Exploring Student Resistance to Topics of Diversity, Social Justice, and Privilege: A Critical Content Analysis of Student Evaluations of Diversity Instructors

by

Dionne Harris Lazenby

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Approved by
Brandon L. Sams, Co-Chair, Assistant Professor of English, Iowa State University
Michael P. Cook, Co-Chair, Assistant Professor of Curriculum & Teaching
Carey E. Andrzejewski, Associate Professor of Educational Foundations, Leadership, & Technology
Julia S. Charles, Assistant Professor of English

Abstract

While research has shown the importance of diversity and social justice education (Bowman, 2010; Cabrera, 2014; Kumar, 2018; Valentíin, 2006), instructors of these courses often encounter barriers to effective instruction in the form of student resistance. Many women and instructors of color experience resistance and challenges to their character, authority, and credibility from white students. This is especially prevalent when the course content involves privilege and social inequities (Evans-Winters & Twyman Hoff, 2011; Littleford & Jones, 2017; Martinez, 2014; Nast, 1999; Perry et al., 2009). White privilege, emotionality, and fragility influence these displays of resistance (DiAngelo, 2018; Matias, 2016). Such displays have been chronicled in classroom interactions, student assignment submissions, and student critiques of courses and instructors (Bernstein, 2016; Crosby, 2012; Milner, 2010). In course evaluations, students have asserted that instructors were racist or bitter and made excuses concerning the racialized aspects of our society in an attempt to avoid facts. These students also referred to the courses as liberal (Crosby, 2012; Perry et al., 2009; Williams & Evans-Winters, 2005). It is important to understand these displays of resistance in order to provide effective social justice education and create culturally responsive teacher educators.

The purpose of this study was to explore how, if at all, students used course evaluations to display resistance to topics of diversity and social justice. This critical content analysis examined student evaluations of instructors of a diversity course for pre-service teachers. This study was framed through a critical whiteness studies, critical race theory, and critical race feminism perspective. Data was collected from three participants who taught the aforementioned diversity course within the last five years. I served as a

participant in this study. The data collected were student responses to end of course evaluations from this time period. I focused on the responses to the open-ended survey prompt. I also included critical narratives from my time as a TA and as an instructor of this course.

Findings showed that pre-service teachers experienced complex reactions to learning about diversity and social justice. There was evidence of growth with some students, while others exhibited a commitment to maintaining white supremacist ideologies. Instructors were critiqued harshly based on students' reactions to the course content. Instructors were described as liberal, too political, or as outright racist against white people. Students also used different language to express the same ideas depending on the race and gender of the instructor.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Diversity and social justice education are an important part of English Language

Arts Education and the field of education as a whole. Many teacher education programs

offer specific coursework that addresses social justice topics, often requiring pre-service

teachers to complete a focused educational diversity course. Diversity coursework can be

challenging for pre-service teachers and tends to evoke varying responses among these

teachers, both in the classroom and when evaluating instructors.

After I taught an educational diversity course at a predominantly white university in

the south for a semester, I was able to review the course evaluations my students had

completed. I felt as if some of my students took this as a time to make personal attacks

against me. I was accused of rolling my eyes and making snide comments, things that I feel

come from a stereotypical depiction of black women. This was extremely frustrating and

emotionally laborious. The experience caused me to question my commitment to social

justice education in this type of setting. I also questioned whether or not my presence and

commitment were welcomed at all.

Prior to this experience, I served as a teaching apprentice for this diversity course,

assisting and learning from an instructor with eight years of experience teaching the

course. I had also taught another education course at this university, which focused on

classroom management and support for pre-service teachers (PSTs) during their

internship experience, for several semesters. Prior to teaching at the university level, I had

worked as a middle school teacher serving a majority African American student population.

As an instructor of color and as a woman, I entered this experience of diversity teaching

well aware of the potential for bias and pushback. So, I attempted to craft lessons in a way that would serve the purpose of challenging student ideology and perception concerning privilege and inequality, while also refraining from causing students to feel attacked. Yet, evidence suggested that I had failed at these attempts. Despite my years of teaching experience, attempts at creative planning, and even working with a sample of the same student population, I was not prepared for how I was perceived as an instructor in this diversity course. I was not prepared for the attacks and attempts at power assertion I experienced in the classroom, within assignment submissions, and on end of course evaluations. Students were silent during discussions, missed classes, and referred to assignments as racially biased in their reflective writing. Anonymous evaluations provided a vehicle for more directed attacks in which students accused me of focusing on a racially biased agenda and of not allowing them to express their beliefs without being admonished.

As I attempted to work through the emotionality involved with this experience, I decided that I wanted to be able to use these evaluations in a meaningful way. I wanted to understand these displays of resistance and how they may be similar to or different from displays against men and/or white instructors. I also wanted to be more effective in helping white PSTs understand and practice equity. Although past researchers have highlighted the experiences of minority instructors of diversity courses by detailing resistance encountered in the classroom and in course evaluations (Crosby, 2012; Evans-Winters & Twyman Hoff, 2011; Littleford & Jones, 2017; Nast, 1999; Perry et al., 2009; Williams & Evans-Winters, 2005), I aim to add to the conversation by including the analytical element of comparing and contrasting the experiences of marginalized groups to those of white instructors teaching the same course. Specifically, I explore how students in

diversity related courses use evaluations as tools of resistance to women and instructors of color and the ways these displays differ from those experienced by men and white instructors. Additionally, I aim to highlight white student resistance to instructors and course content that challenge their privileged perspectives and practices. In English teacher education, these challenges include introducing texts and varying linguistic styles that disrupt white dominant content, discourse, and educational practices. Because English education provides such a strong opportunity for introducing diverse concepts, studying student resistance to these ideas, which should be a significant focus for English teacher educators, is important for moving the field forward. In doing so, this study adds nuance to the conversation of teaching about diversity and social justice by considering the systems of white supremacy, racial bias, and privilege that dominate teacher education and lead to white student resistance.

Statement of the Problem

Lack of diverse faculty representation in the field of higher education creates challenges for instructors, including resistance from students. Many women and instructors of color feel that their students challenge them or resist accepting the concepts being presented, especially when those concepts involve privilege and social inequities. Since the fields of primary and secondary education are also predominantly occupied by white educators, white students may lack preparedness for the challenges of studying diversity concepts. This problem is further complicated by the underrepresentation of faculty of color in higher education (Antonio, 2002; Conklin and Robbins-McNeish, 2006). Exploring the experiences of instructors of color in diversity courses at primarily white colleges and universities, Perry, Moore, Edwards, Acosta, and Frey (2009) found that

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students were often resistant to professors of color teaching diversity courses. These students challenged the instructors' credibility, questioned their integrity and motives, and attempted to undermine the instructors and concepts being covered. Having encountered similar resistance, Martinez (2014) discussed her experience as an instructor of color at a predominantly white institution. The author observed that students tended to challenge her credibility and authority. These experiences, however common, can be mentally and emotionally taxing, contributing to the problem of recruitment and retention of women and faculty of color (Conklin & Robbins-McNeish, 2006). Because student evaluations of instructors are used in hiring, promotion, pay, and tenure decisions (Centra & Gaubatz, 2000; Johnson, Narayanan, & Sawaya, 2013), students can use these instruments to assert power and resistance through negative evaluations that attack instructors' character, credibility, and objectivity (Evans-Winters & Twyman Hoff, 2011; Littleford & Jones, 2017; Nast, 1999). In diversity course evaluations, students have accused instructors of being bitter or racist against white people, referred to the class as liberal, and accused the instructor of using race and privilege as an excuse instead of accepting facts (Crosby, 2012; Perry et al., 2009; Williams & Evans-Winters, 2005).

Another effect of student resistance is the building of tension surrounding discussions involving inequality and privilege. White students often become defensive, emotional, or fatigued when equity and privilege are discussed (DiAngelo, 2018; Sleeter, 2017). This tension, or stress, can impede growth and development for white PSTs and negatively impact their ability to educate diverse student populations, bolstering the continued manifestation of stereotypical and prejudicial views and practices (Brown, 2004). Although, in formal social environments, many people tend to shy away from topics

that may cause tension, Barnett (2011) emphasizes the need for instructors to encourage open discussion among students that includes problematic views on diversity, racism, privilege, and bias. The author avers, "As they critically examine complex issues, they may be called on to examine themselves in new ways and to understand the needs of others" (p. 675). Bernstein (2016) adds that there is a difference between supporting diversity efforts and actually engaging students in dialogues that develop when students' belief systems and comfort levels are challenged. Because of the diverse population of students that pre-service teachers will encounter in the classroom, it is necessary for teacher educators to encourage PSTs to have these discussions, to be receptive to challenges to their own ideologies and comfort levels, and to avoid dismissing the experiences, feelings, and struggles of marginalized groups as opinion or isolated incidences. Educational diversity courses can provide a space for teacher educators to encourage such growth and development through a specific focus on topics related to diversity, social justice, equity, and privilege. Yet, diversity coursework can sometimes fall short of effectively challenging white supremacy and privileged perspectives (Barnett, 2011; Milner, 2010). This can be the result of only requiring a single diversity course (Bowman, 2010) or focusing on privilege and racism without consideration of the complexity of white students' identities (Lensmire, et al., 2013). Additionally, student displays of resistance, often a result of students not understanding or prioritizing the need for this course of instruction or feeling threatened by these efforts, can prevent progress towards these goals (Bernstein, 2016; Milner, 2010).

Purpose of the Study

Students in required diversity courses often display resistance to learning about diversity and social justice topics through actions such as challenges to instructor

credibility, use of hostile silence and microaggressions, negative instructor evaluations, and questioning instructor motives (Crosby, 2012; Martinez, 2014; Perry et al., 2009). In this study, I conduct an analysis of one instrument that is used in such displays: student evaluations of instructors. I posit that the anonymity of course evaluations allows students to show resistance and receptiveness more candidly. It can be difficult to have open, honest, and productive discussion in the classroom setting, especially when students struggle with the ways the course content challenges their ideologies.

In order to encourage growth and discussion among white pre-service teachers, it is necessary to first understand the systems, structures, and ideologies that privilege whiteness and patriarchy, marginalizing women and people of color and leading to white student resistance. Through the use of critical theoretical lenses, I explore how these systems, structures, and ideologies influence student resistance to diversity and social justice content and instructors. So, it is my goal to identify patterns and differences in the ways students respond to the presentation of diversity and social justice content as well as responses to diversity course instructors, specifically women and instructors of color. For this reason, I conduct a content analysis of end of course evaluations completed by students in an introductory educational diversity course. I use these student evaluations of instructors to identify themes and differences between and among student responses to instructors of different race and gender. The student evaluation forms contain university-wide questions using interval rating scales, departmental questions, and an area for additional comments on strengths and areas for improvement. I am most interested in the comments students left at the end of the evaluation form in response to the prompt, "Additional comments- Strengths and areas for improvement". These comments are direct

statements from students in which they describe their thoughts and feelings on numerous aspects of the course, such as grading, course content, assignments, and instructor attitudes and actions. Because the evaluations were collected anonymously by the university, I posit that they give a more candid view of student reactions and feelings.

Research shows that students in diversity and multicultural courses have used student evaluations as tools of resistance to instructors of color and women instructors, making negative statements that reflect racist, sexist, and stereotypical ideologies (Crosby, 2012; Evans-Winters & Twyman Hoff, 2011; Tharp, 2015). I aim to explore similarities and differences in student comments regarding the instruction of different individuals (e.g., men compared to women and white instructors compared to instructors of color) in order to gain a more in depth understanding of student resistance and the reasons for this resistance. I look for dissimilar critical language choices, meaning differences in wordage used to express similar ideas when making critiques, as well as differences in perception of instructional techniques, instructor attitudes, and grading policies. The university's student population is 80.8% white and 51.3% men, and its faculty is 77.7% white and 47.6% men (College Factual, University Population Stats, 2019). In 2017, undergraduate degrees awarded from the University's College of Education were to a student population that was 97% white and 40% men for subject specific content areas and 96% white and 3% men for grade specific content areas (College Factual, University Data & Information, 2019).

Theorizing that race and gender of the instructor play a major role in the way students perceive instructors, receive content, and provide feedback in course evaluations, I approach this study through a theoretically layered lens of Critical Whiteness Studies (Applebaum, 2016; Cabrera, 2014; Matias & Mackey, 2016),Critical Race Theory (Gillborn,

2015; Joseph, Viesca, & Bianco, 2016; Ladson-Billings, 1998) and Critical Race Feminism (Berry, 2009; Childers-Mckee & Hytten, 2015; Sule', 2014) as a means of exploring assertions of power and resistance in the evaluation of instructors of color and women instructors. This three-tiered approach provides insight into the ways in which the instructors' race and gender interact with students' white privilege (Breunig, 2019; DiAngelo, 2018; McIntosh, 1990) and white emotionality (Matias, 2016; Matias, Montoya, & Nishi, 2016) in the classroom and in evaluating instructors. In this study, I focus on evaluations from an introductory course on diversity. Additionally, in response to unexpected challenges with my original methodology, I employ the critical storytelling elements of CRT, CRF, and critical autoethnography to relay narratives from my time as an instructor and as a teaching apprentice for this course. These narratives provide insight into student resistance while giving voice to the unique experiences of women of color instructing diversity courses.

The Introductory Diversity Course:

In this study, I examine how pre-service teachers in an introductory educational diversity course at a primarily white university in the South respond to learning about topics of diversity, social justice, equity, and privilege. This course, which highlights the inequities in the educational and life experiences of students from different backgrounds, is required for all undergraduate pre-service teachers in the college of education. It is usually taken during students' second or third year of studies prior to beginning their specific programs of study (e.g., English Language Arts Education or Early Childhood Education). The course is described as an "exploration of how sociopolitical factors and students' diverse identities shape their experiences and opportunities in educational settings and

society, with a focus on the interaction between schooling and inequity" ("Diversity of Learners and Settings", 2019). It includes a service learning requirement in which PSTs are assigned to work with students in local schools and community programs. There are six major learning goals for this course:

A. To learn about the historical, philosophical, legal, ethical, and social issues associated with the extensive range of differences among learners;

B. To build awareness, acquire knowledge, and develop skills in communicating and interacting with students, parents, and colleagues of differing backgrounds and perspectives. Such backgrounds and perspectives include attention to the following variables: ethnicity, culture, language, socioeconomic status, lifestyle, religion, age, and exceptionality;

C. To examine students' motivation for seeking a career in education and the ways in which their backgrounds and experiences affect their worldview and their view of education;

D. To examine students' assumptions about diverse learners, diverse settings, and the roles of schools and education in society;

E. To develop skills related to productive reflection and self-regulation; and

F. To engage in appropriate, challenging, and supportive learning opportunities through participation in service learning. (Lazenby, 2017, pp. 1-2).

This course has been taught by a number of instructors over the years, each with different instructional styles. However, instructors use the same textbooks (currently Adams, et al. (2013) *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice*. (3rd ed.) and Gollnick, D. & Chinn, P. (2017). *Multicultural Education in a Pluralistic Society.* (10th ed.)) during a given

semester. Supplemental instructional materials (texts, videos, projects, etc.) and grading requirements may vary. Assignments include, but are not limited to, reading quizzes, reflective writing, current event reports and presentations, group reports, diversity event attendance, and several quizzes and activities (ex: SNAP challenge in which students live for five days on the amount of food that could be purchased with the average SNAP food benefits of $4.14/day) that focus on aspects of privilege, such as race, religion, and financial stability. Additionally, some instructors may require completion of tests or final projects or include attendance and participation as a grading component. Although these differences in style requirements may affect student learning and evaluations, I theorize that instructor characteristics, such as race and gender, play a substantial role in how students experience and critique diversity learning.

From Instructor to Researcher and Study Participant:

Having been the only woman of color to teach this course within the last 10 years, I found it necessary to examine my own course evaluations as a part of this study. Because I serve as both the principal researcher and a participant in this study, I must consider the ways in which my experiences as an instructor may influence my perceptions as a researcher. As a black woman instructing a class of majority white students, I developed certain impressions of students and their actions and motives. As a participant in this study, I must consider possible researcher biases that may be based on my own life and classroom experiences. This means ensuring that I am following the data to conclusions, as opposed to incorporating any preconceived notions I may have. Yet, I must acknowledge that my background and experiences shape the way I construct knowledge as well as the lens through which I analyze data. While I theorize that race and gender will be prevalent

in how instructors are evaluated, I use specific theoretical frameworks to guide my evaluation and conclusions. I also use these theoretical frameworks to integrate critical autoethnography as a means of recounting my experiences as an instructor and as a teaching apprentice. My narratives were added after the study began due to the limited number of study participants. Incorporating my own narratives into the analysis of survey data creates a space for voicing critical counter-stories as well as focusing specifically on the perception and evaluation of women of color. These critical narratives also give the reader context for the feelings and learning experiences described by students in the course evaluations.

Research Questions

Central Question: When evaluating diversity courses and instructors, specifically women and instructors of color, how, if at all, do undergraduate education students display resistance to learning about topics of diversity, social justice, and privilege?

1. In what ways is resistance to learning about topics of diversity, social justice, and privilege evidenced in student course evaluations?
2. What common or differing themes and language are present in evaluations of diversity courses when students evaluate women and instructors of color as opposed to evaluating men and white instructors?

Study Significance

In English teacher education, pre-service teachers have been required by the National Council for Teachers of English (NCATE), now the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), to be educated on social justice theory and to be able to transfer that knowledge into instructional practices that support inclusion (Dover, 2015, p.

362). The diversity course that serves as a focus for this study is a requirement for English

Language Arts Education students, serving as an introduction to diversity and social justice

topics that are incorporated throughout their English Education coursework.

Understanding student resistance to learning about topics of diversity, social justice, and

equity is important for many reasons. First, it shows the ways in which higher education

institutions can improve upon diversity instruction and exposure for pre-service teachers

in English Language Arts Education as well as in other areas of study. Since resistance can

hinder student progress and understanding of course content (Crosby, 2012), studying this

resistance provides insight into ways to effectively challenge preconceived notions and

ideologies that do not align with the goals of diversity education courses (Valentíin, 2006).

Challenging these belief systems in a purposeful way encourages growth and discussion

among pre-service teachers and teacher educators. In English Language Arts Education,

culturally responsive teachers work to connect literacy to agency and social action (Singer

& Shagoury, 2005). Observing that diversity coursework is essential in developing

culturally responsive educators, this research shows the significance of white students'

assertion of white privilege and racial power dynamics in these settings. This is important

to teacher educators' understanding of and ability to educate pre-service teachers, directly

affecting the potential growth and development of these pre-service teachers as culturally

responsive teachers and advocates of social justice and change (Baumgartner, Bay, Lopez-

Reyna, Snowden, & Maiorano, 2015; Dunn, Dotson, Ford, & Roberts, 2014).

This study also provides insight into the varied reception and critiques of

instructors, particularly women and instructors of color, teaching diversity courses at a

predominantly white institute of higher education. Participants provide demographic

information concerning their age, race and ethnicity, gender identity, and sexual identity. This information is used to analyze and report variances in critiques of instructors from differing demographic groups. Exploring these experiences can aid in the recruitment and retention of women and people of color to faculty positions by revealing ways to transform the arduous work environment created by lack of diversity support and awareness (Conklin & Robbins-McNeish, 2006). Research from this study may provide context for teacher educators to further examine variables, such as professor age (Stonebraker & Stone, 2015; Wilson, Beyer, & Monteiro, 2014) and instructor sexuality (Anderson & Kanner, 2011; Jennings, 2010), that may contribute to student resistance with regard to diversity and social justice instruction, and ways of addressing such displays of resistance.

Definition of Key Terminology

In conducting a study centered on responses to diversity related content and diversity instructors, it is necessary to define the term diversity and the related terminology as they are conceptualized in this study. These definitions are derived from recent scholarship on diversity education, as well as the course content for the course examined in the current study. These terms are essential to my work in that they provide a guide for how diversity and its associated terminology are conceptualized in educational research and specifically in this study. This key terminology details my thinking about diversity and social justice and the overarching themes of race and gender in diversity education, which are key in my approach to studying student resistance.

- *Diversity* is the representation of different groups of people based on social identities, such as race, religion, personal experience, ethnicity, historical legacies, sexual identity, ability, and gender identity (Paterson & Floyd, 2019; Tharp, 2015;

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Thompson & Biffle, 2008). In education, the use of the term diversity often serves as a buzzword, a more palatable means for non-marginalized persons, specifically white students, to discuss inclusivity (Harris, Barone, & Davis, 2015). The lack of clarity on the definition of this term allows for definitions that reinforce privilege and provide reinforcement for resistance. For example, white students may include lived experiences, such as being college students, and ideological stances, such as varying opinions, feelings, and morals, in their definition of diversity in order to imply that variation in identity is not a necessary characteristic of diversity (Kvam, Considine, & Palmeri, 2018). In the course that is the focus of this study, diversity is used in parallel with social justice to describe the inclusion and support of marginalized groups, particularly as these concepts pertain to race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual identity, religion, disabilities, poverty, multilingualism, and multiculturalism.

- ***Diversity Coursework*** is an umbrella term that includes coursework on many topics related to social identities, social justice, equity, privilege and racial, ethic, or gender differences (Bowman, 2010). Studying these concepts and their intersectionality is essential in preparing pre-service teachers to educate and advocate for varied student populations (Dunn et al, 2014). Diversity education should push pre-service teachers beyond simple remedies, such as studying ethnic authors or participating in cultural celebrations. Effective diversity coursework challenges knowing and understanding in ways that work to reform inequitable education systems (Evans-Winters & Twyman Hoff, 2011).

- *Equality* means having the same rights or social access. In education, this term has been used in support of segregated, or separate but equal, schools (Renner & Moore, 2004). While it is important to ensure that schools and students have equal access to funding and resources, it is also necessary to consider the ways in which discriminatory policies of the past make a focus on equity, rather than equality necessary (Renner & Moore, 2004; Warren, 2017).

- *Equity* is fair and equal access. Differing from equality, equity means accounting for deficits in access, power, and societal influence. An equitable educational environment acknowledges and addresses racism and includes access and policies that allow for equal student outcomes among diverse groups (Bensimon, 2018; Liera & Dowd, 2019; Tharp, 2017; Warren, 2017).

- *Identity* describes an understanding of self, derived from social, cultural and historical practices and beliefs (Matias, 2013). It includes the distinctive social groups with which a person identifies. These characteristic groups, which include race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality, shape who a person is and how he or she experiences the world (Parker & Neville, 2019; Pugach, Gomez-Najarro, & Matewos, 2019).

- *Intersectionality* indicates the ways in which different societal systems influence the interaction of complex identities and experiences. It also recognizes the differences in the identities and experiences among individuals in the same identity groups (Harris & Patton, 2019; Pugach et al., 2019).

- *Racism* is racial prejudice and discrimination that is upheld by legal authority and institutional power. Although racism is often viewed in white society as mean,

immoral people who are intentional in their dislike of other racial groups (DiAngelo, 2018; McIntosh, 1993; Trepagnier, 2006), it actually begins with ideologies and misinformed beliefs and are imbedded in and reinforced through societal structures (Schmidt, 2005). In the United States, people of color cannot be characterized as racist because they do not have the social and institutional power necessary to affect the lives of white people beyond a temporary inconvenience (DiAngelo, 2018).

- *Resistance* refers to oppositional attitudes and behaviors, both deliberate and unintentional, exhibited by students in response to diversity course content and/or instructors, as well as challenges to instructors' authority and accuracy of the course content (Crosby, 2012; Dunn et al., 2014; Parker & Neville, 2019).

- *Social Justice,* which is an essential aspect of diversity studies, involves understanding, including, and supporting marginalized groups (Gallor, 2017). Social justice includes using one's agency to pursue social change and equity (Tharp, 2017).

- *White Emotionality* describes emotional expressions, such as angry outbursts, tears, denial, shame, dejection, cognitive dissonance, guilt, defensiveness, and uneasiness, in response to discussions of race, racism, and privilege (Matias, 2016).

- *White Fragility* refers to the defense mechanisms employed by white people when they are faced with racially centered challenges, such as learning about inequity and privilege and their role in reproducing these biases (DiAngelo, 2011). These responses, which include silence, guilt, anger, fear, and tears, are often employed as a means of reinforcing white supremacy and stifling racial dialogue and progress (Applebaum, 2017; DiAngelo, 2018; Masko & Bloem, 2017).

- ***White Privilege*** describes unearned advantages, social access, benefits, and access to capital given to those who are identified as white (DiAngelo, 2018; McIntosh, 1993). This privilege extends to and influences advantages in other areas of social identity, such as class and gender. This privilege does not negate the individual struggles or obstacles faced by certain white people (Breunig, 2019; DiAngelo, 2018; McIntosh, 1990).

- ***White Supremacy*** involves the assumed superiority and entitlement of those who identify as or are perceived as white, and the social, political, and economic systems and practices centered on this perception (Ansley, 1997; DiAngelo, 2018). This view positions whiteness along with its interests and views as normal (Gillborn, 2006) without acknowledging the roles of white people in maintaining this dominance (Leonardo, 2004).

- ***Whiteness*** is a socially constructed identity created as a means of classifying the other as less than, justifying imbalanced treatment and denial of access, and protecting inequitable advantages (DiAngelo, 2018). Historically, whiteness has been used as a means of asserting superiority and also as a measure of normality (Cabrera, 2014). In Critical Whiteness Studies, whiteness has been defined as a racial discourse, outlining a social concept of avoiding and minimizing systemic racism and the experiences of people of color (Cabrera, Franklin, & Watson, 2016).

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter, I provide a review of previous scholarship on diversity and social justice education, student resistance, and theoretically driven content analysis. In order to show the importance of diversity and social justice education and the ways this instruction has been introduced and received, I review literature detailing the implementation of diversity course requirements and highlighting the influences of white identity and privilege along with instructor race and gender on student receptiveness to the content presented in diversity courses. Through theoretically driven Critical Content Analysis of student evaluations of instructors, I seek to expand teacher educators' understanding of pre-service teachers' resistance to discussions of diversity, equity, and social justice and how that resistance, which can be the result of feelings of guilt, frustration, and anger, is often misdirected as enmity toward and negative critiques of the course instructor. Because women and instructors of color are perceived and critiqued differently, and often more harshly, this review of literature demonstrates the necessity for giving voice to the experiences of women of color as well as understanding the ways that these identities interact with whiteness and privilege in the diversity education environment.

Diversity and Social Justice Education

Because of the diverse populations found in many public schools, it is essential that pre-service teachers (PSTs) are able to connect with and learn as much as possible about the topics covered in educational diversity courses and how to apply them in the classroom. Educational diversity courses offer the opportunity for PSTs to gain an understanding of topics of social justice and equity and how their own privilege affects their views and actions with regard to these issues. However, these courses are often a

small part of the curriculum (Kumar, 2018), taught using a fragmented approached of one or two focused courses, as opposed to being infused throughout teacher education courses. This approach allows students to compartmentalize diversity education as a single course requirement (Valentíin, 2006). It also allows pre-service teachers to dismiss diversity education as an obstacle they must get past in order to learn to teach instead of an essential aspect of teaching and learning. In this study, I focus on a diversity course that is taught as a standalone course and is a requirement for all undergraduate pre-service teachers.

As social justice becomes more of an educational focus in teacher education programs and accreditation standards, specifically in English Language Arts Education, teacher educators are able to include this content throughout their courses, making diversity and social justice learning a major part of becoming a successful educator. However, diversity coursework remains an area of needed development. While the content of these courses varies considerably across institutions, the approach used has important implications. Some courses focus on specific diversity topics such as gender inequality or ethnic studies while others encompass a broad range of topics (Bowman, 2010; King & Butler, 2015). Some courses emphasize the importance of tolerance rather than equity.

When courses mainly focus on race and ethnicity in order to increase tolerance as opposed to exposing and dismantling oppressive systems (Cabrera, 2014), researchers assert that this pursuit of increasing tolerance actually works to maintain oppressive systems (Agid & Rand, 2007; Nicholas, 2017), as the term tolerance connotes enduring differences (Nieto, 1994). As Cabrera (2014) notes, "one tolerates a headache or a baby on the airplane that keeps crying" (p.34). The goal of diversity education should be promoting equity and social justice. A focus on diversity and social justice should also be interwoven

throughout the teacher education curriculum in order to increase exposure to and understanding of diverse individuals and experiences and lessen student resistance. The course that is the focus of this study focuses on a range of diversity and social justice topics, such as race, gender, class, religion, and disabilities, as these topics relate to the public education system. While this course does reference tolerance, its major focus is promoting equity in education.

Goals and standards for social justice education vary across institutions and programs. King and Butler (2015) assert that many universities have implemented diversity course requirements in teacher education programs but have not set detailed guidelines for implementation. Therefore, although universities are required to set diversity goals according to accreditation standards, there is considerable allowance for interpretation and variation in content presentation. There is even more variation in the standards for specific colleges/departments and programs. Furthermore, faculty of color, often untenured or adjuncts, are often tasked with teaching diversity courses even when they do not have academic experience with the content material being addressed (Ahluwalia, Ayala, Locke, & Nadrich, 2019; Brayboy, 2003). Rubin (2018) adds that there is no manual, basic framework, or wealth of curricular resources for creating and teaching diversity courses.

Research suggests that diversity related content is generally not being presented in a way that prepares pre-service teachers to effectively teach diverse learners (Acquah & Commins, 2017). Accordingly, the content presented in diversity related courses, as well as the extent to which these topics are covered beyond these courses, can vary significantly

across programs and institutions. This variance can shape student perceptions on the importance of diversity related content.

Commonly, universities and teacher education programs are required to address guidelines for diversity in their accreditation standards. The Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation, CAEP, requires teacher preparation programs to ensure that candidates demonstrate an understanding of InTASC, Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, standards. The InTASC standard on diversity and cultural awareness states, "The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards" (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, Standards, 2015). Similarly, The National Council of Teachers of English, NCTE's standard on diversity states, "Candidates demonstrate knowledge of how theories and research about social justice, diversity, equity, student identities, and schools as institutions can enhance students' opportunities to learn in English Language Arts" (National Council of Teachers of English, 2012).

These standards give examples of the type of knowledge teacher candidates should gain, but do not give a specific guide for curriculum content or texts. Although this model allows instructors to focus more deliberately and critically on social justice and advocating for change, it also makes it difficult to perceive a standard for diversity education or assess resistance to such education beyond what is observed in a specific course. The current study focuses on one course taught by multiple instructors. Because these instructors follow the same course learning goals and use the same major texts, there is a standard for comparison across course sections. The differences in race and gender of the instructors

provide variables for analysis. Through this analysis, I aim to evaluate the key points of emphasis in student resistance, making comparisons that are not often feasible when evaluating resistance across different courses.

Diversity coursework can have a positive or negative effect on white students' ideologies and practices, depending on how it is delivered and received. Bowman (2010) posits that although research has shown the benefits of diversity courses, the key to seeing change within students is exposure to two or more such courses. In surveying students from 19 colleges and universities before and after taking diversity courses, the author observed that students who had taken two or more diversity courses displayed growth in "psychological well-being, comfort with differences, relativistic appreciation of diversity, and diversity of contact" than students who only took one diversity course (p. 554). This growth, measured by comparing student responses to the scales of psychological well-being assessment before and after completing one of a number of courses on diversity related concepts (i.e., diverse cultures and perspectives, social justice, equality, or gender studies), was more extensive with more privileged students, specifically male students and students from wealthy backgrounds.

Neville, Poteat, Lewis, & Spanierman (2014) add that students who complete more diversity courses show reductions in color blind racial ideology, a modern form of racism that ignores and rationalizes social inequality. In teacher education, pre-service teachers show more growth when exposed to educational diversity courses along with field experiences working with diverse student populations. However, when these experiences are limited, they can reinforce stereotypes and allow PSTs to remain disconnected from these student populations (Klug, Luckey, Wilkins, & Whitfield, 2006; Scott & Mumford,

2007). Additionally, many courses do not specifically name or focus on race and privilege, often using racially coded language that reinforces students' racist perspectives (DiAngelo, 2018). White PSTs can leave these courses with a stronger belief in their previously held stereotypes or belief in new stereotypes (Klug et al., 2006). These PSTs sometimes reject the course material altogether (Bowman, 2010).

Furthermore, courses that focus on tolerance may give PSTs the impression that if they do not engage in harmful actions or speech, there is nothing else they need to do or learn about social justice. Yet, coursework and discussions that focus heavily on privilege and students' confessions of unearned advantages can also lead to tension and resistance (Berchini, 2017; Lensmire et al., 2013). White PSTs often lack knowledge and understanding of the prejudice and inequity engrained in American history (Crosby, 2012), and frequently fail to perceive their own biases, which creates tension and resistance in the diversity learning environment. Building on this knowledge, the current study aims to show how such resistance is displayed in evaluations of instructors and how the race and gender of the instructor influence the level of resistance and language used in these evaluations.

Whiteness, Privilege, & Resistance

Since the data for this study comes from evaluations completed by a majority white student population, it is essential to connect to the ideas and beliefs that may shape the way these students critique specific individuals and actions. To make such connections, it is necessary to interrogate what it means to identify as white. It is also important to understand what Matias (2016) describes as whites' commitment to whiteness. Scholars such as W.E.B. DuBois (1920) and James Baldwin (1984) asserted that whiteness only

exists as a social construct. This means that there is no biological foundation for identifying

oneself as white and one can be perceived as white simply based on skin color.

Nevertheless, identities are often constructed around the concept of whiteness and the

privilege associated with it. Cabrera et al. (2016) describe whiteness as a normative

structure that privileges white people, allowing them to benefit as a privileged societal

group, while marginalizing people of color, denying them those same benefits. The authors

note that the unclear characterization of whiteness is what allows its effectiveness in

societal structuring and reinforcing privilege.

Privilege involves unearned societal advantages received by individuals of

particular identities, such as white, male, and straight. These advantages include perceived

status as well as freedom of movement and speech without consequence, fear, or judgment

(DiAngelo, 2018). When ascribed such privilege, it is not necessary to identify with or even

consider the challenges that others face. In teacher education, this privilege is seen in the

myth of meritocracy, where pre-service teachers argue that hard work is key to their

success and the success of others since everyone has the same opportunities (DiAngelo,

2018; Hossain, 2015). White privilege and resistance also manifest as colorblind ideology

(Cabrera, 2014; Jayakumar & Adamian, 2017) that leads to deficit thinking and white

saviorism in instructional practices (Ford & Grantham, 2003; Matias, 2013; Miller & Harris,

2018). White pre-services teachers often make claims of a post-racial society in which color

is not seen, racism no longer exists, and students are judged based solely on merit.

White identity and privilege often shape the ways in which white pre-service

teachers approach, and often resist, topics of social justice and equity (Haviland, 2008;

Picower, 2009). This resistance can be the result of white emotionality and fragility,

defined as emotional and angry responses to challenges to students' comfort levels (DiAngelo, 2011). White students can also feel left out or frustrated when engaging with diversity and social justice concepts (DiAngelo, 2011; Vianden, 2018). Additionally, the complexity of white identity influences student perceptions of and reactions to diversity studies (Berchini, 2017; Mason, 2016). So, resistance may sometimes be the result of white students feeling overwhelmed and judged due to assumptions made about white students and the resulting presentation of content (Berchini, 2017; Lensmire, et al., 2013). Through resistance, white pre-service teachers undermine social justice education and its potential benefits, which can lead to these PSTs reinforcing oppressive systems that are a detriment to marginalized student groups in their own classrooms. Examining the current data through a frame of Critical Whiteness Studies allows for an exploration of student resistance to diversity topics through a lens that focuses on white students' privileged perspectives and the performance of those perspectives.

The majority of teachers in the United States are middle-class white women (Matias & Mackey, 2016). The population of teacher education programs mirrors this. In 2016, the U.S. Department of Education reported that students of color made up 25% of teacher education program enrollment, with only 42% of black students and 49% of Hispanic students completing the programs. Conversely, 73% of white pre-service teachers completed their teacher education programs (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Pre-service teachers of color often do not receive the support and guidance needed to succeed in the teacher education environment (Berry, 2009). Yet, the public school population has become increasingly more diverse. Teacher education programs have implemented diversity course requirements in order to educate their majority white pre-service teachers

on working with the diverse student populations present in most public schools. These courses and the complex nature of the topics covered can present challenges for many PSTs. Seeking to understand the ideological and systemic foundations of student resistance, I review scholarship on the experiences of white students studying diversity as well as studies on student resistance, with attention to course evaluation studies and the theoretical frameworks used for analysis.

White PSTs Studying Diversity

Because the current study examines white pre-service teachers' displays of resistance to diversity and social justice education, it is important to understand the ways white students display resistance and how these displays can hinder growth and education. White pre-service teachers (PSTs) sometimes see diversity courses as unnecessary or fatiguing and do not take these courses seriously, resulting in resistance to learning about topics such as race and privilege (Milner, 2010; Sleeter, 2017). Milner (2010) asserts that white PSTs do not "see themselves as racial or cultural beings" (p. 151). These PSTs see themselves as the standard and others as diverse or racialized. They also fail to understand the significance of diversity and education. White PSTs often do not believe that diversity matters in their careers, as they plan to return to the majority white educational environments in which they grew up. Although this is often not what happens, this outlook causes the teachers who do return to majority white teaching environments to ignore diversity concerns throughout their teaching careers (Klug et al., 2006). Furthermore, white students often believe that racism is a thing of the past (Williams & Evans-Winters, 2005) that was perpetrated by certain individuals. They subsequently fail to recognize the continued effects of systems and institutions based on racism and white supremacy

(DiAngelo, 2011). Such a mindset also leads to resistance to learning about topics of diversity.

Students tend to display resistance, often to instructors of color or women instructors, through actions of defiance, such as silence or challenging the instructor's knowledge, or more commonly through comments on course evaluation forms (Dixson & Dingus, 2007; Picower, 2009). In other instances, white students use silence as means of coping with the ways the course material and racial discourse challenges their identities (Mazzei, 2008). Even when they are not overtly resistant, it can be difficult for white PSTs to interrogate social injustice and acknowledge their roles in perpetuating and/or disrupting white privilege (Bophal & Rhamie, 2014). These students may also be resistant to the element of confession involved in anti-racist studies. Being asked to acknowledge their privilege in a perceived effort to prove they are not bad people can be overwhelming and intensify fears of being perceived as racist (Lensmire et al., 2013). The classroom can then become a place of anger, emotion, and conflict and a setting for the performance of white emotionality and fragility, which are defensive responses to racial stress (Matias, 2013). White students often display negative feelings in the form of tears and irritation (Applebaum, 2017; DiAngelo, 2011). These displays, specifically white women's tears, serve as a means of maintaining white dominance and invalidating the experiences of people of color by refocusing the attention to white students as victims (DiAngelo, 2018). The author explains,

> Whether intended or not, when a white woman cries over some aspect of racism, all
> the attention immediately goes to her, demanding time, energy, and attention from
> everyone in the room when they should be focused on ameliorating racism. While

she is given attention, the people of color are yet again abandoned and/or blamed

(p. 134).

People of color then shoulder the responsibility of comforting white tears and absolving white people of feelings of being bad people. Therefore, white women's tears become a tool for gaining control of the discussion through positioning these women as victims, consequently creating an even more hostile environment for people of color.

In order to create a healthier learning environment, some instructors of diversity related courses find it necessary to focus significant amounts of class time on addressing and reducing adverse feelings and student resistance. This can include focusing on improving cultural diversity awareness by having students complete activities like researching and introducing their own heritage, exploring the potential influence of their belief systems through role playing, and working in cooperative groups to examine bias (Brown, 2004). While these activities can be helpful, they focus on comforting whiteness and take time away from the critical thinking and analyses that shape successful social justice education. Consequently, Applebaum (2017) argues the importance of embracing discomfort and countering white fragility in effective diversity and social justice education. The researcher argues that when white fragility is understood as the "performative enactment of invulnerability", a means of reasserting power through tears or angry outburst, there is less of a draw towards comforting these privileged students or protecting white emotions during class discussion (p. 871).

Studies of Student Resistance

Many instructors of diversity related coursework, particularly those who are members of marginalized groups, feel that their students challenge them or resist accepting

the concepts being presented. This resistance can be both implicit and explicit, including a range of displays such as hostile silence, challenges to instructor authority and intellectual ability, claims of reverse racism, denial of the existence of privilege and racial bias, assertion of colorblind ideology, and negative critiques of instructors who are often perceived as promoting their own agenda (Diggles, 2014; Dunn et al., 2014; Rodriguez, 2009).

Researchers have provided insight into actions of resistance and the feelings behind them through analysis of classroom interactions and student course evaluations. Martinez (2014) discusses her experience as an instructor of color at a predominantly white institution. The author observed that students tended to challenge her credibility and authority, which, she notes, is similar to incidences reported by instructors in Perry's study exploring the experiences of instructors of color in diversity courses. Perry et al. (2009) found that students were often resistant to professors of color teaching diversity courses. Students challenged the instructors' credibility, questioned their integrity and motives, and attempted to undermine the instructors and concepts being covered. Rodriguez (2009) analyzed her experiences with student resistance as a woman and an instructor of color. The challenges she encountered included assertions of colorblind ideology, declarations of white innocence and victimization, and displays of white arrogance, which involves debating knowledge and dismissing informed perspectives in favor of simplistic recommendations (DiAngelo, 2011). With similar descriptions of the classroom and student evaluation experiences of instructors of color, these studies provide a foundation for further critical examination of student resistance, strengthening the significance of the current study.

An important part of studying student resistance is understanding attitudes associated with acts of resistance. Boatright-Horowitz et al. (2012) explored student feelings about studying the concept of white privilege, which involves white students' lack of awareness of unearned privileges and the effects of racism on the daily lives of people of color. The researchers found that when their privilege was discussed, white students felt personally attacked or labeled as the bad guy or problem. This problem persists when white students are challenged with discussions of racism and privilege that may overly generalize without critically examining racialized systems and institutions (Berchini, 2017). Relatedly, Dunn et al., (2014) noted student declarations of disagreement with course content and perceived instructor ideologies and agendas. Furthermore, Rodriguez (2009) emphasizes that students may feel confused and frustrated by deviation from the norm of a white male instructor. They may also feel fear of confronting their own privilege or of saying the wrong thing. These types of student feelings and subsequent acts of resistance are often studied using specific theoretical paradigms for analysis. These theoretical frameworks provide insight into underlying viewpoints and ideologies associated with these actions. In the current study, analyzing the data through theoretical frameworks is essential to addressing the research questions and to understanding the ideologies and societal systems that shape student resistance to and perceptions of instructors of color.

Theoretical Frameworks of Student Resistance Studies

Researchers have used Critical Discourse Analysis, Critical Race Theory, Critical Whiteness Studies, and Feminist Theories to study student resistance. These theoretical frameworks provide a lens for interpreting how white students display resistance to

studying diversity and social justice topics and for exploring ideologies and societal structures that contribute to this resistance. Through action research, Tharp (2015) used critical discourse analysis to examine student resistance to social justice topics. The researcher analyzed student behaviors and statements during a diversity workshop that covered topics of social justice, privilege, allyship, social identity, oppression, and diversity. This analysis served as a means of identifying types of resistance and their underlying causes. Tharp found that students displayed resistance in several ways: attempting to assert the normalcy of the status quo (i.e., whiteness), concentrating on their own marginalized identities (such as sexual identity), invalidating the lived experiences of oppressed groups by minimizing the need for diversity studies, and using hostile silence. The researcher asserts that exploring these types of resistance is essential to exploring student beliefs and perspectives as a means of engaging students in learning and advancing the impact of the course and instructor. In an earlier analysis of student use of hostile silence, Ladson-Billings (1996) used critical race theory in examining how students use silence as a weapon against diversity topics. While her white students did not express disapproval in course evaluations, they did use silence and body language, specifically eye rolling, as a means of silencing discussions of race and gender. Silence then became a form of resistance.

Critical Race Theory has also been used in conjunction with other theoretical approaches to study student opposition to diversity topics as well as student perspectives on diversity and social justice related topics. Picower (2009) used Critical Race Theory along with Critical Whiteness Studies to explore how white pre-service teachers understood and enacted racial ideology. The author asserts that white pre-service teachers

use performative tools of whiteness, behaviors such as silence, claims of wanting to help

people of color, who they viewed as less fortunate, and denial of racism, to protect their

own stereotypical ideas of race and supremacy. These tools are based in emotionality,

involving denial and deflection of guilt and responsibility, and ideology, which often

involves making claims of a better state of race relations or lack of control over such

relations. For this reason, teacher education programs must work to deconstruct such

ideologies. Focusing on student action and dialogue, Haviland (2008) used Critical

Whiteness Studies, discourse analysis, and feminist theories to examine ways that white

pre-service teachers attempted to absolve themselves of accountability in the enactment of

social inequality. These studies used theoretical analysis to show how white students

perform resistance to education that focuses on privilege and inequity. In the current study,

I use a combination of the aforementioned theoretical approaches to explore how this

resistance is exhibited in course evaluations and how this display of resistance differs

depending on race and gender of the instructor.

Displaying Resistance Through Evaluations of Instructors

Student course evaluations are used by many universities to assess the quality of

instruction and courses, and to compare classes and instructors across departments (Goos

& Salomons, 2017). The variables measured by these instruments are specific to what each

institution prioritizes (Oon, Spencer, & Kam, 2017). These evaluations affect tenure and

promotion decisions and are often used to rank instructors. Course evaluations are also

intended for use in improving instructional materials and methods. However, response

rates are generally low, especially when online evaluations are used, which can create

selection bias, meaning the sample is not truly representative of the population being

analyzed (Frick, Chadha, Watson, & Zlatkovska, 2010; Goos & Salomons, 2017). Online

evaluation forms also exclude the option for students to ask questions or seek technical

help (Morrison, 2013). Additionally, there are questions of reliability, validity, and racial,

gender, or other bias in the use of these instruments (Hornstein, 2017; Oon et al, 2017).

One key concern is whether undergraduate students have the ability to assess instructor

knowledge and competency and whether they do so truthfully. These students also may not

have the knowledge to assess aspects such as pedagogy or instructor knowledge

(Hornstein, 2017). Students may also be overly harsh, give more extreme ratings, or yield

to the influence of their peers (Morrison, 2013).

Racial, gender, and ethnicity bias also influences student evaluations of teaching

(Boring, Ottoboni, & Stark, 2016; Chávez & Mitchell, 2019). In diversity and multicultural

courses, such as the course being considered in this study, students often display resistance

through course evaluations by making negative critiques grounded in stereotypes, racism,

and sexism. Students critique women and instructors of color harshly and challenge their

knowledge and authority (Crosby, 2012; Evans-Winters & Twyman Hoff, 2011; Tharp,

2015). Researchers assert that when universities do not consider the role of sexism and

racism in these assessments, student evaluations can be used as a source of power for

white students, allowing them to assert perceived dominance over instructors by giving

negative critiques on an instrument that could affect the instructor's tenure (Boatright-

Horowitz et al., 2012; Nast, 1999).

Seeking to understand this method of resistance, researchers have used content

analysis of student evaluations to gather information on white students' feelings toward

diversity instruction. Using information from course evaluations provided by instructors,

Nast (1999) examined student language in course evaluations as evidence of how such evaluations can be used as weapons against professors. With the goal of developing a plan of success for achieving critical multicultural objectives, the author shows the issues instructors with diverse identities face. The data shows that students used race, gender, and sexuality as factors for critiquing instructors and displaying resistance to diverse faculty and curriculum.

Building on this work and using a critical lens for analysis, Evans-Winters and Twyman Hoff (2011) used data from student evaluations to identify themes of racism and sexism in white students' resistance to learning about topics of diversity. They explored these students' attitudes toward African American instructors of a foundations of education course similar to the course being used in the current study. The researchers framed their study in Critical Race Theory and Critical Race Feminism, looking for ways in which students expressed disapproval of African American women as instructors and the underlying meaning of these expressions. The researchers used student evaluations as support for the existence of racism and sexism in student perceptions of African American women as instructors. Using the lenses of Critical Race Theory and Critical Race Feminism shaped the way textual evidence was interpreted. It allowed the researchers to approach the analysis with the supposition that the reasoning behind students' manner of criticism of African American instructors was race and gender. The authors used data from student evaluations, as well as their own experiences in the classroom, as evidence of the existence of sexism and racism in students' resistance to and evaluations of instructors. The authors note the use of hostile silence as well as stereotypical beliefs concerning black women. Asserting that racism is engrained in teacher education programs and higher education, the

researchers found that white students are able to resist engaging in discussion of race, gender, class, and equity while also asserting their power through the use of anonymous survey instruments.

Relatedly, Crosby (2012) used comments from student evaluations to show that students made personal attacks against her and her credibility as a means of displaying resistance. Because such displays of resistance disrupt teaching and learning, the researcher explored these displays of resistance as a resource for analyzing and restructuring her course to encourage student engagement. Also studying factors that contribute to student resistance, Basow, Codos, and Martin (2013) created a controlled study that removed the variables that may be present when comparing critiques of instructors, such as differences in presentation styles. The researchers used prior research as a basis for hypotheses about bias in student evaluations and differences in student performance level based on the professor's race and gender. Students viewed a simulated professor and then completed an evaluation form for that professor. Students also completed a quiz on the material presented. They found that while students did not rate the minority professors lower, they did perform better on the content assessments when they were instructed by a white male. This suggests that bias can also be a factor in student performance in that it can affect students' willingness to learn from women and instructors of color. So, when students leave negative feedback on evaluations concerning their learning in the course, it is plausible that this is the result of racial and gender bias.

With a similar focus on student displays of resistance through instructor evaluation, the current study highlights the continued and widespread prevalence of race and gender in student perception and critiques of instructors. This study attempts to understand the

interaction of the ideologies of white students in diversity courses with the race and gender of instructors. How do these students view certain instructors and react to course content being presented by said instructors? How do students respond when their ideologies are challenged in this setting? I use a multifaceted theoretical approach to explore differences in evaluations and to highlight bias and negative critiques. My research builds on the work of other scholars by comparing and contrasting evaluations of instructors of different race and gender. By showing the similarities and differences between the experiences of marginalized groups and privileged groups, this method allows for a more holistic view of the ways in which student resistance is displayed through instructor evaluation, deepening the understanding of the need for more inclusion and protection of marginalized groups in education.

Theoretical Perspective and Conceptual Framework

In critical content analysis, researchers often attempt to position findings within an applicable theoretical paradigm (White & Marsh, 2006). This paradigm is the lens through which the researcher views and analyzes the data. Researchers have used numerous theoretical approaches to study white students' resistance to diversity topics. In developing a theoretical framework for the current study of displays of student resistance to learning about topics of diversity, several existing frames provided insight into different aspects of this resistance.

As a woman of color, I have the distinctive task of educating white students who may be resistant to the idea of my positional authority over them; who may use racial stereotypes in an effort to undermine me; who may not understand my social norms; and who just simply may not understand the relevance and importance of the course content.

This is a shared experience among many instructors of color. Ladson-Billings (1996) explains her white male colleague's assertion that he was free to cover issues such as gender, class, and race with vigor, while still being received as scholarly and objective. Conversely, his African American women counterparts had to be careful how they presented the material because that may be seen as bitter or pushing a political agenda. Building on this and other works that have explored these issues, I have chosen theoretical frameworks that explore how race and gender are constructed, received, and critiqued in society and specifically in the field of education, which is largely occupied by white students. Theorizing that race and gender of the instructor, along with the emotionality and fragility of white students, play a major role in the way these students receive content and provide feedback in course evaluations, I approach this study through a lens of Critical Whiteness Studies. I also consider how the synthesis of this theoretical approach with Critical Race Theory and Critical Race Feminism can serve as a means of exploring assertions of power and resistance in the evaluation of instructors of color and women instructors.

Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS):

Critical Whiteness Studies is the field of scholarship that endeavors to reveal the societal structures that privilege whiteness and maintain white supremacy (Applebaum, 2016). Whiteness is a socially constructed identity that privileges those who are categorized as white, giving them inequitable advantages. It is used to assert superiority and categorize others as inferior, denying them access to social, political, and educational advantages (Cabrera, 2014; DiAngelo, 2018). Critical Whiteness Studies examines the intersectionality of white privilege and racism. The objective of such studies is to expose

the hidden political, economic, and social structures complicit in the maintenance of white

supremacy and privilege (Applebaum, 2016; Cabrera, 2014). The lens of Critical Whiteness

Studies recognizes and analyzes the power and privilege of whiteness (Haviland, 2008).

These studies are used to understand how the ideas and associations of whiteness impact

our society, including our systems of education. CWS uses a transdisciplinary approach to

exploring whiteness. This involves an in depth look into how whiteness is established and

imposed upon other groups, ultimately influencing the current state of race relations

(Matias & Mackey, 2016). In these studies, whiteness is defined as a racial discourse rather

than a group of people. This means that in whiteness studies, whiteness is used not as a

way to refer to white people, but as a representation of a social concept centered on

dismissing and negating systemic racism and the experiences of people of color (Cabrera et

al., 2016).

CWS problematizes the normalization of whiteness, which allows whites to

minimize their own privilege and power in race dynamics through deflection and denial

(Matias, Viesca, Garrison-Wade, Tandon, & Galindo, 2014). CWS also critically analyzes the

ways white students respond to challenges to their privilege. These responses include

"semantic games" such as explaining that they are not racist before making a racially

charged statement, situating themselves as the victim by creating "sincere fictions" like

reverse racism, and minimizing racial issues (Cabrera, 2014). Additionally, a major goal of

CWS is the deconstruction of the mental, physical, and societal power ascribed to

whiteness. For this reason, it can be used to complement other critical race theories in the

examination of power, privilege, and racial interactions. Teacher educators have used CWS

to deconstruct racial privilege and allow white students to critically analyze and

understand how such privilege has accumulated for them in terms of wealth, power, and perceived superiority. CWS also aids in developing antiracist teachers who embrace the discomfort of disassembling oppressive systems (Matias & Mackey, 2016). Additionally, second wave whiteness studies explore how a focus on privilege, individual acts of racism, and confession may contribute to emotionality and resistance (Berchini, 2017; Jupp et al., 2016; Lensmire et al., 2013; Mason, 2016).

In the current study, CWS assists in the examination of white students' assertions of power over faculty of color through anonymous evaluations. This study provides insight into whiteness and the weaponized use of its power and privilege through critical analysis of student responses to coursework and instructors when their privilege is challenged or becomes a focal point. Anonymous student evaluations provide a space for white emotionality and fragility to be used as weapons against diversity related coursework and instructors, which calls into question the validity of these evaluations beyond being reinforcers of power and privilege.

Critical Race Theory (CRT):

Although I evaluate data through a lens of CWS, Critical Race Theory aids in my analysis. CWS has been used in conjunction with Critical Race Theory to explore the attitudes and actions of white pre-service teachers. Matias et al. (2014) suggest the use of Critical Whiteness Studies and Critical Race Theory together as a means of analyzing the experiences of white pre-service teachers. Through their study of white PSTs in a Social Foundations and Cultural Diversity course, the authors assert that this approach is beneficial in that it allows for the examination of how whiteness is present in the responses of white pre-service teachers to questions concerning learning about race.

Developed from critical legal studies, Critical Race Theory is an area of scholarship that operates on the supposition that racism is normal in American society. CRT highlights the gradual progression of racial reform and examines the connections between race and citizenship. This scholarship is also critical of civil rights legislation and its benefits to white Americans, arguing for immediate and widespread legal changes (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Critical Race Theory applies Critical Theory to the analysis of societal and cultural norms in terms of race, law, and power. This framework acknowledges that racism is present in society in ways that are a part of institutions and power structures. It also makes clear that race is a social construct, where the beliefs and interests of whiteness are positioned as normal (Gillborn, 2015). CRT involves story telling as an analytical tool (Ladson-Billings, 1998), and takes into account that identity is not one-dimensional (Gillborn, 2015). Through CRT, researchers seek to reveal the effects of institutionalized racism on the experiences of people of color. Joseph, Viesca, & Bianco (2016) explain that the fundamental goal of CRT is to encourage progress toward racial equity by highlighting the racism engrained in American society. This is done through the exploration and transformation of the relationships between race, racism, and power.

Critical Race Theory explores the normalized forms of racism that are not often seen as problematic since they are not overt. Childers-Mckee and Hytten (2015) affirm that CRT has been used in education studies to investigate instructional practices that have origins in racism. Ideas such as meritocracy and neutrality purport to be fair, but actually serve the interests of dominant groups. These practices, both implicit and explicit, work against the goal of inclusive practices for diverse students. Ladson-Billings (1998) explains that Critical Race Theory can be used to dismantle the power structures that allow for these

discriminatory practices. In teacher education, a field largely occupied by white women, CRT is used to challenge curriculum, policies based on assertions of color blindness, neutrality, and meritocracy, and practices dominated by white privilege and racist ideologies. These policies and practices, such as disproportionate funding, instructional strategies based in deficit thinking, and distorted curriculum, do not consider racial inequalities and the effects of historical racism on the education system in the United States (Sleeter, 2017). In the current study, I use CRT to critique the normalized forms of racism exhibited in student evaluations of instructors, focusing on how students use negative and stereotypical critiques to assert racist and otherwise biased power dynamics over instructors of color.

Critical Race Feminism (CRF):

Critical Race Feminism is an extension of Critical Race Theory that explores the influences of race and gender on the way women of color experience the world. Its aim is the analysis and elimination of racial and gender bias. CRF, like CRT, employs the use of storytelling and has been used to study the effects of gender and race in the classroom (Berry, 2009; Evans-Winters & Twyman Hoff, 2011; Wing, 1997).Although Critical Race Feminism is influenced by both Critical Race Theory and Feminism, it is distinct in its attention to the specific ways in which women of color experience the effects of white supremacist ideals and institutions (Childers-Mckee & Hytten, 2015).

In addition to recognizing issues of race, Critical Race Feminism asserts Feminism in a way that shows the uniqueness of individual experiences, as well as the influences of other identity differences on such experiences (Sule', 2014). Berry (2009) asserts that CRF focuses on women of color, highlighting their experiences and acknowledging that those

experiences differ from those of men of color as well as those of white women. In education, CRF emphasizes the unique experiences of women of color facing white student resistance (Childers-McKee & Hytten, 2015; Evans-Winters & Twyman Hoff, 2011), specifically in social justice focused courses (Rodriguez, Boahene, Gonzales-Howell, & Anesi, 2012). In the current study, I explore how the experiences of women of color instructing a diversity course differ from other instructors, focusing on the ways in which students describe and critique these instructors in evaluations, as well as my own critical narratives detailing my experiences and interactions as a diversity course TA and instructor.

Intersectionality of CWS, CRT, and CRF:

In using a combination of theoretical approaches, I aim to explore student resistance from different sides of the same experience. How and why do students resist learning about diversity, social justice, and equity? What roles do race and gender of the instructor play in this resistance? How do instructor and student experiences and identities combine to engender displays of resistance? As an African American woman, I must acknowledge the ways in which my background and life experiences shape the way I interpret texts. However, I must also acknowledge the ways in which whiteness, privilege, white supremacy, and emotionality may shape the ways students respond to women and instructors of color. Recognizing these actualities, I approach this content analysis through a lens of Critical Whiteness Studies, with consideration to Critical Race Theory and Critical Race Feminism.

Critical Whiteness Studies is needed as an analytical tool because the words being analyzed are those of primarily white students experiencing studying diversity as a

requirement. CWS explores the ways in which white privilege and racism combine to affect viewpoints and actions. When there is a perceived challenge to this privilege, an emotional response is often invoked (Boatright-Horowitz, Marraccini, & Harps-Logan, 2012; Matias, 2013). Using CWS, I aim to identify structures and institutions complicit in the preservation of white supremacist ideologies that may contribute to the resistance displayed in student responses. Including Critical Race Theory and Critical Race Feminism as analytical approaches, along with the use of critical narratives, allows for the consideration of race and gender as factors in why different instructors may have different experiences with the same general population of students or why they may be critiqued differently. With this analysis, my objective is to provide an argument for improved and expanded delivery of diversity coursework with an emphasis on exposure to more diverse instructors in teacher education, specifically in English Language Arts teacher education where diverse language usage and studying diverse identities through literature are essential.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the critical content analysis approach and the process of analyzing student survey data through specific theoretical lenses. In this study, I used Critical Whiteness Studies, Critical Race Theory, and Critical Race Feminism as analytical tools to examine course evaluations in order to understand the ways pre-service teachers experience learning about issues of diversity, social justice, and equity in an introductory diversity course. This chapter also describes participant selection, data collection and analysis, and limitations of the study. Additionally, I explain the inclusion of critical autoethnographies as a means of providing more insight into the gendered and racialized experiences of women of color in diversity and social justice education.

Research Method

Content analysis is a manner of inquiry in which the researcher analyzes textual data to identify significant patterns and develop categories. According to Beach et al. (2009), content analysis "is a conceptual approach to understanding what a text is about, considering content from a particular theoretical perspective, such as sociohistorical, gender, cultural, or thematic studies" (p. 132). This theoretical perspective is derived from prior research, knowledge of experts, or existing theories. Content analysis can be used with both qualitative and quantitative research. In qualitative content analysis, researchers focus on textual or multimedia data, such as responses to open-ended interview questions, as a means of understanding a phenomenon (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; White & Marsh, 2006). In using this research strategy, researchers should give very detailed descriptions of the process of analysis (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008).

Critical content analysis uses the strategies of standard content analysis, while adding the use of critical theoretical lenses to challenge forms of oppression. This critical lens is used to provide insight into underlying meanings and displays of power in texts (Corces-Zimmerman, 2018; Short, 2016). Improved understanding and insight into power dynamics and concealed forms of oppression bring these issues to the forefront and emphasize the critical need for societal change. In the current study, I used critical content analysis to analyze student evaluations of women and instructors of color. This approach was appropriate because my focus was critically analyzing student responses to the open-ended prompt on the evaluation form. I applied a three-pronged theoretical lens in order to focus on the ways women and men of color are perceived, critiqued, and met with resistance when instructing a diversity course to a majority white student population. The analytical lenses allowed me to explore the assertion of the power and privilege of whiteness in this environment, providing evidence of the need for diversification of teacher education.

The data used in content analysis should be meaningful and provide a basis for making inferences and answering the research questions posed. Researchers often use codes, or explanatory labels, to develop categories and assign data to those categories (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; White & Marsh, 2006). Content analysis can consist of any number of steps, depending on the researcher's analytical purpose. One must consider research purpose, research questions, data collection, sampling, organization, analysis, reporting, and applicable critical theoretical framework (Beach et al., 2009; Crowe, Inder, & Porter, 2015). Researchers make decisions on which strategies to use based on research paradigm,

which delineates the researcher's philosophical beliefs and guides research decisions (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017; Perez & Saavadra, 2017).

Researcher Perspectives:

I situate my work within the Critical Theory paradigm, which aims to examine reality and focus on social change by "interrogating values and assumptions, exposing hegemony and injustice, challenging conventional social structures and engaging in social action" (Scotland, 2012, p. 13). A research paradigm describes how the researcher constructs meaning and guides the researcher's methodological choices. A critical lens was most applicable for this study because "the critical paradigm situates itself in social justice issues and seeks to address the political, social, and economic issues, which lead to social oppression, conflict, struggle, and power structures at whatever level those might occur" (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017, p. 35). With this focus, I examine white pre-service teachers' displays of resistance when evaluating diversity instructors. I focus specifically on the ways these students critique women and instructors of color. Acknowledging the overwhelming whiteness of teacher education, this study highlights white pre-service teachers' displays of privilege and emotionality, as well as attempts at power assertion in response to diversity and social justice education.

Critical theorists investigate the relationship between race, gender, and class, seeking to challenge power structures and promote emancipation through active dialogue about social justice that encourages activism and reflective evaluation and critique (Crotty, 1998; Loick, 2018; Sanjakdar, 2018; Yin, 2016). This paradigm provides insight into the researcher's methodological choices and onto-epistemological suppositions. Research epistemology describes ways of knowing, what can be known, and the relationship

between the knower and the known. Ontology describes ways of being, specifically beliefs about reality, existence, and notions of truth and being (Crotty, 1998; Yin, 2016). As a critical theorist, my epistemological perspective is that knowledge is constructed socially, meaning that knowledge is developed through social interaction. What we know or can know is directly influenced by social and historical situations, as well as societal power relations. My ontological belief is one of historical realism. I believe that reality is shaped by values associated with social, cultural, and political identities and ideologies. I think that critical research has the power to change reality and influence social change and shifts in power dynamics. Approaching my research methodology with this perspective, I chose to conduct a qualitative study, focusing on responses to an open-ended question as a data source. In response to low participation rate, I added critical autoethnography as a data source. I also chose to examine this data through critical race and gender lenses to make thematic interpretations and bring critical awareness to the experiences of women of color (Scotland, 2012). With this emphasis, I used Critical Whiteness Studies, Critical Race Theory, and Critical Race Feminism to conduct a critical content analysis of student evaluations of teaching, analyzing the power structures, discourses, and societal institutions that influence white student resistance to diversity and social justice education, in order to promote change within the system of diversity and social justice education.

Critical Analysis:

In qualitative content analysis, researchers often attempt to position findings within an applicable theoretical lens (White & Marsh, 2006). In critical content analysis, this lens is clearly identified and applied throughout the research process, from selection of text for analysis to presentation of findings and implications (Utt & Short, 2018). Beach at al.

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(2009) explain, "What makes a study 'critical' is not the methodology but the framework used to think within, through, and beyond the text, such as critical discourse, postcolonialism, women's studies, queer studies, and childhood studies" (p. 132). As detailed in the previous chapter, researchers have used numerous theoretical approaches to study student resistance to topics of diversity and social justice, including Critical Discourse Analysis (Tharp, 2015) and Critical Race Theory (Ladson-Billings, 1996). Gendered and racialized critical studies are used to call attention to injustice and the effects of oppressive systems, to explore methods of societal change, and to provide freedoms to marginalized groups (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison., 2018; Lynn et al., 2006). To this end, two or more theoretical lenses can be used in conjunction to study student opposition to diversity topics as well as student perspectives on such topics. CRT has been used along with Critical Whiteness Studies (Picower, 2009) and Critical Race Feminism (Evans-Winters & Twyman Hoff, 2011) to explore the ways in which different aspects of the experiences and thoughts of both the researchers and the participants in a study overlap to inform analysis and meaning making.

In order to investigate how ideas of race and gender interact in the current study, I evaluated student evaluations of instructors using Critical Whiteness Studies in conjunction with Critical Race Theory and Critical Race Feminism. Having completed a pilot study using Critical Race Theory as the guiding theoretical lens, I found it necessary not only to assert a more in-depth application of this lens, but to also add Critical Whiteness Studies as the major evaluative lens and Critical Race Feminism as an accompanying lens in the current study. In reviewing my analysis of data from the pilot study, I also expanded my research of critical race and gender theories. I learned that I was applying a superficial

understanding of CRT, and that I also had not thought through how whiteness, emotionality, and fragility may have shaped student responses to the evaluation prompt. This realization led to reconceptualizing my study and reconsidering what I wanted to accomplish.

Initially, I thought I would uncover student motivations for resistance, and I anticipated that motivation being mostly about my race. My goal has shifted from uncovering individual student motivations to exploring ideologies and societal systems that influence racialized and gendered interactions in the diversity education classroom. Through the use of CWS, CRT, and CRF as analytical frames and the inclusion of my own critical narratives, my work has evolved to not only centering the experiences of women of color, but also working to subvert oppressive systems in education and disrupt the whiteness of teacher education. Additionally, I had not considered the intersectionality of my blackness and my womanness with whiteness and dominant power structures. As a black woman instructing a primarily white group of pre-service teachers in an institution and educational system dominated by whiteness, I faced challenges in the classroom. In the pilot study, I attempted to remove myself and my individual experiences from my analysis in favor of focusing solely on student resistance. I have learned that including my stories through critical autoethnography is an effective means of demonstrating and analyzing student resistance while also giving voice to a black woman's unique experiences in teacher education.

Pilot study:

I conducted a pilot study prior to the beginning of this study. This pilot study was conducted during a qualitative research course and served the purpose of helping me make

methodological and theoretical choices for the larger study. I used the following research question for the pilot study: "How do undergraduate education students in an introductory course about diversity at a primarily white research university in the south experience learning about topics of diversity?" The two participants in the pilot study were myself, an African American woman with one semester of experience teaching the diversity course, and a university professor, a white woman who, at the time of the pilot study, had taught the diversity course for 8 years. The data used were a smaller sample of the course evaluation data used in the current study, focusing on the open-ended prompt, "Additional comments- Strengths and areas for improvement". The student evaluations used were from the most recent semester in which the participants taught the course. I chose to focus specifically on evaluation data in order to evaluate student perspectives.

From the pilot study and subsequent research, I realized the need to consider my theoretical lenses when developing coding categories. I also developed a more detailed approach to data sorting and coding. The analysis and conclusions drawn from the pilot study informed the development of the current study in that the pilot study revealed strengths and areas for improvement in my research questions, methodology, and use of theoretical frameworks for analysis. In the pilot study, I used a number of research questions that have now been consolidated into one central question and two sub questions. I previously identified Critical Race Theory as the theoretical lens through which I would examine data. I now feel that in using this particular frame, I anticipated race as a motivating factor without considering the intricacies of such an assertion. Why might white students display more resistance toward instructors of color? What other factors might

contribute to resistance? What experiences and ideologies contributed to such displays of resistance? What will happen when men are added as participants?

Findings from the pilot study revealed the need to adjust my theoretical focus to include frameworks that could illuminate student outlook and the ways in which it could influence the data, as well as ways in which my own outlook influenced data analysis. As a black woman, I bring a racialized, gendered, and mixed class perspective to my teaching, learning, and research analysis. My onto-epistemological belief that reality and knowledge are influenced by political, cultural, and social ideologies and identities shapes my approach to this analysis. My lived experiences and lack of similarities with the student population affect the lens through which I view and analyze student discourse and actions. Since the responses to this survey are from a majority white student perspective, it is necessary to analyze those responses from a multifaceted theoretical perspective that shows how different identities and ideologies interrelate in the classroom to create certain reactions. It is also necessary to consider the layers other participating instructors might add to analysis, such as gender bias. For these reasons, I have chosen to conduct a multilayered analysis, using Critical Whiteness Studies, Critical Race Theory and Critical Race Feminism. When used in conjunction, this multilayered framework allowed theoretically informed critical analysis and inference making concerning the experiences of women of color teaching diversity related courses and the presence and influence of whiteness, supremacy, fragility, and emotionality in diversity and social justice education.

Data Collection

Participants:

Participants in this study are current and former instructors of an introductory

diversity course at a predominantly white university in the deep south. Each participant is

19 years or older and has instructed said diversity course within the last five years. The

participant pool consisted of professors and graduate students, women and men who may

identify as white or black/African American. Table 1 provides a brief description of the

study participants.

Table 1
Participant Information

Participant	Race	Gender	Age	Sexual Identity
Lazenby	Black	Woman	36	Straight
Bailey	White	Woman	42	Straight
Davis	Black	Man	54	Straight

Course Distinctions. Although the learning goals and major texts were the same for all

classes during a given semester, each participant developed his or her own syllabi, course

content, and grading requirements. All instructors used a discussion-based course format,

with the addition of different supplemental material and activities. Although the general

class format was similar, each instructor has a unique presentation style. Hence, the

differences in student descriptions of certain course aspects. Having served as a teaching

apprentice for participant 2, Dr. Bailey, my course content and grading requirements were

inspired by hers, and therefore, contained many similarities. While students referenced

mini exams and group presentations as a part of Dr. Davis' grading criteria, the grading

system was very different for Dr. Bailey and me. We both used an a la carte grading system

in which students were required to do certain assignments, such as two reflections and two

current events, but were allowed to choose which other assignments they completed.

Figure 1 summarizes course distinctions among the three participants. This figure shows

the similarities and differences in the approaches of the instructors.

Figure 1
Course Distinctions

All Participants	Davis	Bailey & Lazenby	Bailey	Lazenby
•Texts: Adams et al. (2013) & Gollnick & Chinn (2017) (Previously: Ornstein et al., 2017) •Discussion based class format •Includes use of videos and other supplemental teaching material •Service Learning Requirement	•Take home exams, in-class exams, & group presentations •Grading based on required assignments only	• a la carte grading system with certain requirements (ex. weekly reading quizzes) •Specific point total needed for each letter grade •Reflective writing, current events, assigned Ciphers, group essays, optional tasks (ex. Snap Challenge)	•Specific point total needed by specific date to earn an A •Attendance policy	•Final Project required if A not earned by specific date •Weekly in-class group projects (not graded)

Participant Recruitment:

    I recruited participants through email invitation (Appendix A). Participant

recruitment and data collection took place between July and October of 2019 and involved

numerous attempts at reaching prospective participants. Some potential participants opted

not to participate in the study due to concerns of anonymity and accuracy of course

evaluation studies. Other potential participants agreed to the study but later decided not to

submit data and discontinued all communication. These instructors did not provide any

explanation for this action. I postulate that there may have been feelings of inadequacy,

concerns of anonymity, or concerns with the comparative nature of the study. By this I

mean that these instructors, mainly white men, may have elected not to have the privilege

that could be evident in their evaluations highlighted in comparison to women and black

men. They also may have feelings of embarrassment due to being critiqued harshly by students. When I initially viewed my course evaluations, I felt a sense of failure and shame. Not having other instructors' evaluations as a comparison point highlights one's own critiques in isolation and may lead to feelings of inadequacy. Additionally, as a woman professor who declined to participate in the study expressed, the small number of instructors for this particular course makes it hard to truly anonymize the data when race and gender are being revealed. It is not surprising that professors may not want to share their harshest criticisms without guarantee that they won't be viewed in a negative light.

The email invitation and subsequent submission of requested data served as participant consent. In addition to submitting composite survey data, each participant completed a request for basic demographic information of the instructor, including race, gender, age group, and sexual identity. Each participant, with the exception of myself, was assigned a pseudonym to be used during data analysis and presentation.

Data Collection:

The data used in this project consisted of student evaluations of instructors provided to students by the university. These evaluations were completed within the last five years. This timeline was chosen as a means of ensuring that data collected is current and not deemed as outdated or irrelevant. With topics of diversity and equity, the landscape is ever evolving. Therefore, the data used in this study represents the most current responses without limiting the data in a way that could obscure the results.

Although data gathered through observations and/or student and instructor interviews could provide an opportunity for follow-up questions, using student evaluation surveys ensures anonymity and an analytical focus on textual evidence. It also ensures that

students are not intimidated by the researcher's presence (based on race, gender, or other distinguishing factors) or the presence of their classmates or instructor and therefore give responses that are more reflective of their true feelings and beliefs. Barnett (2011) postulates that students are reluctant to make potentially divisive statements in the classroom and often, through private conversations, seek out the instructor's approval or absolution from feelings of guilt related to white privilege. Students fear being judged, attacked, or even hated for their beliefs or assertions. Being able to express their beliefs and critiques of the course in anonymous evaluations allows students to assert a more unfiltered viewpoint.

The student evaluations were completed anonymously and presented to instructors in a composite list. These evaluation forms contain university-wide questions using interval rating scales, departmental questions, and an area for additional comments on strengths and areas for improvement. For the interval questions, students rate statements concerning instructor expectations, learning opportunities, course material, and student support as "strongly agree, agree, slightly agree, slightly disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree". These responses are assigned scores 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively, and the instructor is assigned an average score for each question based on student responses. The form also lists the total student response percentage and the response percentage for the students completing the survey who also leave feedback in the additional comments section.

I collected these composite survey lists from participating instructors through secure Box sharing. I used the one open-ended prompt from the survey as a data source. Over the years, the wording of the prompt has changed slightly, but the information

requested has remained the same. The Fall 2014 version of the prompt was "Additional comments- Strengths and areas for improvement". The most recent version of the prompt reads "Please provide additional actionable feedback related to instruction (strengths or areas of improvement)". Although I focused on this one prompt, I found through the pilot study that the responses provided rich data for analysis. By this I mean that the data was detailed and nuanced, revealing the opportunity for a more thorough, multi-layered analysis. In the pilot study, I focused on the most recent semester of instruction. Table 2 provides an overview of the survey response rates for the data used in the pilot study.

Table 2
Pilot Study Data

	Participant 1: Lazenby	Participant 2: Bailey
Class Sections Taught	1	2
Total Student Enrollment	26	49
Total Student Responses to Survey	13	23
Student Response Percentage	50 %	46.94 %
Total Student Responses to Open-Ended Prompt	6	16
Percentage of Survey Respondents Completing Open-Ended Prompt	46.15 %	69.57 %

These responses were rich in description and contained several different layers of content to analyze. In the current study, I anticipated participation from four to six participants, but was only able to secure three participants. However, two of the three participants have taught the course multiple semesters within the last five years and have a substantial amount of survey data. Participants submitted composite lists from all semesters of teaching the course within this five-year time frame. Table 3 provides an overview of the survey response data for this study.

Table 3

Survey Data Collected

	Participant 1: Lazenby	Participant 2: Bailey	Participant 3: Davis
Number of Class Sections Taught	1	15	27
Total Student Enrollment	26	357	532
Average Enrollment	26	23.8	19.7
Total Student Responses to Survey	13	178	246
Student Response Percentage	50 %	49.86 %	46.24 %
Total Student Responses to Open-Ended Prompt	6	102	126
Percentage of Survey Respondents Completing Open-Ended Prompt	46.15 %	57.30 %	51.22 %

Although there was a significant gap in enrollment numbers between Dr. Bailey's

and Dr. Davis' classes, the number of responses to the open-ended questions for these two

instructors was comparable. However, having only taught the course for one semester, my

enrollment and survey response numbers were significantly lower than those of the other

participants. Being the only black woman to have taught the class in the last ten years, the

inclusion of myself as a participant was crucial to addressing the research questions. I

account for this disparity as well as the limited number of study participants by including

narrative data (see *Critical Narratives*, p. 65) from my time as a teaching apprentice and as

an instructor for the diversity course. This data consists of notes taken during class

sessions and teaching journals written after class meetings and assignment grading as well

as narratives of memorable occurrences from this time period.

I did not collect any additional data from participants concerning student

demographics, classroom experience, or any other identifying information concerning

specific classroom populations. I collected data concerning age, race, sexual orientation,

and gender identity of the instructors who participated in the study in order to analyze

similarities and differences in responses to instructors of different social identities.

Data Analysis:

My major goal for this study was to describe the ways in which students display

resistance to learning about topics of diversity and social justice through evaluations of

instructors. I focused on how the display of resistance and language choices differed

depending on the gender and race of the instructor. Since whiteness has been historically

associated with power and advantage (Owen, 2007), I aimed to identify ways in which

white pre-service teachers enact this power with people of color and other marginalized

groups who hold positional authority over them. Ideally, this will be the start of

understanding what factors contribute to displays of resistance and developing methods of

engaging resistant learners. This means that teacher educators will be able to develop

educational strategies that encourage pre-service teachers to critically engage with

diversity and social justice content and to recognize, critique, and challenge dominant

power structures.

The process of data analysis followed approaches of directed content analysis. In

applying a directed approach, I used the theoretical frameworks of CWS, CRT, and CRF as a

guide. The application of such frameworks can provide focus for research questions and

"provide predictions about the variables of interest or about the relationships among

variables, thus helping to determine the initial coding scheme or relationships between

codes" (Hsiu-Feng & Shannon, 2005, p. 1281). I began my data analysis by sorting

evaluations by instructor. When assigning a pseudonym to each instructor, I made note of

the race and gender of the instructor attached to each pseudonym. This information was

reported by participants on the demographics form. Next, I developed a code list through partner coding. I applied the final code list to each participant's data. Figure 2 provides a summary of my data analysis process.

Figure 2
Data Analysis Process

Developed & Tested Codes with Partner

Completed Individual Coding & Partner Review

Conducted Cross Analyses

Analyzed Coded Data Using Theoretical Frameworks of CWS, CRT, & CRF
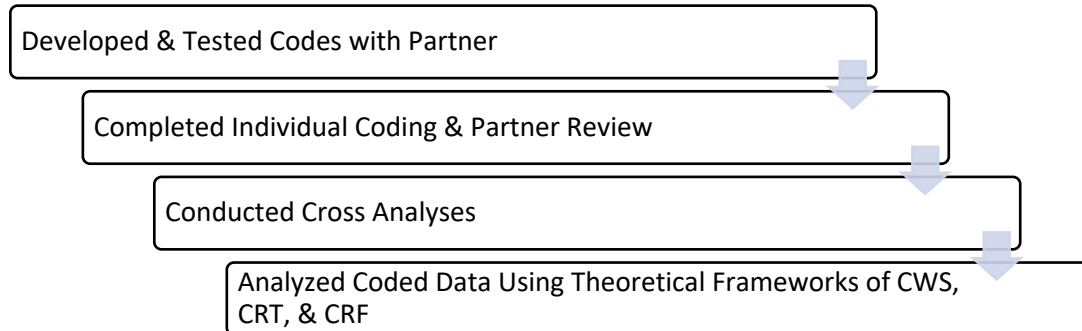
Creating a Code List:

In developing a code list, I built on the work from my pilot study, in which I used open coding to develop four major headings: Descriptions of Class, Descriptions of Instructor, Grading System/Assignment Requirements, and Student Feelings. In the current study, I used more detailed adaptations of these categories as a starting point, developing coding categories that addressed the research questions and allowed for a comparative analysis of the data. Considering the major focal points of CWS, CRT, and CRF, I included codes that highlighted language choices, displays of emotionality, fragility, and privilege, semantic games, and attempted assertions of power. I used a partner coding strategy to develop codes and test their application. Dr. Brandon Sams and I used an aggregate data sample of 30 student responses, which I chose randomly, to develop our initial code lists through open coding. We then combined and narrowed the list, having discussions via phone. We removed repetitive categories, included code abbreviations, and added more detailed descriptions and key words to guide data coding. Figure 3 provides an illustration

of the process of expanding and narrowing codes, from the pilot study to individually

developed codes by partner coders, to the final combined coding categories.

Figure 3
Code Development
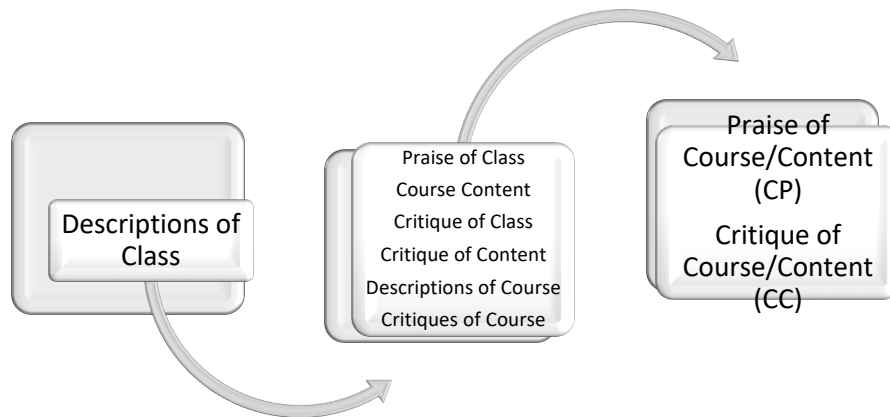
Next we used a second sample of 30 student responses to test the applicability of

the codes. We coded separately, and I combined our lists for side by side analysis. We met

via phone conference to discuss the differences in our coding and narrow and finalize the

code list. This round of coding allowed us to eliminate any coding categories that were not

applicable to the data set and add useful categories. Table 4 details the finalized coding

categories.

Table 4
Coding Categories

Category	Code	Description	Keywords (Considerations for Sub-Categories and Coding)
Praise of Course/Content	CP	This category includes instances in which students praise the course content and in class activities.	-Focus on specific topics -Course and Content Relevance -Time Spent on Topics -Time Spent in Class

Critiques of the Course/Content	CC	This category includes instances in which students critique the course content and in class activities.	-Too much focus on topics -Course and Content Relevance -Time Spent on Topics -Time Spent in Class
Analysis of Grading System/Assignment Requirements	GA	This category contains student descriptions and evaluations of the way grades are calculated and the requirements for assignments.	-Grading/Points System -Fair/Unfair Grading -Assignment Relevance -Assignment Difficulty -Quality of Assignment Instructions
Student Learning	SL	This category includes descriptions of student learning, including assertions of not being prepared.	-Expressions of learning or not learning anything -Feelings of preparedness -Concepts students can or cannot take into the workplace
Praise of Teaching Method	MP	This category covers praises of teaching method.	-Positive comments related to teaching method -Discussions, videos, other teaching tools & methods
Critiques of Teaching Method	MC	This category covers critiques of teaching method.	-Critiques of teaching method -Discussions, videos, other teaching tools & methods
Classroom Environment	CE	This category includes student descriptions of the classroom environment, including their rapport with the teacher and whether they felt free to express themselves.	-Rapport with instructor/TA -Freedom to express thoughts & feelings -Service Learning environment
Praise of the Instructor	IP	This category outlines the ways students praise instructors, including differences in critical language choices.	-Positive comments about instructor -Language choices -Style of dress

Critiques of the Instructor	IC	This category outlines the ways students critique instructors, including differences in critical language choices.	-Critical Language Choices and Coded Language -Reads of instructor (i.e., pushing an agenda) based on race, gender, or other descriptors -Ascribing Course Content to Instructor Ideals -Style of dress
Suggestions for Improvement	SI	This category covers instances in which students suggest ways to improve the course.	-Directives or suggestions on improving course, grading system, etc.
Assertions of Student Feelings/Experienced Emotions/Manifestations of Frustrations	SF	This category defines the ways students express their personal feelings, growth, emotions, and frustration with learning about topics of diversity, social justice, and equity.	-Evidence of Growth/Discomfort -Evidence of Resistance/Assertions of Power and Privilege/Hostility -Indications of fragility and emotionality (ex. course frames white people as bad) -Indications of Culpability and Indignity -Use of Silence as a Weapon -Perceived/assumed instructor feelings toward students
Framing Social Issues as Political/Controversial	PC	This category includes instances in which students frame real social issues as debatable, controversial, or political.	-References to controversy or politics concerning issues of racism and other social issues -Expressed desire to debate or have their side heard on social issues
Recommended Action	RA	This category covers student recommendations for action or suggestions of actions the student will take.	-Instructor shouldn't be allowed to teach -Teach the test/quiz -Advising friends not to take this class/instructor
Purpose of Instruction	PI	This category includes instances when students tell what the course or the instruction should be about or look like.	-Claims of what should be taught -Assertions of how material should be taught -Proclamations of how instructor should act/lead class

Evaluating the Data:

Following the development of the code list, I individually coded each data set by

participant. Next, I conducted cross analysis, comparing the coded data from all

participants side by side. This was done by combining coding charts and analyzing each

code individually across participants. I identified frequently occurring codes and themes, which guided my theoretical analysis. I also noted themes and codes that occurred among all participants and those that did not occur with particular participants. In order to address specific research questions, I looked for similarities and differences in descriptions and critiques based on different characteristics of instructors, mainly race and gender, as well as differences in critical language choices in these critiques. I highlighted issues of race and gender, both veiled and overtly stated, as mentioned by students, as well as differences in language and tone based on race and gender of the professor. Finally, I analyzed the coded data as it relates to the explicit tenets of the theoretical frameworks of Critical Whiteness Studies, Critical Race Theory, and Critical Race Feminism. Building on the work of Haviland (2008), in which the researcher explored attempts of white students to claim ignorance or uncertainty about issues of race, and Cabrera (2014), in which the author used Critical Whiteness Studies to examine white students' feelings of victimization and reverse racism, I aimed to identify explicit assertions of whiteness and privilege in evaluating women and instructors of color. Integrating critical autoethnography, I used reflective notes from my own experience as a black woman instructing a diversity course and serving as a teaching apprentice to Dr. Bailey, who taught that same course, to aid in the analysis of student evaluations of instructors. These evaluations revealed the use of gender and racial bias as tools of resistance to women of color as instructors, highlighting the problematic treatment of marginalized identities in education

Analysis and Coding by Theoretical Framework:

I utilized the tenets or major focal points of each chosen theoretical frame as guides during data analysis. Applying analytical questions based on these major focal points, I

began by evaluating the frequently occurring themes to identify these theoretical concepts within the data. I looked for patterns in student responses in order to make inferences. In using Critical Whiteness Studies as a guide, I sought to examine the ways in which whiteness was asserted and maintained as an instrument of power and the ways whiteness and privilege influence race relations (Matias & Mackey, 2016). Referencing the coding categories listed in Table 2, I identified instances in which students attempted to discount or diminish their own roles in maintaining privileged power dynamics (Matias et al., 2014).

I used Critical Race Theory and Critical Race Feminism as guides for analyzing differences in the language of critiques and praise of instructors, teaching methods, and the course itself, adding narrative evidence for additional support. I focused on the major tenets of CRT: explaining the prevalence and permanence of race and racism in the functions of US society; challenging dominant ideologies and suggestions of equal opportunity, neutrality, and meritocracy; demonstrating commitment to the active pursuit of social justice; and bringing marginalized and oppressed voices to the forefront (Evans-Winters & Twyman Hoff, 2011). Moreover, I used CRF as a means of adding a gendered perspective to this analysis, focusing on the intersectionality of race and gender, meaning the ways these marginalized identities interact (Sulé, 2014). Although my pilot study only used women as participants, I was able to use CRF as a guide in identifying differences in students' critical language use based on the instructor's race. Adding an African American man to the current study further compelled the use of CRF to highlight the ways women of color are critiqued in juxtaposition to the evaluations of men and white women. My application of CWS, CRT, and CRF was guided by the following analytical questions:

- How are the power and privilege of whiteness evident in student evaluation responses? Specifically, in student responses to challenges to privilege? In student responses to learning about race and privilege?
- What tactics of white emotionality and fragility are used in praise and critiques of instructors and course content?
- How could counter-storytelling be used to show an alternate perspective of this narrative?
- In what ways are dominant power structures and discourses involved in student responses?
- What structures are complicit in the maintenance of white supremacy and privilege? How do student critiques and descriptions of feelings provide verification of the presence of these structures?
- How might this response be influenced by race and/or gender of the instructor?
- How is the uniqueness of the experiences of men and women of color in academia evidenced in the data? How do whiteness and institutionalized racism affect these experiences?

Critical Narratives:

Although the surveys collected provided a significant amount of varied data points, there were some limitations to this data. Having only three participants and no white men as participants narrowed the scope of my data analysis in that I was unable to fully conduct the type of comparison I initially envisioned. Although I aim to center the experiences of women of color, one of my goals was to show how these experiences differ from white women, as well as white men and men of color. Due to the limited number of study participants and the discrepancy in number of survey responses, it was necessary to include narrative data from my time as a teaching apprentice and as an instructor for the diversity course to address my research questions and support my research findings in a meaningful way. Additionally, student comments on the survey served as a way for them to

tell their stories, to share their feelings, and for some to position themselves as the victims, further perpetuating the normative stories of whiteness. Incorporating critical autoethnography is a way to shift the focus to the racialized and gendered experiences of women instructors and instructors of color. Johnson (2017) asserts that counter-stories can be used to disrupt the dominant white narratives, while racial storytelling allows stories of race and racism to be told "without the gaze of the dominant narrative" (p. 482). Baker-Bell (2017) affirms that storytelling, or autoethnography, is a powerful language and literacy convention for black women, allowing the examination of personal and cultural experiences as they relate to academic experiences. She adds that telling these stories from a black feminist-womanist perspective allows the writer to center racialized, gendered, and classed experiences. Autoethnography also focuses on the lived experiences of researchers in order to highlight aspects of society or culture (Ohito, 2019). Romero-Hall et al. (2018) assert that critical autoethnography features aspects of critical theory, seeking to "a) understand the lived experience of real people in context, b) examine social conditions and uncover oppressive power arrangements, and c) fuse theory and action to challenge domination processes" (p. 21). The researchers also explain that this method considers personal experiences and understanding cultural perspectives.

The narrative data for this study consisted of notes taken during class sessions and teaching journals written after class meetings and assignment grading, as well as my memories of specific occurrences from these classes that I had not chronicled in my journal. This data served to further illustrate incidences of student resistance and to convey my unique experiences as a black woman in a predominantly white educational space. In adding the narrative data to my study, it was necessary to incorporate specific

methodological approaches. Since I was already using CRT and CRF as theoretical

frameworks, I was familiar with the storytelling element associated with these frames. CRT

employs personal narratives and counter-storytelling as a means of directing focus to the

stories of marginalized people in order to challenge the dominant narratives of race and

racial progress told from a white privileged perspective (Brown, 2014; Dixson & Rousseau,

2006; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Matias, et al., 2014; Sleeter, 2017; Williams & Evans-Winters,

2005). Haddix (2012) emphasizes the value of CRF in "illuminating how we talk about and

position Whiteness in teacher education and, by extension, give voice to or silence

members of marginalized groups within this same context" (p. 171). CRF also employs

story telling as a methodology as a means of disrupting white normative discourse and

views (Berry, 2009; Childers-McKee & Hytten, 2015). Sulé (2014) explains:

> In line with CRT, CRF employs storytelling to explicate the intricacies of how
>
> institutions and social practices are lived by women of color. Essentially, storytelling
>
> has a palliative and oppositional function as it validates the experiences of the
>
> suppressed and destabilizes discourse that justifies power hierarchies. With
>
> storytelling, the hope is that typical explanations for social inequality such as work
>
> effort become less palatable because stories from people on the periphery generate
>
> enough cognitive discord that they ignite awareness of inequities (Ladson-Billings &
>
> Tate, 2006) (p. 436).

Along with the storytelling aspects of CRT and CRF, I chose to incorporate critical

autoethnography into my methodology. Critical autoethnography is a means of storytelling

that includes personal stories and their relationship to culture in order to disrupt dominant

narratives such as the myth of meritocracy (Boylorn & Orbe, 2016; Hughes, 2020). This

methodology allowed me to convey my personal experiences while reflecting on my role as a social justice educator and the ways in which my cultural background intersected with the backgrounds and ideologies of white pre-service teachers.

In the current study, I use critical storytelling to decentralize the dominant narratives of whiteness and privilege, prompting the reader to prioritize the narratives and experiences of women of color. These narratives provide insight into my research objectives and questions by describing my experiences and interactions as a woman of color instructing a primarily white group of pre-service teachers. The narrative data also highlight incidences from Dr. Bailey's class, showing the experiences of two women of color working with and learning from a white woman instructing a diversity course. This supports my research objectives by providing a point of comparison for the experiences of white and black women instructors and presenting counter-narratives to the stories and critiques detailed in student evaluations of instructors.

In my initial study design, I did not include narrative data because I believed this data could bias the study findings toward a racialized and gendered perspective, especially since I had opted not to interview study participants. However, in positioning my work within the critical paradigm, I made defensible inferences based on the data (Elo & Kyngas, 2007). This means that although my identity and experiences influenced my interpretations, the data and theoretical frameworks guided my analysis and ensured the reliability of my study. I was also reluctant to position myself as a victim, as someone who had been wounded by the words and actions of white students. As a black woman who occupies the predominantly white space of higher education, I have long struggled with the performance and perception of my black womanhood. I constantly considered

stereotypical perceptions such as being labeled the angry black woman or having my hairstyle, one that was natural in my culture, be seen as ghetto or unprofessional. I controlled the way I spoke, focusing on using so-called Standard American English. I was asked to perform black speech and mannerisms as if it were a show. My identity as a black woman intersects with academic life in ways that can be difficult to navigate. So, even in research that specifically addresses the unique experiences of women and instructors of color, I silenced my own stories in favor of focusing on the ways white pre-service teachers conveyed these interactions. I struggled to see my stories as data instead of personal thoughts and feelings. However, situating my work within the critical paradigm and exploring my own beliefs regarding knowledge and meaning making revealed the academic value of telling these stories. Incorporating critical counter-storytelling allowed me to position my experiences in juxtaposition to the emotionality, privilege, white victimhood, aversive racism, and semantic games exhibited in student stories. This methodology allowed me to relay the meaningfulness of my own experiences while critically analyzing how these narratives interacted with student narratives.

As I adjusted my study design, I focused on coding and developing my narratives separately. I found that writing these stories elicited an extreme emotional response and I needed to separate that feeling from my process of analyzing the survey data. I also did not want those feelings to dominate the telling of my story. So, while I could not, nor did I desire to, completely remove my emotions from the story or the analysis, I chose to attempt to relay these narratives without positioning myself as a powerless victim. It is essential for me to give voice to the marginalized, but also to show the strength, courage, and aptitude of these groups and voices.

I began by transferring data from my teaching journals on days when I was not coding the survey data. This prompted more memories, which I then put into writing. I combined the narrative and survey data after all coding and survey data comparisons were complete. This was done by interweaving my narratives into the survey data groupings that I developed. I arranged each data set by theme, such as weaponized silence (Evans-Winters & Twyman Hoff, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 1996) or power assertions (DiAngelo, 2018). Then, I combined relevant topics from the surveys with the narratives, selecting stories that fit with each major theme. I then developed titles for each story and data section. Once the data was combined, I applied the three-pronged theoretical lens for analysis, seeking to directly address each research question. I found that these stories served as a useful introduction to the survey data points and demonstrated how my theoretical reading of these data interconnected with my classroom experiences. Figure 4 illustrates the process of incorporating critical narratives.

Figure 4
Critical Storytelling Process
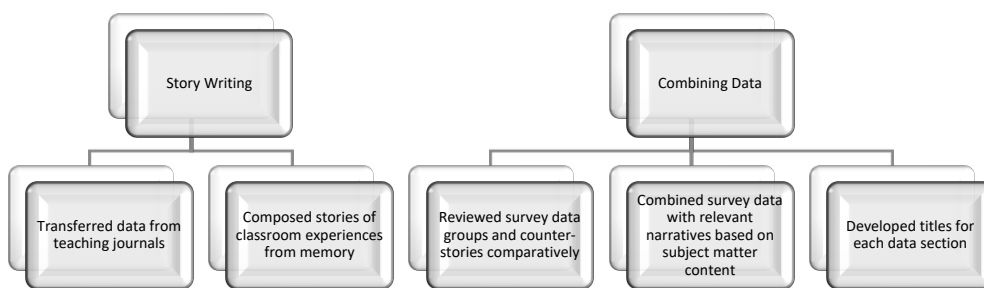
Considering my research questions, I believe that these critical counter-stories provided context for some of the assertions made by students in the instructor evaluations. Therefore, although this particular data set was not specific to instructor evaluations, it offered a look into some of the classroom occurrences referenced in these evaluations as

well as actions, writing, and speech that reflected the ideologies of some of the pre-service teachers completing these evaluations.

Credibility and Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, credibility and trustworthiness involve ensuring that data collection, interpretation, methodology, findings, and conclusions give a reliable representation of the phenomenon being studied (Connelly, 2016; Cope, 2014; Yin, 2016). In critical content analysis, credibility and trustworthiness involve ensuring the completeness and reliability of the data and analysis using appropriate data collection and coding processes, as well as reporting findings that are supported by textual evidence (Elo, et al., 2015; Hsiu-Fang & Shannon, 2005).

In order to strengthen the acceptability of my findings, I employed several strategies for credibility and trustworthiness:

1. I have clarified the bias I am bringing to the study. As an African American woman instructing a class of majority white students, I entered the class with certain perceptions of my students and their motives. As a participant in this study, I must consider my own possible biases that may be based on my life experiences as an African American woman. This means ensuring that I am not reading race and gender in data where there may be other explanations for student resistance. This was done through partner coding with my committee co-chair and reflective journaling throughout the discussion of findings.

2. I used reflective journaling. In the pilot study, I used reflective journaling as a means of capturing my personal feelings and insights throughout the research process. This journal helped me to revise the research questions and develop a paradigmatic

and methodological focus for the current study. I used journaling in the current study to review my own insights and potential biases (Yin, 2016).

3. I presented discrepant information. Evidence in any of the data that suggested a conclusion contrary to the one I have drawn has been presented as such in my research findings.

4. I maintained an audit trail. This includes all research materials, and explicit documentation of my research steps, decisions, assumptions, and challenges encountered (Cope, 2014).

5. I used partner coding. My committee co-chair, Dr. Brandon Sams, and I worked together to develop the codes used for data analysis. We used a data sample of 30 data points to develop the initial coding list. This was done by developing individual lists, then comparing and combining ideas. We then used our composite coding list to code a sample of 30 additional data points. We coded individually, then met to discuss and refine our analysis. Working with a more experienced researcher helped me to develop applicable codes for analyzing the data effectively and thoroughly addressing each research question. Additionally, since Dr. Sams (a white man) and I (a black woman) have differing racial and gender identities, our partner coding also helped ensure that race and gender were read appropriately in my analysis.

6. I have linked the data and findings from this study to current literature.

Limitations and Delimitations

I conducted this study using surveys completed by students at a large, research-intensive university in the Southeastern United States. However, the study participants are the professors and graduate student who served as instructors for the course being

evaluated. Since the students are not study participants and the response rate to these evaluations varies, there is no way to know the demographics of the person who submitted the response. The researcher is only able to identify the overall demographics of the university and possibly the individual classrooms. There is also no way to ask follow-up questions.

Additionally, since the students who participated in this study only received instruction from one instructor, it is not possible to compare the reactions of a particular student across professors of different race and gender. This exposes the possibility of resistance to other factors not being examined in this study. For example, students may have issues with the instructor's teaching style, which can lead to displays of resistance. Focusing on instructors as the participants also presents a limited number of participants and data. The limited data is further compounded by the varying response rate of students to course evaluations and the use of responses to only one question from the student evaluations as data. However, the inclusion of autoethnographic narratives provides detailed data on classroom interactions in my class as well as Dr. Bailey's class.

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to explore how undergraduate students display resistance to learning about diversity, social justice, and privilege through evaluations of instructors. This study was based on end of course evaluations of instructors completed by students in an introductory diversity course at a primarily white university, as well as critical narratives from my own experiences instructing this course. I used Critical Whiteness Studies, Critical Race Theory, and Critical Race Feminism as a three-pronged framework for analyzing similarities and differences in the ways students perceived and evaluated instructors of different race and gender.

In this chapter, I present the findings of the study as determined through critical content analysis of student responses to the open-ended prompt requesting additional feedback on strengths or areas for improvement. My findings also include critical narratives from my teaching journal, notes, and memories from my time as a teaching apprentice and as an instructor of this introductory diversity course. My narratives provide an additional evaluative lens and perspective for analyzing pre-service teachers' displays of resistance to learning about diversity, social justice, equity, and privilege.

These two data sources work together in revealing the racialized and gendered conflicts present in diversity classrooms and in student evaluations of instructors. They also show the differences in the social justice teaching and learning experiences and perceptions of white pre-service teachers and instructors of color. My narratives provide insight into lessons, activities, discussions, written and oral student responses, and classroom events that occurred in my class and in Dr. Bailey's class the semester that I was her TA. These narratives also provide an additional evaluative lens for analyzing student

evaluation responses in relation to classroom discussions and assignments. Critical autoethnography and counter-storytelling serve to center my experiences as a woman of color, providing a different perspective from those of the primarily white group of pre-service teachers who completed the course evaluations (Baker-Bell, 2017 Boylorn & Orbe, 2016; Hughes, 2020; Johnson, 2017; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Matias, et al., 2014; Sulé, 2014). Employing this use of personal narratives and counter-storytelling gives voice to my story, the narrative of a woman of color in higher education, and reveals racial nuances involved in our daily lives (Matias, 2013; Williams & Evans-Winters, 2005).

This study addresses the following research questions:

Central Question: When evaluating diversity courses and instructors, specifically women and instructors of color, how, if at all, do undergraduate education students display resistance to learning about topics of diversity, social justice, and privilege?

1. In what ways is resistance to learning about topics of diversity, social justice, and privilege evidenced in student course evaluations?

2. What common or differing themes and language are present in evaluations of diversity courses when students evaluate women and instructors of color as opposed to evaluating men and white instructors?

Critical Content Analysis

Critical content analysis involves analyzing textual data using a critical theoretical lens in order to understand a phenomenon and provide insight into underlying meanings and power dynamics (Corces-Zimmerman, 2018; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Short, 2016; White & Marsh, 2006). I used critical content analysis to organize and analyze the data, identifying major themes in the responses. In order to conduct this analysis, I first developed a coding

list (see Table 4 on page 60) using partner coding. Next, I applied these codes to each participant's data set individually. Following this coding, I conducted a comparative coding analysis, comparing data from the three participants in each coding category side by side. I transferred narrative text from my journals and recounted narratives from memory throughout the analysis process, storing these narratives in a separate data file until the second phase of analysis. I also referenced text messages and emails from that time period and consulted Ashley, Dr. Bailey's other TA, to enhance the accuracy of my narratives. I chose narratives from this file to include with my findings based on their relationship to the topics that developed within my analysis and my perception of what these narratives could add to my analysis.

Content Analysis Summary

In my initial phase of content analysis, I coded data by participant. I noted how students described and critiqued instructors, instructional methods, and course content. During this first phase of analysis, I organized the survey data based on the 14 coding categories. Considering the research questions, I began with the overall category of Pre-service Teachers Responses to Diversity Education. While I recognize that student responses are certainly not binary, I identified two major sub-categories of responses: Evolution and Resistance. Using theoretical frameworks of Critical Whiteness Studies, Critical Race Theory, and Critical Race Feminism, I developed coding clusters into which I sorted the data. These clusters were developed based on patterns I observed within the coded data. Therefore, some codes were present in two or more clusters.

CWS highlights and challenges privilege, institutionalized racism, white supremacy, and power assertions (Matias et al., 2016). CRT explores the effects of institutionalized

racism on people of color and challenges white dominant ideologies (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Sleeter, 2017), while CRF focuses specifically on the experiences of women of color (Sulé, 2014). Additionally, CRT and CRF use counter-storytelling to assert experiential knowledge and center the experiences of men and women of color (Childers-McKee & Hytten, 2015; Sleeter, 2017). These concepts informed my development of the following coding clusters: Whiteness, Privilege, & Power Assertions, PSTs Perceptions & Critiques of (Wo)men of Color, and Language of Resistance. Within the Evolution category, I identified Discomfort as a Catalyst for Growth and Change as a major cluster/theme. Figure 5 describes how I developed categories and clusters for sorting data.

Figure 5
Categories & Coding Clusters
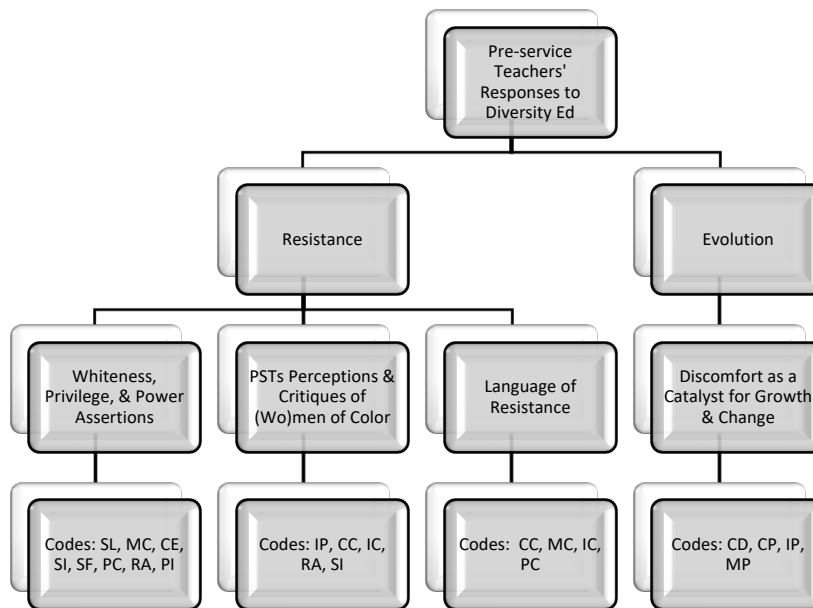
Comparative Coding

I organized the coded data for comparison during phase 1, grouping data for all participants by coding category. This comparative analysis was essential to addressing the research questions in that it provided an overview of how students perceived and critiqued

different aspects of diversity instruction. It also served as the first stage of comparing

language and themes present in evaluations of diversity courses and instructors. In

conducting the comparative coding analysis, I created a combined coding list to compare

data for the three participants side by side (see Appendix B: Sample Coded Responses). As I

organized the comparative data, I noticed similarities and differences in the ways course

content and participants were evaluated by students. These similarities and differences

were critically analyzed in the second phase of content analysis. Figure 6 provides a

summary of the two phases of my analysis.

Figure 6
Phases of Analysis

Content Analysis Phase 1
- Data Coding & Sorting
- Development of Overall Categories
- Identification of Sub-categories
- Development of Coding Clusters
- Composition of Narratives

Content Analysis Phase 2
- Comparative Coding Analysis
- Analysis by Theoretical Framework
- Identification of Themes
- Application and Analysis of Narratives
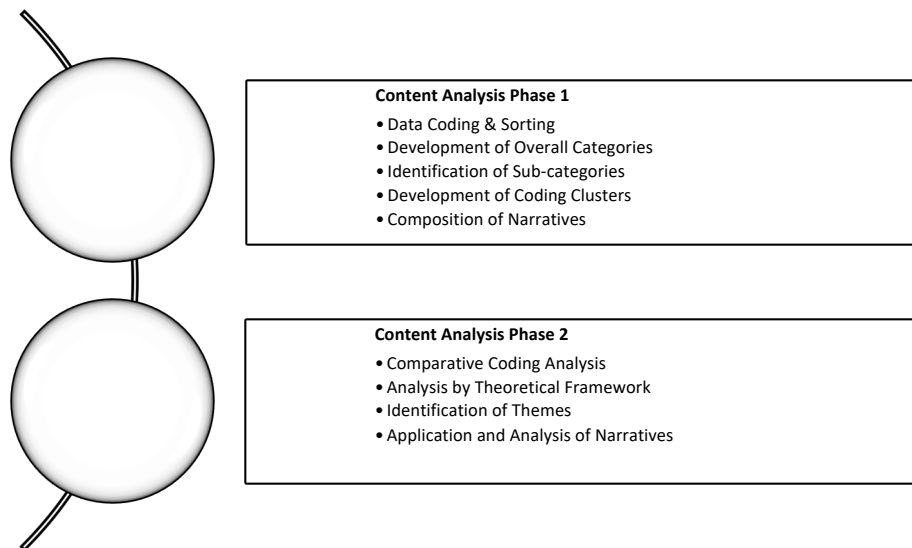
Theoretical Analysis: Critical Whiteness Studies, Critical Race Theory, Critical Race Feminism, and Critical Autoethnography

My coding and analysis were informed by tenets of Critical Whiteness Studies

(CWS), Critical Race Theory (CRT), and Critical Race Feminism (CRF). CWS explores the

relationship between white privilege and racism with the goal of revealing the social,

economic, and political systems that serve to maintain systems of privilege and white

supremacy (Applebaum, 2016; Cabrera, 2014; Haviland, 2008; Matias & Mackey, 2016). Similarly, CRT examines race as a social construct and aims to highlight the experiences of people of color while revealing the effects of institutionalized racism (Gillborn, 2015; Joseph et al., 2016; Ladson-Billings, 1998). Building on CRT, CRF focuses on how women of color experience white supremacist and racist institutions (Berry, 2009; Childers-Mckee & Hytten, 2015; Evans-Winters & Twyman Hoff, 2011; Wing, 1997).

Using these frameworks as a guide for analysis, I focused on the ways in which three instructors teaching the same course were regarded and critiqued by a majority white group of students. In this second phase of analysis, I looked for similarities and differences in the way course content, instructional methods, and instructors were evaluated. I also looked for instances in which students used different language to express the same types of ideas or critiques of instructors, instructional methods, and course content. Additionally, I used critical autoethnography to interpret this data and introduce counter-narratives to student evaluation narratives. Matias (2016) explains that counter-stories enrich the study of race in that "they unveil intricate racial nuances embedded in everyday life (p. 139). My narratives provide distinct evidence that gives voice to the struggles of black men and women in academia, specifically in diversity and social justice education. To understand how white pre-service teachers used evaluations of diversity instructors as tools of resistance, I used critical content analysis guided by my three-pronged analytical framework to identify themes within the coding clusters developed in phase 1. Figure 7 provides an overview of the themes I observed within each data cluster.

Figure 7
Data Clusters & Themes

Whiteness, Privilege, & Power Assertions	• Maintaining racial isolation and epistemology of ignorance • Using weaponized silence as a form of resistance • Attempting to control discussion • Displaying emotionality and fragility
PSTs Perceptions & Critiques of (Wo)men of Color	• Performing & Erasing Black (Wo)manhood • Silencing Black Voices • Challenging Instructor Knowledge & Character
Language of Resistance	• Claims of Reverse Racism • Claims of Political Extremism

Pre-Service Teachers' Responses to Diversity Education

Because discussions of diversity, social justice, and equity often challenge deeply held ideologies, these discussions can evoke emotional responses. It can be difficult for pre-service teachers to have such discussions openly and honestly, and to enact the self-reflection necessary to evolve as social justice minded educators. Many students actively resist engaging with diversity related content and instructors. Jaekel (2016) explains,

> Diversity courses serve an important purpose in higher education. They have the ability to engage students in creating more community, expose students to new ideas and concepts, and provide space for critical inquiry. Yet, if students only engage in resistance towards diversity topics in the classroom, they may not benefit from the courses (p. 857).

In this study, some pre-service teachers were receptive to the challenges of diversity learning, while a number of others responded with resistance. I observed the following overall student responses to diversity education: evolution and resistance.

The 15-Week Challenge: Evolution or Resistance

While discussing social inequity can be uncomfortable for many students, these discussions and the resulting discomfort are a necessary catalyst for change (Applebaum, 2017). As DiAngelo (2018) asserts, "White comfort maintains the status quo, so discomfort is necessary and important" (p. 143). In a standalone diversity course such as this one, pre-service teachers receive a considerable amount of often discomforting information in a short window of 15 weeks. Yet, students who were open to the ideas presented in this course seemed to make progress toward change. They acknowledged the uncomfortable aspects of this growth but were willing to do the work. One student asserted, "It's no question that this course deals with a lot of heavy problems, but Mrs. Lazenby was able to help us find solutions and work for a common good." Here, the student expressed the gravity of the issues discussed in the course, but stated that with help from the instructor, (s)he was able to work towards resolutions. Another student expressed, "The way Dr. [Davis] conducts this class is really designed to get his students to think. ...and he is very good at doing just that. He is skilled in creating an atmosphere where various topics can be discussed and where students can share their viewpoints openly and reason through different issues in education. I have really learned a lot in this class and am thankful I have had the opportunity to take it!" This student viewed the course as an opportunity to reason through issues in education with support from an instructor who was able to encourage students to think. These students embraced the challenging topics of discussion as opportunities for learning and growth.

Applebaum (2017) explains embracing the discomfort of social justice education:

The motivation to stay in discomfort may consist in the hope and promise of

learning to become more human; this may unlock opportunities for the interests

and needs of students of color to be addressed without being sabotaged. The

difference between support and comfort lies in the responsibility borne by the

student. Rather than narcissistically needing to alleviate discomfort, the student

might welcome a challenge to his/her worldview and be receptive to new

possibilities even when they imply his/her complicity (p. 872).

So, because discomfort can be a necessary part of growth, pre-service teachers who

embrace this discomfort are able to see the supportive and critical nature of diversity

instruction as opposed to feeling targeted and victimized. A student in Dr. Bailey's class

added, "I am now much more open minded about diversity in the classroom. I enjoyed

expanding my knowledge on different matters and challenges that will come up when I am

teaching." Being open to the course content allowed this student to become more objective

in preparing for some of the challenges of being an educator. When students have the

opportunity to actively engage with issues of race in relation to schools and society, they

are able to learn more about themselves and how whiteness functions institutionally and

societally (Berchini, 2016; Jupp et al., 2016; Mason, 2016). Another student stated, "There

is nothing I would change about this class. Not only did it challenge me inside the

classroom, but I walked away with a new outlook on life and am a different person because

of this class. Continuing bringing to light social injustices and opening the door for students

to think critically about them especially through advocating for their ciphers." Here, the

student describes becoming a different person due to his/her willingness to embrace the

challenges presented in this course. This pre-service teacher also realized, through

advocating for ciphers, that student identities can be a resource for teaching and learning (Jupp et al., 2016). By leaning into the discomfort and challenges presented by the course content, these pre-service teachers were able to achieve some level of personal and professional growth.

Social justice education, including anti-racism, is an ongoing progress of learning, reflection, and vigilance. Mason (2016) explained that although students will not leave a diversity course as fully developed anti-racist educators cleansed of all racist ideologies, they will be "ready and willing to ask difficult questions about how racism might be working in themselves and in the communities where they live and work" (p. 1045). With the knowledge and readiness to critically examine issues of racism and supremacy, these pre-service teachers will be equipped to focus on gradually dismantling systems and institutions.

Conversely, when students were committed to maintaining their ideologies, which some students described in terms of conservative and liberal political views, they missed the point of the course and worked hard to reinforce their own problematic ideas, even gathering outside of class to do so. This commitment to maintaining their beliefs resulted in displays of resistance in the classroom and in course evaluations. I identified the following coding clusters in the expression of student resistance: whiteness, privilege, and power assertions; PSTs perceptions and critiques of (wo)men of color; and the language of resistance.

Whiteness, Privilege, and Power Assertions

The power and privilege of whiteness is evident in many aspects of our daily lives. Higher education, for example, is dominated by white students, which results in white

students being protected from racial stress, or "challenges to their racial worldviews and/or to their racial innocence" (Applebaum, 2017, p. 866). These students often react emotionally and defensively when this insolation is interrupted (DiAngelo, 2011). These types of responses, termed white fragility and emotionality, are a means of evoking the power and privilege of whiteness to restore white equilibrium, center whiteness by positioning white students as victims, and maintain racial dominance (DiAngelo, 2018; Matias, 2016). Students asserted the power and privilege of whiteness in the following ways: maintaining racial isolation and ignorance, weaponizing silence, attempting to control how and when social issues were discussed, and displaying emotionality and fragility.

Theme 1:

Same Segregation, Different Decade: Maintaining Racial Isolation & Ignorance

During my time as a TA for Dr. Bailey, the students often used the term colored people. They seemed to feel really comfortable saying it to Dr. Bailey. One student in particular had an adopted brother from Africa who she referred to as colored. There was a moment toward the end of the semester when this student used the term and I said aloud "y'all have got to stop saying that!" We discussed it briefly and when the student walked up to me during break, I told her it wasn't directed only at her because other students used the term too. (I'm not sure if I was trying to absolve her of some responsibility or make her feel more comfortable or what, but I imagine that this was a way of subconsciously shielding myself from the powerful effects of whiteness in academia. As a black woman navigating a primarily white space, I have a tendency toward softening my words so as not to cause offense.) The student said it was fine and that she honestly just didn't know that the term shouldn't be used. I recall thinking these

students lived in their own little worlds and never had to consider people outside of that

bubble, even when those people came into that space.

Di Angelo (2018) explains that life in the U.S. is still racially segregated. These PSTs

who used racially offensive language, like the term colored people, without knowledge or

consideration of its effect on people of color were shielded by this racial isolation. That is to

say, no one ever told them they were wrong because they were surrounded by white

people with similar ideologies and interests in protecting whiteness. White people often

live isolated lives and are never told that their lives lack anything by not being exposed to

people of color. This segregation and absence of sense of loss is a part of the foundation of

white fragility (DiAngelo, 2018). Furthermore, whiteness and privilege allow white

students to avoid issues of social injustice or to control the tone of discussions on these

issues. This commitment to reinforcing their own problematic ideas is representative of an

epistemology of ignorance, meaning whites actively invest in being uniformed about issues

of race and privilege in order to reify their own privilege (Cabrera, 2014; Matias, 2016). For

example, one pre-service teacher positioned affluent, white Christians as victims of

discrimination by Dr. Bailey, "Day in and day out I was discriminated against for being a

white, Christian, and for being financially stable." The language of this critique indicates a

desire to maintain racial isolation and ignorance. Claiming that Dr. Bailey discriminated

against him/her because of these social identities suggests this student's commitment to

the maintenance of these identities and the privileges associated with them. DiAngelo

(2018) explains that making claims of discrimination is one of the emotional responses

white people have when their beliefs and behaviors are challenged. In addition to these

claims, this student uses several methods that reflect white fragility and emotionality.

Next, the student describes social justice education as brainwashing and further asserts the liberal-conservative dichotomy, a positioning that indicates a commitment to maintaining racial isolation and ignorance:

Dr. [Bailey] thought that we sat there and listened to her brainwash us with her liberal opinions, but we simply gave her what she wanted to her (for our grade's sake) then would all meet after class and talk about how we agreed with her liberal logic so our grade wouldn't be penalized, but how we all disagreed with her views. All but one in that class was and still is conservative and we feel that our freedom of speech has been limited within that class. I had a friend who made a conservative comment, and the teacher did not give her credit for participation that day. This course is extremely biased and forces you to write things that you do not believe.

Here, social issues are described in terms of politics and students assert weaponized silence in class while meeting outside of class to express their beliefs. This student makes claims of a majority of students feeling the same but pacifying the professor through silence in order to receive good grades. (S)he claims that students were penalized for not agreeing with Dr. Bailey, positioning white students as the victims of unfair treatment and attempts at brainwashing. Describing Dr. Bailey's teaching as brainwashing and classifying students as victims is a white fragility tactic of domination through channel-switching. This means that white students describe attempts at educating them as the true form of oppression (DiAngelo, 2018). This act of channel switching signifies a commitment to an epistemology of ignorance in that the student attempts to disrupt discussions of racism, privilege, and other social justice concepts in order to maintain her/his own ideologies.

The student continues,

Dr. [Bailey] went on to make claims that we shouldn't teach Christianity because

you wouldn't want to force your opinion on anyone else and make them feel that

their grade could suffer because they didn't believe what you did, when in fact her

class did exactly that. This was a miserable class to sit through, and I promise I was

not the only one who felt this way. This class did not allow me to stand up for what I

believed in due to the grade dangling over my head that Dr. [Bailey] had full control

of. My freedom of speech has been compromised and this is not what [this]

University stands for.

The student expressed misery and having his or her freedom compromised and even

evoked the values of the university as a defense. Further, this student uses language of

white oppression and emotionality in describing feelings of misery and having opinions

forced on her/him. (S)he displays fragility in enacting silence and then claiming that

her/his freedom of speech was compromised. Critical race scholars describe the

manifestation of whiteness in response to learning about race as white emotionality and

fragility, a range of emotional responses such as fear, anger, guilt, denial, dissonance,

resistance, and silence (DiAngelo, 2011; Masko & Bloem, 2017; Matias, 2016). These

emotional responses serve to disengage white students from uncomfortable conversations,

allowing them to maintain racial isolation and an epistemology of ignorance.

Matias (2016) explains that in displays of emotionality, teacher candidates often

invoke reverse discrimination rhetoric. In a similar display of white fragility, Dr. Davis was

accused of imposing bias and pushing the idea that white people are bad, which was used

to justify students not taking in the knowledge being presented:

I learned nothing in this class other than how black individuals are treated poorly

and that white individuals are overall bad. I would not recommend this professor to

anyone. This bias that he tries to impose on his students is horrific. You cannot state

your opinion or anything…Nothing that i learned in class is worth my attention as it

only proceeds to racism and how white individuals are bad.

Here, the pre-service teacher enacted white victimhood, an expression of white

emotionality, in accusing the black professor of being biased and of focusing on the

depravity of white people. This victimhood functioned as an assertion of privilege, a means

of maintaining social power (DiAngelo, 2018). S(he) further asserts dominance by

declaring that nothing learned in this class was worth her/his attention, positioning the

white student as the determiner of what constitutes knowledge. This positioning also

shows the student's desire to maintain racial isolation and ignorance. S(he) has no interest

in social justice education and does not feel it is worth his/her consideration. The student

eludes to reverse racism when (s)he claims that the instructor sees white people as bad

(Matias, 2016). Additionally, the student utilizes another pattern of white fragility: seeing

oneself as an individual, disassociated from racial socialization. This language of

individualization allows white people to separate themselves from racism through the

belief that racist acts are/were committed by bad individuals. This belief serves to

whitewash the systemic, cultural, historical, and institutional associations of race and

racism (DiAngelo, 2018). Students are then able to deny the reality of racism and reinforce

their own commitment to an epistemology of ignorance.

Theme 2:
Silence as a Weapon

A very effective strategy that my students used was simply refusing to participate in class

discussion. They would sit quietly and visibly bothered until I moved on to something else.

Because the beginning of the semester focused on race related topics, they effectively cut class

short and avoided discussions of race. I noted in a conversation with Ashley, a doctoral

student who had also worked as Dr. Bailey's TA the previous semester and sometimes sat in on

my class sessions, that the students who never said anything in class were the ones who wrote

the most messed up stuff. By messed up, I meant racist, sexist, and homophobic. I had to

change the format of my class to include a lot of in-class group projects. We did a lot of

posters and flyers and pamphlets, anything to get them working on projects related to the

issues. Having them present these projects was how I was able to have some semblance of

class discussion. In my evaluations, it was said that I took the conversation back to race even

when that wasn't the topic. I remember discussing prayer in schools and a student saying, "if it

ain't broke, don't fix it". I said that at some point slavery wasn't "broke", to which he

responded "touché'". Was this me discussing race too much? Or was it that I pointed out the

racial disparities when we discussed poverty or other issues? My students often failed to see

intersectionality and wanted things in a neat box that only had to be opened one week out of

the semester. We talked about race for one class session. That was enough, right?

The use of weaponized silence in my classroom was an assertion of power by PSTs, a means of silencing discussions of race, privilege, and other critical social justice issues. These students later expressed their displeasure with the class discussions in their evaluations. They also stated that they found it difficult to speak in class due to instructor pushback. A student explained, "It was difficult for me to speak in class because whenever I did, she would make a snide remark or roll her eyes if she did not agree with what I was

saying." Here, I am accused of intimidating actions that made the student uncomfortable with speaking in class. The student justifies the use of hostile silence by redirecting blame to the instructor. Historically, black bodies have been portrayed as aggressive and intimidating in order to justify policing, dehumanizing, and committing acts of violence against those bodies (Matias, 2016). The language of this critique depicts me in the same manner, in juxtaposition to an innocent, helpless white body. In this way, the white student asserts superiority through the use of anti-black language (DiAngelo, 2018). This mirrors the type of writing PSTs sometimes submitted, in which they disclosed white supremacist sentiments. By using written assignments and instructor evaluations to make these types of statements, students turned their weaponized silence into weaponized writing.

One student saw the discussions as something students had to sit through, as opposed to being engaged in meaningful dialogue: "At times I felt shame, guilt, etc for being white from the comments or topics that Mrs. Lazenby would say. It was sometimes hard to sit through and listen and I would walk out upset and frustrated." Feelings of shame and guilt are common in discussions of race and privilege. As a black woman, I am sometimes overcome with emotion in witnessing and discussing racial injustices. As a result, I may disengage from the conversation completely, using silence as a form of protection, or carefully choose my words so as not to steer the discussion into a more upsetting place. So, it stands to reason that white students might feel uncomfortable or emotional as well. As noted in my discussion of Evolution, some students push through these feelings and the resulting discomfort in order to focus on growth, learning, and commitment to social justice. However, this student positions whites as victims (Matias, 2016), proclaiming that

my statements created feelings of shame and guilt, feelings typically associated with white emotionality and fragility.

Jayakumar and Adamian (2017) explain that white students are usually protected from having to confront their own racial biases and racist ideologies because whiteness is centered in curriculum and instruction. The decentering of whiteness along with a lack of understanding of the nature of racism causes white students to become uncomfortable and feel victimized (Cabrera et al., 2016). Relatedly, Dr. Bailey's pushback, which involved asking questions and presenting facts that challenged student assertions, was perceived as condescension or unwillingness to confer with others, which led to silence as a defense. A student asserted, "She was very condescending throughout the semester and said some very inappropriate and unprofessional things to me this semester." Although this student is critical of Dr. Bailey, (s)he does not explain in what ways the professor was inappropriate or unprofessional. Researchers have described professionalism as a discourse of power, a means by which agencies and individuals define and impose identity onto educators (Hilferty, 2008; Tolbert & Eichelberger, 2016). Here, the student evokes the power of the discourse of professionalism to portray Dr. Bailey negatively without making any direct statements about specific actions or statements made by the professor. Because standards of professionalism are often based in white normativity (Marom, 2019), the use of professionalism as a tool of criticism is a display of the power of white dominant discourse and institutions.

White dominance is often asserted by taking advantage of the institutionalized power ascribed to whiteness. DiAngelo (2018) points out that this reestablishment of

power, an illustration of white fragility, is accomplished in many ways, including tuning out or withdrawing from the discussion. The author explains,

> White fragility functions as a form of bullying; I am going to make it so miserable for you to confront me—no matter how diplomatically you try to do so—that you will simply back off, give up, and never raise the issue again. White fragility keeps people of color in line and "in their place." In this way, it is a powerful form of white racial control (p. 112).

So, white silence becomes an attack, a weapon by which to muzzle marginalized voices. For Dr. Davis, trying to engage students in discussion was sometimes perceived as harassment and met with hostile silence: "He decided to harass those not speaking often with questions until we would speak. Personally, I experienced this first hand. I added to the class discussion, but my ideas were shot down because they varied from his ideas. I stopped talking altogether because I was mad and embarrassed." This student frames Dr. Davis' attempts to engage students in discussion as mistreatment, positioning white students as victims who were forced into silence by the antagonistic words and actions of the instructor. DiAngelo (2018) explains, "One way that whites protect their positions when challenged on race is to invoke the discourse of self-defense. Through this discourse, whites characterize themselves as victimized, slammed, blamed, and attacked" (p. 109). So, the black man is positioned as the aggressor, evoking images of danger and violence, while the white student is seen as innocent and oppressed.

Dr. Bailey's students also used silence as a defense. A student used Dr. Bailey's critiques as a justification for hostile student silence,

I love Dr. [Bailey] as a person, but sometimes it felt like she would not reason with some other peoples viewpoints. If you said something that she thought was wrong, she would be sure to tell you that you are wrong. I think this is something that was important to her, and to show us the many things about diversity that we needed to learn. But towards the end of the semester I think people stopped engaging in conversation because they thought she would shut their opinion down.

This student takes the approach of complimenting Dr. Bailey before pointing out the problem of her telling students when they were wrong. In doing so, Dr. Bailey triggers white fragility by giving public feedback and by breaking from white solidarity. DiAngelo (2018) explains that the need for white solidarity is one pattern of white fragility. That is, white people can feel the need to stick together, protect white advantage, not cause racial discomfort, and to maintain an appearance of being good. This means that white people are silent on topics that expose unearned advantages and do not speak out publicly against one another. Additionally, this student describes the desire to have her/his opinions and viewpoints heard. So, truth is equated to the white experience and white students deem their experience as equally deserving of being heard as the experiences and subject matter expertise of the instructor. White fragility is then exhibited through silence and later through evaluations of her teaching. When students accuse Dr. Bailey of being condescending, allege that Dr. Davis harassed them, and accuse me of making snide remarks that caused them embarrassment, they respond by using hostile silence to reassert their dominance. Framing their hostile silence as a response to perceived harassment and antagonism from the instructors allowed white pre-service teachers to

position themselves as the victims and diminish the hostility of their own speech and actions.

Theme 3:

Controlling the Conversation: Social Issues with A Dose of Sugar

I noted several times in my TA and teaching journals that pre-service teachers were reluctant to talk about sensitive topics, which could reference most of the topics covered in this course. Many students showed a preference for a more subtle discussion of certain issues or for avoiding discussions on these issues altogether. This was especially true with issues pertaining to heteronormativity, sexual identity, racism, and privilege. As a teaching apprentice, and later as an instructor, I taught a lesson on school violence. I opted to use a video depicting violence against a student of color who may have identified as a part of the LGBTQIA+ community. The video, Tragic Teens, discussed the case of Brandon McInerny, a white student who shot and killed classmate Larry King, a multiracial student, in a school classroom. Although Larry was the victim, my students looked for any way they could find to blame him for his own death. In particular, students were disturbed by the fact that Larry accessorized his uniform with things typically worn by girls, and by a teacher giving Larry her daughter's old prom dress. Students stated that the teacher crossed a line by giving him the dress because she encouraged Larry to be openly gay even though it made the other students uncomfortable and he was being bullied. One student even equated giving Larry the dress to giving gang related clothing to a student who had become involved with gangs. It was apparent from their comments and the way they added their own twists to the narrative, such as incorrectly claiming that Larry exposed himself to other students, that they did not approve of his lifestyle or his refusal to conform to gender identity roles. Additionally, the shooter,

Brandon, had alleged ties to a white supremacist hate group. Yet, somehow, he was still seen

as sympathetic, not only by the jurors in his trial but also by the students in my class.

When introducing the topics of anti-heteronormativity and anti-homophobia, Dr.

Bailey used an in-class debate format in which pre-service teachers addressed the following

question: Should anti-heteronormativity/anti-homophobia be included in early childhood

education? There were five students who argued in favor of including these topics and four

who argued against. Figure 8 shows examples of student arguments for and against including

this content.

Figure 8
Anti-heteronormativity/Anti-homophobia Debate Responses
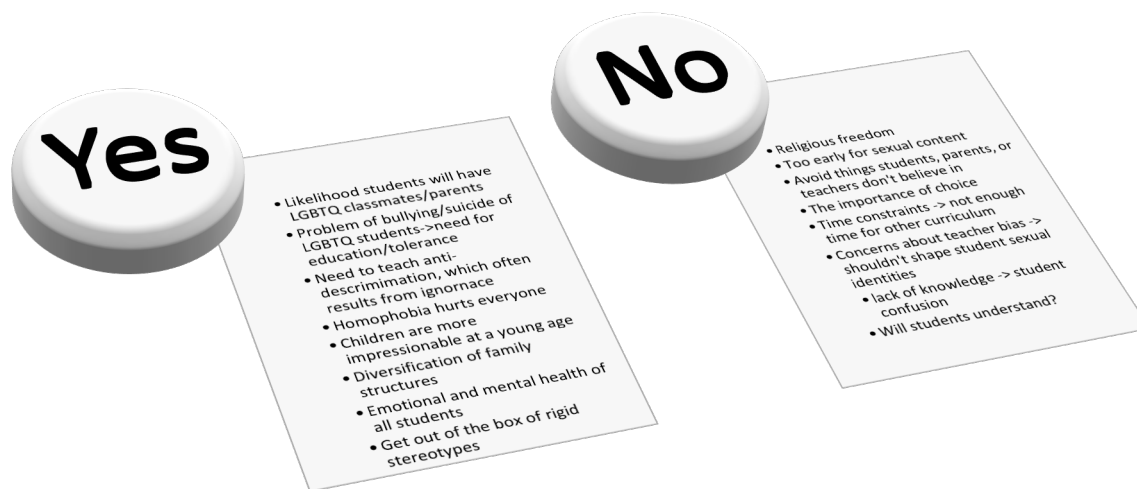
In their debate responses, pre-service teachers arguing the pro position showed

understanding of the changing dynamics of families and the ways discrimination and

homophobia can be hurtful. However, they also used the term tolerance, which as noted in

chapter 3, connotes enduring differences as opposed to dismantling oppressive systems (Agid

& Rand, 2007; Cabera, 2014; Nicholas, 2017; Nieto, 1994). Pre-service teachers arguing the

con position focused on religious freedom and an assortment of excuses, such as time constraints and lack of student understanding, as reasons for not including this content.

Dr. Bailey continued the lesson on anti-heteronormativity and anti-homophobia by reading the story of two male penguins living together who wanted to be parents and were given the opportunity when an extra egg was given to them. In listening to class discussion and later reading student reflections, I was amazed that students could grasp the concept of male penguins building a life together and wanting to be parents but referenced the Bible when speaking of men and women doing the same. When we discussed men and women of varying gender and sexual identities, many students stated and wrote about how the Bible teaches them that these lifestyles are a sin. However, they showed compassion for the male penguin couple and noted how these penguins just wanted to be parents.

Dr. Bailey also used children's books that subtly showed anti-heteronormativity. Pre-service teachers seemed to grasp these concepts well when presented through children's characters. When I taught this lesson, I gave each group two books, one that presented anti-heteronormativity/anti-homophobia subtly and one that did so overtly. For example, I gave one group a book about a crayon that colored a different color than it looked and a book about a transgender girl. They were to read the books, choose one, and design a book project together to present. Book project options included creating poems, bookmarks, drawings, and more. None of the groups chose the book with the overt representation of anti-heteronormativity/anti-homophobia, enacting their power to silence uncomfortable discussions. This seemingly innocent choice of material shows students' need to muffle LGBTQIA+ voices and present a more palatable story of identity and belonging. This is similar to students focusing on the cruelty of bullying instead of the need to empower LGBTQIA+

voices and equal rights. In reflecting on this activity, I realized that by offering a choice of

books I further emboldened the power and privilege of these pre-service teachers to choose

how and when they discussed issues of equity and social justice. However, my influence was

limited in that I was also under constant scrutiny in the form of student comments outside of

class and course evaluations.

CWS and CRT scholars explain that the ability to choose not to discuss certain topics

is a manifestation of privilege and often an exhibition of the dominance and intimidation

associated with white fragility and emotionality (DiAngelo, 2018; Matias et al., 2016).

Jaekel (2016) argues that using religion as an argument against LGBTQ content is an

assertion of social power, positioning students as authoritarians of what is right and wrong.

The author points out that it is a display of Christian privilege, allowing students to reassert

their power through a focus on discourse and ideologies that center Christianity and

position LGBTQ lifestyles as sinful. When students stated their preference for more subtle

approaches or chose books with a more subtle representation of anti-heteronormativity,

they demonstrated their power to silence the voices of the marginalized by focusing on

comforting their own discomfort (Applebaum, 2017).

In evaluating instructors, students mentioned their aversion to discussions of

sensitive topics and their desire for a more indirect or delicate approach to instruction. A

student declared, "Mrs. Lazenby was very 'in your face' about a lot of the topics we

discussed in class." This student expressed difficulty participating in class due to my direct

approach and pushback against problematic statements. Students saw disagreement or

pushback against their ideologies as judgement. For example, a student declared, "Mrs.

Lazenby was very hypocritical in this area because there were several times where she

asked us to share our opinions on a subject and when someone said something that she didn't agree with, she was verbally judgemental." Pre-service teachers wanted a safe, judgement-free zone where they could discuss social issues in a debate format, presenting their sides of the argument without criticism. These PSTs wanted to be comfortable and not have discussions that made them feel guilty. DiAngelo (2018) explains that "within their insulated environment of racial privilege, whites both expect racial comfort and become less tolerant of racial stress" (p. 100). A student asserted, "Dr. [Bailey] imposes her beliefs on students. I went into this class thinking it would be a debate class of sorts and that I would be able to share my opinions in an safe environment conducive to learning, but Dr. [Bailey] belittles the opinions of those who disagree with her (passively)." This student explains his/her desire to share opinions in a safe space, evoking the white fragility tactic of justifying emotional reactions to challenges by claiming to not feel safe (DiAngelo, 2018). (S)he also positions class discussions as an opportunity for debating opposing positions in which Dr. Bailey's subject matter expertise is perceived as belittling the other side.

Another student added, "but some things were hard to understand or agree with and the instructor could be a little more open to other ideas, like just hearing us out because real discussion is what helps us learn, not when everyone says exactly what the teacher wants to hear." Again, a student expresses the desire to be heard out on issues of social justice, positioning these issues as having debatable sides. This creates the opportunity for white talk, a discourse of whiteness that functions to protect white people from examining their roles in maintaining racism and white supremacy (Borsheim-Black, 2015; Haviland, 2008; McIntyre, 1997). It also creates the opportunity for pre-service

teachers to assert white fragility through "correcting the racial analysis of people of color and white women" (DiAngelo, 2018, p. 135).

Students went as far as instructing Dr. Davis to mediate and not choose a side: "When we have discussions on sensitive topics such as race or sexual orientation, your job as the teacher is to play mediator. You instead (whether you intended to or not) made your feelings very clear on the subjects, and many of those feelings were very closed-minded outlooks and offensive. I find that odd considering that you are teaching a class about diversity in the classroom." Applebaum (2017) explains that by creating a comfortable environment for white students, instructors dismiss and disregard the feelings of students of color while also providing absolution for white students' guilt, effectively ending discussions of their complicity in maintaining oppressive systems. Because of this, PSTs saw challenges to their beliefs as condescending or critical. These pre-service teachers expressed the belief that they should be able to have mediated discussions about social issues. The problem with this approach is that the issues covered in this course are not debatable opinions. Privilege, racism, sexism, classism, and homophobia are all evident occurrences in American society and in academia (Anderson & Kanner, 2011; Williams & Evans-Winters, 2005). While student discussion is an important aspect of learning, it is necessary for students to understand the realities of social injustice. Therefore, instructors must limit engagement in white talk that serves to prevent meaningful dialogue and understanding concerning racism and privilege (Borsheim-Black, 2015; Trainor, 2005). Students' desire to frame these social issues as having multiple, debatable sides is an attempt at employing the power of whiteness as a defense mechanism in an uncomfortable environment (DiAngelo, 2018). Additionally, in this idealized student debate world,

instructors are not permitted to assert their expertise, as this is seen as an imposition of their own opinions. In this way, students assert their assumptions about who can be considered an intellectual and who has the knowledge and worthiness to teach them (Williams & Evans-Winters, 2005). This removes the positional authority that professors hold over students, once again enacting the power and privilege of whiteness and silencing the voices of the marginalized and their allies.

Theme 4:

The Fragility & Emotionality of Privilege

The white privilege quiz was an online assignment where students viewed 50 statements of privilege. These statements listed things such as not being singled out because of race and not being asked to speak for one's entire racial group. As a teaching apprentice, I didn't view student responses to this activity. I don't remember them saying much during class concerning the quiz (which was assigned and completed on Canvas). As an instructor, I was shocked by the responses I got. Students wrote that the purpose of the activity was to say that all white people are bad and that the quiz itself was racist toward white people. A student even wrote that black people are privileged in some areas, such as sports. Another student stated that the author was overreacting about the whole situation and overanalyzed the "whole white power idea", adding that he had not changed his opinion on white privilege because white people worked for their privilege where other races just assume they will have a higher place in society. Students also avowed that the acts of their ancestors were not their fault and they should not be looked down upon for what their ancestors did. These responses showed commitment to an epistemology of ignorance through denial, victimization, and race evasiveness. White emotionality and white supremacist ideologies were evident in these

student reactions. I could also tell from the student responses that they thought I created the

quiz. For example, a student claimed that the quiz was racist and prejudiced against white

people. The looks on their faces during our next class meeting when I pulled up a picture of

Peggy McIntosh, an (then) 82-year-old white woman and the creator of the quiz! I remember

a white male student looking around and laughing at all the different expressions. I stated

expressly that I felt the students believed I created the quiz. But what I didn't ask was why it

was such a problem for me to call out white privilege (even if only perceived).

Lensmire et al. (2013) explain that McIntosh's white privilege work is limited in

that it requires confession and little more, and that it focuses on the individual. Because

anti-racist work seeks to dismantle systems and institutions associated with racism, it is

necessary to engage students in discussion and reflection that deepens their understanding

of and commitment to deconstructing these systems. Asking students to evaluate their

privilege on an individual level may contribute to their feelings of guilt and shame, and the

resulting resistance.

My students stated in evaluations that the conversations often focused on race and

privilege. Several of Dr. Davis's students viewed white supremacy and privilege as topics

that were being forced on them. One student declared, "The course itself is ridiculous, and

the books required basically smothered White-Supremacy in everyones face." By

describing the diversity course as ridiculous and reducing the texts to tools of oppression

against whites, this student denies the facts of racism and the importance of diversity and

social justice coursework. DiAngelo (2018) explains that white fragility can function to

downplay the reality of racism. Additionally, because of the discrepant nature of history,

white identity can be built on historically inaccurate claims of superiority (Matias, 2016).

So, white students deny the realities of racism in an effort to protect their own privilege and supposed superiority. However, the complexity of white identity development complicates the way students engage with social justice content (Berchini, 2017; Mason, 2016). Students may feel overwhelmed and judged in being asked to confess their own white privilege, which contributes to resistance (Berchini, 2017; Lensmire, et al., 2013). These feelings are evident in students' passionate language choices, such as referring to the course as ridiculous and using the term smothered to describe the style of the course materials.

Dr. Davis was also accused of race shaming and focusing on issues that were not valid: "I often felt as though I was being shamed due to my race, which while I understand that racism studies were part of the course, I feel as though Dr. [Davis] could have approached this subject in a fashion that instructed students without guilting them for transgressions that were not even legitimate." This pre-service teacher not only expresses feelings of shame and guilt, (s)he also questions the legitimacy of the past transgressions of white people. DiAngelo (2018) explains that white people often respond to challenges to their assumptions and behaviors with feelings of shame and guilt. These feelings are justified by claiming that another person is making them feel that way or not conducting the discussion in the correct way. This is evident in this critique of Dr. Davis in which he is accused of instructing students in a way that causes these feelings. DiAngelo asserts that such claims "exempt the person from further engagement and accountability" (p. 119). In addition to denying accountability, this critique further trivializes the racialized history of our country and demonstrates the dominance of white historical narratives.

Critical Whiteness Studies emphasizes the danger of whiteness, specifically when whites feel empowered to determine what is or isn't racist (Matias et al., 2014). Asserting this power, white students can simply choose to deny the validity of content that emphasizes the violent history of whiteness and the prevalence of such violence today. Still, these students may have felt protective of their white identities and fearful of what it means to deconstruct the power of whiteness and decentralize the dominant narrative (Mason, 2016). In one of my class sessions, I showed a clip of Jane Elliott's eye color experiment, in which she designated people with blue eyes as inferior and treated them poorly. When I asked students how they felt about it, one response was "well, she certainly got her point across." I stated that while I could see her point, I didn't know if I would learn from her due to the hostility of the environment. While I am not suggesting that Dr. Davis, Dr. Bailey, or I created a hostile environment, I do wonder if our focus on privilege was overwhelming for white pre-service teachers. Certainly, the power and privilege of whiteness influences this questioning of my own work with white students. However, it is important to consider the effectiveness of my instructional approach. Yes, discomfort is often necessary for growth, but perhaps understanding white identity can aid teacher educators in preventing this discomfort from becoming resentment and hostility.

Electing to Hate

Since I was the TA on Tuesdays, we were in class the morning of election day, so the results were unknown. There was another TA, Ashley, a black woman, who was in the Wednesday section of the class. This class met the evening after election day. She described students walking in talking about wearing their Trump shirts proudly. She then described Dr. Bailey, not knowing about these conversations, being upset about the election results and asking if

students understood the implications of Trump's election. The TA commented on students

showing support for Trump and questioned why they would support someone who ran on a

foundation of hate and division. She described Trump supporters as racists and bigots, while

students argued that supporting Trump did not make them racist. These students did not

provide any clarification on their support of Trump, only stating that their beliefs aligned

with his. Ashley also questioned these students' commitment to becoming effective educators.

This caused a lot of problems in the class. Students and parents complained against Ashley

and Dr. Bailey. The next week, I attended the Wednesday class. It was Ashley's week to teach

and I wanted to support her amid all the controversy. Many students did not attend class.

There were a couple of young ladies who showed up, took the quiz, and walked out of the

class. Was this to make a statement? Was it that bad to be challenged by a black woman? Did

students not see the connection between Trump's election and what we were attempting to

educate them against?

Following the 2016 election, there was an increase in overt acts of racism on

colleges campuses. These incidents ranged from text message threats to actual physical

violence (Johnson, 2017). Donald Trump's campaign and election had sent a message of

hate, a message that we would return to the good old days when America was great, when

white people were free to wear their racism proudly without consequence. Playing on the

belief that whites will become the minority by 2044 and the fear of the empowerment of

black people created by Obama's election and re-election, Trump's racist pandering was a

call to white people to protect their power and privilege (Donnor, 2020). Dr. Bailey's

students seemed to be excited about this return to power. The major problem was that

these were pre-service teachers. These were the people who would be responsible for

educating students of all racial and social identities. How could they enter a classroom with such hateful mindsets and effectively educate our children? After all, they refused to even be in the classroom with a black woman who had challenged them. Enacting white fragility, these pre-service teachers asserted their power by not showing up or by walking out of class. DiAngelo (2018) explains that there is immense power in white people's responses to racial challenges, and they will use this power in whatever way necessary to regain control.

Students wielded this power further by describing their discontent with the election issue in Dr. Bailey's evaluations. They failed to see the issue with their electoral choice and felt that Ashley was rude and disrespectful. One student asserted, "I was highly unsatisfied with the TA of my class. She was very rude and mean". This student displays an emotional and privileged perspective. (S)he describes Ashley negatively and asserts his/her dissatisfaction. Another student added, "I was disappointed with Dr. [Bailey]'s teacher assistant because of comments she made in class after the election in November that was extremely offensive. With this class being so open to new ideas and beliefs, the comment she made was very disrespectful. I wouldn't mind taking Dr. [Bailey] again cause she was really great. I just hope I don't get the same teacher assistant again". These students declared feelings of dissatisfaction, disappointment, and being disrespected, a white fragility tactic that positions them as victims. They also position Ashley as subordinate, referring to her as the TA or Dr. Bailey's teacher assistant. Further, somehow this student saw supporting the racist foundation of Trump's campaign as being aligned with being open to new ideas and beliefs. This is another example of white talk in which whites defer to other ideas and beliefs and disregard or fail to notice racism (Trainor, 2005).

These students may have aligned with Trump for a number of reasons, such as his stance on abortion or his "tell it like it is" approach. The danger in this is that in supporting Trump, they perpetuated racist, sexist, homophobic, and ableist ideologies. Additionally, Dr. Bailey was expected to stand up for her students and go against her TA. A student declared, "Also the TA we had [Ashley], was very judgmental and would even call out student's for being bigots if we voted for Trump in the presidential election. She also insulted everyone in the class saying that we are not fit to be teachers because we sugar coat our answers too much, all in front of Dr. [Bailey] and she didn't speak up or defend anyone of her students". This student enacted one pattern of white fragility: becoming defensive when a connection to racism was suggested (DiAngelo, 2018). And to add insult to injury, Dr. Bailey had once again broken from white solidarity by allowing her students to be challenged on their racist views. Dr. Bailey had not protected them from Ashley or made any attempt at absolving them from guilt or accountability for their racist statements and affiliations. She had supported a black woman instead of banning her from the classroom or putting her in her place, a place of subordinance.

PSTs Perceptions and Critiques of (Wo)men of Color

While exposing the use of the power and privilege of whiteness, the aforementioned incident and its resulting acts of emotionality and fragility also show the unique and racialized ways in which women of color in academia are perceived, critiqued, and ultimately silenced. Instructors of color often experience challenges and resistance in the classroom and in evaluations (Ladson-Billings, 1996; Martinez, 2014; Perry, et al., 2009; Rodriguez, 2009). When blackness and womanness intersect with the power and privilege of whiteness in the diversity classroom, the result is often tension and resistance. Evidence

of the unique experiences of men and women of color instructing diversity courses can be seen in the performance and erasure of black womanhood, the silencing of black voices, and the minimalization of the expertise and qualifications of a black man.

Theme 1:

Acting Like A Lady: Performing and Erasing Black (Wo)manhood

Several years ago, I took a linguistics course to fulfill one of my required English courses. I still lived in Hawaii and the professor allowed me to Skype into the class sessions. We read an article where the author discussed eye and neck rolling as mannerisms of a group of adolescent girls[1]. One of my classmates made a statement and for clarity, I asked "Did you just say you don't know what neck rolling is?" And without hesitation my professor, a white woman, said, "Do it, Dionne". And so, I, the only black student in class (as usual), demonstrated neck rolling to the group. I was already positioned on the big screen opposite the rest of the class. And now I was performing ghetto mannerisms. In the moment, I felt uncomfortable and a bit annoyed, but not surprised. I reflected back on this incident when, about a year and a half later, as Dr. Bailey's TA, our class discussion landed on code switching. I explained that my goal was to learn to be more deliberate in my code switching, an idea I had gotten from a former English professor, the only black woman I had the pleasure of studying under during my graduate career. I stated that my code switch tended to happen naturally. Then, a white student said "Do it! Do it!". Once again, I was being asked to perform my blackness. I told the student to just listen as we continued the discussion and it would happen. I don't know if I made a more conscious effort to code switch or if it slipped out, but the student didn't even

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[1] Goodwin, M.H., & Alim, H.S. (2010). "Whatever (Neck Roll, Eye Roll, Teeth Suck)": The Situated Coproduction of Social Categories and Identities through Stancetaking and Transmodal Stylization. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, 20(1), 179–194.

notice. She had wanted me to perform at her command and seemed to become uninterested when that was not done.

Ashley and I had previously discussed with Dr. Bailey how we worked hard to portray a certain image, as to not be perceived a certain way, mainly as the angry black woman. And so, we performed the most palatable version of our academic selves, using so- called standard American English, dressing professionally, being anything but what would be perceived as combative, and apparently performing blackness on command. I removed the so-called ghetto or hood elements of myself from my academic and professional performance. I never wore my hair braided as a teacher, until the semester I became Dr. Bailey's TA. It was a huge deal for me personally and a secret cause of anxiety. I worried about how I would be perceived by students and colleagues. So, being described in terms of pejorative stereotypes ascribed to black women was upsetting to me. It showed me that no matter what I did or didn't do, the perception was there. It also made me wonder why I felt the need to remove my blackness from my professional self. I landed back on Dr. Bailey's response to me and Ashley concerning our images, "I'll tell you what Dr. Davis would say," she asserted. "What's wrong with being the angry black woman?"

The angry black woman or ghetto black woman stereotype allows white people to view black women as inferior, even inhuman, also serving as a justification for racial isolation. These stereotypical images are often seen in the caricatures of black women in television and film, which are frequently consumed as accurate representations of black women. While I realize the racialized undertones of being asked, or commanded, to perform black mannerisms and speech, I wonder how much of it was about asserting power over me. As a black woman in academia, especially at a primarily white institution,

my presence feels unwelcomed and sometimes bewildering. I do not present as the ghetto black woman in need of a savior (Matias, 2016). So, perhaps, being able to view me in a stereotypical context served as justification for white supremacist ideologies. Furthermore, being able to command these actions, to control the presentation of my blackness and womanness, was a demonstration of the power and privilege of whiteness.

Unexpectedly, the role of gender in evaluations was not explicitly visible. This was furthered by the limited number of participants in the study. I also believe that gender bias was less evident because Dr. Bailey and I both fit the conventional ideals of what marriage and family should look like. We are both heterosexual women who are married with children. Therefore, we give the outward appearance of conforming to stereotypical gender roles. Dr. Bailey's children were even mentioned in her evaluations: "Her kids are really cute too :)" This statement has a humanizing effect, positioning Dr. Bailey as a nurturer and creating an idealized picture of her family.

I theorize that some of the student reactions to my pushback as being snide or rude and disrespectful could be attributed to my womanness. However, the intersectionality of race and gender creates a need to acknowledge that these things could also be attributed to racial bias. I was accused of actions that are stereotypically applied to black women in a negative manner, such as eye rolling. Williams and Evans-Winters (2005) explain that stereotypical portrayals of black women are used to justify our oppression and depict racism, sexism, and injustice as an ordinary and unproblematic part of life. This can also be true for black men. Dr. Davis was also accused of being rude and disrespectful, with references to alleged speech and behavior often associated with negative depictions of black men.

Some students described Dr. Bailey as a likeable, more nurturing being, even pointing out the fact that she was smart. Students affirmed, "Dr. [Bailey] is an excellent professor and you can tell that she cares a lot about her students education and personal growth"; "She was also very understanding"; and "Great class, Dr. [Bailey] truly cares and listens to her students." However, students who did not like Dr. Bailey described her as unapproachable or rude. One student claimed, "I did not view the instructor as approachable outside of class due to my shyness verses the personality of the instructor. I have nothing against the instructor, but her personality would not get along with mine." Another student added, "Dr. [Bailey] has been my least favorite professor that I have had. She was rude towards myself and other students throughout the semester. When asking for help, I would get short, unhelpful answers. She was very condescending throughout the semester and said some very inappropriate and unprofessional things to me this semester." These characterizations could be attributed to student expectations of how a woman instructor should speak and act. Dr. Bailey speaking firmly and directly against problematic speech and behavior could be seen as rude or unladylike. She may have been expected to be gentler and more nurturing, as suggested by the aforementioned reference to her children. Mothers are expected to be helpful, kind, caring, and approachable, as Dr. Bailey is described in favorable comments. They are not expected to be rude, unsupportive, or standoffish, as Dr. Bailey is portrayed here.

Additionally, Dr. Bailey may have been expected to perform what Applebaum (2017) terms comforting the discomfort of white students. These types of expectations are further complicated for black women whose multiple identities intersect with the power and privilege of whiteness in the diversity classroom. Matias (2016) explains that white

teacher candidates often enter the classroom with a mentality of white saviorism. They

want to show their sainthood by sacrificing and giving back to underprivileged students of

color. So, having a woman, particularly a black woman, as an instructor/professor creates

resistant reactions, because she is the one who should need to be saved. Dr. Bailey and I

both disrupt the dominance of white men in higher education, albeit in different ways. Dr.

Bailey's firm presentation of her subject matter expertise and disinclination to comfort

white discomfort or support white solidarity created a space for challenges and resistance.

Similarly, my existence as a person of positional authority within this white dominant

space and my audacity to challenge privilege and white supremacist ideologies resulted in

the same type of opposition.

Theme 2:
Be Quiet!: Silencing Black Voices

During the lesson on multilingualism, Dr. Bailey used a card game that required silence. I

wasn't playing, so I talked to one group. They responded by pointing, at which point I

understood what was happening. Each group had different rules and at the end of each round

students would be moved between groups. They had to figure out how to play together

unknowingly using different rules and unable to communicate with one another. When I

spoke, Dr. Bailey yelled at me to be quiet. I was taken aback, but I didn't talk. I stood at the

table reading instructions at which point, she yelled at me to get away from the table. I

protested slightly but when she continued to be hostile, I backed off. I sat on a table, quiet,

away from the group for the rest of the class, even when Dr. Bailey tried to engage with me.

She sent me a text during class explaining her anxiety about the activity, which I ignored. She

later sent me an email in which she apologized and noted her commitment to making things

right with me. She asked for my input but said that she knew the work was hers to do. I

ignored her email as well. I honestly wanted to finish the semester and never speak to her

again. I felt disrespected in a way that I never had. A white woman had yelled at me and

talked down to me in front of her group of privileged (and some racist) white students. I was

humiliated and felt that when the students walked past me during the mid-class break, they

gave me smug looks. Nothing like seeing an uppity black woman get knocked down to size,

right? I spoke to Ashley about what happened, and she encouraged me to talk to Dr. Bailey. I

just didn't want to. She explained that maybe Dr. Bailey didn't understand the implications of

"shhh'ing" a black woman. But she claimed to be such an ally. How could she not?

During the next class meeting, Dr. Bailey apologized to me publicly. Ashley was present, as it

was her week to teach the class. I hadn't wanted to address the issue at all. But here I was,

forced to talk about it in front of everyone, or be perceived as an angry, uncompromising

black woman. I kind of deflected by talking about why I had gone silent during the incident: "I

only have two levels of conflict: shut down completely or make you hate me". And since I didn't

want to ruin my academic career and reputation, I opted not to speak. However, this incident

did change the way I viewed and interacted with Dr. Bailey. She had been my instructor for

two courses, one of which had been held the spring semester prior to my being her TA (and

actually led to this arrangement). During the course, I often complained about her grading

and how I had a love/hate relationship with her rubrics. I remember getting a 1.95/2 on an

assignment and when I asked what the problem was, she said, "it wasn't perfect". I told myself

that Dr. Bailey was so hard on me because she knew I had to be that much better than my

white counterparts to even have a fraction of the opportunities they would have. But our

interaction in the diversity class made me question this. Was she so hard on me because she

felt I needed to prove to her that I was worthy? Did she share the same sentiments as some of the students in that room? Is whiteness and privilege always at play, even with my white colleagues who identify as allies?

Critical Race Feminism explains that the experiences of women of color differ significantly from those of white women (Berry, 2009). So, even as an ally, Dr. Bailey wouldn't identify with certain aspects of my experience. But shouldn't that be an outcome of the diversity and social justice work she was doing? Furthermore, the differences in our identities and experiences certainly didn't mean that I should be disrespected or dismissed. For me, this was more than a moment of tension, it was an assertion of dominance, the dominance of a white woman over my black body, the silencing of my voice. And if I reacted any way other than timidly, I would become the villain. I also risked ruining my academic and professional careers. Although I recognize Dr. Bailey's commitment to doing the work herself instead of using the white fragility tactic of making me responsible for fixing things and/or educating her, I have found little comfort in this fact. As a woman of color, navigating white spaces can be exhausting. Not having professors who look like me or understand the uniqueness of my experiences or the intersectionality of my identities makes my academic journey difficult and frustrating. Having a white audience witness the assertion of white dominance over my black body felt like an extreme failure, not only to myself but to my culture.

Attempts at silencing black voices are evident in the aforementioned evaluation comments in which pre-service teachers accuse Dr. Davis and I of discussing race too much and question the legitimacy of the course content and instructor knowledge. Yet, in this instance, my voice had been silenced by a professor who held positional authority over me.

Interestingly, Dr. Bailey's students did not mention our tense interaction in her evaluations. The only mention of me was "her GTA is very tough grader". The fact that no students thought enough of this interaction to mention it showed either a lack of care and understanding of the significance of the situation or an intricate understanding of the implications of white dominance, with this interaction serving as confirmation of their perceived superiority to me. That is, these pre-service teachers either failed to understand the importance of this situation or they ignored the interaction to purposely avoid portraying a white woman in a negative light in relation to a black woman, a demonstration of white solidarity (DiAngelo, 2018). This protection of whiteness and its appearance of goodness is evident when white people fail to call out their peers' problematic speech or behaviors. They may also not be interested in hearing or understanding the perspectives and experiences of people of color. Dr. Bailey's students may not have found it necessary to mention our interaction because it didn't directly affect them. However, when the conversation was directed toward students and their ideologies, they were sure to mention the interaction in their evaluations.

Theme 3:
A White Man Would Be Better at This: Minimizing the Expertise & Qualifications of a Black Man

Critical Whiteness Studies explores the power and privilege of whiteness, emphasizing the maintenance of white supremacy and privilege. Critical Race Theory highlights how the experiences of people of color are impacted by institutionalized racism and the ways in which whiteness is present in responses to learning about race (Evans-Winters & Twyman Hoff, 2011; Stovall, 2005). These points were evident in the evaluation of Dr. Davis, who was critiqued differently from other study participants. He was referred

to as Mr. instead of Dr. in some evaluations. This can be seen as a purposeful omission of Dr. Davis' title, a sort of demotion or denial of his expertise and academic status. Additionally, students stated that he "boasted" about his tenure many times, depicting his statement of his accomplishment as exaggerated and excessive. As a perceived outsider in a predominantly white space, Dr. Davis' tenure status represents the type of black advancement that triggers white rage and anti-black sentiment (DiAngelo, 2018).

Students also questioned Dr. Davis' preparedness and ability to teach the course as well as the legitimacy of what he was teaching, stating that he was teaching his opinions as facts. Because it differs from the white frame of reference, black professors' experiential knowledge is often seen as a hindrance instead of as a benefit (Evans-Winters & Twyman Hoff, 2011), which excludes these men and women of color as producers of knowledge (Johnson, 2017). One student went as far as asserting that the service-learning coordinator, a professor who I am reading as a white man, would be better at teaching the course. The student began by harshly critiquing Dr. Davis' teaching,

> In taking a diversity class, I expected a professor that allowed different ideas to flow in conversation. However, Dr. [Davis'] opinions were taught as fact, and any other ideas (especially those regarding religious beliefs) were torn down. If you did not agree with him you would be discriminated against in the class. I guess he does not practice what he teaches.

One assumption of white fragility is that if the individual cannot see something, it isn't legitimate (DiAngelo, 2018). Here, attempting to delegitimize the experiences of the professor and other marginalized groups, the student disregards Dr. Davis' teaching as simply his opinion. This PST equates truth and knowledge to the white gaze (Williams &

Evans-Winter, 2005). (S)he then frames instructors' content knowledge, which causes this PST discomfort, as persecution.

This student then displays emotionality by centering whites as victims (Matias, 2016), stating that Dr. Davis discriminated against students. This white victimhood is further asserted as the student describes feelings of being disregarded and disrespected:

Those who do not talk often are also put down. I, like many people, suffer from anxiety. Because of this, I have trouble speaking in classes. But, Dr. [Davis] did not care why I did not talk as often as the other students. For the remainder of the semester I was ignored, penalized for no purpose, and spoken to with no respect. I felt like an outcast in this class, and soon a few of my classmates followed Dr. [Davis'] lead. I even tried bringing to his attention that my classmates started excluding me through emailing him my situation. However, he replied with an unhelpful 4-word response.

This student attempts to garner sympathy by saying anxiety prevented speaking in class. However, the prefacing statements indicate a position of hostile silence taken as a defense to Dr. Davis' pushback.

Next, the student attempts to vilify Dr. Davis by accusing him of making inappropriate comments and being misogynistic:

On top of this, he would make inappropriate comments to other students. These comments did not relate to the course content and were said to students before and after class. His comments included those relating to misogynistic ideals and drinking alcohol.

This student alleges discussions of drinking alcohol as a means of disparaging Dr. Davis, evoking the negative images historically associated with black men. Critical Race Theory examines the ways white supremacy is maintained in education, such as racial microaggressions and stereotyping (Chadderton, 2013). By evoking impropriety, misogyny and drunkenness, this student also calls Dr. Davis' character and qualifications into question, implying that he is unfit to be a university professor, especially one instructing a diversity and social justice focused course. The student continues,

> I also wonder how much Dr. [Davis] actually prepares for this class. For example, he gave 2 lectures over the course of the semester. He taught 2 additional days, but simply showed a video in those additional days. The remainder of the course consisted of the class presenting projects. I learned more through my peer's projects then anything Dr. [Davis] taught. He continued his lazy teaching with grading. Our test were graded by the GTA, who had different instructions than the ones Dr. [Davis] provided us. I did find it ironic how he stressed the importance of proper grammar when the syllabus, instructions, and emails were full of grammar mistakes.

This student accuses Dr. Davis of not being prepared for class, refers to his teaching and grading style as lazy, and points out grammatical errors supposedly made by the professor. Again, stereotypical images of a lazy, unintelligent black man are ascribed to this instructor.

Matias (2016) explains that such descriptions portray black bodies as inhuman, justifying the denigration of black people. Furthermore, Dr. Davis' status as a university professor may have triggered more feelings of needing to dehumanize him. This positioning serves as an attempt to remove Dr. Davis from the white dominant university environment. He is a black man who does not need a white savior (Matias, 2016) and who

has the audacity to not only inhabit an authoritative position over white students, but to also brag about his tenured position. DiAngelo (2018) explains Carol Anderson's (2016) assertion that blackness with ambition and purpose, and refusal to accept subjugation ignites rage within white people. A professor of color, holding a higher status, then becomes a threat to whiteness, narcissism, and students' so-called colorblindness (Matias, 2016).

Bashing Dr. Davis was a lead up to praising the service-learning coordinator, including assumptions made about this individual:

The best part of this class was the service learning. Dr. [Smith] was amazing. He understood that we were not informed of the service learning portion of the class when registering for FOUN 3000. Because of this, he made sure to take the time to help each student find the best service learning option for their schedule. He replied to emails on time, and with care. I can tell that he continues to educate himself, cares for the students, and is able to set aside his own beliefs to have an unbiased conversation. Dr. [Smith] understood the pressures students face, and did not hold that against us. I wish Dr. [Smith] taught FOUN 3000. He represents the values [this] University holds to high esteem. Overall, I would not recommend this course. I took Dr. [Davis] because the other professors who teach this course have terrible reputations. However, Dr. [Davis] is just as prejudice, lazy, and mean as the other professors' reputations. I hope someone reads this and takes action, because no other student should be subjected the same treatment as I was.

It is interesting that a white man acting in a completely different role is seen as more qualified than a black man with years of experience in teaching and research in this area.

Critical Race Theory and Critical Race Feminism explain that white men are often free to cover social justice topics vigorously without having their authority or academic titles challenged and without being labeled as bitter, biased, or pushing an agenda (Evans-Winters & Twyman Hoff, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 1996). Here, the white professor is said to represent the values of the university. What values are these and what determinations are used to decide who represents them? Aside from being a white man, what does Dr. Smith offer that Dr. Davis does not?

This student perceives Dr. Smith as unbiased; yet, the student has not been in a diversity classroom environment with him. In my experience, interactions with the service-learning coordinator are limited and do not involve discussions of the social issues covered in this class. So, what are the determining factors for being unbiased? Moreover, what makes Dr. Davis prejudiced? His disagreement with this student's religious ideals? His insistence that students participate in class discussion? Furthermore, describing a black man, a collegiate professor who holds a PhD, as lazy and mean speaks to racist depictions of black men that have been used historically to incite violence and discrimination against them. Conversely, the student states that Dr. Smith is caring and continues to educate himself, despite the unlikelihood of a student knowing this information. This is a declaration of white supremacist ideals that positions the educated, compassionate white man as a better candidate for this position than the lazy, mean black man.

The Language of Resistance

The language choices made by students when critiquing black instructors were noticeably different than those made by students critiquing a white instructor. In the preceding student evaluation, student language choice is notably harsh. The student uses

stereotypical, anti-black language when describing Dr. Davis as lazy, questioning his intelligence, and eluding to inappropriate, misogynistic comments. DiAngelo (2018) explains that white people have historically projected onto black people characteristics that they don't want to own in themselves, such as laziness, childlike behavior, and violence. Through a lens of CRT, we see the manifestation of white supremacy in the othering of black instructors against the normative, perceived goodness of white instructors (Chadderton, 2013). This is evident in the negative descriptions of Dr. Davis that lead up to the idealized descriptions of Dr. Smith. Evaluating the language of student critiques shows the positioning of the white instructor as overly political and the black instructors as racist against white people.

Theme 1:
Black Racists and White Political Extremists

Although students took issue with the topics discussed and the opinions of the instructors, they described the problem in different terms. Dr. Davis and I were said to discuss race too much. A student in my class wrote, "I felt that most days our conversations resorted back to race and privilege, even when it was not the topic for the day". Interestingly, this student compartmentalizes discussion of race as something that can be covered as the topic for one class period, failing to see the intersectionality of race and other social issues, such as poverty. Similarly, Dr. Davis' students wrote, "I feel that he focused primarily on race, seldom relating it to the classroom" and "All we talked about was racism, expand the curriculum." These students challenged the curriculum in an attempt to derail discussions of racism. They also failed to recognize or acknowledge the intersectionality of social justice issues. So, since the reality that poverty is

disproportionately high for people of color goes against the myth of meritocracy in which white students are often invested (Sleeter, 2017), students assert that race and racism should not be a part of the discussion of poverty and other issues.

Critical Race Theory explains that the emotionality of whiteness seeks to shut down discussions of race, racism, and white supremacy (Matias, 2016). Dr. Davis was even accused of being racist and bias: "Cons: -White bashing -Liberal thoughts only -Does not invite other opinions -Can not speak freely because he will argue you down on something if he doesn't agree -Has favorites", Another student added, "This professor is racist against white individuals." Here, the pre-service teacher uses language of individualism. This language serves to maintain white racial control by positioning white students as individuals who are exempt from the effects and unearned benefits of racism and privilege (DiAngelo, 2018). Additionally, students once again evoke white fragility through the framing of whites as victims of racism. Through a lens of Critical Whiteness Studies, such claims are seen as a rhetorical shift known as sincere fictions (Cabrera, 2014), socially constructed narratives that conceal the reality of discrimination and oppression (Feagin & O'Brien, 2003). These fictions persist because these students truly believe what they are saying, despite the fact that their claims do not reflect historical or current reality (Cabrera, 2014). CRT adds that accepting this distorted historical view is representative of an epistemology of ignorance, in which whites are actively invested in not knowing about issues of race (Cabrera, 2014; Matias, 2016). So, when white students attempt to control the conversation and deny the experiential knowledge of instructors of color in favor of their own experiences, they are committing to this epistemology of ignorance. These

students seek to maintain the power and privilege of their whiteness by limiting the course's focus on racial inequities and questioning the instructor's knowledge.

Although she covered the same content, Dr. Bailey's students described the content and the instructor's viewpoints in terms of politics and controversy. A student explained, "I think she's naturally going to have some complaints because the subject is politically charged for some reason". Dr. Bailey was also referred to as liberal and the course material was referred to as controversial. Student critiques included statements such as, "This teacher is an extreme liberal who forces her views on you", "I feel like the class was very biased towards her beliefs. I understand that the class covers a great deal of controversial material but I felt that it was taught in a very biased way towards her beliefs", "she is very opinionated and tended to get political when this isn't a political science class," and "If an opinion did not align with Dr. [Bailey] or was more conservative it was treated as if it were wrong." Although Dr. Bailey was accused of being biased, students did not mention the amount of time she spent discussing race and intersectionality. This assertion of fragility and emotionality would not be effective against a white woman. Accusing a white woman of being racially biased against white students or disproportionately interested in the narratives of people of color wouldn't seem very plausible. Instead students challenged the instructor's alleged political ideologies. This is an example of DiAngelo's (2018) assertion that whites wield their power in whatever way is necessary to stop the challenge. This means that fragility and emotionality are asserted in different ways depending on what will be effective in a particular situation. If alleging reverse racism or using hostile silence will shut down the conversation, that is what will be done. If crying and asserting victimization or playing up perceived political affiliations will work, that is the tactic that is used. Here,

students still position themselves as victims, but of political bias instead of racism. These differences in language choice show the presence and awareness of the power of whiteness.

Summary

Evidence suggests that varying factors contribute to the ways students critique diversity instructors. While some students did focus on grading techniques and time spent in class, a great deal of student reactions to diversity instructors focused on contempt for subject matter, perceived instructor opinions, and how students felt the material should have been presented. Student evaluation statements and narrative accounts showed student displays of resistance and assertions of privileged ideologies. Students struggled with criticism or disapproval of their beliefs, actions, and political affiliations, and believed that instructors should remain neutral, allowing students to express their thoughts without being challenged. However, when these pre-service teachers embraced the discomfort associated with growth and ideological change, they found the course, material, and instructors challenging, but helpful and enlightening.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

In this chapter, I summarize my findings directly as they relate to my research questions, examining how these findings connect to and expand upon the current literature. I discuss the implications of my findings and the importance of exploring student use of evaluations as tools of resistance. I then make recommendations for future research.

The purpose of this study was to explore how pre-service teachers use evaluations to display resistance to learning about topics of diversity, social justice, and privilege. I examined the similarities and differences in the ways pre-service teachers evaluated instructors of different race and gender teaching the same diversity course. The following research questions guided this inquiry:

Central Question: When evaluating diversity courses and instructors, specifically women and instructors of color, how, if at all, do undergraduate education students display resistance to learning about topics of diversity, social justice, and privilege?

1. In what ways is resistance to learning about topics of diversity, social justice, and privilege evidenced in student course evaluations?

2. What common or differing themes and language are present in evaluations of diversity courses when students evaluate women and instructors of color as opposed to evaluating men and white instructors?

A Critical Examination: CWS, CRT, and CRF

Using student evaluations of myself and two other instructors, I analyzed student comments to show patterns in responses to learning about issues of diversity and social justice in education, such as race, gender, sexual identity, anti-heteronormativity, and privilege. In analyzing the data, I used the theoretical frameworks of Critical Whiteness

Studies (CWS), Critical Race Theory (CRT), and Critical Race Feminism (CRF). I also

employed the counter-storytelling aspect of CRT and CRF, as well as the use of Critical

Autoethnography. My narratives helped to answer the research questions in that they

provided a unique lens through which to view student resistance and white dominant

narratives, while also giving voice to the experiences of a woman of color in academia.

Additionally, my critical narratives aided in highlighting differences and similarities in the

experiences and critiques of black men and women and white women.

As detailed in the previous chapter, the major coding clusters and themes present in

the evaluations of the three participants and my critical narratives were:

- Evolution
  - Discomfort as a Catalyst for Growth & Change
- Whiteness, Privilege, & Power Assertions
  - Maintaining Racial Isolation & Epistemology of Ignorance
  - Weaponized Silence
  - Attempts to Control the Conversation
  - Displays of Emotionality & Fragility
- PSTs Perceptions & Critiques of (Wo)men of Color
  - Performing & Erasing Black (Wo)manhood
  - Silencing Black Voices
  - Challenging Instructor Knowledge & Character
- Language of Resistance
  - Claims of Reverse Racism & Political Extremism

Figure 9 presents a summary of my findings, detailing how these clusters and themes relate

to the research questions.

Figure 9
Summary of Findings

Central Question: If/How PSTs Displayed Resistance	Question 1: How Resistance is Evident in Evaluations	Question 2: Common/Dissimilar Themes & Language
• *Evolution* • PSTs who did not show resistance, showed evolution through using discomfort as a starting point for growth. • *Commitment to Epistemology of Ignorance* • PSTs who were committed to maintaining their ideologies and ignorance concerning race and privilege showed resistance through critiques of instructors and course content. • *Critical Narratives* • Centering my own experiences as a woman of color in academia showed student resistance through a lens of black womanhood, also providing critical counter-stories to dominant white narratives.	• *Silence as a Weapon* • PSTs used silence as a means of controlling or ending discussions. • *Weaponized Evaluations* • PSTs used evaluations as weapons against instructors, attacking their instructional styles, content knowledge, and character. • *Privilege & Power Assertions* • PSTs asserted the power and privilege of whiteness through tactics of fragility and emotionality.	• *Common Themes* • PSTs displayed resistance and employed tactics of fragility and emotionality with all instructors. • *Dissimilar Themes* • Certain themes were present only with instructors of color. PSTs attempted to silence the voices of instructors of color. Instructors of color also experienced performing and erasing their identities. • *Language Choices* • PSTs used differing language choices to describe similar behaviors among women instructors. They also labeled instructor actions differently based on race.

Central Question

When evaluating diversity courses and instructors, specifically women and instructors of color, how, if at all, do undergraduate education students display resistance to learning about topics of diversity, social justice, and privilege?

From the evaluation and narrative data, I was able to conclude that pre-service teachers experienced learning about topics of diversity in a challenging and complex way. Notably, not all PSTs reacted to diversity and social justice education in the same way. While many pre-service teachers responded negatively to diversity instructors and content, some of these pre-service educators were able to work through the discomfort of this course of instruction in order to achieve progressive outcomes. Evaluation data showed that while acknowledging the difficulty of the course content and discussions, these PSTs embraced these challenges as opportunities for growth, emphasizing ideas such as working together for the common good and reasoning through issues in education. By acknowledging and critically examining racism and privilege, these students were able to

take steps toward becoming social justice minded educators committed to equity and anti-supremacy. As teacher educators, we must recognize the discomfort associated with social justice learning and respond pedagogically (Zembylas & Papmichael, 2017). Applebaum (2017) asserts, "A pedagogy of discomfort counters universal expectations that teachers must create comfortable environments for students and assumes that comfort can foreclose learning and obstruct change. Discomfort thus becomes synonymous with the possibility of individual and social transformation" (p. 863). Therefore, discomfort is a necessary catalyst for change. In the diversity course environment, this pedagogy of discomfort should involve a collaborative learning approach (Jupp et al., 2016) that encourages critical thinking and analysis as well as self-reflection. Acknowledging that social justice education can be difficult and uncomfortable for students, teacher educators should encourage PSTs to critically examine the roots of their discomfort and move away from the good/bad binary associated with confession to or rejection of racialized privilege (Lensmire et al., 2013; Tanner & Berchini, 2017).

My findings show that students who commit to this type of growth acknowledge and embrace the discomfort associated with it. These students commented on the difficulty of discussing such topics. However, they focused on the opportunity for growth and working together for a common good. Students asserted that Dr. Davis created an environment in which they could reason through issues in education and that I helped them find solutions that served the common good. There was evidence of a higher understanding of the objective of the material and acknowledgment of the instructors' attempts to help students work through adverse feelings and move toward a more positive outcome. These students seemed to understand the purpose of being exposed to these ideas and appreciate the

manner in which the instructors presented the material. Students stated that Dr. Bailey challenged them and helped them become more knowledgeable and open minded concerning social justice issues and how to address these issues in the classroom. So, instead of employing the white fragility tactic of positioning themselves as victims, these pre-service teachers seemed to feel empowered to bring about change. In order to encourage pre-service teachers to embrace the discomfort of learning about difficult subject matter, teacher educators must design content and interactions that focus on critically examining racial identity. Helping PSTs to view themselves as racial beings and to understand the systems and institutions that reinforce inequality will put less focus on individualism, allowing these PSTs to engage with social justice concepts in a meaningful way.

Many of the topics covered in this course, such as racism, sexism, privilege, anti-heteronormativity, and gender and sexual identity, were difficult to discuss. As shown in the course evals, students tended to have differing opinions from the instructors on several topics and, in turn, displayed resistance to learning about them. Based on previous research on diversity in education, it is clear that learning about diversity can be difficult for students and often causes adverse responses (Crosby, 2012; Rodriguez, 2009). These topics are often challenging for students, as they tend to be polarizing and bring about strong opinions and reactions from many people. Researchers have found that exploring diversity issues in class can lead to displays of resistance that disrupt student learning (Perry, et al., 2009; Tharp, 2015). Diversity instructors are often characterized as racially and politically biased. These instructors are accused of being bitter and discussing race too much, similar to the claims made against Dr. Davis and me. They also have their intelligence

and qualifications questioned by students (Boatright-Horowitz et al., 2012; Dunn et al., 2014; Martinez, 2014), an experience that is evident in Dr. Davis' evaluations. Pre-service teachers in the current study showed feelings of guilt and shame related to these topics. Findings revealed that these PSTs used evaluations to voice their displeasure with the course, material, and instructors. Additionally, narrative data showed that students pushed back against course content, such as the white privilege quiz, that they felt depicted white people as racist or bad.

Diversity and social justice education courses serve as a means of employing education to disrupt the power, privilege, and oppressive systems associated with whiteness. Tsang (2013) explained that despite legal action, such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964, discrimination and oppression are still very much a part of American society. Although it may not be as overt as it was once allowed to be, oppression is enabled by the societal and educational systems set in place. These systems also allow individuals to deny implicit biases and avoid challenging discussions. Because diversity education attempts to disrupt systems of privilege, it can cause feelings of resentment towards instructors, resulting in acts of resistance. Matias (2016) discussed teacher candidates' use of claims of reverse racism, demonstrations of annoyance with black people, and comparisons of minor experiences such as being stared at to the racialized experiences of black people. Similarly, Cabrera (2014) affirmed that white male students used claims of reverse racism and minimization of the struggles of marginalized beings in an effort to center themselves as victims and downplay their own privilege. This is evident in student claims of reverse racism against Dr. Davis, accusations that he and I both focused too much on race, and descriptions of instructors as aggressive or uncompromising.

From the narrative and evaluation data used in this study, it is evident that students displayed resistance through their actions, writing, and evaluations of instructors. By employing critical narratives to center my experiences as a woman of color in academia, I provide a view of resistance and racialized interactions from a perspective counter to the dominant white narrative. This data demonstrates the need for approaches to diversity and social justice education that center the experiential knowledge of men and women of color while also focusing on dismantling oppressive systems and institutions. Dunn et al. (2014) explains the importance of this disruption:

> Issues of race, language, sexuality, and the intersectionality of these and other identities are omnipresent in PK–12 schools, yet until they are made explicit to future teachers, those with power will maintain it, and those without power will have a harder time accessing it (p. 98).

So, in order to effect change in the educational system, teacher educators must first critically engage pre-service teachers with social justice issues.

Question 1

In what ways is resistance to learning about topics of diversity, social justice, and privilege evidenced in student course evaluations?

Similar to the findings in previous studies (Crosby, 2012; Perry et al., 2009; Rodriguez, 2009), my findings show that pre-service teachers responded to learning about topics of diversity by displaying resistance, negative attitudes, and stereotypical language toward instructors. Student evaluation responses indicated that students held a significant amount of resentment toward instructors. PSTs did not like what they perceived as instructors' opinions on the topics presented during the semester. Students felt that the

ideas discussed in class were instructors' personal and political opinions, as opposed to historically based, factual accounts of past and present systemic oppression. PSTs also expressed a desire to keep certain conversations separate from class discussion. Student resistance is evidenced in the use of hostile silence, weaponizing evaluations against instructors, and displays of emotionality and fragility.

Resistance Tactic 1: A Quiet Defense

Through observation as an TA and an instructor, I confirmed white students' use of silence as a means of avoiding uncomfortable discussions in class. Crosby (2012) explained, "White students were confronted with viewing the United States from perspectives, structures, and laws that enforced exclusion and inequality, not the democratic values of inclusion and equality they were taught. Thus, they experienced cognitive dissonance, which resulted in resisting the class and me" (p. 94). Pre-service teachers in the current study affirmed in their evaluations that they avoided speaking in class due to feelings of embarrassment, guilt, and shame. They also wanted to silence comments from instructors that these students perceived as biased or judgmental. Ladson-Billings (1996) explained that in discussion-centered classes, student silence can prevent growth and understanding. The author also described student use of silence and dismissive body language to silence another student who was outspoken on issues of race and gender. When hostile silence is used, white students then control how the class flows and what can be done. Silence becomes a weapon by which these students can assert power over the instructor and other students. DiAngelo (2018) explained that silence and withdrawal, among other acts of emotionality, "push race off the table, help white men retain control of the discussion, end the challenge to their positions, and reassert their dominance" (p. 135).

Silence can be used as a defense mechanism by white students as well as students of color. Barnett (2011) asserted that both black and white students were reluctant to speak in class for fear of being judged by their peers:

> Suddenly it made sense that the difficult conversations were taking place privately, during my office hours, where black students often confronted me with resentments and fears, in part perhaps seeing me as a proxy for the whites in the room or in American society. Equally interesting, white students came to office hours often seeking my approval and absolution for their feelings of guilt about their white privilege (p.670).

Students in the current study displayed and wrote about this same reluctance to speak. In my diversity course, there were only two black students. These students rarely spoke in class, one was habitually absent. On the first day of class, as students were introducing their seat partners, I realized and blurted out that this student had taken my younger cousin to prom the previous year. Although we developed a good rapport and he was familiar with my family, he was still reluctant to speak during class discussion. In studying diversity teaching and learning, it is important to understand how pre-service teachers of color experience learning about diversity and social justice, especially in a white dominant environment. Students of color often feel frustration, fear, resentment, and anger at not being heard or having to defend their stances and their humanity against white supremacist ideology (Applebaum, 2017; Barnett, 2011). With the course being so focused on privilege and the mistreatment of marginalized bodies, was I creating a space where black and white students alike used silence as a defense? Was it easier, or necessary for self-preservation, for black students to remain silent or simply not show up for class?

While evaluation data confirmed that students in each participant's classes used silence as a weapon, these students blamed instructor's attitudes and statements, even accusing instructors of being condescending or harassing students. Students felt frustration and condemnation, but were uncomfortable expressing these things aloud during the semester. Pre-service teachers took on the role of the victim, being forced to listen to incongruous ideas and not being allowed to express their own beliefs openly. They viewed factual accounts presented in course readings and discussion as beliefs of the instructor, avowing that their own beliefs were equally deserving of being considered. In this way PSTs attempted to diminish or dispute the knowledge and authority of the instructor. CRT and CRF assert the need for recognition of the experiential knowledge of people of color. This means that the experiences and narratives of people of color, which are often dismissed in favor of the white dominant narrative, are useful tools of education and analysis and should be valued as such (Childers-Mckee & Hytten, 2015; Dixson & Rousseau, 2005). My use of critical narratives supports this assertion by countering the dominant narrative and also positioning my experiences as learning tools for teacher educators.

Since so much of the material for this course focuses on the experiences of the marginalized, white PSTs dismissed these accounts as opinion or isolated incidents. PSTs also exhibited a desire to express their beliefs without criticism or challenge. Not being able to do so created a space for feelings of being dominated. Silence, it seems, was their only immediate weapon of defense against the uncomfortable subject matter and instructors who insisted on engaging them and calling out their privilege and misinformed ideologies. As indicated in the narrative data, weaponized silence was an immediate and effective defense, silencing class discussions and even altering the course format and activities. For

example, student silence influenced the change in my course format from primarily discussion-based to more activity-based. Once end of course evaluations became available, they were used as a means of justifying this silence, displaying anger, and attaining retribution against instructors.

DiAngelo (2018) explains that resistance is the result of the insulation provided by being white, "White people seldom find themselves without this protection. Or if they do, it is because they have chosen to temporarily step outside this area of safety. But within the insulated environment of racial privilege, whites both expect racial comfort and become less tolerant of racial stress" (p. 100). In diversity education courses, pre-service teachers are exposed to racial stress sometimes for the first time, which can be difficult. Lensmire et al. (2013) explain that the focus on individual acts and the task of confessing to privilege often present in diversity coursework can add to student resistance. Even students who are interested in doing the work to become social justice minded educators can be overwhelmed by the perceived assertion that they themselves are bad and are associated with racism. My findings suggest that in designing diversity courses teacher educators should acknowledge the discomfort necessary for growth while also considering the complexity of racial identity. While studying the effects of racism and privilege are essential in diversity learning, we must also create an environment where pre-service educators are able to work through difficult feelings and focus on the institutions and systems associated with maintaining marginalization.

Resistance Tactic 2: Weaponizing Evaluations

Students often use evaluations of instructors to display resistance to diversity topics (Crosby, 2012; Evans-Winters & Twyman Hoff, 2011; Tharp, 2015). These evaluations

serve as a means of asserting their power over instructors. Since these evaluations are used in promotion and tenure decisions (Goos & Salomons, 2017; Oon et al., 2017), they can be used by students and other faculty to bully untenured faculty into conformity (Rodriguez, 2019). Each participant in this study received critiques in which students made attempts at such power assertions. Students qualified their negative statements by noting that they usually would not leave negative comments for a professor, or the professor was a nice person but unqualified or too opinionated. Students also asserted power by noting that they would tell others not to take this instructor's class or that they would be going to the dean about the instructor. As shown in the narrative data, PSTs (and their parents) also asserted power through complaints against Dr. Bailey's TA, Ashley, and through showing up to class to stage a walk out. This group of students later used evaluations to portray Ashley negatively and to criticize Dr. Bailey's failure to defend them against Ashley.

Although students are often unaware to what extent course evaluations influence promotions and retention, they do presume to know that a negative evaluation can affect employment. This was evident in Dr. Davis' evaluations where students mentioned numerous times that he made statements about being tenured, and therefore not affected by negative evaluations. Dr. Davis' tenure statement took power from the weaponized evaluation. While student evaluations are used in promotion and tenure decisions (Johnson et al., 2013), Dr. Davis already having tenure meant that students couldn't use negative evaluations to get him fired, as many of their statements indicated was their desire. However, this did not thwart students' efforts to use these evaluations against him. Students framed Dr. Davis' statement about having tenure as boasting and made pleas for some higher authority to read their critiques and take action. Dr. Davis is positioned as an

outsider who does not belong and does not fit the university's standards. This positioning

represents a covert form of racism through discourse known as othering, which dictates

who belongs and who is an outsider (Chadderton, 2013). By designating Dr. Davis as an

outsider, PSTs asserted power while calling upon a white voice of superiority to reify this

power and perceived superiority.

Resistance Tactic 3: Emotionality and Fragility

As evidenced in the weaponizing of instructor evaluations, white students often

perform resistance through emotional and defensive responses. Matias (2016) described

the feelings of shame, guilt, and defensiveness that white people experience during racial

discussions as emotionality. According to DiAngelo (2011),

> White Fragility is a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes
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> intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward
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> display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as
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> argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors,
>
> in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium (54).

The emotional responses to the evaluation prompt used in this study showed how white

emotionality and fragility are present in evaluating instructors of diversity courses. These

pre-service teachers experienced learning about topics of diversity by internalizing feelings

of shame, guilt, and victimization. PSTs stated that they left my class feeling shame and guilt

due to things I said. Students accused Dr. Davis of reverse racism and being biased against

white students. Additionally, PSTs noted feelings of misery at having to sit through what

they perceived as Dr. Bailey attempting to brainwash them. Many of the topics covered in

this particular diversity course were polarizing issues that many students did not have

experience discussing in what could be perceived as an oppositional environment. Instructors presented students with new information and often pushed back on students' expressions of their beliefs. So, students were uncomfortable with these discussions and the feelings this dialogue evoked.

Instead of being able to learn from the content being presented, pre-service teachers seemed to take on the idea that the course was aimed at making them feel bad or forcing them to share the same opinions as the instructors. Data revealed that students expressed feelings of indignity, culpability, and discomfort. PSTs described being blamed for past transgressions that were not legitimate and asserted that Dr. Davis and Dr. Bailey imposed their personal beliefs on them. Students also claimed that I made them feel shame for being white and Dr. Davis focused on white individuals being bad. As DiAngelo (2018) asserted, "When ideologies such as color blindness, meritocracy, and individualism are challenged, intense emotional reactions are common" (p. 100). Zembylas (2017) added that these emotional responses are brought on by studying the difficult histories associated with white identity. Yet, instead of addressing the fact that they were uncomfortable with the ideas being presented, students directed their anger towards the instructors. For this reason, instructors were often portrayed as uncompromising and judgmental. Students also used stereotypical identifiers to describe the black instructors, accusing me of eye rolling and snide remarks and accusing Dr. Davis of being lazy and making misogynistic comments. This accusation of misogyny functions similarly to white women's tears, positioning the white woman as an innocent victim who deserves sympathy. Matias (2016) explains, "Plainly stated, society falls to its knees when White women cry because their pain is felt by society at large in the way we all grieve with the Virgin Mary in

Michelangelo's *Pieta*" (p. 9). So, a white woman crying, or accusing a black man of misogyny, positions her as needing to be protected from this perceived threat.

Students showed irritation with the instructors expressing their feelings, while simultaneously wanting their own opinions to be heard and their feelings to be placed at the forefront. While this anger and discomfort is a display of white fragility and emotionality, it may also represent a call to action for teacher educators. One important need is a more diverse representation among teacher education faculty and students. Additionally, teacher educators must create learning environments in which students understand that discomfort is not a matter of good or bad, but a catalyst for change. PSTs should be able to critically examine inequitable systems and ideologies, gaining understanding of how these systems privilege whiteness and why these systems should be dismantled. In order to position white students to do the work of facing difficult histories and unearned privileges, teacher educators must also engage white students in discourse and activities that focus on social justice oriented work but also consider the complexity of white identity (Mason, 2016). This means that teacher educators must focus on critical examinations of whiteness and privilege, emphasizing a cooperative approach to teaching and learning about race, racism, and privilege and positioning students to explore their own identities and view themselves as racialized beings (Jupp et al., 2016). Additionally, teacher educators must consider how an approach to social justice education that emphasizes confession and individualism, instead of focusing on anti-racist action and critical analysis, could negatively impact student learning and lead students to believe that simply confessing is all they need to do (Berchini, 2017; Lensmire et al., 2013). Further, disrupting the whiteness of teacher education will help foster respect for the knowledge

and experiences of instructors and students of color. While it is important for white teacher educators to emphasize social justice education, it is also necessary to have men and women of color as professors of varying courses, including but not limited to diversity and social justice courses. White teacher educators should encourage this disruption through scholarship and instructional content and practices, and work to create supportive environments for scholars of color.

Question 2

What common or differing themes and language are present in evaluations of diversity courses when students evaluate women and instructors of color as opposed to evaluating men and white instructors?

The presence of some of the aforementioned themes differed based on the race and gender of the instructor. All instructor evaluations showed instances of pre-service teachers embracing discomfort as a catalyst for growth. All instructors also experienced students' attempts to maintain racial isolation and an epistemology of ignorance, use weaponized silence, and control the conversation. White fragility and emotionality could also be seen in all instructors' evaluations. Autoethnographic data further demonstrated these instances of student resistance. Critical narratives showed pre-service teachers' lack of racial awareness as well as the ways they used silence and tactics of emotionality and fragility to control or silence conversations about race, privilege, and marginalized groups. The major differences in theme were in performing and silencing black voices and minimizing the knowledge and qualifications of the instructor. Critical autoethnography aided in centering my experiences of being asked to perform blackness on command and attempts at silencing my voice. Dr. Davis and I were both said to discuss race too much,

which functioned to silence the voices and minimize the experiences of a man and woman of color. Dr. Davis experienced attacks on his character as well as questioning of his knowledge and qualifications. He was even compared to a white instructor who was deemed a better candidate for diversity instruction. Critical Whiteness Studies, Critical Race Theory, and Critical Race Feminism attribute these differences to the influence of whiteness in conversations about race (Matias et al., 2014) and the unique experiences of men and women of color (Childers-Mckee & Hytten, 2015; Dixson & Rousseau, 2005).

There were also noticeable differences in the language used to describe instructors. The language of critique is an important aspect as it reveals covert differences in the ways instructors are critiqued. DiAngelo (2018) described the use of racially coded language as aversive racism. This means that white people are enacting racism subtly, so that they are able to preserve a positive self-image. Coded language is also used to assign positive or negative connotation when describing the same types of actions and attitudes. For example, students used differing language to describe the same types of actions from black and white instructors. The major differences in the language of critique were the use of stereotypical language and claims of reverse racism vs. political extremism.

Language Theme 1:
Stereotypical Language: The Provocative Educator vs. The Angry Black (Wo)Man

There was an overt difference in the way similar critiques were made of the two women instructors. Whereas Dr. Bailey was described as opinionated and not showing discretion about her personal opinions, I was said to be rude, roll my eyes, and make snide remarks. Not only could students not separate their ideas about the topics from the instructors, but they also could not separate their views of the stereotypical opinionated

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black woman from the reality of an instructor who challenged their problematic beliefs. It was seen as disrespectful not to tell them that their views were okay.

When describing similar ideas about Dr. Bailey and I, the language was noticeably different. A student asserted, "Dr. [Bailey] was challenging and provocative in a good way. She made the class interesting and opened my eyes.". Dr. Bailey was also described as caring and kind. On the other hand, my description conveyed similar ideas, but with a negative connotation: "Mrs. Lazenby was very "in your face" about a lot of the topics we discussed in class." Ladson-Billings (1996) noted this difference in perception when an African American woman teaches issues of race, class, and gender. African American women are often critiqued harshly and accused of being bitter or imposing their own political agenda and personal interests. Conversely, our white colleagues are often perceived as scholarly and objective. Students used positive language to describe Dr. Bailey's challenges to their ideologies, even noting that the material was important to her. When Dr. Bailey exhibited hostility toward me, as explained in the narrative data, there was no mention of the interaction or her aggression in the evaluations. She was not portrayed as angry or combative, as students simply opted not to discuss the incident. Conversely, I was described with language that indicated anger and combativeness, despite my efforts to present a more palatable, or whitewashed, version of myself in interactions with students.

Through a lens of Critical Race Feminism, the differences in language choices to convey similar ideas, the framing of white passion vs. black aggression, speaks to the effects of white supremacist ideologies on black women in academia. Similarly, Dr. Davis was depicted as angry and uncompromising, only interested in interacting with those who agreed with his ideas. Dr. Davis was often described as funny, and in some instances, he

was said to be a nice man; however, it was followed by a negative critique. These criticisms were akin to the semantic games highlighted in Critical Whiteness Studies, similar to saying "I'm not racist, but" (Cabrera, 2014). In this way, pre-service teachers attempt to position themselves on the right side of the good/bad binary (DiAngelo, 2018), while also expressing racialized views. In describing Dr. Davis as nice or funny, these pre-service teachers used hedging statements that aimed to make their negative critiques less racially offensive.

Language Theme 2:
Reverse Racism vs. Political Extremism

Although each participant received negative critiques related to the course content and the instructor's presentation of this content, there was a definite difference in these criticisms. Dr. Davis and I were framed as having an agenda focused on race. We were both said to discuss race too much, and Dr. Davis was accused of being racist against white people. These claims of reverse racism are similar to those chronicled in Critical Whiteness Studies as white victimhood, attempts at repositioning white people as the actual victims of racial discrimination (DiAngelo, 2018; Picower, 2009). Dr. Bailey, on the other hand, was said to be pushing a political agenda when discussing her views on social justice. She was described as too opinionated and uncompromising and even encouraged to keep her views hidden, but she was not referred to as racist. This demonstrates the Critical Race Theory standpoint that the experiences of people of color are unique and greatly affected by institutionalized racism. Adding to this assertion, Critical Race Feminism emphasizes that the experiences of women of color differ greatly from those of white women. Additionally, the differences in the language and claims made in these assessments of perceived

instructor bias support critical race scholars who explain the restrictive perceptions of black instructors, who are accused of having racially discriminatory agendas.

Discussion

Studies of student resistance to social justice and diversity education have shown that white students have complex reactions to learning about diversity and social justice (Brayboy, 2003; Crosby, 2012; Tharp, 2015). These students often display resistance through silence, emotionality, and negative critiques of the instructor (Evans-Winters & Twyman Hoff, 2011; Matias, 2013). Findings from this study affirm the complexity of student experiences in a diversity course. Students experienced discomfort, emotionality, and fragility. They reacted by using weaponized silence, making racialized statements in class and in their writing, and critiquing instructors harshly. There were students in these classes who embraced the discomfort necessary in growth. However, other students used evaluations to lash out at instructors. Although this study confirms what has been established in the literature, it goes further in offering an analysis of student displays of resistance through evaluations along with the narratives of my experiences as an instructor and TA. Centering my experiences as a woman of color in academia allowed me to analyze the data through a unique lens while also countering the dominant white narrative. In doing so, I realized the impact of my own critical narratives within education scholarship. Accordingly, I offer an analysis that shows the differences in the ways a black woman, a black man, and a white woman teaching the same course were evaluated. Using CWS, CRT, CRF, and Critical Autoethnography, I demonstrate how whiteness, fragility, and emotionality are present in pre-service teachers' evaluation of and interactions with

women and instructors of color, indicating the need for more men and women of color in teacher education.

The three participants in this study represented different racial and gender identities, as well as varying ages and levels of experience. While each participant was perceived uniquely by students, there were also similarities in the ways these instructors were critiqued. Though gender was a potential influence on evaluations, instructor race was an apparent factor in these assessments. Findings revealed that the power and privilege of whiteness are pervasive disruptions in social justice education. This study also shows that evaluations are weaponized against diversity instructors, with racialized, sometimes coded, language being used to describe instructors of color. This affirms the distinctiveness of the experiences and critiques of instructors of color, particularly women. As a woman of color, Matias (2016) explains, "I painfully attest that teaching in a white institution with White colleagues and White students is "traumatic," an experience that relentlessly terrorizes my heart, soul, and psyche on a daily basis" (p. 10). In a similar expression of the stress of navigating a white dominant space, my use of critical autoethnography demonstrates how my blackness and womanness encountered whiteness and privilege in the diversity education classroom. These narratives provide insight into student resistance and the societal and institutional systems that privilege whiteness and undermine the value of the knowledge of women and instructors of color.

Implications for Future Research

In this study, I examined evaluations of three instructors of the same diversity course for pre-service educators. The participants were a black woman, a white woman, and a black man. Using Critical Whiteness Studies, Critical Race Theory, Critical Race

Feminism, and Critical Autoethnography, I looked for ways pre-service teachers displayed resistance to learning about diversity and social justice. Although the major data source for this study was student evaluations of instructors, I also used narratives from my TA and teaching journals, as well as my own memories, as an evaluative lens, giving insight into classroom occurrences and ideologies of pre-service teachers and providing critical counter-stories that demonstrate the racialized and gendered experiences of women of color in academia.

To build on this work, future researchers could include more participants of varying race and gender, with more than one participant from each category. It is worth noting that while my potential participant pool included white men, those individuals declined to participate in the study. A point of potential research exploration could be the reluctance of instructors, even those with very little to lose, to participate in such a study and the ways the institutionalized power of whiteness is present in this refusal. Additionally, researchers may explore how an instructor's sexual identity may influence evaluations. Future researchers could also include interviews with participants, focus groups, or classroom observations. Data concerning specific student demographics could also be collected.

While research should aim to disrupt the dominant white narrative, it is also important to understand how pre-service teachers perceive their own identities and how this perception affects their teaching and learning. I have learned through this study that there is a need to take diversity and social justice education beyond an understanding of privilege and disadvantage, taking into account how elements of confession and individualism affect student learning. Teacher educators must guide PSTs in critically navigating the complexities of their own identities, examining the relationship of those

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identities to racialized systems and institutions, and exploring the intricacies and lasting effects of race and privilege. Building on my work, teacher educators should aim to balance the discomfort of difficult learning with an understanding of the complexity of racial identity. Schools of education should create opportunities for social justice oriented learning and diversity exposure throughout the curriculum, while also strengthening diversity coursework by extending it beyond one required course.

As a focus for my own continued research, I would like to explore the imperativeness of the disruption of whiteness in teacher education, as well as the need for more support for women of color pursuing careers in higher education, specifically English Language Arts education as well as social justice and diversity education. To further my research on the unique experiences of women of color being evaluated by white students, I would like to observe in-class interactions as a preface to examining evaluations. This would provide the type of narrative data included in this study across each participant's dataset. It would also make the researcher privy to specific interactions referenced in evaluations.

Conclusion

The findings of this study present a view of the ways pre-service teachers use evaluations as tools of resistance in diversity courses. The study shows how instructors of different race and gender teaching the same diversity course are evaluated by students. There were similarities and differences in the ways instructors were evaluated. Although there were other factors that contributed to negative evaluations of instructors, such as grading procedures, many of the negative critiques focused on the course content and statements made by instructors. Students exhibited emotionality and fragility in their

critiques, demands, and directives. Students also expressed perceptions of instructors' expertise on topics as being these instructors' personal and political opinions. Following our current political administration's tendency toward labeling unpleasant facts as fake news, these white pre-service teachers downplayed the existence and effects of societal systems of power and privilege by mislabeling facts as opinions.

This study builds on the work of critical race scholars who have examined white student resistance to social justice education. This work is important in that it allows teacher educators to study, prepare for, and combat such instances of resistance. It also allows teacher researchers to understand student resistance and apply ideological approaches meant to help pre-service teachers develop as culturally competent educators.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I situate my study findings within English Language Arts education research. I begin by reflecting on my educational and personal experiences as a student, an English educator of primarily black students, and as a graduate student and teaching assistant in a primarily white institution, giving insight into my journey of becoming a social justice educator and scholar in English teacher education. Next, I discuss how my work contributes to diversity and social justice education within English teacher education and provide recommendations for English teacher preparation as well as directions for English education scholarship. I center the experiences and counter-stories of men and women of color in academia as evidence of the need for interrupting the whiteness of teacher education and English teacher education. Lastly, I consider my work as it relates to advancing ELA teacher education scholarship.

Reflections on My Personal and Professional Transformation

I conceived this study based on a desire to make sense of evaluations of my teaching that painted me in a negative light. While I did not expect to find similar evaluations of the more experienced teacher researchers, I thought examining these evaluations might show me what I was doing wrong, or as I later discovered, what I might be doing right. As an English Language Arts teacher educator, my goal has always been to ensure my students were engaging with language and texts in meaningful ways and making progress toward our learning goals while understanding that each of their students will bring a unique identity and differing background experiences into the classroom. Teaching this diversity course challenged me in so many ways. It was frustrating and tiring, yet somehow fulfilling. At times I felt that I was doing the necessary work to effect change. However, there was a

point during my time instructing the diversity course that I wanted to quit white academia all together. This feeling was exacerbated when I saw how students described me in evaluations. I determined that I wanted to study and work in an environment where people would embrace and understand me. And while it remains absolutely essential for me to support and help men and women of color in academia, I have concluded that helping them navigate and succeed in a system that I survived, while also educating pre-service teachers toward the disruption of these power relations, would be the most meaningful use of my education and experiences.

In conducting this study, I focused on my experiences and evaluations in juxtaposition to those of instructors of different identities. In doing so, I wanted to show how the experiences of instructors of color differ from those of white instructors and provide an argument for disrupting the whiteness of teacher education, specifically English Language Arts education. Preparing the autoethnographic narratives was an opportunity to reflect on my own experiences as a student and educator. These experiences shaped the way I approached my role as an educator and teacher educator and fueled my desire to interrupt the whiteness of the education system and center the voices of the marginalized. As a primary and secondary student, I excelled. I wrote well and spoke in a manner that showed my primarily white teachers that I was smart and had mastered what was then termed correct English. I knew when and how to turn my ghetto black girl off (which I now see as problematic since it privileges white identity and SAE as correct and superior). As an English major at a primarily white university, I excelled for the same reasons. I even made it through my alternative master's program in English Education without much critical reflection on how my blackness functioned in these spaces, but with the unspoken

knowledge that successfully navigating this environment meant presenting a white washed version of myself. Haddix (2015) describes a similar thought process in her own teaching:

> Becoming a teacher, I internalized the understanding that I was to make deliberate language choices and decisions based on specific time-place constructs. In other words, African American Language (AAL) was relegated to my home and social contexts, and an academic English, or what was deemed a more "standard" form of English, was required in my role as a secondary English teacher. In order to be an effective educator, I thought I needed to mark clear lines between these different worlds. I internalized a belief that speaking African American Language somehow diminished my intellectual and teaching ability as well as my authority as an English teacher (pp. 1-2).

As noted in my critical narratives, I experienced this same type of conflict between my personal and academic/professional identities. I removed elements of my blackness from my academic self. I spoke, acted, dressed, and styled my hair in the ways I felt were most palatable for the majority white educators and pre-service educators in my program.

As a secondary teacher, I taught in an all black school. I related to my students on a personal level and we worked well together. I taught them that there was no such thing as correct English and that while we would master Standard American English in the classroom, they should never let anyone tell them that the way they spoke was wrong. I encouraged them to write narratives that included character dialogue so that they could incorporate different vernacular. I took pride in being a role model for my students, in building lasting relationships with them. Conversely, the relationships I formed with my white peers in graduate school were superficial and very seldom continued outside of the

classroom; but I never concerned myself with these relationships. My academic life was separate from my real life. I was there for a purpose, and like so many black women before me, I was determined to keep my head down and push forward. As noted in my critical narratives on performing and erasing black womanhood, I performed my blackness in a way that allowed me to fade into the background of the white educational environment. Similar to the pre-service teachers in Haddix's (2012) study, being the only black woman in the room evoked deliberate silence on issues of race and careful language choices when engaging with my peers.

As a doctoral student, my identity as an outsider became even more apparent. The sentiment that I needed to prove myself as an educator and as a scholar seems to always be present. As a graduate teaching assistant, I was careful to show my most palatable and whitewashed self. I had to be sure my professors and advisors, most of whom I didn't relate to much, thought I was good enough to engage in this pursuit successfully. I also had to be sure my students didn't question my intelligence or authority, an experience evidenced in my findings of students attempting to minimize the expertise and qualifications of a black professor and dismissing instructors' subject matter expertise as personal or political opinions. Through conducting this study, I have learned how whiteness, racism, and privilege have influenced my experiences in education. I also learned how social justice education and scholarship contribute to ELA education and scholarship.

The importance of my presence and scholarship in English Language Arts teacher education and in diversity and social justice education has become more apparent during the process of conducting this study. A diversity course like the one studied here should serve as one of many opportunities to engage pre-service English teachers with concepts of

diversity and social justice. In my work as a diversity and social justice educator and researcher, I realized the importance of my voice, my experiences, and even my emotions. Johnson (2017) explains the importance of black educators owning our feelings in a white dominant society that depicts our emotions as weakness. Although I was reluctant to share my experiences because of my desire not to be seen as weak, this study allowed me to explore Critical Autoethnography as an essential and bold form of scholarship. Furthermore, I was able to see how diversity topics affect students' views of other instructors in similar ways as my students had viewed me. I also learned a great deal about the similar experiences of black women in higher education. Research shows that black women frequently face resistance and have their credibility challenged. They also receive negative critiques similar to the ones I received. I studied the ways these educators had worked through and attempted to combat instances of student resistance. One of the most important things I learned was the ideology of comforting discomfort. I learned that it is okay for students to be uncomfortable as a part of their process of growth and development; however, it is necessary to consider how emotionality affects the learning process. Moving forward, I will use the knowledge I gained from this study to build on my own research but also to improve my classroom practices.

Through conducting this study, I began to establish myself as a social justice educator and researcher within English Language Arts Teacher Education. My objective is to work within the space where language and literature meet equity and social justice. I am particularly interested in the usefulness of children's and young adult literature as tools for introducing diversity and social justice issues. The narrative data showed that PSTs were receptive to the stories of marginalized groups when presented through children's

literature, especially if that literature was more subtle in its representation of the issues. This literature allowed them to process content in a less guarded, less resistant way. For example, PSTs showed understanding and sympathy for the two male penguins who wanted to be parents, even though they had previously expressed that homosexuality went against their religious beliefs. I believe that a major goal of English Language Arts teacher education should be producing social justice minded ELA educators who can critically examine their racial socialization and aim to create culturally and socially equitable learning environments for a diverse student population. This can be accomplished through continued scholarship and course designs that focus on teaching about racism, privilege, and marginalized identities, as well as dismantling white supremacist systems in society and education.

Connections Between My Research and Current ELA Education Scholarship

In this study, I endeavored to examine if and how pre-service teachers displayed resistance to topics of diversity, social justice, and equity. Because English Language Arts offers a space for teachers and students to explore language, literature, and educational content of and for diverse student populations, social justice education is an important aspect of ELA education. As Tanner and Berchini (2017) explained, scholarship that explores resistance, contempt, and other negative reactions to examinations of whiteness and privilege can prove beneficial in the English education environment, particularly to educators working to challenge white supremacy in educational institutions.

Understanding student resistance provides insight into how to effectively have conversations that may challenge students' belief systems, especially those based on white supremacist beliefs. English Education scholars highlight the need to address issues of race,

gender, and social justice in ELA education (Borsheim-Black, 2015; Haddix, 2016; Johnson et al., 2017; Tanner & Berchini, 2017). My work with social justice education is in dialogue with the following issues within ELA education scholarship:

- Teaching and Learning about Race & Racism
- The Intersection of Curriculum & Marginalized Identities
- The Importance of Critical Counter-Storytelling
- Preparing Social Justice Minded ELA educators

Teaching and Learning about Race & Racism

English Education scholars assert the need to address racial issues in English classrooms (Borsheim-Black, 2015; Tanner & Berchini, 2017; Thomas, 2015). Borsheim-Black (2015) explains that because racism is a topic in many commonly taught novels, teachers have to decide how and to what extent they will discuss racism within their literature curricula. This decision is important in that it sets the tone for how and what many students learn about racism. My findings show that PSTs avoided discussions of race, racism, and privilege, and favored a more subtle approach to social justice education. Similar to diversity education, literature studies that involve race and racism can evoke feelings of guilt and frustration, causing displays of emotionality, fragility, and resistance. Thomas (2015) pointed out, "There is considerable confusion in contemporary society when it comes to talking about race. Because of this confusion, race talk in schools can be fraught with difficulty, leading to problematic conversations, disconnections, and ultimately student disengagement" (p. 154). My findings show the confusion and discomfort PSTs exhibited when the conversation was about race and privilege. They viewed these discussions as either political or the racialized agenda of the black instructor, and they often disconnected from the conversation through weaponized silence. Pre-

service English educators must be equipped to not only promote effective discussions among their students, but to also face their own feelings and ideologies concerning race, racism, and privilege.

My study findings show that pre-service teachers exhibited white fragility and emotionality when faced with discussions of race, racism, and privilege. These students used hostile silence and stereotypical critiques of black instructors. They stated that the black instructors were discussing race too much and the white instructor was being too political. Additional, pre-service teachers described instructors as biased and uncompromising, and labeled the instructors' subject matter expertise as personal opinion being taught as fact. Tanner and Berchini (2017) described similar responses to Berchini's writing about whiteness in education as violent and irrational. The authors noted,

> Very few of the reactions to her piece were productive; many responses called educators' knowledge into question in a general sense, while other attacks were deeply personal, one even referring to Christina as a "rookie punk". We have also faced opposition to our research during our academic job searches and through the peer-review process with regard to scholarship (p. 41).

White fragility and emotionality are evident in the personal attacks made against the author. The prevalence of the power and privilege of whiteness in education is also shown through opposition to the researchers' scholarship. In my findings, I noted similar displays of emotionality and fragility in criticisms of instructors and positioning of their knowledge as opinions.

Johnson (2017) describes the need for a disruption of the dysconscious racism that accepts the normalization of whiteness and privilege. The researcher explains that "the

physical and symbolic violence and erasure of Black bodies illustrate the urgency to center

discussions and the lived experiences in our teacher education courses around race,

racism, and the working of white supremacy" (p. 477). Educators of color face the challenge

of centering our voices and experiences in an effort to disrupt the whiteness and

institutionalized racism of teacher education. As shown in my findings, social justice

instructors, particularly instructors of color, had their subject matter expertise and

credibility challenged and their motives questioned. White PSTs positioned themselves as

victims and were resistant to the course content and instructors. Critical narratives served

to center my voice and experiential knowledge. This provides evidence of the value of the

narratives of instructors of color in education and scholarship. So, in order to effect change,

white PSTs and teacher educators must be willing to do the work of dismantling oppressive

systems, including committing to critically examining issues of diversity and social justice.

They must also respect people of color as knowledge producers and reiterate the

importance of the voices and contributions of marginalized individuals.

The Intersection of Curriculum & Marginalized Identities

My findings showed the significance of the tension of race and gender in the

classroom. Race and gender of the instructor influenced student resistance as well as the

ways they displayed this resistance. Students accused instructors of color of discussing

race too much, while the white instructor was said to be too political. These identities can

also influence instructional practices as well as how instructors and students interact with

texts and other course content (Johnson, 2017; Tanner & Berchini, 2017).

The curriculum in K-12 schools and higher education institutions has historically

been centered on whiteness, which marginalizes the voices of students of color, kills their

spirits, and excludes them as knowledge producers (Johnson, 2017, p. 482). In English

Language Arts classrooms, the study of language and literature provides the opportunity to

incorporate a variety of texts that focus on marginalized identities and varying identities

and dialect, parallel to the focus of diversity and social justice education. The diversity of

language and dialect creates a space for growth and learning that incorporates varied

literature and language studies. However, white dominant ideologies reproduce content

that excludes diverse linguistic and literary choices. The traditional focus on canonical

literature and standard American English further perpetuates disregard for marginalized

voices. Because language and vocabulary mastery play such a major role in English

education, it is important to acknowledge and incorporate diverse dialectical styles in

order to empower student identity and disrupt existing power systems (Morrell, 2005).

Johnson, Bryan, & Boutte (2018) characterize the marginalization and policing of black

vernacular as linguistic violence, promoted through privileging standard, or white, English.

In order to disrupt these acts of violence, teacher educators must first work to disrupt the

whiteness of teacher education.

Critical Whiteness Studies emphasizes how ideas and associations of whiteness

impact our society and educational system (Applebaum, 2016; Cabrera, 2014; Matias &

Mackey, 2016). Introducing white dominant literature and language as normative and

correct advances this influence. My findings show this impact in the stereotypical

descriptions of black instructors, the silencing of black voices, and attempts to minimize

the impact of race on education and the necessity of discussions of race. These findings

support ELA scholars' focus on the importance of curricula that incorporates diverse

identities and language and that depicts people of color in a positive manner.

ELA scholars have explored the impact that a curriculum based in whiteness has on black children. The voices of students of color are silenced when the curriculum reflects white dominant narratives and ideologies. Johnson et al. (2017) assert that white educators often question the relevance of race to literacy, reject the scholarship of people of color, and fail to recognize people of color as knowledge holders and producers. This, along with a commitment to canonical literature, reinforces white supremacist ideologies and inhibits the growth of students and educators of color. My findings show that when pre-service teachers are receptive to learning about social justice and diversity, they are able to make progress toward change. However, when they are resistant, they often refuse to acknowledge the importance of disrupting white dominant ideologies. Haddix (2016) explains that educators must understand their roles in maintaining or disrupting these ideologies and the impact this has on the lives of children. This includes views concerning language and literacy. White supremacist ideologies have a considerable influence on educational systems and classroom practices. In the same way that I learned to whitewash my presence and voice as a student and educator, students who encounter teachers, specifically English teachers, who are not attentive to diverse identities and language can see whiteness as a superior influence to which they must conform. English teacher educators must encourage current and future educators to implement ideological and curricular practices and designs that center the experiences of the marginalized.

Conflicting Narratives: The Importance of Critical Counter-Storytelling

In my research, I employed Critical Autoethnography as a means of centering the experiences of men and women of color in higher education. Johnson et al. (2017) assert that storytelling is "a legitimate and necessary approach to qualitative inquiry" (p. 5). My

narratives added a lens for analysis of student evaluations of instructors. Additionally, these critical narratives provided counter-stories to the narratives of the majority white student population completing these evaluations. Because dominant white narratives privilege the stories of white people and silence the voices of people of color (Baker-Bell, 2017; Johnson, 2017), counter-storytelling gives voice to marginalized groups. Johnson (2018) explains the importance of counter-storytelling in English Education:

> Dominant narratives—or stories—often sustain whiteness, white supremacy, and anti-blackness by privileging the stories and voices of white people (Bernal & Villalpando, 2002). In contrast, counterstorytelling as a methodological tool can counter these ideologies and the narrow claims that educational institutions, educators, and society make about people who are often on the margins (Delgado, 1989). Counterstorytelling tackles white supremacy, rejects notions of neutrality, and centers the voices and knowledge of people of Color (p. 113).

ELA scholars use counter-storytelling as a means of positioning the stories, voices, and experiential knowledge of the marginalized as valuable. These narratives also serve to counter dominant ideologies and stereotypes. So, in order to create learning environments that center marginalized voices, English educators should incorporate culturally relevant course content and teaching practices.

While the focus of this study was a diversity and social justice course, as an ELA scholar, I employed my own critical narratives to show the importance of the voice and experiences of a woman of color in our field, focusing on social justice education. Because the narratives of a majority white group of students served as the principal data source, it was important to implement critical narratives to analyze and counter these narratives. In

this way, I emphasized the voices and subject matter expertise that these students had

dismissed as personal and political opinions. While there is value in critically examining

issues and ideologies presented in canonical literature (Borsheim-Black, 2015), English

educators must also focus on implementing culturally relevant text and instructional

practices (Haddix, 2015; Johnson, 2017). This content will serve to center marginalized

voices, as the curriculum will function as a counter-storytelling element that challenges the

stereotypical depictions of marginalized beings.

Preparing Social Justice Minded ELA Educators

This study examines student responses to instructors, instructional methods, and

course content in a diversity course for pre-service educators. While the course is not an

English Language Arts course, it is required for all pre-service teachers. Because this course

covers diversity and social justice in the context of the United States educational system,

pre-service teachers are tasked with relating their learning to their future classroom

practices. Additionally, this course serves as an introduction to educational diversity and

social justice topics that are an essential part of ELA methods courses.

The presence of anti-black and white supremacist ideologies in teacher education is

evidenced in my findings. Pre-service teachers used stereotypical, anti-black language to

describe instructors. They also exhibited white fragility and emotionality, which function to

reassert the power and privilege of whiteness. Critical (Race) English Education scholars

work to advance English education curriculum to include a focus on language and literature

that disrupts dominant narratives and centers marginalized identities (Baker-Bell et al,

2017; Morrell, 2005). As with diversity and social justice courses, CEE and CREE are

essential in preparing social justice minded English educators. Accordingly, understanding

student resistance to diversity and social justice education can help ELA teacher educators develop methods for introducing culturally relevant language and literature texts and practices.

English Language Arts classrooms should be a space for countering dominant narratives and centering voices of color through assignments that allow children of color to tell their stories (Johnson, 2018). Therefore, English teacher education programs should offer opportunities for community engagement that fosters social justice learning and culturally relevant teaching practices (Haddix, 2015). Accordingly, as English Language Arts teacher educators, it is our responsibility to engage pre-service teachers in learning that centers diversity, social justice, and the need to study, understand, and incorporate the experiences of marginalized students into our teaching and learning practices. This means that we position ourselves as diversity and social justice educators, and may become the targets of the type of student resistance chronicled in this study. We may also influence the type of growth, learning, and self-realization that some of these pre-service teachers experienced. This growth and critical understanding positions pre-service English educators to gradually dismantle racist institutions through fostering respect for diverse culture, language, and literature.

Advancing ELA Teacher Education Scholarship

This study shows the need for continued scholarship in the areas of student resistance to diversity and social justice education and countering white dominant narratives. My findings show the importance of critically analyzing student resistance and the systems and structures that influence this resistance, such as white supremacist ideologies and emphasis on individualism. Findings also highlight the discomfort necessary

for growth as well as the need for critical analysis and discussion of whiteness and inequity. Based on this study, I identified the following issues for consideration in ELA scholarship: interrupting the whiteness of teacher education, specifically ELA education, preparing social justice minded English educators, strategies for incorporating diverse identities and language practices in ELA instruction, and guiding discussions of race and racism in the ELA classroom.

In order to disrupt the whiteness of English teacher education, ELA education scholarship must explore recruiting and supporting faculty and students of color. The lack of diversity in teacher education contributes to challenges faced by instructors of color, including resistance from students. The problem of diverse faculty recruitment has been attributed to factors such as colleges and universities' resistance to change, the unspoken rules that allow for avoidance of discussions on racism and sexism, lack of diversity within search committees, and the challenging environment of an institution where minority faculty often feel unsupported (Conklin and Robbins-McNeish, 2006). People of color, particularly women, often have to go through gate keepers in academia. Pre-service teachers must meet the approval of professors, supervisors, and cooperating teachers. For educators of color and women, passing through those gates requires going through added processes and checks, almost having to make sure all submissions and interactions are flawless, to ensure that the evaluative focus remains on teaching and learning. Additionally, there is a lack of attention to diverse identities in the teacher education classroom (Berry, 2009). So, while white teacher educators focus on preparing a majority white pre-service teacher population for the classroom, educators of color are often left feeling unacknowledged and unsupported. This process reinforces white supremacist ideals in

higher education in that students of color need white approval and permission to advance, but often do not receive the necessary support to do so. Therefore, ELA education scholarship should focus on creating a supportive environment for ELA scholars of color.

Additionally, ELA education scholarship must focus on preparing social justice minded ELA educators. These educators should prioritize progressively dismantling white supremacist systems and ideologies through language and literature instruction. This includes employing counter-storytelling as a source of knowledge and a means of disrupting the dominant white narratives and influences of canonical literature and standard language usage. As noted by Baker-Bell et al. (2017), in English teacher education, it is imperative to cultivate and maintain critical friendships, to use the fear and frustration felt by faculty of color addressing racism and racial violence as a means of starting transformative dialogue, and to center the experiences and multiple languages and literacies of students of color.

ELA educators should also explore the process of deciding when and how to approach social justice topics in the secondary classroom. These topics often arise in the study of literature; therefore, it is necessary to guide PSTs in developing strategies and guiding critical dialogue on race and racism, giving attention to the effects of white talk on such discussions. There should also be continued scholarship on the importance of Critical English Education (CEE) and Critical Race English Education (CREE) in disrupting power relations, white supremacy, and racism through language and literature content (Baker-Bell at al., 2017; Morrell, 2005). This critical education is a step toward gradually dismantling white supremacist systems in education and ultimately in society.

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Appendix A

Recruitment Email

Subject: Invitation to Participate in Dissertation Research Study: Exploring Student Resistance to Topics of Diversity, Social Justice, & Privilege

Dear Faculty/Staff Member,

My name is Dionne Lazenby. I am a graduate student in the Department of Curriculum and Teaching at Auburn University. I would like to invite you to participate in my research study to explore student resistance to learning about topics of diversity, social justice, and privilege in an introductory diversity course. You are invited to participate in this study because you are a current or former instructor of an introductory diversity course at Auburn University and are age 19 or older.

Your participation is completely voluntary. You will not be compensated for your participation. If you decide to participate in this research study, you will be asked to allow the researcher access to course evaluation results, provided to you by AU eValuate, from the aforementioned diversity course for the last five years.

Your time commitment will be minimal and only require you to compile and forward evaluation forms, and complete and submit the demographic information form, which contains questions concerning age, race and ethnicity, gender identity, and sexual identity. The demographic information will be used along with an assigned pseudonym in data analysis and reporting. All participants will remain anonymous.

If you would like to participate in this study, please complete and submit the participant demographic form and your student evaluations via the following secure Box email link:

If you would like more information about this study, an information letter has been attached to this email. If you have questions about this study, please contact Dionne Lazenby by e-mail at dth0002@tigermail.auburn.edu or Dr. Michael Cook by e-mail at mpc0035@auburn.edu or by phone at (334) 844-4415.

If you change your mind about participating, you can withdraw at any time during the study. If you choose to withdraw, your data can be withdrawn as long as it is identifiable. Your decision about whether or not to participate or to stop participating will not jeopardize your future relations with the researcher, Auburn University, the Department of Curriculum and Teaching, or the College of Education.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Auburn University Office of Research Compliance or the Institutional Review Board by phone (334)-844-5966 or e-mail at IRBadmin@auburn.edu or IRBChair@auburn.edu.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Dionne Lazenby, PhD Candidate

Appendix B

Sample Coded Responses

Codes	Sample Responses
Praise of Course/Content (CP)	(P1) This was a very helpful class. (P2) Wonderful class that made me reflect on my personal values and on current issues in the public education system (P2) The class was very interesting and did not seem like a three hour class. I was able to learn so much and see so many different views on the same topics, which will be important for the future. (P3) I enjoyed this class a lot! Although the topics were heavy, i felt free to give my opinions and ask questions. (P3) This course challenged me, made me think critically, and gave me experience working with students.
Critiques of the Course/Content (CC)	(P1) I felt that most days our conversations resorted back to race and privilege, even when it was not the topic for the day. (P1) Our semester also seemed to focus mostly on race and privilege. Even when we discussed other topics, the conversation would turn into a race discussion. (P2) This course is extremely biased and forces you to write things that you do not believe. (P2) the only thing negative is that since this class challenges everything you "believe" it can be really overwhelming. (P3) The course focus was on diversity in the classroom. I feel that he focused primarily on race, seldom relating it to the classroom. (P3) First, I think the fact that we have to take this class is completely ridiculous. I think I may have learned three things all semester. A lot of the class and what we talk about is really common sense to almost everybody.
Analysis of Grading System/ Assignment Requirements (GA)	(P1) The structure of her class and the way she set it up was great. I loved the grading system and work requirement! (P1) She was also did not give clear instruction for many of the projects and assignments that we did. (P2) I really liked the roadmap grading system. I am a planner, and was able to plan ahead and ensure that I would receive a good grade in the course. (P3) However, we were not tested on how to use these life applications, we were tested on mountains of textbook information that we barely touched which I found stressful and unhelpful. (P3) We had three major grades in this class: a presentation and two exams. In order to pass the exams you had to MEMORIZE the textbook chapters assigned. MEMORIZE. WE ALL FAILED THE FIRST TEST and WE ALL PROBABLY FAILED THE SECOND. THIS IS NOT FAIR.
Student Learning (SL)	(P1) *(Students did not discuss their learning in these evaluations.)*

	(P2) I learned a lot in this class and I felt that it was all applicable to my future career.
	(P2) I believe that overall this class shaped my perspective of children in the classroom in a great way. It opened up my mind to new ideas and allowed me to realize how the differences between students can positively and negatively affect the classroom and it is up to me to support those strengths and weaknesses by applying what I have learned.
	(P3) I learned nothing in this class other than how black individuals are treated poorly and that white individuals are overall bad.
	(P3) I learned very much from this class, and the class reinforced my decision to become a teacher.
Praise of Teaching Method (MP)	(P1) I appreciated the way she structured the classroom to be conducive for everyone's learning styles.
	(P2) Having a debate, video, class discussion, and sometimes a game really helped make the class interesting and I learned a lot because of it.
	(P2) I enjoyed the debate-centered format very much. It helped me learn the material far better than mere reading and opened my mind and eyes to social issues and how to adapt my thinking to a diverse classroom
	(P3) I loved the open discussion format of the class!
	(P3) I really enjoyed that Dr. [Davis] made a lot of classes, discussion based classes. It makes it way more relatable and being able to voice my agreement or disagreement is very helpful in my learning process.
Critiques of Teaching Method (MC)	(P1) I do not usually leave negative comments for my professors but I did not enjoy Mrs. Lazenby's teaching styles.
	(P2) The only thing that I would say is that the class structure got repetitive with the debate, video, discussion etc.
	(P2) I went into this class thinking it would be a debate class of sorts and that I would be able to share my opinions in an safe environment conducive to learning, but Dr. [Bailey] belittles the opinions of those who disagree with her (passively).
	(P3) All we talked about was racism, expand the curriculum
	(P3) The discussions were rather pointless attempts for Dr. [Davis] to get us to agree with him.
Classroom Environment (CE)	(P1) It was difficult for me to speak in class because whenever I did, she would make a snide remark or roll her eyes if she did not agree with what I was saying.
	(P2) This was a miserable class to sit through, and I promise I was not the only one who felt this way.
	(P2) I did not agree with everything that was taught in the course, but I felt very comfortable to share my opinions based on what I believe; I was never criticized or shorted points for any of my assignments, especially one in particular that I was very open about a personal belief.
	(P3) Dr. [Davis]' classroom is very tense. This professor is a racist against white individuals.

	(P3) Very flexible to accommodate student needs and made the learning environment enjoyable.
Praise of Instructor (IP)	(P1) Mrs. Lazenby led this course in a way that allowed everyone to engage with the material.
	(P1) ... but Mrs. Lazenby was able to help us find solutions and work for a common good.
	(P2) Dr. [Bailey] was challenging and provocative in a good way. She made the class interesting and opened my eyes.
	(P2) Dr. [Bailey] is an excellent professor and you can tell that she cares a lot about her students education and personal growth.
	(P3) Dr. [Davis] is very passionate about this subject and always brought great debates and lectures to the class.
	(P3) I loved Mr. [Davis]! He was so awesome and funny. He made the class very exciting and tried to make some subjects we talked about not so harsh.
Critiques of the Instructor (IC)	(P1) Mrs. Lazenby was very "in your face" about a lot of the topics we discussed in class.
	(P2) Dr. [Bailey] has been my least favorite professor that I have had. She was rude towards myself and other students throughout the semester. When asking for help, I would get short, unhelpful answers. She was very condescending throughout the semester and said some very inappropriate and unprofessional things to me this semester
	(P3) He even told us that he didn't care if we wrote him a bad review because he has tenure. What kind of teacher says that? This class was about teaching us to be effective educators and Dr. [Davis] was the opposite of an effective educator.
	(P3) I am changing my major because of this course. Dr. [Davis] is the least efficient teacher I have ever had.
Suggestions for Improvement (SI)	(P1) *(Students did not provide suggestions for improvement.)*
	(P2) Would recommend allowing students to get an A if they reach 250 points by the end of the semester and not only if they meet the given deadlines.
	(P2) I do think that 3 hours was a long time to sit there for though and I would find myself losing focus by the end of it just because of the length so it may be better as a 2 day a week class.
	(P3) Mini exam portion of course needs revamping. Questions where not always on track to the readings and class discussion.
Assertions of Student Feelings/ Experienced Emotions/ Manifestations of Frustrations (SF)	(P1) At times I felt shame, guilt, etc for being white from the comments or topics that Mrs. Lazenby would say. It was sometimes hard to sit through and listen and I would walk out upset and frustrated.
	(P2) Very pleased with this class and the life lessons it taught me.
	(P2) I did not feel like I could do my assignments except for how she would want them, it was never true to my beliefs because when that would happen, I would get poor grades on assignments.

	(P3) Dr. [Davis]'s teaching was unclear and discussion more often made me frustrated than enlightened
	(P3) Dr [Davis] is very rude and disorganized. All he has taught me this semester is how not to behave once I am a teacher. I hope that he changes his attitude and instruction practices, because his rudeness and inconsideration is ruining this course.
	(P3) This bias that he tries to impose on his students is horrific. You cannot state your opinion or anything…Nothing that i learned in class is worth my attention as it only proceeds to racism and how white individuals are bad.
Framing Social Issues as Political/ Controversial (PC)	(P1) *(Students did not frame social issues in this manner.)*
	(P2) I feel like the class was very biased towards her beliefs. I understand that the class covers a great deal of controversial material but I felt that it was taught in a very biased way towards her beliefs
	(P2) Dr. [Bailey]makes the difficult hot button subjects easier to talk about and is very good at facilitating discussion.
	(P3) *(Students did not frame social issues in this manner.)*
Recommended Action (RA)	(P1) Honestly, I am telling every education major I know to NEVER take her class.
	(P2) I would strongly recommend that others take this course and have her as a the teacher.
	(P3) This professor needs a re evaluation because his class lectures are meaningless to our test as we have zero material that we learn in class to help us on test.
	(P3) I have every intention to go to the Dean about Dr. [Davis], because his teaching methods are simply not fair.
	(P3) I hope someone reads this and takes action, because no other student should be subjected the same treatment as I was.
Purpose of Instruction (PI)	(P1) One of the purposes for this class was to learn how to advocate for our students, regardless of what they believe, and leave our own beliefs and opinions out of it.
	(P2) But, ciphers were busy work. We are undergrads. We do not have teaching experience, so we do not always know the best way to tackle these issues. College is a time to gather as much information about how to tackle the "real world" as we possibly can. We need more long lasting resources used/showed to us in class, to put in our bank of resources for real world use. We will spend the rest of our lives "figuring it out on our own." Now is a time to explain how schools work and how to work in them and how to work with students, not how to work with ciphers and how to do busy work. If we "need to care more," then calling our students "ciphers" is not going to make us care. It completely de-personalizes the students we are supposed to care about. Thus, making it more busy work and less important. That's how I felt about most of our assignments--we did them just for points, not for practical experience.
	(P3) When we have discussions on sensitive topics such as race or sexual orientation, your job as the teacher is to play mediator.