning so much in the College of Ed about not doing that but then people in the profession or my friends, are doing just that. And it makes me mad because, well personally I really try not to put labels on people and that's what they're doing. Just because of where they live and so it just makes me upset because I know that there's schools around here that would never get the negative comments. They would say "Oh"... [Like which ones?] Like Bosque Hills you know. That's one of them that you would say "Oh my goodness, you're child goes *there*? Well what a great school!" (Emma, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

> While I was there they [media] always said like the Mexicans and the Blacks would riot against each other and it would be this huge like racial thing. I don't remember what they called it, like a something war - a race war. I don't know. Something crazy. One time like the cops came on horses and were on our campus to make sure nothing happened and there was one time when a list was found and I was so upset because it was like a list of names and they called it a 'hit' list on the news. And then a week later a list comes out of Golden high school and they called it a 'hate' list. And even just that one word has way different connotations to people and there were all sorts of things that happened with Holland that they would right away blast on the news. I mean it seemed like this horrible high school and I mean yeah things happened but things happen at every high school. (Nora, Hispanic, 1st Semester).

Both Nora and Emma were light-skinned females who self-identified as Hispanic[22]. Nora was born and raised in the same geographic area as this study and Emma was born and raised on the East Coast but had moved to the Southwest at an early age. It was also interesting to note that both Nora and Emma although from Spanish-speaking parents, did not speak Spanish themselves. The issue of language was brought up by both Nora and Emma and was strongly tied to questions involving identity.

> With well especially with the Spanish like I just didn't care to learn it because he [father who was Mexican] was trying to force me to learn it, which now I wish I had... and so with me that's another thing that I hate is when people know that I'm Hispanic or know that I'm a half Mexican, they right away assume that I have all this culture and that's not my culture because I never associated myself with that. Um, so I think that's part of the point because I think we've been learning about you know making everything our pedagogy like culture, culturally relevant and all that. But I think another point too is that just because someone is Hispanic doesn't mean they associate with Hispanic culture and that's something that's not covered over. With me I would never have wanted a teacher to be like oh, let's learn about this because it's your culture and I'd be like no. (Nora, Hispanic, 1st Semester).

> To be frank it just makes me feel stupid because, like, everybody in the family, you know we're here in the Southwest now and so many people know two languages. They speak Spanish and I just feel that being Hispanic and with my family with so much of our family that speaks Spanish also I just feel really inferior that I can't be a

[22] It is important to point out that the use of Hispanic as an identity label in this state has been connected to a long history of conquest and colonization which has led to a demarcation between what would be considered Hispanic ethnic groups, e.g. Mexicans, Chicanos, etc.

part of that. That I don't know it. Um, so I don't know. I guess I'm just sad that we didn't grow up learning it better. (Emma, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

Although both of the participants demonstrated some awareness that went beyond the Conformist/Non-Critical stage, it is important to point out that the discourses of Nora and Emma largely adhered to problematic ideologies with limited or no analysis of the racial structure or racial system. Most of their explanations or responses to race-based questions were devoid of any deeper reflection and adhered to the use of stereotypes.

I think a large part of it is culture. Like if you take an Asian culture, education is high, high, high on their priority list, which is why we know that so many of the Asian countries are more highly educated than Americans, test higher than Americans, you know, because their focuses are math and sciences. Where ours are trying to get there. But, ours aren't held as high here. And then, you know, you hear that Asian cultures, the parents, the parents are really involved in education, the parents all have these scientific jobs, the parents are really strict with their kids about what they're going to study and how much they study and study, study, study and less play time. But, that's not supported like in American culture, not with everybody. And then, if you take Hispanic culture, it's even less. So, unfortunately, again, the stereotype is being reinforced. (Emma, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

There's also some older people that live there which now they've all died off slowly and then new people have moved into their houses and I've just seen that on my street but I mean that could be the case for the rest of the area and it seems like well we have a lot of drug dealers that move in or people that I don't even know what

> they do but they're very suspicious and they don't talk to anyone. They're very weird. (Nora, Hispanic, 1st Semester).

Again, these quotes illustrate many of their responses that indicated that they had not previously encountered much critical thought on race-related issues. Instead much of their discourse reflected an adherence to minimization of race, use of stereotypes, etc.

Developing awareness/awareness. Individuals positioned along the Developing Awareness/Awareness stage on the spectrum tend to have discourses that many times go beyond simplistic and/or a limited understanding of how race functions in society. These individuals have moved beyond the Conformist/Non-Critical end because they are engaging with larger ideas of how and why society works the way it does. These individuals have not completely bought into problematic notions that explain differences using race, culture, and/or language as their frame. That is, individuals who exhibit Developing Awareness/Awareness will not automatically use race or culture as an explanation of why certain students succeed or "fail" in school. Through their explanations and responses to race-based questions, it becomes apparent that these individuals have had experiences, courses, discussions, peers, family, etc. that have impacted their ideologies and are beginning to question the role of society and how race functions within it.

There were 4 participants – Marie, Rachel, Carlos, and Briana – who consistently brought up examples in their responses of how class, language, and/or race impacted individuals in both schools and society.

> I think it's lack of support or, like parental support, you know, even economical support. I think it's just down to that because even graduating from high school we weren't encouraged to go to college or anything you know, we were just like

graduating with the bare minimum of math and science and even English or whatever, it was just like the bare minimum. So even though I went to college I started off with low classes, I was relearning how to do algebra and basic math skills, like dividing fractions and stuff … it was kind of like a waste, you know? Like I felt I could have learned this in high school, …they didn't really encourage us to take the full load. (Carlos, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

It's hard because society wants to put a label on you based on your skin color, based on your name, based on your appearance, but for me it's like I'm a product of my environment and that's my culture. My culture is community, it's family, it's music, it's very, you know, faithful. (Briana, Hispanic, 1st Semester).

The construction workers they're people of color and they're there day after day working in the wind and this harsh weather and they're the ones going to build this future building for us college students. And going to the restaurants, you look in the background in the kitchen, it's always people of color cooking up the meals, getting there early preparing the food. (Marie, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

I think um part of it is still we don't want to admit that things like this are still happening, that students are still being discriminated against. Maybe we don't realize its happening or realize that were doing it but you know just like I was saying in Hartwell the teachers have lower expectations... I think that there's still racial tension throughout the nation I think that still exists, *I know* it does. (Rachel, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

Although the participants consistently exhibited discourses that demonstrated more reflection, their analysis of race was still limited and/or at times they resorted to stereotypes as an explanation to race-based questions.

> I think there's a little truth to it. I mean you see like all these cases of domestic abuse and stuff and these things on the news and it's people of color are getting the, are making a bad name or whatever, especially with crime and stuff. (Carlos, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

> Call me ignorant, you know, call me naive but it's almost like acknowledging those things just empowers them. Okay, let's talk about stereotypes. Yeah, we can talk about stereotypes all day long. (Briana, Hispanic, 1st Semester).

> I think it'll be extremely challenging and very frustrating when, um, you're trying to go to a community where they don't want to hear what you want to say. Like they have their way of life and they're going to continue down the pathway they've been going. Um, the government doesn't care. That's just another low-income city with a lot of crime. (Marie, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

The following was Rachel's response when I asked her the following question - "If you could come back to Earth, what race would you choose to come back as? And you can't pick white."

> I think ... I'd like to be Asian it just interests me you know I just think that there's a lot of things about them that interest me like the foods that they eat, the different religious aspects of it, the peacefulness mainly peacefulness of the culture. [How many people do you think would pick a Black person?] (silence) ... probably not very

> many [Yeah and why?] because its seen as a bad thing, its a stigma. (Rachel, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

Rachel's response was interesting in that she both reified one of the common stereotypes associated with the Asian culture and at the same time she demonstrated her awareness regarding the 'stigma' associated with the Black culture.

Greater awareness. Individuals in the Greater Awareness stage on the spectrum reflect discourses that the majority of the time will exhibit more expansive awareness of how race has the power to impact individuals' lives in society. Individuals who are consistently demonstrating discourses that reflect Greater Awareness have moved beyond the Conformist/Non-Critical stage. There were three participants– Dayna, Karen, and Amber – whose racial discourses reflected Greater Awareness. These three participants posed many questions and demonstrated much reflection throughout many of their responses, especially when they were asked race-related questions. What is interesting to note is that Dayna, Karen, and Amber are white women. Many of their personal experiences had given each of them a different view on race and how it impacts individuals and groups in society and thus had forced them out of using a lens largely immersed in whiteness and white privilege. Karen shared the following -

> Had I not had some of the experiences I had when I was younger, after I left the part of town I lived in for all my life up until that point, I think my views would be different, cause I would have my own view of the world that I think exists. But once I got out there and saw the other half of the world that's out there or you know of this city anyway, it really opened my eyes to see that it's not fair... I think the biggest thing I noticed was just the economics... that it's ... there's so many things going

> against people, especially economically that they might not even now how hard they try they just can't break loose from it. I think that's the biggest thing, my own personal experiences. (Karen, White, 1st Semester).

There were other variables that were of interest and that should be pointed out as having had significant impacts on their discourse and ideologies. Specifically, both Dayna and Karen were living with or married to a significant other who was a person of color. When I asked Dayna what she thought about interracial dating/marriage she responded:

> So, um, interracial dating for me is not a problem [laughs], obviously. (Dayna, White, 1st Semester).

Karen and Dayna both had children with their partners and thus were mothers of what would be categorized as biracial children. These are important characteristics to note because they have the potential of significantly impacting their ideologies. Being married to a person of color and being a parent to a biracial child have the power to impact the dominant ideologies whites are submerged within. As Dayna had stated at one point during the interview, in order to really understand what people of color were experiencing, she had to make those experiences hers. The way Dayna had made those experiences hers was by actively listening to her significant other talk about the experiences he had being racialized and heard his pain regarding this. Because he was someone she loved and deeply cared for, she was able to believe, understand, and internalize more of what he had felt and experienced as a person of color.

Both Dayna and Karen also shared experiences in which they had witnessed their partners mistreated because of their race. Dayna specifically made reference to her white

stepfather who she described as "racist as you can get." She poignantly recalled a time when her stepfather literally fired shots at her and her Hispanic boyfriend at the time:

> He literally shot at me and my boyfriend because he thought he was Mexican 'cause he was dark and he shot at us one day when we were walking up the driveway...it was horrible. (Dayna, White, 1st Semester).

One can only imagine what this must have felt like for Dayna. Karen also shared an experience when she and her husband who was Hispanic were in the process of trying to buy their first home. Karen directly witnessed many discrepancies between the home-buying process she had endured in comparison to what her white friends had experienced. Karen shared how the process had taken much longer for her and her husband and that they were required to provide many more documents to the bank in order to prove they were “good” people and qualified homebuyers. Karen stated, "society brushes Hispanics and Blacks with broad strokes." Karen described these experiences as "unfair" and it was clear that it had not only made her angry and upset, but it had increased her awareness regarding how profoundly race impacted people on a daily basis.

It was also interesting to note that Karen, Dayna, and Amber had taken some type of multicultural education class and/or other critical course prior to entering the teacher education program. What this meant is that the three of these women had entered the required Diversity 101 (DIV 101) course with prior knowledge regarding critical issues and what have been considered more controversial themes in education such as tracking, effects of testing, school to prison pipeline, history from the non-dominant perspective, etc. All three believed that prior knowledge and experiences with more critical courses and/or multicultural education classes had helped them better ‘prepare’ for DIV 101. This belief

was aligned with what Frankenberg (1995) stated in her book *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness*, "knowledge about a situation is a critical tool in dismantling it" (p. 10). And as such, these women believed that knowledge and experience had shifted their ways of seeing the racial world. It was interesting to hear Karen go further and suggest that there should be a prerequisite before even taking DIV 101.

> That was discussed a lot too [how white students felt personally attacked in the class]. That "Oh, I'm White and so I've got to automatically hate myself" and people were like why isn't there White or White pride and stuff like that. This was *everyday*. And so, I think there was just some general ... I don't know maybe there was I mean I would hate to put like a pre-req on it or something. But, I don't know maybe they would accept it [DIV 101] better. (Karen, White, 1st Semester).

Amber had a similar suggestion -

> I don't think you can do it [cover critical issues] in just one class it's not going to work. There's too much material to cover. I wish more classes were required or at least offered Because having gone through the process, I realize that you have so little time in the first class to cover everything that you don't really get a chance to delve into all of the issues and to get to listen to everything.

Having prior knowledge had given them a greater understanding of the importance of covering more critical issues and how courses that address these themes should not be viewed as personal attacks on students. That is, a discussion of whiteness and white privilege in an education course should not be regarded as a personal attack on white students taking the course. Their positive comments stood in stark opposition to many of their peers

who believed that DIV 101 was not needed given what they believed to be an inherently diverse geographic location and current post-racial times.

Although Amber was not in an interracial relationship or a parent of a biracial child, she demonstrated greater awareness similar to both Dayna and Karen. Amber believed that much of her awareness was connected to her mother whom she felt had greatly impacted her thinking. Amber spoke of her mother very highly and shared how she had been encouraged by her mother to learn the 'other side' of history by taking a more critical history course from a person friend of their family. Amber had expressed some reservation towards DIV 101 but she recognized how the course had impacted her belief systems and how she viewed and understood race.

> Well, it's funny because when I started I wasn't exactly happy that it was required. I didn't even understand what it was about, but now that I've gone through the class I wish more classes were required. (Amber, White, 1st Semester).

Dayna, Karen, and Amber also served as clear examples of how we cannot essentialize white students and assume that they would always be less critical or less aware than students of color. As critical educators we understand the importance of not essentializing racial groups as for example, having had the same experiences in schooling, in work, in their family life, etc. In the same manner that we should not generalize and erroneously state that all persons of color are poor and/or have had the same racial experiences, we should also take care to not essentialize whites. As Bonilla-Silva (2009) argued, all whites should not be categorized as "refined Archie Bunkers" (p. 131). As Bonilla-Silva goes on to state, "no one should ever ignore white militants who struggled for racial equality and who risked their lives for this goal" (p. 131). Dayna and Karen in

particular troubled the tendency we often see that generalizes whites as 'refined Archie Bunkers.' Both of these women again had partners of color and biracial children. Both of them had chosen to live in communities that were largely populated by people of color. Both of them had also chosen for their children to attend schools with high numbers of students of color. These were conscious decisions Karen and Dayna had made which they understood would impact and compromise their white privilege in some form. In the case of both Karen and Dayna, similarities in their ideological positions were due to the similarity in experiences these two women had had during their lives. These experiences are what pushed them to become more aware and conscious of the realities of race. Amber had not had the same experiences as Dayna and Karen but she saw herself as beginning to follow a path leading to more critical thought and had the support and guidance of a parent who had not completely bought into dominant ideologies.

What made these three white women different from for example the TES whose discourses were caught in the Conformist/Non-Critical end of the spectrum, was that not only did they have partners and children of color (Dayna and Karen) and prior knowledge regarding critical issues, but they also acknowledged the existence of whiteness and practice of white privilege. They were in a place where they were beginning to understand the system of whiteness and how it impacted people of color.

> I have to admit that I think a large part is because so much of it has to do with violence. And when you really look at it in depth you realize that it's a lot of people on people violence, and a lot of the issues within our culture are based on race. And a lot of people, pretty much from every culture, say "you're different from me I want to

> change that, so I'm just going to try and wipe you off the map." (Amber, White, 1st Semester).

Dayna acknowledged that at times she struggled with the concept of whiteness, but she wanted to challenge herself to learn and to confront her thinking.

> [DIV 101] was an extremely tough subject for me, now looking back, I feel bad 'cause I was very, like, "What in the world are you talking about?" I was angry. It made me angry because I love my Southwest culture. And I guess I don't identify with whiteness because I love the culture that's here... Because I'm white, I can't change white. Hispanics can't change Hispanics. People that are brown can't change that they're brown. You know? And, and we can't change our physical and chemical makeup. You know you can't change that. So I think that maybe it was just the term [Dayna is referring to the use of the term whiteness in DIV 101]. And it really hurt my feelings. And I understand that and I've learned a lot from the class, like it's been hard and I don't know if there's a way to prep for that class... I have no explanation for it [again referring to whiteness]. I just know that it's wrong and I think that a lot of people that see it know that it's wrong. (Dayna, White, 1st Semester).

All of the experiences Dayna, Karen, and Amber shared had served to expand their experiences beyond what is considered a typical white upbringing (e.g., mostly white neighborhood and attending mostly white schools, dating primarily within their race, schooling aligned with dominant ideologies, etc.). What became clear over the course of the interviews and data analysis was that these life experiences had worked to challenge their perspectives which pushed these women beyond a confined and limited manner of understanding the significance of race in America.

Entering critical/developing criticality. Individuals positioned along the Entering Critical/Developing Criticality end of the spectrum reflect discourses that exhibit the following characteristics:

- Explanations and responses to race-related questions and issues that break away and do not conform to dominant ideologies – e.g., do not use meritocracy as an explanation as to why individuals and groups do not 'succeed' in school and life in general;
- Do not adhere to colorblind ideologies (e.g., do not make general statements such as "color doesn't matter");
- Understand that race functions as a significant factor in society;
- Understand and are aware of the fact that race impacts an individual's and/or a group's relative success in society;
- Do not place the "blame" on individuals and/or groups in regards to their position in society; and so on.

Much of the discourse that these individuals along the Entering Critical/Developing Criticality stage is far removed from the use of stereotypes and they also tend not to essentialize racial groups. That is, they do not generalize or make blanket statements across an entire racial group. For example, they will not say and/or do not believe statements such as "Black and Mexican families do not care about education, they prioritize family."

Furthermore, these individuals in the Entering Critical/Developing Criticality stage have learned to question the role of larger society in regards to race. That is, they question and reflect on the role society has in the creation and perpetuation of racism. These individuals understand that race functions as a means to oppress and to categorize humans

and that this subsequently impacts the fate of individuals and groups in our society. Individuals who are Entering Critical/Developing Critical have learned to question the power of race in our everyday lives including but not limited to how the educational system reinforces race and racism. Race and racism are not treated or regarded as natural or normal.

The discourses of 6 TES – Hannah, Sofia, Isabel, Frank, Ria, and Stephanie –largely reflected an Entering Critical/Developing Critical understanding of how race functions in our society. It should be noted that 5 out of the 6 participants identified as people of color. Isabel identified as Mexican and Sofia identified as Hispanic. Frank was biracial but self-identified as Chicano on his demographic sheet. Ria identified as East Indian/Hispanic/Irish and Stephanie identified as Black/White. Hannah was the only white TES who consistently demonstrated a racial discourse that clearly went beyond adherence to problematic racial ideologies. As critical educators we cannot automatically assume that students of color will always be more critical than their white counterparts, but there continues to be a general pattern. That is, in studies and in classes, the most critical-minded and racially aware individuals do tend to be people of color (Bonilla-Silva, 2006). This makes sense in that people of color continue to be the most oppressed in society in all regards. People of color have had to deal with the consequences of being racialized on a daily basis and thus continuously face the realities of being oppressed, judged and evaluated because of the color of their skin. Despite the prevalence of a colorblind and post-racial ideology, "color," continues to greatly matter and its impact is made evident across multitudes of statistics gathered that demonstrate the material and social consequences of race (Haney-Lopez, 2010; Oliver & Shapiro, 1997).

Throughout their interviews these 6 participants consistently demonstrated thinking that went above and beyond an adherence to dominant racial ideologies. For the most part, they had not bought into notions of meritocracy and did not view racism as a thing of the past or as something limited to an individual's problematic attitude. Although they did not have the 'academic' language to explain race on a structural level, their examples indicated that they understood the impacts of race on a larger scale.

> I think it's just the color. Like, if you're from a different color and you're not white you're just going to be treated like less...I mean, even if they say the opposite, that every one's equal, it's not true. And that's not going to change for a very long time. Even if we have an African American president, that's not going to change. Cause I mean I've heard racist jokes about our president and it's like why? What's the point? (Isabel, Mexican, 3rd Semester).
>
> I know that the United States has a pattern of racism. I know that and I think racism plays a large part. (Frank, Chicano, 3rd Semester).
>
> We had someone in our class say for months that there was no such thing as racism. That racism did not exist anymore in our community. I was like, I don't see how you can say that at all. It doesn't even make sense. (Ria, East Indian/Hispanic, 1st Semester).
>
> I think that my theory is that were afraid to see ourselves as anything other than good. We're afraid to critically look at ourselves. I think because this country was supposed to be founded on such wonderful ideals and if you look at the constitution it is all men and women are created equal but that is not how we've done

> it and ... I don't think many people want to admit that or want to talk about it or teach our kids. (Hannah, White, 3rd Semester).
>
> I don't know if I did or if I've always been somebody who's kind of aware of things because obviously going to Golden High I think there's a handful of people who weren't white who went to that school so you learn right away that people are surprised that you are doing well and you're like what? Why does it surprise you that I would be a good student or surprising that I'm in this class ... I think the more you see that the more you realize that there's still so much. (Sofia, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).
>
> It doesn't feel good to know that being white, you've had all these privileges and for somebody to point them out and put them in your face and it's not necessarily something that you ask for but it's something that you take advantage of. I think it's hard for them to see people of color who have struggled their entire lives and they say, "Oh, well, it's the bootstrap mentality. You just didn't, you didn't work hard enough or you didn't do this or you didn't do that." And I think when those ideas are being tested, I think it's really hard for them to come to terms with it. (Stephanie, Black/White, 1st Semester).

These statements highlight the thinking that these 6 TES demonstrated. Throughout their interviews it became evident that they did not place blame on an individual student or on families for what would be perceived as a lack of 'success' in school or their position in society (e.g. where they lived, their economic status, etc.). The 6 firmly understood that students, families, and groups of color struggled because of a system already in place in society.

> We're labeled as the students who are not going to get ahead and we're just going to just stay in the same town forever. 'Cause I've noticed that they label us from the very beginning. (Isabel, Mexican, 3rd Semester).

Isabel clearly understood that students of color were labeled in schools, many times by teachers themselves, and that many of those labels brought with them negative connotations associated with failure.

> In job interviews if you have a white, blonde girl and you have a very dark black girl there is instantly a difference, regardless of their schooling, regardless of whether everything they did in their life was exactly the same throughout grade wise. (Ria, East Indian/Hispanic, 1st Semester).

Here Ria demonstrated her knowledge of how race serves as a marker that is used to differentiate between people. Ria did not buy into the naive assumption that people would be treated fairly across races, even when both persons are equally competent.

> I think that especially in schools if they haven't seen any differently they think "oh all of our kids are treated fairly like all of our lessons we make so that we don't insult certain groups or that we do whatever to include all the groups of people" but I think that they don't realize that in like the city its almost like an opportunity thing, some kids are not even given the opportunity that others are given and it comes down to much more than how you try to include this in your lesson so that this kid... and they do probably think that its post-racism and that people are treated equally. (Sofia, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

Sofia understood that not all are afforded the same opportunities in life. Furthermore she was aware of how specifically teachers had bought into this post-racial moment.

> I think it's the schools where the administration thinks the discipline needs to be in place, discipline needs to be in place in order for these kids to learn. That might be true, but the discipline that I see it's you know, hands behind your back when you walk down the hall, straight line, don't touch anything. That's like to me that's like, man you're getting these kids ready for prison. (Frank, Chicano, 3rd Semester).

Frank's statement here reflected a deeper understanding of how schools have functioned to uphold race and the categorization of students by race and class. He had learned about the school-to-prison pipeline in one of his Chicano Studies classes and this knowledge had become more real for him while at his field placement where he had witnessed this trend in action.

In the following quotes, both Hannah and Stephanie demonstrated profound knowledge on the systemic effects of a racialized structure in society. Hannah not only questioned the use of stereotypes to categorize families but she also connected it to white power and white privilege.

> I think that we've stereotyped those families and we tend to put them in a racial group but I think my perception is that its the families who have never had anyone graduate from high school who never had anyone go to college and they're stuck in these you know minimum wage jobs and they can't give their kids what they want to give them and because of our ... the white power ... the white privilege. Its more accepted that oh if someone who's white is living out in west mesa and they don't have running water or electricity that's due to bad luck and we've constructed this well if its a Hispanic family that's just because that's the way it is for them and maybe its the way

> it is for them but it can be the way it is for anyone else just as easily. (Hannah, White, 3rd Semester).
>
> I think a lot of our education system isn't, not necessarily accommodating, but sensitive to them. So for instance in history, we're learning about Caucasians, we're not learning about African Americans or Hispanics or Native Americans. Other than being the victim or being enslaved. I think that there are a lot of negative connotations with having a white instructor and having that person and those expectations that are set, I think it has a lot to do with the teachers. Um, if they're not culturally sensitive to it as well. And I think people are like what does, what does being cultural have to do with math. But it's the way that they speak with students. I think we have, white teachers, they have a lot of lower standards that they've set for these students as well. "Oh, you poor Black student or you poor Native student." Or, you know, they're thinking that they're worthless, that they can't do it... So I think a lot of this has to do with the teachers in the schools and how these students are treated. (Stephanie, Black/White, 1st Semester).

As a biracial woman who had experienced many moments of racialization in school, Stephanie understood how the education system did not work in favor of groups of color. She related this to the prevalence of white teachers and their continued lack of sensitivity to groups of color and the impacts of race.

The 6 TES who demonstrated greater critical thought differed from many of the other TES in this study in that they did not deny the existence and influence of white privilege and whiteness in education and society in general. The following section explains this further.

White privilege. Not many individuals, including TES, understand or are even aware of the systemic impacts of white privilege and often times those who are made aware of it become defensive and/or react negatively when those discussions come up in classes, in readings, or in conversations. Take the following statement made by Marie as indicative of the typical reaction to questions regarding white privilege -

> I don't think you should say being white's an advantage because I think that's a poor excuse for saying I can't accomplish these goals. And so I disagree with that being white is an advantage because I think, case by case, a person of any color can get where they want to be. So I think it's a poor excuse to say that. (Marie, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

Karen who generally demonstrated greater awareness throughout both interviews also did not fully comprehend white privilege as a system in place within the current racial structure. Karen's understanding of white privilege was limited to something an individual had, something personal and not systemic.

> A lot of the my classmates understood white privilege as something that they were being told like if you were white you didn't really have to work hard for anything. And I can kind of see where they were frustrated with that and cause I mean I thought about that myself that it kind of seemed like there was just this general lump assumption about if people were White they would have it kind of easy. They didn't have to really struggle for anything. That's where I was like well my life hasn't always been easy there's been different things that I've gone through. Just from my own experiences I don't know if being White helped or just didn't really matter. (Karen, White, 1st Semester).

In the following statement, Claire seems to justify whiteness and being 'privileged.' Claire does not seem to find it problematic that the students she had at Alex Pine Elementary (her first field placement) had so much privilege in contrast to the students she now had at her new field placement, Santa Ana Elementary, a predominately Hispanic serving school.

> Well, okay, so when I was at Alex Pine Elementary I felt more at home in the school environment, as far as my own family, my own Anglo, um, high standards really. You know I want the best for my kids. I want them to have every opportunity. Let's travel the world. You know that whole kind of thing. Um, and there was a lot of that at Alex Pine. I mean, the kids brought in their... you know they've been to Lego Land and they've been everywhere ... very much kids who are living more of a privileged lifestyle. (Claire, White, 3rd Semester).

When I specifically asked Claire if she thought that whites had advantages over people of color, this is how she responded -

> I keep thinking about the demographics in like the east, the eastern part of .. the western part of Florida, driving through that area or like Appalachia. What about Appalachia? I mean, they're white and I think that demographic in that area of the country is very suppressed, like this one, or oppressed or whatever. (Claire, White, 3rd Semester).

Statements, such as Marie's, Karen's, and Claire's stood in stark contrast to those made by the critical TES. The recognition and knowledge of the system of white privilege in the US made it evident that the racial discourses of the TES reflected an Entering Critical/Critical position on the spectrum. These 6 TES not only were aware of the prevalence of racism in society,

but they understood that there were beneficiaries in this system. This knowledge set the 6 TES apart from the rest of the participants in the study.

> I remember reading in it, it was saying White people, Anglos, they need to recognize their privileged and they need to say, "hey there's something wrong going on," and they need to admit that. Until they do that they won't be open to seeing, you know, the problems going on in the United States and our communities. (Frank, Chicano, 3rd Semester).

> I think that white people who have not felt like they have personally persecuted other people or personally given advantages because of it and they feel like they haven't had that experience [white privilege] and they're like, this doesn't exist. (Ria, East Indian/Hispanic/Irish, 1st Semester).

> I think we could as - as the university I would hope that the professors could frame it in a way .. would allow the students to discuss it and get more into it I think they would shy away from it initially very much so because they don't want to see themselves as the oppressor .. as the privileged white oppressor. You don't want to see yourself as privileged and you don't want to see yourself as the oppressor its hard. (Hannah, White, 3rd Semester).

Sofia related white privilege to an incident that occurred during her field placement where students had to choose a famous person for a biography report and one of the boys in class chose Michael Jordan but the teacher did not approve that choice. Here I had asked Sofia if she had said anything to her Master Teacher regarding this incident -

> I didn't ask because I didn't know how to bring it up with her but I couldn't figure out why, like what the difference would be between the two [the teacher had allowed

> Michael Phelps but not Michael Jordan], especially after what was brought to her attention that he was in the Olympics also. "Nope you can't do Michael Jordan pick someone else." All of the other ones by far, like there's nobody that's not white that the kids ended up picking, so I don't know if she realizes that or if she was even aware in trying to guide kids to someone like maybe Cesar Chavez would be interesting to do or Martin Luther King would be someone. But you know they weren't even guided to that point. There weren't books on the table of people like that, so I don't think that a lot of teachers realize that's the message they're sending or when they give their reports everyone in the class is going to hear 26 reports of somebody white who's contributed and nothing else. (Sofia, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

Stephanie not only understood the system of white privilege but she also recognized her own privileges as a lighter skinned biracial woman.

> I think because of- I know because I have light skin and it's something that is considered to be a plus. In most social circles, it's better to be light skinned than it is to be dark skinned. (Stephanie, Black/White, 1st Semester).

Stephanie recognized she had privileges over darker-skinned Black women and it was something she thought about and caused her pain.

> I think it's more internalized than anything because I understand, I can see their side of the story and there are times when I do feel bad with the fact that I am light skinned and I know that I'm treated differently than other people would be. If I go into a job interview and a darker skinned woman goes in, they're going to feel that I'm a lot less threatening, that I meet that I meet that quota of being ethnically- you know, "Oh, she's diverse or we're bringing diversity into the classroom." Whereas if

> they bring in a darker skinned person, I feel like a lot of people wouldn't take that chance and wouldn't do that. So I know I do get those privileges and I do feel bad about getting those privileges even if it's not something that I ask about. (Stephanie, Black/White, 1st Semester).

Concluding Thoughts

This chapter focused on answering one of the main questions in this study - what would the racial discourses of teacher education students (TES) in the urban Southwest look like at this given time and in this geographic space? As was discussed in this chapter, the discourses of the TES both conformed and resisted larger dominant racial ideologies. Blanket statements such as *all* TES demonstrate problematic racial discourses cannot be made. A significant number of the 17 participants in this study did demonstrate racial discourses that adhered to a colorblind ideology in which race is not seen or noticed by well-intended individuals. Some of the TES also demonstrated overt racist discourses and others had bought into the current post-racial rhetoric that has heightened since the election and re-election of President Obama. What is vital to note is that there were also the TES who broke from upholding dominant ideologies and instead demonstrated more critical thought regarding the significance and prevalence of race and racism in society. The 6 more critical TES will be the focus in Chapter 5. These are the participants who inspired the hope that change is possible given a context that provides reflection and an environment conducive to critical thought and practice.

Chapter 5

Findings II

This chapter focuses on the 6 TES whom I have referred to as *los conscientes* that loosely translates to 'those who are conscience.' The reason why I refer to them as *los conscientes* is because that is what they represent - a greater state of being conscience and aware. The term *los conscientes* does not equate to having reached a final destination on the spectrum, i.e. the ideal anti-racist, but it does reflect individuals who walk a path of greater critical thought. That is what these 6 individuals represented, individuals who had already embarked on that critical journey and who because of their conscience nature chose not to conform.

In this chapter I explore the following questions: What was it that made Hannah, Sofia, Isabel, Frank, Ria, and Stephanie so distinct from the rest of the participants? What made them more aware of social and racial injustices in society? What were the specific variables or factors that contributed to their awareness and more critical nature? Why did these individuals *choose* the path of resisting larger racial ideologies in our society? As critical-minded educators we need to invest adequate time in better understanding students such as *los conscientes*. They can shed light on how and why certain TES choose a path towards endarkened epistemologies or endarkened ways of knowing. Dillard (2000) argues that instead of using enlightenment which is fundamentally based within the White canon, we should construct knowledge from our own ways of knowing and being. Dillard further states that this means using "language that attempts to unmask traditionally held political and cultural constructions/ constrictions, language which more accurately organizes, resists, and transforms oppressive descriptions of sociocultural phenomena and relationships" (p. 662).

How can we then as caring and critical educators use our students' endarkened epistemologies as a means to impact other students, especially those caught in the Conformist/Non-Critical stage of the spectrum.

Los Conscientes

After analyzing the discourses of *los conscientes*, there were a handful of factors they had in common that contributed to their more critical nature. Some of the most impactful factors were the following: a) a significant person (or people) in their lives that challenged and/or influenced their thinking, specifically in terms of how society functions and in relation to race and racism, including family members who were race critical; b) prior coursework related to race/racism, diversity, language, etc. that included a more critical curriculum; and c) direct experience(s) with race and racism that impacted their ways of seeing the world and making sense of society.

Significant others/family impact. The role that another person (or persons) can potentially have on shaping an individual's understanding regarding race and its impact cannot be underestimated. Many of the impactful people that the TES who demonstrated greater awareness and critical thought mentioned ranged from teachers, mentors, family members, friends, peers, and/or significant others. What was interesting to note is that only 2 of the critical TES, Sofia and Isabel, had attributed their manner of thinking to family impact. Sofia talked about the impact her extended family - specifically her grandmother and aunts and uncles - had on her understanding of social justice and education.

> I think definitely from my grandma. She went up to a third grade education and she always told her kids and grandkids that you take advantage of free school because it wasn't always free and girls couldn't go so you're gonna [sic] go and do well because

> you have the opportunity and you take advantage of that ... my dad is the youngest of 7 siblings and all of them went into fields that is very give back, boys and girls club, teaching, and my dad went like to business school so there's just something in my dad that's very money driven as opposed to the rest. One of my aunts does social work and one of my uncles pretty much built the boys and girls club in Creswell and one of my other uncles was a teacher and a principal so my dad is the one job that doesn't fit with everyone else's. (Sofia, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

Isabel mentioned her parents various times throughout both interviews and it was evident that they greatly impacted her sense of security and pride with being Mexican. Isabel did not associate being Mexican as a stigma or as something she should feel insecure or inferior about.

> I always felt more part of Mexico than I did in the United States, even though I was born over here because my parents always played that cultural part, like they never, never stopped with their culture. And so I was always doing what they were doing. And till this day I feel more from Mexico than I do from over here even though...I mean, I've become accustomed to the culture over here. (Isabel, Mexican, 3rd Semester).

Isabel was the only critical TES who had specifically mentioned her parents as having played an influential part in her thinking, specifically in regards to feeling secure about her Mexican heritage. For the other critical TES, they spoke of their parents as either *not* critical or as conforming to dominant thinking. This is important to point out because it highlights how having a critical parent is not an absolute ingredient for a person to become critical themselves. It is not always a parent that plays the most influential part role in the

development of criticality. Although Hannah, Sofia, Stephanie, Ria, and Frank believed their parents did not directly teach them to question the function of race in society and/or did not talk about race per se, it is important to point out that none of the critical TES had parents who were overtly racist and/or who used problematic racial discourse. This was in stark contrast to the racist comments Jane and Claire continuously heard from their parents growing up.

The following quotes highlight what Hannah, Frank, Stephanie, and Ria shared about their parents who they viewed as 'conforming' or 'non-critical.'

> My mom was a Quaker and very much with the hippie movement and my dad is very conservative and so my mom is still nervous about people from outside of the country, from completely different cultures but my dad is like you know he'll teach them, he's a professor or was a professor. He'll teach them, he'll accept them, he'll help them, but .. "We need to be American. We need to do the American thing." And so just to keep the conflict away, they didn't talk about it. (Hannah, White, 3rd Semester).

Hannah goes on and related this tendency in her parents to her own thinking -

> It sparked in my mind when I think about it. That's the moment that I go back to. I remember the fear that I had of anyone who wasn't American and when I go back now and I look at that I'm like - why was I so afraid, because I didn't know.

Both of Frank's parents were educators. His mom was a self-identified Chicana and his dad was Irish. Because his dad was in the military, Frank's family had lived internationally, mostly on military bases. When I asked Frank if race had been discussed in his home, this is what he shared -

> I have to say my parents never really brought up race in the household. It was never, we were always told, you know, treat people how you would want to be treated. Be polite. Open the door for the person behind you. Say “please” and “thank you.” There was never really this, “Well, because of this, you have to watch out.” It was just kind of be a human being, they always told us, “You know you shouldn’t judge somebody by how they look or how they talk," um, you know, just be respectful. And that’s how we grew up and yeah, race was never brought up. It was just be a good person. (Frank, Chicano, 3rd Semester).

This quote again illustrates how Frank's parents did not proactively address race or racism in their household but the fact that Frank mentions that his mother self-identified as Chicana reflects his mother's understanding of identity. The use of Chicana/o as a way of self-identification continues to be a powerful symbol in communities across the nation (Bernal, 2001; Garcia, 1997). Although I did not ask Frank at the time of the interviews if his mother's use of the word Chicana had influenced his own self-identity as Chicano but certainly it had an impact.

Ria also stated that both of her parents did not talk about race, it was something that just was not brought up or in her mind was even 'brushed off.'

> My dad is slightly socially inept, he’s - I swear, um, one of my other theories is that there’s like super book smart and super social smart and then there's everybody in between and my dad’s like right on the book smart edge. He’s like, has no ability to deal with people. He actually came to America because he had a full ride scholarship to Cornell. He’s a really brilliant man but he could give two licks about what anyone else thinks and I think he, he acted like that towards me too ... And he was just, one of

> those genius Indians that came over and it was never a bad thing to him ever. And so when I went through that[23], it was not - and he's not somebody I talk to about things anyway because he is like that. It's just easier to say, Dad, help me with my math homework than try and deal with it. My mom is much more nurturing. And my mom she didn't quite understand either because she is a very, very, light skinned, Irish looking Hispanic. She has dark hair but she has very light skin and freckles and you know light brown eyes and, she doesn't look like a Hispanic. [Interviewer: So her experiences have been different?] Yeah. So both of them have had such different experiences that they didn't understand what I was going through really. You know, they a lot of times would just brush it off as, well, people are mean, kids are mean, don't listen to them, they're dumb. Okay, thanks, Mom. (Ria, East Indian/Hispanic/Irish, 1st Semester).

There is much to note in Ria's quote. She addresses many issues regarding her parents and whether she is aware of it or not, her description of her father could be used as an example of the model minority myth (see Wu, 2002). As Ria explained her father came to the US on a full ride scholarship to a prestigious Ivy League school. This certainly impacted his views on race in the US. As Ria described her father was regarded as a genius and surely received much positive attention. Moreover, because of his educational attainment his experiences with race were vastly different from Ria's own experiences with race. Stephanie stated that her own mother was not very critical of race.

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[23] Ria was bullied at school by many students post 9/11; I will be discussing this in more depth later in this chapter.

> I think my mom is always going along with things. Yeah, my mom is always like - she's kind of just gone along with things. My sisters did the exact opposite. My mom has been, my mom has kept us in places, um, tried to keep us, as much as possible in places where we were pretty much the only people of color. I think that's because she wanted better schools and stuff like that so that's where she kept us. So she's more along the lines of like, I guess assimilating more than anything, rather than saying something. (Stephanie, Black/White, 1st Semester).

I have to share that at first I had actually been surprised to note that the parents of many of the critical TES were not as critical-minded as their children had proven to be. Many times the assumption is made that if someone is critical, then their parent(s) must be too. After thinking about this for some time, I related it to my own experience. My own parents were not as critical-minded and/or race-conscious as I had become over the years. This was especially true for my mother, a very light-skinned Mexicana who shared with me many accounts in which she had been severely teased about her almost blonde hair by other children during her elementary school years in Mexico. My mother vividly remembers this teasing and finger-pointing that caused my grandmother to force my mother to cover her head with a *rebozo* (Mexican shawl) every time they went out to run errands. My mother recently admitted when I asked her about those incidents again that eventually she yelled back at the kids who teased her with - *"callénsen Indios!"* ("shut up Indians!). Over the years I have related my mother's own limited views towards race and racism with the fact that she is a light-skinned Mexicana who could "pass" as white if she chose. The only thing that would keep her from completely passing would be her accent. But again, *none* of the

more critical TES mentioned a parent who was outright racist and/or a parent who used racial slurs.

When I asked Stephanie whom she felt most influenced her thinking, she immediately mentioned teachers of color influenced her decision to become a teacher -

> I know a lot of really good, um, role models for teachers as I was growing up. Really the big defining moment for me was when I went to middle school and I went to an all Black school. It was my first time ever to a -- my mom had kept me in white schools before, predominantly white schools -- and this was the first time that I went to a school, and not only did I see that there were students of color, but there were also instructors of color who had degrees and were educated and they were in the schools. So it was a whole different dynamic for me and I think that was the turning point that made me want to become a teacher. (Stephanie, Black/White, 1st Semester).

After reading this quote, I realized how important having teachers of color was to Stephanie and her own development as a critical thinker and her decision to enter the teaching field. Students of color often cite the importance of having teachers of color in their schooling and lives. As a person of color I can attest to this and can relate to the importance of teachers of color in our lives. The teachers whom I remember the most and who most impacted my life and thinking were definitely people of color.

For Hannah it was a significant other, her boyfriend who was a practicing Muslim living in the Middle East, who greatly impacted how she saw race and subsequently led to a greater understanding of what it felt to be Othered. Hannah was one of the most interesting participants in the study. After learning more about Muslim traditions through her boyfriend and then her own involvement with a local Mosque and activist groups, Hannah began to

follow Muslim traditions and began wearing a headscarf during the latter part of her undergraduate education.

> I think for me it started around 9-11 and I didn't understand what was going on. I didn't know who the Muslims were. I didn't know anything and I started talking to people and I started learning about it and I've learned about different issues and different perspectives of history because I had some teachers who were willing to have the conversation when I was in high school and even more when I got to UNM ... like my history teachers really had us shift the way we looked at things and I joined a few activist groups on campus and we tried to dissect things and its been a huge shift specifically in the past few years and this onslaught of information. (Hannah, White, 3rd Semester).

Hannah stated that she had not yet become officially Muslim but had chosen to follow that path. This decision and the wearing of the headscarf led Hannah to experience many moments in which she began to understand what it meant and felt like to be Othered by her peers and society in general. Following the aftermath of 9/11, the headscarf has become associated with what many in the US now interpret as 'enemy' or as 'dangerous, there is a definite negative connotation and a stigma with being connected to the Muslim faith (Joshi, 2006; Kwan, 2008). Because of wearing the headscarf, Hannah was subsequently stigmatized by other whites and people of color as well. After she began wearing the headscarf on a daily basis, Hannah described how former friends and colleagues suddenly stopped talking to her and how people's behaviors towards her changed (e.g. being followed and treated as suspicious). Hannah shared how she noticed these behaviors coming especially from whites. Over time, Hannah realized how her 'privileges' have been put on the

line. Here I asked Hannah if she believed that wearing the headscarf gave her greater insight as to how race impacts individuals.

> It also makes me wonder a little bit too before I started covering my hair um ... like did they perceive me as privileged? As a white privileged girl because my mom is a pediatrician my dad was a professor? I grew up on a farm, we never wanted for anything, we didn't live you know like extravagantly but I sort of- I wonder and I never asked them because it never came and I wasn't really aware of it until I made myself aware of it in a different way. (Hannah, White, 3rd Semester).

What I found most interesting is that Hannah did not have to cover her head. She was not officially part of the Muslim faith but regardless she consciously chose to wear the headscarf even if it meant losing some of her privilege. Why? In the case of Hannah it was connected to a matter of love. She had fallen in love with a practicing Muslim man. Hannah had met her boyfriend years earlier while still in high school during an international science fair and they had dated continuously throughout her undergraduate education. During the interviews with Hannah, it became clear what a significant impact her boyfriend had on her -

> Before I met him I couldn't map the Middle East ... I didn't have a concept of my privilege or what it meant to look out your window and watch a city being bombed. I didn't have any outside [how old were you?]. I was 16 when I met him. (Hannah, White, 3rd Semester).

Many of Hannah's actions and behaviors can be attributed to her relationship with her boyfriend. Because she had formed a deep friendship and relationship with a person who was continuously Othered, it had the power to shift her way of thinking. But it was the action of wearing a headscarf daily that set Hannah apart from many other whites involved in

interracial relationships. That is, by consciously choosing to wear a headscarf, Hannah put herself in a different level of consequence and being. She became not only a white person involved in an interracial relationship, but also a white person who consciously and continuously exposed herself to being Othered while putting her white privilege on the line. It can be argued that white women involved in interracial relationships also put their privilege on the line and are subsequently subjected to a decentering of their positionality as white women (Luke, 1994). But, this is mostly the case when they are in physical proximity with their partner and/or children of color in public spaces. But by covering her head, Hannah placed herself in those spaces of being questioned and Othered whether her boyfriend was near or far. In fact, Hannah's boyfriend lived in the Middle East and for the majority of the time was not in close proximity to her. It is important to point out that unlike the other white TES who were in a relationship with a person of color and who demonstrated greater awareness, Hannah was distinct in that she lived Othering on a daily basis. Hannah reached greater levels of criticality in comparison to for example Dayna and Karen, because of these continuous in the flesh racialized experiences.

It should be pointed out that 3 of the 4 most aware and critical white TES in this study were involved in an interracial relationship at the time of the study (Dayna and Karen were married to men of color, Hannah was dating a man of color, and Amber was not in a relationship at the time of the study). Could this be part of the key to understanding whites who are more willing to put their privileges on the line, meaning that whites who willingly cross what are considered racial boundaries are the ones who would mostly likely be more critical of the racial system? It seems that by forming deeper emotional connections to people of color, whites are able to begin to know that the racialization of bodies is real and

the pain it causes. Dayna shared during one of the interviews, she could not begin to understand what it meant for people of color to be oppressed until she made it 'hers.' By this Dayna meant that she only felt the pain experienced from oppression when she asked someone she loved who was a person of color to explain what oppression meant to them and to share the experiences they had endured. Dayna stated that because it was a person she cared deeply about, their pain became her pain. In this manner the realities of being oppressed in this racially structured society could become more real to Dayna and not just something she just read and discussed in a course.

Prior coursework related to race and racism. Having taken prior coursework connected to studying race and racism also came up as a significant factor for the more critical TES. The majority of them stated that contrary to many of their peers in the teacher education program, they enjoyed and learned a great deal from DIV 101, the one diversity class they were required to take as part of their program. The 6 critical TES did not talk negatively about DIV 101, they considered the class beneficial to their learning and thought there should be more courses related to race in their program.

> I loved her class [referring to DIV 101]. That was an awesome class. But we talked about that, the pipeline, the school to prison pipeline. It's like you come in in the morning get your time in the yard, eat on time, you're in the classroom, you get a 15 minute break, back in the classroom, uniforms, 30 minute lunch, back in the class, then you go home. Then you start it all over again. (Frank, Chicano, 3rd Semester).
>
> I love it. I think it's so interesting. I think it's so valuable and I wish that, I think that elementary ed teachers should have to take more diversity classes and more

> special ed classes. I'm really sad that this is the only diversity class that we're required to take. (Ria, East Indian/Hispanic/Irish, 1st Semester).

Stephanie spoke highly of DIV 101 but pointed out the reactions of many of her peers who were also taking the class that semester -

> I loved it. I really loved it. I liked the instructor and I liked everyone that she brought in. But I think what was really eye opening for me is the belief systems of my peers. I knew that my peers came from, you know, middle class homes, that they had their education paid for. They were there and they didn't have to go through the same experiences that I did and it was eye opening to see how they acted and what their real beliefs, the things that they held on to and it was different, for me to see them break down those barriers and be able to see like how they truly are. And a lot of times, it was really scary to see like, wow, these are the people that I'm in class with. And I'm a little bit nervous because one day I want to have children and some of them, I really wouldn't want them to be my kid's teacher. (Stephanie, Black/White, 1st Semester).

Frank, Ria, and Stephanie's positive comments regarding DIV 101 stood in stark opposition to many of the statements other TES made about the class.

> I never considered myself a racist person. And then over time it was like, okay, I think everyone probably somewhere inside admitted or not, is a little racist, just a little, just a little prejudice, you know? Cause I definitely think that they go hand in hand. And now with taking this multicultural class I'm just like, like I flat out call it my racist class because I'm like, that's all we seem to talk about. (Briana, Hispanic, 1st Semester).

Nora stated something similar to Briana and used being in a 'diverse' place as rationale for not needing the class -

> So I think the hard part for me because I don't really like having a diversity class just because for me I've grown up in a diverse atmosphere. I don't agree with a lot that's being said and I think that's the toughest thing for me is because all the material is very one sided. (Nora, Hispanic, 1st Semester).

It is important to note that this is often the argument used as a means of dismissing the need for courses on diversity or even including themes in other courses related to race, class, and culture. The thinking goes that if individuals grow up in what are considered diverse spaces or attend diverse schools, then there is no need for discussions related to these issues. The assumption is made that diversity is automatically understood by people in these spaces. Nora's statement reflected this train of thought - why should I be required to take a class on diversity when I'm residing in a diverse geographic region? Those of us who have been involved in the teaching of race well know that this assumption is problematic. We cannot automatically assume that all people of color or whites growing up in 'diverse' spaces will understand what it means to live in a society with a set racial hierarchy is place and what this means for especially groups of color. Nora could be used as an example for this problematic assumption. According to Nora growing up in a diverse space meant that she automatically understood what it meant to be diverse but her problematic racial discourse and ideologies stood in stark contrast to this.

Jane, who exhibited one of the most problematic racial discourses, made it clear throughout the interviews how she felt about the class. More than half of the statements that Jane uttered were related to the DIV 101 class and her negative views towards it.

> To be honest, when I saw it on my syllabus I didn't actually know what the class was. I saw it was like, the... it made me laugh because it was like 'Teaching of Reading,' 'Teaching of Language,' and then 'Educating the Linguistically and Culture-' it like took up the whole page! 'Educating the Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Students,' and I am like you mean it's 'Political Correctness 101.' (Jane, White, 1st Semester).

Because both Hannah and Isabel were working on a Bilingual/TESOL endorsement, they were not required to take DIV 101 but were required to take many courses in a department outside of the general teacher education program that in general introduced more critical concepts such as white privilege, race, use of stereotypes, etc. in comparison to the teacher education requirements. Isabel recalls what she heard TES in the general cohort say about DIV 101:

> The people who weren't getting their bilingual endorsement and they have to take that class, they're like "Oh, it's so stupid. It didn't teach me anything. I don't know why we have to take it. It doesn't help us in anything." It's like well if you're already thinking that way, what does that tell you? (Isabel, Mexican, 3rd Semester).

Hannah connected to a class she had taken outside the teacher education program that had included readings on Critical Race Theory (CRT) -

> I think part of me realized that you know the closer you are to looking like you're white no matter what your you know ethnic background is .. the people who are around you aren't going to look at you twice and maybe that's something that I've learned now that I've been looked at twice. I think I started I started realizing it when I started reading CRT but [I ask Hannah: "Primarily in Jason's class?"], yes almost

> exclusively, but I don't think I gave it much of a second thought until people started looking at me twice. "Well she has those light eyes and she has that light face but does she really have the blonde hair to go with it?" (Hannah, White, 3rd Semester).

For *los conscientes*, coursework related to race and racism served to expand their knowledge regarding race and was not considered to be a waste of time or regarded in a negative manner. Critical coursework and/or discussions focused on racism were not treated as problematic by these TES who already understood that society did not function fairly. There was a definite correlation - the TES who had the most problematic racial discourses considered coursework on "diversity" to be unnecessary, while the TES who had the most critical racial discourses considered coursework on diversity to be a very needed part of their education and training.

Experiences connected to race and racism. There is a vast amount of research that points to experience as being key in the formation and development of human thinking and how we eventually understand the world and people around us. Experiences are key in how individuals view their world and in turn interact with others – within their racial group and across groups. The importance of experience has been an important part of race-focused research (Sue et. al, 2009; Foster, 2005; Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). Experiences are viewed as being key in the thought processes of teachers and how they interact and respond to their students, other teachers, and families. Following this train of thought, in the last couple of decades or so, 'experience' emerged as key in the ‘sensitizing’ of preservice teachers (Easter et al., 1999; Groulx, 2001; Mason, 1997; Shultz et al., 1996; and Wolffe, 1996). That is, teacher education programs across the nation began to include a field experience as part of their requirements as a means of exposing many of their white

preservice teachers to urban spaces[24]. This new direction in teacher education was intended to help sensitize future teachers to the Other, was driven by the reality of ever-changing demographics in the US. Because of the continuation of problematic "views" or "negative attitudes" of mostly white TES, there was a push to 'sensitize' the predominately white, middle class teacher workforce to the students of color they would ultimately be responsible to teach (Gomez, 1993). Many of the recommendations pointed to the need for TES to have direct contact or experiences with the Other so that they may better work with this population. Short-term field experiences in urban and inner-city schools became the norm in teacher education programs across the country (Easter et al., 1999; Groulx, 2001; Mason, 1997; Shultz et al., 1996; and Wolffe, 1996) and that practice continues until today.

But if real ideological transformation is what we seek to elicit within the minds of TES, then we must ask if these 'flash' experiences have made a lasting impact on their racial ideologies. It can be argued that all of the TES in this study, including those who displayed the most Conformist/Non-Critical racial discourses, had their fair share of 'experiences' connected to race and racism, some of those as a result of their field placement. Furthermore, it can be argued that *all* humans, whether they claim to be conscious of it or not, have experienced race in some way, shape, or form. But with all of this said, experience has been treated as much too simplistic. That is, has it been mere exposure to the Other, to students of color, to poor students, to ELL and immigrant students, that has caused a shift in the thinking of TES? Have 'urban' field experiences served to truly sensitize TES as it is claimed (Easter et al., 1999; Groulx, 2001; Mason, 1997; Shultz et al., 1996; and Wolffe, 1996)? As the data

[24] 'Urban' as code word for spaces with larger populations of people of color such as 'urban' schools with predominately students of color.

and analysis have demonstrated, this is not the case. The majority of the TES in this study did not mention their field placement as having greatly impacted their mindsets, especially in terms of understanding and appreciating diversity and the Other. None of the more critical TES in this study mention their field experience as contributing to their racial awareness.

This leads to my subsequent thought, if it was not exposure and sensitization techniques that caused great change in the discourse and ideologies of TES, then what was it that had instilled such critical thought in especially the 6 TES who demonstrated continuous racial awareness? Here I argue that it was not a simple field experience, or even a slew of experiences, that led to greater racial criticality. This criticality cannot be solely explained in terms of simple exposure and/or experiences with students or people of color. The explanation that made most sense is that their criticality developed through acts of *racial witnessing* entailing very real and profound experiences with being *Othered* and/or the witnessing significant others and/or loved ones being *Othered* by a society that adheres to a rigid and problematic racial hierarchy. Acts of witnessing are what led to the development of a deeper understanding of how society functions, especially in regards to the racialization of the human body and its real effects on individuals and groups.

Witnessing.

"To witness always involves risk, potentially to have your life changed" (Peters, 2001, p.714).

I am using the idea of 'witnessing' to better understand the 6 critical TES. I am referring to the idea of 'bearing witness' but not in its traditional legal sense where 'witnesses' are considered either passive or active bystanders in the witnessing of an event usually connected to a potential crime scene. In the court system, witnesses are commonly treated as unreliable at best and are often put under great duress so that they can 'accurately' tap into

prior witnessing events. Here I deviate from these legal and confining explanations of "witness" and instead use the form in a more literary and psychological sense. I should also take a moment to explain why I chose witnessing and not experience as a means to reach deeper meaning in this study. As I spent time with the participants and then with their words and thoughts during the analysis phase, I realized that there was something very different when TES spoke of specific moments and/or of memories that involved events connected to racism and/or the racialization of their bodies (or of someone that they cared about). During these race-related events in which they bore witness, there was always an emotional or psychological aspect to the events. That is, these moments were not simply experiences in passing. The critical events TES spoke of and shared were strong, profound, and quickly recalled. It became evident that what TES described and remembered could not be equated to an 'experience.' An 'experience' did not have the power to describe the lasting impact these witnessing events had on them. There is something about having directly seen, felt, heard, and been marked by a racial event. I believe witnessing events are responsible for the greater awareness exhibited by the 6 more critical TES. All 6 of the critical TES were more in tune with society's role in determining the lives of people of color, were more race critical, and nonconforming.

I also chose to use the concept of 'witnessing' as distinct from 'experience' because of the pain, violence, and trauma associated with being racialized or of 'bearing witness' to a racial event. Witnessing is the more appropriate word to use for it contains the urgency and power of what I am attempting to connect to and explain. An experience can often be dismissed or even denied but a witnessing event brings with it much more and cannot be so readily brushed aside. As Peters (2001) states, "witnessing is an intricately tangled practice.

It raises questions of truth and experience, presence and absence, death and pain, seeing and saying, and the trustworthiness of perception – in short, fundamental questions of communication" (p. 707). Peters also goes on to argue that "to witness an event is to be responsible in some way to it. The stream of data flowing through the unaided senses already exceeds our explanatory schemata. The present moment supplies enough sensory information to outlast a lifetime of analysis" (p. 708). As such, to witness means to have been marked with a memory, either tapped into continuously or left to be triggered at some point in our lives.

Racial witnessing. I also wanted to go further with this idea of witnessing and expand on what I have referred to as *racial witnessing* – i.e., defining moments where an individual experiences a strong event in which they (or someone they care deeply about) were racialized, Othered, and/or treated differently (usually negatively) because of their racial group, racial affiliation, etc. Racial witnessing is distinct from witnessing in that it is specifically connected to race and racism. As all other witnessing events, these racial witnessing events do not vanish into oblivion but stay present with the person who experienced them, it remains connected to them throughout their lives whether they may be conscious of it or not. As Oliver (2004) states, "at the most fundamental level, this relationality or responsivity [to witnessing] is neither intellectual nor perceptual but operates through unconscious processes of transference" (p. 86). Thus, these racial witnessing events are not necessarily 'intellectual' or 'perceived' at the instance when they occur, these events can be relegated to an unconscious process to be later retrieved or maybe not consciously retrieved at all but yet have the power to impact and influence one's racial ideologies and sense of group position (Blumer, 1958), that is, how they perceive themselves as distinct or

similar, inferior or superior, in relation to other racial groups. As such, racial witnessing events directly impact an individual's racial ideologies and racial discourses – they are intertwined and connected.

Thus I am arguing that it was not experience, but racial witnessing events, above any other impacting variable, that are the common thread among the participants who are Nonconforming/Critical and most reflective in their thinking regarding how our society functions and upholds the racial hierarchy. Why? Because these individuals are distinct from others in the sense that moments of racialized witnessing made them aware of the discrepancies that exist in society. All of the participants had many witnessing events in which they and/or their families or a significant other had been racialized. The racialized witnessing events they endured led to the gaining of a deeper understanding of how race functioned in society. This allowed the 6 critical TES to readily understand that race *is* a fundamental organizing factor in society, they did not require convincing.

It is important to once again make note of the fact that in addition to moments of racial witnessing the 6 TES had critical teachers and/or mentors in their lives who served to challenge their thinking, lived in areas where social and racial injustices/discrepancies were obvious, and/or were surrounded by friends/significant others who were also on a more critical path. I do not believe that any one of these variables alone had the power to create the critical TES. I believe that these variables *combined* with racialized witnessing events resulted in individuals who did not adhere to larger problematic discourses and ideologies. Regardless of whether or not they had the "right" academic jargon to be able to explain the larger racial structure that exists in our society, the 6 TES clearly understood that race had the power to directly and indirectly impact lives. They understood that many of the

differences that we see in society ranging from educational resources, opportunity, housing, adequate healthcare, the job market/opportunity, etc. were connected to race.

Wanda Pillow (2012) goes on to explain that witnessing should be understood as a form of responsibility and connects it to the idea of remembrance. Witnessing entails a "responsibility as to how we read, consume and reproduce or rewrite such representations" (Pillow, 2012, p.52). That is, witnessing will impact how we witness and subsequently remember events. We must also explore how these remembrances and witnessing events then serve to either reinforce dominant discourses and ideologies and how ultimately they impact how we act at given moments. For example, what did the individual do during a racialized witnessing event? Did they react? Were they silent? Did they choose to conform and/or resist whatever racialization was occurring? Did they subsequently analyze the racial event or was the event stored in their memory? I believe that it is the accumulation of these racial witnessing events that will guide and dictate where individuals find themselves along the spectrum at specific moments in time.

It can be argued that *all* of the TES, or all individuals, have endured experiences related to race at some point in their lives. But for the more aware and critical TES those experiences were witnessing events that were distinct from experience alone in that these individuals were not only present but also in some way privy to racialized incongruences that existed. What could be regarded as a race-related experience became a racial witnessing event because they were present to see and feel during this specific event and it left them with an imprint that they might or might not have fully understood at that given moment. Because of the variables in place in their lives, these racial witnessing events called upon a notion of responsibility to resist the racial structure. For these more critical TES and others

like them, these moments left a defined mark, moments that might have been stored somewhere in their mind but *not* forgotten. These moments have continued to guide them and made them more prone to cues that draw upon racialized moments within the racial script. It was this sense of *knowing* or deeper understanding of what it even signifies to be oppressed or to be 'endarkened', that gave them the frame to be able to fully understand or even react to that moment. Without this knowing, race-related experiences may serve to actually reinforce dominant notions of race and Othering. In order to be able to disrupt problematic ideologies, individuals have to be in a place where they are aware and critical of privilege or of the racial structure. As Pillow (2012) argues, in order to see differently, to become endarkened, individuals must give up their Sacajawea[25]. For example, Conformist/Non-Critical individuals continue to reinforce and uphold problematic hegemonic discourse because they have not given up their Sacajawea. This has not allowed them to give up their privileges or their mindsets and instead they remain immersed in larger, problematic notions of race. These individuals have kept their Sacajawea intact, or in other words, their hegemonic *mis*-representations remain intact.

I felt that during the interviews with the more critical TES, many racial memories were triggered and they connected to those racial witnessing events. These memories might have been stored untapped for an indefinite amount of time but the questions posed during the interviews enabled them to reflect back and then connect to those moments once again. Many of these defining moments shared during the interviews were marked by changes in

[25] Pillow uses Sacajawea, the Lemhi-Shoshone woman historically known for her involvement in the 1804-06 US Corp of Discovery expedition, as symbolic of what Pillow refers to as hegemonic representations that are passed on to individuals through the curriculum we learn in schools; Pillow states that these hegemonic representations such as Sacajawea "can distort understandings and perpetuate colonial and othering perspectives" (Pillow, 2012, p.45).

tone, demeanor, and at times the pain and/or emotion associated with those memories was evident.

Moments of racial witnessing have a lot to do with how critical an individual was. The commonality among all of the more critical TES was that they all had endured key racial witnessing events in their lives that had left their mark and ultimately guided their thinking about others and society – i.e. their ideologies. These acts of racial witnessing then greatly impacted where an individual fell on the spectrum of criticality. The finding in this study was straight forward, the TES who had experienced more racial witnessing events fell on the more critical end of the spectrum because their racial discourses reflected ideologies that resisted and questioned common understandings of race. This of course made sense. We routinely "bear witness to events that often are under erasure, silenced, or only partially known" (Cutter, 2009, p.10) to us. The power lies in understanding these events and how they have come to either disrupt and/or reinforce our own participation in the hegemonic racial beast.

The following presents a glimpse of the racial witnessing events each of *los conscientes* shared during the interviews. Their narratives unearth the vital moments that caused a type of rupture from the racial norm within each of these TES and that had led them towards a continued critical path. Before beginning this section I want to emphasize that many of these shared memories and events were personal, painful, and emotional moments for the critical TES. They were moments when vulnerability was evident. These were the moments that allowed me to more deeply understand the thinking of individuals who have chosen to follow a more critical path.

Hannah. Hannah was a 21-year-old self-identified white woman. She was in her final semester of the teacher education program and was also completing the requirements for her TESOL/Bilingual Education endorsement. One of the first things someone would notice about Hannah is that she wears a headscarf, also known as a hijab in Muslim tradition. Although Hannah had already been learning and following Muslim traditions, she shared that she began wearing the hijab after an experience she had while assisting in a psychology course. She initially decided to wear a headscarf to demonstrate her solidarity with Muslim women around the world who have been targeted in recent years. Hannah shared the following during the interview:

> To be a Muslim you have to say the shahada which really takes as long as it takes to order a Swiss cheese sandwich, you say that you believe in one God and that you believe in all of the prophets but that Mohammed is the last prophet and you say it in Arabic and um I've taken a few classes on Islam .. and I've gone to the Mosque and I've met the people and I have several friends but I haven't said the shahada yet. I decided at the beginning of the year that I would peer TA for the intro psych class and on Scarves and Solidarity day I decided to participate and covered my hair. It was on the day of a quarterly exam and I stood there and collected the exams in a line with my other TAs and almost every student avoided me.

This was the precise moment when Hannah began to know what Othering felt like. Although prior to this moment she had already taken more critical coursework and was involved with a local Mosque and activist groups, this marked her introduction to a world in which she no longer had the privilege of blending in and going relatively unnoticed. After Hannah shared this event, I immediately asked her if this act of wearing the headscarf and being treated

differently had allowed her to better understand what it is like for people of color in the US. Hannah responded with the following -

> I mean I identify as white and it has definitely given me like - is this what it's like to be part of the quote unquote Other? Is that what its been like and it sort of made me go back and think have I participated in that sort of separating myself from the Others? Unknowingly have I? It's truly made me examine myself and how I treat other people and how I accept other people.

This memory was marked by emotion. Hannah's tone of voice and facial expression changed and it was evident that it caused her some pain to recount this racial witnessing event. Here was a young woman who on all accounts was white, but was suddenly thrown into a space of racialization and Othering because of what could be considered a simple piece of cloth. With the wearing of the hijab Hannah was no longer treated as 'white' by those around her. This was a key moment in Hannah's life. From this point on, she was not the same person. Her eyes were opened to a new angle from which to see the racialized world. What was most surprising was that Hannah could have easily made the decision to *not* wear the hijab again, especially after having experienced being Othered by individuals who knew her from before. This is what made Hannah distinct from many others—she continued to cover her hair despite the possible negative treatment and loss of privilege.

> People stopped talking to me. They stopped even acknowledging my presence in the class. Not my professors but .. some of the people that I considered to be pretty close friends they stopped talking to me for a little while and I was having a really hard time with that. I was getting sort of depressed and I decided that the best thing to do was .. to joke about it to bring it up and not tell them directly that they were excluding

> me but say you know... And I'm out and about and see people that I know walking on campus that I've had classes with before and I say hi and .. they ignore me and ...so I try to make fun of myself. As soon as I bring humor into it its all ok and the more people I talk to and the more freely I bring it up .. they - they'll start talking to me again. That's almost dissipated now. I'll joke and tell people that I'm bald. I try and make fun of myself.

Hannah shared that she began to bring humor into these situations on campus with students she knew, much of it included making fun of herself. Although Hannah joked about it, I am certain that this practice came with a psychological and emotional price.

With this act of wearing the hijab on a daily basis, Hannah became different from other whites in that she had a better sense of what it actually felt to be Othered. Hannah could not change the fact that she was identified and treated as white but by choosing to wear the hijab she consciously put her privilege on the line.

> I think that ... I mean I didn't start covering my head until I learned about critical race theory. But that being said, I think I still would have had a very different experience. I think I would have. I definitely would have been perceived as the typical white American female teacher to-be who doesn't understand anything about other cultures. Who doesn't understand what's its like to be a minority. So in some ways I guess this has set me apart but it has also let me in a little bit ... But I don't know. It goes around in my mind quite a bit and I always think about it a lot and I wonder. I think about the ways that I can continue to put myself out there and continue to challenge my own beliefs and challenge the stereotypes that you know my students or the community that I'm teaching in has about whoever they perceive to be the other.

Most whites, even though they may have read extensively on white privilege, race, and whiteness, still had not experienced the Othering that Hannah endured. Only by wearing the headscarf did Hannah begin to understand what it's like for people of color on a daily basis. Some might question the intention behind Hannah's act of wearing the hijab, i.e. was she doing this as something that was self-serving, as something selfish? Or should her act be questioned by the very fact that with the removal of the hijab, Hannah would regain her white privilege? But throughout both interviews Hannah proved to be sincere, compassionate, and critical. As discussed in the previous section, much of this connected back to her relationship with a Muslim man living in the Middle East. Although Hannah might be subject to critique, the fact remained that not many other whites would be willing to put themselves out on the line as she did. The fact that Hannah chose to cover her head and be automatically associated with a group considered dangerous or different from the norm, threw her subject position as white female into another place where she became associated with the Other. Hannah consciously made the decision to subject herself to endure more experiences being treated as Other that she normally would not have experienced with her head uncovered. With the hijab becoming a part of Hannah's daily routine, she opened herself to a new and wider range of racial witnessing events.

Ria. Ria was a 22-year-old in her first semester of the teacher education program. On the demographic survey, she identified as East Indian/Hispanic/Irish. Ria's father was born and raised in India and her mother was biracial - Hispanic and Irish - and was originally from the Southwest. Ria shared that her parents were not very critical and did not talk about race at home. What had greatly opened Ria's perspective towards race and its significance began shortly after the bombings that occurred on 9/11. Immediately after 9/11, Ria was cast

into the categorization as 'enemy' by many ignorant students at her school who erroneously racialized her as belonging to an extremist Muslim group because of her East Indian background.

> I was actually in 6th grade when September 11th happened. And I was horribly picked on for most of middle school and high school. And okay my dads from India. And you know 6th graders tell me, “Your gonna [sic] blow up the school.” Everyone, you know, people stopped talking to me. I had a horrible time, because people were like "your gonna [sic] blow up our school." I was like, "Okay, first of all, India’s not in the Middle East. Second of all, even if I was from Iraq, I’m not an extremist Muslim." Like I’m in 6th grade! Leave me alone you know?

Prior to 9/11, Ria attended a Montessori school and shared that she did not really think about race and her ethnicity had not been questioned by other students or staff. She described her elementary school as a "hippie" school that accepted everyone. But post 9/11, Ria's life completely changed and so did her feelings towards her racial group.

> I really hated my culture. I hated what I was because I felt like that’s what stuck me in that label and that’s what kept people from seeing me because they just saw, you’re going to blow up the school, you know? And it took years, it took a really long time. And growing up here I so badly just wanted to be Hispanic and not tell anybody, change my name to Gonzales, or something, you know? ... [Interviewer: and so you struggled?] I did struggle and I wanted to be Hispanic. I didn’t want to be Indian anymore. In elementary school, in Montessori school, it was totally different. We, we did a lot of like, culture, we did cultures of the world day. So we each got to pick a different country we wanted to do and we did this report on it and I always did India.

> And I was so excited about it because I got to wear my Sari to school and I got to cook, there's this special Indian dessert, that's like almond paste, I don't know, it's delicious, but it was so exciting for me and I loved it very much. And then as soon as that happened [referring to 9/11] it just completely changed it. It was awful and I didn't want -- and I hated Indian music. Every time I heard it I would cringe and I hated the Indian accent and the head bob and all the things that define my family. 'Cause my whole family is very, you know I am technically on my dad's side I am first generation.

It was hard to hear Ria share this racial witnessing event that negatively impacted her life for so many years. The pain and frustration that she felt because of all the bullying and harassment she endured throughout those years was evident. Ria, along with countless other across the US and the globe, did not deserve to be stigmatized in this manner because of the culture of fear and hate that exists in the US and beyond (Kwan, 2008). What should have been years marked by growth and development during middle and high school, were instead a dark time for Ria. Certainly Ria was not alone in these experiences for the racialization of bodies has been a reality for students of color since schooling began in the US (Mondale, 2002; Zinn & Emery, 1997).

Because of her strong nature and a supportive network of friends and mentors, Ria was able to reach a point in her life in which she celebrated her Indian heritage once again.

> My culture was very hard for me to come into liking. It took a very long time for me to embrace my own culture. And I think it was because I didn't understand enough about it. So I have this theory that I think the kids should be really aware of their own culture, regardless of what it is and embrace it. And that there should be a family

> community in my classroom where all my kids are embracing each other's cultures. Because I, when I hear kids tormenting each other about race and culture and color and things like that, it just drives me insane. That's like one of my biggest pet peeves because that's what I was so tormented for you know? And so I just really think that kids should have a greater love for their culture and their race and for their ethnicity.

These numerous racial witnessing events Ria was forced to endure throughout these formative years had subsequently pushed her into a very critical-minded nature regarding race. Race was something that Ria knew firsthand was used to categorize and dehumanize individuals. Ria understood how race played a significant role in society and how it was used as a means to stigmatize racial groups deemed inferior or in her case as dangerous, extremist, and violent.

> I don't know, it's interesting to hear the dialogue that goes on in that class [referring to DIV 101 class]. Um, there's one girl who I hope you interview and she made a statement at the beginning of the year that there isn't racism and she was like, "There isn't racism anymore." And she's a white student. I don't know and it was just so funny. It was like, how can you not see this? Especially living here, how is it possible that you can be so oblivious to this, like to everything that's going on?

Sofia. Sofia was a 21-year-old in her final semester of the teacher education program. She was also working on completing the requirements for a Bilingual/TESOL endorsement. Sofia had self-identified as Hispanic on the demographic survey. In this survey I asked students of Hispanic/Latino descent the following question - If you are a person of Hispanic/Latino origin, how do you usually self-identify? (e.g. Mexican, Chicana/o, Spanish, etc.). To this question Sofia had responded that she self-identified as Chicana. This was

interesting to note because Sofia shared that her family was originally from this geographic area. Using the word Chicana as a self-identifier speaks to the individual's political understanding and position. The word Chicano/a in this specific part of the Southwest has not been used as commonly as states like California and parts of Texas. Sofia stated that her grandparents were very proud of their Hispanic heritage.

> My grandparents on my dad side always get mad when we're asked that question [The 'where are you from' question] because they're like "we grew up here, your family is from here, like you didn't come from anywhere, this is your home."

The fact that Sofia chose to use "Chicana" to self-identify was already an indicator that she would most likely not follow the norm and pointed to a greater understanding of identity and position.

Sofia was from a family with greater financial resources. She shared that they lived in a wealthier part of the city and that she had attended schools known as the 'better schools' in the district. There were various factors that had significantly impacted Sofia's racial discourse and ideology. Although Sofia's family was relatively wealthy and she had attended the 'good' schools and had grown up in the 'good' areas, she shared that she at different points throughout her schooling had been treated as an outsider. This not only came from students but from some teachers as well. Here I had asked Sofia what she attributed her greater awareness to and this is what she shared.

> I don't know if I've always been somebody who's kind of aware of things because obviously going to Golden High I think there's only a handful of people who weren't white. I went to that school so you learn right away that people are surprised that you are doing well and you're like what? Why does it surprise you that I would be a good

> student or surprising that I'm in this class? I think the more you see that the more you realize that there's still so much [Interviewer: Do you remember experiences like that in elementary?] Not so much in elementary school or in middle school it was kind of still a diverse school so there's still a bit of diversity in that school and it wasn't as bad. It was at Golden High that I first started noticing I was in higher math classes and I remember people would be so shocked because I was in them and I could never really... like at first I was like "why you don't even know me, why would you be surprised I'm in this class?" [Interviewer: But what would they tell you? Was it students *and* teachers?] Yeah students and teachers or just um .. I don't know just like you can tell you can definitely cus [sic] my sister was a good student, she's a smart person but she was not as high as an achiever as I was in school so even the principal was "*Oh* that's your little sister?" That doesn't make sense.

This is what Sofia specifically stated about some of her teachers:

> Mostly it was surprise or teachers when they get their first list and they think about what kids will be in there. What I think like shocked them is that I would end up being a good student that I was one of the higher achievers in the class. I would get asked a lot where I moved from. I've lived in the same neighborhood since I was 2, I didn't move from anywhere. I grew up in the same place you guys grew up in.

During this discussion about her high school experience I asked Sofia what factor she attributed all of this to.

> Race more than anything ... teachers being shocked that I spoke English and I'm like what? Tons of people are in Albuquerque, why would you be surprised that I can speak English?

Most of Sofia's racial witnessing events were connected to these moments she endured during high school. It was during this pivotal time that she understood that her white peers and white teachers were evaluating her on the basis of her appearance and racial group. It became clear to Sofia that she was being racialized by others. Attending 'good' schools in a mostly white setting had its costs. The surprise exhibited by both students and teachers when they discovered that Sofia was successful in school and in attending school in what they considered *their* spaces, made it apparent to Sofia that there was a set racial hierarchy in place. What was most interesting about Sofia was that in spite of the fact that she had grown up within affluent spaces and attended privileged schools, Sofia did not follow a path of conformity and assimilation. It became evident throughout both interviews that the numerous racial witnessing events she endured sparked something within Sofia that led her to question and oppose many things in society that she considered to be connected to racism.

> I know that people can be mean or people can find differences about people and isolate them for those reasons but I think I was shocked that in the society that we live in with all the education that people have and all the technology that we have that people would still look at you based on your skin color or something about your racial identity and make an opinion of you about that .. I don't know how people can still think that there's difference or that it would be based on race. It just shocks me that people would be that ignorant about it and so like have those thoughts that race would have anything to do with it.

Sofia's numerous experiences working in afterschool programs in low socioeconomic areas also added to the racialized witnessing events she had throughout high school and beyond. Having worked directly with poor students and families gave her a direct view of the

realities of people who do not have great economic resources. She also learned firsthand that children or their parents should not be 'blamed' for a system that they could not control. Sofia expressed frustration when she described the discrepancies she observed between schools in the wealthier areas as compared to low-income areas.

> I think a big part of it was being in so many different schools and seeing how different they were. I graduated from Golden High so that right there has given me a huge advantage because of the quality of the school and just going to other elementary schools that are nothing like the one I went to. They're in the same city so there's no reason why there should be that big of a gap between what the kids are getting and the biggest difference I do see is color which irritates me that these schools are like 98% Hispanic and that's why they seem to be like crappy compared to other schools and I think the most eye-opening is that just at Hamilton I could never understand why they didn't have grass on their field and why they didn't have any floor on their cafeteria.

Isabel. Isabel was a 22-year-old in her final semester of the teacher education program and was also working on her Bilingual/TESOL endorsement. Isabel self-identified as Mexican on the demographic survey. Isabel grew up in a low socioeconomic area of the city and had attended what were labeled as 'bad' schools. Because of where she grew up and her schooling, Isabel clearly understood that people of color, especially Mexicans, were quickly labeled and underestimated. During both interviews Isabel shared numerous racial witnessing events that greatly impacted her racial discourse and ideology. Isabel had first-hand knowledge on what it felt like to be continuously racialized by teachers and society. Because she was immersed in spaces where racism continuously rose to the surface, Isabel

was very aware and critical of race. For Isabel, it was not a question of whether racism existed or not. She was well aware of its direct impacts on groups of color.

Isabel began to endure racial witnessing events early on. Isabel shared that she was a shy child growing up and was not very talkative in school. She was born in the United States yet the assumption made by students was that her quiet nature equated to not speaking English and being Mexican.

> Well I mean as a girl growing up I was never the talkative kind. And a lot of times I would hear like the kids say, "oh well she doesn't want to talk to us because she's Mexican and she doesn't know English." And I mean it's not that I didn't know English, it was just that I was really shy and I didn't want to talk to them.

Similar to the experiences that other students of color face daily in US schools, Isabel quickly learned that race greatly mattered in society. Isabel did not have to read about race and racism to gain a deeper understanding of its effects, she learned this harsh lesson from being directly impacted.

Isabel played soccer during high school, and she readily recalled racial witnessing events that transpired when their soccer team would play against the 'better' schools in the district that were predominately white.

> Right away they would be like...they would call us names like I was in soccer and every time I would play with Canyon High they would insult us and they would tell us "go back to Mexico!" They would call us wetbacks. It was on the fields, in the background you would hear the parents tell us too. And they were bringing bells to the soccer games and tell us insulting things and I was just like "Okay." And I mean a lot of the girls from the soccer team weren't even Hispanic or Chicanos or anything.

> They were white. But just because we came from that area, probably just because we came from a poor place and they knew that it was a school full of Mexicans. The coach would get mad and would tell the referees but nothing was done. The parents would be the worst.

What did these racial witnessing events tell Isabel? What mark did they leave behind? This is a similar story lived by countless of other Mexicans and Latinos living in the US. The assumption is made that any person who speaks Spanish or is perceived as Hispanic is Mexican and this labeling is quickly followed by the stigma of being an 'illegal immigrant' and of using and abusing undeserved services while living in the country. These associations followed Isabel into her field placement while completing her student teaching requirement.

> One day we were having collaboration and I was speaking with my Master Teacher in Spanish, because sometimes I don't even realize I'm speaking in Spanish to another person because it's just something that happens automatically. And one of the English teachers got really mad and she started saying that it wasn't fair to her that we were speaking in Spanish because she didn't know if we were talking about her or not. And I was like 'well, we weren't talking about you' and literally my Master Teacher and her started yelling at each other because she brought that up. 'It's that we're not talking about you. We were just talking about something else.' It's something that we do it without even noticing, because we're so used to speaking to each other in Spanish that it's hard for us to speak in English to each other. And I mean, she's like 'well it's very impolite that you are talking on the side and we don't even know if you're talking about us or not' and it was just this big thing. And I was like,

> sometimes you do it without even thinking. I mean it was just a simple question about what was going on.

This example is common to many Spanish-speaking individuals across various settings. I have personally experienced this type of racial witnessing event in which I have endured the angry glares from mostly white individuals when I speak Spanish in public with family and friends. Typical reactions such as this stems from the heavy anti-immigrant/English-only discourse that is now a firm part of current racial ideology (Pulido, 2007). The English-only movement in the US has heightened in response to demographic changes reflecting the increasing numbers of Latinos/Hispanics (Macedo, 2000). Latinos/Hispanics across the nation are routinely racially profiled regardless of their immigration status and ability to speak Spanish (Romero, 2006). Latino/Hispanic individuals continuously endure racial witnessing events connected to not only their racial group, but also language and immigration status.

Most of Isabel's and Sofia's racial witnessing events occurred within the context of school, which is revealing but not surprising, if the position is taken that *schools* function as sites for the continued racialization of bodies (Leonardo, 2013). As discussed in this study, schools have served to perpetuate the current racial hierarchy. This has been largely accomplished through the continued use of a curriculum that reflects a white supremacist racial structure. Students learn about and subsequently internalize this set racial hierarchy via lessons highlighting the accomplishments and superiority of whites while the history and achievements of people of color are largely excluded or minimized. This is an everyday occurrence in schools across the nation regardless if the school is predominately attended by students of color. In this system it is the teachers that work as the primary agents in

enforcing the curriculum. It cannot be stated that all teachers adhere to the upholding of a white supremacist framework in schooling but the fact remains that the majority of teachers continue to be white, middle-class females.

Stephanie. Stephanie was a 24 year old in her first semester of the teacher education program. She self-identified as Black/White on the demographic survey. At the time of the interviews, Stephanie was taking the required DIV 101 and because of the nature of the course, there were numerous conversations and incidents related to race that occurred in class that she referred to during the interviews. Because of Stephanie's Critical/Non-Conformist position on the spectrum, she was not one of the TES who complained about the course. In stark contrast to the Conformist/Non-Critical TES, she stated many positive things about DIV 101 and the topics covered.

Stephanie's racial witnessing events, similar to the other critical TES, began early on and within the context of school. She shared how her mother had chosen predominately white elementary schools for Stephanie and her siblings to attend because she wanted her children to attend 'good schools' and have greater opportunities. Being schooled in a predominately white space did not change until middle school for Stephanie.

> My family moved around a lot. So one of the places that we lived was in Louisiana and my mom put me, I was in a predominantly white school. I think it was first grade. And I remember I went into the classroom and the teacher has us -- we had to raise our hands. If you were African American, you raised your hand. If you were white, you raised your hand to identify- to see how many were in the classroom and that was a policy that they had in Louisiana. And so being that I am mixed, I'm half German-Jewish and half Black so whenever they asked for whites to raise their hand, I raised

> my hand. Whenever they asked for Blacks to raise their hand, I raised my hand and I got chewed out for that because it was like, “No, no, no, you’re definitely not white. You *only* raise your hand when we say Black” and I was like, “I am both.” And as a first grader I didn’t understand why that was so important for me to choose one when I was both.

Re-reading this statement made me reflect on how confusing this event must have been for Stephanie as a young child. She was not confused about who she was - both Black and White - but yet her teacher bypassed Stephanie and chose the 'correct' racial group for her. In the narrow-minded thinking of the teacher, Stephanie was Black and should not identify as white although her father was white. This reaction by the teacher reflected much of society and how it has treated biracial individuals. It does not matter if the person is half white. What matters most is that the person is not full white and thus the person should not claim white. This connects back to the notion of the one-drop rule. As long as there is one drop of any other race, the person is no longer afforded the full benefits of being white. This specific moment, among many others, was a racial witnessing event that remained present with Stephanie until adulthood. This was a crucial moment when Stephanie realized that racial demarcations would be placed upon her by others.

Many of the racial witnessing events that Stephanie shared were connected to being biracial. She was the only biracial individual in her family and it was obvious that it was something that had triggered greater awareness within Stephanie because of the differences she had observed and experienced connected to her skin color.

> I think being German ... that’s probably as white as you can get. You know so I felt like I was whiter than some of the people in that room. But that was a really big thing

> for me. A lot of the experiences that I had racially growing up, were because I'm the only mixed person in my family. The rest of my sisters and my family is Black. So I'm the "black sheep" you know because I'm the only light skinned one. So growing up, that was really hard for my mom too. She would be pushing me around and I didn't have hair like my sisters. I didn't look like my sisters. And so there was a lot of colorism that was going on. I was treated differently. In some situations I was treated better and other situations I wasn't treated better.

Many of the racial witnessing events connected to her skin color involved white individuals and white-dominated spaces, but others had been experienced in Black circles. Stephanie recognized that her lighter skin had given her privileges that darker-skinned Black women did not have. But at times being light-skinned came with its drawbacks and caused suspicion and tension within Black circles. She shared how there were moments when her light skin was an advantage and others when Black women gave her a hard time because of it.

> I'm the only mixed one, my younger sister, since she's full Black, she assimilated into Black culture at Harris. She's completely opposite of me even though we grew up together, like same household, everything. But she was able to because of the color of her skin. She was able to fit into Black social - I don't know the word, right now [circles], yeah Black circles. Whereas I wasn't able to fit into those as well. So I think there was more tension towards me being in Black circles than it was being in white circles because I was seen as the cute little mixed girl, you know, or something like that in white circles. Like 'oh, that's just Stephanie, like the one Black girl.' But in Black circles, it was a lot different and I think it has to do with of course the slave mentality and everything that comes with being light-skinned. So I felt like growing

> up I just had different experiences. So that's really what led me to be this way more than ever. It wasn't necessarily like somebody sat me down and was like this is gonna [sic] happen to you, you know.

This was an important statement because Stephanie connects back to one of the interesting findings among the more critical TES - that their parents were not necessarily race critical themselves. As Stephanie stated, no one sat her down and told her what would happen to her, what she would have to endure because she was a person of color. Through racial witnessing moments, Stephanie became thoroughly acquainted and knowledgeable of how she would be treated because of her racial group. This again points to the reality that a critical parent is not one of the main variables that need to be in place in order for individuals to become race conscious and race critical. It is more about the events connected to the racialization of bodies that create a greater impact on the discourse and ideologies of individuals. It is these moments that leave their mark upon the bodies and minds of people of color and ultimately lead to following a path of greater critical thought.

Frank. Frank was a 29-year-old in his last semester of the teacher education program. His father was Polish and his mother was Hispanic. Frank self-identified as Chicano and referred to himself as 'mixed' only once during the interview. He had grown up in a military family (his dad was a nurse and health teacher in the military) and had lived outside of the US for a significant amount of time while growing up. His family had always lived on military bases and Frank shared some of his experiences:

> People have this idea that a military base is, like it's American and it's Christian but a military base - I mean, it's some of the worst suicide rates and the domestic violence rates are pretty high. There's suicide. Racism. And I grew up with all that and also I

> had teachers who were ex-military so 'You're going to do what I say [Frank bangs on the table with his hand] or I'm going to send you to the office where they're going to call the police.'

Frank went on to share that both his brother and he had been subjected to continuous racial profiling and harassment from military police and school personnel while growing up on bases. He said that this was especially true for his brother who Frank described as also having darker features and who looked more 'hardcore.'

> Um, growing up, my brother looked pretty hardcore you know, slicked back hair, baggy jeans. I think he carried that persona around with him just by the way he looked and dressed. A chain hanging down, you know, bandanna out the back pocket. But I mean, he's a really nice guy it was just how he wanted to look. There was an incident at our middle school one time where the principal thought everybody was sniffing paint, gas, and white out. And so, the first person called to the office was my brother. 'What do you know about this?' 'Why are you calling me into the office?' Again, our father's the nurse in the school and my dad - that was one of the times our dad really stuck up for us. .... But that was one incident where my dad was like, 'No, he's not, he's not doing those kinds of things. Why are you calling him into the office? Like, why is he the kid you're calling into the office?'

Throughout both interviews, Frank shared several instances in which he or his brother had been racially profiled and targeted. He endured numerous racial witnessing events that greatly impacted how he viewed race and society. Frank clearly understood that race impacted individuals, especially when they were profiled as potential criminals solely because of their appearance.

Here I had asked Frank if he could remember his first experience with race. This is what he remembered:

> Oh yeah it was in fourth or fifth grade. It was Friday, because it was pizza day in the cafeteria. So the bell rings for lunch and we all race to the cafeteria. So you're running, running, running, and we all get to the line and this kid accused me of cutting him. You know how kids are. I said, 'I didn't cut you.' And he was like, 'Uh, you wetback, you cut me.' And I thought, *'Wetback*? What does that mean?' And I remembered, you know, lunch went on. I kept thinking, like, 'What does that -- why did he call me, that?' I remember, actually like looking at my back, like, why did he call me that? Got home, mom asked, 'How was your day?' 'Oh, it was fine. Oh, by the way a kid called me wetback today.' I remember her kind of like stopping in her tracks. She told me what it meant, you know it was a racial slur, it was a negative thing, he shouldn't have called me that. So that was the first time that that ever happened.

I remember thinking at this instant, how many other people of color have had similar racial witnessing events in their lives and for how many of them have these impactful events taken place in school, spaces that are supposed to be relatively 'safe?' How many of our young students are subjected to this rude and real racialization of their bodies by others, including teachers, who are taught to uphold the dominant racial structure in society?

This is what I believe is key across critical-minded individuals. They have become critical because of the direct experiences they endured during these racial witnessing moments. It was not just an experience, individuals such as Frank 'bore witness' to how society continues to unjustly treat human beings based on the color of their skin and/or their

outward appearance. For many, these racial witnessing events occur early on in their lives and continue throughout. During both interviews Frank shared many events in which he had been racialized and/or in which he had witnessed someone being racialized.

Concluding Thoughts

> Witnessing obliges students to examine their world critically, to seek the truth, to take nothing for granted. Witnessing encourages students to protect civil liberties, civil rights that are always vulnerable to erosion, and to re-fashion a new Civil Rights Movement for the twenty-first century. Witnessing inspires students to lay their principles, if not their lives, on the line. (Bloom, 2009, p.21).

Out of the 17 participants, these were the 6 TES who questioned the educational system, who questioned society, and who questioned why our society continued to function the way it has. They were the students who did not seem to buy into the meritocratic system or a colorblind society. I often thought of these students as *los conscientes* among the masses. They were the students who left me with hope that despite a limited critical education in their teacher education program, they would enter the teaching field with a perspective that would not serve to reinforce biases and stereotypes. *Los conscientes* would enter the teaching field with a perspective that would question and would not conform. These would be the teachers that students would say were their favorite and understood and appreciated them.

At times I saw myself reflected in their statements and in their philosophies. It reminded me of when I was a new and young teacher at 23 ready to take on the challenges of teaching. No particular person or course had taught me about the inequities in the educational system. I learned this lesson first-hand having grown up in one of the concrete jungles our society would like to forget. I attended schools that would be labeled as 'failing,'

overcrowded, and underfunded schools with inadequate and outdated resources in buildings that on the outside looked more like prisons. These were the direct lessons that taught me that not all was fair. But I did not realize the extent of this unfairness until as a young adult I entered the teacher workforce. It was when I stepped into East River Junior High School in the Bay Area that it really hit me how discrepant and unjust the system was. Most startling were the obvious racial lines drawn to demarcate differences among people.

The interviews, especially with *los conscientes*, also made me reflect on where I was ideologically at that time when I started teaching. Although I had not taken one course in teacher education, I knew and understood that there were vast differences and that not all was just. "Liberty and justice for all" did not really intend for *all*. "For all" really meant "for some." That was clear early on. When I think about it in this sense, then I should not have been surprised to find *los conscientes* among the masses. *Los conscientes* will always be present in circles and groups. Sometimes the outside might miss them because they do not always make themselves known, but they are there.

The majority of *los conscientes* arrived in the teacher workforce by chance. Many of them were from neighborhoods where struggle was a reality. Most of them attended schools that were not labeled the best and so they knew and understood that not all was set up fairly within the educational system. They learned firsthand that education is *not* automatically the great equalizer. These were some of the variables that made them different and that had predisposed them to be more critical. The racial witnessing events they experienced growing up had allowed them to understand race at a much deeper level than the other participants. It was these racial witnessing events that left their mark upon their minds and beings. These events then impacted how they acted, how they understood their surroundings, how they

made sense of the world, and ultimately how they would interact with and treat others. It was these racial witnessing events that had the greatest impact on their racial discourse and ideologies and that had led them to the critical path they had chosen to walk.

Chapter 6

Concluding Thoughts

This concluding chapter aims to provide a summary of the main findings of this study, a discussion of its connection to and implications for teacher education programs, and my final thoughts on this study and educational journey.

Summary of Main Findings

There were 17 teacher education students (TES) who participated in this qualitative study. The TES participated in 2 semi-structured interviews in which various questions were asked to engage them in discussions related to race within the context of education and society in general. Interviews were transcribed and uploaded into Atlas.ti. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was used to analyze the interview data. The following offer a summary of the main findings found in this study:

1. Problematic racial ideologies continue to plague teacher education students (TES) in this particular region of the Southwest, as made evident by the racial discourses reflected by many of the TES throughout the interviews.
2. The racial discourses of many TES reflected underlying problematic racial ideologies that conformed to overt racist thinking, adherence to colorblind ideologies, and/or buying into current post-racial rhetoric.
3. The racial discourses of TES fell along a spectrum ranging from Non-Critical/Conformist to Critical/Non-Conformist. The position where TES found themselves at the time of the study depended on different variables - e.g. family impact, significant others and peers, type of education received, prior experiences with race and being racialized, etc.

4. The more critical TES had in common that they each had been impacted by a person(s) that had challenged their thinking regarding race (ranged from teachers, extended family, significant others, and peers); had taken prior coursework related to race that used a more critical curriculum/framework; and had endured prior experiences related to race and racism.
5. In conjunction with the aforementioned variables, the discourses and ideologies of the more critical TES had been greatly impacted by what I referred to as racial witnessing events - i.e. defining moments where an individual experiences a strong event in which they (or someone they care deeply about) were racialized, Othered, and/or treated differently (usually negatively) because of their racial group, racial affiliation, etc.
6. I argue that it is these racial witnessing events that have the greatest impact on the racial ideologies of individuals. Racial witnessing events leave a lasting and defining mark that subsequently guides and dictates how we in turn understand the impacts of living in a racialized society.

Connections to Teacher Education

For the most part, teacher education programs have been overlooked in heated discussions and critiques centered on the education 'crisis'. It is as if they have been exempt from forming part of the chain reaction that has created a largely substandard and racialized educational system. Because of their crucial role in the training and preparation of individuals who will be charged with educating children of color, there exists an absolute need to examine the role teacher education plays in re-creating and upholding a racialized system. We must analyze how teacher education programs work within a racial hierarchical

system in which they function and we must question their role in perpetuating racial discourses and ideologies.

Teacher education programs, as all other 'schools' in the US, mirror the larger society in which they reside and thus it makes sense that their foundations and frameworks have been based on dominant ideologies. It can be argued that from their very inception, teacher education programs and all other forms of schooling have functioned to firmly uphold white supremacy and white privilege (Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Leonardo, 2009). Thus these institutions and programs have largely functioned to normalize the racialization of bodies. The curriculums, textbooks, pedagogical approaches, and the structure of schooling have worked to normalize race and Othering in the minds of all who attend or work within its walls. And with the passing of every day, it is also ingrained in the minds of all that the white mind and white body exceeds in comparison to all others. Today, it is common to hear schools claim they have solved the 'diversity' problem by boasting curriculums that include a multicultural component and/or diversity training for their teachers. Research has been published that has shown a positive correlation between a short-term field experience in an 'urban' setting with sensitive and racially aware students (Easter et al., 1999; Groulx, 2001; Mason, 1997; Shultz et al., 1996; Wolffe, 1996). Instead of being satisfied with this, concerned race-conscious educators and researchers should question what these approaches are really accomplishing and challenge these claims.

This study sheds light on the necessity to examine the role teacher education programs have on not only adequately preparing TES for future work with students of color, but also how because of their foundations and frameworks, they serve to impact (or perpetuate) the racial discourses and ideologies of TES. This is a crucial piece that needs to

be greatly explored because teacher education programs can potentially have such a great impact on TES. Most teacher education programs are at minimum one year long and if a critical curriculum is utilized and implemented by faculty who understand and are aware of the larger racial structure, it would have the power to significantly impact the minds and behaviors of many of its student teachers.

All of the participants in this study were part of a teacher education program in a large university located in the urban Southwest and thus as students within this institution they offer firsthand accounts regarding the quality and breadth of their program. Many of the thoughts expressed by the TES during the interview process directly connected to the courses they were taking as a required part of their program. These thoughts ranged from positive to negative. Some of the TES felt adequately prepared to face the responsibility of teaching a 'diverse' student population while others felt very underprepared to face this task.

Here I had asked Marie if she felt prepared to teach in a diverse classroom and this is what she stated:

> I think out here in our program specifically, I think so. I think just hearing conversations in seminar, I respect many - all of my peers because they have a strong understanding that people do have different backgrounds and their homes and I do feel they are prepared to hear from students. I don't know about other programs but I would hope so. But here I believe that our teachers are well prepared to go into a diverse classroom. (Marie, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

What was interesting was that during the same interview Marie expressed that she enjoyed the classes she had to take but found the ones on "diversity" to be redundant. What also needs to be pointed out is being "prepared to hear from students" (as stated by Marie above)

or even willing to listen to students is very distinct from understanding the impacts of race on students and being able to transfer that knowledge to the classroom.

Stephanie expressed that she did not feel prepared to face the challenges of teaching but remained hopeful despite the many negative and problematic racial remarks she heard in DIV 101.

> I hope that we all get educated so that we can see these things and combat them. I hope that I can be strong enough as a teacher to be able to work against odds that are set for me as a person. 'Cause like, I don't feel ready. (Stephanie, Black/White, 1st Semester).

Emma who made many statements that adhered to a problematic racial discourse believed that the teacher education program had not taught them to think beyond the stereotypes.

> I think it's fair for me to say that I don't - I think that a lot of us aren't hearing about this and so we don't have the knowledge about a lot of the contradiction [referring to what we had been discussing in interview, continued use of stereotypes, etc.]. We just keep being presented with stereotype, stereotype, stereotype, and we keep getting fed information that reinforces the stereotypes. (Emma, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

During one of the interviews I had asked Dayna, a white student in her first semester who had demonstrated greater awareness, if she believed that one diversity class was sufficient and this was her response:

> I don't think...no, I don't think it's enough. (Dayna, White, 1st Semester).

The findings of this study point to the crucial role teacher education programs play in adequately preparing future teachers. But what also should be noted is that teacher education programs also play a vital role in impacting the discourses and ideologies specific to race of

this population, many of whom belong to the Millennial generation. As was discussed previously Millennials have been quickly categorized by media and others as being post-racial or 'beyond race' but this study served to trouble that notion. As was made evident by the interview data, many problematic racial notions linger on within newer generations, some who would eventually become part of the teacher workforce. Blanket statements touting the racial progress of Millennials prove to be inconsistent at best. This again was poignantly illustrated by the various comments made by TES, especially in regards to the only diversity class (DIV 101) they were required to take as part of their program.

> I don't like it. The biggest problem for me is that all the text is one sided. (Nora, Hispanic, 1st Semester).

This belief that the class was one-sided was expressed by Nora and a few other TES as well. These students felt that hearing about race and racism and how it impacts individuals and students was one-sided or considered as non-neutral from the instructor. Amber shared that outside of the class a friend and others had said the class was ridiculous.

> I have a white friend who basically says, 'oh this is a P.C. class. This class is so ridiculous.' (Amber, White, 1st Semester).

> A lot of people think it's ridiculous that the class is even an option. Most people think that racism just doesn't exist. And to some degree, I would agree with them. They just think that the class itself is ridiculous, regardless of who's teaching it. (Jane, White, 1st Semester).

Stephanie also shared that she heard students state that this was a BS class mostly because the topics of race and racism were covered. She went on to share a racial witnessing event in

which she had been followed in a store and pointed out how many of her classmates would not know what this would be like.

> I felt like in that class, a lot of people, instead of letting go of their beliefs, really examining them and figuring out what they believe in and changing their own beliefs, they held on tightly. I felt a lot of them just held on to their beliefs so tightly after that. I know a couple of my classmates thought this was total BS, they were sitting there talking about how it's so hard to be white in New Mexico. And I'm like, 'Are you flipping kidding me? Like it's hard to be white? Did you like really just say that?' Oh, gosh, you don't have people following you around. Just today, I was in a gas station and I got followed around by the owner. I was like, really? He was just in there watching me while I was picking out some candy. You know, I'm like, really, that's never happened to anybody else in here. I didn't think I looked bad at all but he was still following me around the store making sure I didn't steal something. I'm like, 'Come on! That's everyday.' (Stephanie, Black/White, 1st Semester).

As someone who previously worked as a liaison for the teacher education program the participants were attending, I had acquired over 5 years of direct experience working with many students, staff, and faculty. Throughout my many visits to school sites where TES were completing their field experiences, I listened to the complaints expressed by TES in the program. I soon noticed that many of these complaints seemed to center on the same issue - their DIV 101 class. Semester after semester of serving as a field liaison I listened to students voice their frustrations regarding the topics covered in class, especially those having to do with race, racism, white privilege, whiteness, etc. Many students expressed they felt

the class was a prime example of "reverse racism" and some felt compelled to go further and formally express their concerns with teacher education faculty.

What became clear to me over the years that I worked for the teacher education program was that whether it intended to or not, DIV 101 had become notorious among students and gained a rather negative reputation. Students would make negative remarks about the class that ranged from complaints and frustration about the topics covered to bashing of the instructors faced with the challenging task of teaching DIV 101. Some students made it a point to mention that DIV 101 had become coined as the "how to become a racist 101" class. Instead of TES stating that they had acquired *greater* knowledge regarding the impacts and importance of race and racism in society, they would say the course had *taught* them to become racist and/or had made them feel as if they were being accused of being racist, something they adamantly denied. Over the years the utter lack of respect and seriousness expressed by many TES towards DIV 101 became painfully clear.

> I heard our [DIV 101] turned as the racism class. That's "Racism 101." Like if you weren't racist before you go in, you'll be racist when you come out. (Dayna, White, 1st Semester).

> Some of them felt and even said in the class it made them - they nicknamed it "Racism 101" because to them like they were becoming racist. Like they were becoming more aware of things and like it was teaching them to be racist. Which you know I don't think they were going to go out and be racist but it made them more aware of different things that I don't know if they were willing to accept or not. (Karen, White, 1st Semester).

I often thought about DIV 101's negative reputation and also questioned why the teacher education program tolerated these narrow-minded notions? As a relative 'insider' I knew that many of the instructors, staff, and faculty were aware of this problematic view towards the class. I had also attended meetings in which I heard faculty and staff discuss this issue but nothing was ever done to address this with TES. As the saying goes, "it was swept under the rug." The teacher education program could have easily addressed this important issue in the seminars TES were required to take every semester. A few students over the years shared that particular staff and faculty stated similar frustrations towards the class and its themes. Jane shared that she had gone to complain to one of the lead faculty members about DIV 101 and this is what he had told her:

> He said just it's going to be required. He said you're half way through the semester. He told me this is going to be a useful skill when you're a teacher, to learn how to lay down your own personal convictions for the sake of your students, for the sake of keeping your job. He said you're half way through the semester. You only have a couple more or a few more weeks to go. Just stick with it. He said - "I understand your frustration, a lot of students share your frustration. But if you drop it now, you're just going to have to take it next semester and if you don't do it then, then you're just going to have to take it after." He said so it's not going to go away, it's going to keep chasing you if you drop it now. So he said you know, just stick with it 'cause it's not worth it to quit right now. (Jane, White, 1st Semester).

What was most alarming to me regarding what Jane shared was that the faculty member did not once mention in his pep talk to her the importance of taking DIV 101 for its inherent value and the important information students would learn in the class. Instead the advice to

Jane was to get through the class. What was the underlying message sent to Jane by this key faculty member? It certainly was not that the course was important in its own sake and for its content.

Throughout my years working with the teacher education program, I often thought about the potential impact it could have had on stopping or at least minimizing the 'attitude' displayed by students like Jane. As a critical-minded educator, it was not only alarming but disappointing to know that the program did not take a more active role in addressing this problem. Was it that the teacher education program did not consider this a problem at all or was it that they did not consider it significant enough to invest the time and energy it required to call attention to? My mind would continuously return to the same question - was it really DIV 101 that was problematic because of the 'offensive' themes covered? Or was the resentment displayed by students a reflection of their own limited knowledge and understanding of what it meant to live in a racialized society? Were these continuous negative remarks an indication of their *own* racial biases and discomfort with facing the realities of racism? Furthermore was this also a reflection of the larger teacher education program's own shortcomings and limited position towards issues related to race and racism?

The findings in this study corroborated that this 'post-racial' and often time negative sentiment expressed towards DIV 101 was a reflection of not only the TES own limited understanding of race-related issues, but also of the teacher education program's own challenges of adequately including more critical training in its pedagogy and framework. A critical analysis of the interview data pointed to the continuation of problematic racial ideologies that were being largely upheld by the teacher education program. I state this without a doubt because as I mentioned I was privy to many of the comments made and

discussions centered on race that took place among students, staff, and faculty and had numerous firsthand accounts of how race was dealt with in the program, or better yet, *not* dealt with.

Transformation of Teacher Education

What does all of this point to? It highlights the utmost need for a critical shift and revamping of teacher education programs in order for them to be more effective in creating an ideological shift in its students. Again, if we think about the countless hours in coursework, assignments, and fieldwork that TES have to complete during their teacher preparation we can begin to imagine the impact that would be possible if teacher education programs strategically structured their entire frameworks and curriculums around critical foundations that used for example the teachings of Critical Social Theory (CST), Critical Race Theory (CRT), and/or a critical multicultural education approach.

Teacher education programs across the nation must also do away with the notion that an effective approach to teaching its students about race or "diversity" can be accomplished through the one required multicultural education class. As was evident in this study, many TES not only considered the class to be problematic but they exhibited an antagonistic attitude towards the class *before* they had even entered the classroom. We must ask - is the extent of impact already compromised given a set and predetermined negative position towards DIV 101? That is, if students are taking an antagonistic stance before actually stepping foot in the class, then logic follows that these students would probably not meaningfully engage in the themes covered within the class.

If transformation is truly what teacher education programs are seeking then they must come to terms with the fact that significant and lasting ideological impact is not achievable

with one diversity course. Programs need to address what this one-course approach to dealing with diversity says to students in its program and what the underlying message this practice sends to its students. Are teacher education programs ultimately doing a disservice or hindering the progress of their students by structuring their programs in this manner? This study demonstrated that this one course approach is not the most effective in eliciting an ideological shift in future teachers. When classes are taught and included in the program in a disjointed manner, they lose their potential impact.

As this study demonstrated, the more critical TES had reached that level of awareness through not just having taken one diversity course. They had become race critical because of a combination of not only critical coursework, but especially because of the impact from others who were critical, and having experienced a range of racial witnessing events throughout their lives. This is something teacher education programs need to consider. If we know that racism continues to be an endemic part of society and in the US educational system, then it is the responsibility of teacher education programs to respond to a call to change. If teacher education programs continue to function in the same manner that they have, then it can be argued that they are contributing to the perpetuation of problematic racialized notions and the upholding of race-based hierarchies in society.

We are 60 years past Brown versus Board and yet society remains mired in a racialized system. If our teacher education programs wanted to enact greater ideological change across the US, they would choose to revolutionize their programs. We know that not all future teachers would align with a more critical understanding of the world, but many would, especially if problematizing race would become a key element in teacher education programs. Teacher education programs can choose to disrupt conformist and non-critical

ideologies. This also leads to one of the ultimate questions - can teacher education programs significantly impact the racial ideologies of its students given that programs are usually 1 - 1.5 years in length? Although it would be difficult for teacher education programs to include forms of racial witnessing events, this discussion could be included in course work. What programs can include are more required courses that cover diversity, multicultural education, race, racism, and other issues considered controversial. What programs should aim to instill in their students is critical and reflective thought achieved through critical coursework and a challenging curriculum throughout that would hopefully lead to students who are more open to understanding how race impacts us all on a daily basis.

Recommendations for Teacher Education

The previous section began the conversation regarding what needs to be done in teacher education programs if a real and lasting ideological impact is desired. Throughout the interview process, TES expressed their own thoughts on how the teacher education program could be improved. This included better preparation to teach in diverse settings that included more than one diversity class.

> Yeah, I wish more classes were required or at least offered. Because having gone through the process I realize that you have so little time in the first class to cover everything that you don't really get a chance to delve into all of the issues and to get to listen to everything. The last thing I would say is that it sounds to me like after this there's going to be a lot of people that say the multicultural class should not be mandatory and students should not be forced to take it. And my sentimental thought would be you know we should be required to take some kind of multicultural education or some kind of history course which incorporates a multicultural

> viewpoint. And rather than just having one class or one option to pick from, we should have multiple choices and try and get at least two out there if not more. You know encourage lecturers to come in and talk to students. You know try and provide incentives and multiple options for students to get multicultural education. (Amber, White, 1st Semester).
>
> I love it. I think it's so interesting. I think it's so valuable and I think that elementary ed teachers should have to take more diversity classes. Which also upsets me that this is the only diversity class we're required to take. It upsets me that this is the only diversity class and that next semester is the only special ed we have to take. I think that we need more than that. (Ria, East Indian/Hispanic, 1st Semester).
>
> I will say that I think the class is important to have and I think students need to have that class but I think they also need to have like prerequisites. For example, I took the Chicano Studies class and for a mixed kid looking for his identity, that class was the best. (Frank, Chicano, 3rd Semester).

Some of the TES specifically mentioned the organization of DIV 101. They felt that they should be eased into topics such as whiteness and racism. Stephanie did not agree. This is what she had to say:

> You have sixteen weeks to teach this course and there's so much you need to cover in here that easing into it, I mean, that's basically wasting days. You know what I mean, that's time that you could be getting to that rough stuff. And that rough stuff needs to be covered and every single part of it does. Because it, especially working here, if they want to work in this state they need to know. You know what I mean. They need to know that this is out there. (Stephanie, Black/White, 1st Semester).

Other TES expressed that they believed the program and the licensure program was not thorough or rigorous enough.

> I think definitely that Southwestern University could make some additions to the program that would be really helpful. There's a gap really between what's happening in the classroom at the university and what's happening in the classroom in the school. And you really can't have one without the other. (Claire, White, 3rd Semester).

> The program isn't difficult enough. I think it's really easy to get your license and I think that the teacher's test, I think you should be able to only take it three times and then after that you should not be able to get it because in every other profession, you only have three chances on the test and if you don't then you can't do it. But with teachers you can take the test as many times as you need to take it. So I think the main thing is it's too easy to become a teacher. (Nora, Hispanic, 1st Semester).

It was interesting to hear a few TES express that if students were not proponents of diversity then they should not be allowed to teach or belonged in the teaching field.

> You sit in your classes together with your cohort and you look around the room and you hear them say things sometimes and you're like, "you should not be a teacher. Like you need to find a different profession. This is not for you." (Ria, East Indian/Hispanic, 1st Semester).

I had asked Sofia one of the more critical participants that if TES should be allowed to become teachers if they were not supportive of diversity. She hesitated a bit before she responded with the following -

> I think that - I don't know (we laugh). Like I said wouldn't want my kids in their class at all. By any means would I want my kids in a class with a teacher who was

like that regardless if my kids grew up in the heights or the valley. (Sofia, Hispanic, 3rd Semester).

Final Thoughts and Implications for Future Research

Even thinking of writing this final section stirs up a bit of nostalgia for it marks the end of this doctoral journey. Although it is the end point, it is far from the last stop of my own journey towards an anti-racist destination. As race critical educators and researchers we understand that a complete anti-racist ideology is almost impossible. In the same manner as there exists a spectrum of criticality for my participants, there also exists a spectrum in which we fall as anti-racist critical educators and individuals. Who should be the ultimate judge of where we find ourselves? Are we our own best judge or evaluator or is this something we should leave to our colleagues, mentors, and/or students to decide?

It was my hope and intent to represent participants in the most accurate and honest manner possible. Although we are trained researchers, we are ultimately human and "to be human is to err." During the coding, analysis, and writing of this study I spent ample time thinking about my participants and at times found myself struggling with what I should and should not disclose about them via their discourse. This was especially true for the participants who exhibited the most problematic racial discourses. I continuously thought about their lives and the experiences they had endured that brought them to the current point. I also thought about how all the "ideological baggage" they carried, that all of us carry, guided and dictated much of what we choose to state, how we interpret our world, and how we treat those around us. I clearly remember the interview with Claire and how she stated so matter of fact and without any hesitation that President Obama was different from other Blacks because he did not come from the "Black ghetto."

> I struggle to separate from the culture and I don't know why because like you're saying, "I'm not that way," which I totally get. And neither is Barack Obama. He's not that way and he's not coming out a Black ghetto, you know. Like, so I get it, that it's not color but it's definitely like this thing is tied to the culture, you know. (Claire, White, 3rd Semester).

Although at that very moment Claire's statement made me cringe a bit, I refrained from automatically judging her and categorizing her as a "bad" human. Over the course of the interviews I became better acquainted with Claire and I knew that she also possessed many good qualities. I thought about all of the experiences she had, especially with her overtly racist father and how his problematic racial ideologies had significantly impacted Claire.

At the end of the interview process and after having spent quite some time listening and reading their words, I felt a connection to all of the participants. Maybe it was beyond a connection – an unspoken loyalty of sorts that emanated from the sheer fact that these individuals made this study possible and this terminal degree achievable. This allegiance was associated with the fact that trust was established with the participants, especially because the interviews spanned over two sessions and sometimes over 4 hours were spent with an individual participant. Thus it was difficult to see these individuals as *just* the participants in my study. They represented a significant reason why I was able to reach this finale.

There was trust established or at least that is what I felt during each of the interviews. I believe this was especially true given that I used a dialogical interview approach in which I attempted to simulate the feel of an authentic conversation instead of a more formal interview. I felt that this was what made the interviews so smooth and informative. I especially noticed a difference from interview one to interview two. In general the participants seemed more

relaxed and willing to share even more information and personal experiences in the second interview. I also believe that the actual interview time reflected the overall success of the dialogical approach. Each interview lasted between 60 - 120 minutes, something I did not expect. If participants had felt uncomfortable or offended in any way, certainly this would have impacted the overall interview length.

Because I am a critical-minded educator and developing researcher, I also felt the obligation to be true to the findings of this study and to best represent what was revealed during the interviews. My ultimate obligation was to help our teacher education program move away from this erroneous post-racial rhetoric by demonstrating to them that the discourses and ideologies of its future teachers are far from race-neutral, post-race, and race-free. The ultimate goal was to demonstrate with firm data that these post-racial beliefs are inaccurate and if not confronted and dealt with, would continue to uphold and perpetuate a white supremacist society with its inherent and determined racial hierarchy.

Although there were only 17 participants in this study, this was a representative sample of the larger population of TES attending the teacher education program within this specific institution. Generalizations cannot be made but the findings of this study can be considered a "snapshot" of the TES in this program that can be used as a springboard to analyze other teacher education programs across the nation. I also think about the students who participated in my study and why they were drawn to it. Was it the topic? Was it out of curiosity, especially for the ones who were not race critical? Was it their way of providing their "two cents?" Although I was careful not to include the word “race” when I announced my study in their classes, I did specifically mention my interest in teacher education programs, multicultural education, bilingual education, and diversity.

Another thought that plagued my mind was the following: If our own teacher education program—that is considered “diverse” because of its geographic location and because it is housed within an outwardly appearing "diverse" institution—then should it not have logically followed that TES would exhibit greater 'race forward' thinking by its students? If this was a place immersed within diversity and accepting of diversity, shouldn't the students then reflect greater acceptance of diversity and a deeper understanding of race? If our own supposedly “diverse” program was struggling with these issues, then what does this possibly reflect about other teacher education programs across the state, especially those that reside in less diverse settings and with significantly less diverse student and faculty demographics? This thought alone should warrant more studies of this kind in institutions across the country so that we can gain an even greater understanding of the significance and reach of this post-racial moment.

It is noteworthy to point out that this study was the first of its kind to be conducted in this specific geographic area of the Southwest and within this specific institution. Other studies on discourse and ideology have been conducted but not at this specific institution. Thus it was long needed and revealing. For the years that I had worked for teacher education there existed a notion that it was meeting its diversity quota and for the most part, students were regarded as progressive and race-sensitive. But, the findings of this study have directly contradicted this notion and hopefully will work to dispel the myth and propel the program to act and create change.

This study as others has left many more questions. First more studies need to be conducted that explore discourse and ideology specific to race within teacher education programs. We cannot continue to gloss over racial discourses and ideologies and assume that

Millennials are beyond race because they simply are not. There is also a great need to continue to explore why and how teacher education programs continue to function the way they do. As critical educators and researchers we must ask why they have continued to function the way they have for so many years and without much interruption. Longitudinal studies that follow TES to their first years in the teaching field are needed, especially ones that focus on TES who end up in what are considered very diverse and/or low-income areas in our local district. What would be their thoughts looking back at their teacher education program and their readiness to teach? What would be their thoughts regarding the importance of classes such as DIV 101 as teachers in what are considered more 'challenging' schools?

Looking back I also think about what I could have done differently. I would most definitely have included a more detailed survey as part of the study that asked various questions specific to race. It would have been interesting to ask TES very direct survey questions that deviated from the typical "do you believe everyone deserves an equal education regardless of race?" I would have also included interviews with teacher education faculty/staff and especially the DIV 101 instructors. Including their perspective on DIV 101 would have added another layer to this study. What did the instructors think of the TES that exhibited the most problematic racial discourses and ideologies? What were their explanations for these dispositions? It would also have been interesting to have included at least a couple of direct observations of DIV 101 within the course of this study.

In closing, I am most thankful to the participants in this study. Many of them inspired me with hope that despite their 'training,' they would prove to break from the conformist mold, especially when they enter their own classrooms. Most importantly, all of the participants with their words, allowed me to see them as humans who are struggling on this

path. Now we as critical race educators are left with the task of helping our students along so that *together* we can have the power to disrupt and transform our educational system.

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Appendix A

Demographic Survey

Please fill out the following survey questions prior to the first scheduled interview. These questions will help frame some of the questions you will be asked during the interviews. **These answers will not be shared with anyone else.** Answer the questions as accurately as possible. If you have any questions about this survey, please feel free to contact the Primary Investigator, Virginia Necochea at 505-304-8724 or by email – vneco@unm.edu. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study!

Date: _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Age: _____

Year in Program: _____

Endorsement Area(s):
_____

1. How would you self-identify?

_____White _____Non-White

2. If you chose Non-White, how do you usually self-identify racially?

3. If you are a person of Hispanic/Latino origin, how do you usually self-identify? (e.g. Mexican, Chicana/o, Spanish, etc.)

4. What is your ancestry or ethnic origin? (Explain in a couple sentences)

5. Are you originally from New Mexico? If no, please include where you are originally from and how many years you have lived in New Mexico.

6. Is there any other information you would like to provide that you feel would help me to better understand who you are?

Appendix B

Interview Questions

Interview 1 - Educational Background:

1. Where did you grow up? What were the racial demographics?
2. Where did you go to school? What was it like? Describe the students? (as far as class and race)
3. What program are you in? Where are you in your program (as far as course work and completion)?
4. What made you decide to become a teacher?
5. Where are you currently doing your student teaching? What have been your experiences with student teaching so far?
6. Tell me about the students at the school and in your specific class (demographics of school).
7. Do you like the students at the school and in your class? Generally, are they successful in school? What do you think attributes to this success (or failure)?
8. What do you think are some of the most important variables that affect the educational success of students?
9. Have you heard about the "achievement gap?" What do you know about it? [If needed, give a general definition so they more or less understand what it refers to.]
10. What do you think accounts for the "achievement gap" that we continue to see in dropout rates and educational attainment between specifically whites and minorities?
11. What are your thoughts about how well your program has prepared you for student teaching and beyond? How about specifically in regards to ELL students and other minority students?
12. Do you think that having components on issues of diversity and multiculturalism are necessary in TE programs? Did your program have a strong component?
13. What would be your ideal school setting to teach in upon finishing your degree? Describe the school and the students.
14. Would you be most comfortable teaching students who most resemble your own background or who are different from your background? Do you think that your preparation matters in who you end up teaching?
15. "_____ percent of the teacher workforce is made up of whites, what are your thoughts on this? Why do you think this is? Do you think this reality might have an affect on students of color?
16. Do you believe that schools (the educational system) provide an equal education and equal opportunities for all regardless of race?
17. Do you think that more should be done by the government (e.g. increase federal spending) to decrease the achievement gap? [If answer with a yes or no, can ask participant to elaborate on why not or how?] What about at the university and college level?

Interview 2 – Race and Race Relations:

1. What are your first memories of race?
2. Do you have a significant story or experience dealing with race, either while growing up or even as an adult, that affected how you think about race?
3. What would you say race is? What role does it play in your life?
4. How do you describe and/or categorize yourself racially?
5. What were your experiences with race where you grew up? Did you talk about race growing up? How about now?
6. Tell me something about who your closest friends were growing up? What race were they and what role did that play in your friendship?
7. What are your thoughts on inter-racial dating and/or inter-racial marriage?
8. Have you ever dated outside of your racial group? Would your friends and family be ok with that type of relationship?
9. How would you describe relationships among different races in the U.S.?
10. Looking at current statistics, the majority of white people live in almost white neighborhoods. Why do you think this is?
11. Do you think you would have more difficulty teaching Asian or Black students? Native or Hispanic? Why?
12. It has been said that some minority races are more privileged than others (such as Asians being more privileged as the model minority than Blacks and Latinos.) Would you agree or disagree that some groups are more privileged and would you explain your answer?
13. Many teachers say that Asian students care more about their education than for example Hispanics and Blacks and that's why they are more successful. What do you think about this?
14. Do you think that there is racism between groups of color? E.g., do you think that there are racial issues between Blacks and Hispanics? What about within the same group (e.g. within Latinos/Hispanics)?
15. Many minorities would claim that being white is an advantage in society. What do you think about this statement?

Appendix C

Table 1 - Study Participants

Pseudonym	Age[26]	Semester	Cohort	White/Non-White[27]	Self-Identification for Non-White Participants[28]
Ria	22	1st	General	Non-White	East Indian/Hispanic/Irish; Mexican/Spanish (Native New Mexican)
Briana	25	1st	General	Non-White	American-Mexican; Mexican
Nora	22	1st	General	Non-White	Hispanic; Hispanic
Stephanie	24	1st	General	Non-White	Black/White; N/A
Dayna	34	1st	General	White	-
Karen	35	1st	General	White	-
Amber	22	1st	General	White	-
Jane	21	1st	General	White	-
Frank	29	3rd	Bilingual	Non-White	Chicano/Mexican American; Chicano
Rachel	24	3rd	General	Non-White[29]	Hispanic; Spanish and Mexican
Sofia	21	3rd	General	Non-White	Hispanic; Chicana
Carlos	25	3rd	TESOL/BIL. ED	Non-White	Hispanic, Chicano
Marie	23	3rd	TESOL/ESL	Non-White	Hispanic; Guatemalan
Emma	22	3rd	TESOL/ESL	Non-White	Hispanic; Spanish
Isabel	22	3rd	TESOL/ESL	Non-White	Hispanic; Mexican
Claire	49	3rd	TESOL	White	-
Hannah	21	3rd	TESOL/BIL. ED	White	-

[26] Age at time of study
[27] Response to question - "How do you self-identify? White or Non-White?"
[28] Response to question - "If you chose Non-White, how do you usually self-identify racially?" and "If you are a person of Hispanic/Latino origin, how do you usually self-identify? (e.g. Mexican, Chicana/o, Spanish, etc.)"
[29] Although Rachel self-identified as Hispanic only, she did state that her father was white.