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Performing Critical Consciousness in Teaching: Entanglements of Knowing, Feeling and Relating

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**PERFORMING CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN TEACHING:
ENTANGLEMENTS OF KNOWING, FEELING AND RELATING**

A Dissertation Presented

by

KATHLEEN A. MCDONOUGH

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

May 2015

College of Education
Language, Literacy and Culture

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Approved as to style and content by:

Maria José Botelho, Chair

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DEDICATION

To my parents, my brother and John for their love and support.

To my students past, present, and future.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I owe a great deal to Maria José Botelho, chair of my committee, mentor, and now friend. Her guidance, support, and insightful questions helped me design a research project and write a dissertation that brought me joy. Our conversations about teaching, love, aesthetics, and critical literacies were synergistic. Our ideas evolved and intertwined. It is hard to say where the “ownership” of one idea ends and the other begins. I appreciate Maria José’s support and trust as I stretched the boundaries of a traditional dissertation in what follows. I will always be grateful for her loving ways and welcoming me into her family during my long-distance commuting across the state as I juggled both job and role as student. Thank you Maria José.

I wish to thank Claudio Moreira not only for being on my committee but for introducing me to performance ethnography – which I am still trying to get a handle on. His kind heart, commitment to students, and to social change are what I try to emulate with my own students. Claudio’s invitation to our class to the Qualitative Inquiry Congress is part of the impetus for the structure and methodology of this work. Thanks also goes to K.C. Nat Turner for joining my committee long ago. I appreciate Nat’s continued support and encouragement as it took me many years to finish.

Of course, this study would not have been possible without the generosity of the participating teachers, principals, and teacher educators. In one of my first interviews I introduced my vision of this study as a hopeful project. And it was. The participants’ incredible teaching and their commitment to social change brought me hope each time I visited schools or engaged in conversations with these amazing educators.

It is hard to pinpoint what exactly lead me to begin graduate studies as it was from a convergence of experiences. But I do know the love and support of Nelda Barrón, Paula Elliott, and Courtney Williams had much to do with my decision to pursue a doctoral degree. My thanks. I also know that the generous hearts and loving support from my parents, Jack and Aileen McDonough and my brother Kevin also guided me to and along this journey.

I will be ever grateful for the life-long friendships that have developed out of this program, from sharing classes and laughs with Gloria Barragan to long conversations and glorious trips with Cinzia Pica. My long-distance writing group with Patty Bode and Vera Stenhouse offered immeasurable support. My local writing group with Elizabeth Robinson and Elsa Wiehe not only aided my writing, but sustained my will to finish. It has been a joy to watch their families grow, to travel together, and plan future projects together at local coffee shops. I appreciate Elizabeth's kind spirit and ability to help me reframe my thinking. I learned much from Elsa as we sat at the Sierra Grill until closing after each Wednesday night class continuing to talk about ideas and possibility. I will always be grateful for Elsa's faith in me, her sense of humor, and her thoughtful and loving ways. I look forward to what the future holds for us.

I have heard it said that writing a dissertation is lonely work. At times it certainly was – with long stretches at my desk or in the library. Other times I was happy in the company of my imaginary gatherings with Norman Denzin, Elizabeth St Pierre, and Paulo Freire, scholars whose work was guiding me, as I wrote in conversation with them. Or my research was the central focus for conversations with my advisor, writing groups, and conference presentations. I think what must be more lonely than writing the

dissertation is being the partner of a dissertation writer as I spent more hours away from home, more hours in my own thoughts, and fewer hours together. My husband John gets immeasurable thanks for years of immeasurable support. I appreciate the space you made in our shared life for me to pursue this work. I have been grateful for your patience, love, and listening. What better way to close this chapter by realizing “my” new friendships have now become “our” friendships. Onward.

ABSTRACT

PERFORMING CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN TEACHING: ENTANGLEMENTS OF KNOWING, FEELING AND RELATING

MAY 2015

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At a time when education reform is guided by neoliberalism, accountability and standardization have reshaped teaching as highly technocratic and threatened the democratic possibilities of public education. Even so, many teacher education programs have taken up the call to prepare teachers to teach for social justice, whether framed as multicultural education, critical literacy, or critical pedagogy. A construct that ties these pedagogical approaches together is critical consciousness, with the aim of some teacher education efforts to evoke critical consciousness among preservice teachers. This study focuses on exploring how nine educators from elementary grades to higher education experience and enact critical consciousness in their own work of teaching and leading schools. Using ethnographic methods for data collection, I spent a year visiting the classrooms and schools of elementary teachers, high school teachers, an art teacher, two principals and two teacher educators to learn how they thought about criticality and

taught critically. I engaged with and analyzed the data through reading and writing as methods of analysis and in dialogue with theory to create a layered text (Ellingson, 2011). In the teacher education literature critical consciousness is mainly situated as a cognitive experience that individuals have or acquire. This research expands the construct of critical consciousness from a modernist view of criticality to a poststructural exploration of the production of critical consciousness. It challenges notions of critical consciousness as an individual attribute that is attained and which then functions as the source of criticality. Instead it reconstructs critical consciousness as a performed social relation and embodied experience that re/produces variations of criticality from moment to moment and across contexts. I highlight critical consciousness as intersubjective and an entanglement among rational knowing, feeling, and doing as a result of engagement with others. This study has implications for teacher education including the need to think differently about relationship-building, understanding education as political, developing critical literacy through multiple ways of knowing, and “reading” our teaching and our lives.

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CHAPTER 1

BEGINNINGS

From: Carolyn
To: Kathy McDonough
Subject: Apology/Explanation
Date: Thu, Feb 23

I am writing to apologize. I am a student in your Racial and Cultural Identities class and I have only passed in one paper. I have been running from this course because I have many mixed feelings about it. This is not like me as a student. Ever since I attended college I have been a straight A student. I have felt intellectually unstimulated by the course I think because I feel like I have no culture and any culture I have I should feel ashamed about. Fortunately I just had an enlightening conversation with my advisor and she explained that I do have a culture, its just been stolen from me and it is my job to go out and find it. I find this idea very stimulating and I have decided to stop running. I plan on handing in all of the work I have neglected and if you refuse to accept it I understand but I feel like it is imperative I do the work for my own well-being.

Introduction

Like Carolyn, who decided to face challenging course work for her own learning, regardless of grades and institutional requirements, this research project is fueled by my own desire to understand subjectivities, critical consciousness, and the embodiment of teaching; in essence, a stance of critical literacy in everyday lives. Also, like Carolyn, I have had realizations about race, identity, and myself that stimulate my learning and new ways of understanding. Carolyn's experience in this course is similar to many of my students who find it challenging to think about race, culture, identity and self in the context of power – a dance of resisting and engaging. This collective of experiences: my own, mine with my students and watching my students from afar has ignited a curiosity in me about critical consciousness. What I seek to understand through the work of this

project is critical consciousness. What is experiencing critical consciousness like for people? How it is provoked, enacted, and sustained? Some of the more common explanations that highlight the cognitive aspect: a reading of the world, new levels of awareness, questioning assumptions and the status quo, have not satisfied me. There seemed to be more. Thus, was the birth of this project.

Sedimentations

How have I come to have such a curiosity about teaching that is P/political (Janks, 2010), reflexive (Marcus, 1994; Pillow, 2003) and a way of knowing-being (Barad, 2003)? This research project did not begin with my dissertation proposal or my comprehensive exams, but can be traced far back to the years before I began my doctoral studies. It emerges from years of thinking about the connections between teaching, being¹, and social change, starting with my first teaching job as a new college graduate through today, as an instructor at a small liberal arts college teaching preservice teachers. A puzzle I kept returning to was why some of my graduate students shared how their experience discussing race in courses was profound whereas others retreated, resisted, refused. I remember once asking a student “Could you come on over and join your discussion group?” He said “No” then crossed his legs and watched the other students pull their chairs into a small circle.

In this section, *Sedimentations*, I explore some of my teaching history to identify just a few layers of experience and theory (praxis) related to (critical) literacy that brought me to this place today. My early years of teaching, just out of college, were in

¹ How I use/theorize being and becoming is important to this study and is taken up in a subsequent section of this chapter.

residential schools for children then labeled ‘emotionally disturbed’. They all had a variety of histories (school, family, learning) but all were there for the same reason – the public schools felt unable to keep them safe; safe from harming others or harming themselves. Too many violent outbursts or perhaps suicidal ideation were some of the individual histories of my students – ages eight to nine. Most were far behind in academic learning and struggled to read and write.

Remembering: September

Billy, a slender eight-year-old African American was tall for his age. When he arrived at the classroom door on the first day of school I asked what classroom he was looking for – assuming he was too old for my class. Near the end of the first week of school Billy and I were sitting on the carpeted floor playing a math game. It was his turn.

Billy softly and carefully said, “I can’t work with...teachers...like this” as he looked at his shoe and rubbed his Nike sneaker.

I was puzzled, “You can’t work with who?”

“You know. Teachers... like this.” As he tapped the white swoosh of the Nike.

“White?...White teachers?” still puzzled.

“Yeah.”

“I’m sorry to hear that Billy. But I am your teacher and I’m going to do my best to teach you and you’re going to have to do your best to learn.”

I had just graduated from college with my first job as a lead classroom teacher. I grew up in a predominantly white suburb, did my student teaching in Vermont and had

never been asked or felt the need to think about institutional racism or the histories of racism beyond the requisite and inadequate skim over slavery and the Civil Rights Movement in high school. I thought Billy was making an excuse to avoid work or maybe that his parents were Black radicals. I did not know what to say about his reference to race and I also did not think it mattered much. I answered kindly and with care. I believed that was how schools function – individuals doing their best, to learn and work cooperatively, hopefully with compassion for one another. Regardless of race, I would do my best to teach and he had to do his best to learn. It was the mid-1980s. At that time my passion was teaching reading and my commitment to teaching literacy was to share my passion and a joy in reading. I had grown up a lover of reading. I remember weekly trips to the town library throughout the summer, coming home with an armload of books and returning to post icons on the library wall indicating how many books I had read. One of my birthday memories was opening the entire boxed set of Laura Ingalls Wilder Little House books and laying on the braided rug in the TV room reading until I fell asleep in front of the fire. As a recent college graduate with my first teaching job, reading aloud to my class was my favorite time of day and I wanted nothing more than for my students to fall in love with reading as I had. Some did.

Soon after, I began a masters program for the teaching of reading and fell in love again, this time with process writing. The work of Don Graves, Lucy Calkins, Donald Murray and Mary Ellen Giacobbe were new sources of inspiration. As I learned more about process writing and voice my commitment to literacy transformed to seeing literacy as empowerment. The upcoming 1991 International Reading Association annual conference theme was Empowerment Through Literacy. I immersed myself and my

students in whole language experiences, sought to empower student voice through writing projects and showcases, and had a goal of individual empowerment by teaching each student to read. My early reverence for Paulo Freire was from my interpretation of his work of social change through bringing literacy to individuals rather than understanding it as systemic change. Being literate, in a traditional sense, would empower my students to better participate in society – as it was. At the time, *conscientização* did not stand out to me. Not aware of experiencing critical consciousness myself made it invisible to me as the reader.

Remembering: Another September

I said yes because of the promise of having lunch somewhere afterwards. I was new to the college and a colleague invited me to the newly formed Anti-Racist Seminar, a group for teacher educators to meet and discuss issues of race in supervising student teachers. I did not know what to expect, but I wanted to meet colleagues. After almost a decade of teaching elementary aged children I sometimes now savored being alone in my car driving across town from school to school and observing student teachers. I felt incredibly free and a bit guilty to be able to stop at 10:00 in the morning for a cup of coffee. I filled my days with school visits and while children talking, arguing and laughing surrounded me, I was never a part of those conversations. I was lonely.

Joining this anti-racist monthly seminar would be an opportunity to be with others and share our work as student teacher supervisors. Evelyn, the facilitator, asked us to go around and share why we were here. I became tense. I accepted this invitation nonchalantly, not thinking about expectations. My lack of thought about race when

entering a space designated for talking about race was symptomatic of whiteness. As I listened to others share questions and concerns about race and teaching I became more uncomfortable. Now my white² body took on new meaning. Latinas, Black women and white women talking about race shifted my awareness to my skin and my ignorance.

Years after beginning my career as an elementary special educator, that was my first formal experience talking about race. Of course I had been surrounded by race talk all of my life but I did not remember ever before sitting down with a plan to talk specifically about race. I had not realized how much the *Discourse of Not Knowing* (Applebaum, 2010) shaped my experiences. Even though I left that first session feeling uncomfortable, something made me return. As I remained in this group I experienced ebbs and flows of noticing. I saw differently. Sometimes race expressed itself all around me. Other times, I closed my eyes and retreated. I participated carefully, careful of what I wanted to share about myself, then careful about how I engaged with other participants and talked about our students. I listened differently. Alice McIntyre's (1997) book *Making Meaning of Whiteness: Exploring Racial Identity with White Teachers*, provoked consideration of patterns in language – my own, my colleagues, and families and friends. And then I began to have another love affair. This time with multicultural educators. Geneva Gay, Sonia Nieto, Gloria Ladson-Billings and Christine Sleeter were the scholars whom I could not read enough of their work. I began to connect with colleagues around readings, planning course curriculum and attending education conferences (i.e. National

² I am writing “white” in lower case to interrupt, albeit briefly and fairly insignificantly, the power invested in “white” as a socially constructed dominant racial group. To go one step further and problematize my decision, I refer to Karen Maschke's work (1997) in feminist legal theory who notes that leaving white lower case can continue its invisibility as a norm. Neither option is completely satisfactory.

Association for Multicultural Education) that had a focus on race. This was when the course Racial and Cultural Identities (RCI³) entered my life.

Remembering: Spring

This is the fourth semester Patricia and I have co-taught RCI. I remember being very cautious at first in our relationship, as I was not sure how to balance learning from Patricia as a mentor since she taught the course for years before I was asked to co-teach, and yet not relying on her, as an African American, to teach me about race, racism and whiteness.

Soon our teaching and planning became a rhythm of debriefing, emailing, talking at the oak table in my dining room, and on the phone. We took turns leading different activities and discussions and deciding who will play what role. “Ah, that one’s yours” Patricia laughs, “a white person has to be the one to address that....” Our rhythms have us in tune to each other’s bodies as well. I can see Patricia tilt her head ever so slightly and look up a bit through her new purple-rimmed glasses. I know she wants to add a thought or ask a question, “Patricia, what do you think?” I appreciate these additions. They stretch our students’ thinking and stretch my thinking. On this particular day, Patricia is standing on one side of the room facilitating a conversation about racism as systemic while I am sitting at one of the empty student desks on the other side. A young white woman looks agitated and asks Patricia, “But don’t you think your people need to

³ The course Racial and Cultural Identities (RCI) will be referenced throughout this dissertation. It was once a required course for all undergraduates and graduates in any teacher licensure program at my institution. It currently remains a requirement for all programs except one. RCI addresses intersectionality of identities but does have an explicit focus on race. It generates much campus discussion, in part because a number of students report it makes them uncomfortable. I look more closely at this discomfort in Chapter 5.

take some responsibility?” Was that pain or anger that flashed across Patricia’s face? As she engages – trying to have the student rethink, Patricia slowly moves toward my side of the room. Without looking at each other Patricia serves the perfect hand-off, “Understanding theories of racism can be challenging depending on one’s social location.” I stand as Patricia takes an empty seat nearby. My turn.

These early experiences teaching RCI shaped my understanding of race and identity through the lenses of racial identity development (Cross, 1991; Helms, 1991) and social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). For years, my teaching partners and I, or the group of RCI faculty, could predict what the many students would say, write and do. We were prepared to face a number of upset white students when they read Beverly Tatum’s (1997) *Why Are All The Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?* Certain readings would trigger a strong claim to individualism from all students. And after a 20/20 clip, many students of color would share with the class their own experiences with racism. Some of the patterns reoccur, new patterns have emerged and as always with teaching, there are surprises. The patterns and surprises coalesced to initiate this project, long before I decided to return to graduate school.

This Project in Embryo

The key impetus to this project is linked to my learning, my questions, and more specifically my own questions of consciousness-raising from many years of teaching Racial and Cultural Identities, to both graduates and undergraduates. Teaching is always unpredictable and puzzling, at times frustrating, and often invigorating. This class seems

even more so. Some students experience shifts in their worldview and are invigorated by new understandings, while for others the cognitive dissonance they experience makes them frightened, angry, and thus resistant. I am fascinated by the different ways students respond to the course experiences. I am taken in by the ways this course forces me to think about my subjectivities and constantly challenges my teaching pedagogy. I am continually questioning and rethinking how I might approach each class discussion, assignment or activity to gently unseat assumptions (my students mostly, but sometimes my own) and encourage students to question. From my experience teaching this course about race, identity, and power, I find myself often asking: how is it that patterned ways of thinking about the world can be ruptured? When do these ruptures initiate new worldviews and when does resistance emerge? Is there a relationship between types of learners and a willingness to reconsider alternate perspectives and ideas that may force them to question deeply held beliefs?

Irit Rogoff (n.d.) writes that criticality is about identifying the limits of the boundaries of our thinking. Maria José Botelho and Cathi Gibson-Gates (2008) note that “critical inquiry requires that teacher candidates unlearn and learn new ways of learning, teaching, and researching” (p. 21). Perhaps for some preservice teachers it is too threatening to push one’s learning to or beyond a boundary. Instead, they seek comfort and affirmation of themselves as learners and wish to remain within the boundaries of what they already know. Like Rogoff, I emphasize that this course is as much about *unlearning* as it is about learning. Rogoff states “one does not learn something new until one unlearns something old, otherwise one is simply adding information rather than rethinking a structure” (n.p.).

This balance, delicate at times, of unlearning and learning combined with reflexivity is what I seek in my teaching. How do I help my students to rethink the structures of society and how they frame their own experiences? These questions led me to Paulo Freire's (1993) concept of *conscientização*, the role it plays in teacher education and how this construct might help me to understand learning, teaching and becoming.

The Problem

Here, I outline the dilemma this research project is attempting to address by starting out broadly and then narrowing the focus. I begin by contextualizing US education and education reform, in particular in the context of neoliberalism, then move to a brief exploration of the work of teacher education programs that strive for infusing a philosophy of equity and social transformation before concluding with a look at how one potential solution, the development of critical consciousness among teachers, is constructed in the teacher education literature.

I take the position that a purpose of education is to assist students to participate in their communities for the common good. In other words, education should help students to engage in a participatory democracy. Unlike how democracy is often taught in US public schools where students learn about the role of government and voting, I agree with John Dewey that democracy is a process of social inquiry, is collaborative, and should focus on exploring one's "humanness" rather than focusing on the intricacies of the political system (1916/2009). Deweyian democracy is a way of life, perhaps criticized for being too idealistic, but nevertheless a useful guide when thinking about how schools and curriculum should be designed. Like Kincheloe's (2003) call for critical ontology in education, schools should help students "to appreciate that political empowerment,

community building, and the cultivation of both the individual and collective require a constant monitoring of the relationships that shape us.” (p. 48). I understand these relationships not just as our relationships to others but also to history, institutions, and discourses. How do these personal and institutional relationships shape opportunity, equality and inequities? Neoliberalism, under the guise of education reform, is detrimental to developing relationships that build community and to a democratic education.

Neoliberalism as Education Reform

Neoliberalism relies on market-based relationships to explain the world. Eve Tuck (2013) argues that neoliberalism is in fact not a recent phenomena but a version of colonial imperialism – another rendering of the dispossession of the “other” as neoliberal policies, practices, and epistemological orientation shrink the public sphere. What are the ways in which neoliberalism impacts public schools? Through Presidents Reagan, Bush and Obama, and the education reform policies including No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top have shaped a discourse that public schools are failing, teachers are responsible, and students are disengaged because of poor teaching (Costigan, 2013). The solutions are market-based accountability measures such as standardized high stakes tests, state and now the new national Common Core standards, linking teacher evaluations to student performance as measured by tests, and outsourcing teacher education to rapid and less expensive teacher recruitment programs such as Teach for America (Costigan, 2013; Tuck, 2013). The emphasis on testing has overrun schools, is being used for the wrong purposes, and is detrimental of the needs of children (Ravitch, 2010).

These practices have become so ingrained in the way schools work, that I fear the preservice teachers I teach are socialized to be unable to imagine any other alternative. These practices also not only jeopardize democracy but shape teaching to be something other than a profession (Milner, 2013). These practices have largely reshaped teaching to be technocratic, with a focus on learning that is about acquisition of facts, preparation of the work force, and national preparation for competing in the global economy (Costigan, 2013). The roll out of the Common Core standards (<http://www.corestandards.org>) have largely focused on “college and career readiness”, not the development of a sense of wonder, curiosity, nor an affinity for engaging with others for the betterment of society.

The Common Core State Standards are a prime example of political agendas and corporate interests infringing on the *public* of public schools. The standards were designed by Gates-funded consultants, none of whom are parents and few who are teachers or administrators. Instead, most are academics or assessment experts with ties to testing companies. The Common Core will require new tests, all of which are to be taken on computers. Test design, test purchase, and computer purchase means money and profit. Pearson Inc., the leading test-maker for New York schools, embedded corporate logos and promotional materials into the reading passages on the tests. How will schools pay for these new tests and computers? Race to the Top Funds, an Obama initiative awarded funding to states that adopted the standards (Editors, Rethinking Schools, 2013).

These neoliberal policies have also resulted in the de-professionalization of teaching. Richard Milner (2013) through the National Education Policy Center cites three main areas of de-professionalization: value-added assessments, fast-track alternative teacher preparation and scripted, and narrowed curricula. Milner’s brief is extensive and

here I only highlight a few main areas that negatively impact teaching as a profession. Value-added assessments, or the evaluation of teachers based on students' test scores, pressures teachers to teach to the test and at times to cheat. They also ignore the variation and nuances of teaching. Narrow curricula emphasize teaching as technical and remove teacher autonomy. And finally, alternate teacher preparation programs such as Teach for America do not emphasize pedagogy – the heart of teaching – and have low expectations for how long they expect the program completers to remain working in schools.

Teach for America (TFA) recruits Ivy league and other top college graduates to commit to an urban school for two years. Highly criticized for this model that promotes high turn-over, other concerns about TFA are less publicized. Financial supporters of TFA are the same individuals and organizations that promote privatization of schools and a free-market economy, who are well aware that education is a big, open market with the potential for significant profit. As concerning is TFA's 2008 initiative that is rarely publicized, Leadership for Educational Equity (LEE), whose goal is to encourage and support TFA alumni to shape educational policy and run for office (Miner, 2010).

At times I feel like a hypocrite educating teachers with a sense of hope to enter the field that destroys their ideals. I am committed to social justice ethics, plan as best I can intellectually rigorous courses and classes that ignite curiosity and inspire preservice teachers to *teach boldly* (Bode, et al., 2009). I assume that teacher education across the United States varies – some programs uncritically aligning themselves with the same neoliberal vision as K-12, and all facing pressures as neoliberalism also permeates higher education. I take heart in the ongoing work of educators such as Sonia Nieto (2003) who reminds us that teaching is just as much about hope and love as despair and anger; and

Maxine Greene (2000) whose life's work centered around the ideal that education has to incite the imagination. I take from Greene that imagination is both creative and political and these two feed each other. Creativity, often provoked and supported through the arts and aesthetic experiences, assist teachers and students in engaging in novel ways, some of which render new ways of participating in the world or "learning things being otherwise" (Greene, 2000, p. 22). Reimagining the world, or a socio-political imagination is not unlike how C. Wright Mills (1959/2000) theorizes *sociological imagination* where biography and history intersect to rethink social issues.

Deborah Britzman (2000) calls for a renewed teacher education that moves from self knowledge to *world-making*. What would teacher education look like that prepared teachers to engage with their students in social reparation (p. 200)? She criticizes a national curriculum that censors ideas and avoids controversy because it is the controversies of the world that need attention. In the recent wake of the controversial shooting death of an unarmed Black teenager, Michael Brown, the superintendent of Edwardsville, Illinois is banning any talk of the events in Ferguson, Illinois as schools open for the new school year (<http://www.alternet.org/education/illinois-school-bans-discussions-michael-browns-death> retrieved 8.31.14). More and more schools are being shaped as decontextualized spaces separate from the lives children and families lead. If teacher education were to take up Britzman's call, then what are the ethical obligations of teacher education?

Tensions in Teacher Education

Teacher education in and for the 21st century is at a precarious place. Education reform brings increasing accountability measures and curriculum requirements, which impact both the K-12 classroom and higher education. Criticism of and lack of consensus in teacher education programs throughout the United States is nothing new. Some of the critique is helpful and valid (Cochran-Smith, 2000), and other critique is a broadening of the blame of public dissatisfaction for schools (Darling-Hammond, 2000). One area of contention is the question if teacher education programs are really worth it? Alternate routes to licensure have sprouted in the last two decades in over 40 states (Darling-Hammond, 2000); some with just six weeks of preparation (teacher training) over the summer. Among proponents/supporters of teacher education programs in higher education, the driving questions center around just what those programs should look like? Even though, Jennifer Gore (2001) contends, that on the surface teacher education programs might seem to be in agreement with the purpose(s) of teacher education, the “structure and substance of programs” (p. 124) vary widely and cause tensions. Ken Zeichner and Daniel Liston (1990), in a review of the four main traditions in teacher education of the 20th century, name social reconstructionist, which focuses on a more just society, as the most marginalized. Social reconstruction, born in the 1930s mainly out of the work of John Dewey, began in schooling and transitioned to teacher education when it was realized that the work to transform schools needs to begin with the preparation of teachers.⁴ Teacher education with a social reconstructionist agenda remains today in a

⁴ It is interesting to note that “frontier educators” of the 1930s (affiliated with the John Dewey Society) identified the need to awaken the social consciousness among teacher educators if

variety of formations: social foundations, education as praxis, and critical approaches (Zeichner & Liston, 1990). Since this review nearly 25 years ago, critical race theory, feminist studies, and other variations of critical have made their way into teacher education and Gore (2001) contends that even though they still exist in the margins, critical stances have gained ground. For teacher education programs that do espouse a critical orientation the dilemma is then *how*. How do supporters of a critical framework then go about designing programs ?

A Critical Literacy /Multicultural Education Teacher Education Framework

Many teacher education programs tend to take up either a multicultural education framework or a critical literacy approach. I propose that the direction teacher education needs to go in is to weave the two together to generate new meaning in the relationship among critical consciousness, multicultural education and critical literacy. That work has begun in some spaces. Joyce King (1991) calls for a critical literacy approach to disrupt preservice teachers' dysconsciousness⁵. Hilary Janks (2010) references the scholarship of Sonia Nieto. Jerri Willet, Judith Solsken, and Jo-Anne Wilson-Keenan (1999) join critical language studies in the "dialogue about multicultural education" (p. 166) and Maria José Botelho and Masha Rudman (2009) use critical literacies as a tool to deconstruct multicultural children's literature, framed as critical multicultural analysis. These are

(teacher) education was going to transform and focus on the common good. (Zeichner & Liston, 1990).

⁵ Dysconsciousness as described by Joyce King is a misinformed way of thinking about society and inequality which limits our ways of knowing. This construct is how King explains "being misinformed" as a result of what discourses are made available to us rather than situating blame within individual fault or characteristics.

powerful beginnings and more collaboration across these fields is necessary to prepare critical teachers.

Critical literacy is a framework and pedagogy with goals of creating more equitable experiences for students both in and out of school, supporting students and teachers to take on social action, and encouraging teachers and students to critique language use and social structures (Dozier, Johnson & Rogers, 2006). According to Barbara Comber (2001), critical literacy involves teachers and students in “asking complicated questions about language and power, about people and lifestyle, about morality and ethics, about who is advantaged by the way things are and who is disadvantaged” (p. 271). Holding a critical literacy perspective is, in part, to “recognize that one’s world views are value laden and connected to language” (Dozier, Johnston and Rogers, 2006, p. 18). In some ways, critical consciousness is a worldview, a way of seeing, interpreting and critiquing one’s experiences. The construct of *conscientização* or critical consciousness, attributed to the work of Paulo Freire, is a process of “learning how to read in relation to the awakening of ... consciousness” (1974/2008, p. 38) and allows one the possibility to not only “be in the world, but to engage in relations with the world” (p. 39).

I argue that critical literacy working in concert with multicultural education helps each to bring about the goals and realizations of the other. Nieto and Bode (2011) espouse three broad goals of multicultural education. The first is to address inequities in schools and society. The second is to increase all students’ achievement and the third goal is to help students “become critical and productive members of a democratic society” (p. 10). To achieve these goals Nieto and Bode propose seven tenets for

multicultural education, including multicultural education that is education for social justice and that is critical pedagogy. Geneva Gay (1997) names multicultural education as a process and as practices to achieve democracy.

To a certain extent, texts that guide teacher education requirements in the context of Massachusetts can be read as taking on the call to prepare teachers for the above critical literacy and multicultural education goals by framing some competencies, standards, and courses around “diversity”, or teaching for social justice. Of course, the key here is how these standards are framed and then how they get interpreted and put into practice. The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standard is vague with reference to *all students* and *diverse populations* so that teacher educator programs can address this in a host of ways. The Massachusetts standard offers more detail but focuses on effort, an interpretation of democracy, and understanding of the connections between culture and learning. I argue, as do some educators, that calls for equity and diversity need to be framed as conversations about ideologies, positionality, and resource distribution.

The 2008 version of the NCATE standards has one designated “diversity”, the Massachusetts licensure standards include attention to “promoting equity” and numerous teacher education programs include a course(s) on multicultural education, social justice or diversity⁶. As an example of differing interpretations, the Massachusetts’ Pre-service Performance Assessment Professional Standards for Teachers on promoting equity states that an equity-focused teacher a) encourages all students to believe that effort is a key to

⁶ This dissertation will not address critiques of these standards and coursework but I will note that there is on-going debate about the effectiveness of how equity pedagogy, diversity efforts and multicultural education are defined and practiced in the given examples. The key point I am making here is that there is an invitation from accrediting bodies to engage in diversity and equity efforts.

achievement; b) works to promote achievement by all students without exception; c) assesses the significance of student differences in home experiences, background knowledge, learning skills, learning pace, and proficiency in the English language for learning the curriculum at hand and uses professional judgment to determine if instructional adjustments are necessary; d) helps all students to understand American civic culture, its underlying ideals, founding political principles and political institutions, and to see themselves as members of a local, state, national, and international civic community; e) collaborates with families, recognizing the significance of native language and culture to create and implement strategies for supporting student learning and development both at home and at school.

At the time of this study, the NCATE standards are in transition and most teacher education programs are using the 2008 standards, which define diversity efforts as:

The unit designs, implements, and evaluates curriculum and provides experiences for candidates to acquire and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn. Assessments indicate that candidates can demonstrate and apply proficiencies related to diversity. Experiences provided for candidates include working with diverse populations, including higher education and P–12 school faculty, candidates, and students in P–12 schools.
(retrieved from
<http://www.ncate.org/Standards/UnitStandards/UnitStandardsinEffect2008/tabid/476/Default.aspx>)

The Social Justice Project

Social justice teaching, or how I framed the early context of this project as I sought critical educators who might identify as social justice teachers, is poorly theorized (Grant & Agosto, 2008). Carl Grant and Vonzell Agosto find that “social justice” is ill-defined, and is an area lacking empirical studies of socially just teaching practices. More

specifically, to prepare teachers for social justice teaching or multicultural education, the field of teacher education has focused on the “cultural mismatch” between teachers and students. With a predominantly white teaching force, studies have focused on (white) candidates’ experiences and attitudes toward diversity, prejudice reduction and equity pedagogy (Hollins & Guzman, 2005). There are a number of studies illustrating that white teachers often demonstrate deficit-oriented thinking toward children of color, or at the very least, a hesitancy to discuss and explore issues of difference, race in particular. Other studies note that many white teachers enter preservice programs and schools with little previous contact with racial groups other than their own (Milner, 2003b) and with negative perceptions of students of color (Terrill & Mark, 2000). Sleeter (2000) notes that many white teachers avoid discussing issues of race by “minimiz[ing] the extent and impact of racial discrimination” (p. 123) and “refus[ing] to examine race openly” (p. 125).

Is this how the purpose of critical literacy or multicultural education should be framed – to prepare white teachers to teach children of color? While that is an aspect needing serious attention, it dichotomizes and creates gaps. First, it is a way of framing teacher education that diminishes the experiences and needs of candidates of color. Secondly, omitting white P-12 students overlooks that those white students also participate in maintaining the status quo. There are other reasons why critical literacy and multicultural education are necessary. I agree with Carl Grant and Vonzell Agosto’s (2006) call for the “widespread need of multicultural education” (p. 96) in their review and critique of multicultural education literature. Grant and Agosto do not minimize the extreme importance of attending to the vast educational disparities that impact low

income students, English language learners, and students of color. Yet they also ask the question that even when white middle class or “traditional students” (p. 96) do well in schools, what does *well* mean? Often, well means quiet, passive, compliant. Grant and Agosto question just how *well* schools serve most students.

The “social justice project”, politically speaking, must focus on everyone while at the same time restructure for *education debts* (Ladson-Billings, 2006). For example, securing more equitable opportunities and resources for low-income districts and students, reframing how schools work with families so as not to continue marginalizing some families from the educational process, examining and revising school discipline policies that push students into the school to prison pipeline, and reconsidering teaching and testing practices that limit student agency.

Critical Consciousness as an Underdeveloped Construct in the Teacher Education Literature

A theoretical construct that ties the pedagogies of critical literacy, multicultural education and teaching for social justice together is critical consciousness. Critical consciousness, or the social process of questioning one’s assumptions about reality (Freire, 1973/2008), and active participation in the critique of knowledge production (Ladson Billings, 1995), is needed if one strives to meet some of the ideals of critical teaching. The majority of the literature I reviewed on critical consciousness and teacher education names critical consciousness as something a teacher may or may not *have* rather than something she does. Critical consciousness is sometimes described as a tool, a

viewpoint, or a framework (Gatimu, 2009). It can be developed (Gay & Kirkland, 2003), sparked (Rodriguez, 2008), promoted (Houser, 2008), and achieved (Beilke, 2005). In the educational literature, critical consciousness is framed as knowledge (Sleeter, Torres & Laughlin, 2004) and dispositions (Houser, 2008), but less often as social practices. What mainly is missing from the literature is attention to critical consciousness as *performed* (McDonough, 2009).

The research literatures also state the purpose of critical consciousness for preservice teachers is to help them in their preparation for working with diverse learners with diverse becoming a commonplace synonym for non-white students. An underpinning assumption of most articles is that white teachers need to develop critical consciousness to teach across social difference (read as teach children racially different from the white norm), for “multicultural understanding” (Houser, 2008, p. 465) and to be “more effective with students of color “ (Howard, 2003, p. 194). Exposure to racial others is identified as one way that the critical consciousness of whites begins to emerge (Beilke, 2005; Houser, 2008). While most researchers do acknowledge that preservice teachers of color also need to cultivate critical consciousness, there are few studies about how this might happen or what the experiences of preservice teachers of color might be like. Critical consciousness is constructed as a necessity for teachers to assist the “cultural other” to do well in school. Reiterating Grant and Agosto’s (2008) point about the need for multicultural education, I assert that engaging in critically conscious thinking and action benefits all students, regardless of race, class, and gender.

Achieving or developing critical consciousness is becoming an objective in teacher education (Comeau, 2008). It is considered teachable, attainable and desirable. An

assumption in the literature is that if preservice teachers develop critical consciousness then they are likely to teach for social justice. But lacking are any studies to support this assumption; also missing is attention to inservice teachers. There is an emphasis in teacher education literature to only look at the teacher education practices with preservice teachers (Beilke, 2005; Hill-Jackson, 2007; Houser, 2008; Milner, 2003). Yet much can be learned about what preservice teachers need from exploring the praxis of classroom teachers.

Purpose

In order to be able to live and work for the common good one needs to understand self, social systems, and social inequities. Thus, Paulo Freire's construct of critical consciousness is useful when considering how students and educators might engage in ways of being that foster the consideration of multiple perspectives and reconsider beliefs, assumptions and ways of participating in school and community.

The purpose of this study is to explore how nine critical educators enact critical consciousness (Freire, 1993; Freire, 2008) as well as how I construct criticality as researcher and educator. For the purposes of this study, "critical educators" are educators who embrace a critical edge in their work. Chapter 3 addresses more specifically what this critical edge may look like (or its processes) but for the purposes of this introduction it is sufficient to loosely define critical educators as follows. They are educators who are self-reflexive about their subjectivities and identities, relationships with others and the structures of society. Their aim is to teach so that students learn ways of thinking and participating toward a more democratic society. Their visions of more equitable opportunities and structures both in and out of school, of students who creatively engage

in democratic dialogue and participate in community create an “arch of social dreaming” (McLaren, 1991, p. 28). Critical educators may identify as multicultural teachers, social justice educators, critical pedagogues, anti-racist teachers or anti-oppressive educators. Most likely, as in this study, they claim no specific identity affiliation that links them to any particular pedagogies.

In the teacher education literature, critical consciousness resides in the psychological/cognitive domain and is constructed as insights or understandings that one either has or does not have and that one needs in order to be able to teach critically. Here, in this study, I consider how critical educators enact a critically conscious pedagogy and how they understand and talk about critical consciousness in relation to their work. The aim of this project is to raise questions and explore the complexities of the construct of critical consciousness with the hope that a closer look at the many interwoven layers will offer varied opportunities and approaches to support critically conscious engagements of preservice teachers.

In describing her work about constructions of gender, Judith Butler said “*Gender Trouble* was about watching, doing, making, becoming gender” (Zajdermann, 2006). I can say the same about this research project. I am not just “watching” critically conscious performances of educators as I observe lessons and listen carefully in interviews. I am also “doing” criticality as I engage in research, and teaching. I am “making” criticality, perhaps a particular kind of criticality, through my theoretical, methodological and representational choices. And I too am in a process of becoming in relation to criticality. My understandings, assumptions and blind spots inform my research in ways that construct criticality both similarly and differently from other scholars and educators.

Critical consciousness does not exist outside of our writing and talking about it. It does not sit outside of us awaiting discovery but instead “has to be created in every domain” (Deleuze, 1995, p. 126).

Research Questions

This study is an interpretive study of a critical construct – that of critical consciousness. My self-reflection about how I teach and the ways in which students engage with material about social inequities and power continues to provoke my ongoing questioning. I often wonder how to raise ideas that provoke students but do not indoctrinate. Or, I think about why some students are willing to explore their own beliefs, sometimes reconsidering a stance. There is an interesting pattern that my colleagues and I have noticed about the course Racial and Cultural Identities. Every semester, a handful of students from across the sections do not do or at some point stop doing any of the assignments and may complain of the irrelevance or discomfort of the course. They subsequently need to retake the course and almost always re-engage in ways that not only position them as very successful students but they also begin to talk about the course as one of the more significant courses they have experienced. These shifts in engagement create wonder for me as a teacher and learner – a wonder about the possibilities of becoming. The following are the questions that guided this study of critical consciousness.

1. What provokes and sustains critical consciousness?
2. How do educators talk about and enact critical consciousness?
3. How can the experiences of critically conscious educators inform teacher education?

Sedimentations Part II: Conceptual Underpinnings

The layers of theory I have engaged with through reading, living, hypothesizing, and teaching (hooks, 1994) are dialogic with one another. I do not disregard one as I become familiar with another. There is plenty of room in my body to take up multiple theories and for them to interact with each other as I engage in ongoing exploration of subjectivities and learning. Since theory starts outside of the academy (LeCourt, 2004,) living informs my theories and then theories inform my living. All the theoretical places I have visited and made my home build on one another to bring me to my current place of understanding. The theories related to some of my memories that I shared earlier in this chapter have not been disregarded. With a careful eye, one can see that I still love language and literacy as I did in my first years of teaching – but now I understand literacy as multiple and multimodal. I no longer construct empowerment as individuals being afforded power by becoming *literate* – but have reshaped it to understand it as agency⁷ offered through discursive positioning. Finally, I still consider race and other social identity group memberships key shapers of human experience yet now as discursively produced. In the following section I look more closely at three frameworks that inform the methodology and analysis of this project: critical literacy, feminisms, and poststructuralism. I claim feminist poststructuralism with some caution in the ways in which I describe below.

⁷ Agency is the “discursive constitution of that person as author of their own multiple meanings...though only to the extent that person has taken on as their own discursive practices...of the collectives of which they are a member” (Davies, 2000, p 66). Davies suggests that agency is considered as persons authoring their own meanings, or *authority*. She is clear that this authoring is not random but constitutive of our dialectical engagement with discourses. The role of literacy here is individuals’ readings of discourses and language in use in relation to their authoring.

This Project as Critical Literacy

I no longer teach traditional language arts to students but see my work in all my courses, RCI in particular, as teaching critical literacy. This study of critical consciousness is essentially a critical literacy study in the following ways. This research project is a reading of lives: nine educators and my own. It is the reading of lives, reading of the world, reading of teaching as a text (Wooldridge, 2001) and juxtaposed with reading research literatures to understand critical consciousness and its relationship to *becoming*, in a Deleuzian way (1995), which is a becoming that is different – different from oneself just a moment ago. Critical consciousness is not constructed as a destination and I do my best to avoid writing that I or anyone in the project is critically conscious. Maxine Greene often said in presentations and in the weekly salon she hosted at her home, “I am what I am not yet.” This project is an attempt to make sense of critical literacy beyond a guiding classroom philosophy or classroom activities and assemble it as a way of being and becoming.⁸ It is an acknowledgement of the layers of theories (literacies) that are sedimented within me and a close exploration of current theories that hold promise for my work but with which I struggle. It stems from my years of working first with elementary-aged children (empowerment through literacy-an early sediment) to years in teacher education (awareness through reading the world and deconstruction-Derrida and Freire-another layer) and, of late, interest in critical consciousness and my own subjectivity. Hopefully, not a self-centered, self-serving interest but rather one that

⁸ I outline how being and becoming are different in a subsequent section.

comes out of wanting to become a better teacher⁹ and understand being human, as much as that might be (im)possible.

This project *is* and *of* critical literacy. It is *of* critical literacy in that it is a study *of* the ways a critical literacy stance guides the ways of being in the world and the teaching of many of the educators I interviewed and visited. The New London Group (1996) identifies critical literacy as a way of exploring patterns to name and then rename the world and then reshape it. Critical literacy is not so much a subject as an orientation that begins with self. It is “a call to position oneself differently in the world” (Vasquez, Tate & Harste, 2013, p 18). Allan Luke’s (2012) description of critical literacy is as a political orientation with a focus on literacies for social justice. Lastly, as Edelsky (1994) posits, critical literacies are connected to principles of social justice and democracy. These literacies come in different forms in the working life of the educators, whether as a request to clarify language use, questions about what is fair, a reconsideration of history, or an art assignment that represents identities.

The project *is* a CL project in that the framework and methodology is a critical reading of the data with intentions to question and expand the ways in which critical consciousness is rendered in teacher education literature. I understand critical literacy as a stance or philosophy that, in the classroom, guides approaches to teaching that may then be called critical literacy practices – practices that invite students to live critically (Vasquez, Tate, Harste, 2013). These social practices are just as relevant outside of the

⁹ I cannot quite avoid a teleological presentation here and have tried to rethink this. I could say I want to be a different teacher so that I am aligned with Deuluze and Greene, who I just mentioned. I have a drive to teach in ways that are fresh and new and engage students (more) deeply, which I often think of as better. The ways in which I construct better actually align with new theories I have taken up so in reality I suppose they are just different from my previous representations of my self as teacher rather than necessarily better.

classroom for guiding social interactions and as researchers engaging in studies. As I engage in writing and pay close attention to language use I am engaging in critical literacy. Do I want to write *being or becoming* ? Which of those two choices come closest to the theory of self I am borrowing from others? In this sense, I align with James Gee (2001) who argues that critical literacy is a form of discourse analysis in that “language is always fully situated in social and political contexts” (p. 17).

Remembering: An April afternoon

“Poststructuralism is shit”, said my long time friend and mentor as we stood in the parking lot at work. Marcela and I never taught RCI together but she mentored me through my first few semesters – spending hours helping me plan, think through dilemmas, and provide feedback on my teaching. We also often talked about racism and sexism on trips to AERA, over pancakes and eggs at the local café, on her front porch. We were walking to our cars after a day of meetings when I asked, “Can we find time for coffee? I want to talk about poststructuralism.” That is when she claimed it ‘shit’ and said no matter what meanings are up for negotiation, she faces racism daily and that too feels like shit.

....I felt guilty for asking.

Feminisms and Poststructuralism

I deliberated for quite some time about whether or not to call this section as I have or name it feminist poststructuralism. It might be easiest to write of feminist postructuralism since that marriage offers many possibilities for illustrating how language

builds ideas, produces material structures, and can be disputed and therefore disrupted (St. Pierre, 2000). Feminist poststructuralism also frames how I reflect on my role in the research (personally, politically), how I consider wider discourses and interdiscursivity to analyze texts, and think about how experiences of body, mind and emotions are created out of and through language (Davies, 1999). Keeping this guiding construct as one entity hints at a particular kind of feminism and softens/reduces others, Black feminism and postcolonial feminism in particular. I cannot claim feminist poststructuralist because that erases the critiques of postmodernism from women of color, bell hooks (2001) and Patricia Hill Collins (2000) in particular.

hooks proposes a postmodern blackness in attempt to borrow from both paradigms. She acknowledges and welcomes the potential of postmodern theories to upend essentialized and over-determination of Blackness. Yet she is cautious and asks, “Should we not be suspicious of postmodern critiques of the subject when they surface at an historical moment when many subjugated people feel themselves coming to voice for the first time?” (1999, p. 28).

Patricia Hill Collins also acknowledges the potential for postmodern theories to reject certainty—certainties that have created oppression. Yet her criticism is much stronger than hooks’s as she questions the actual impact of decentering and deconstruction on marginalized groups. With postmodernism’s shifting and flattening of theory, decentering becomes game for anyone, even those at the top of “real-world hierarchical power relations” (p. 45). Therefore, the marginalized can no longer claim the “power of marginality” (p. 43). Deconstructing the canon benefits Black feminists and at the same time erases their authority in terms of the history of Black feminist thought. Hill

Collins echoes hooks with a closing thought: “The true irony is that elites can now undercut the bases of authority of those long excluded from the centers of power while invoking their own fluency in the exclusionary language of postmodernism” (p. 60).

Rather than writing about feminist poststructuralism as one entity, I will name what poststructuralism offers my study as well as what I am drawing on from feminisms. Postmodernism pushes me to rethink the humanism pervasive in most of my education and take up the constitutive power of language – from everyday talk to broader discourses. The key analytical tool in poststructuralism is language, which I mainly draw on for the empirical part of this study. The key aspects of poststructurally informed theories of language that are relevant to this study are that language constitutes reality, it is not an expression of an individual but constructs the individual, and it is where/how the social is created and contested (Weedon, 1997).

Second and third wave feminism put subjectivity on the “theoretical agenda” (Weedon, 1997, p. 12) in part from women’s consciousness-raising practices both are relevant to a study of critical consciousness. An outcome of the consciousness-raising groups of women was to shape the theme *the personal is the political* as the sharing of personal experiences provided insight to the workings of structures. Two strands of feminism, Black feminism and postcolonial feminism, specifically target issues of race linked to sex/gender, and class. And finally, there is the advent of fourth wave feminism with the introduction of new materialism (Barad, 2007; Coole & Frost, 2010; Dolphin & van der Tuin, 2012) which posits that the linguistic turn has taken too much attention from the real material effects of and on bodies in constructing identities and experiences.

New materialism is considered “new” in feminism because of a renewed look at the material: so matter matters. Our bodies as matter (visible identities), space as matter, concrete items like clothes, and earthquakes are matter, and there are material effects from poverty and racism. What is also “new” is the theorization that all matter has agency. Although I argue that while both of these framings are relevant to my study, neither are that new. All living and non-living things were assigned agency in the work of Bruno Latour (2005). I apply this understanding in Chapter 4 when I argue that emotions are agentic in the enactments of critical consciousness. Also, the materiality of classism, racism and sexism along with the material effects of bodies has long been a topic of the scholarship in the feminist writings of women of color (Anzaldúa, 1999; Anzaldúa & Moraga, 1981; Minh-ha, 1989; Sandoval, 2000). I do not illustrate much of an empirical argument in this case, but the relevance of materiality informed much of my thinking throughout this project.

Key Constructs

Language and Discourse

Both James Gee’s (2005) definition of Discourse as an identity kit as well as Discourse as bodies of knowledge (Foucault, 1972) are both relevant to this study. Gee (2005) writes about discourses as particular ways of engaging in “language, action, interaction, values, beliefs, symbols, objects, tools and places...” (p. 27). Discourses are ways of “doing” identities, like Butler’s (1993) performativity where “the power of discourse reproduce(s) the phenomena that it regulates and constrains” (Butler, 1993, p.

2). This is in part what I am interested in illustrating – how critical teachers perform critically conscious teaching.

Gee (2005) defines Discourse as a “dance that exists in the abstract as a coordinated pattern of words, deeds, values, beliefs, symbols, tools, ...as a performance that is recognizable” (p. 28). The key to Gee’s concept of discourse as identity is recognition. Persons recognized as certain types of people who do certain types of things have then “pulled off a Discourse” (p. 27). This theory of discourse provides opportunities to explore how persons become a member of a figured world and “fit in” or are excluded; in this case, the worlds of various critical classrooms.

Discourse as rationality and truth is from the work of Michel Foucault. Discourses are bodies of knowledge which overlap and intersect. Discourses are often written about separately but they interact with one another. Discourses form over time and in interaction (Foucault, 1972). For Foucault, his writings on madness, criminality and sexuality might take the appearance of three separate discourses. Yet each informs the other in subtle and not so subtle ways.

Discourses, as bodies of knowledge, are also systems of power. It is power that produces or sustains truth through discourse and thus power/knowledge represents this intimate connection (Foucault, 1980). Since power produces knowledges and “knowledge bolsters power” (Janks, 2010, p. 50) power \leftrightarrow knowledge can represent the dialecticism between the two. Performances then as “interpretive act(s), act(s) of intervention and method(s) of resistance (Denzin, 2003, p 9) are expressions of discourses.

Subjectivity and Intersubjectivity

This research project about critical consciousness is essentially an exploration of subjectivities and identities. I provide a fuller explanation in Chapter 5 of how the two differ but in short and for now, identity is a momentary snapshot of the subjectivities I project to others or how others see/name me. Identity/ies seem stable: teacher, woman, daughter, white until one begins to think of the myriad ways to be a teacher that is also informed by gender, relations, and race, which in and of themselves, are also varied. Subjectivity is the sense of our selves informed by experiences, feelings, perceptions. Poststructural theories of subjectivity construct it in the realm of discourse. From Weedon, (1997), subjectivity is “precarious, contradictory and in process, constantly being reconstituted in discourse each time we think or speak” (p. 32). Discourses made available to the subject shape opportunity and limitations and are the ways in which subjects participate in society, constructing their identities via a mangle of subject positions (Davies, 2000).

Yet, Donna LeCourt (2004) calls for less emphasis on the discursive and a consideration of how the material, in concert with discourse, constitutes subjects. She argues that the material aspects of culture, which constitute selves, have been largely ignored with the linguistic turn. Material effects of racism, violence and poverty as well as our embodied social relations need consideration. I notice the call to return to the material brings me comfort. I still straddle theories – not ready to fully embrace the cognitive dissonance brought on from poststructuralism. Yet I am not certain it is just a discomfort in terms of a difficulty understanding challenging theory but of my own resistance to what feels like discounting the very material effects of gender, class, and

race that impact my life, and the lives of students and friends. [A tangle: I am still trying to sort out structuring structures (Bourdieu, 1980) and poststructuralism. The material turn allows me to say race matters even though that can be read as modernist a cementing of an identity group. My body is immediately read as white and with that can come certain interactions such as being asked if I need help by the person at the counter as she looks past the Black woman in front of me who is the only other customer. Or within a few minutes of being introduced to a neighbor of my parents he brings up the remake of *The Planet of the Apes* and how that is just like what the world would be like if Blacks were in power. There are subtle and not so subtle patterns of engagement that align by race, class, gender and so on. They are not essential qualities of members of those groups but are constructed by the discursive communities of which they belong.]

Subjectivity, as a construct, has taken shape in this study as I have reshaped critical consciousness to something formed in interactions (with others and spaces). These interactions I call entanglements. Retheorizing critical consciousness in this way challenges the humanist rendering of critical consciousness as an action emanating from a core self. Instead, like Davies' (2000) explanation of subjectivity, "our selves and our human nature are not the causes of what we do but the products of the discourses through which we speak and are spoken into existence" (p. 77).

Through the work of this project I have come to understandings of identity and subjectivity that are slightly more clear to me than previously. But just slightly. And subjectivity is slippery – elusive even to scholars who have crafted entire research agendas attending to subjectivity. Elizabeth St. Pierre (2011) shares that her personal dictionary has a thirty page entry for subjectivity and still she is unsure what it means.

But more troubling is her argument that poststructural work does not align with subjectivity as researchers insert their subjectivity statements and thickly describe participants as autonomous subjects. In this regard, I am sometimes guilty.

Broadly, intersubjectivity is the meanings co-created by people interacting with each other. Our subjectivities in face-to-face interactions continuously shape each other and are part of the social construction of reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). How we understand the world is only in relation to and in dialogue with others in the world (Abma & Widdershover, 2011). Mikhail Bakhtin's I-Other emphasizes intersubjectivity as dialogism where "to be means to be for the other" (as cited in Wertsch, 1988, p. 116) in that others are the co-authors of our ideas. Greg Nielson (2002), in describing Bakhtin's answerability explains, "we come to be ourselves through gifts bestowed on us by others...through language...and emotional-volitional tones" (p. 38). We are all inter-subjects where our thoughts and actions cannot be reducible to only our selves (Crossley, 1996). According to Crossley (1996), it is intersubjectivity, or shared thought, meaning and action that generates our identities and agency. He adds that intersubjectivity is not just linguistic but involves a *corporal intertwining* (p. 174) as humans are embodied beings.

Embodiment

One critique of poststructuralism is that it is too cerebral – that it is a theory for intellectualizing rather than a theory for political action. Is there room for bodies and emotions in a theory wrapped up in the intellect? Embodiment has relevance to this study in a number of ways. Merleau Ponty's (1962) theorization of what we know as thoughts

are the results of what we know or understand through our body is an overarching guide for thinking about my engagement with the research process, findings about the agency of emotions, representing critical consciousness as embodiment, and the method of performance ethnography. While I do not specifically name embodiment throughout this dissertation, I invite readers to consider key ideas about embodiment as they engage mindfully and bodily with this work. The entangled nature of critical consciousness is onto-epistemological (Barad, 2007) in that reasoning develops out of experiences with the body as bodies interact with other subjects and the environment (Johnson, 1999). Or, as stated by Ian Burkitt (1999), “knowledge is located primarily in the experiences of the active body” (p.5). Subjects’ sense of self and critical knowing is rooted in their bodies—the feel, their experiences, their movement through time and space (Burkitt, 1999). “The body is the medium for sense-making” (Macintyre, Latta & Buck, 2007, p. 316). Thus, critical consciousness, which is usually presented as cognitive engagement, then is reformed as an embodied phenomena.

Methodologically, this work is also a representation of embodiment. Husserl described the body as “a thing inserted between the rest of the world and the subjective sphere” (as cited in Carman, 1999, p 212). Thus, my bodily experiences visiting schools and meeting with educators, teaching memories I try to reconstruct here, and my engagement with data analysis all involve my knowing-being. My efforts, while restricted by the media of print, are to erase clear borders between mind and body and break the mind-body dualism.

Performativity

Judith Butler's work on gender identity is applicable to any identity formation and I draw on it here to illustrate how critical consciousness is a performative act. As Butler (1990, 1993) explains about gender, that what we do is not a result of who we are but is how we constitute who we are. In other words, critical consciousness, like gender, does not exist within us as a part of our inner core but instead comes to be how we identify or are identified through a repetition of language and signs and thus comes to be reality. Another way to explain the performativity of critical consciousness is not to think of critical consciousness as something prior that shows up in our actions, but instead it is enacted/constituted through our actions, often collectively.

Another key aspect of Butler's theory is that performatives are reiterative. Performatives of identities are in constant motion, always being repeated yet never exactly the same since no given context or moment exactly repeats itself. Critical consciousness performances are also reiterative and sometimes read as teleological since Freire's idea about critical consciousness was for the oppressed to learn to read the world and act for better conditions – or an improved humanity. The teacher education literature also constructs critical consciousness as the path toward more equitable teaching that changes learners and the world.

A strong criticism of Butler's work is that she situates performatives mainly, if not only, in discursive practices. While performative theory is necessary in this study to situate critical consciousness as an enactment rather than a disposition or ability, it needs balanced with the intersection of feminist applications of the role of the body as in postcolonial theory from Chandra Mohanty (1991, 2003) or Gloria Anzaldúa (1999) and

a layering of new materialism, or fourth wave feminism as in the writings of Karen Barad (2003, 2007) and Elizabeth Grosz (1993, 1995). A second, lesser critique but very applicable to this study is from Ian Burkitt (1999) who argues that the role of the social is overlooked in Butler's theory, in terms of regulation of norms and developing *innovative practices* (p. 97).

Being and Becoming

A study of consciousness, identity and subjectivity needs to deal with the potentially conflicting constructs of *being* and *becoming*. I use both in this project. Being can infer a humanist interpretation of personhood where the subject has an essential core and becoming might be visualized as the subject as moving toward enlightenment or a telos. I draw on Hall (1996), Deleuze (1995) and Bakhtin (1981) for the construct of becoming. According to Hall (1996), subjects are always in the process of becoming because the question of identity is not about who we are but who we might become. Of course there is no answer to that but the constitution of our becoming is situated in history, language, and culture and the ways we have been represented and will re/present ourselves. Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) becoming works nicely with Hall in that becoming is a process of becoming different from who one was just a moment ago. As subjects interact with and through language and culture, each instance creates difference. Critical consciousness is a focus on interpreting the world in new ways to illuminate how discourse and materiality of social structures shape lives. This is where Mikhail Bakhtin's (1981) construct, ideological becoming, is useful. For Bakhtin, ideology is a worldview that is always in process through dialogism. "Our ideological development is...an intense

struggle within us for hegemony among various verbal and ideological points of view” (p. 346). Because Bakhtin’s work is about social context, ideological becoming is not merely a process or theory of how ideas get developed but about the development, or becoming, of the whole person (Ball & Freedman, 2004).

In terms of my use of being, I draw on Karen Barad (2003, 2007), Joe Kincheloe (2003) and Buddhism. When I use phrases such as “way of being” or my introductory phrase, “teaching, being, and social change” I am merging three ideas: knowing-being, critical ontology and mindful presence. Knowing-being or onto-epistemology is Barad’s (2003) reference to knowledge and who one understands oneself to be (in that temporary fixing of identity) as coming from mind and body. Subjects do not exist solely through rational experiences but also as a part of bodies in space and temporality. Joe Kincheloe (2003) suggests a study of critical ontology in teacher education. This could be summarized as a meta-awareness of one’s identity – again, a temporary fixing of subjectivities (Weedon, 1997). So while I understand, theoretically, that at any given moment I am different from the moment before – my body has aged, an idea on the page is now a part of me, as is the conversation I just had, I cannot keep up reflexively with every given moment and instead I spatialize and temporalize chunks of my history and consider my ways of being in this time period, this experience, or in this place. Finally, from Buddhism I take the tenet of mindful presence to consider being as attention to context, emotions, the moment, and an awareness of temporary identities (Barbezat & Mirabai, 2014). If these three concepts are thought of as in motion then being does not contradict becoming but supports it.

Significance of Study

The majority of the literature about critical consciousness and teacher education focuses on the preservice teaching experience. A common supposition is that to be able to teach critically, one must first develop or demonstrate some critical consciousness. Operating on this premise it then makes sense for there to be a focus during the intense training period of a teacher education program. Yet, as Sherry Marx (2006) reminds us, preservice teachers are a captive audience. Their classroom engagement, writing and reflection are often tied to a grade. This study explores the experiences of nine educators in Pre-K-12 schools or higher education, with a range of professional experience from one year to approximately thirty. By focusing on currently practicing educators this research foregrounds their experiences and advice, a refreshing perspective when much of teacher education is designed insularly from the teacher educators themselves. It is necessary to look to practicing teachers as teacher educators revise and plan courses and programs to prepare aspiring teachers.

Second, this research re-theorizes critical consciousness and recasts it from an individualistic psychological construct within a developmental model to a complex relational, embodied performance that is enacted through language but also felt and realized nondiscursively.

And finally, the significance of this study also rests in its methodology. It makes use of performance reflexive autoethnography to make public one teacher educator's perspectives and lines of thinking. A common assumption in the teacher education literature that addresses critical consciousness is that the preservice teachers are not critically conscious and unconsciously embrace deficit thinking. This may be sometimes

true (or match some realities, but not all) and yet I have identified only one publication in which the authors, themselves teacher educators, publically explore their own thinking (Zamudio, et al 2009). The assumption in the literature is that the writers are themselves critically conscious but what might that look like? How can we teacher educators learn more from each other by making our shifting thinking and struggles public rather than only sharing our teaching practices.

Notes on Reading this Dissertation

This dissertation, a final product, at least for the moment, represents years of thinking, reading, and experiencing. Research literature and textbooks on research methodology can create the illusion that the process is more clean and linear than it really is because by the time the writer has made her way through the messy process, what she presents does look quite tidy. In my coursework, I learned that research questions will get reshaped as I work with the data, that the process of reading, thinking, writing is iterative, and choices about what to exclude are just as important as what to include. Experiencing these research practices are quite different from reading about them, and capturing them for readers is another matter. How do I capture the experience of reading on the lawn in front of the W.E.B. Du Bois Library from a book lent by my writing retreat leader so I can see an example of style when in fact I connect to the author's explanation of identity construction as not only discursive but also from material culture, which reminds me of the work of Karen Barad and new materialism, something I have been reading of late, and almost simultaneously raises a question about the difference between how LeCourt (2004) defines identity and the comment my friend Elsa made about subjectivity via an

email this week that is quite unlike the way Weedon (1997) defines subjectivity – and that perhaps my study about critical consciousness and the ways in which educators talk about their thinking and teaching has all along been a study of subjectivity? Perhaps readers are more interested in my analytical tools and findings; and this is exactly my point. The experience in front of the library *is* analysis. And how I think about that experience and the many more like it are, in part, findings.

The format of this dissertation was crafted to try and capture this complex and messy process of living my research for a number of years. I learned from the data collected and from my experiences of teaching and being. I learned from discoveries and also from what I could not figure out that presented as dilemmas. My efforts are to represent the variety of labor that went into this project and to gently push back at traditional academic writing as my way of claiming there are multiple ways of knowing. I carefully push and pull at the edges, not completely disregarding the power and merit of traditional academic discourse and at the same time experimenting with other ways of representation. One key finding of my research, which holds the entire project together, is that critical consciousness is an entanglement. And in that spirit, I composed a dissertation that is an entanglement of writing forms and genres informed by and represented as multiple discourses.

Readers will find the following types of writing in this dissertation. There are sections of academic narrative organized similarly to many qualitative dissertations as well as autoethnographic moments either woven into the various sections or as stand alone memories labeled as *Remembering*. These longer instances of remembering are written in italics to assist the reader in following when I am excavating sediments of my

experiences that either link to the theories I am exploring or highlight aspects of my subjectivities that are relevant to how I constructed this research and criticality. This personal writing is a theoretical and political move. Theoretical in that these moments in italics “invite [me] to turn [my] own analytic gaze on the ongoing process of [my] own subjectification” (Davies, 2000, p. 10). The purpose of inserting my memories is not to provide my autobiography, but to provide a resource for exploring the discourse and materiality in “the detail of the texts of life” (Davies, 2000, p. 10). Politically, as Bronwyn Davies (2000) explains, these extractions blur the boundaries between the researcher me and the “me as embodied human being” (p. 16). Also, my experiences are re/written to *relocate* memories from a private, individual sphere to a political, cultural and social space. (Kamler, 2001). I embrace Barbara Kamler’s use of *relocation* as I consider the memories shared here as a temporary location, even though frozen in this printed text, of where I am at the time of this writing while simultaneously attempting to capture previous locations and relocations.

Interspersed throughout are also subsections called *Constructing Critical Consciousness* where I reflect on how my project, my own lens and my research decisions construct criticality. There are also short interruptions where I make note of theoretical *tangle* I encountered. The interruptions give hints of the shadow text – the problems, what I resolved, what got ignored. In part, the words on the page capture what did not get put on the page. In two chapters I include a few poems, written by me with the words of the educators who participated in this study. The process of writing these poems forced me to consider what was most salient from interviews and focus groups. Finally,

there are occasional footnotes. It is here that I clarify a construct, explain a decision if I feel that decision is necessary for the reader to know, or I mention an aside.

Accounting

Before summarizing this chapter, I need to share one other recollection and a confession, both embedded in risk. Not that many years ago, I attended the American Educators Research Association's national conference. This conference offers thousands of presentations and draws even more thousands of participants. I am at a theoretical juncture at the conference. I decide that rather than going to hear my favorite scholars Gloria Ladson-Billings or Joyce King or attend the teacher education sessions that focus on race, I would attend presentations about new ideas introduced to me in my doctoral program: critical literacy, innovative qualitative research, and topics that are explicitly postmodern. After the first day, I was disheartened. My first risk is in an act of essentialization as I now share my observation that the rooms were filled with majority if not (seemingly), all whites. I suppose I could psychologize my response as feeling a need to be with people of color to validate my political commitments. But rather, my disappointment was not only in who was missing but more so in what was missing. There were few conversations about power, race, class, or gender. That is not to say that whites cannot have these conversations. I puzzled and continue to puzzle over what may be the cause of the omissions and suppose it is the confluence of subjectivities/identities, epistemologies and paradigms. I was disappointed because critical literacies¹⁰ and

¹⁰ I acknowledge that there is a history to critical literacy that includes a number of approaches including but not limited to critical pedagogy and critical language awareness and not all preclude

postmodern theories have tools to offer critical multicultural education. This is my first act of accounting – a counting of who is in the room and how that may account for the conversation.

My second act of accounting, and risk, is my own confession. After constructing and rereading my list of theorists and constructs for my dissertation proposal, I step back and look again only to notice that I have created mainly a list of white European male theorists. Is this whiteness¹¹ herding me in particular directions? I make a concerted effort to review my papers and many books and renew my commitment to reconnect my work to scholars of color. On the one hand, I can argue that it is good of me to stop and search for scholars of color that are saying the same things, said something first, or stretching boundaries in new ways. But I doubt this accountant's approach to listing, counting, balancing. How am I holding myself accountable to be reflexive about whiteness and its implications for me? Audrey Thompson (2008) writes that "additive adjustments underscore the foundational white assumptions that organized our research questions...even when race and culture are central to our work chances are that those of us who are white – and some who are not – appeal to white-referenced ways of naming race and culture" (p. 193). In what ways am I accountable for the citational linkages I make in the scholarship I produce? I offer this memory and confession not as catharsis

concerns with race (Morrell, 2008). But of the critical literacy sessions I attended at this particular conference there was little talk of race.

¹¹ Distinguishing the difference between white and whiteness is important. White is a socially constructed identity group based on phenotype. Whiteness is a power construct that structures the lives of all groups of people and can be taken up by anyone of any so-called race. So, here I am not claiming that all the white theorists on my list enact ideologies of whiteness in their works. I am saying that the power of whiteness shaped the research field to elevate white scholars, to make them more prominent and visible as well as whiteness shapes me to more easily locate (see) the works of these scholars. Of course gender is implicated here as well.

but in a commitment to making my research process public and troubling that which troubles me.

Onward¹²

In this first chapter, I combine memories of my own teaching to sketch a pastiche of some of the theories/theorists who have most influenced me and the ways I have constructed language and literacy learning as empowerment, as critical racial awareness, and as poststructural. The memories weave in and out of more traditional academic writing that provide the background and the undergirding concepts for this study about critical consciousness. I situate the study of critical consciousness as a necessity – my own in terms of an insatiable curiosity about human change and a necessity for the field of teacher education. In an era when neoliberalism has permeated all spheres of public education and many private spaces, I believe teacher education has to help reclaim education for democratic practices and movement toward a more equitable society.

In the next chapter I review the literature related to teacher education and critical consciousness. Here I note the patterns of constructing critical consciousness as an internal cognitive activity or state of being, and three prominent discourses of critical consciousness in the teacher education literature: situated in multicultural education, connections to race and/or otherness, and related to newer goals in teacher education. I also note that much of the critical consciousness in education sits in either teacher education or work with K-12 students. Few studies address critical consciousness with practicing teachers.

¹² I borrow the structure of *Onward* from an unpublished dissertation: Gannon, S. (2003). *Flesh and the Text: Poststructural Theory and Writing Research*. James Cook University.

CHAPTER 2

CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN TEACHER EDUCATION LITERATURE

An uneven social location makes consciousness varied, developing over time in fits and starts.

-Margaret Zamudio, et al. (2009, p. 460)

No problem can be solved from the same level of consciousness that created it.

-Albert Einstein

In this chapter, I review the literatures that map the context of critical consciousness in teacher education by first situating critical consciousness broadly in a social justice framework and more specifically within multicultural education. This is not to say that other literatures do not include critical consciousness. They do but often implicitly. Critical literacies, anti-oppressive education (Kumashiro, 2000), critical pedagogy, I argue, all have a goal of evoking critical consciousness with students, but rarely does teacher education research in those pedagogies name critical consciousness. Broadly speaking, much of teacher education that addresses critical consciousness is situated in a framework of multicultural education. Second, I review a number of concepts or other terms that clarify or overlap with critical consciousness such as critical reflection, sociopolitical consciousness and racial consciousness. The main body of this review summarizes how critical consciousness is constructed in the teacher education literature and identifies three broad discourses that have been taken up: multicultural

education, race, and teacher preparation. After presenting a brief review of pedagogies of critical consciousness in teacher education I end by identifying some of the gaps in literature.

Teaching for Social Justice: Multicultural Education

This review addresses the dilemma of preparing critically and socially just teachers by exploring the literature about critical consciousness in teacher education. Because the majority of the teacher preparation literature that explicitly addresses critical consciousness, as I will demonstrate later, sits in a multicultural education context I am situating the beginning of this review in the field of multicultural education. As James Banks (2007) states, two goals of multicultural education are to assist all students to successfully navigate their own culture and across cultures, and to disrupt oppression. He categorizes five dimensions of multicultural education to demonstrate its depth: content integration, the process of constructing knowledge, equity pedagogy, prejudice reduction and an empowering school structure and culture. Carl Grant and Christine Sleeter (2006) situate multicultural education within five approaches to “address human diversity” (p. 8): Teaching the exceptionally and culturally different, human relations approach, single-group studies, multicultural education, and education that is multicultural and social reconstructionist. Unfortunately, multicultural education is often misunderstood and enacted as one of the first three approaches from this list.

Multicultural education as defined by Sonia Nieto (2004) has seven characteristics including anti-racist teaching and critical pedagogy. According to Sonia Nieto and Patty Bode (2011), teaching for social justice is nested within multicultural education and is defined as a philosophy and as action that foregrounds equity, confronts discrimination,

and engages students in critical thinking and participatory democracy. Lee Anne Bell (1997) agrees with Nieto and Bode and adds that “social justice involves social actors who have a sense of their own agency as well as a sense of social responsibility” (p. 3).

The need for multicultural education and social justice teaching is often framed within a demographic imperative and the resulting “cultural mismatch” (Ladson-Billings, 2005). Readers of multicultural education research are often reminded of the shrinking number of white students in public schools along with a rapid increase of students of color, many for whom speak English as a second or additional language (U.S. Census, 2009). While the demographics of the nation’s student population have changed considerably, the same is not true of the teacher population. The average U.S. teacher is a white female. Yet, in spite of the growing number of teachers of color, the discrepancy in race and ethnicity between students and teachers is vast (Nieto & McDonough, 2011).

Because of the widening demographic gap between the student body and teacher population, the race and ethnicity of teachers and students is often researched and named as a cultural mismatch. The mismatch refers to the ways in which majority white, monolingual, and middle class teachers have little basis for understanding the experiences and seeing the strengths of their diversifying student body. There is significant evidence that white teachers often demonstrate deficit-oriented thinking toward children of color, or at the very least, a hesitancy to discuss and explore issues of difference, race in particular. Many white teachers enter preservice programs and schools with little previous contact with racial groups other than their own (Milner, 2003) and with negative perceptions of students of color (Terrill & Mark, 2000). Sleeter (2000) notes that many white teachers avoid discussing issues of race by “minimiz[ing] the extent and impact of

racial discrimination” (p. 123) and “refus[ing] to examine race openly” (p. 125). Alice McIntyre (1997) found in her study of white middle-class preservice teachers their desire to be seen as raceless individuals, particularly in the context of working with children of color. McIntyre (1997) as well as Sherry Marx (2006) identified patterns of “white talk” or ways in which white teachers use language to marginalize people of color and avoid discussions of race.

Is this how the purpose of multicultural education should be framed? While I too, often foreground and analyze through the lens of race first, there are other reasons why multicultural education and social justice teaching are necessary. I agree with Carl Grant and Vonzell Agosto’s (2006) call for the “widespread need of multicultural education” (p. 96) in their review and critique of multicultural education literature. Grant and Agosto do not try to minimize the extreme importance of attending to the vast educational disparities that impact low income students, English language learners, and students of color. Yet they also ask that even while white middle class or “traditional students” (p. 96) do well in schools, what does *well* mean? Often, well means quiet, passive, compliant. Grant and Agosto question just how *well* schools serve most students. I would like to underscore their commentary that schools must provide a quality education to *all* students and add three brief points. The challenge to serve all students well is made increasingly difficult as definitions of what counts as knowledge is narrowing with the current emphasis on education reform, accountability, and standardization. Secondly, as the world changes due to globalization and new forms of digital technologies, students need continued guidance exploring how their subjectivities are constructed. For example, cyber-bullying and sexting are two new practices that shape students as subjects and

objects in novel ways. Finally, all students need to learn how to envision and participate in a more just civic life. I understand the construct of critical consciousness as applicable to all and not just to prepare white teachers to teach students who are typically marginalized.

Review Methodology

Recent scholarship has submitted a small flurry of literature relating teacher preparation and the theoretical construct, critical consciousness. What do teacher educators mean by critical consciousness and how does it help them in their work with preservice teachers? Is critical consciousness something that can be taught or prompted with intention or is it an unexpected outcome? To address these questions this review is constructed to answer: How is critical consciousness framed in teacher education literature? By “framed” I review how critical consciousness is defined in the teacher preparation literature and what pedagogies teacher educators draw on to scaffold critical consciousness in their students (Sleeter, Torres & Laughlin, 2006).

To conduct this review, I completed searches on ERIC, Educomplete, and Academic Search Premier for the key words: critical consciousness and critically conscious, partnered with teacher education, multicultural education, and critical literacy. Searching the database for dissertations unearthed a few empirical studies relating critical consciousness to teacher education. I also looked at reviews in a number of handbooks on teacher education (Houston et al., 1990; Sikula et al., 1996; Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Cochran-Smith et al., 2008) and book publications from university libraries. I read these pieces through the lenses of critical pedagogy, critical literacy, and feminist poststructuralism. These frames provide openings and opportunities to

understand how critical consciousness is reshaped in relation to historical moments, power and discourse, and to interpret how texts create the construct of critical consciousness.

I did not limit the search by year and found the explicit use of the construct critical consciousness is relatively new in the teacher education literature. To narrow my search I only selected literature that named critical consciousness in the title, search terms, or abstract and that addressed the preparation of teachers. Hence, this review is limited by those search strategies and thus omits literature that may address the construct of critical consciousness in other ways.

Historical Perspectives

Critical consciousness is a “global history of ideas.” (Willis, Montavon, Hall, Hunter, Burke, & Herrera, 2008, p. 55) and its roots can be traced to both philosophical and critical theories. In this section I mainly summarize the work of Arlette Willis and her colleagues, along with the work of Ernest Morrell (2008) to sketch global intellectual influences on criticality. Willis et al. mainly focus on the shaping of critical consciousness and Morrell addresses critical literacy. In Morrell’s review of critical traditions he gives a nod to the value of the aesthetic by including hip hop, poetry, claiming fiction needs more attention, as well as naming the value of the emotive in the Negritude Movement. These three – criticality, critical conscious and critical literacy are interconnected. Critical consciousness is not a stand-alone construct. It emerged from and resides alongside critical traditions and current trajectories.

An historical sketch about concepts, theories, and frameworks in relation to understanding critical consciousness in current literature must include a discussion of

Paulo Freire's *conscientização*. Willis and her colleagues note that it is important to understand Freire's conceptualization of critical consciousness evolved over time. In the beginning of his work, he focused on the role of critical consciousness to illustrate violence inherent in oppressor/oppressed exploitive relationships. Later, Freire explained critical consciousness more as a dialectical "act of knowing" (Freire, 1971, p. 4 as cited in Willis et al., 2008) with a goal of transformation.

Freire's philosophical underpinnings and influences deserve additional attention than is afforded in the history constructed by Willis and her colleagues. Often Freire's frameworks are attributed to critical theory with Western European roots. True, his construct of critical consciousness is rooted in Hegel's master-slave dialectic (Gadotti, 1994) and a Marxian perspective. In addition, Freire was heavily influenced by four philosophical orientations emanating from Latin American philosophy and political thought in the 1960s: liberation philosophy, liberation theology, and popular education (Torres & Noguera, 2008). Liberation philosophy and liberation theology oriented Freire to question European notions of "otherness" and to align with a theological orientation to oppose "ethnocentric, racist, and self-congratulatory European civilization" (Torres & Noguera, p. 2). Lastly, popular education, a socialist model from Spain, had explicit political objectives and was a precursor to public education in Latin America (Torres & Noguera, 2008).

In addition to Western philosophers, Morrell (2008) names four main categories of intellectual tradition that shape critical literacy: anti-colonialism, postcolonialism, the African American tradition and the Latin American or Caribbean tradition. Morrell is intentional in separating anti-colonial from postcolonial in that the former was in

existence since initial Western colonialism as actions of dissent. Anti-colonialism discourse was mainly in the actions of revolutions, beginning in Haiti and the spreading to Africa and South America. Franz Fanon is named as a key anti-colonial intellectual with his work of identifying language as a tool for transformation. The postcolonial scholars Edward Said, Homi Bhaba and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak are named by Morrell as doing the work of naming Orientalism othering, reclaiming marginalized discourses and *subaltern voices* (p. 65).

The Chilean poet Pablo Neruda is credited as the most widely read poet in the world and he is known for illuminating poems about love. Less well known are his political poems. Neruda “was unwilling to separate his art from political activism” (Morrell, 2008, p. 71). Aimé Césaire, also a poet from Martinique, was a key founder of the Negritude Movement which highlighted Black culture globally, from France to the Harlem Renaissance. Both of these activist artists engage critically with the world and are known around the world. A lesser known activist, Carolina Maria de Jesus (1960/2003), also contributed to the criticality of a nation with her critique of poverty and the racialized social system in Brazil. As the first Black Brazilian woman to be published, her diaries were first excerpted for newspapers in 1958 before publication as a book. Her life story of survival in the *favelas* unveiled the illusion of Brazil’s racial democracy and initiated social reform of the 1960s.

Morrell’s list of African American contributors is rich and varied. He includes Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. Du Bois, Zora Neal Hurston, Marcus Garvey, Carter G. Woodson, Huey Newton, Angela Davis, bell hooks, and Cornel West. According to Theresa Perry (2008) as cited by Morrell, literacy for African Americans has always

connected to critiquing society. While this list of statesmen, writers, orators, and political activists may not seem directly responsible for the underpinnings of critical consciousness, they enact and shape criticality by their public writings, speeches and actions.

Willis and her colleagues (2008) also include the work of African American scholars whose work undergirds critical consciousness. W.E.B. Du Bois and Carter Woodson foregrounded liberation theology, vociferously challenged scientific notions of determinism about African Americans, and highlighted how social forces influenced thinking. Black liberation theologians such as Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, and James Cone questioned how human suffering could be tolerated within a Christian framework and forwarded a Black theological perspective focused on social justice, hope and liberation for everyone. Willis and her colleagues also attribute critically conscious work to Myles Horton, who founded the Highlander School. It was there that Horton instituted Freirian literacy pedagogies for adult learners, mainly African Americans so they could acquire the literacy needed for voting. Horton also coordinated workshops at the school to train people how to engage in social activism. His goal was to help people “become morally and politically literate” (Horton & Kohl, 1998, p. ix).

Of course, a history of critical theory also needs to include the philosophies of Kant, Hegel, and Marx along with theories of postmodernism. Kant sought to separate ways of knowing or consciousness from empiricism. He believed that science was limited in explaining “functions of the mind and soul” (Willis et al., p. 6) and instead that a consciousness of consciousness (the Jaspersian split) helps humans understand what they know. Hegel built on the work of Kant and “emphasized themes such as domination,

equality, emancipation/liberation” (Willis et al., p. 5). The Hegelian Dialectic is a key to the construction of critical theory and critical consciousness. The cycle is a vehicle to continually question what is known, create new alternatives, and then critique the alternative, always seeking new ways of understanding.

Karl Marx’s theories on consciousness and his development of early critical theory are also foundational to the construct of critical consciousness. Marx conceptualized consciousness as a result of economic determinism, or as the primacy of economic structures to constrain agency, and situated it as a state of mind of individuals, usually men. The Frankfurt School, founded to critique and expand Marxist theory, shaped critical theory to include analyses beyond class and inclusive of race and gender. Frankfurt’s founders’ theories about ideology, consciousness, and reification shapes how critical consciousness is referenced in the present.

Theories of French sociologists continued to build on the work previously mentioned and in some examples, shifted critical theory by emphasizing a poststructural framework. Jacques Derrida’s deconstruction is extremely significant in working with critical consciousness as it is an explication of the Frankfurt school’s main premise: to question everything. If critical consciousness partially centers on questioning what is taken for granted then analysis of any given practice or situation is necessary. Deconstruction then, is that method of analysis. Michele Foucault’s concepts of power/knowledge and disciplinary techniques, and his theories of power and discourse have pushed critique into new directions. Each of these offers ways to explore our subjectivities, locate discursive fissures and consider what that may mean for new discursive practices.

Disentangling Terminology and Discourses

In this section, I explore conceptual terminology similar to critical consciousness and then explore discourses embedded in the critical consciousness teacher education literatures. I then look at the pedagogical practices in teacher education that are presented as consciousness-raising pedagogies.

Reflection, critical thinking, critical reflection, reflexivity

Is critical consciousness different from either critical thinking or critical reflection? Language choice plays an important role in determining in what ways each are similar and different. Here I will refer to perhaps the more common understandings of critical thinking and critical reflection in education. But first I will make a few comments on reflection itself. Reflection has long played an important role in teacher education. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education includes reflection in unit standards related to pedagogical knowledge, professional dispositions, diversity and clinical practica as an expected outcome of teacher candidates (retrieved 10/4/14<http://www.ncate.org/Standards/UnitStandards/UnitStandardsinEffect2008/tabid/476/Default.aspx#stnd1>). Thus, it is common to find *reflection* included in course syllabi. Theories of reflection in Donald Schön's (1983) *The Reflective Practitioner*, while not explicitly about the teaching profession, have found a prominent place in teacher education. His concepts of reflection-in-action (thinking while doing) and reflection-on-action (rethinking what one has done) frame many preservice teacher assignments and provides a model for mentoring student teachers. Learning to reflect and engaging in

reciprocal reflection is a counter to teacher-as-technician, and mirrors Paulo Freire's emphasis on dialogue.

But what Schön does not include is the importance of considering one's assumptions and values during the reflection process (Zeichner & Liston, 1996). Thus it is possible that Schön's description of reflection could, unintentionally, maintain reflective practice as reflection on the technical. Denise Baszile (2008) would agree that reflection may not always serve intended outcomes. She noticed two detrimental results of reflection in her own student teaching experiences. At times, her attempts to reflect served only to rationalize her decisions, rather than to explore her intentions. She also experienced reflection as surveillance rather than as transformation when her mentor guided her away from reflections on race in the classroom and to instead reflect on de-racialized pedagogy.

Critical thinking can be used to describe a way of participating in Freire's problem-posing pedagogy (Freire, 1993; Jackson & Wasson, 2003) but it can also be a descriptor of functions of apolitical thinking in a cognitive sense, such as interpreting, analyzing, extrapolating and verifying (Beyer, 1985 as cited in Smith 1990) rather than a form of thinking linked to critical theory. Frank Smith (1990) argues that thinking critically and thinking creatively are similar and relate to generating and selecting alternatives. He cautions against characterizing critical thinking as a set of skills but rather as thinking related to language, knowledge, dispositions such as "reasonable doubt" (p. 104) and authority. In my framing of critical consciousness, critical thinking, as intellectual engagement, is necessary but not critical consciousness in and of itself.

John Dewey's noteworthy (1933) writing on reflection in teaching practice shapes the way critical educators engage in reflective practice or ask their students to do so. Connections to the socio-political-historical are evident in Dewey's caution not to accept the everyday way of doing things and to his notion of responsibility to the greater whole, not just responsibility to the immediate outcome of a given practice (Zeichner & Liston, 1996). Ken Zeichner and Daniel Liston include Dewey's concepts of open-mindedness and wholeheartedness in their sketch of the historic roots of reflective teaching. Revisiting these two concepts as defined by Dewey would benefit the conversation about critical consciousness. An overlap between the two concepts exists: both are active, are a way of voraciously engaging in learning, and could drive critically conscious engagement (Dewey, 1986/2008). Open-mindedness is not an openness to just anything but rather the recognition of "the possibility of error even in the beliefs that are dearest to us" (Dewey, 1986, p. 136). It is the examination of our own assumptions and imagining new possibilities. This openness to explore one's beliefs and consider changing them is the essence of critical consciousness. Wholeheartedness, not mentioned in the critical consciousness teacher education literature, is the opposite of perfunctory intellectual engagement for a grade or as a task. Rather, learning is with the whole-heart, where one is immersed and the learning drives the learning (Dewey, 1986). Missing from the critical consciousness literature is sufficient exploration of wholeheartedness, or what drives preservice teachers to engage in learning that often disrupts their sense of the world.

Reflexivity is different from reflection. Reflection in this collection of teacher education literature is often framed as self-consideration of what the preservice teachers

are learning. Whereas, reflexivity is the exploration of one's own subjectivities in relation to historical context. It is a "turning back on oneself, a process of self-reference" (Davies, 1999, p. 4). While it can be inferred that preservice teachers who are guided to critique their own assumptions are engaging in reflexivity, it is not made clear in the majority of this literature if they examine how their subjectivities are constituted. Self-examination of both the preservice teachers and the researchers is essential in relation to critical consciousness. The definition of reflexivity from Donna Phillips and Kevin Carn (2007) in their study of the analytic memo in a preservice research course connects reflexivity to the study of discourses. They state, "reflexivity is understood in this work as a method of self-inquiry, and positions teacher identity as fluid and subject to multiple and competing discourses" (p. 561).

Sorely missing from the literature I reviewed is attention to reflexivity in method and self-reflexivity in researchers' practice. Margaret Zamudio (2009) and her colleagues offer one of the only example of self-reflexivity in their construction of curriculum. Through a collective online journal, the four teacher educators-researchers engage in a conversation about how their own critical consciousness influences their work with students and how they frame course content. The journal then serves as a key source of data for their study. The second example is in the work of Maria Dantas-Whitney and Eileen Dugan Waldschmidt (2009) where they state that their research is not to find fault or place blame on their preservice teachers but to reflect on their own effectiveness as teacher educators and the effectiveness of their teacher preparation program design.

Reflexivity in research is both epistemological and methodological. It is related to "how we should learn about knowledge...and how we should do research to obtain this

knowledge” (Nencel, 2014, p. 76)¹³. Reflexivity is used both within and outside of research contexts and I suggest the same for work related to engaging critical consciousness in preservice teachers. Preservice teachers should also be asked to engage in reflexivity. There is value in being asked to reflect on learning and emerging practices. In addition preservice teachers should be supported to examine their subjectivities. Coupling reflexivity and examination of discursive practices will support teacher educators’ efforts to support critical consciousness.

Critical consciousness: a Freirian perspective

Critical consciousness is sometimes described as a tool, a viewpoint, or a framework (Gatimu, 2009), and state of mind (cite). It can be developed¹⁴ (Gay & Kirkland, 2003), sparked (Rodriguez, 2008), promoted (Houser, 2008), achieved (Beilke, 2005) and performed (McDonough, 2009). In the educational literature, critical consciousness is framed as knowledge (Sleeter, 2004) and dispositions (Houser, 2008), but less often as actions. Teacher educators write of approaching critical consciousness through a variety of pedagogical moves with the purpose of “liberating” particular social groups. But just what is critical consciousness? Not all of the literature I reviewed defines the construct but many authors do cite Paulo Freire.

¹³ I return to a discussion of reflexivity in research in Chapter 3 to problematize this practice.

¹⁴ Verb choice is significant and often presented me with a dilemma. Verbs represent how I or the other scholars conceptualize critical consciousness. My research shows that critical consciousness is a performative construct sometimes embedded in psychological theories. When representing the ideas of the researchers I tried to use the same verbs as they used. When engaging in my own analysis I often struggled with verb choice. I understand critical consciousness as a way of making meaning that is evidenced in performances of language. It is hard to step out of the “illusion of progress” (Cannella, 1997, p. 47) that has dominated educational discourse in general and mine in particular, about learning. Thus, verb choice often gives away a developmental framing: develop, approach, move toward.

The notion of *conscientização* or critical consciousness, is attributed to the work of Paulo Freire as both a process and a state of being (1993). The process of “learning how to read in relation to the awakening of ... consciousness” (1974/2008, p. 38) allows one the possibility to not only “be in the world, but to engage in relations with the world” (p. 39). Both simple and elegant quotations but rich with intended meanings. What does Freire mean by “read”, “be” and “engage”?

Freire’s construct of critical consciousness is the root of critical literacy and straddles modernist and postmodern theory. Freire (1974/2008) writes of the ability to “read the world” (1993, p. 26). Rather than embracing a technical and mechanical definition of literacy Freire taught “adults how to read in relation to the awakening of their consciousness” (Freire, 1998a, p. 81). In other words, ‘reading’ involved coming to an understanding of one’s ‘reality’ in historical moments, involving dialogue and problem-posing.

Freire (1974/2008) also writes of stages of consciousness or different ways of “being” (magical, naïve and critical) that one can be led through via the process of identifying reality and causality. Perhaps a result of translation, Freire seems to stress the accuracy or clarity of naming reality and juxtaposes that with magical consciousness. Magical and naïve consciousness obscure reality, according to Freire, and to me, take on a Marxian notion of false consciousness. Here I agree with Stuart Hall (1988) that the construct of false consciousness dichotomizes *them* and *us*, or the groups that have achieved true consciousness and those that have not. It also assumes that there is something inherently wrong with those living within false consciousness because they

cannot read the *truths* of the real world as if reality sits outside of our own systems of meaning making.

Freire's suggested process of construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct benefits those initially grappling with the construct of critical consciousness in helping to illustrate the complexities and interrelatedness of knowledge, analysis and action of a critically conscious person. Yet it can also give the illusion that one can stand outside of reality to critique it. On the one hand, the critique of reality is always contextual and we can not fully remove ourselves from our values, lens, and discursive practices in order to deconstruct as cleanly as Freire sometimes infers. Yet on the other hand, Freire does underscore the importance of context in analysis; in particular, attention to the historical moment and an engagement with history as one considers self, others, and the current context. According to Eduardo Duarte (1999), Freire's *conscientização* includes reflection on situationality, or the dialectical relationship between self and situation (Duarte, p. 398).

Engagement for Freire (1993), requires dialogue and critical action. The dialogic process, rather than a banking method of education, among participants is the impetus for critical consciousness. The banking method, where the teacher imparts facts to her pupils, is constructed on vertical relationships of teacher over students, and results in a submerged of consciousness. The students accept the status quo and domination continues. Whereas a problem-posing education pedagogy involving dialogue helps consciousness to emerge and propels learners to critically participate in shaping one's reality (Freire, 1993). Dialogue *is* reflection and action, or praxis. As Freire cautions,

dialogue without reflection is merely verbiage and action without reflection is a misguided form of activism.

Even though Freire does give prominence to language as a mediating tool to construct and deconstruct the world, reflect and act, we can further his efforts by drawing on additional theories of language or considering how bodies and the material co-construct critical consciousness. One of Freire's greatest legacies is his invitation to develop his theories and keep them from remaining static. Thus we can think of acquiring literacy, as defined by Freire, also as acquiring critical consciousness by considering both as "an attitude of creation and re-creation, a self-transformation producing a stance of intervention in one's context" (1974/2008, p. 43).

Political and ideological clarity

Freire writes of political clarity in his "Fourth Letter to Teachers" (Freire, 1998b) when he describes the "indispensible qualities of progressive teachers" (p. 39). Political clarity in this case undergirds teacher confidence and is the ability to support one's actions as well as have an awareness of "what one is for or against" (p. 43). Whereas for Lilia Bartolomé (Bartolomé & Balderrama, 2001; Bartolomé, 2004) political clarity is a consciousness of the ways sociopolitical and economic realities shape our lives. For educators, it is the awareness of how macro structures might influence students' experiences in schools. Bartolomé differentiates political clarity from ideological clarity. Ideological clarity is an individual's ability to identify and critically analyze how her own beliefs (ideologies) reflect – or not – not dominant society's explanation for the current social order. For teachers, according to Bartolomé, ideological clarity is necessary when

working with subordinated students so that teachers do not uncritically adopt harmful assimilationist and deficit-oriented ideologies.

An important pattern noted by Bartolomé and Balderrama is that in most educational literature the beliefs and values of teachers are apoliticized and instead associated with their personality, rather than explored as “how these worldviews a part of a particular ideological orientation” (2001, p. 51). Bartolomé’s definitions of ideological and political clarity are in essence two specific aspects of how critical consciousness is defined in some literature which may be useful to other teacher educators with an interest in understanding critical consciousness and moving preservice teachers toward more critical thinking.

Political relevance and sociopolitical consciousness

Tamara Beauboeuf-Lafontant (1999) employs political clarity as *political relevance* in efforts to redefine culturally relevant pedagogy. Culturally relevant pedagogy (Gay, 2000; Ladson Billings, 1995, 2001) faces the same challenges as multicultural education in that both are often misinterpreted as ‘safe’ approaches to diversity wherein teachers learn passive approaches to appreciate diversity or practice strategies to teach particular groups of students, rather than reconstruct society. For Beauboeuf-Lafontant, more important than cultural or ethnic similarity among teachers and students is the teachers are “politically relevant” (p. 706) or have cultural, historical, political and social understanding of their students and context. Thus, their pedagogy is “relevant to the political experiences of inequity and disenfranchisement of their

students” (p. 705). Her work focuses on teachers and students of color and, in particular, African American teachers.

Similarly, Gloria Ladson Billings (2001) forwards three necessary elements of culturally relevant pedagogy: academic success, maintenance of students’ cultural integrity and development of students’ *sociopolitical consciousness*. Both students and teachers need to “develop a broader sociopolitical consciousness that allows them to critique cultural norms, values, mores and institutions that produce and maintain social inequities” (1995, p. 160). To this definition I must add discursive practices to the list of what needs critique. Like Freire (1993), Ladson Billings links critique with social action and she calls for “an investment in the public good” and participation in “civic culture” (p. 121).

The recurring theme of the political in the aforementioned constructs is core to these scholars’ work in preparing teachers to teach marginalized students. Also core to many scholars is the construct of race as they situate critical consciousness specifically in relation to race. The explicit connection to race is likely related to the history and commitments of multicultural education. In the next section I trace the connection to two terms that expressly focus on race.

Cultural critical consciousness and critical racial consciousness

Geneva Gay with Kipchoge Kirkland (2003) address cultural critical consciousness in their writing about preparation of preservice teachers. In their framing, this is critical consciousness with specific focus on “racial, cultural and ethnic diversity” (p. 181), which according to the authors should be an area of focus in teacher education.

While their concept highlights the word culture, they actually focus on issues of race and developing a critical *racial* consciousness in the preservice teachers with whom they work. Although culture plays an important role in how they frame forms of knowledge for student teachers to acquire, race examples are highlighted throughout their article.

Race is also a central focus in H. Richard Milner's (2003a; 2003b) work with preservice teachers and he proposes the importance of developing preservice teachers' ability to engage in race reflection. While he does not explicitly refer to critical consciousness, his description and rationale for "*race reflection*" (p. 196) mirrors many of the points made by Gay and Kirkland. Also, Milner situates his rationale for developing race reflection via critically engaged dialogue grounded in the work of Freire (1993) and bell hooks's (1994) concept of engagement (which was extended from Freire's work by reshaping critical consciousness as 'critical awareness and engagement'). She focused on the formation of engaged pedagogy to support students to take a reflective stance that involves interrogating "one's location, the identifications and allegiances that inform one's life" (Florence, 1998b, p. 36).

A third example of critical race consciousness is in the work of Illa Deshmukh Towery (2009). Her study investigated how four teachers of color drew on "features of critical race-consciousness to undermine institutionalized racism" (p. ii). Towery frames her study on hooks's (1995) definition of critical race consciousness as becoming political as a result of an awareness of the impact of racism.

Obscured in the previous terms is much social difference beyond race. Class differences are alluded to with Bartolomé's definition of political clarity and

Ladson-Billings's call to attend to social inequities. While class and race are intimately connected and not always possible to tease apart for analysis, there is little explicit mention of class in the use of these terms and never a construct called 'critical class consciousness'. This is ironic especially in light of Freire's analysis of class oppression and the criticisms he received for ignoring race and gender in his work. The one exception is Peter McLaren and Ramin Farahmadpur's (2001) work which does explicitly address class disparities and calls for "building working-class solidarity and opposition to global capitalism" (p. 136). Maria José Botelho (2004) offers explanations for overlooking class consciousness. The first is that class is something we, in the United States, avoid speaking about. One reason for this avoidance is that the American Dream shifts our attention away from a close look at class inequality. Instead, individuals are blamed, rather than structural inequalities, for failure to rise above poverty or working-class statuses. The work of Lani Guinier and Gerald Torres (2002) illustrates that what is sometimes analyzed as a racial divide is, upon closer examination, a masked class divide. According to Guinier and Torres, "white progressives [will] recognize a more complex notion of racial consciousness that exists outside of, yet is connected to, conventional class analysis" (p. 25).

Critical consciousness defined in teacher education literature

Critical consciousness is described as a journey, an awakening, and a continuum. It is raised, facilitated, journeyed into, something people must have, and brought out. Most metaphors invoke a sense of moving toward critical consciousness and with a quality of ownership—it can be acquired and then one has it. Many metaphors are also modernist in that critical consciousness is inherent or asleep inside of preservice teachers

and needs coaxed out or developed within them. My first publication constructed critical consciousness as a destination acquired through multiple pathways. I now find pathways too clean and linear a metaphor even though I did acknowledge there were many options. *Entanglements*, a key metaphor in this study, better helps construct critical consciousness as a non-linear, complex process.

The authors of the literature analyzed in this section share a common goal of developing preservice teacher's critical consciousness and thus, all assume critical consciousness can be taught as a part of the curriculum. Margaret Zamudio (2009) and her three colleagues assert their commitment early in their piece that they have a "strong assumption that a critical consciousness, which is necessary for social justice, is teachable." (p. 455). The researcher-educators in the studies I reviewed aim to move critical consciousness from an implicit to explicit¹⁵ place in the preservice education curriculum. A number of the scholars who do define the construct of critical consciousness in their work, draw on Freire and highlight the importance of examining and critiquing societal forces and/or social reality (Hill-Jackson, 2007; Beilke, 2005; Sleeter, Torres & Laughlin, 2004). Pamela Bolotin Joseph (2007) also defines critical consciousness as the questioning of reality and social forces yet draws from Maxine Greene rather than Freire. Approximately a third of the scholars of this review do not define the construct of critical consciousness in their work even though it is highlighted as the central point of the article (Houser, 2008; Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Rodriguez, 2008). Often, the meaning of critical consciousness can be inferred in these articles, but with a multifaceted construct, how these scholars interpret critical consciousness impacts their pedagogical decisions and proposed research.

¹⁵ For more on implicit, explicit and null curriculum see Elliot Eisner (1994).

There appears to be consensus among most of the literature reviewed here that developing critical consciousness is a process of self-transformation, typically described as non-linear and instead ongoing social processes of multiple insightful moments (Sleeter, Torres & Laughlin, 2004). One exception is the research of Valerie Hill Jackson (2007) who denotes it is possible yet extremely difficult for “arrival at the critical consciousness level” (p. 33). Her findings, based on narrative pre-course and post-course surveys, resulted in her construction of a three-level model of consciousness attainment for white preservice teachers. Developmental models can surface commonalities among groups. Knowledge of general patterns of how preservice teachers experience attempts to engage critical consciousness can assist teacher educators in their thinking about curriculum and pedagogy. Yet on the other hand, developmental models can obscure spaces of difference and openings for change. Hill-Jackson’s model, while somewhat restrictive, is linked to her call to theorize whiteness with preservice teachers rather than study difference. This movement away from a focus on difference, as in different from the white-norm, is imperative if we are to disrupt ‘othering’.

Critical Consciousness: Cause and Effect

Much of the literature addressing critical consciousness in teacher education positions critical consciousness in a chain of cause and effect linkages among consciousness and action. In some ways the illustration below is an oversimplification of the complexities of teaching and learning with a critical lens but it does highlight how the field of teacher education constructs the role of consciousness raising with preservice teachers. Particular kinds of teaching experiences can support the consciousness

development of preservice teachers, with hopes that if they demonstrate critical consciousness in class it will spill over into other parts of their life and they will then create their own critical classrooms and curriculum.

Hegemony--->dysconsciousness--->TE action--->develop CC of - --> critical practices---> develop CC with youth
 & Dominant of preservice preservice in K-12 classes
 Discourses teachers teachers

To explain the above heuristic a bit further, dominant discourses such as whiteness, capitalism and patriarchy construct preservice teachers who hold deficit views of ‘difference’ which is most often interpreted as a form of dyconscious racism (King, 1991) – not an intentional racism but rather “uncritical habit of mind...that justify inequity... by accepting the existing order of things” (p. 135). Teacher educators who are committed to socially responsible teaching then take up efforts to evoke critical consciousness in their students with a variety of pedagogical approaches. An assumption that often is implicit in the research is that if preservice teachers become¹⁶ critically consciousness they teach in ways that could be considered socially just and invoke critical consciousness among their own students. This assumption makes sense when using a cause and effect framework. Yet, there are few studies that investigate the teaching practices of the student teachers nor are there any, that I have located, longitudinal studies following the preservice teachers after the course or program that invoked critical consciousness. I have had a few experiences teaching graduate students that were undergraduates at my institution and a number have said something similar to, “wow, I haven’t thought this way since I took RCI as a sophomore.” If hegemony and

¹⁶ In trying to represent the literature I chose the verb become. Whereas in my own work I would write enact.

the status quo are shaping preservice teachers, are not those also impacting the teacher educators?

Discourses of Critical Consciousness in Teacher Education

For the purposes of this dissertation, I am drawing from Michel Foucault and Norman Fairclough to define discourse as bodies of knowledges (Foucault, 1972) or a system of beliefs and knowledges (Fairclough, 1992). In other words, how language creates knowledge, makes ideas seem like common sense, guides what we think and do. For example, discourses about teaching include what the field as well as outsiders to the field “know” about teaching, shapes how teachers think and how they teach. Discourses are neither overly deterministic nor are they totalizing. Any given discourse will have fissures and contradictions (Pennycook, 2001).

Multicultural Education

The majority of the literature connecting critical consciousness and teacher education was published within the last 10 years. That is not to say that critical consciousness was theoretically missing from teacher education, but it was not a construct named by the authors in their studies or pedagogical design. Intentionality plays an important role in research. I also found that there are few published empirical studies connecting teacher education and critical consciousness. The empirical studies still mostly reside in dissertations. Most literature addressing critical consciousness in journals are conceptual pieces, reflection on practice or position papers. It is apparent from my review that explicit use of critical consciousness in the context of teacher education is finding a home in the multicultural education literature as the field focuses on preparing teachers to teach racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse learners.

Explicit attention to writing about critical consciousness in teacher education is a relatively new focus within the realm of multicultural education. Perhaps it is in effort to reclaim the original intent of multicultural education.

Since multicultural education's emergence as a social movement in the 1960s the field has taken a variety of meanings and forms from the least critical of superficial celebrations of holidays to an emphasis on power and participating in social change (Sleeter, 1996). It is ironic that at the same time critical consciousness is surfacing in multicultural education focused articles Paul Gorski (2009) identifies the dearth of critical teacher preparation in multicultural education coursework. In a review of multicultural teacher education syllabi from across the United States, Gorski found that the majority of the syllabi do not espouse "the key principles of multicultural education, such as critical consciousness and a commitment to educational equity" (p. 309). What he found instead was a predominance of syllabi to take up an assimilationist or appreciation of difference approach. Wangeci Gatimu (2009) also makes similar claims about approaches to teacher education within a multicultural education framework. Her argument is that critical consciousness is *unconsciously undermined* because of its connection to multicultural education that is situated within a functionalist paradigm or cultural pluralism.

Race, racism, and otherness.

The discourses of multicultural education intersect with discourses on race, racism and otherness. Most of the authors situate their work by identifying the gender and race of their preservice teachers, but rarely their class or other social locations of identity. Thus, in alignment with the nation's demographics, a number of articles take shape

around the needs and characteristics of white teachers, even when acknowledging that critical consciousness is important for all. I found two exceptions. The first is from Louie Rodriguez (2008) who teaches predominantly Latin@ preservice teachers. His perspective and experiences illustrate hegemony shapes all, not just whites, as he makes links among family status (when a family immigrated to the United States), class, and colorism to critical consciousness. In a second example, Rita Kohli (2012) working with groups of inservice teachers of color in California states that while teachers of color have experienced some racism, they can not necessarily explain how systems work or have the tools to discuss racism among themselves or their students.

The majority of the articles state the purpose of critical consciousness for preservice teachers is to help them in their preparation for working with diverse learners; diverse has become a commonplace synonym for non-white students. An underpinning assumption of most articles is that white teachers need to develop critical consciousness to teach across difference (read as teach kids racially different from the white norm), for “multicultural understanding” (Houser, 2008, p. 465) and to be “more effective with students of color “ (Howard, p. 194). Another assumption is that critically consciousness teachers will engage their students in critical consciousness as well. Exposure to racial others is identified as one way that the critical consciousness of whites begins to emerge (Beilke, 2005; Houser, 2008).

Applying pedagogies of critical consciousness with attention to preparing teachers to work with English language learners (Dantas-Whitney and Waldschmidt, 2009; Palmer & Medard-Warwick, 2012) is a somewhat more recent addition to the growing literature in teacher education. It is here that there is more attention to culture and (preservice)

teachers are constructed as cultural workers which is more closely aligned with the work of Freire. I interpret the focus on bilingual, or English learners as a proxy for race since these efforts are often in relation to assisting white or ethnic European preservice teachers to teach newly immigrated students.

There are two significant silences related to the intersection of race and critical consciousness. The first, is of the experiences of preservice teachers of color. While most authors do acknowledge that preservice teachers of color also need to cultivate critical consciousness there are few studies about how this might happen or what the experiences of preservice teachers of color might be like. One exception is the dissertation by Ila Deshmukh Towery (2009) who investigated what it was like for four teachers of color to construct and preserve critical race consciousness to disrupt whiteness and institutional racism. The second silence is related to white P-12 students. Critical consciousness is framed as necessary for teachers to assist the *cultural other* to do well in school. Going back to Grant and Agosto's (2008) point earlier in this paper, I assert that engaging in critically conscious thought and action benefits all students, regardless of race, class, and gender.

Teacher preparation and teacher capacity¹⁷

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (2008) standards explicitly state that accredited teacher education programs are to prepare teachers with the prerequisite knowledge, skills and dispositions for teaching all learners and in

¹⁷ The term teacher capacity is from the literature and is also used by Carl Grant (2008) to locate critical consciousness. I find the phrase teacher capacity problematic as it is reminiscent of banking education and infers that a teacher can be complete as in "filled to capacity".

particular for *diverse* learners (see standards 1, 3, and 4). Research on teacher education has explored a range of concerns related to teacher education including teacher characteristics, what teachers should know and be able to do, methods in teacher education and program design (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Cochran-Smith, Feiman-Nemser & McIntyre, 2008). The research on teacher education is broad. To address questions of teacher education and social justice, studies and reviews have congregated around the key ideas of “diversity”, “difference”, and “social justice”. Within this realm, Etta Hollins and Maria Torres Guzman (2005) conducted an extensive literature review and reported on three areas of teacher preparation: prejudice reduction, equity pedagogy, and field experiences. Overall, and as can be expected, there were some benefits to each approach and a number of concerns related to the research design or findings. What is not discussed in Hollis and Guzman’s review is explicit attention to criticality or critical consciousness. Rather, studies focused mostly on attitudes, life experiences, and preservice teacher thinking in relation to preparing to teach “diverse populations” (p. 477). That can be a result of Hollis and Guzman’s selection or a result of what was available in the literature.

The same can be said of the first two editions of *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education* (Houston et al., 1990; Sikula et al., 1996), that critical consciousness is not yet a part of the mainstream teacher preparation conversation. Critical consciousness is not found in the index nor as a topic of teacher preparation. It is interesting to note that in the first edition (1990) criticality is included three times in the index: critical theory, critical rationality, and critical/social orientation. Critical rationality and social orientation come closest to a discussion of critical consciousness. They are defined respectively as

emancipatory education (Banks & Parker, 1990) and a “progressive social vision...[with a] radical critique of schooling” (p. 266). Yet in the second edition, criticality disappears from the index. A submission from Francisco Hidalgo, Rudolfo Chávez-Chávez and Jean Ramage (1996) discuss multicultural education in ways that strongly hint at features of critical consciousness as well as poststructuralism. Their comparison includes: “realities as multiple, constructed; knower and known are interactive and inseparable; and all entities are in state of mutual simultaneous shaping” (Hidalgo, Chávez-Chávez & Ramage, p. 771). In Christine Sleeter and Dolores Delgado Bernal’s (2004) chapter in the *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education* (2004) critical consciousness is briefly addressed as a thread of critical pedagogy but otherwise does not appear in the handbook.

In the recent edition of *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education* (Cochran-Smith et al., 2008), Tyrone Howard writes of critical consciousness as part of the conversation on teacher capacity for diverse learners (Howard & Aleman, 2008) and teacher capacity for social justice (Grant & Agosto, 2008). Teacher capacity is defined as teacher’s knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Over time, as standards change and more is discovered about the teaching-learning process, what is included as teacher capacity (knowledge, skill and dispositions) has also changed (Grant, 2008).

With the entrance of critical consciousness in research reviews and appearing in ERIC searches, critical consciousness is taking on the role of an objective in teacher education (Comeau, 2008). It is considered teachable, attainable, and desirable. An assumption in the literature is that if preservice teachers develop critical consciousness then they are likely to teach for social justice. But lacking are any studies to support this

assumption. Attention to inservice teachers is also missing. Even though the scope of this review is preservice teacher education, it is apparent from sifting through the literature that research about and with inservice teachers is lacking. It would be remiss not to mention this void as linking preservice preparation and classroom practice is imperative.

Pedagogies of critical consciousness

To begin, all the articles included in this review address consciousness-raising pedagogies in a single course and the majority of the articles are from the perspective of a single researcher-educator. I found no studies that review the role of an entire teacher education program in relation to supporting preservice teachers to engage in critical consciousness. In consideration that learning is social and influenced by context this finding points to an element of design that teacher education programs might want to revisit. Given the depth of interrelated concepts to critical consciousness, most authors agree that one course is not enough.

Two main themes of how one might approach teaching for critical consciousness in preservice teacher education programs are evident in the literature: an emphasis on deconstructing ideologies, and an emphasis on difference. There are a number of articles with focused attention on naming and interrogating ideology (Bartolomé, 2004; Bolotin-Joseph, 2007; McLaren, 2001; Rodriguez, 2008).

Lilia Bartolomé's (2004, 2007) work is perhaps the best example of why and how to ask teachers to deconstruct ideologies. She asserts that teacher educators need to guide preservice teachers to begin with the critique of dominant or mainstream ideologies such as the myth of meritocracy or explanations for school failure before turning to look at

their own ideological orientations. According to Bartolomé (2004), coursework and field placement must include the explicit critique of ideology and supports for preservice teachers to learn how to take “counter hegemonic stances” (p. 118) if teachers are to acquire an awareness of power, revise deficit views of children, and become “cultural brokers” (p. 112). As with most articles, there is a call for preservice teachers to become change agents and as with most articles there is little offered in terms of how teacher educators can encourage this move toward action.

Exploring meritocracy with preservice teachers is also a theme in the writing by Rodriguez (2008). His work addresses a void in the literature; developing critical consciousness with preservice teachers of color. By addressing the themes of being white, meritocracy, and individualism, he demonstrates how ideologies shape everyone. His predominantly Latino/a group of preservice teachers engaged in some of the same deficit thinking about marginalized youth of color that is often attributed to whites (Terrill & Mark, 2000). Rodriguez’s piece can also be read through the lens of class and raises important questions about the shifting meaning of whiteness and its intersection with class and immigration/naturalization.

Critiquing ideology in a preservice course can tap into exploring multiple dimensions of power, whereas teaching for critical consciousness in the context of understanding cultural differences rarely addresses power or if it does, does so within a humanist paradigm (St. Pierre, 2000). Some studies approach developing critical consciousness via asking students to enter unfamiliar territory (Houser, 2008; Beilke, 2005). Taking a “cultural plunge” (Houser, 2008, p. 465) requires students to place themselves in an unfamiliar culture and then later reflect and discuss with classmates.

This process, designed to initiate critical consciousness, maps onto a human relations (Grant & Sleeter, 2006) or a liberal multicultural education (Jenks et al., 2001) approach because the emphasis is on empathy development and “transforming personal attitudes” (Houser, p. 466). Within this framework, Houser does carefully critique potential concerns of the cultural plunge including the potential to engage in “othering”.

“Othering” is also a concern of service projects if learning about power and incorporating self-reflexivity are not incorporated into the experience (O’Grady, 2000). A partnership between a boys/girls club and a university multicultural education course designed to move preservice teachers toward critical multicultural consciousness is described in relation to critical pedagogy (Beilke, 2005). Excerpts from reflective journals demonstrate students’ new levels of awareness but less clear is their understanding of power and the sociopolitical-historical contexts. Much caution is needed if service projects are going to be used in efforts to forward a critical agenda. With a more recent focus on the needs of K-12 students learning English, another pedagogical approach is intercultural exchange (Romano, 2008; Palmer & Menard-Warwick, 2012) with study abroad opportunities. In Palmer and Menard-Warwick’s study it was refreshing to read that they also engage their preservice teachers in self-study of their own cultural identity, not just a study of *others*.

In contrast to using the experience of service projects or out-of-classroom contexts, Gay & Kirkland (2003) address the development of critical cultural consciousness in the context of classroom practice, both their own and through the use of authentic examples from P-12 teaching. They offer clear explanations of their pedagogical decisions in relation to caringly confronting resistance from their mainly white students. Two other

promising practices in teacher education are using art as inquiry (Kraehe & Brown, 2011), developing conceptual/critical skills (Zamudio et al., 2009).

In the literature I reviewed, reflection is named as playing a key role in the emergence of critical consciousness. Opportunities for reflection are included as part of the pedagogical design in the majority of the articles (i.e., Beilke, 2005; Rodriguez, 2008). Reflection often takes the form of journaling about experiences, writing about readings and class discussion. Reflection as noted earlier in this paper can pose as problematic for a number of reasons: if used as a surveillance technique, and if used to reinforce technical decisions. Also, most students are expected to engage in reflection but are often not given enough guidance as to how (Gay & Kirkland, 2003).

Nearly all of the literature I reviewed names dialogue as a crucial element in teacher preparation courses to prepare critically conscious teachers. Dialogue takes the form of small group discussions, journaling, and whole class conversations as participants are encouraged to share opinions, question each other, and learn from each other. Dialogue is also framed as a preferred teaching method to a banking approach (Freire, 1993). The scholars of the literature I reviewed are also all teacher educators who strive for dialogic exchanges with students. They note the benefits of creating a community to learn *with* students, rather than presenting didactic lectures. The emphasis on dialogue confirms that these researcher-educators recognize learning as a social process. Missing from the literature I reviewed are any theories of language. Language is ideological and “ideology may be manifested in language” (Pennycook, 2001, p. 82). Learning theories of how language creates meaning would likely deepen preservice

teachers understanding of ideology, offer new avenues to question assumptions, and provide alternative lenses for questioning the status quo.

Gaps in the Literature

In this review I identify a 21st century focus in teacher education literature of preparing critical consciousness teachers. The current literature mainly focuses on the need to develop critical consciousness, challenges teacher educators face when teaching for critical consciousness, and critical pedagogies employed by teacher educators. The two gaps that my study addresses are the lack of research about practicing teachers – whether student teachers or inservice teachers, and the minimal research available that includes close attention to the meaning-making or consciousness of the researcher. Both are necessary avenues for more researchers to take up. If, as teacher educators, we make the claim that evoking critical consciousness among our preservice teachers results in socially just teaching then more studies of classroom practice are needed. There also seems to be an implied understanding that if researcher-educators are writing about critical consciousness then they must too be critically consciousness or have had some consciousness-raising experiences. This raises a new set of questions for me: what were those experiences like for them? How does their own consciousness invite or limit the consciousness of their students? And how do the shifting boundaries of their consciousness influence their pedagogies? I am making no claims about myself but in efforts to let readers see who is behind this study and perhaps consider those questions, I include autoethnographic moments and attempts at transparency regarding my research decisions.

Onward

In this review of literatures I noted that much of the critical consciousness literature addressing teacher education is situated in the context of multicultural education. I also noted that while teacher education seems to be taking an interest in addressing this construct with preservice teachers, critical consciousness is only briefly defined, if at all, and not explored or problematized as a construct. The discourses embedded in the literatures related to critical consciousness are race, otherness, and teacher capacity. I also raised two important questions related to the gaps in the research: what can be learned from studies of critically consciousness practice? And who are the teacher educators? Or, in other words, how might the work and thinking of teacher educators who write about critical consciousness with preservice teachers provide more insights?

In the chapter that follows, I outline the methodology of this study and pay attention to bringing forward some of the research practices I engaged with that are sometimes taken for granted such as ways I approached reading and writing. Within an explanation of this research as a hybrid text – part (performance) autoethnography, part traditional research design, I highlight the construction of layered and messy texts (Denzin, 1997), and question data and data collection. In efforts to engage reflexively I include a section about my transcription decisions, trouble an act of accounting, and discuss the cautions of employing reflexive writing.

CHAPTER 3

FINDING MY WAY

In Derridian poststructuralism, there is rigorous scholarship, constant quest for knowledge, continual trying on different interpretations, going back over and over again to the data, reading and rereading other people's textual theorizing, keeping up to date with what is being said or published, staying thirsty for words, keeping on writing, writing into the text, writing against the text.

-Jeanette Rhedding-Jones (1995, p. 497)

"In the end it is impossible to disentangle data, data collection and data analysis."

-Elizabeth St. Pierre, 2011, p. 623

In this chapter, I begin with a broad overview of the ethnographic and autoethnographic design of the study. I follow with information about the school contexts, brief sketches of the participating educators and data collection. Before detailing the analytical tools I used, I include a series of autoethnographic moments that recount some key experiences that influenced my analytical framing. As a reflexive text, I am to engage in a "relationship that defines both the subject written and the writing subject" (Minh-ha, 1989, p. 76). But reflexivity is not without its cautions. Thus, I end the chapter with considerations of limitations in relation to reflexivity.

Ethnography

This study is not an ethnography of a specific site but rather an ethnographic exploration of nine educators' ways of performing critical consciousness. The study was designed with the key ethnographic methods of participant observation coupled with field notes and reflective memos, and semi-structured interviews. I spent the second half of the 2012-2013 School Year and first half of the 2013-2014 School Year visiting the classrooms of Savannah, Kedejah, Melissa, Emma and Jocelyn. I observed each principal once: Beatriz teaching her beloved reading group and James allowed me to shadow him for an entire day including the school assembly he facilitated at the end of the day. All the teachers and principals participated in interviews and most were present for either focus group. I have co-taught with both of the teacher educators: Fayth and Patricia. Their participation during this study was in the form of discussions and focus groups, and sometimes woven into my autoethnographic moments.

(Performance) autoethnography

This study lies between the borders of autoethnography and (performance) autoethnography. What are the differences? What is the space in between? It can be hard to discern with the proliferation of performance texts, autobiographies, personal narratives, and reflexive ethnographies as research genres. There is overlap among them all. For example, both autoethnography and performance ethnography are routes to making the personal political (Denzin, 2003; Holman Jones, 2005). Performance ethnography is an embodied practice as a performative art and Conquergood (1991) writes about the body as a site of knowing in ethnographic work, and the bodily work of

field work. Norman Denzin (1997) considers autoethnography a performance text in itself.

As an ethnographic project, this research is about people (educators) and the ways they teach or think about teaching in relation to equity, social justice, and an ethical consciousness (critical consciousness). In effect, it is a study of culture or “the meanings and practices produced, sustained and altered through interactions...residing largely within a sphere of social relations...” (Van Maanen, 1988/2011, p 155). While I rarely use or mention the word culture beyond this section, what I write is a cultural production, what I write about are snapshots of culture in the ways I position myself, my memories, and what I write about are also representations of culture in action whether through describing how emotions impact teachers or how relationships sustain critical consciousness.

As a study that also incorporates autoethnographic interludes, it seeks as autoethnographies do, to demonstrate the construction of self and intersubjectivities; fold in emotions and the corporeal; and use stories to interpret and perhaps change cultural lives (the personal and political) (Holman Jones, 2005). An autoethnography is a “self narrative that critiques the situatedness of self with others in social contexts” (Spry, 2001, p. 710). Since it is both ethnographic with autobiographical moments, I use autoethnographic (or auto \leftrightarrow ethnographic) to represent the interplay among the two lenses; looking at my self as well as interpreting the actions and meaning making of others. Others help me to see/construct my self and in writing about myself I hope “to create a space where others might see themselves” (Pelias, 2005, p. 419). For example, as a white, middle class-raised, former elementary teacher and now teacher educator, my

history is not that unlike the preservice teachers that we in teacher education critique. Sharing some of my stories may perhaps encourage the field of teacher education to turn lenses on ourselves more often.

The autoethnographic interludes also begin to address a gap in the research about critical consciousness in teacher education that needs attention. There are few studies of teacher educators and who we are. It is assumed that if writing about critical consciousness the author is critically conscious. Can someone write about an object of study without having experienced it? [A tangle: I think these are interesting and worthy questions – to ask about the researcher-educators that write about critical consciousness, and to wonder if/how one might write about things not yet experienced. I think these questions also position myself in particular ways – perhaps inferring that I too have experienced and reflect on critical consciousness. I make no claims about myself, but consider that different relationships and differing contexts position me in particular ways. And readers will bring their own experiences and positionalities to their reading of my work to form a range of interpretations.] Am I critically conscious? Some might claim I am, others might not. I do know that I am always learning, always changing and I prefer instead to think of my life story as opportunities to engage in criticality rather than positioning myself on either side of a dichotomous am/am not relationship.

While all ethnographies have an insertion of self, this one in particular has specific autoethnographic moments. As a partial autoethnography, I am my own object of inquiry with an aim to do more than just tell my experience, but to write culture that can be read through power. My body and my experiences are the research instrument (Banks & Banks, 2000). While autoethnography is criticized for being solipsistic, self indulgent

and limited to only what the researcher knows (Coffey, 1999), it does seem a near perfect genre match for a study about critical consciousness. Weaving in autoethnographic moments allows my readers to make their own interpretations and decisions about any critical subjectivities I imply/purport. As I consider acts of representation, it is hard for me to imagine writing about the criticality of others without implicating myself, revealing my subjectivities. Finally, as I consider autoethnography, I entered a doctoral program and pursued my studies out of interest in self-growth. I seek ongoing understanding of my own teaching: what works, why, what doesn't, how I might engage differently. Thus, this research about critical consciousness is research of teaching, for my own growth and learning. Writing autoethnographically is a textual creation of myself. "I am conscious of myself and become myself only when revealing myself to another..." (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 287) which is bound to give me insights about who I am as a teacher and about my teaching.

Yet autoethnography, while addressing reflexivity, is not unchallenged. Autoethnography has been critiqued as nothing more than individual confessionals with limited purpose. Even if embraced as an attempt to challenge academic discourses and the construction of knowledge, autoethnography raises questions of what counts as research, as it can be too subjective (Denshire, 2014). D. Soyini Madison (2012) summarizes David Terry's (2006) argument that when the self is the main form of reality the broader socio-political injustices can be left unchallenged.

A "performance ethnography is literally the staged re-enactment of ethnographically derived notes" (Alexander, 2005, p. 411) and this may or may not happen on the day of my dissertation defense. Thus, this type of performance is a

parenthetical possibility. Yet the spirit and goals of performance ethnography are directly related to my efforts in this study. Performance ethnography may be understood merely as a way to play with research representations. But it offers more. It also invites the researcher and researcher's audience to connect with other ways of knowing, other ways of engaging, and opportunities for reflexivity (Diversi & Moreira, 2009).

Performance ethnography as a form of representation is a way to create aesthetic experiences by drawing from a variety of literary elements and tools to craft a written/performed piece as poetry, narratives, or plays. Considering performance ethnographies as texts and this study as a representation of critical literacy, I draw on Ray Mission and Wendy Morgan (2006) to support the necessity of merging the aesthetic with research. Critical literacy is conceptualized and practiced as in and through language. The material is absent. The aesthetic is "bodily engagement with the material" (p. 45) and linked to the emotional. Critical literacy or, as I also argue, critical research needs to become a passionate practice that is "felt intensely to matter" (p. 224). Performance ethnography is also an attempt to address the crisis of representation by "not speak[ing] about or for the other but, rather speak[ing] to and with the other" (Conquergood, 1985, p. 10). Rather than the printed text signifying a representation of culture from the field, performance writing *is* culture. "Culture is an on-going performance" (Denzin, 2003, p. 12). Thus, as Denzin notes, we cannot directly study a person's experiences as experience.

We study experience "in and through its representations" (p. 12). These efforts to re/form and re/present research are aimed at reclaiming or decolonizing knowledge. Traditionally, the academy creates the impression that particular knowledges are only

generated inside the academy and must be disseminated in particular formats to be deemed valid and authentic. Performance ethnography aims to decolonize knowledge by experimenting with forms of representation and challenging who can speak about what, when is a personal story research, and whose personal stories count as research.

Performance ethnography is a way of knowing as a method of critical inquiry (Denzin, 2003). It offers those engaged with creating and participating in performances multiple ways of knowing. As previously mentioned, aesthetics play a primary role in the design of performance texts. Coming to know something is not just through connections to rational knowledge. Knowing also transpires through emotions. Performance pieces not only need to engage the audience intellectually but also emotively, and aesthetics is the key (Denzin, 2003). Another way of knowing is through our bodies and performance ethnographies are “body centered way[s] of knowing” (Alexander, 2005, p. 411). The researcher’s lived experiences are through the body. Bodies that are afforded and denied opportunities, bodies that love and experience pain, bodies that comfortably occupy some spaces and skirt other unwelcoming spaces. We come to know through our gendered, raced bodies, not just our minds. It is here that Norman Denzin promotes performance ethnography particular to evoking racial consciousness as he demonstrates theoretical connections to critical race theory and historic connections to Black theatre (Du Bois, 1926) and Black political performance aesthetic (hooks, 1990), as well as postcolonial discourse.

Performance ethnography offers various ways to engage in the research process. It is a form of inquiry framing human nature as both *being* and *doing* (Alexander, 2005). Rather than coding to analyze, interpretation occurs through consideration of the bodily

experiences of the researcher as well as the researched, writing through theory and close consideration of words. Thus, performance ethnography is an interpretive tool (Pollock, 1998).

Engagement is not just through the interpretive process but also in the ways that performance ethnography invites reflexivity and response. To write and to perform requires a reflexive awareness as a way of “coming to know self and other and self as other” (Alexander, 2005, p. 421). Reflexivity is central to performance ethnography (Denzin, 2003). In terms of response, the point of performance ethnography is to prompt action. By writing of social issues as culture and through critique, performative pieces initiate critical responses and extend dialogue among writer and audience. It is both a politics of resistance and a politics of possibility (Denzin, 2003).

Performance ethnography offers my study the following. As I think all researchers do, I want my study to provoke action. As I think about my roles as teacher educator and researcher, I often wonder if my research will matter outside of the academy. What good is critical research if it does not contribute, at least collectively, in material differences? Performance ethnography offers the possibilities of action and access to wide audiences. Performance ethnography also draws on the familiar saying, “show don’t tell”. If I want to explore the role of aesthetic and emotive experiences and how we experience the world through our bodies then the genre of performative writing, if done well, will serve to *do* this rather than me as the researcher writing *about* these ways of knowing.

Research Questions

I am taken by the idea of critical consciousness. I wonder about it for myself. Were the shifts in my thinking and worldview when I learned about white privilege and whiteness, experiences of critical consciousness? When I am challenged by and yet open to perspectives that are alternative to my worldview, are those experiences of critical consciousness? What about all I do not *see*, what about all the times I do not *say* and select comfort over action? Do those preclude me from claiming criticality?

I think about critical consciousness in relation to my students and my teaching. It is a thrill to work with preservice teachers who experience shifts in their worldview. I am always puzzling over how/why the same reading, activity or video can profoundly impact some students and increase their thirst for learning, whereas for others they retreat, grow silent and shut down. Sometimes I feel consumed by reading about, talking to, and reflecting on educators' and activists' own experiences with these shifts– or experiences of critical consciousness. For me, understanding all the complexities of critical consciousness in relation to teaching and learning is an unsolvable puzzle – and that is just what makes it exciting to explore. Each realization leads me to new places, raises new questions.

I began quite simply. This study centers on the very broad question of what could I learn about critical consciousness from educators and how might that influence my teaching? More specifically, this study is designed to explore the following questions:

1. What provokes and sustains critical consciousness ?
2. How do educators talk about and enact critical consciousness ?

3. How can the experiences of critically conscious educators inform teacher education?

Recruiting Educators

Rather than immerse myself in a single classroom and observe one teacher as I did for a previous study, I knew from the start I wanted to explore and be involved in a number of settings and meet a number of educators. I viewed my dissertation research as an opportunity to visit schools and learn from highly regarded educators. Here I explain the process of selecting the nine educators who participated with me in this study. I use the term ‘educator’ when referencing participants as a group or when it does not seem salient to identify their specific role. The participants include classroom teachers, a special education coordinator who also teaches a reading class, principals, and teacher educators. One principal also teaches reading, one classroom teacher is also the department chair for high school history. Using the term educator is inclusive of the various roles people embody in this project. When I refer to the participant’s position, it is an effort to provide clarity for the reader, as needed.

My eagerness to learn was the impetus for recruiting a range of educators but there is also methodological relevance for this decision. A rich perspective from just one or two educators was more limiting if I was seeking to learn about nuances of critical consciousness. Exploring with and from multiple perspectives afforded a deeper look at criticality, its embodiment, and enactment.

Phase I

To recruit educators I used a method of peer nomination and asked colleagues in my doctoral program as well as from the teacher licensure program where I teach to recommend “critical” or “critically consciousness” educators who might be interested in my study. I also had a few alumni from my program in mind that I wanted to ask. Deciding what to call the educators provided the first challenge. I rarely heard colleagues use the words critical consciousness. They were more likely to reference socially just teaching, culturally relevant pedagogy or multicultural education. I more often then referred to the labels they used and partnered it with *critical*. Most of my colleagues tend to think of multicultural or social justice educators as critically conscious rather than critically conscious as the key identity label. Since the literature and my experiences illustrate that social justice and critical multicultural educators are enacting critical consciousness I decided to recruit with those labels as identifiers.¹⁸

Describing or defining “critical educators” was another challenge. Some description was needed to recruit the type of teachers I had in mind – teachers who enacted critical consciousness, which I described as someone aware of her own social location, students’ socio-political and historical identities, and who saw education as a political act. Too tight a description was formulaic, something I wanted to avoid, and might reproduce what I already knew. I found myself having different kinds of conversations depending on with whom I was speaking: sometimes talking about critical consciousness, other times, socially just teaching and so on.

¹⁸ Critical literacy educators also enact critical consciousness but since the commonsense understanding of critical literacy is based in language arts I decided not to use that identifier. I thought it might restrict nominations to solely English language arts teachers.

In Fall 2011 I accumulated a list of 25 educators. I emailed 16 of them (excluding those without contact information, two in a location not convenient for me, and one, the mother of one of my undergraduate students at the time). Of the 16, I heard back from 11 who expressed an interest and welcomed me to their classroom for Phase I of my project. In my emailed invitation I described part of my project as the following:

“My research is exploring the practices of “critical” teachers (for example, teachers with a commitment to equity, social justice teachers, multicultural educators) to better understand what critical teaching can look like at different grade levels and to try and understand influences on critical teachers’ curriculum.”

Thus, the public representation of this project began as an exploration of “critical teachers” known as social justice or multicultural educators and intentionally transitioned to one about critical consciousness. In my initial interviews with interested educators I asked if they indeed did identify as a teacher committed to social justice or multicultural education.¹⁹ As the interview was winding up, I explained more specifics of my project and its intention to look at the undergirding connection among critical teachers – critical consciousness.

Constructing Criticality by Omission

Of the eleven educators I met with for Phase I, I decided not to invite two to participate in the rest of the study. The reasons why are relevant to how this study constructs critical consciousness. Brad, who came highly recommended, was an enthusiastic teacher with high expectations. He had a reputation for helping all of his students make academic gains in his urban 5th grade. After observing a math lesson, Brad

¹⁹ In my findings I engage in an analysis of the ways in which the educators answered this question about identification.

proudly showed me around the school, pointing out interesting curriculum projects from other classes and sharing the 5th grade's integrated curriculum design. When we met in the teachers lounge I learned he was highly active in the teachers union, and public protests of education reform rollout and supporters such as Michelle Rhee.

When I asked, "You seem very politically involved. Does your political lens shape what you do in the classroom?"

Brad thought for a moment and then answered, "I wish it could, but no. There is no time for that. I have to focus on all the curriculum I have to teach."

I was eager for my other 5th grade visit in the same district but different school. My colleague told me Vanessa was an amazing social justice teacher, had a leadership role in the Occupy Movement, and was involved in the local Teacher Activist Group (TAG). When I entered Vanessa's class in late November there were two other young adults working in the room with Vanessa during Writing Workshop. Small groups of students were working together or independently on memory pieces about a time they were proud. Vanessa was with two boys on computers. During our conversation, when the students were at lunch, I learned more about Vanessa's participation in the Occupy Movement and some of her previous work as a social studies teacher. I had opened our conversation by connecting to our mutual acquaintance, "Terry said you are an amazing teacher who foregrounds social justice in your work. She highly recommended I meet you."

"Oh well, the past few years I taught social studies and really focused on issues of social justice. But now I got moved to ELA and so don't really teach social justice now. It's harder to make the connections in ELA, but I guess I should think more about that."

In my research journal I made a note of wanting participants who engaged with a meta-narrative of their own political consciousness. I wrote: *I do see that Brad is a good, committed teacher. His high standards and high expectations are a commitment to equity but he may not have a political consciousness about it. (like me in my first job...kids learned and took on identities as learners but I was not politically literate/conscious). I think what is important to me is that the teachers can verbalize what they are doing and why they think so in relation to their own critical consciousness.*

My experience with Brad and Vanessa and the decision not to include them in Phase II was a key moment in how I was constructing this study and the construct critical consciousness. It was here that I made two important decisions. First, I decided that part of enacting critical consciousness involved a subjectivity where one was self-aware of her/his efforts to enact critical teaching. Second, that the purpose of my research was not to explore/categorize whether or not each educator was a critical teacher or how critical. Rather, if their nominator considered them critical and in the initial interview they identified as critical (SJ or MCE or other), then I would explore what ‘critical’ looked like for them.

Perhaps Brad, Vanessa and I were just speaking a different language and that in fact they had an awareness of the sociopolitical contexts of their lives and their students’ lives. And it is likely I would have learned about critical consciousness from them whether from a presence or absence of critical enactments. But whether or not they participated is less important than how my decision shaped critical consciousness in this study.

[A tangle: The recruitment process already reduces what is possible to know to what is already known (by me). My lens influenced this early step in my research in a number of ways. First, by seeking a particular “type” of teacher I had in mind. Second, by asking only colleagues I already considered to be critical to make nominations. These were people I had worked closely with for years in my doctoral cohort or as fellow teacher educators in my program. I knew them well and had a sense they would know and recommend this “type” of teacher. Thus, my selection process was shaped by what I had in mind as critical.]

Phase II

The second phase of this research project began in Winter 2012 and continued up until Winter 2013. This means that observations and conversations with the nine educators while only one year long, crossed over from one academic year to the next. During that time, one teacher, Savannah, moved to a school closer to her home, but remained a 5th grade teacher.

Phase II involved data collected in the form of audio recordings and reflective memos of individual semi-structured interviews, field notes of classroom observations, audio recoding of two focus groups, and a limited collection of artifacts such as photographs of classroom walls and office doors or curriculum samples (i.e. worksheet of reading question, poem). Most educators were interviewed twice and classroom observations varied in number. Additional data were collected in my dissertation journal where I recorded insights, questions, connections, nuggets of theory, and autoethnographic moments. These autoethnographic moments were mainly about my

teaching and work as a faculty member. I recorded my observations, joys, doubts and frustrations—sometimes daily, sometimes more sporadically. When I tapered off, I made myself written promises to be more disciplined with my journal. Other days I wondered how I could capture all that seemed relevant then and might be relevant later. Every micro-moment can have multiple interpretations and is seeped in my own subjectivities. At times I questioned if I wanted to stay in teacher education, at others I could never imagine leaving.

Meet the Educators

I am from²⁰....

Brooklyn, Detroit, Boston, Pepperell

Cuba, the Bahamas, South America, Ireland

I am from....

A biracial family, my grandmother, a lineage of teachers, a father who expected to bail me out of jail from one of my protests,

I am from...

An extremely wealthy private school –and it was nauseating to me, a high school with such low expectations I was expected to drop out, an arts and social change project in South Africa, teaching at a charter that focused on experiential learning.

I am from....

Reading Ghandi and Toni Morrison, joining protests, wonderful mentors: George Spindler and Carola Suarez Orozco, not being called Black until I moved to the U.S., my white privilege popping up

I am from...

²⁰ From the words of the nine educators in this study, modeled after Linda Christensen's (2001) "I Am From Poem" activity.

I took the job where they needed me most-not where they had the most beautiful art studio, a teacher of primarily immigrant children, part of an administrative team where I felt like I could help influence creating a space and voice for social justice education.

I am from ...

Painful stories of children's experiences in schools, anger, disgust, and I am from seeing the beauty of each person, and opening up to our own best selves.

Figure I provides a brief sketch of all nine participating educators. Identifiers used here are those referenced by all of the educators. For example, at some point in our conversations, they all referenced their race. Whereas, only one educator referenced her sexual orientation and only one other referenced her class status, thus neither of those categories are included in this group chart. After the chart, I invite readers into the schools with me as I describe my first visit to each school, meeting the educators for the first time as potential participants in this study.

Table I Participants

Educator	Position	Experience	Race/Ethnicity	Gender
Beatriz	Principal-elementary school	Retired one year after study	Latina	Female
Emma	Special education coordinator	early career	White	Female
Fayth	Teacher educator	mid career	Black	Female
James	Principal-elementary school	mid career in education. First year as principal	Black	Male
Jocelyn	High School Social Studies teacher and dept chair	mid career	White	Female
Kadejah	High school ELA	mid career	Black	Female
Melissa	Art teacher elementary and high school	1 – 2 years	White	Female
Patricia	Teacher Educator and community consultant	near retirement	Black	Female

Savannah	Elementary (gr 5)	1 -2 years	White	Female
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Sketching Sites

Southern High School

It is fall and I left my house early, before the light frost melts from the car windows, to meet the first two educators who expressed an interest in this project. I was worried no one would ultimately want to or be able to create time and space in their busy lives for me, a stranger to them, yet someone interested in their work of teaching. Sipping coffee on the highway, flipping between stations and curious what Emma and Jocelyn would be like. I exit with E-Z pass and have come out near a strip mall. I make a guess to go right to find the main route through town. Unlike the city, there are large spaces between the tire store, McDonalds, another fast food place, and a small furniture shop. A lonely blue building, set back a bit with one car in the lot has darkened windows and **XXX – girls – videos** on the glass door. I drive, leaving the commerce behind me and move toward large grassy yards, a small farm, and houses on semi-wooded lots. I cut down a narrow street and the high school appears on my left. Southern High is in a town of less than 30,000 with 89% of the population as white and an estimated median income of \$66,000. I find a place to park in the nearly full lot near the building. Further away is the lot for student parking. A few students are straggling in. I am reminded of my own high school and my fortune of getting a daily ride from my neighbor in her grey Buick Century.

As with all the schools I visit, I have to ring the bell to be buzzed in. The office is immediately on my left and I ask for Emma. A young woman with long auburn hair, a

small nose ring and dressed in dark green corduroy pants walks in through the back office door as I am signing in and asks if I am Kathy. We shake hands and she leads me to a conference room down the hall. We sit in large swivel chairs at the head of a dark table and begin to talk. I feel I am talking to an old friend. Emma brings up privilege at one point and references herself as a straight, white woman who grew up in Vermont. The 45-minute introductory interview is drawing to a close and we have already made plans for Emma to come speak to one of my curriculum courses at the college. Her enthusiasm for my research makes me think it would be worth the long drive from my home to be able to learn from her. She is eager to introduce me to her friend and colleague Jocelyn who is the new chairperson of the social studies department. We walk down the wide brightly lit hallways that smell reminiscent of cleaning solution. A few teens are darting in and out of rooms and Emma warns me that the bell is about to ring and we will be in a teen swarm soon if we don't hurry to Jocelyn's World History class.

Emma leaves me in the empty room and Jocelyn arrives 15 minutes later. She apologizes, says she is dealing with a crisis amongst some teachers and tells me she had just been crying. I was struck by her openness to reveal what I always try to hide. I suggest I return another time and we make plans for me to visit in 2 weeks. On my return Jocelyn apologizes for showing a movie – it was a leftover activity from the substitute the previous day. We watched a documentary about the Haj. While students took notes I too took note of my surroundings – the Peterson Project map, an “upside down” map, quotations on placards around the room with phrases like *“People’s capacity for justice makes democracy possible, but people’s inclination to injustice makes democracy*

necessary” (Reinhold Niebuhr) and a copy of *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (Alexander, 2012).

Branford High School

A city in the Northeast just shy of 100,000 people with just slightly over 50% of the population African American, Pacific Islander and Latino. Melissa, a young, white, first year teacher, commutes 45 minutes to an hour each way to this city in the eastern part of the state. She selected a job teaching art that splits her time between the high school and one of the elementary schools. The elementary school is in a residential area just a block or two in from a busy street with small family run convenience stores, a dry cleaner, and pizza shop. In the elementary school where she teaches between twenty five to thirty K-5 students in any given class she also shares the space with the music teacher. A piano and instruments are sequestered over in the corner and art supplies take up much of the shelving space under the windows.

On the day of my first visit the kindergarteners were making shape collages. During circle time transition one of the boys says, “Miss B! Miss B! Dylan wet his pants!” Melissa (Miss B) finishes the transition song, directs children to their tables and gently guides the boy with the wet pants towards the teacher’s aide for a bathroom trip clean up. Later, a group of 4th grade students enter and continue working on their sneaker paintings – replicas of their favorite pair of shoes – shoes that tell a story of themselves. The class begins with 23 students and within a few minutes a class of five English Language learners are brought down by their teacher to join in. One of the boys is a brand new student on this day in January. Another Spanish speaker seems to have taken him

under his wing. Melissa greets the new boy with a smile and says to another, “Javier, will you show him your project and explain what we are doing?” I wonder what it is like to have an unannounced new student, learning English, who enters near the end of a painting unit. I wonder what it is like to be a new student, in a sea of English, entering a new school in the middle of the year.

The following week I make my first visit to Melissa’s high school pottery class. But first, to enter I need to navigate through and around a large parking lot, searching for the correctly labeled exterior door. I have never seen a school so big. Once at the front entrance, I was greeted by a woman standing at a podium. Next to her was what looked like an ATM. A large label across the front identified it as LobbyGuard. I hand over my license, have it scanned, and LobbyGuard brings up my info, takes my photo and spits out a bright yellow visitor sticker pass with my name and photo printed. Melissa meets me and we make our way down hallways and up stairs to the fine arts wing and her classroom. I felt underdressed with grey slacks and a maroon top. Melissa was wearing a multicolored caftan dress. I expected an art teacher that worked with clay and paint all day to wear something more casual. Here she has 30 students from sophomores to seniors in an L-shaped classroom. There is only one spot in the corner of the L where all the students can see Melissa if she were to do a demonstration or teach an art concept. The walls are lined with shelving and plastic wrapped clay projects arranged by class. A large kiln is in a corner and glaze, slip and clay are stored near the single sink. Most students enter, get their project of a “safe place tile” – a three dimensional tile that represents a place where they feel safe and that is special to them – off the shelving and begin to work. I see tiles made to represent a stage, a reading corner in a library, and a tombstone

for a buried friend. Melissa announces, “If you are ready to put slip on your tiles please come over here to the sink area for a demonstration.” A handful of students head that way as most others start rolling, shaping, scoring clay.

Castleton Charter

Castleton Charter is also in a city of approximately 100,000 people and about a 45 minute drive from Branford High, depending on traffic. A third of the urban population is comprised of people of color, with Asians claiming the largest percent. Savannah, a white teacher who described herself as from an upper class background, is thrilled to have been offered this 5th grade position at a charter school in her second year of teaching. She loved her previous job, which she had for one year but the travel time was exhausting. She no longer commutes an hour and fifteen minutes each way to work but can ride her bike in just twenty minutes. Like most teachers, Savannah lugs too much gear to and from work to frequently take advantage of a bike-able commute and instead drives to work. Castleton is also in a residential area about two blocks from a one-story public library and perhaps a half mile in one direction to a large plaza with a grocery store and movie theatre and in the other to a busy four lane street that seems predominantly lined with restaurants, bars, and coffee shops.

This charter elementary school reaches out to area towns and draws a majority Black student body. It is currently renting space from a Catholic church and uses the old Catholic school as its home. When I enter and sign in to the guest book the secretary calls Savannah to announce my arrival. I notice a faint smell that reminds me of the incense that is sometimes burned during mass. Savannah comes around the corner to greet me

and we head up the stairs to her 5th grade class. The wooden oak floors creak and the banister is smooth from use. The school is two floors – a shoebox with a main hall and four or five classrooms to a side. My visit coincides with *dress as your favorite book character day* and I see ballerinas, Harry Potter, a mouse, and a superhero. Later the kindergarteners will parade through all the classrooms and receive oohs and ahhs from the older students and teachers.

Savannah's students meander in, some with energy, some with a sleepy lethargy and hang up coats, smush backpacks into place after pulling out homework, and make their way to their desks. Kareem yells, "Hey look! There is a centipede over here!" He bends down to take a closer look.

"Do you want to carefully get it and put it in the terrarium?", asks Savannah. Kareem asks how and Savannah suggests he get a paper cup. He gets one and tries to catch the centipede as it starts to scurry away. "Oh snap !" he says with each try and each miss. Savannah returns and helps him to get it into the cup. Meanwhile the classroom phone rings. A boy jumps up to answer it, "Good morning, Ms S's class." He listens. "Ok. Thank you". He then walks over to Savannah and reports, "Meena is going to be absent today. Her mom just called."

"Thanks, Jonathan." and Savannah heads toward the carpet area to begin morning meeting. She rings a copper singing bowl to signal the students to the rug. Once settled into a circle she asks whose turn it is to share today. Kareem, the boy who caught the centipede, raises his hand and shares about throwing up over the weekend. Three or four other students chimed in with their own throw-up stories. I smiled as I was taking notes – don't we all have a good throw-up story to share?

At a pause, Savannah said, “Vanessa, you are the news sharer. What news do you have today?”

“Obama won!”, she says confidently.

“Yes, he did. Does anyone have any details to add?”

“I was surprised that Warren beat Scott Brown.” asserts a boy in a grey sweater and cargo pants.

“And why did that surprise you?”

“Because everyone said she wasn’t going to win.”

“My TV said it was 203-303”, says Jaz.

“Does anyone know what those numbers mean?”

“Electoral votes!” a few boys and girls said in chorus.

Jaz shares again, “I have a surprise. I was kind of surprised that people voted no on Question 2.”

“And who remembers Question 2?”

“Death with Dignity”

Banning Pilot School

A large city, with approximately 53% of the population identifying as Black or Latino. The Banning is a relatively new pilot school with 300 students and is situated at the intersections of three distinct neighborhoods within the city. Within easy access to public transportation, the school is at the gateway between a residential enclave and a busy thoroughfare that is often backed up to a crawl during rush hour or the territory of occasional night-time drag racing. The small school sits on a corner lot and makes good

use of the small bit of land between the building and the sidewalk. A little garden, a basketball court and small climbing structure fill the space. There are a few city owned playgrounds or sports fields within walking distance and the school uses both. Beatriz is talking to a parent when I arrive and I sit in the office guest chair. Me, the secretary, and the copy machine are all within reach of one another. The teacher mailboxes are squeezed along the other wall and teachers stream in and out this early morning, greeting, getting mail, and checking in. Beatriz finishes with the parent and calls me into her office. She is dressed in brightly colored oranges and yellows. Her waist length silver hair is pulled back from her face with a clip. She smiles, “have a seat and tell me about your project.” When Beatriz was approached by my colleague to ask her for recommendations of her teachers for my research, Beatriz said she wanted to participate. I never met her before but recognized Beatriz from a number of city-wide talks and forums on race and education. Soon, she was touring me around the school and we stopped in to spend some time in the second grade observing a collaborative project between the classroom teacher and art teacher. The students were illustrating their book reviews.

Beatriz and I then found a quiet spot in the teacher’s lounge and she shared with me her memories of beginning her teaching career in this same district 32 years ago, noting that the inequities had not changed all that much. The co-founding of this pilot school was her final big project in her life-long commitment to provide equitable education for the children of this city – immigrant children in particular. Once the school got on its feet for a few years she planned to retire and spend more time with her grandson.

Lowen Elementary

Lowen School is perched on a small hill looking out over a playground below and small homes across the street. Located in a college town with under 30,000 residents, it has just over 250 students, 80% of which are white and an all-white teaching force at the time of this project. James is excited to have landed his first principal position after being a vice principal in the same town but at a different school. Previous to that he worked as a special educator then literacy coach. My day with James is to shadow him. I begin by trying to sit unnoticed on a chair in the office while he takes some calls, works out a coverage plan with the secretary, and warmly greets a parent of color who brought her son to school. The son gets signed in and heads to his classroom. James and the mother move to the small conference room for a private conversation. He had told me earlier, before my visit, how the students and families of color seem marginalized at the school. Some teachers complain about the kids and send them to the office more often. He has talked about how hard it is to be the only Black body at the school and the one to try and negotiate tensions that he sees as race-based, but usually the teachers do not. He said, “I have a lot of hard decisions to make. I like these people but it is not about them. It’s about the kids. I have to do what I think is in best interests of kids and then I get flack.”

With the parent talk over, James offers to give me a tour of the school. He explains each space as we move, “This is where we are going to move speech and language. They are in practically a closet now.” Or, before we enter a classroom James quietly says, “This is one of the second grades. She is by far one of my best teachers.” After leaving a first grade, James tells me that at the beginning of the year one of the white boys in there told the only African American student, “I don’t like Black people.”

As we make our way through the mostly empty hallways, any child who is heading somewhere greets or is greeted by James. “Hi Mr. Hall!”, “Good morning, Devon. How you doing today?” One girl was sharpening her pencil near the doorway of her classroom. She steps out and says, “Mr. Hall, what color socks are you wearing today? Do they match your tie?” James smiles his biggest smile and pulls up a leg of his pressed khakis to reveal tri-colored argyle socks. The pink in the socks matches the pinked button down he is wearing. “Oooo nice, Mr. Hall.” James tells me he has a thing about socks and the kids love to see what pattern he has on each day. His outfit and personality match. He is energetic, cheerful and friendly while also attending seriously to the needs of the children and the school.

At the end of the day, the entire school gathers for an assembly or community meeting for classes to share projects about respect. The music teacher led a class in singing “Respect”, a 4th grade showed a video they made about *no teasing*, and two girls came up and read a poem. James facilitated throughout, including a short read aloud from a book about Cesar Chavez. Earlier, when talking with James in his office he shared, “This work is hard. Especially as someone who thinks about race, gender, class every two seconds. For example, it’s hard to decide what to read this afternoon at the community meeting. I could read the part in this book about poverty, or the part about racism, but I am going to read the part with a big ‘speak English’ sign.”

Knoll College

Fayth, teaches at a small college in the city with an undergraduate population of nearly 50% first-generation college students. She previously taught every grade level

from K -12 as a music teacher and then special educator in private and public schools after arriving in the United States from South America. She says it wasn't until as an adult, when she moved here, that she was referred to as Black. Sometimes she tells that story with some humor: "I wasn't Black until I grew up and came to the US." Her students can be momentarily confused by that until they realize her point about race in the United States. Teaching teachers has her so consumed now that she sometimes expresses regret about letting her piano performances slip away. Every now and then she slides onto the bench of the black baby grand piano in one of the buildings on her campus and plays a song. Most of the time she is running from meeting to meeting – whether with faculty, students or administration. Her approach with preservice teachers I characterize as warm, loving, with high expectations and a commitment to intellectual rigor. Her high expectations are matched with unending support. She provides her cell phone number and urges students to call or text at any hour that they need help – academic or otherwise. Some students take her up on her genuine offer and make midnight phone calls as they work to complete a deadline. Fayth, a consummate learner herself, is often engaged in projects and research with colleagues and students – seeking how to teach better and raise the bar for the students in her program, and integrating the latest in technology, neuroscience or bioethics in her teacher education courses. She designs international learning trips that focus on special education in countries outside of the United States, and supports students in presenting at conferences.

Patricia, a former colleague of Fayth's and now recommitted to community projects and consulting work around issues of race and equity, comes from a lineage of African American teachers from the South. She does not identify as a Southerner herself,

but her Southern family roots and stories of her mom, grandmothers, and aunts as teachers are dear to her. Music is also a part of Patricia's life. She is a professional singer and recently, after some time away from performing, has been singing in different events around the city. Spirituals and a little gospel are her recent focus. Patricia and I taught together about 8 years ago and her attention to students was remarkable. Our planning, her teaching, and her time with students after class is focused on discerning what they needed, the goals at hand and how to connect them to the learning. Patricia will laugh when she reads this – that there is no such thing as a short conversation with her. Not because she dominates and talks the entire time but because processing is what she values. She wants to understand where students are coming from, how they engage, what may help them, and figuring out who they are outside of the college classroom.

Morgan High School

Morgan High is one of many high schools in this large city, the same city where Beatriz is principal at the Banning Pilot Elementary School. Morgan High is also a pilot and focuses on preparing students for college. College access classes, college courses, and a Black College Tour are offerings at the Morgan. A majority low income school, with 75% of the student body identifying as Black or Latino, the school climate survey indicates high student and parent satisfaction and the passing rate on the state's high stakes test is near 100%. In the middle of this study, the school moved to a new building which is much more spacious. Overall, hallways are wider, classrooms larger, and the building has more square footage. It sits at a somewhat quiet intersection among a blend of architectural styles of triple-decker homes, small Victorians with front porches, and

brick or vinyl sided cape-style houses. The front yards are small, just yards from the street and most are landscaped with flowers or small shrubs. The school itself seems oversized on its lot, and makes the homes look smaller than they might if situated elsewhere.

The first time I find Kedejah's class I pull up a chair on the side, near the back of the room. She is teaching at the board about thesis statements and wants students to identify them in their readings or write their own to summarize a chapter. The 10th grade students sit at hexagon shaped tables. It is a nice change from all the spaces I visit with individual desks. Their backpacks are on the floor or shoved onto the bars that cross under each chair. The four students nearest me are secretly passing a bag of Little Debbie powdered donuts back and forth whenever Kedejah looks away. Their attention is on the donuts and me as they keep glancing to see if I am noticing. It is so obvious from my view that I find it quite funny that they seem to be thinking they are being subversive. I finally quietly said to them at a time the class noise level rose a bit, "I'm just a guest and not here to enforce food rules." One said, "Oh" and the game ended. They finished eating the donuts without paying attention to me anymore and eventually began the work of writing thesis statements.

After class, Kedejah invites me to the teachers lounge during the lunch break where she shares about her high school experiences as a student in this same school district. She shared that her teachers seemed to just bide their time until the dismissal bell rang, not caring about her learning or success. She dropped out, no one seemed to mind, and she found a GED program. It was later in art school that she found a teacher that showed care, high expectations, and support. Kedejah's new mentor taught her ways of

taking up academic discourse and encouraged Kedejah to become a teacher, which she did after a few years in the military. I met Kedejah through a mutual friend a few years before my study began and would see her about once a year at a party. She is always taking a class – for fun, for a new interest, to improve her teaching, or just immerse herself in a subject. I share her love of literature and once sat mesmerized as she read aloud her favorite excerpt from Toni Morrison’s latest, *A Mercy*.

Data: Given, Taken or Constructed?

“The history of the theory of knowledge or epistemology would have been very different if instead of the word “data” or “givens,” it had happened to start with calling the qualities in question the “takens”... (Dewey 1929/1960, p. 178 as cited in Brinkmann, 2014, p. 721).

What is it that I collected, constructed or *took* from my time in schools, interviews, reflections on my own teaching, and readings? In the original draft of this dissertation this section was called *Data Collection*. Yet, Svend Brinkmann (2104), citing John Dewey, provokes me to trouble how I think about data. He explains that the Latin root of data (*dare*) is to give and thus data is *the given*. Brinkmann suggests that “...nothing is simply given. What we call data are always produced, constructed, mediated, by human activities...” (2014, p. 721). Elizabeth St. Pierre and Alecia Youngblood Jackson (2013) argues that much qualitative research is filled with latent positivism. Data, even in interpretive and critical studies, are offered as brute data, building blocks in the empirical construction of evidence-based findings. St. Pierre asks researchers to reconsider data – how does it appear and what does it look like when it appears? The particular epistemology and methodology create certain kinds of data.

I have to work to remind myself that I am a large part of the construction of the data I collect via my lenses, my interpretations that happen in the moment as I decide what follow up question to ask in an interview or what to include and omit in field notes, or even just by my presence. I also consider the idiom, ‘that’s a given’, meaning something is obvious or a truth. How is data sometimes put to use or read as a given when used to speak truths about what constitutes annual yearly progress in schools or reading ability? I would rather, as Dewey suggests, consider what I constructed as data. I am entangled with the data, as it “cannot be separate from me” (St. Pierre & Jackson, 2013). This autoethnographic moment excerpted from my research journal provides insight to how I, the researcher, sometimes thought/think about data. I am entangled with postmodern ideas theoretically and more structural, dichotomous thoughts in practice. The act of writing this dissertation forces me to pause, re/consider, re/construct.

I couldn’t wait to see Savannah and catch up over breakfast. Last time we talked was in the spring when she participated in a focus group. Now, she is a month into her new teaching job at a school much closer to her home. I have specific questions to ask about critical consciousness and I want to hear how the new job is going. I’m dichotomizing again – “research” and “not research”. I stand outside of Bloc 11 and see Savannah approaching with her husband. We have never met, but I know it is him from the photos she sent a year ago from their wedding. Is he joining us? How can I do an interview? I’m running out of time. I need this data! The role of researcher makes me selfish. They are walking up the sidewalk toward me hand in hand. Maybe meeting him will give me a glimpse into Savannah outside the classroom – to conversations and spaces other than academic. Perhaps I’ll learn something about Savannah that might be

useful in my dissertation. The husband now becomes a bearer of data. The role of researcher makes me voyeuristic.

What did I gather and how did I do it? My corpus of data is broad and includes field notes from school visits, audio recordings of some of those visits, and reflective memos after visits. Some of the field notes mention what is on the walls of classroom spaces and as a time-saver I, at times, took photos of the posters or signs that I was noticing. Occasionally some of the teachers would hand me copies of the worksheets or other curriculum materials they were using but I did not make it a practice to be thorough about collecting curriculum examples from all. I audio recorded semi-structured interviews of the participants and wrote short reflective memos of my impressions, ideas or questions for follow up. Both focus groups were audio-recorded. As described in a later section in this chapter, “notes on transcribing”, I explain my process for selection and transcription of these audio-recordings. I also have data that I generated outside of the school, interview or focus group spaces. I kept a dissertation journal that included happenings and thoughts about my teaching, ideas, theory notes, and questions about much that came to mind whenever I was thinking about my research. A number of these notes in my journal are transferred from napkins written at restaurants, scraps of paper from bottoms of bags or recycle bins. Lastly, in addition to the autoethnographic data from this journal is autoethnographic data in the form of memories, and memories triggered during analysis of the other data.

[A tangle: Elizabeth St. Pierre’s words invigorate and trouble me. Questioning how I think about data feeds my mind. But I wasn’t questioning it in these same ways

when I was in the field. So does my review of data collection in the next section then become incongruous with what I now want to consider? As I read to support the work I am doing I come across provocations that may shift what I am doing. Ways to analyze and represent data in this project grow and shift through living. Revision is endless. What I wrote a month ago may not be my understanding of today. Some say stop reading. It is not possible.]

Interview Reflections

Before moving on to consider how I analyzed the data I collected, I want to return to some earlier work of mine about interviewing. I wrote an unpublished paper that addressed the practice of interviewing in qualitative research and reflected on my own interview practices for an ethnographic study that was published in the *Journal of Teacher Education* (McDonough, 2009). Here I first review some of my previous thinking, learning and the goals I set for interviewing practices. Then I reflect on my semi-structured interview practices and focus group practices for this research project.

Interviews are bounded by context, history and politics. Positivist framing sees the interview as a place to extract meaning that resides within or belongs to the participants. Conventional or modernist interview approaches sought to retrieve answers from participants and continually improve interviewing techniques to get more and “better” answers (Fontana & Frey, 2005). Whereas a postmodernist lens sees meanings as co-constructed by the researcher and participants. Interviews are socially situated (Dingwell, 1997) and negotiated texts (Fontana & Frey, 2005) as both the researcher and participants bring experiences, views, opinions to the social space of an interview.

Postmodern²¹ researchers attend to the interview process as a collaborative meaning-making activity where the reality of the interview is situated and negotiated (LeCompte, 1995).

As researchers continue to question assumptions about knowledge, redefine the methodology and analysis of the interview, and consider issues of representation, Fontana and Frey (2005) suggest three future directions. The first is to use interviews to look at everyday practices in concert with larger social concerns. Rather than “metatheorizing” (p. 719), Fontana and Frey agree with Garfinkel’s (1967, as cited in Fontana & Frey, 2005) assertion that understanding the mundane helps to illuminate sociological theory. The second direction is in relation to feminist interviewing practices where the interview is constructed more as a democratic and participatory practice rather than exploitive. Performative or poetic representations are the third new direction as they grow in use and acceptance in the academy. Both can be “powerful instruments for social reform” (p. 720) and draw on feelings, passion, and hope (Fontana & Frey, 2005).

In essence, interviews are stories – stories the participant tells of her life and stories the researcher and participant create together. From that unpublished paper I identified research practices I wanted to attend to. The ones relevant to this study are:

- Engage in the “empathetic interview” (Fontana & Frey, 2005) where I interact as myself and not try to remain neutral, since neutrality is not really possible.
- Utilize a multi-method approach in interviewing. One-on-one interviews might offer better opportunities for me to attend to particular lines of inquiry. Whereas, focus group interviews are a forum for more interaction, a space for the

²¹ The differences among the researcher’s goals and understandings of interviews are not as clean as I make it here. The main difference is the aim to locate a rational truth versus the acknowledgement that reality is constructed and situated.

construction of multiple meanings, a place where more participants are using language to create understandings and share world views.

- Scrutinize my role, deconstruct my interpretations, and consider alternate ways of looking at my interview data (Fontana & Frey, 2005).
- Explore the possibilities of performance ethnography and arts-based research methods. Because we experience the world through our bodies and emotions as well as our intellect, I must consider what research practices honor all of our experiences.
- Engage in self-reflexivity and epistemic reflexivity. In all aspects of my research projects I need to consider who I am and what tools I am using to design my questions, interact with participants, analyze my data and represent findings.

This project is a culmination of engaging with all of these practices. I attempt aspects of performance ethnography as part of this research design, carried out focus groups, engage in reflexivity of my practices throughout much of this project, and kept conscious of interviews as co-produced – we co-produced knowledge and were constitutive of each other. Even though I never saw interviews as neutral spaces I did enter this dissertation project with more awareness of interviews as co-produced knowledge and wanted to try and be more of *myself* when interviewing. In my first two or three interviews I treated them more as conversations, and learned when listening to the recordings just how different conversations are than interviews. I interrupted too much! I think as a conversation, I would not have been considered to be overly interruptive. But as a researcher listening to the recordings I notice times when my enthusiasm to chime in

shifted or stopped what the educator was saying. A section in my researcher notebooks are for notes while listening to interviews before transcribing. There is a note to myself there in capitals that says, “STOP INTERRUPTING! Following that discovery, I took up my former practices of asking then listening and continuing to listen.

I also discovered that focus groups raise a number of challenges for facilitation. When some participants are late, how long to wait before beginning? Starting on time honors those present but the hope is for all that planned on coming to participate. In what ways do the conversation patterns matter? How does one by one turn taking differ from a group conversation in terms of knowledge generation? Why might some participants be more silent than others? Are they hoping the facilitator will help them to enter the conversation or do they prefer to take on role of listener? Are the different voices recognizable when listening to the audio later?

George Kamberelis and Greg Dimitriadis (2011) position focus groups as more than a research practice but also pedagogical, political, and performative. They caution about how quickly consensus can form in a group situation, and warn researchers to avoid quick determinations about validity or “false notions of cohesion” (p. 557). There are also issues of anonymity as participants are in the same space, sharing, revealing, and theory building. Here issues of trust and confidentiality can arise especially if the participants are from the same institution or share something they may tend to keep private such as a health diagnosis. But even with these cautions, Kamberelis and Dimitriadis (2011) highlight a number benefits of focus group work that impact individuals, research conclusions and politics. Some people feel safer in a group telling their stories especially as in a focus group setting the power of the researcher is diluted.

The space of a focus group allows for both individual and collective stories to come forward. With this variety of story the researcher may be able to acknowledge complexities and avoid moving too quickly to *a priori* beliefs or *weak evidence* (p. 548), and instead represent multifaceted understandings. Politically speaking, “a complex version of focus groups can be used to resist local, institutional closure (p. 557).

Data Analysis

I understand data analysis as a “process of separating aggregated texts (oral, written, or visual) into smaller segments of meaning for close consideration, reflection and interpretation” (Ellingson, 2011, p. 595). My overarching methods of analysis are writing as method and reading as method. Then more specifically my aim was to write layered accounts (Ellingson, 2001) and messy texts (Denzin, 1997). In this section, I describe each of those and give examples of my engagement with those methods. Initially, my practices were quite leisurely and a bit romantic. I read this and that, exploring as if I was a tourist in a new city, meandering to get my bearings. The idea of writing was lovely. I set up my office desk or found a cozy corner in a coffee shop. I sat and waited for the muse. Most of the time it didn’t come and I closed my laptop only after giving in and checking all my emails. This approach had never worked for me before but somehow I was hoping with the arrival of my dissertation I’d *feel* like writing, that I’d know what to write before I began.

Writing as method

Writing is thinking. It is a way to find out what I think about a topic, the data, myself as I engage in the act of writing – not before I write. It is also a way of knowing, a method of discovery and analysis (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005). It is through writing that the researcher discovers the research, the interconnectivity of theories and data, rather than writing as just the medium of representation – a *writing up* of the research. According to Richardson, the form or genre affects what we can write. This is one reason why I gently push at the boundaries of a traditional dissertation format. By pushing at these boundaries I want to see what it is I can discover – about the data, about myself.

Richardson (2000) states writing is

both a theoretical and practical process through which we can a) reveal epistemological assumptions, b) discover grounds for questioning received scripts and hegemonic ideals—both those within the academy and those incorporated within ourselves, c) find ways to change those scripts, d) connect to others and form community, e) nurture our emergent selves (p 153).

It is through a method of writing that I analyze, write my selves, and am lead to wonder. After my romantic period sitting in coffee shops waiting for ideas to arrive ended, my writing practices became more varied and productive. I began with stories. I wrote many anecdotes, that won no place in this final copy, to help me enter the data. I wrote for insights, experimented with section outlines, reviewed data in the form of notes and transcriptions, and returned to the writing. At first the writing was always incredibly slow and laborious. I was taking too long to select each word – the right word – from the start. A sentence could take 20 minutes as I deleted, rewrote, checked a thesaurus. In some ways this was about producing clean writing from the start, something to move beyond. But also

the words mattered. Words reveal. Should I write *myself* or *my self*? Does *habit* infer a humanist orientation? I began writing in blue font for words and phrases I wanted to remember to revisit. This moved me along.

I was not always writing on my laptop. Other formats entered into the project. I have far too many half-filled notebooks. Small pocket-sized ones for easy carry, big traditional ones for notes on readings, the brown leather bound journal (my romantic period) on my bedside table for the thoughts that awakened me, and the long narrow kind bound with a spiral at the top for keeping research to-do lists. I even tried an artist's sketchbook, hoping the blank pages would assist in breaking beyond linear thinking as I drew heuristics and graphic organizers. A third practice, other than word processing and impromptu notes, was to tape chart paper on the walls of our guest bedroom. With multi-colored markers I would create lists, draw arrows, use color to symbolize different theories. Getting away from the computer, standing, pacing, writing big often helped me break through a period of feeling stuck in my writing.

As my deadline drew closer, I became more and more regimented with my time and this regimentation somehow allowed me to learn more about my process and contingencies. Attention to process helped with product. At first it seemed I must write every single available hour outside of my teaching if I wanted to finish by the end of the upcoming semester. No times for breaks. And yet I learned that breaks help me to be more productive – both in the amount I wrote, but more importantly, in solving problems and connecting ideas.

My non-teaching days became fourteen hour stretches of mostly writing, interspersed with movement and a few short naps. I never would have admitted to the naps if not for the poet Donald Hall (1978), a napper, who said leaving consciousness invited his poetic voice out. At first I thought the 15 minutes naps were a sign of defeat – a giving up. Until I realized that often I awoke with a thought about how to dive back into the writing. Planned movement – gardening, vigorous exercise, a yoga or Pilates class always refreshed, often provoked an insight. Soon I began to notice that the poems and readings shared by my yoga teacher connected mind, body, consciousness, and subjectivities. I would arrive home and write.

Of course with writing comes different kinds of reading. A research project such as this one invites me to read the world around me. Everything seems relevant. But more traditionally, I often reread my draft, reread my notes, made new notes from the rereadings and continued in my writing group – a practice of reading, responding and receiving feedback.

Reading as method

Writing with, through, and about data is not my only tool of analysis. Reading too is a method (Augustine, 2014; St Pierre, 2001). Qualitative researchers engage in wide and deep reading and reflection on our own reading practices illustrates reading as an analytical method. I received frequent advice from a number of colleagues (fellow students and teacher educators) to stop reading and just write. At first that advice made great sense as I was mired in a rut of procrastination that was transforming into writer's

block. I would plan to write and instead I spent the time reading. After finally maintaining a regular writing schedule I found that frequent reading was a must. Reading theory was catalyst for my analysis. Without it I could only write to the boundaries of what I knew.

My reading practices began with rereading theories and scholars I referenced in my research proposal and spread from there. As I worked through dilemmas and ideas, I searched in databases for additional resources. Sometimes I would find that an article was a part of a journal's special edition on a topic and I then skimmed through the entire volume. I often followed citational trails, letting those lead me to old histories and new studies. I discovered new materialism this way and soon was the owner of four new books on this feminist rendering of being. Reading electronically was a good first entry to reading. But to fully engage I had to print and read again with pencil in hand for margin notes. E-books are enticing with their immediate access but again, to dig deeply into the text, I needed a hard copy, in part, because some navigation options are too cumbersome in most e-books. Also, with all electronic sources, I forget what I have, even though I have organized articles by folder and e-books by groupings on my laptop. Having physical books and printed articles to organize by category in my home made it easier to pile and re-pile, which sometimes was a form of outlining, or theory mapping. Besides my research journal I kept reading notebooks. Some entries are per article or book (i.e. notes on Ahmed Chapter 5: Performativity of Disgust) and some multi-paged entries are on a concept, such as subjectivity, that draw from multiple readings.

Although, reading as method and writing as method are not always so separate as I treat them here in the above description. Sometimes I sat at the computer with the goal

of writing memories and anecdotes of teaching in my journal and ended up rereading all I wrote. Other times and perhaps more frequently, readings triggered ideas for and about my life, my teaching, my research. Sometimes they were fleeting, sometimes I stopped and wrote about an idea, and sometimes they were distracting and jarred my concentration.

* * *

1:00 p.m. Taught late last night and now back home from my 8:00 a.m. class. I dedicate a half hour to organizing the papers, handouts and books from classes and then turn to my dissertation for the afternoon. St. Pierre and Jackson (2013) are encouraging, “all concepts, including data, must be re-thought” (p. 223).....*the thought of Darren interrupts. He entered class breathless. His sister’s car was hit by a bus this morning on the way to work. He is on his way to the hospital to be with her....* “the meaning and function of data depend on the meaning and function of a constellation of other concepts” (p. 23).... *a conceptually difficult reading for the first week. A lot of confusion. I’ll need to break that down somehow next week for the students...* “evidence, warrants, claims, reason” (p 23). St Pierre is questioning qualitative researchers’ reliance on brute data to demonstrate empirical stability in interpretative studies—a mismatch. “If qualitative data can’t be numbers...then words will have to do” (p. 224)...*their choice of words are so revealing—a strong sense of individualism, an unwavering core identity.....* Instead of revealing meaning, St. Pierre suggests qualitative researchers bring philosophy to qualitative science to, as Deleuze encouraged, figure out the “kinds of lives it (philosophy) allows us to live” (p. 225) rather than determine truth. “Philosophy does not consist in knowing and is not inspired by truth. Rather, it is categories like Interesting,

Remarkable, or Important that determine success or failure” (Deleuze & Guatarri, 1991/1994, p. 42 as cited in St. Pierre).

Layered Accounts and Messy Texts

A more specific process of my analysis is a methodology of ‘layered accounts’ (Ellingson, 2011). Layered accounts require moving back and forth between different genres of writing – poetry, narrative, academic prose – both as a process of analyses and as options for representation. Layered accounts help connect the personal to theory or cultural critique and combine social science with artistic ways of knowing (Ronai, 1995). My layering is composed of freewrites, academic prose, autoethnographic narratives, some poetry, and a layering within the dissertation itself as I layer and weave data analysis, reflections on that analysis in the form of *tangles*, connections of praxis between participant data and my own teaching or research reflections.

What is also layered and to my knowledge rarely noted in research, are the ways interactions with others over time shape our research from the seed of the idea, to planning and engaging, and to the writing. I have a file in my dissertation folder entitled “Acknowledgments”. Every now and then I jot an idea about how I want to thank the people that have helped to make this dissertation possible. I enjoy reading the acknowledgments in others’ dissertations and books. Genuine thanks are given to the people who directly supported the researcher’s work and the acknowledgments provide a bit of a glimpse to the writer’s personal life – the life outside the dissertation: friends that insist on walks or coffee, spouses that lovingly buoy the writer, and family members who inspire. I like learning a few details of the lives of my favorites scholars and writers. But

what is often kept to the confines of the acknowledgements are also a part of the research process. Relationships with friends, family, colleagues and advisors can be the inspiration for projects, the sustenance, and a critical lens. As I consider my own research practices, I reflect on how the support and thus ideas of key people over the years have become enveloped in this project. Some moments stand out – not necessarily as the most significant but they are some of the ones I can remember: such as when my advisor, Maria José Botelho, included me in a conference panel on love and criticality. Or when telling my friend, Elsa, about how I see emotions as creating criticality and she said, “that reminds me of Latour and Actor-Network Theory”. What is the most significant, though, and impossible to trace and cite are the many, many conversations I had between my two writing groups and with my advisor.

For years, I participated in a Boston based writing group where we usually met in person to share writing and provide feedback. I also participated in a virtual writing group using technology so the three participants from Boston, Ohio and Georgia could video conference about our work. After years of reading each other’s work, providing feedback, asking questions, and sometimes collaborating for a conference presentation our ideas have sometimes folded into each other’s.

Also, for years I have had many conversations with my advisor, Dr. Botelho, as a graduate student, as her research assistant, and as co-presenter for conferences. Again, I can remember some specifics such as early on when she said, “You really ought to consider imagination.” Or I could go back through all my emails and locate the specific articles she shared with me to read about critical literacy or poststructuralism. But just as formative were the many conversations we had while in her office or traveling for

research and conferences. It is not possible to track all the ideas that were shared from her to me, me to her, or that emerged together but they all sit within my body and impact how I went about this project. I encourage readers to look carefully at acknowledgments, mine as well, to help fill in the blanks of stories not told of how the research came to be.

Even though the analysis of my data never felt linear I write a linear account here for purposes of explanation. Borrowing “plugging in” from Mazzei and Jackson (2012) which they borrowed from Deleuze. This approach is in effect opposite from making sense of the data with codes/themes and then finding a theory that explains the themes. For example, I plugged in Sara Ahmed’s theory of emotion as “aboutness”, which I explain in Chapter 4 to come to know the data in new ways – beyond my initial observations. Yet, unlike Mazzei and Jackson, I did not use one small set of data to revisit multiple times with various theoretical lenses. I selected a variety of instances from the data to consider through theory and autoethnographically.

A second method of analysis is the use of (performance) autoethnography as a method and genre. These autoethnographic moments are another layer of data and also a tool of analysis in this study – experiences and thoughts while teaching, in faculty meetings, while driving or running. Memories, a story in the newspaper, conversations with my husband and my friends are all data. Not all are captured in notes – some are – but all shape my analysis, consciously or not.

Performance ethnography is an experimental method that incites culture. (Alexander, 2005). As I write my lived experience I am writing culture, doing culture, representing culture. As I write and incite culture as an act of analysis, I am offering “a critique of self and society, self in society, and self as a resistant and transformative force

of society” (Alexander, 2005, p. 423). The analysis comes when writing, interpreting my life events and making connections to theory, culture, and the other pieces of my research study. Performance (auto) ethnography also offers to me, and I hope to my readers, ways of feeling research, or a methodological power, as captured here where I merge the beginning and end of Ron Pelias’s (2005)²² *An Apology for Performative Writing, With Apologies to Marianne Moore*.

I, too, dislike it: there are things that tradition
just won’t permit, things that must be
proven, things that are important beyond all this
human passion.
Reading it, however, with a perfect contempt for it,
with a complete comfort in one’s
superiority, with a dismissive confidence
that only our accepted academic positions could certify,
one discovers
in it after all, a place where lifeless abstractions might find
human form, where the level of significance
might slide off the page on a tear, where categories
might crack and statistics shrink, and where reason is
unruly. One discovers in
it after all, a place for the genuine.

²² This is a shortened version of Ron Pelias’s original poem. I omitted the middle stanzas.

Eyes that can analyze beyond variance, ears
that can hear what others say, palms
that know the sweat of joining another
and of opening the fist. These things are
important not because a
high-sounding argument can be put around them but
because they are
useful: they evoke what seemed impossible to evoke, they say
what seemed unsayable.

Real lives that shake the imagination
connecting us to subjects that truly matter,
connecting us to each other
shall we have
it. In the meantime, if you demand on the one hand,
the raw data of life in
all its rawness and
that which is on the other hand
genuine, then you are interested in
performative writing.

* * *

What results in my layering of methods and writing genres is a *messy text* (Denzin, 1997) which Norman Denzin describes as:

Texts that are aware of their own narrative apparatuses, that are sensitive to how reality is socially constructed, and the understanding that writing is a way of “framing” reality. Messy texts are many sited, intertextual, always open ended, and resistant to theoretical holism, but are always committed to cultural criticism. (p 224)

My awareness of the messy construction of all texts, in particular research texts, is represented by varied ways of writing as I noted in Chapter 1 (Notes on Reading). By selecting to include autoethnographic moments, excerpts from literature, and interruptions labeled as *A Tangle* are all insights to my thinking, woven into a traditionally framed six chapter dissertation, acknowledges and signals the intertextual construction of this project.

Note on Transcribing

The processes I used and the decisions that guided my transcription practices are informed by my beliefs, my assumptions and my theories about language. Describing my practices is an effort at transparency and an opportunity to be reflexive about an aspect of the research process that often garners little attention (Davidson, 2009). First, I describe my process, then I return and explicate what guided my decisions. “Transcribing is a form of analysis, shaped by [my] examined and unexamined theories and assumptions, ideologies and ethical stances, [and] relationships with participants” (Skukauskaite, 2012, n.p.).

I began with either naïveté or inexperience, or perhaps a bit of both, with the plan to transcribe everything word for word as a way to tackle the mound of audio data from interviews, voice memos to myself, and audio recordings of classroom observations. The

realization that this would take an extraordinary amount of time led me to the second realization that I needed a rationale for what I selected to transcribe, not just for using time efficiently but for targeting my research questions. I then began listening to the audio recordings in my home office, at the library, and while walking. I jotted notes about what was said that could help answer my research questions, what else seemed interesting or notable, and new questions that were raised. I notated the time of the interview so in the future I could more easily return to transcribe that section. But I didn't transcribe all of those sections right away. Instead I worked with the notes, looking for how what I was hearing was coming together to suggest answers to my research questions. Then I would select from those as to what to transcribe. For example, the emotive quality of critical consciousness surfaced very quickly but it was not until I decided to focus on discomfort and love that I transcribed those exchanges, rather than transcribing everything that named an emotion.

The act of transcribing – putting the words to the page – also required decisions. Since I am not engaging in conversational analysis, systemic functional linguistics, or other analytical method that requires precise (as much as that is actually possible) attention to language, I did not use an exacting system to identify tone, emphasis, and pausing. While it is true that the way we say things impacts what we mean and how we are understood, I was not intentional about analyzing how things were said, but rather what were the ideas or the gist of the exchanges. This meant that I used a general system of noting long pauses with ellipses and tonal emphasis with **bold** when those (moves/practices/habits) seemingly influenced meaning. For example, when Patricia says she does not say “multicultural about **anything** anymore”, *anything* was said with

intentional emphasis. As the researcher in the room, the emphasis was even more obvious to me because of the body language of Patricia and between her and Jocelyn. *Anything* was said with a shake of her head, a slight flick of the hand and met with an affirming laugh and eye contact from Jocelyn. Perhaps any listener could hear the emphasis on the audio recording. But I, someone that was present for the focus group, could envision it as well. Thus, I bolded that emphasis and it became important to the overall analysis. Transcription practices are also influenced by our memories and field notes from observations and interviews.

As the researcher and transcriber, I not only determined what to transcribe based on what I deemed meaningful to my study, but I also determined the “boundaries of ideas” (Skukauskaite, 2012, np) by where I put a comma, a period, or an ellipses. Take this example from Savannah and whether or not *you know* is placed at the end of the first sentence or beginning of the second sentence.

It was such an important thing, how uncomfortable it was and how that was like—you know. Then there would be the uncomfortable silences that people would try to shut down.

It was such an important thing, how uncomfortable it was and how that was like. You know, then there would be the uncomfortable silences that people would try to shut down.

The first infers that all or some of us in the focus group can relate to and understand the uncomfortable feelings that can come with discussing race. In the second example, *you know* is a verbal habit similar to *um* or *like*, and changes the emphasis to the uncomfortable silences. These differences are subtle but required close listening to try and infer the speaker’s intended meaning before punctuating.

When transferring transcribed excerpts to the final document, I sometimes cleaned up or omitted speech habits such as *like* and *um* to make the reading more effortless and smooth for the readers of this project. This decision was also guided by my desire to project the participants eloquently. During the interviews and when listening to the recordings, most educators sounded so fluent and fluid. Yet, transcribing speech to text revealed the number of habitual phrasings that seem to go unnoticed aurally, yet bark out glaringly in print. I believe some educators might be embarrassed reading the number of *um*, *like*'s that they iterated.

My transcribing practices were mainly guided by a key premise of this study – that language is performative. What I selected to transcribe were theoretical, organizational, and value-laden decisions. Using discomfort as an example I explain how. Theoretically, I construct emotions as part of the performative. It was value-laden because of my desire to demonstrate a discourse about discomfort that is alternative to the dominant discourse at my institution. Currently, dominant ways of thinking about discomfort are centered around a desire to limit uncomfortable experiences for our students. In the market-driven climate in higher education where students are seen more as customers or clients, limiting the negative becomes an institutional goal. Most recently, this is demonstrated by the national conversation about whether or not and what should receive trigger warnings. Predicting what might trigger students to have an emotionally negative or post-traumatic reaction is nearly impossible, and the trigger warnings themselves become a form of censorship. So my aim at focusing on discomfort and the important role it can play in learning is an effort to offer a counter-discourse.

Focusing and transcribing emotion data that mainly addressed discomfort was also an organizational decision. My main goal is to show how emotions do things in relation to critical consciousness. I could just as well have accomplished that by demonstrating the work of emotions using a variety of emotional responses. I decided a main focus on only one or two emotions was tighter and I will leave a multi-emotion analysis to another publication.

Coming to Method

My methodological decision making was deeply influenced by a conference presentation I attended, a course I took on performance autoethnography, the writings of feminist poststructuralists (i.e. Bronwyn Davies, Elizabeth St. Pierre, and Patti Lather) and performance writing. (i.e. BK Alexander, D. Soyini Madison, Claudio Moreira, and Ron Pelias). At the 2011 American Educators Research Association (AERA) convention, Elizabeth St. Pierre, Maggie MacLure and Alicia Youngblood Jackson challenged the audience to think beyond one of the foundations of qualitative analysis – coding. This sent me on a path of intellectual inquiry about how to write research without coding and perhaps without focusing on identified themes. The Performance Autoethnography course led me to participate in the 7th Qualitative Inquiry Congress. It is here that I first really deeply *felt* research when listening to a panel on joy and when later, I heard Claudio Moreira, Bryant Keith Alexander and Hari Stephen Kumar perform a trialectical reading about relationships with their fathers.

Remembering April

I am the first to arrive. Half an hour early. As I sit and read, women enter and begin to set up papers. I wonder if one of them is Patti Lather or Elizabeth St. Pierre, the two panelists I came to hear at this talk, After Coding: New Analytics in Postqualitative Research. They begin²³:

Problem #1: Qualitative data is that which has been textualized in words and field notes.... Only words can be data but what about emotions, dreams, sensuality, memory-that which can not be reduced to words?... They are fleeting transgressional data...Laughter....tears...silences are embodied and belong to both the body and to language.

Problem #2: Counting codes treats words as numbers and words code words... Words are treated as neutral, waiting to be analyzed...where everything is explicable... “The West moistens everything with meaning.”²⁴

Problem #3: Coding distances the analysis rather than allowing the researcher to stay close...is coding limited to what we already know?... The coding takes us back to what is known....

I left the session puzzled, intrigued, and moved. My chest got that hard-to-name feeling. Butterflies perhaps – memories of flirting. Thinking about data this way was a relationship I wanted to pursue. It pulled at me.

²³ Problems #1-#3 are composed from the words of Elizabeth St. Pierre, Alicia Youngblood Jackson and Maggie MacLure, presenters at 2011 AERA convention in New Orleans. (Patti Lather was unable to attend).

²⁴From Barthes, R. (1983). *Empire of Signs*. New York: Hill and Wang.

* * *

Elizabeth St. Pierre, Alicia Youngblood Jackson and Maggie MacLure are not the first to suggest data analysis without coding. Jodi Kaufman (2011) takes a small set of empirical data and analyzes self through theories of power from Foucault and the concepts of haccuity and territory (Deleuze and Guatarri, 1987). In Jean Anyon's (2008) edited book, *Theory and Educational Research: Toward Critical Social Exploration*, the contributors use theory to *know* the data in efforts to weave theory and empirical data into complex renderings. Alecia Jackson and Lisa Mazzei (2012) demonstrate how to think with theory by using the same set of interview data to explore through key constructs from various theorists. What might be illuminated if reading the data through the lens of Derrida or Spivak or Butler? To 'not code' intrigued me. Coding takes us back to what we already know and might know, because of its macro view, "cause us to miss the texture, the contradictions, the tensions and entangled becomings" (Jackson and Mazzei, 2012, p. 12). Not coding may allow for more room for interpretation by the reader – frowned on by post-positivists seeking stability, but in alignment with a postmodern project. The published examples I found of interpretation and representation without coding seemed fresh and challenging. They challenged a dominant procedure of analysis and challenged me to reconsider what I understood about knowledge production.

Remembering, January

The professor, Claudio, in jeans, a ponytail, and a smile welcomes us and asks us to make a circle with our desk-chairs in Machmer Hall for our first class meeting. With

only six doctoral students this intimacy makes me nervous. It will be easier for others to see what I do not know. I was questioning if I knew “enough” and my perceived lack of eloquence. Is this rooted in social messages that women are less intelligent, my humanist leanings about what it means to ‘be smart’, or the high school guidance counselor who said, “Don’t get your hopes up. You probably won’t get into to The University of Vermont.”? Sometimes I fumble with theory and cannot remember what seems key. Claudio seems a bit nervous too. Or am I just projecting? Basic introductions of name and program are over. Claudio, in the circle with us, clears his throat, picks up a paper. I wonder why he seems nervous to tell us about the syllabus. He begins to read. It’s not the syllabus.

“Hey Gringo.”

*Yes, this is how my people call me in Brazil. Do you want to know why
I call them my people? You might have
To wait a little longer. I am a gringo
In Brazil and an alien here
In America. I am a betweenner! I live life in-betweeness. Right here
I am standing...as a European descendent, as a poor child, as a father, as Latino, as
husband,
As scholar, as all
And none
As many and few
As a shifting some, as an in and out*

More words and images wash over me and some linger: collective consciousness, Anzaldua, dear brave Andrezinho, made visible through poetics, writing from the heart, reimagines possibilities of imagining the human.

Claudio reaches the last page. Powerful. Personal. Provoking us to think about theories, research, purpose, and representation. Mimesis, poesis and kinesis (Conquergood, 1992).

There is silence.

“Ok. I need a smoke. I’ll be right back.” and Claudio throws on his leather jacket and leaves the room.

* * *

Remembering, May

May. University of Illinois-Champaign Urbana. 7th Qualitative Inquiry Congress. The panel of five men are standing in front of a large, nearly full room. They have convened today to talk about if joy has a place in autoethnography—acknowledging that more typically autoethnographies address sorrow, trauma, pain-and are sometimes criticized for that. I wonder too and sense my own frustration with ‘autoethnography as therapy’. What would I, from class and white privilege, write about? Sometimes I worry I must be headed for disaster since my life has been so rife with possibility, privilege and

²⁵ Unpublished paper entitled “Transgressive Body, Transgressive Scholarship: A Fragmented Life in so Many Acts,” by Claudio Moreira.

ease. What sorrows and pain could I dig up for writing and then if I did, would I want them to be revealed?

Christopher²⁶: Can I trace the contours of joy that come with this project called life?

Ben²⁷: Why do I seek to preserve moments of pain through autoethnography and moments of joy through snapshots with my camera? Why don't we write moments of joy and take pictures of pain?

Ron²⁸: Joyful moments come in the presence of others, with faces turned to other faces, with connections that allow individual isolation, refuge in the welcoming of another's hand.

* * *

The room is already near full. I take a seat in the back near an aisle. Bryant Keith Alexander, Claudio Moreira and Stephen Hari Kumar sit in chairs at the front facing the audience. The room slowly fills. Bryant begins reading, then seamlessly they each take turns again and again reading about their father's presence, absence, violence, love; trying to please, forgive, resist, reconcile. Their selves as (un)wanted mirrors of their fathers. Mimesis, poesis and kinesis (Conquergood, 1992).

By the time they finish I'm tense from trying to hold back tears. They leak out anyway. Why do I try so hard not to cry? I fear that if I allow the tears to come they will

²⁶ Christopher Poulos of The University of North Carolina. Greensboro.

²⁷ Benjamin Myers of University of South Carolina Upstate.

²⁸ Ron Pelias of Southern Illinois University.

never stop. I look slightly to my right and left. A few men nearby are silently wiping their eyes.

* * *

Performance (auto)ethnography has a grip on me. I've never had a professor introduce him/herself with such intimacy and connection. I've never cried, or seen men cry at a conference before or since. Performance autoethnography can reveal aspects of self without becoming a confessional. It can illuminate the ordinary and can reinterpret culture that is taken-for-granted into something fresh and insightful. It can move readers *emotionally* into action.

Procedure and Tools of Analysis

My plan not to code stalled my data analysis for many months. Coding was what I knew from my previous research experiences and it was difficult to imagine interpreting data in a new way. I worried, too, like Sharon Murphy Augustine (2014) that my research would not be respected. I still worry.

While I was resisting coding I thought I was not *doing anything*. Unknowingly, at first, and then I became aware I was engaged in analysis in all the instances I thought of my project and of my teaching. Analysis is both practices of mind and body that are difficult to track, as well as systematic plans for 'doing things' with collected data. My initial work with data collected from observing classrooms involved reading and rereading field notes and reflective memos, then writing about what I noticed or wondered. These new writings were never very long – jottings on margins or additions to my research journal. I also listened to the audio recordings of interviews and classroom

lessons while walking around Jamaica Pond. With a pen and piece of folded paper in my hand I would listen, walk and scribble brief notes. Usually at the mile-mark I would sit on a bench to write more completely and then sit again back at my starting place. Once home, I'd go back and forth between the data (notes, transcripts, listening to audio) and my research questions, and then notate, chart, list and web in notebooks, sketchpads, and on chart paper. These practices allowed me to "stay close to my data" (St. Pierre, 2011, p. 621) and in fact, became more data. Remnants of other aspects of my life get mixed in and revisited as I flip through notations on paper scraps and see the soccer formation I planned for my high school team on the back of a blank consent form or a sticky note inside *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* that reminds me to pick up the fish at the CSA. My research questions about critical consciousness are in essence questions about being and becoming. How do I separate out "my research" from my living? Any line or boundary drawn is likely false or at least ephemeral and only serves to give a sense of order to my own management of this project.

It was impossible not to notice patterns and themes, which I also tried to resist for quite some time. Yet, I now understand St. Pierre did not mean we should ignore patterns but rather that the labeling and counting of those patterns (coding) can be a positivist practice and to reconsider how it shapes what we come to know. For example, in almost every interview I could not escape noticing emotion. Educators would name emotions they felt as they talked about teaching and learning, a voice would quiver, they would move forward in their chair, or I too had sensations fill me. It became clear that I had to attend to emotions in a study about critical consciousness. It also became clear that powerful data events that even if stood alone, without a pattern, deserved attention.

[A tangle: Aren't all forms of data autoethnographic? Selections from research literatures or other genres are read through my lived experience whether I am officially dissertating at a library desk or browsing in the bookstore with my husband before going out to dinner. Data collection at schools and in focus groups also involve the unofficial moments such as my travel there, the pre-talk as the focus group gathers, and my own experiences of being a participant-observer. I collect data through my living, and as much as I can aim for strong objectivity (Harding, 1993). The I cannot be untangled from the them.]

Limitation of the study

The educators in this study were identified and selected through the method of peer nomination. The nomination process works well and is also limiting. It works well as a filter to locate participants with pre-defined experience or qualities, and it is an effective way to do this in a timely way. It adds some layer of trustworthiness in that both myself as the researcher and the nominator agree that the qualities I am seeking exist/are present. Yet, it is bounded by my own understandings and descriptors in that I asked colleagues whom *I* deemed to understand criticality to nominate practitioners who they deemed to enact critical teaching. Then, again, my lens acted as the qualifier. As I met with each nominated educator I *got a sense* of if this was an educator I would want to spend significant time learning with and from. In essence, this getting a sense is a form of evaluation. Thus, the design of this study can be replicated but the outcomes could vary widely from the beginning based on who gets recruited to participate. The demographics,

experiences, and personalities of a group of critical consciousness educators recruited by someone else could likely be quite different.

Validity and Reliability

“Language and speech do not mirror experience: They create experience...the meanings of the subject’s statements are, therefore, always in motion....There can never be a final, accurate representation of what was meant or said – only different textual representations of different experiences” (Denzin, 1997, p. 5). Critics of autoethnography and messy texts could claim that Norman Denzin’s quote offers justification for researchers to create sloppy and intellectually lazy texts but I find the opposite to be true. [*A tangle*: words like true cause me to pause and reflect on what is truth, is it inferred to be a universalism or will readers understand it is true for me in my experiences? Is truth a modernist rendering of experience that has no place in a postmodern project? What is the relationship to authority? Doesn’t a poststructural project challenge all claims to authority? When Foucault (1972/1980) speaks of intellectuals he contextualizes their knowing as not universal but in own situations. When he writes of truth he reminds us that “it is not outside power” (p. 131) but is produced by and induces power.] The possibility of different textual representations means more to consider theoretically and methodologically. How would different theories influence interpretation of a subject’s statement? How do varying methodological tools impact what gets represented on the page? How do the theories and methods I engage shift or illuminate the data? Do they complement each other or do they contradict each other? And how does each word I select to type move the readers toward or away from the meanings I project onto and from the subject’s statements?

What constitutes validity and reliability when working with *meaning in motion* (Denzin, 2007) and autoethnographic accounts? Kvale (2002) writes of validity in postmodern projects as partly asking if the method investigates what the researcher intended to investigate. Whereas, others question the reliance on the “trinity of validity, reliability and generalization” (Janesick, 2000, p. 390) in postmodern influenced work. Since there is no fixed point that can be triangulated in a postmodern project, Richardson (2005) proposed crystallization as a metaphor for validity. Crystals represent just the opposite of a two dimensional triangle because they are multifaceted and reflect as well as refract. Ellingson (2009) builds on Laurel Richardson’s concept of crystallization through by advocating for complex interpretations, analysis across the qualitative continuum, including multiple forms of representation and avoiding a single truth.

Since my research is partly autoethnographic, I also offer Hughes, Pennington and Makris’s (2012) suggestions for the alignment of the American Education Research Association’s (AERA) standards for reporting empirical research to autoethnographic projects: a) clear study design and methodological choices, b) facilitates critical and thoughtful discussion of methodological choices, c) offers multiple levels of critique, d) credible analysis and interpretation that connects narratives to researcher self.

Each reader will bring their own experiences with research, ideas about validity, the purpose of autoethnography, and construct varying interpretations of the usefulness and qualities of this research project. And I imagine, as with all pieces I write, I will revisit this project in the future and imagine new ways of theorizing, writing and representing – some which may bolster and others which may very well contradict what I have put forth here.

Reflexivity: Some Cautions

Damned if you do and damned if you don't. Linda Finley (2002) argues that reflexivity is now a defining element of qualitative research. To leave out reflexivity is to compromise the research and in using it the researcher is faced with a "perilous [swamp] full of muddy ambiguity" (p. 212). Reflexivity is sometimes "claimed as a methodological virtue" (Lynch, 2000, p 26) to deconstruct objectivity, bare researcher positionality and reveal methodological and epistemological assumptions. Reflexivity feels right as an ethnographer, experimental writer, and someone who cannot stop reflecting on my work as a teacher educator. D. Sonyi Madison (2006) calls for "a doing with deep attention to and with others" (p, 323) in the fieldwork of ethnography. I couple that with paying close attention to myself. Hopefully, not in a navel-gazing, confessional way but rather to consider how I construct the research, and how my subjectivities are constituted and the interplay between the two. "We are storied selves entangled with others' stories...our understandings of their stories and their understandings of ours" (Gerry & Clair, 2011, p. 95).

Reflexivity is a practice often recommended for researchers who want to attend to power, consider their role in the construction of meaning, and "trouble" (Lather, 1996) their interpretations. Reflexivity in the research process can occur during our thinking, our performances, in an interview, and in our writing. Pierre Bourdieu and Loic Wacquant (1992) challenged the field of sociology to take up *epistemic reflexivity*²⁹ in

²⁹ Epistemic reflexivity according to Bourdieu is the exploration of the tools and frameworks of the researcher. For example, what are the assumptions about the nature of knowledge when using

addition to looking at researchers' own subjectivities and biases (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Like Bourdieu, Sandra Harding (1987) calls for *strong objectivity* or the critique of methods and frameworks as well as exploration of researchers' positionalities and values (Cammorota & Fine, 2008). The inclusion of reflexivity in research is an effort to move away from a positivist frame, which seeks measurable truths and rational knowledge, while attempting to address bias. And yet the offer of a more transparent research process (and researcher) via reflexivity can be read as offering a better *truth* (Finlay, 2002). Reflexivity embraces the critical when the researcher uses it as a "method to deconstruct power throughout the entire research process" (Hesse-Biber & Piatelli, 2007, p. 496.) or when used in feminist research as *performed politics* (Marcus, 1994) in talking back to male-oriented perspectives.

Reflexivity is also a target of criticism even among those who agree that research is subjective and influenced by the lenses of the researcher. Critiques of navel-gazing and questions of the usefulness of succinct, pat descriptions of the researcher both have merit. Disclosing who one is often draws on group memberships such as class, gender, or race and can then fall into a form of identity politics (Marcus, 1994). Finlay (2002) cautions against engaging in reflexivity without consideration of what type to take up and why. She outlines a typology of variations of reflexivity: introspection, intersubjective reflection, mutual collaboration, social critique and discursive deconstruction, each offer opportunity and challenge. Introspection and social critique by considering my social positions and how I represent participants are the primary forms of reflexivity in this study. The perilous dangers I face then, according to Finlay, are constructing authority in

interviews versus surveys. Bourdieu's efforts were aimed at continually questioning the nature of sociology and its tools in relation to sociological interpretations of everyday practices.

my very attempts to deconstruct authority and sharing personal revelations or insights with no apparent connection to the patterns in the research about the participating educators. Wanda Pillow's (2003) cautions are more overarching as she draws on Trinh Minh-ha (1989) and Lubna Chaudhry (2000) to warn of reflexivity's relationship with ethnocentrism and the danger of using reflexivity to know the *other, better*. Pillow then calls for a reflexivity of discomfort that aims for disruptions, not "clarity, honesty, or humility" (p. 192).

Onward

In this chapter I outlined a methodology of layered texts that weave together a number of ways of writing that both serves as a method of analysis and varying forms of representation. I highlighted a number of reading and writing practices that were my methodology and in efforts to uncover much of the work of the research process that can remain invisible. Through autoethnographic memories I shared a number of events that shaped the entirety of this project and led me to try and engage in research that pushes at traditional norms and addresses questions about truth, validity, and reliability in a postmodern era. I also engaged in sketching the school sites and impressions of first visits somewhat extensively as a way to introduce readers to the participants, especially since I mostly engage in a number of moments with participants the findings section and do not engage in analysis of who they are as educators in their entirety.

In the next chapter, Entanglements: Knowing, Feeling, Relating, I borrow and build on Elena Mustakova-Proussardt's (2003) definition of critical consciousness as knowledge, will and love to reframe it as an entanglement of knowledge, emotions, and

relations. In the first third of the chapter I focus on the feeling of discomfort that arises in courses that address issues of social justice, racism in particular. I suggest that emotions have agency, reside in bodies differently depending on public and private spaces, and move subjects toward or away from enacting critical consciousness. I then move to suggest that relations also do work in producing critical consciousness. I do so by describing relations that embolden, help teachers enter students' worlds, and work to keep the educators present or attentive to the needs of the class. In this section about relations I demonstrate how reading Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1987) before finishing the chapter prompted me to consider how discursive space is created out of place when comprised of relations. I end the following chapter by framing love as a pedagogy and acknowledge that love overlaps with emotion, pedagogy, and relations. Another entanglement.

CHAPTER 4

ENTANGLEMENTS: KNOWING, FEELING AND RELATING

“Why wasn’t I taught this in high school? That kinda pisses me off.”

“I left all my course books at home over winter break and my dad picked up and read *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?* (Tatum, 2003). Now whenever he calls he wants to talk about race. He just told me how he noticed all the college ads on the subway have pictures of mostly white people.”

Upon entering class and before taking his coat and backpack off, Antoine says, “These readings blew me away. As a Black man, I *get* racism....but I never before saw the clear link to capitalism.” Antoine since has been reading Marx, joined a local socialist organization, and continues to stop me now and then in the hallway between classes and update me on his community organizing.

Whether learning that race is socially constructed and not genetically marked, reading about racial identity development (Helms, 1991) or studying capitalism, it is clear that acquiring knowledge through coursework and readings impacts students’ awareness of racism, classism, and other social issues. The teacher education literature also documents the value of learning content (Barrón, 2008), historical context (Sleeter, 2011), and new perspectives (Gay and Kirkland, 2003) as an avenue to critical consciousness. What we learn/know opens up possibilities to new understandings and new ways of being or becoming. Nathalie Wooldridge (2001) found in her critical literacy work with teachers the importance of background knowledge. Knowing is necessary to be able to apply critical literacy teaching. Without it, teachers were not able

to ask probing questions, nor know what questions to even ask. But is critical consciousness experienced only through study, analysis, and rational thought? Hilary Janks (2002) raises key questions about the rational in her critique of criticality/critical literacy. She asks readers to consider the “territory beyond reason” (p. 9) in critical engagement. What is the role of desire, humor, pleasure and transgression when engaging critically with texts? Because I define text as anything that can be read or interpreted such as print resources, images, body language, (New London Group, 1996; Kress, 2009) then enacting critical consciousness involves a reading of these same types of varied texts. These same questions about the territory beyond reason, raised by Janks, can be asked of engagement with critical consciousness. And I do so by looking specifically at the entanglement with affect.

Entanglements

I borrow entanglement from Karen Barad (2007) to represent the intra-activity of things and ideas, or the material and the discursive. Entanglement, borrowed from quantum physics, describes how particles are connected or linked together in an entanglement. While my analysis is still mainly situated in the discursive, I also attend to the material to broaden my analysis and build on other ways of knowing-being. I also use entanglement as a way to think about interconnections – even if mainly discursive – that are not always causal or linear and yet still are productive – producing critical consciousness as an identity performance. For the purposes of writing, I need to select threads to isolate as part of this entanglement and an order for writing. The threads, or if using the language of physics, the particles I selected to write about in this chapter are the entanglement of knowledge, social relationships, and emotions in productions of

critically consciousness performances. In Chapter 5 I address critical consciousness as a performative and illustrate an entanglement of pedagogical practices. The entanglements I selected to showcase are not intended as a hierarchy or a chronology in terms of the production of critical consciousness but rather are nuances that add to the complexity of how critical consciousness is currently understood in teacher education.

Building On

The work of this project builds on previous research about critical consciousness that draw mainly from teacher education literature. Here I provide a general summary of how my work builds on current research before detailing my findings further on in this chapter. As written about in Chapter 2, critical consciousness is sometimes described as a tool, a viewpoint, or a framework. It can be developed, sparked, promoted, and achieved. In the educational literature, critical consciousness is framed as knowledge and dispositions, but less often as actions. It is a way of examining and critiquing societal forces and/or social reality or more specifically, it is a *sociopolitical consciousness* that allows “critique (of) cultural norms, values, mores and institutions that produce and maintain social inequities.” (Ladson Billings, 1995, p. 160)

My first critique is that the critical consciousness construct itself, while becoming a main and important goal in teacher education that strives for social justice, has not been afforded in depth attention. The education literature that references or is centered around attending to critical consciousness rarely does more than provide a phrase or line or two to define and describe critical consciousness. Its meaning has become taken for granted which is problematic for two reasons. The first, a construct central to a study needs

fleshing out. Second, since nearly all researchers/teacher educators agree that the work of supporting preservice teachers to acquire a critical consciousness stance is challenging at best, the construct itself requires more exploration. Thus, the questions that drive my work regarding how critical consciousness is evoked and sustained, or what experiencing and “doing” critical consciousness is like for educators, have forced me to dig deeper and make the picture of critical consciousness more complex.

My second critique, as stated in the review of the literature in Chapter 2, is that critical consciousness is typically constructed as a cognitive state; something that happens in the minds of individuals. It is emphasized as an experience of thinking (the rational). There appears to be consensus among most of the teacher education literature that developing critical consciousness is a process of self-transformation, typically described as non-linear and ongoing social processes of multiple insightful moments (Sleeter, Torres & Laughlin, 2004). I agree that critical consciousness is a non-linear experience that is self-transformative, or a process of *becoming*. My argument is the need to rethink critical consciousness as an individual, cognitive state that can be achieved or acquired. Notions of achievement and acquisition create an illusory that critical consciousness is something tangible with an end-goal in reach. Rather, I argue, critical consciousness is performed, as are identities, in fluid, shifting and multiple ways. Thus, as in poststructural framing, one never acquires or achieves an identity, one does not achieve critical consciousness. Both are always being re/constructed. I consider critical consciousness an embodied identity performance constructed by discourse and materiality that is entangled with knowing, feeling, and social relationships.

The data I share is not all about one person, does not follow any one educator in particular, but are a handful of instances gathered to illustrate an entanglement. In the sections that follow and in the subsequent chapter, I slightly disentangle critical consciousness for the purposes of writing and begin by describing it as an identity performance.

Entanglement of Knowledge, Emotion and Relationships

In this chapter I explore critical consciousness as an entanglement of knowledge, emotion, and relationships or knowing, feeling, and relating. These entanglements are also identity performances – critically consciousness identities are also performed in concert with affective engagement and in relationships. This entanglement illustrates the embodiment of critical consciousness or the connections among bodies, feelings and knowing. Some (Merleau Ponty, 1962; Johnson, 1999) would argue that all reasoning is grounded in our bodily experiences or that bodily knowing proceeds a consciousness of knowing. Thus, my writing separately about these three areas of entanglement may do my argument of critical consciousness as embodied a disservice, yet through language and my own confines of Western thinking, I know of no other way. An influence that reframed my research toward this entanglement is the work of Elena Mustakova-Possardt (2003). Expanding on her work is central to my study and deserves some attention. Here, I first provide a brief overview of the differences between Mustakova-Possardt's work and my own to demonstrate how I am building on her definition. Then I return to develop a more extensive argument for the roles of emotion and relationships in performing critical consciousness in separate chapter sections about emotions and relationships. I do not include attention to the role of knowledge other than in the introduction of this

chapter because of the attention in the literature to how course experiences in teacher education programs that engage students in learning about history, multiple perspectives, and constructs such as social construction do influence their engagement with critical consciousness .

Mustakova-Possardt, a social psychologist, framed Freire's concept as a psychological journey comprised of developmental stages. While I do not situate my own research within a psychological frame inclusive of stages and self-actualization, I do draw from Mustakova-Possardt's definition of critical consciousness as the synchronicity of *knowledge, love* and *will*. Her suggestion of critical consciousness as involving will and love led me to much of the work in this project. Even though we both define critical consciousness as more than just knowledge or rational engagement, there are a number of differences between my work and hers. From the ethnographic and autoethnographic data of this project, it is clear that love is not the only emotion experienced when enacting critical consciousness. Love, anger, guilt, and curiosity are some of the emotions experienced by participants and the many students I have worked with over the semesters. Thus, while love can play a key role in critical consciousness, so too can discomfort and anger, for example. In my work, I reconstruct critical consciousness as knowledge and emotion, rather than just love, to include varied affective and embodied experiences.

Will does not take prominence in my research, as it does for Mustakova-Possardt. Rather, it is subsumed as a part of affective experiences and relationships. Below, I briefly explain how relationships—or relating, are synchronistic with intentionality – or will.

Eduardo Duarte (1999) writes of the phenomenology of *conscientizacion*, drawing on Freirian dialectics. Duarte's emphasis is on *comunidad*, or "fellowship and solidarity" (p. 400) and intention in the work of critically conscious engagement. As relational beings, "being human" (Freire, 1993) is about being with others. The educational practice of freedom or a liberatory pedagogy is based on meaningful togetherness and working with others. "Teachers and students co-intent on reality, are both Subjects, not only in the task of unveiling that reality, and thereby coming to know it critically, but in the task of re-creating that knowledge" (Freire, 1993, p. 51). As students and teachers work together, to name the world and act, they are engaging in co-intentional education. Thus, *comunidad* or communion, supports critically conscious thought and action. I reference this engagement as relationships or relating which take up the third aspect of critical consciousness – knowledge, emotion and relating.

The Work of Emotions

What is the work of emotions in constructing criticality? How do emotions work—or act with force on bodies to both produce or restrict critical consciousness? Schools, whether elementary grades, high school or higher education have traditionally condoned mainly certain emotions. In fact, some emotions, joy, for example, are often unnamed teaching goals as many educators will hold an underlying philosophy of wanting students to develop a love of or joy in learning. It would not be unusual to observe students smiling, laughing, hopping up out of their seats in efforts to participate in something they found exciting in the classroom. But what about emotions such as anger, fear, and discomfort? What is their relevance to learning? Some emotions are deemed negative and

attempts are made to avoid them in schools. After first defining emotions and situating them in a socio-historical context, I then explore the work emotions do by looking at discomfort. I take up love at the end of this chapter as a part of the section on critical consciousness as relational.

Defining Emotions

In agreement with Megan Boler (1999), emotions are difficult to define. They overlap with sensations (feelings), the reliance on language to describe or name an emotion and the variance of definitions among disciplines create complexity and provide no clear definition of emotion. For this study, I define emotion by borrowing from the work of Megan Boler (1999) as “part sensational or physiological: consisting of the actual feeling...and...cognitive or conceptual: shaped by our beliefs and perceptions” (p. xix). Emotions are attributable to meaning and interpretation as constructed through language. Michalinos Zembylas and Zeus Leonardo (2013) make a distinction between the feeling and the naming or sense-making by referring to the sensations as affect and pertaining to the body, whereas, emotions are the meaning we make of those sensations and codified in words. Therefore, emotions are discursive, emanating from the material and shaped by culture/discourses. The material nature of emotions are felt or sensed, but to represent the feeling it is done so discursively (emotion). While I could infer a number of affective encounters experienced by the participants such as when Emma cried during an interview when talking about her students that are discarded by society, or hearing a change in intonation when James talked about his frustration seeing a higher percentage of students of color sent to the principal’s office, I primarily explore when participants

refer to affect, through language as an emotion (“I was uncomfortable.”) or emotive phrase (“This gets me all fired up”).

Historical Western discourses of emotion are explored in detail in Megan Boler’s (1999) *Feeling Power: Emotions and Education*. Emotion discourse is rooted in pathology, the Enlightenment and religion in that they are constructed as related to science/medicine, counter to reason, and controlled by religious tenets. Emotions are mainly characterized as individual, private, natural and something needing control. Boler credits feminism as responsible for the more recent fourth discourse of emotions – as political. Through feminist research, emotions have been brought to the fore as socially constructed – not mainly biological and natural. They are collaboratively formed, created through culture and ideology. Given this understanding of emotions as collective and cultural, what is it that emotions do (and how do they do it) when faced with varying texts (print, images, spoken language) about identities?

Plugging in Sara Ahmed’s Emotions as Relational

What is the work of emotions in shaping criticality? This section explores the work of emotions, discomfort in particular, in constructing spaces for enactments of critical consciousness. I begin by ‘plugging in’ Sara Ahmed’s (2004a) theory of *emotions as relational* to explore interview data from the educators in this study and autoethnographic memories of teaching a course, Racial and Cultural Identities (RCI). Ahmed’s theory of how emotions work can also be read as an entanglement of emotions, objects, and subjects. For Ahmed, emotions are shaped by contact with objects (within cultural contexts). These moments of contact are equivalent to the experience of thinking

“I have a feeling about...” which Ahmed refers to as “aboutness” and “involves a reading of the contact” (p. 17). Objects can be anything – a reading, video clip, a sight while walking down the street, a piece of art, a sound clip from the radio. Relationality is then enacted as ‘towardness’, ‘awayness’ or as sideways/forwards/backwards ripples in relation to the emotion. People connect or distance themselves from forces of emotions and experiences of emotion in one context connect to other experiences.

Another way to understand the movement of emotions and the force they have on subjects is to consider emotions as agentic. Emotions or affect, like any material object, have agency (Latour, 2007). In the next section, I avoid categorizing the wide variety of emotions that are present in the data of this study. Instead, by reading and listening to the data through the lenses of Sara Ahmed and Bruno Latour, I explore what is the work or force of emotions on bodies, in this case, subjects (educators and students).

Emotions and Teaching/Learning About Racism

Twice now, at the end of the semester, I’ve asked my students in the course Racial and Cultural Identities to write an answer to the question, “What are some of the emotions you experienced in this class and how do you think they impacted your learning?” Just last semester, students collectively named over 25 different emotions including: anger, frustration, sadness, validation, awakened, eager, pessimistic, excited, enriched and discomfort. What are often deemed negative emotions, something we have been socialized to believe is not okay in school, such as guilt, anger and discomfort are frequently explained as an avenue/impetus/ toward learning. Students wrote of wanting to learn more in order to understand their discomfort, how feelings of guilt or discomfort

made them want to make informed decisions to allow for responses to racism or how denial and frustration can illicit new perspectives.

These reflections from students run counter to the dominant discourse circulating at my institution. Consequently, what I often hear are second-hand comments by faculty and administration about the need to revise the course because it makes students uncomfortable. At an institution markedly gendered female (as a normal school preparing teachers and social workers) being polite is a prominent value. And as neoliberalism and the market economy have crept into higher education, a new hegemony has been foregrounded. Students, more often seen as clients or customers, need to be pleased and retained. Thus rises an unstated challenge of creating educational experiences that expand and provoke new ways of thinking without causing unpleasant experiences. It is the unpleasant, the discomfort, that is often criticized in public, and likely private, comments about the RCI course. Rarely do I hear the public circulation of stories told to me by my students how the course, while challenging, made a significant and necessary impact on their world perspective and understanding of structural inequality.

Savannah, a former student of mine, and now a 5th grade teacher participating in this study, commented on discomfort in the first focus group of this study. She shares with the other educators in the room,

I just want to say something about RCI (Racial and Cultural Identities Course). I know when taking RCI we would talk about what it was like and a lot of people felt quite uncomfortable. You know. Black **and** white. hmm and I just thought that was so cool. It was such an important thing... how uncomfortable it was and how that was like... you know. Then there would be the uncomfortable silences that people would try to shut down sometimes but the fact was they had to be there and couldn't pretend that it wasn't happening and they couldn't really acknowledge that uncomfortable feeling and I think that part... um as a white teacher in a classroom where there is only 3 white kids it is so easy to come up against

the discomfort and then just find a way to make it comfortable again. Whatever kind of rationalization, whatever I have to tell them or anything—that is so easy for that to come up but letting the discomfort... and having to acknowledge it. I am lucky enough to be in a classroom with an African American co-teacher and we talk about it all the time and it is so awesome. The kids genuinely feel so lucky because there are constantly conversations about race in the 4th grade...but I think the discomfort of it, I think at Wheelock, is so interesting because it didn't happen in the other classes.

What might be going on here in terms of how the feeling, named as discomfort, is relational or *in motion* (Ahmed, 2004a)? First, as Savannah identifies, the discomfort travels among the raced/racialized bodies both in the classroom and outside of the classroom. Her reference to “we would talk about what it was like” is referencing the out of class conversations some of the graduate students were having about the course. Discomfort flows in the room during class and is revisited by some of the students in conversations outside of the official learning space. It is shared in different configurations – among Blacks, among whites and as Savannah states with emphasis, “you know, Black *and* white”.

The experience of discomfort is connected – or ripples – not only among other bodies but both sideways and backwards for Savannah, herself, to other courses of her semester and previous semesters as she compares and observes that discomfort did not happen in these other spaces, at least in her realm of awareness.

For Savannah, the discomfort also travels backwards within her personal history. As a longtime practitioner of yoga and meditation she was taught to embrace and lean into the discomfort. By leaning in, the discomfort is worked through rather than backed off and ignored. The discomfort from class has agency and acts as a “towardness” for Savannah as it pushes her to explore the why of the discomfort. She interprets the

emotion as a signal of something about herself that she does not like or that needs improvement. Whereas, discomfort can act as an “awayness” for other students. Matt, a student in another section, angrily walked out of the room in the middle of a class discussion when he realized Beverly Tatum’s (2003) definition of racism implicated all whites. Not only is this a literal example of awayness since he left the space, but a bodily representation of his desire to push away the reason for the discomfort. Perhaps over time, Matt revisited his feelings and Tatum’s argument. But in what remained of the semester, he demonstrated a distance and resistance to considering new (to him) explanations of racism. These examples demonstrate the agency of an emotion – namely discomfort.

Savannah’s observation that “people would try to shut down sometimes but the fact was they had to be there” raises a significant difference between teacher education and inservice professional development and engagement. Sherry Marx (2006) notes that preservice teachers are our captive audience. This works both ways. On one hand, I am told of students who boast outside of class that this anti-racist stuff is a bunch of crap but they know how to perform to get by and pass. On the other hand, the requirement of attending class with grades as an extrinsic reward helps some students tolerate, if not work, through the discomfort and experience a transformation of perspective that they may never have experienced if they could *walk out* indefinitely. Some of my colleagues report voluntary professional development related to race and racism experiences a similar phenomena. As the discomfort arises, fewer teachers attend. But is the discomfort all the same for preservice teachers? In the next section I take a closer look at how discomfort can manifest differently among raced bodies that also are gendered and

classed. The discomfort ripples/moves in bodies differently and is related to private or public spaces (and what is allowable).

Discomfort: The Public and Private Spheres

When is the emotion discomfort made public and for whom? When does it remain private and what are the consequences? In this section I explore the racialized nature of discomfort and the role it plays in sustaining whiteness. Then I consider how I construct critical consciousness with the alignment of affect to criticality. Savannah thought RCI was *cool* because it brought up discomfort that others classes did not. Perhaps it brought up a different kind of discomfort—or a feeling more particular to white students learning about racism, which then became a part of the public discourse. Yet, discomfort is also experienced in other classes, often privately, and often by students of color. One evening, about half-way through the semester, an African American student stayed after class and told me she had been nervous about taking RCI and likely being one of the few students of color in class because of some of her previous experiences in her graduate program. As sometimes the sole student of color, she shared how uncomfortable it was in prior classes to be asked to represent *the Black experience* and she expressed relief that had not happened in our class. I suppose she might have wanted to add the word “yet” as she was likely aware that any one of the white students or myself could (inadvertently or not) ask her to represent. Near the end of the semester I learned one of my undergraduate students, who identifies as Latina, dropped a required course because she could not tolerate the undercurrent of racist comments in class. Incidents of individual acts of racism on campuses across the country are highlighted on social media.

And when the tipping point arises, student activism can take place. Black students at Harvard University initiated, *I too Am Harvard*, a campaign through slideshow (www.tumblr) and a theater performance to make public their personal experiences of alienation on campus. At my institution, the Black Student Union began a campaign to collect stories of racism. The project was derailed before the collection went public.

Emma, the special education administrator at Southern High, began formal dialogue groups at the high school the year prior to this project when she was still full-time in the classroom. The dialogue groups were meant to provide an officially sanctioned public space for youth to talk about experiences related to identities – marginalized ones in particular. The first day I met with her for an informal interview and explanation of this project was also the first day of that year’s dialogue groups – groups of students who met and discussed issues of identity, facilitated by other youth. I asked how the participating students got involved. Emma responded that the students volunteered and said, *“I was specifically conscious though about looking for, making sure we invited all kids of color for instance and all kids that were...that identified as gay or lesbian or bisexual just to make sure there was a space for them because... particularly around the issues of race there currently isn’t really – there isn’t a club or a place for kids to go... for kids of color to go.”*

Emma continued to talk about the first dialogue group experiences without the need for another question from me. She added:

The kids had such an amazing time. I remember just being moved to tears with their responses. They just came and pulled me out of class when I was teaching. They were all fired up in the hallway. They said *“We’re going to go talk to the principal. We want the whole school to do this.”* A lot of kids spoke to me individually and said *“I never felt comfortable*

before and I finally feel comfortable in this group and it is so nice to talk about the fact that this school is racist or the fact that I am scared to walk down the hallways.” I think that up until that point kids were finding other ways to...navigate or to cope and so it was really enlightening and really heartbreaking and really frustrating.

What drew Emma to accept her new position as the special education coordinator for the entire high school was her hopes to make significant impact beyond the classroom. She loved teaching and felt uncertain about giving up the classroom so negotiated to continue teaching one language arts class a semester. The possibility to influence change is what moved her to accept the position: *“I also get to be a part of an administrative team and get to be involved in the bigger picture conversations about the vision of the school and the direction things are going. Which was a lot of the appeal for me. I really wanted to get involved in a level where I felt like I could help influence creating a space and voice for social justice education...to embed itself in the curriculum.*

While the dialogue groups initially focused on opportunity and creating a safe space for the students of color, Emma reflected on the importance of getting the white students³⁰ just as involved.

...white privilege – that is what I feel like is needed and that is where I feel like I am at this point with my fear that I have to figure out how to get through. I am not there yet but my dream and my intention is to deal with **that** in this high school and to create groups of white students to dialogue about whiteness and identity. There are so many great reflective kids here and kids who see it and there are white kids who participate in the dialogue groups. But the awareness and the sense of it, it’s all mixed and really it involves the staff... to get the teachers to sit down and talk about their own racism. I am really inspired. I feel like it's the next... if, as a school culture, people feel comfortable being vulnerable to talk about their identity I really believe that is what will cause transformative changes in schools.

³⁰ In 2012 the town was 88% white.

Emma's belief that transformation will occur when "people feel comfortable being vulnerable" may be a reference to a variety of identities, not just race. But in this context of talking about racism and whiteness in a majority white town and school, the point does not go missed that the protection of white comfort remains a norm at the school.

Why is it so difficult for students of color to be heard when their comfort is at stake and yet the comfort of whites is paramount? David Gilborn (2009) suggests that the ways whites talk about race is protected emotional speech. Protected in that we structure the parameters and rules for race talk in efforts to create or return to comfort. Leonardo and Zembylas (2013) address this as *whiteness as technology of affect* where whiteness³¹ governs subjectivities, responses, feelings. It is then through emotions that whiteness creates likeness and inclusion, unlikeness and exclusion through bringing certain bodies closer and pushing others away. This can manifest in classrooms as white silence and distancing between whites and students of color. Other literal manifestations of this form of embodiment are "materialized boundaries" (p. 160) such as segregated spaces, exclusion, and disenfranchisement. Bob Fecho (2011) argues that most teachers and schools try to avoid tension out of fear the uncomfortable tensions will erupt. Conversely, they avoid and assuage, letting the marginalized students keep their discomfort to themselves as it is "better they be silently uncomfortable [rather] than risk a dialogue that might cause students in the school's dominant culture to have to question their complicity in the stoking of tensions" (p. 39).

³¹ Leonardo and Zembylas (2013) clearly differentiate between white identity which is fluid and multiple and whiteness which is singular and consistent (p. 153).

Remembering, First Day of Classes

It was nearing the end of the first day of class and a white student who had been eagerly participating shared “ I went to a pretty diverse high school-we had a lot of colored people there.” In the few seconds a lot happened. I made a mental note to teach about the evolution of race language earlier in the semester than I planned.

Simultaneously, I felt my eyes go to one of the students of color in the room. Was I trying to check-in, read her reaction or trying to silently message, “yeah-I got that.”? As I noticed another white student making intense eye contact with me as if to say, “did you hear that?” I continued with the conversation as if I didn’t and Jenna, the white student who was staring at me raised her hand and asked, “Is it ok in this class to bring things up that we hear and want to point out as not right or that we disagree with ?”

“Of course,” I answered. But that was not true at that moment. “I want us to be able to have a dialogue with each other about any questions we have. And at the same time I want you all to think about timing. When does it make sense to bring things up in the moment with a particular person and when might it be better to wait and bring up general patterns that you notice? So you will always have a decision to make.” I am sure I emphasized better, wait, and decision.

I really did not want her to bring up the ‘colored people’ comment and potentially isolate or embarrass an eager student within the first hour of the semester. It is true I wanted to protect that student. I also was protecting myself. While I typically embrace the tensions that arise in a class about race, I did not want to deal with conflict in the first class. I did feel the learning could happen just as well the following week when we could

discuss race terms with some anonymity. Typically, in class we spend time exploring the evolution of race labels and how they connect to power. Jenna got my message and did not pursue her point. What other messages did I send and to whom? I end each class with written (anonymous) feedback cards. A student wrote, “you MUST correct people and let them know it is not OK to say “colored people”. I assumed Jenna wrote that. She did not return to class the next week and subsequently dropped the course. I later learned that a student of color wrote the feedback card. That was the other message I sent – protecting a white student’s feelings was a priority over the feelings of the students of color in the room, who likely sat “silently uncomfortable” (Fecho, 2011, p. 39). Those pedagogical moves in that minute span danced with emotions: my initial discomfort, a desire to avoid embarrassing a white student, suppressing what may have been anger in another student, and then realizing that my moves may have come at an emotional cost to students of color in the room.

Constructing Critical Consciousness

In the prior section I align affect with critical consciousness by situating emotions as a social and political phenomena rather than individually possessed and wholly biologic feelings. At the suggestion of Zeus Leonardo and Michalinos Zembylas (2013), if an “affective theory of whiteness” (p. 156) is taken up in courses that address race and social justice, this will allow all students, whites in particular, to take up feelings of guilt, discomfort and uncertainty to be able to engage in dialogue across races.

I position Savannah as critical because she accepts the movement or force of emotions such as discomfort in pushing her to ask herself “*What am I doing? Why is this*

uncomfortable for me? Why is this more comfortable?” She shares these self-reflections in the context of thinking about race and thus I argue that she, in these instances, is facing whiteness and seeking to learn to see things differently, and reconstruct her performances of critical consciousness.

I also position Emma as critical because of her awareness to create safe, public spaces for what often goes unsaid in the high school in relation to multiple identities. Her emotional involvement working with marginalized students as a special educator moves her to connect students together who have not felt safe or comfortable. Through dialogue groups she is not only creating opportunity but also a collective.

The Work of Relationships

In this section I consider what work relationships do in and with the material to construct critical consciousness and render it public so that critical consciousness is a social relation. Much of the current teacher education literature about critical consciousness acknowledges the value of dialogue in developing/initiating critical consciousness. The dialogue is cast as the catalyst to initiate a private/personal experience of thinking/knowing. Whereas I suggest dialogue, or the relations developed through dialogue, can take on part of the public enactment of critical consciousness. To consider the work of emotions I begin by loosely situating critical consciousness as a relation as in Marx's *relations of production*. I then sketch/trace how reading Deleuze and Guatarri (1987) shifted my plans for this chapter in terms of structure and theory.

It is not unusual for theories new to the researcher to shift the project while writing as that is the nature of research. Specific to Deleuze is the invitation to think

things anew. St. Pierre (2004) writes that one will never get to the bottom of a Deleuzian concept and, in citing Massumi (1992), suggests instead to ask “What new thoughts does it make possible to think? What new emotions does it make possible to feel? What new sensations and perceptions does it open in the body?” (p. 8). After tracing how Deleuze entered this project, I plug in his concepts of de/reterritorialization and smooth and striated space along with Laclau and Mouffe’s (2001) theory of hegemony to consider how relations, sometimes with materiality, do some of the work of producing criticality as a social relation.

Relations of Production

Borrowing very loosely from Karl Marx’s (1867/1992) theory of *relations of production* I consider relations productive in a number of ways. Relationships produce subjects. We are defined in relationships and “none of us would be considered an ‘individual’ or a ‘person’ or an entity recognizably human if we were not in a relation (Noddings, 2002, p. 15). And in this production of the subject, critical consciousness can be a part of the performance, or co-performance. Marx’s construct is a relational-structural explanation of the engine of economy. People enter relations, a variety of them, such as laborer, owner, etc. and these relationships in total create the economic structures of society. This can be loosely applied to other areas of life by substituting the reference point. For this study, I consider the ways in which the educators talk about or enact relations.

Emboldening

The educators often spoke of the necessity of support – whether of a husband helping to brainstorm new perspectives on an historic event, or a friend who listens when challenging instances come up. Jocelyn entered this study on recommendation from another participant, Emma. When meeting for the first time with Jocelyn I asked about her teaching and if she participates in the school-wide dialogue groups with Emma.

K: When I met with Emma she said ‘you have to meet this woman, she is definitely committed to social justice teaching’. Is that how you see yourself?

J: Yeah. I came into teaching committed to political change. And do I hope that our country moves to more politically, economically and racially just systems? Yes. But what I want my students to get now is I want them to become more critical thinkers and that is partly how I define social justice teaching. I can’t indoctrinate them but I can expose them to ideas and I can help them see different issues and moments in history from different perspectives and then they can apply that to how they look at today. So I want them to critically read, critically analyze what they see, critically view the news, critically engage with each other in their daily lives in terms of challenging each other around bias, stereotypes and assumptions.

K: and are you participating with Emma in the dialogue groups here?

J: Some. She has taken the lead. I’d love to more but I do go to a dialogue group for white anti-racists so that is a piece of my life. It definitely emboldens me. It is not new ideas to me but it keeps me focused...and it does embolden me to speak up and act up in moments, I mean race is always on my radar – as much as I can say that as a white person. But I have a Black family. I have a Black husband and biracial kids. So it makes it more on my radar. It was on my radar before and is probably growing all the time. The group gives me ideas and strategies. Its emboldened me to use this (holds up *Race the Power of Illusion*, 2003). I am going to use the first episode around the lack of racial biology with my 9th graders when we look at the Atlantic slave trade. I’m really curious and a little nervous to see what happens with the 9th graders. I am sure it will be very provocative. I am sure some will say why are you challenging me? But we have to talk about race and slavery and it feels unethical at this point not to do this (pointing to video). Otherwise we are just continuing with our assumptions.

The map of relations, family, co-worker, dialogue group, in this exchange intertwines a number of connections, all moving or supporting Jocelyn in *teaching boldly*

(Bode et al. 2009). She is emboldened to speak up, to act up, to plan curriculum that may provoke and challenge what she feels is needed. Participating in an anti-racist group for whites, unrelated to school, and even though Jocelyn feels “is nothing new” plays a role in constructing what she chooses to do in the classroom. Having a Black family keeps race on her mind and perhaps initiates more race talk in her curriculum. And yet some of the relationships that might matter most in terms of her day-to-day experience teaching are in crisis. As the chair of the history department, Jocelyn wants the faculty to make curriculum revisions so the perspective is not so heavily Eurocentric. The principal agrees this is an important move and a meeting is convened in March. I walk into Jocelyn’s room early the next morning before classes begin. She is at her computer, obviously prepping for class that begins in 10 minutes. She looks up and I say, “I’ll come back at 8:00.”

“Yes. Thanks,” and then Jocelyn turns away from the computer to face me and adds, “The meeting didn’t go well yesterday. In fact, it was terrible. I am thinking of leaving.”

That afternoon over coffee I learn more, “Basically they want to keep a European focus and basically the principal facilitated for consensus against my proposal. It wasn’t his intention but he read the room and heard the consensus. I am sort of waiting for him to come talk to me about it.”

What questions does this raise about critical consciousness? What might I speculate? How are relations working toward or away from criticality? Jocelyn in her new role as department chair feels her responsibility and relations to students extends beyond her classroom, and feels it is imperative that the curriculum become more critical.

Jocelyn's commitment to student learning is framed around the need for critical reading, viewing, and engaging. She advocates for change, which seems possible because of the support of the principal. In what ways do the relationships among the history faculty work to keep the curriculum intact and uncritical, at least in the view of Jocelyn? And how does the pressure of consensus trump the principal's desire to align himself with Jocelyn? In what ways do these intermingled relationships work to uphold the status quo?

At another time during one of our conversations Jocelyn said, "I feel kids need allies around ideas not just identities." Here she means identities as in social identity groups of race, class, gender, etc. In both instances above, allies are working in ways to influence how critical consciousness can be enacted. Out-of-school allies embolden Jocelyn to enact critically consciousness teaching in ways that might make her nervous, but she feels is necessary. While in-school ideological allies (not hers but allies with each other) create a consensus that prevents change and limits criticality.

It is a common piece of advice given by teachers who are trying to *teach against the grain* (Cochran-Smith, 2004) to find allies to support each other in the work of teaching critically. When asked what advice she'd give to new teachers trying to engage in social justice teaching, Kedejah replied "create a network of allies." In a conversation with Emma she lamented, "I sometimes feel I am the only one at my school and need to find ways not to give up hope and that comes from relationships." At the end of the school year, when asking Emma how the dialogue groups have been going, she told me about a dialogue summit that was held with a number of schools on a Saturday. As the teachers from area schools were waiting around while the high school students were dialoguing they realized, "maybe we should dialogue and we all sat in the faculty room

around this table and it almost became like a support conversation. You know, just to build support where there isn't any support and we thought we should email each other. You just have to find ways to not give up hope."

Being Present

A number of participating educators referenced the importance of a different type of consciousness; one of presence and human connection, not necessarily critical in and of itself but which nurtures the critical. Unlike the previous section, where educators sought support from ideological allies, here the connections were sometimes across difference and often involve reflection on their own subjectivity. Difference, in these examples, references teachers and students. Melissa, the first-year elementary and high school art teacher talked frequently of her relationships with students. It seemed that is what she valued the most and it was clear that they had strong connections. She reported having no behavior problems in her classes of thirty students at the high school and an incredibly difficult time managing the elementary grades during the first two months until she turned things around. She put all the responsibility on herself, never blaming the students, for what she was doing wrong in managing large groups of young children, not what they were doing wrong.

At the start of a late morning high school ceramics class a tall boy walks in wearing what looked like a brand new white t-shirt under an unbuttoned oxford shirt. The t-shirt had a large image of a woman wearing only a thong, sexily posed with arms crossed to cover parts of her breasts. Melissa moves his way as she pulls out materials and says, "Come on hon', you'll have to button that up." My guess was that a teen who chose such a shirt was not going to be very willing to lose the attention it provided.

Melissa did not stay to ensure he followed her request, but moved on helping students get situated. He buttoned his shirt. Later, I told Melissa that I hadn't expected him to listen or at least not so immediately. She said he has worn other things that she found offensive and talked to him about it. "I told him those images make me uncomfortable especially as a woman, and that they probably make some of the other students uncomfortable. I just try to explain honestly where I am coming from and not make it about school rules or lectures about right and wrong. I am big on acting human."

Savannah, the first-year 5th grade teacher speaks a lot about intentionality and reflection. She considers her subjectivities and positionality. "I am always really checking myself. What am I doing? What is my intention here?" She says this as a follow up to her comments about an anti-bias curriculum in a school where she worked as an aide before deciding to pursue teaching as a career.

The mid-career special educator, Emma, also talks about a humanity.

"The other thing is also being really present – just being able to be present in the class with your kids, with your students and to get what is going on for them and to meet them where they are at and to acknowledge it. You need to make a space to name it and to acknowledge it. I think it creates a humanity that allows for learning to happen. I feel like being really conscious of what is going on and being present."

The intentionality and attention to connect to students helps shape the relationality of critical consciousness. In some of the school-based talk and professional development seminars, intentionality is described as keeping a focus on the learning goals for each child. Rather, here the intention and attention seems to be a form of mindfulness. Mindfulness is a paying attention with care to self and environment (Barbezat & Mirabai,

2014) as do Emma, Savannah and Melissa – merging subjective awareness with what students are doing and saying.

Remembering: Fall Semester

I am worried about how this is going to go over. After semesters of joking, directing, discussing, ignoring, asking about texting and laptop use in class I can't stand it anymore. The intimate seminars of 8, the classes of 25, high-stakes rigorous courses, low-key senior Capstone, graduates and undergraduates – in each class a few students get lost in their screens. I've considered how much of my annoyance with screens is about my ego. I don't think this stems from a big ego – but rather from desiring connection. So when we are real people in a room together the screens get in the way. I'm about to tell the class my (new) technology policy – screens are not allowed. I'm worried about how this new policy is going to go over. And it doesn't quite feel like me to make such a declaration about what students can or can't do in a class. Then again, I have never experienced something that had felt this intrusive to developing a learning community. I couch my declaration by telling them how much I love Apple products and have almost all of them and I talk about being present and attending – not to me but to themselves as learners and to each other. They don't say anything.

I've surveyed my graduate students about this policy at the end of each semester of RCI, asking how the policy impacted our learning community and their own engagement and learning. To my complete surprise they appreciate it. I was expecting negative feedback and then the dilemma of what to do next. The majority of our graduate population is one to three years out of undergraduate work – so fairly close to the

undergraduate experience. This year there is only one student older than thirty, and one other who has been teaching for five years. Of the 33 anonymous responses from two different sections, only one wrote, “you were too strict with this policy”. Three others made non-committal statements such as, “technology has its limitations and benefits”. The other responses provided me with insights about connections and relationships in all classes but specifically classes that discuss uncomfortable issues, as happens in RCI.

Students wrote about how much the policy helped them to stay present, made the class the most engaged (as a group) class they have experienced at our institution, prevented classmates from ‘hiding’ behind screens when the topics were uncomfortable, helped them not to surf, and brought them relief because they get so distracted or upset seeing classmates facebook during other classes. I still dislike highlighting my technology policy at the start of each new course and it took some time to find the courage to survey the undergraduates, certain they would strongly disagree with my policy. They did not. This memory raises questions about intentionality and being present as brought up by Emma, Savannah and Melissa within a larger community and enacting critical consciousness. In what ways does a community talking about gender, class, race and sexuality connect and distance themselves from each other and from their own self-reflection? Does technology always get in the way in real time or are there ways technology can facilitate that? Is there a role for contemplative practices in supporting critical consciousness? And how do students and the material play a role in constructing critical consciousness? A question I now turn to after an interruption from Deleuze.

Enter Deleuze

Rhizomes. Last year, I imagined critical consciousness as rhizomatic. Multiple, non-heirarchical, connected instances, non-causal. I could not pull those instances together.

Smooth space. This morning, I unfolded and pressed out the wrinkles of the charts that had fallen off the wall in my home office and taped them back up. What to do about Chapter 5, this chapter, about the entanglement of knowledge, emotions and relations? I wanted to think about how relations worked rather than naming what types of relationships were apparent in the data. Who or what concept might help me to do this? Out came the notebooks and legal pads of lists, citations, and ideas squeezed into margins. Structures of feeling (Williams, 1997) and habitus (Bourdieu, 1980) were considerations. I begin reading about habitus again. It is contextual. It seems too fixed. It is in relation to histories. It seems too humanist –although I know there is much disagreement about how structuralist/poststructuralist was Bourdieu’s work. I begin reading Deleuze and reading about Deleuze. I read most of the day: de/reterritorialization, space – smooth and striated, nomads, assemblages, lines of flight. I am often lost but there is a thread I am following – yet not always sure what is it. There are references to literature, movies, birds and Lacan. I am the nomad moving from Deleuzian place to place.

Reterritorialization: This afternoon, a new understanding that does not renounce the prior territory (Voithofer & Foley, 2009) comes forward. The last section of Chapter 4,

Performing Identity, has to move and merge with the Chapter 5 section on relationships. It needs rethought, rewritten, re/presented. Ian Burkitt (1999) writes, “the different spaces in which people perform are social spaces” (p. 95) and “the possibilities for change are through the individuals bound into constantly shifting and reforming social relationships and contexts” (p. 96). So, rather than considering only how the material constructs identity, the material becomes a part of space in the antagonisms of de/re/territorialization in the experience of becoming. Deleuze will help me consider relations in spaces. I write this before another look at the data. Where will Deleuze take me?

Space and the material

Deleuze’s interpretation of space is that space is what is created by an event. He builds on de Certeau’s (1984 as cited in Conley, 2010) explanation of space as a “discursive practice of place” (p. 261). As opposed to place which is a given, named area that can be mapped, space is “a site of engagement among living agents who mark it with their activities or affiliate with dialogue and active perception” (p. 261). A place becomes space once actors inhabit and therefore mark it with interaction (with each other and/or with the material). All spaces are an interwoven mix of both smooth and striated spaces. This is not a boundaried mix that stands still, but a mix of smooth and variegated forces that push and pull at each other. “Forces at work within space continually striate it, and how in the course of this striation it develops other forces and emits smooth spaces.”(Deleuze & Guatarri, 1987, p. 500). Striated spaces are rule bound, authoritarian, routine, marked by lines that divide and demarcate. Whereas, smooth spaces are boundless, transforming, embodied and dynamic (Voithofer & Foley, 2009; Conley,

2010). Consider the smooth and striated in art, geography, architecture, and how they intermingle to make one.

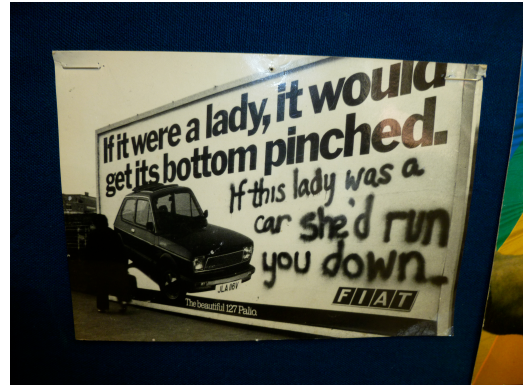
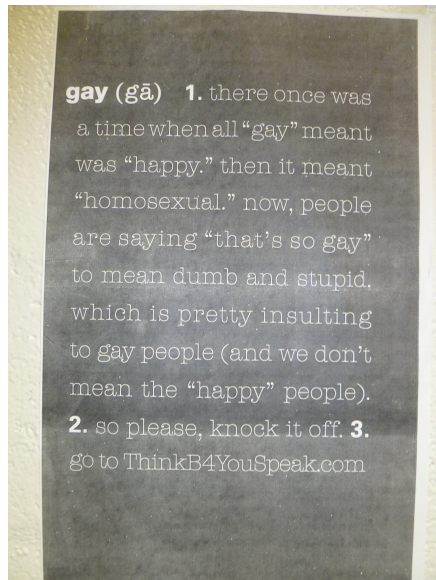
In these spaces occurs *becoming* or more specifically, ongoing deterritorialization and reterritorialization. Not to be thought of as binaries but instead continuous movement between smooth and striated space. Deterritorialization is a disruption of dominant ideas and reterritorialization is a remaking of understandings. Even though the goal is reterritorialization, this is not a teleological occurrence but rather ongoing reshaping and antagonisms. The new understandings and practices may take us to new places but the de- and re- territorialization reinscribe each other. Another way to think about Deleuze and Guattari's de/reterritorialization is to compare it to hegemony as conceptualized by Laclau and Mouffe (2001). Hegemonic ideologies or discourses do not just belong to the dominant groups. It is not just the authoritative discourses (Bakhtin, 1981) that are hegemonic but instead there is ongoing contestation or antagonism among all ideas (discourses) in differing contexts (space and time) and various ones "rise to the top" or are the current common-sense understandings in that space. Hegemony is an active process that involves de- and re-territorialization. Given these constructs about space and becoming, how might they illustrate possibilities of relationships and the material in classroom exchanges?

Jocelyn's world history class looks like many classroom spaces in the United States. Desks are lined up in a U shape. There is a front of the room with white board and screen for occasional videos. Her desk is off to the side near the entrance. As students enter in the morning if she is still at her desk, she can greet them and offer directions on

how to begin the class period. A striated space that is organized, led by school schedule and bells, and a teacher at the front of the room.



Perhaps less usual in a high school space are the posters, images, and sayings that cover the walls. They seem to invite dissent – at least in relation to the obedience required of school rules and routines. *“A pencil can break a sword”*, Korean Proverb. *“No problems are solved in the same consciousness they are created”*, Einstein. *“Justice too long delayed is justice denied”*, MLK. Two prominent posters hang on the wall. One of Joe Hill (Industrial Workers of the World. Executed 11/19/1915) and the other Aung San Suu Kyi (National League for Democracy, Burma). A *Boston Globe* story of Governor Deval Patrick signing the first Transgender Rights Bill is taped near the door. Numerous postcards and images that challenge isms fill a bulletin board.



How do the words and images that surrounded the students create a smooth space amongst the striations? What aspects keep routine and authority? How does space offer invitations for boundary-less exploration? Classrooms are spaces of both – pushing and pulling at each other. When Jocelyn engages the students in discussion, image analysis and video critique how might her questions and responses along with the graphics in the room invite movement into smooth spaces where boundaries of knowledge blur and move students to new territories?

The first semester's essential question for the World History class "What made some societies become great societies? guides the class in a study of Ming dynasty, and the empires of Ottoman, Mali and Inca. During a late fall visit, students are writing letters to the British Prime Minister of 1963 who stated "Africa had no history until the British Empire came." One student asks if instead he can write to Henry Louis Gates, Jr. "Great idea," says Jocelyn and soon about a third of the class is on board and revising letters that will actually be mailed.

During a Renaissance unit, Jocelyn asks students “Do you think Martin Luther was a Renaissance individual?

Student 1: “yes”

Jocelyn: “explain why

Student 1: I said yes because he had Renaissance beliefs”

Jocelyn: Ok. Talk more about his beliefs specifically

Silence

Jocelyn: If yes, what about how he is living his life reflects Renaissance ideas?

Student 2: It shows his individualism

Jocelyn: Explain more.

Later that morning, the class is discussing questions that were given as homework the night before. The printed homework asked, what religious issues exist in our society today that incite the same kind of fervor and loyalty? Explain.

Students call out:

Birth control

Abortion

A mosque at Ground Zero

Same sex marriage

The class ends with a round of Four Corners, where students select a place to stand in the room based on how much they agree or disagree with a statement or how

they would answer a question. As conversation ensues and students explain their position, others are encouraged to move as their thinking shifts. Jocelyn begins by stating: “Was Martin Luther a villain or a hero?”

By my visit in May, the class had been studying Europe. The guiding question for the semester was “How did Europe rise to power in the world by the 20th century? And some of the unit sub-questions were: Why did Europe conquer the Americas and not the other way around? Why do some people begin to question their long-held scientific, political or social beliefs? And was industrialization a benefit or a curse?

* * *

Jocelyn emphasizes critical-analytical thinking, connecting past to present and re-presenting dominant Eurocentric perspectives to push herself and her students to think differently. Often, she shared with me about working through ideas with her husband, a landscaper, since it is not always easy to think differently as she too endured a dominant perspective in her own schooling. Jocelyn made it clear in an early interview that she can’t indoctrinate students even though she hopes they will change their thinking. Instead, she focuses on multiple perspectives, asking questions, teaching them to think critically and critique what they view and hear. Does the call and response model create the striations? Do the questions and open discussion make for smooth spaces? How might students be disrupting what they know and reterritorializing revised understandings?

Examining the Student's World

Kedejah's 9th grade English students are making their way into class. It is Halloween and T enters with a bunny mask on. Kedejah smiles and says, "T, I love it." She continues to smile, "it's really great but it's going to be a distraction in class." T takes it off as others glance and smile.

"Ok if you are working on your songs what is it I am looking for?"

Student: a thesis and analysis

Kedejah: That's right. An analytical essay. I don't know this music and I think it is fascinating.

Students are working independently. The room is busy. I am sitting on the side taking notes, Kedejah is roaming, prompting, asking. A student teacher roams as well, sometimes sitting down between desks. An aide is in and out talking to kids about school work and others things (appointments, etc.). Here – not a complete transcript of the period but highlights of what I hear, as bits of conversations are loud enough to hear over all of the other talk.

Kedejah: What does this song say about the artist? What does it say about life?

Remember that's language that has purpose for them.

Kedejah: Ok, so what's this mean? Is it something sexual? To me this part is about his confusion about the world. You have some deep songs here.

Student teacher: A thesis has to be interesting and clear, not something obvious. So not ‘it changes people’ but ‘it changes people from innocence.’

Two students start some quiet singing and a bit of dancing. Kedejah says “I know you like this music. But the task here is to dig deeper into the lyrics and look at what they are saying.”

Students are talking about Jay-Z with the student teacher. The student teacher brings up 50 Cent, emphasizing ‘Fiddy’. The students at his table laugh and say to him, “too hood, man”. He reddens a little but takes it in stride and says, “Ok, too hood.”

The aide censors a song and says it can’t be used because there are swears. She checks for support from Kedejah, but Kedejah rethinks, “So if it has profanity, which is language, we need to know why it is used and if there are other words that can be used.”

Kedejah loves literature, dives into teaching her English classes each day, and holds high expectations. She expects students to go to college. She continues taking classes with the vouchers she gets from area universities for having student teachers. I imagine she likely could have a second masters degree by now. Her drive, she says, comes from providing for students what she did not get in high school. She felt her teachers did not believe in her, did not expect her to even finish high school. Kedejah’s students must analyze, substantiate, locate and write thesis statements, construct clear arguments, and read and write in many genres. And she hooks them through content of

their interest. This week it is an analysis of lyrics from any songs of their choosing. The following week is a deep read of an essay “Should Schools be Abolished?”.

Different from Jocelyn’s class in that the specific content is less important but similar in that they both want students to rethink perspectives and develop critical analysis. For Kedejah, in an urban system with a majority of students of color, critical teaching is about using the lives of the students as access points for learning academic skills. How might smooth and striated space here initiate de/reterritorialization? The verbal give and take is a little bit freer, in part due to the number of adults often in the room and the flow of conversation among all. Students joke and play, especially when deciding on songs and examining the lyrics. Kedejah allows some looseness and then reigns the energy in when it seems too off track. A give and take of exchange, shifting boundaries and learning about the students’ worlds, Kedejah seems as invested in exploring lyrics and learning from her students. As for the student teacher, I cannot say if he thought more about the 50 Cent exchange but it prompts me to think about how teachers read students and how students read teachers. Then, based on those readings how do relationships form and reform? I wonder, do the 9th grade students incite critical consciousness in Kedejah or the student teacher? Relationships are a web, not just teacher to student. The literature about critical consciousness in teacher education focuses on classroom activities and experiences of the teacher educators as they work to engage the preservice teachers in consciousness-raising experiences. Readings, videos, and assignments are aimed at the preservice teachers. An area that needs exploration is what the preservice teachers bring to these spaces? What is their role in constructing critical consciousness for each other and the teacher educator? Next, I share a collage of

memories to further consider this question. I chose collage because there is no way to trace the thoughts of students nor can I claim one action was responsible for the other and whole stories are too long. Instead, this is an assemblage of memories representing the entangled relations in space and suggesting that students, whether K-12 or as preservice teachers, are part of the web of criticality.

<p>David rarely participated in class, and in the one assignment instead of analyzing, he writes he is a dominant member of society because he has a penis. Do I respond with my own flip answer? Ignore? I was tired of David's excuses about work but glad I wasn't being faced with more writing about his penis. Three years later David is in my graduate class. He reads the assignments and more. He engages. And when the only other male in class says things like, "women are just as equal as men" or "race doesn't matter, my students and I get along." David responds, "you know, I used to think that way too, but now..."</p> <p>"What you are saying reminds me of an article I just read called the <i>White Savior Complex</i>." "Can we read it?" "I'm glad to share it with you but I don't think I'd assign it. It's provocative and emotionally challenging." Her group convinced me to assign it. They convinced the class to read it. The following week some students said they were angry and upset and ready to dismiss the author, but after reflection they could understand the argument and were left wondering about their service learning/charity participation.</p>	<p>In a class discussion Corrine starts, "As a cisgendered person...." cisgender? I ask her to say more. I google cisgender that night. I begin reading about transgender experiences.</p> <p>Javier is the only student of color in my section of RCI. He loves theory and participates often – telling the class about his experiences with racism, or discrimination as a son of immigrants – often linking the stories to readings and constructs. Once when watching a short Youtube clip in class he quietly says (to himself?), "God this is too painful.".... In my evaluations someone wrote I only called on the student who agreed with me. I wonder about that...The next year, Susan has teamed up with Javier and started to speak publicly about racism on campus. She took on school leadership positions. She says RCI was so formative for her. Funny, she never volunteered a word in class, often flipped through her planner, making to-do lists, skimming readings from other classes.</p>
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What might be the role of students in enactments of critical consciousness? Most often the teacher education literature positions the teacher educator as responsible for doing the work of constructing opportunities to initiate critical consciousness. What if critical consciousness was rethought as intersubjectivity? In Chapter 6, I consider this question and engage with intersubjectivity as culture.

Pedagogy of Love

Why is love addressed in this section on relations and not earlier where I write about emotions or not in Chapter 5 as a pedagogy? I selected here as I conceptualize love as an action that is relational, enfolds other feelings, and is enacted through pedagogies. I am not suggesting a sentimental, romantic love. I worry somewhat that linking love and teaching may serve only to highlight the representations of elementary teachers that sketch teachers as kind, patient, and loving but unaware of teaching is a political act. Rather than asking *what* we love, as does Mustakova-Possardt, I suggest taking up love as a verb and asking ourselves *how* we love. Asking how we love makes love material and offers opportunities to look at love through performances in our lives and in the work of teaching. Framing love as action (hooks, 2000) affords openings to see how love can be enacted in schools as critically conscious engagement.

It is common to hear preservice teachers, in particular, elementary teachers say they love children. Descriptors of good teaching offered by preservice teachers are predominately stated as personal attributes such as loving (Brown, Morehead & Smith,

2008). When love is framed only as an emotion it is not possible to see how love impacts teaching and learning. Whereas, reconceptualizing love from an emotion to action as in dialogical engagement creates a “pedagogy powered by love” (McLaren, 2007, p. 304). Freire’s dialogue, an exchange that unites reflection and action, only exists in the presence of love – a love where persons are naming and renaming the world (Freire, 1993). The educators in this research project enacted love as a relational-pedagogy through love as anger, love as trust, and love as response-ability.

The anger in interviews and focus groups was, at times, palpable as the educators shared frustrations and pain from witnessing how some children are treated in schools. Earlier I wrote about Beatriz’s foundation as an educator as shaped by the race-based inequities she saw in the special education system where she began teaching. The very first time I met Emma she apologetically began to cry mid-way through the interview as she shared about how angry and sad it made her feel to see how kids get marginalized by race, class and disability. In a focus group, Fayth shares many anecdotes:

“My very first internship at Moore High School I was introduced to students as ‘be glad when he doesn’t show up’ and a litany of what to be aware of. Funny-I had no problems with the kids. These were all Black kids and all white teachers giving me warnings and then asking me what I did differently. They were sweet kids but not treated as kids. (mmmhm, mmmhm and a nod from Beatriz). I found myself defending them, teaching them to find out who they are as people and defending them. I became an educator who wanted to fight for kids. We are one of the richest counties with two separate education systems”.

“When I think of critical teaching I think of creating opportunities to destroy or interrupt what’s going on in schools-the way we dehumanize kids. It’s toxic.”

“One way I try to humanize the personal relationship work of a teacher is through the stories I tell to my preservice teachers. I want the students I work with to come to the side of the kids. The only way I can think of doing that is to tell the stories that motivate me to do the work that I do. And some of the stories are painful stories of children’s experiences with teachers who have injured them. I always tell about the child at The Chilcott School who came bounding into school with smiles and a wealth of confidence in September. By October he entered my music class like this (Fayth acts out an enveloped body with eyes to floor). I asked him, “Terrance honey, what’s the matter?” “My teacher doesn’t like me. Am I supposed to be nice?” and then he burst into tears.

“What? A little one”? Asks Beatriz

“Pre-schooler. By January he was expelled. He came on scholarship – one of a handful of families of color. I tell that story all the time because it moved the hell out of me.”

Throughout telling the story of Terrance, the women of color listened, hmm-hmmed, and nodded both in affirmation and disgust. The white participants engaged at a more cognitive level, interjecting “that is so strange” or “did he do something violent?” Would the anger of the woman of color have remained so constrained if not in a ‘strangers’ living room?, not in a formal research interview setting?, not with white women they did not know very well?

Anger can initiate but it cannot be the only guide. The anger is with the system or the actions of others. Some anger splinters off and transforms to love and commitment for the students as Fayth talks about a humanizing pedagogy and Jocelyn states what sustains her as, “it’s the obstacles in this work that are the reason for the work.”

Love as trust can take on the form of attentive love. Attentive love, suggests Daniel Liston (2008) can guide the theory and practice of critical pedagogy. According to

Liston there are three elements of attentive love: seeing the goodness in students, discernment, and reducing noise of the self. Because of the frenzy to test, the move to standardization, and the focus on drill and facts, teachers lose track of who students are as persons and lose track of honoring students. Learning about students, affirming who they are (Nieto, 2004) are ways of seeing their ‘goodness’ or attending to who they are (Liston, 2008). Knowing students then allows for discernment, or looking with “clear-sighted attention to our students and connect[ing] them with the educational tasks at hand” (p. 390). I observed attending to students through acts of trust.

During Melissa’s first year as an art teacher the other part-time art teacher and some classrooms teachers expressed surprise that she allowed the elementary aged children to use clay at the beginning of the year. “That’s too ambitious,” they told her. Melissa thought “of course they can use clay.” And they did. They also painted images of their most favorite pair of sneakers and wrote or told stories of where those shoes had been. Reading, writing, speaking and listening objectives are tied into all her art units. “I don’t think the teachers know we do interdisciplinary stuff. They think we just play with paint. A lot of the teachers just drop the kids at the door without even saying hello to me.” Twenty-six fourth grade students, one art teacher, and jars and jars of paint. She does not hover and announces, “Get what you need.” A boy grumbles, “I stink at art”. Melissa says, “I’ll show you. But first go take a look at Sam’s.” Designing shirts with social messages, safe-places tiles and hand art that expresses something about themselves. Melissa tells me, “We are doing cool projects. Some of the teachers say to me ‘no one has ever done things like that with them’.” She is generous and trusting with

materials, she has faith they will do what is needed and most importantly, she has confidence that they are capable.

For Emma, the newly instituted high school dialogue groups are an act of trust as well as a vehicle for creating more trust. After organizing and setting up the first dialogue groups, students are left on their own to have these discussions. She says she'd love to stay in the room to participate and listen but she knows it is better to leave the students to do this work on their own. Most significant is how the dialogue groups impact the ways she now thinks about her own teaching,

“ There is something about dialogue that has given me more of a trust for my students to be able to monitor themselves and come back to the conversation. I feel like I've been able to back away a couple of steps from needing to control and needing to move and push them in a certain direction. I'll think, Ok, they need to meander and have this conversation and then we'll get there.”

Similarly, Patricia speaks of her community activities and her facilitation of groups, “When I am facilitating I stay out of the way...so they are coming in to their own content more deeply. And I am trying to hold onto the different threads and where they are going.” Jocelyn laughs, and says, “and when I am teaching I try to *get in* the way!” Trust is not an *anything goes* attitude toward teaching but a strong sense of discernment (Liston, 2008) for what the students need. At times, that is a stepping back and at other times it is a getting in the way.

Another example of love-in-action that I want to connect to teaching is “response-ability” (Oliver, 2001). Response-ability is love as an openness to others and as offering students ways to respond. Oliver asserts that people have a responsibility to engage with others in a way that “opens up rather than closes off the possibility of response by others”

(p. 18). What are the ways that educators and school practices both open and close off responses of students and families? Taking up the practice of response-ability requires three moves by teachers: being responsible for the other, for the other's response, and for the other's ability to respond. Oliver also suggests that response-ability reconstructs subjectivity by continually reinterpreting and elaborating relationships. In the classroom, this would manifest as an openness to responses of students as well as to how responses constitute teachers as subjects.

The relationships the teachers and principals in this study developed with children and families are wholeheartedly about response. In a previous section, *Examining the Student's World*, I wrote of a number of ways the educators show commitment to engaging students and creating spaces for response. There were also some stand-alone stories when one of the educators advocated for or had faith in a student which allowed student response. One of Melissa's high school students had special needs and she was told by some colleagues, "Bryan can't be in ceramics." They tried to convince her to move him to a different elective. She refused and when I met Bryan as I circulated around the room asking students about their clay projects, he did not have too much to say. But he was engaged and making a slab vessel just as his classmates were doing. In looking back, Melissa was angered that colleague's assumptions about a student would have prevented Bryan from taking ceramics. And now as I look back, I am struck by Melissa's action. It is not easy to go against the grain or the suggestions of others especially when a first year teacher in a new job.

Over coffee after school one day Jocelyn update me on some highlights from the last month or so. I had been spending time in other schools and had not been to Southern

High for a while. A few events with one of her sophomores, Mark, spurred the principal to make a unilateral decision and move Mark out of Jocelyn's room. Jocelyn explained that first, Mark made a comment that in tone was racist but in content was subtle. Then, during a lesson about the Trans-Atlantic slave trade he made a gesture that suggested *victory* for the European slave traders. Finally, what prompted the principal to move Mark was a negative comment he made about Jocelyn's biracial children. Jocelyn said she was not completely comfortable with Mark in her room and she appreciated the support from the principal and yet the decision did not sit right with her. The morning the student was going to be told of the move, Jocelyn went to the principal and said, 'Thanks but no. Mark needs to stay.' As the unit on slavery progressed, and Jocelyn showed the class the series *Race: the Power of an Illusion*, Mark made a turn-around. He was engaged, insightful and reflective in some of the class discussions about race. Our coffee became a small celebration as we wondered together what it is that triggers some of the more resistant students to reconsider. Both Melissa and Jocelyn, in their commitment to student learning, made space and opportunity for students to respond. They engaged with response-ability.

Lastly, love can show up as a fresh, uncommon, school-time declaration as when James, the elementary school principal ended the school assembly one spring by looking out at the entire audience of K-5th graders, taking in as many eyes as he could hold and saying, "I love you all."

Onward

In this chapter I work from Elena Mustakova-Proussardt's definition of critical consciousness as knowledge, love and will and revise that to critical consciousness as

knowledge, emotion and relationships. In considering the role of emotions, I suggest that emotions have agency and using Sarah Ahmed's theory of the relations of emotions. I consider how emotions move subjects toward or away from critical engagement and toward or away from each other. I selected to focus on discomfort and talk about race because in my experiences teaching, the conversations about race bring up the most contention. The second theme of this chapter involved an exploration of critical consciousness as a relation. I began by addressing two themes: being emboldened, and being present. I then tried demonstrating, through the structure of the chapter, how reading Deleuze shifted the ways I was thinking about relationships to consider how social relations happen in places to create space for becoming. I end this chapter reflecting on love as a relation or relational-pedagogy and shared how participating educators are moved by anger toward love, enact trust as love, and create spaces for students to respond.

In the chapter that follows, "Doing Identity", I engage with questions and data about identity in a number of ways. First, I take some time to explain how I theorize identity and the related construct, subjectivity. Then through interview data, I discuss the politics of naming and the ways in which participants name, avoid naming, and talk about actions as ways to broadcast their identities. Then, plugging in Judith Butler's theory of performativity, I explore how critical consciousness identities are performed through interview talk and four pedagogical themes. The pedagogical practices I highlight are: attending to everyday moments, guiding, developing analytical thinking, and provoking.

CHAPTER 5

PERFORMING CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

It's often in the tiny moments and most often through language.

-Jocelyn, High School Social Studies

"Cultures and selves are not given, they are made, even like fictions, they are 'made up'...they hold out the promise of re-imagining and refashioning the world."

-Dwight Conquergood (1989, p.83)

In Chapter 3 I outlined a hybrid research methodology called layered accounts that I stitched together as an approach that would offer multiple interpretations of the data I collected, whether from the words of others or my own life experiences. I offer no single or definitive interpretation of data but rather put forward considerations of ways in which educator's talk and action, my own teaching and consciousness-raising experiences and observations of the world co-mingle in this research project to illustrate entanglements of critical consciousness. A challenge is writing a layered account that is neither too messy (entangled) nor too linear.

A key argument I make throughout this body of work is that by designing and writing this dissertation, I am producing criticality. As I summarize, critique, and create knowledge with institutional backing from the academy, I am naming and thus creating criticality that is open to critique by others. This project serves as a documentation of what others and I experience and construct together as critical consciousness. Critical consciousness does not exist outside of our bodies and experiences awaiting discovery but gets constructed in day-to day-actions/interactions. Through asking about, looking for

instances of, and making efforts to explain and understand critical consciousness, it gets created via me in this study. What we select to research can easily be reified by the questions we ask and methods we use. It is possible to say that by looking for particular instances or nuances of critical consciousness I made them appear (Wong, Fine & Weseem, 2000). Research reflects the experiences, interests, and subjectivities of the researcher, as well as those of the participants. Thus, by following my own interests and lines of inquiry, my interest in understanding how teachers evoke and perform critical consciousness influenced how I participated in the interviews and observations and thus created some of the data. Another researcher may have paid attention to different ways of critically consciousness talking and acting and crafted critical consciousness slightly differently.

I begin by considering how the politics of naming or being named as I sought to identify participants was a part of the process of constructing critical consciousness. As a part of this, I consider how my own methodology was an initial move in constructing criticality. Then, I use Judith Butler's theory of performativity to explore how participants take up performances of critical consciousness in teaching and interviews. I conclude with a section, which considers pedagogical practices and how the materiality of bodies and spaces work with language in constructions of critical consciousness.

Because the boundaries of critical consciousness shift and overlap with multiple ways of knowing and being I have constructed this chapter using the metaphor of entanglements to emphasize the connectivity of ways of knowing-being to produce critical consciousness. Before exploring these entanglements, I discuss in the next section how my project builds on the current literature about critical consciousness in education.

Constructing Critical Consciousness

To answer my three research questions: What evokes and sustains critical consciousness?, How do educators talk about and enact critical consciousness?, and How do educators speak about critical consciousness in relation to their work? I wanted to work with educators who were, at any level, critically conscious. As I noted in my methodology chapter, I did not want the study to focus on categorizing or determining how critical someone was or was not. I felt it not possible to rely on a formula or list of criteria, as the boundaries of what may be deemed critically conscious are fuzzy and always in motion. At the start of this research project, I initially created the list below (see Figure 1) of educator characteristics for recruiting participants but subsequently did not use it as it felt too limiting. It was using the known to try and explore the unknown and I was tentative about having nominators or participants run through a checklist to evaluate themselves, then perhaps, remain focused on these domains in the ways they thought about and presented critical consciousness. By setting this chart aside, rather than sharing it with nominators or participants I was constructing criticality by leaving open possibilities for how it is understood and experienced. This was a way of constructing the project with openings for new discoveries.

Figure 1 Educator Characteristics

Critical Teachers

- Engage in critique of status quo, self as teacher, construction of knowledge in context of power (Ladson-Billings, 1995)
- Understand that knowledge is political and teaching is never neutral (Freire, 1998)
- Seek to examine “comfortable cultural practices and values” (Dozier et al., 2006)
- Examine own positions, question status quo (Gay & Kirkland, 2003)
- Attempt to take an anti-racist, anti-bias approach (Nieto & Bode, 2011)
- Attend to issues of equity in terms of teaching, resources, opportunities
- Understand that critical teaching is always in process and never a place of arrival (Sleeter, Torres & Laughlin, 2004)

And while this could be a helpful starting place, many criteria can be met on this initial list, taken from research literature, and not create critical consciousness. For example, some of my students or colleagues can critique the status quo and systems of oppression as an academic exercise without care or affect. Thus, a critical analysis of power can occur without a personal connection to why that might matter (In hindsight, emotion and intentions – or the “territory beyond reason” (Janks, 2002) are missing). Deidre, a white student in a colleague’s RCI course, wrote A quality papers as she demonstrated understanding of the readings and concepts such as intersectionality, oppression, and privilege. She made it a frequent point to mention in papers and class feedback that she was already familiar with the course content. In one class session, while watching a video of the history of racism, an African American woman quietly cried throughout most of the movie and in our class discussion afterwards. Deidre’s written end-of-class feedback was *I have seen this movie before and am familiar with US history*

of racism. I surged with anger hearing about this – at both the “I know this already” performance but also frustrated with the apparent lack of awareness of the pain and sadness in the room. This is just one example of a student who “can produce a reasoned critique that is not in any way transformative” (Janks, 2010, p. 212). Deidre, like others, can perform criticality as an academic exercise but not as a way of being.

In other ways, students and teachers can make curriculum decisions that seem completely acritical until the context is fully excavated. For example, in a town nearby, the reading program is mandated by the district. Recently an email from the superintendent went out to all teachers to remind and warn them that they are not to use any other reading material, even as supplementary, other than the purchased curriculum. While reading trade books is not typically considered a radical act, it becomes one under this mandate. When the few teachers there knowingly take a risk and use a book from the library to supplement a reading group it is an enactment of political or critical consciousness.

Performing Identity/Forming Subjectivities

Within poststructural discourse, discussions of identity and subjectivities overlap and can appear interchangeable. Both have been referenced as unstable, multiple, historically specific, and shifting. Does a difference matter? While identity does have modernist roots where the individual is considered stable, and subjectivity aligns with a postmodern framework to explore how a subject is made, I use both in this research project to differentiate between an outwardness and inwardness when thinking about oneself, being identified by others, and enacting critical consciousness.

Identity is the temporary fixing of subjectivity (Weedon, 1997) and “the expressible relationship to others” (Holland et al. 1998 p. 172). Identity works in more conscious ways than subjectivity to self-identify, claim political affiliation, or be named/identified by others. For example, three of my identities, those of a white, middle-aged, woman are visible identities (Alcoff, 2006), identifiable by others and not only used to classify me but make decisions – conscious or not – about how to interact with me. Young store clerks now more often call me ma’am in efforts to be polite and yet each ma’am reminds me that I’m now 50 and that my laugh lines are now wrinkles. As my body changes I notice how strangers relate to me differently. On days when my back injury flares up I appreciate the offer to lift the half-case of seltzer from the bottom shelf. Other days, I feel insulted, sometimes saddened, that it seems I can’t do for myself.

I may heighten and take up my identity as woman strategically as a political move to engage with other women (and men) to demand corporations to reduce the use of chemicals linked to breast cancer or align with Planned Parenthood to help ensure access to quality reproductive care. I do these not only because they seem ethically right, but with a visceral engagement as I feel the ways in which corporations, politics, and industry try to control mine and other women’s’ bodies – or because of an eye on profit, result in harming us with higher cancer rates. This engagement with strategic essentialism (Spivak, 1988) is a powerful political tool that shapes social movements. Engaging as a woman about what is usually deemed as *women’s issues* matters even though limiting cancer-causing substances and providing safe and equitable health care will benefit all sexes. At the same time, my femaleness renders me invisible in the role of coach on the

soccer field and I don't know if I should heighten or diminish my female gender enactments.

As I walk to the field with my team of teen girls, the home team coach introduces himself to various fathers, seeking out the coach. I experiment with acting like a coach by dressing in sweats, carrying the equipment bag or some clip boards. I give directions to the girls as we cross to our spot to the away bench. I take on an athletic walk, different from how I walk across campus on my way to teach a class. These moves seek to flatten my femaleness while heightening my coach identity – typically constructed as male. That seems easier to put my energies toward rather than demonstrating that coaches are women or even feminine too. Sometimes those tactics work – not always.

Identity and subjectivity are multiple and constructed by both discourse and the material (Barad, 2007; LeCourt, 2004) and yet subjectivity is more shifting and ephemeral. Subjectivity is “precarious, contradictory and in process, constantly being reconstituted in discourse each time we think or speak...[it is both] conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of self and her ways of understanding her relation to the world” (Weedon, 1997, p. 32). Multiple subject positions are converging at any given moment out of the confluence of the discursive-material in an identity enactment (LeCourt, 2004). For example, my subjectivities join in a confluence in a few seconds to create and enact my white identity in a faculty meeting.

In a discussion about campus racism, I am aware of my many subjectivities: as white, as someone who teaches a course about race and racism, as an instructor not a professor in a room of mostly professors, some of who also teach courses about race. I think of the history of exchanges I have had with other faculty in the room. I am aware of

how much I avoid speaking in these large forums. There is also much that I am unaware of that also hails me (Althusser, 1969), some that reveal themselves to me later, others that I may never be aware. A disagreement rises as to the possibility of faculty – us – and if we also engage in unintentional racism when teaching. I think about the students who have told me about the racism they face in classes and in the dorms. I think of the moves I have made when teaching that can be read as racism, such as cold calling on a Latina in class the previous week. She first turned slightly and exchanged a “see, it’s happening again” look with her friend, also Latina, before answering. Did she not notice I had previously cold called on a few white students? Or did I not notice if my question was somehow different than the previous questions? Race is always present. Influencing what I do, how I am seen, how I see my students (Bonilla-Silva, 2014).

And so when I do speak up in this particular faculty meeting, race, status, and this confluence of subjectivities influences both what I say and how I am read by others. In efforts to be an ally to my students, I speak out and say something about the value in considering the ways in which race and racism influence all of us whether we are aware of it or not. With this statement I am in effect also aligning myself as a *good white*. Here I am thinking of two different ways of being a *good white*. The first is that of claiming I am not racist and do not engage in racist actions (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Leonardo & Zembylas, 2013). The second way to think about being a good white, and where I position myself in this story, is that of claiming as white, I too am always complicit in racism (Applebaum, 2010). This move still results in making myself a *better* white than other whites – more knowing about racism, and in essence creating a hierarchy of types of anti-racist whites. I do not want to establish myself as more knowing but I feel the

need to call attention to the often invisible ways that racism works. Either way, the whiteness is inescapable. It gets “reproduced through being declared” (Ahmed, 2004b). By declaring or admitting to bad practice the admission I make becomes good practice and thus elevates my status as a good white. The whiteness constantly shapes me and the interactions in the room.

Subjectivity then is the concealed “I” that shapes identity, the public “I”—what I am consciously putting forward as well as how others read me. “Subjectivity becomes all at once a vessel, a lens, and filter of everything” (Madison, 2012, p. 42). Throughout this dissertation, I slip in and out of revealing, considering and constituting my subjectivities, sometimes inferred and sometimes explicitly in sections labeled *Remembering*. In the rest of this chapter, I focus on identity performances of the educators in this study. I begin with, “The Politics of Naming”, where I explore discursive moves by the educators and myself to situate who we are and what we do through how we self-identify. In the latter half of the chapter, I then address the ways in which the educators perform critically consciousness identities in interviews and teaching.

The Politics of Naming

How does naming create or shape criticality? Why name or claim an identity? Who does the naming and who is being named? Does it make a difference? As I noted in the methodology section of this study, deciding what to call educators for the purpose of recruiting participants created an early dilemma. While on the one hand I am claiming not to evaluate whether or not participants are *critical enough* (McDonough, 2009), in reality I actually do to a certain extent. This is evident by my decision not to put out a blanket invitation to any educators, but in my efforts to seek out a certain type of

educator by nomination – those that were critically consciousness. Here is where the first challenge lay related to the politics of naming. In my experience, not many practitioners and only some colleagues were familiar with the construct critical consciousness even if they were enacting it in their work of teaching. It seemed that more educators were familiar with particular types of teaching: multicultural, socially just, anti-oppressive, or critical literacy. But I wanted the study to be about a construct (critical consciousness) not an educational identity group. And here it was that I experienced the dilemma of naming. In what ways did it matter what I called people? Words are political and each of these labels infers particular ideologies about teaching and learning. In my invitation to educators I wrote, “I am exploring the practices of “critical” teachers (social justice teachers/critical pedagogues/multicultural educators) to better understand what critical teaching can look like at different grade levels and influences on critical teachers’ curriculum.” With my selection of labels I was creating boundaries from the start and a sense of belonging or exclusion whether through the use of language that might not be what the educators typically referenced or by, in a way, making them claim an educational identity. I now realize that through the work of this research I have recrafted or created a “new” educational identity group – critically conscious educators as an avenue to exploring critical consciousness.

One finding of this study is that the educators did not take up naming themselves as part of their identity work but preferred to describe what they did to define who they are. The majority of the educators declined to name or identify themselves with any particular identity descriptor, sometimes quite intentionally as a move of resistance

against what they saw as the de-politicalization of multicultural education and sometimes as a way of claiming/creating identity through actions rather than identifiers.

When I first met Beatriz, the principal of an urban elementary school, early in the interview I asked,

K: I've been asking colleagues to help identify teachers that might be interested in this project. Linda thought of asking you about teachers here, at your school, and then told me you said you were interested.

B: hm hm

K: So I am curious about what made you interested to also participate?

B: Well, because you were asking for teachers who were working with multicultural ideas so that's my life work really so I thought I could participate. There are other teachers here who are doing that as well.

Here, Beatriz is working to create a multicultural teacher identity in a number of ways and yet without calling herself a multicultural educator. As a principal who works with a reading group each day, she still views herself as teacher and includes herself in my boundary as I initially sought K-12 teachers. Beatriz's interest in my project is what prompted me to widen the borders and include school administrators that were both nominated and saw themselves as educators with a commitment to critical work. By stating she works with "multicultural ideas" is an interesting way to craft her educator identity without naming herself as a multicultural educator. It is a way of constructing identity through action – something she does as well as leaving room for differing interpretations. *Multicultural ideas* can have slightly more ambiguity and perhaps signify room for other approaches, rather than making a claim as a multicultural educator. Also significant, especially just two years from retirement, is Beatriz's identification of multicultural ideas as her life's work. This comes up again in her focus group participation when referencing teaching as a way of being and which I explored in

Chapter 4. After a few more exchanges about the busy lives of the teachers in her school I ask:

K: So from what you just said it sounds like you identify as either a social justice teacher or a multicultural educator.

B: hm hm

K Are those words that you use and call yourself or what's a better way to call how you describe yourself?

B: Well I've always advocated for my students because of... really it came from my very first special education classroom - they were all Latino children and when I first arrived at this school two weeks into the academic year I walked through these double doors and it was like the special ed ward of the school. There were the Latino kids who were on the right and the Black kids - same disability - on the left. So that image guided my entire practice really as a teacher of immigrant children primarily. I taught special needs for about half of my career and then I went into the mainstream. Well not really mainstream I was bilingual.

K: And how long have you been teaching?

B: This is my 32nd year. I think that the lack of equity is still very real and the segregation is also real. In fact this school is the first school I have worked in where there is almost 20% white people in this school. (higher percentage than usual)

Again, significant, Beatriz does not claim to be either a multicultural or social justice educator. It is possible this is out of humility, intentional avoidance of self-labeling, or perhaps not having recent requests to name herself. Her answer to my question about how she identifies is in the language of action, "Well, I've always advocated for my students..." as she then links her formative experiences to race and inequity. The politics of naming works both ways - both as the one naming others as I was attempting and an action of naming oneself. Similar to my earlier writing in the section just previous about identity, self-naming can be an act of strategic essentialism (Spivak, 1988) for political purposes when wanting to align oneself similarly across

groups/individuals. Avoiding naming, as Beatriz did, as in the exchange here in a focus group with Patricia and Jocelyn, can be a political move as well.

Patricia, previously a teacher educator, is now a community consultant around issues of equity. Jocelyn, a high school social studies teacher, had recently been promoted to the department chairperson while still maintaining her teaching schedule.

P: I don't use multicultural ed anymore Because I don't think it has the kind of...it doesn't have the reference that I want people to have ...I don't say multicultural about *anything* (with emphasis) in particular.

J: laughs

P: but I think people are very aware of how I recognize and integrate the analysis around systems and structures and systems that work for and against groups of people. But I don't.... I'm just conscious of not... using multicultural because it's been co-opted in so many ways.

J: uh huh.

P: So I'm aware what I *don't* say.

Kathy: and Jocelyn, you were saying you agree? What uh...

J: yeah I agree that I don't have – well I feel so far away from... language for theoretical frameworks. I feel like I'm sort of on the ground and that my advanced work was in content and not as much in theory so I just don't come from the theoretical background and I feel a similar experience with the word multicultural and not wanting to go near the term but then I guess I think I've used social justice at times but I don't really have a way.... I do sort of think that the heart of a lot of it is anti-oppression. I don't know. And again I wouldn't use that term on a daily basis.

Patricia and Jocelyn's aversion to referencing multicultural education as a stance, identity, or even "anything", as Patricia emphasizes, is linked to the changing landscape of multicultural education. Patricia prefaced her comments by saying even though her own doctoral work in the early 1990s was grounded in multicultural education she intentionally tries to avoid the term. In schools and over time its historical roots as a

radical social justice movement in the 1960s have been erased as multicultural education has often been taken up as an approach to celebrate diversity rather than striving for equality and equity. Multicultural education scholars continue to push and stretch the edges of multicultural education as they weave in and address multicultural education in relation to intersectionality, citizenship in a global context, and anti-racism (Banks, 2013; Sleeter, 2014; Nieto, 2005a). Yet, the disconnect between theory and practice is concerning and the de-politicization of multicultural education well documented (Cochran Smith, 2004; Gorski, 2006; Nieto, 1995). Teacher education tends to be an apolitical arena as well and a 2008 study by Paul Gorski of multicultural course syllabi from across the United States show that the courses address “personal awareness” but do not prepare preservice teachers “in accordance with key principles of multicultural education, such as critical consciousness and a commitment to educational equity” (p. 309). Patricia and Jocelyn avoid referencing themselves or their work as multicultural as a political stance as they seek to align themselves to be perceived as participating in more radical change. This linguistic move to craft identity is a relational discursive move as they define themselves against something else (Gee, 2014).

Identity as Action

Identities are enacted through language, in talk and in writing (Gee, 2014) and thus identity performances can be understood as actions – sometimes conscious such as my previous example of trying to act like a soccer coach, and often less conscious such as all the ways I enact being a daughter. I am usually not thinking “I am a daughter now and how do I want to relate to my parents?”, but rather the time I spend (or not) with my parents on the phone, in email, and in visits is crafting my daughter identity. While I

could argue that *all* that one says or does is creating identity via actions, here I want to highlight the ways some of the educator's explicitly referenced their work as actions rather than name themselves, as a conscious move to create/shape their identities. It is not the simple act of naming or not that shapes criticality but the reflection behind those statements. I began this section earlier by noting how Beatriz answers my exploratory question about how she identifies with an answer about what she does – that she advocates for students.

K Are those words that you use and call yourself or what's a better way to call how you describe yourself?

B: Well I've always advocated for my students because of... really it came from my very first special education classroom...

In a focus group conversation, Patricia shared about an exchange she had with an acquaintance as a part of the Boston Busing Project. It begins with Patricia recounting what the woman said to her: "Patricia, I know you **do** but I don't know exactly **what** you do. You're known for doing this stuff that sort of pushes these conversations in some kind of respectful way." And then Patricia concluded by telling us, "So I don't have... um... I don't call myself anything at this point." Even though Patricia avoids an identity label she is clear throughout this portion of the focus group conversation about her goals and her alignment in her community work. She is "really conscious of having an identity... a stance that doesn't privilege one type of oppression over another" and she states she is "very consistent with my identity around I am a "both/and". There are multiple things operating at the same time that's really important and it always comes up for me anytime I see anybody dichotomizing."

Another example is from my initial conversation with James, an African American principal of an elementary school in a predominantly white college town. My familiarity with James's work is that he is very conscious and of the ways in which race plays a role in all that we do – and I have observed him comfortably vocal about race and racism when he is with people he has a relationship with – of any race. At this school, though, where he and some classroom aides are the only educators of color he shares he has to be more careful and plan what he says. James shares about recent teacher's meeting where he passed out data on the grade level, gender, and race of the students getting sent to the office or other types of consequences that the school tracks (i.e. losing recess). He hoped he could lead the teachers to notice the disproportionate number of boys of color receiving punishments rather than have to tell them himself. After recounting a few other examples of his race consciousness I asked, "So as I think about critical consciousness and your awareness of dynamics of race, class and gender, I am wondering how you see yourself, and what you do." James replied, "This is about best practice". I was surprised by his response as it seems out of alignment with the ways in which James talked about his previous teaching and current administrating.

Best practice comes to the field of education from business and is the idea that when something is found to work it should be replicated – often in varying contexts. But districts and schools have varying student bodies and socio-historical backgrounds. Lilia Bartolomé (1994) warns against a fetish with methods and warns against replicating the same "best" methods in any context. When Sonia Nieto gives conference presentations she often recommends a small but powerful revision of language and suggests *promising practices*. The modernist assumptions and neoliberal associations behind the discourse of

best practice lead educators to believe teaching is about quality and replication. More concerning is that *best practice* does not invite critique as the assumption is that particular practice has a proven track record. In this case, James's language did not match and in fact, subtly countered, his actions. This is a good example of heteroglossia and the blending of varying discourses. Talk and action can be traced to a multitude of sources (if at all traceable). James's blending illustrates that the notion of *pure criticality* does not exist. Our enactments are an intermingling of centrifugal and centripetal discourses (Bakhtin, 1981).

Melissa, the art teacher in a large urban school system both declines naming herself as a multicultural educator and shares how she thinks about herself more in terms of what she does. Interestingly, Melissa attended a graduate art teacher certification program designed specifically around the intersections of art education and critical multicultural education. When she shared about her program experiences she praised the explicit focus on critical multicultural education and credited that to much of her development and philosophy. Yet when, in our first interview, I asked: "Do you see yourself as a critical teacher? Whether you call yourself a multicultural or social justice educator or something else?" Melissa laughs and says, "I don't know if I have developed that yet. I am very reflective. I do a lot of thinking about my students and where they come from. I think a lot about why they are creating art and why art is created...asking the why and having kids ask that too. I think about **that** a lot and I'm not sure how to label it. I think about the **things I do** and the **processes** I go through." Teaching and reflecting about her student, her work, her needs and abilities are at the heart of Melissa's

identity as a first year art teacher. Reflection does not make one a critical teacher, but criticality is deeply embedded with self-reflection (Nieto, 2005b; Vavrus, 2002).

Remembering, Spring Semester

Like most juniors and seniors after completing their student teaching, this group of women have strong convictions about teaching and how schools should function. Their commitments are both refreshing and, at times, frustrating. I admire their eagerness to do right by children and the energy they bring to the profession. I have to sometimes draw on my patience to listen and gently provoke when they seemingly will not budge from a position; perhaps it is an unwillingness to understand why a parent might not be able to help a child with homework since in their view, all parents should care about education and helping with homework is a way to demonstrate that. Their strong beliefs and positions come from inexperience, and their classed, raced, and gendered experiences. I say unwillingness as that is how it feels during our class time but perhaps it is more of a temporary inability. We all have blind spots and temporary disabilities. This time my inability to trust my students was in the way.

It was early in the spring semester and I initiated a conversation about multicultural education to get a sense of what they learned in previous courses and student teaching. The grumbling began as a quiet undercurrent and I felt defensive. Immediately I jumped to assuming they were taking on a discourse of resistance; a resistance to readings and talk about race, equity and social justice. Bob Fecho's (2011) voice echoed, "embrace the wobble" (p. x). Rather than try to shift the conversation to what I wanted to hear, listen to what the students have to say. By attempting to create

more comfort for me, the teacher, I may miss out on learning from and understanding my students. I shifted from standing at the board with marker in hand to pulling up a small desk to sit among the circle of students.

I am not sure when of the past years that I noticed how my body moved when teaching but at some point I became aware of how my body was doing some of the work of teaching and relating long before I attached thinking and a rationale to it, such as moving in close for the more difficult conversations. I was enacting pedagogy through and with my body as well as with specific instructional strategies and content (Vick & Martinez, 2011). I listened. The students did not like multicultural education because they thought it was somewhat superficial. They only knew it, from their own elementary years and now student teaching, as pot-lucks, bulletin boards and occasional cultural assemblies. Their initial grumbling was of a different kind of resistance than I thought. Not all resistances are the same. Perhaps we over generalize in teacher education. They wanted to distance themselves from the tourist curricula they had lived in schools.

Not until writing this section did I come to the realization how often I too shy away from identifying myself with identity descriptors that reference my theoretical or pedagogical positions. I have not claimed to be a multicultural educator even though Sonia Nieto's (2004) seven tenets guide much of my work, and many multicultural educators are the first scholars I began to read in depth and rely on to develop my teaching. Why have I never labeled myself a feminist, a poststructuralist, or critical even though that is how I have framed my research? Perhaps it is a wish to avoid being static. A name feels somehow pre-determined and bounded. Perhaps it is out of self-doubt. In

what ways might I be challenged once I make those claims? Perhaps it is because the act of naming then feels like that identity is complete. What would be next?

Just this past semester I was asked to participate on a “Being an Ally” panel at my institution. I accepted because I imagined the conversation to be provocative and interesting. I began by stating, “I have never called or considered myself an ally.” The coordinating professor’s face dropped as if she thought I was going to co-opt the talk. It felt presumptuous to claim I was an ally – to whom? And when? And I am sure there are a number of the times I overlooked opportunities to be an ally. Whereas, instead of saying I am something, naming the work we do as educators and as researchers leaves room for negotiation, shifts and nuanced ways of being, thus more of an awareness of always being formed and reformed; or becoming.

Constructing Criticality

Naming is political. Naming creates what we come to know as critical by re/constituting how the social actors in an exchange discuss criticality. And naming works to create criticality through inclusion and exclusion. At the start of my study, when speaking to a class of fellow graduate students, some were encouraging me to first figure out whether potential participants were critical or not before enlisting them in the study. I argued that what it means to ‘be critical’ was always in motion, too hard to pin down. And one student asked, “But you could probably name right now what is *not* critical, couldn’t we all?” This comment has stayed with me for a few years. Yes, in some ways it is easy to step into that binary but to blur the boundaries and consider multiple possibilities taking up positionality (Alcoff, 1988) can be useful here.

Our identities (critical, not critical, multicultural educator, critical pedagogue, man, white) are created by relational positions and constantly reconstituted through positioning (Davies, 2000). So those early introductory exchanges in interviews where I was asking participants how they identify as educators are examples of my positioning them (intentionally in these cases) and how they were positioning or repositioning themselves. I offered subject positions such as multicultural educator which to me assumes a semblance of criticality and they took it up in different ways. The educators, and myself engage in these positioning moves relative to the narratives we have lived out. According to Davies (2000), we bring storylines to our conversations and in the case of these early interview exchanges we brought images, metaphors, experiences with our prior selves as teachers, teacher educators, and variations of critical education whether subsumed under critical literacies, social justice and so on. Our layers of race, class and gender also influence our narratives of criticality and based on these subject positions each of us will have varying interpretations of critical.

Performing Critical Consciousness

Using Judith Butler's theory of performativity I look at how the educators perform critical consciousness in their teaching and in interviews. Butler's work on gender identity is applicable to any identity formation and I draw on it here to illustrate how critical consciousness is a performative act. As Butler (2006) explains, our identities are created through discourse and actions. In other words, critical consciousness, like gender, does not exist within us as a part of our inner core but instead comes to be how we identify or are identified through a repetition of language and thus comes to be reality. Another way to explain that is to think not of critical consciousness as something prior

that shows up in our actions, but instead it is created/enacted/constituted through our actions, often collectively. This way of thinking about critical consciousness has significant implications for teacher education as I explore later in Chapter 6.

Another key aspect of Butler's theory is that performatives are reiterative. Performatives of identities are in constant motion, always being repeated yet never exactly the same since no given context or moment exactly repeats itself. Critical consciousness performances are also reiterative and sometimes read as teleological since Freire's idea about critical consciousness was for the oppressed to learn to read the world and seek/act for better conditions—or an improved humanity. The teacher education literature also constructs critical consciousness as the path toward more equitable teaching that changes learners and the world.

By applying Butler's theory to critical consciousness I suggest consideration of critical consciousness as an identity performance rather than a cognitive ability or psychological state. By conceptualizing critical consciousness as performative, I de-emphasize the individualistic and somewhat essentialized versions of critical consciousness that can be presented in the literature and emphasize the collective, always-in-forming aspects of critical consciousness. To take a closer look at the performative of critical consciousness I first look at what educators said in a focus group about critical consciousness. Second, I consider four pedagogical themes that are enactments of critical consciousness of the educators and simultaneously serve to cultivate critical consciousness in the students. The themes are everyday moments, guiding, a commitment to excellence, and provoking.

In the previous section, “The Politics of Naming”, I have already entered the territory of exploring identity as action by referencing the ways in which the educators sidestepped naming themselves with an identity descriptor such as multicultural educator and instead talked about what they did. Next, I move on to further explore how talk as action (or how action as talk) instantiates performances of critical consciousness.

Constructing Criticality

In the upcoming two sections on performances of critical consciousness there are a few ways I am constructing criticality. As I noted earlier in Chapter 3, I made a key methodological decision not to place the participating educators on any sort of imaginary continuum of criticality. I make no claims that some participating educators are more or less critical than others and accept that by both being nominated by colleagues and then agreeing to participate in this project they understand their work as educators to be enacting critical teaching. I prefer to think instead that the educators perform varied and numerous critically consciousness moments; some moments more visible than others. [A tangle: “non critical” educators can also perform critically conscious moments. This leads one to ask how much is enough? And I think that a dangerous question as it takes us back to a quantifiable or measurable hypothesis/algorithm.] There are layers to actions that I cannot analyze from the participants but can excavate with my own autoethnographic data. An example of a less visible critical enactment is that I have made a purposeful decision to identify the person I am married to as my husband.

Sometimes, I am read as acritical and projecting heteronormativity by people who do not know why I do this. They then reference their spouse with emphasis on the word *partner*, as if wanting me to pick up on the slip I just made. For years, I did call John my

partner as an effort to politically align with gays and lesbians; especially previous to the passing of same-sex marriage. One day, previous to marriage equality in Massachusetts, my friend said with exasperation, “I wish straight people would just own up to their privilege and call their husbands husbands and their wives, wives. Saying ‘partner’ just hides their heterosexual privilege.” Here, my efforts to enact criticality were being read as acritical. I subsequently shifted my language. I share this example not to say that *husband* is a more critical choice than *partner* (because either way it can be read as critical by some and not critical by others), but rather to illustrate that the reflection behind a simple action or word choice, often invisible, can render that action differently than imagined.

There are no clear borders to cross to officially enter a determined realm of critical consciousness. Rather, educators who espouse criticality, are always in the process of building and performing critical consciousness. As Maxine Greene said, “I am what I am not yet”. Thus, in the following sections I avoid what might be interpreted as a case study or portrait of a single educator and instead create a montage of examples of performative moments of critical consciousness. [A tangle: Is there a fine line between what might be considered critical consciousness and what supports/evokes/sustains it? For example, there seems no disagreement that ‘questioning one’s assumptions’ is a part of critical consciousness. So are my previous examples in the prior chapter of relationships and trust a part of the questioning/critical consciousness or a part of what is a support? Does the difference matter?]

Talking about critical consciousness as an identity performance

At the end of the 2012 School Year, after interviewing and visiting participants in their schools, I organized two focus groups – one in the eastern part of the state and one more centrally located. I invited the educators to attend either or both. What follows are excerpts from a conversation about defining critical consciousness. In each, the language is performative in a number of ways. First, by what was not said constructed their critical identities. No one said, “hmm, I have not thought about that” or “I really don’t know”; instead, they spoke with authority. No one hesitated, denied or self-effaced by saying they were not critical or did not know about critical consciousness, even though a few made comments to negate their artistic abilities when I asked them to sketch. Patricia, a professional singer, joked, “Oh oh. I am not a visual artist. Can I sing it?” and Fayth introduced her piece by saying, “ This image is not anything. I wouldn’t hold it up in a museum or anything.” Beatriz also described the heart she drew as not coming out the way she wanted. Second, the first three speakers in what follows placed themselves in their descriptions of critical consciousness. This positioning makes them actors in these critical performances.

Rather than simply asking participating educators to describe or talk about critical consciousness, I considered alternate ways of knowing. Given the research of K.C. Nat Turner (2011) and his assertion that multimodal media production can foster critical literacy, I extend that to the visual arts. Producing a text that is other than traditional writing can foster new interpretations. Therefore, I first asked the educators: “Could you draw a representation of critical consciousness and how you understand it before we talk about it?” After five or so minutes of quiet as they finish up sketching I

said, “The reason I wanted to ask you to do this is we know things other than through words. Anyone want to start sharing how you think about critical consciousness?”

I selected four explanations that represent four distinct (yet overlapping) themes of how the participants spoke about critical consciousness. Rather than reprint their explanations in their entirety I share their descriptions in the form of four poems. Poems, according to Mary Oliver (1994), are the ideas of many and are born in an historical moment. Whether long or brief, poems bring intense focus and a *felt integrity* (p. 54) to the experience within the poem. When a poet is writing about her own experience she tries to bring a sense of loyalty about that experience through the poem. In the case of these four poems, I am inter-tangled with the speaker as I shape a poem from their words through my lens.

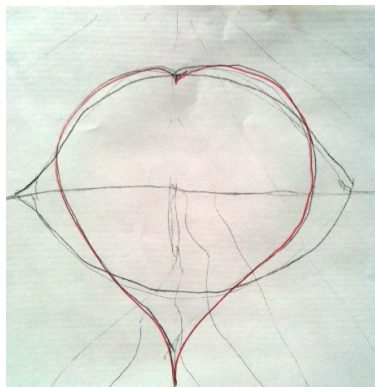
These poems are a distilled interpretation of their narratives. My process for condensing each description to an essence was to first read and reread the transcribed narrative descriptions with an aim to *listen closely* to what Patricia, Fayth, Beatriz and Savannah said that breezy June afternoon in my living room. My rereading of their transcript was coupled with looking at the images as I read. Then to see their explanations in a different way I charted the nouns, verbs and adjectives of each looking for patterns that might highlight any particular emphasis. For example, Beatriz uses *being* five times, more than any other noun or verb. Thus, I created a poem, using only her words, about critical consciousness as being. Lastly, I created *found poems* using only their words, excerpted from the narratives.

Found poems are made of phrases, words from existing texts reordered and placed thoughtfully on the page. “Found poems are the literary equivalent of collage”

(<http://www.poets.org/poetsorg/text/poetic-form-found-poem>). Through many revisions I paid most attention to turning the lines. Line turns are intentional and impact meaning and pace. Oliver (1994) writes of the importance of visual representation in poetry as the increased availability of printed text outmoded oral tradition. Thus, the visuals “give assistance to the mind seeking to ‘hear’ the poem” (p. 56). In my revisions, I considered where to turn the lines, if and how to punctuate, and how each would impact reader’s tempo.

Three of these four educators aligned her explanation, intentionally or not, with another aspect of her identity she values in herself: a dancer, a student of yoga and mediation, and a community activist. In order, the four educators talk of being, structures, feelings, and relationships in context. The poems here are accompanied by their images. The white space of the poems matter too and are a part of my decisions to represent based on interpretation. For example, the structural Marxist rendering aligns evenly on the left margin, in the spiritual poem, the words float through space in a way similar to how Savannah rendered her image.

“It’s a Being Thing”



It has to have a heart place.

It’s being,

a being thing,

a way of being in the world all the time,

being in my history.

Cuba, my grandmother, woman, teacher

being a teacher

It’s about seeing.

It has to be grounded, a sense of roots.

Roots to history, to growing up, to what I know.

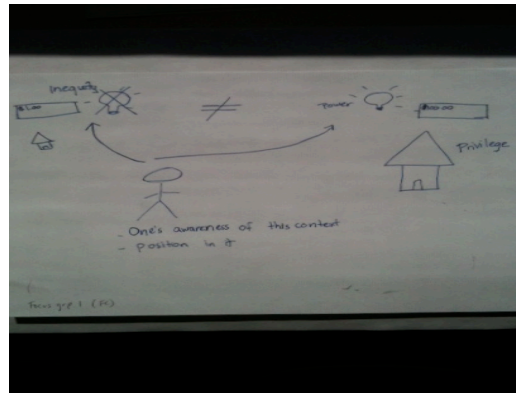
The intellectual family...things that I have read

and people’s ideas who have inspired me.

Beatriz describes critical consciousness as an embodiment through her heart, eyes, and being rooted. She had introduced herself as a teacher at this focus group by saying she was a “dancer first with an integrated arts degree”. I consider artists, dancers in this case, to know and show through their bodies. Her roots are to history, family, and families of ideas and she attributes these to giving them a sense of herself and her

consciousness. Beatriz, in her commentary, states the clearest links between critical consciousness and herself.

Respond



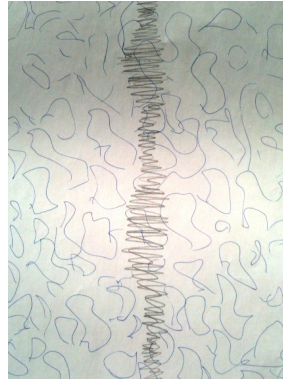
A representation of power and privilege and inequity
symbols of money and a big house for privilege
a dichotomous view

The key is the awareness of this dynamic of
your position, of
the context.

I make sure my students understand the context and the students' position
and respond.

When explaining her sketch, Fayth relates an explanation of critical consciousness that is grounded in a Marxian analysis of power and privilege in relation to wealth and ownership. She does not place herself in the description of critical consciousness until the very end when she connects to the work she tries to do with her students who are preservice teachers – getting them to understand and respond. Similar to a previous section in this chapter and the participants who shaped identities through action, Fayth's own relationship to critical consciousness is through her actions of teaching.

A Spiritual Thing



I am at a stage
more of a feeling than something that has language attached to it

it feels quite spiritual

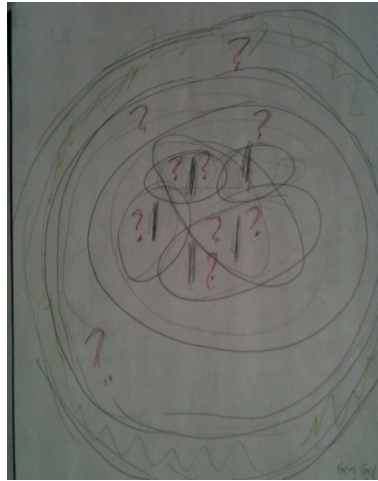
I feel a solid vibration I keep coming back to within myself

shadowy, ephemeral

all the assumptions that need broken up
imagining that things are true
and then remembering that we actually can't rely on them.

Savannah's drawing does have an ephemeral look to it as she describes critical consciousness as something she feels yet cannot fully describe. The grey pencil shading running through the middle, almost looks like a heartbeat, represents the solid vibration she feels. The blue squiggles that fill the background are the "assumptions that need broken apart." Savannah a yoga practitioner, who took a weeklong silent meditation retreat a few weeks before school began so she would be centered for the fall, references critical consciousness as a spiritual connection. She feels it. Perhaps it guides her to think about breaking up her own assumptions.

Connections



People in relationship to one another

own contexts, overlapping contexts, shared contexts, distinctive contexts

who they are and the questions that they are willing, are able

to generate around the circumstances in their lives

power is accorded to different circumstances

relationships, naming love coming to these relationships, inferring love and heart.

Teaching at its very best is a loving act.

Patricia, formerly a teacher educator and now involved in numerous community equity projects as researcher, as consultant, and as participant, emphasizes relationships.

The interconnecting ovals and circles represent contexts and connections. The question marks are attributed to the questions that people ask and are willing to consider. Patricia did not indicate any part of the image that represented her reference to love but rather followed up on Beatriz's explanation, "I really love the idea of Beatriz naming love and coming to these relationships are inferring love and heart. "

Inviting these educators to tell me about critical consciousness, asking ways to teach for criticality and how to think about teacher education constructs them and the conversation as critical. I looked to them as experts, if one could say it is possible to be

an expert in this area. If not experts, at least well experienced in thinking about selves, students, contexts and teaching/learning. I am not engaging in an analysis of discourse that seeks to identify ideologies or grand narratives within their explanations, but rather demonstrate that their talk is a performative of critical consciousness.

Performing Critically Consciousness Teaching: Four Pedagogical Themes

Classrooms are sites of performativity through language, discourses and the material. Margaret Edson (2008), playwright and educator, talks of teaching as a “breath-based event...whatever we have to offer is stored within our bodies...withholding nothing” (n.p.). The educators of this project do not perform a stagnant critically conscious identity but continually form and reform it again and again. Their actions through curricular choices and pedagogical moves are constitutive actions that form themselves as critical. In this section I focus on four pedagogical themes or practices that are enactments of critical consciousness of the educators, which may also serve to cultivate critical consciousness in the students. These themes in and of themselves do not make or guarantee criticality but they can each be seen as an entangled part of critical teaching. Reconsidering the metaphor of an entanglement, a gathering together of instances constructs criticality of what may look banal when standing alone. They address my research question that asked how do educators enact critical consciousness and at the same time answers what sustains or evokes critical consciousness. Their actions are one way of sustaining their own consciousness, and perhaps the consciousness of students. The themes are: attending to everyday moments, guiding, developing analytical thinking, and provoking. Rather than addressing each theme one by one in four

separate sections I share a few examples in a series of *snapshots* from my visits with educators and consider the entanglement among the four. The snapshots are through words and may describe a classroom event, repeat a classroom conversation, or create a montage of lines said, questions posed, by various educators. Some of these instances are collapsed over time. This is primarily a decision for organization for the reader. Of course it does also have analytical and theoretical implications such as raising questions of accuracy, and trustworthiness. But by now I suspect the reader knows I am not making any causal arguments, nor making any claims of assurance, but rather I am noticing, looking for possible connections, and reconsidering. In the places where I collapse I aim to select where sequence appears not matter. For example, instead of writing about two separate instances visiting Beatriz; one where she talks about walking in lines with the students, and one where she addresses a question about slavery, I write it as one visit. I do not merge different conversations together as if they were one. I keep conversations intact.

* * *

Beatriz, a co-principal who both administers and teaches part-time in the fourth grade had just finished herding the class from recess back to the classroom in a sort of disorderly orderliness. Skipping the school protocol for quiet lines for a few days she then facilitated a discussion about what the children thought of the need for lines and where lines might be important. The students commented on lines being important when having to wait a turn, or sometimes for safety. They did not think they were as necessary in schools but brought up that being quiet was respectful of the learning happening in the classrooms they passed. One little girl noted that ‘sort of a line’ is a good idea in case

there are other classes and kids moving through the hallways. The fourth grade decided that they did not need to walk in perfectly straight lines of absolute silence but they should walk in a semblance of a line using quiet voices. Lines – a common practice of control, orderliness and routine are rarely questioned by students and teachers. It is just the way of moving in schools. Later during reading groups, Beatriz was reading about Phyllis Wheatley with a group of all girls. At one point a student defends the slave master in the story, “he may have had 50 slaves but that’s Ok because at least he built an orphanage with them.” Beatriz hesitated, “hmmm. I see.” And then, “It can be hard to decide what was right or wrong because at that time in history slavery was a common practice.” Another girl then asks, “ Didn’t Phyllis get sold twice?”

“I don't think so”, responds Beatriz, “But let’s check.”

* * *

Protestant, what’s the root word?

Protest!

Protestantism was a movement against the Catholic Church and Lutheranism is a form of Protestantism.

Is Christianity and Catholic the same?

Jocelyn begins to draw out three large umbrellas on the white board labeled Islam, Judaism and Christianity, then lists many branches of Christianity under that umbrella.

What about Mormons?

They have multiple kids, I mean, wives.

I know you are laughing because Jason made a funny mistake. But this is also a good time to think about that at times you might find some things about different religions

uncomfortable or shocking. And I know some kids in this school do not feel comfortable sharing about their religion. So it is my responsibility and your responsibility to create an environment where we can share aspects of our lives.

So how can Mormonism be Christianity if it allows for multiple wives?

There are different interpretations and different branches of any religion.

Ok I am confused. I was baptized an Episcopal so am I not a Christian?

Episcopal is a type of Christianity and baptism is a ritual that differs among different types or sects of a religion.

So when I was baptized the priest crossed out godmother and wrote in Christian witness.

Why? If we are all Christians?

That is an example of how power or conflict can play out in and among religions.

Did you have to practice a religion in Europe?

It depended on location and the power of the Catholic church and ...well...ok, I shouldn't say that...., but non-believers were often persecuted or killed.

* * *

“MCAS makes me feel terrible about all the knowledge I lack.”

Emma is working with five high school students who in some ways are outcasts at the high school. They struggle to read, one boy has autism, and one of the girls is struggling with severe anxiety. They come to this separate room for language arts. With a small group, they can receive special supports. With MCAS not far away, and their dislike, fear, and humiliation about the test, Emma uses a teacher written poem for the day's reading and writing response.

Revolution for the Tested

Kate Messner

Write

But don't write what they tell you to.
Don't write formulaic paragraphs
Counting sentences as you go
Three-Four-Five-Done.
Put your pencil down.

Don't write to fill in lines.
For a weary scorer earning minimum wage
Handing out points for main ideas
Supported by examples
From the carefully selected text.

Write for yourself.
Write because until you do,
You will never understand
What it is you mean to say
Or who you want to be.
Write because it makes you whole.

And write for the world.
Because your voice is important.
Write because people are hurting
Because animals are dying
Because there is injustice
That will never change if you don't.
Write because it matters.

And know this.
They'll tell you it won't make a difference,
Not to trouble over grown up tings,
Just fill in the lines
And leave it at that.
Tell them you know the truth.
That writing is powerful.
Just one voice on the page
Speaks loudly.
And not only can a chorus of those united change the world.
It is the only thing that ever has.

* * *

Why do you think that?.... What makes you think that?Ok, an evolution you say-an evolution of what?

You can include things in your observation you don't really understand.

Read and decide if you support, refute or want to qualify.

What skills are you looking to improve in this assignment?How will you challenge yourself in the next project?

Does the Mali empire defy conceptions of African history?

So you can't just say that is a strong or weak argument. Why? What is present in the text? Is it a restatement?

Look at the text guys-you are just pulling things out of the air.

Are there any pieces that evoke a strong emotion? Describe the piece and the emotion

This pastiche of teacher statements and the above classroom snapshots represent some of the ways the educators, through everyday moments attend to critical thinking with high expectations, guide students to new perspectives and draw own conclusions, and trying to provoke their thinking. In and of themselves they are not novel or groundbreaking but they serve to illustrate that enacting criticality most often happens in

everyday moments. Patricia, former teacher educator, now community activist says, “ the critical is also in the stuff we take for granted. The power is in reflecting on those moments and the dominant frames of reference.” Jocelyn considers critical consciousness as being provoked, “often in the teeny tiny moments, and often through language. They are reoccurring moments, not just every once in a while. It is really just about being embedded in how we exist together.” These mundane moments can be compared to the way Michel de Certeau (1984), in *The Practices of Everyday Life* looked at routine daily practices as creative and sometimes as moves against structures of government. The creative doing of these educators are small, daily moves to counter dominant discourses about teaching, learning and knowing. Daniel Liston (2008) frames some of these moments as love. Attending to needs of students, to discern what they need and how to engage each one with the world, is framed as attentive love. This attentiveness happens constantly in the “apparently empty and everyday moments” (p. 390). Critical teaching looks different from one situation to the next. While the overall goal of critical teaching might be radical transformation, it is important to acknowledge the *little disruptions* (Ayers, Michie, Rome, 2004) that come from what may seem modest teacher efforts. Attending to the everyday might not always look like the imaginary of critical teaching, but rereading these moments as moments in an arch of becoming reshapes how critical is read.

Onward

At the beginning of this chapter I considered how the politics of naming impacts participants identity affiliations. Then I plugged in Judith Butler’s performativity theory to demonstrate how critically conscious identities can be performed in talk (interviews)

and through pedagogical practices. The interview data I focused on was the educators' descriptions of critical consciousness. It was here that I highlight treating them as informants who experience critical consciousness themselves. In the last third of the chapter, I address four pedagogical themes that ran across the work of the majority of the participants. These practices in and of themselves do not necessarily equate to critically conscious teaching but work in concert, or as a pedagogical entanglement, with critically conscious performances.

In the following and final chapter, I summarize the findings from this study and group them as critical consciousness as an entanglement, performance, a collective experience, and embodied. I then discuss a number of implications for teacher education including intentionally integrating aesthetic experiences, using critical literacy as a tool to achieve socially just and multicultural goals, and shaping a teacher education that is reflexive about subjectivities via critical ontology (Kincheloe, 2003). After making a few recommendations for further research, I bring this dissertation to a close with a coda – intended not only conclude but also to open up new lines of questioning/flight.

CHAPTER 6

RECONCEPTUALIZING CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION: IS IT LOVE?

“It has to have a heart place” –Beatriz, principal

This project has been both liberating and frustrating. At times it has been joyful to engage in writing messy texts and gently pushing at the boundaries of what has been considered traditional academic writing. The reading, writing, re/reading and re/writing sometimes opened new possibilities for me as I engaged in thinking about education, social change and being/becoming. Other times, the medium of print was frustrating and the linearity of a text got in the way of my efforts to capture my envisioning of entanglements. The entanglements themselves caused considerable dilemmas. For example, where was love to go? It can be represented as a relation, an emotion, a pedagogy. Does love evoke and sustain critical consciousness or is it an enactment of critical consciousness? Does love get its own section and if so where? Does love weave throughout and if so does that become redundant?

Perhaps, the most simultaneously liberating and frustrating is that my new understandings from engaging in the reading-writing-thinking of this research encouraged me to revise plans and revise the writing of this study. New connections and insights brought renewed curiosity and sometimes joy. At the same time, I had to abandon other revision possibilities, if not, I would be caught in an unending cycle of re/constructing this dissertation. For example, at this very moment of typing these lines

and as I draw the project to a close, I wonder what shape would this dissertation take if I did weave love throughout all sections. Thus, an end product is liberating. I can close this chapter and start anew, building on what I have learned thus far. And yet an end product is frustrating. It continues to not quite match how I keep re/envisioning it as I continue to become.

I enjoyed all my time spent in schools and talking with educators. Even though each of them expressed anger or frustration at some point, they, like me, continue to seek new ways of engaging students to consider what is just, and new perspectives. This experience spending time in schools has brought me cautious hope. As Cornel West states in his commencement address at Wesleyan University, there is a need for hope rather than optimism:

There is a need for audacious hope. And it's not optimism...Optimism is a notion that there's sufficient evidence that would allow us to infer that if we keep doing what we're doing, things will get better. I don't believe that. I'm a prisoner of hope, that's something else. Cutting against the grain, against the evidence. William James said it so well in that grand and masterful essay of his of 1879 called "The Sentiment of Rationality," where he talked about faith being the courage to act when doubt is warranted. And that's what I'm talking about. (West, 1993, n.p.).

I say cautious hope because pervasive neoliberal mindset and practices have a tight grip on education. I have to and want to hang on to hope even when I am not that hopeful. As a teacher educator who supervises student teachers and graduate teaching interns, I visit a number of schools and hear of the challenges of many of my current and previous students. In despair they report seven year olds practicing how to fill in bubbles for future standardized tests, recesses cut from early grades to add more time on task, no excuses charter schools where demerits for untucked shirts or a lax raised hand accumulate to detentions and suspensions for youth, mainly of color, in urban centers,

and a breadth of data collection as the panacea for all that is deemed wrong with school and teaching. In the schools, these practices along with the greater societal inequities that continue to marginalize students and families can bring despair. Yet, West (1999) reminds us that “despair and hope are inseparable. One can never understand what hope is really about unless one wrestles with despair “ (p. 554).

Freire (2007) claimed hope not out of stubbornness or ignorance to the discourses of despair in schools and nations, but in connection to dreaming about the possibilities of the future. Hope then goes hand-in-hand with education, which is a *permanent search* (p. 87) as beings always in the process of becoming. “Hope is a natural, possible, and necessary impetus in the context of our unfinishedness “ (Freire, 1998, p. 69). Thus, our constant search for more, different, better, as educators is in itself an *expression of hope* (p. 69).

I remain hopeful that spaces of change matter and can spread and interconnect. This project is my expression of hope. Knowing there are others like Fayth and Patricia fostering critical consciousness among preservice teachers and connecting teacher education to communities; like Jocelyn, Emma and Kadejah who push their high school students to consider new perspectives and engage in critical analysis; like James and Beatriz who lead schools to be more equitable and encourage teachers to consider the role of race and class in education; and finally, like Savannah and Melissa, both first year teachers at the time of this study, who engaged in reflexive awareness about their positionality as they planned, taught and developed relationships with students. In this final chapter, I briefly review findings from the literatures and this study, then consider

implications for reconstructing critical consciousness, teacher education, and future research. I close the chapter with new questions about love.

Summary of Findings/Constructions

Now that Elizabeth St. Pierre has me questioning what data is and what we do with data, I question the word findings. That word – findings – makes me think of to find, found, lost and found, as if something was hiding from all of us that I uncovered or located. The online Merriam Webster Dictionary defines find as to discover, to obtain, and to come upon. These all infer something was in existence awaiting my discovery. I wonder if findings would be better named constructions. I drew on theories, literatures, methodologies, interactions with educators, and reflections on my subjectivities to construct the following ways I represent critical consciousness. My research questions: What provokes and sustains critical consciousness?, How do educators talk about and enact critical consciousness? And how can the experiences of critically conscious educators inform teacher education? were designed to try and approach a study of critical consciousness with fresh eyes. In essence the available literatures have answered these questions but often from a modernist or critical framework. What I construct through feminist and poststructural theories creates new possibilities for framing critical consciousness and for teacher education.

From the Literatures

A goal of addressing critical consciousness is apparent in a number of pedagogies that aim for more just and democratic education experiences and outcomes: critical literacy, multicultural education, social justice education, anti-oppressive education, and

critical pedagogy. But when looking specifically for critical consciousness connected to teacher education, the predominant pedagogy and majority of the research is situated in multicultural education³². The focus of many of these studies is on a race consciousness and positions critical consciousness as something mainly for white teachers to acquire to be able to teach children of color. As I wrote earlier in this dissertation, I believe critical consciousness is a necessary enactment for all teachers and all children, even though I, in turn, also focus mainly on race in this study. I am not sure if that is a contradiction, an indication of the pervasive discourse of race in the United States, or a reflection of my subjective lenses. Maybe a bit of all three. I could claim that race is in the data – and it is, but why? How did my own social and professional networks influence who was nominated for this study – educators who think and talk a lot about race? Does race seem prominent because of what I heard and recorded in my notes, unaware of, say, how often gender was raised? Or is it prominent because of what I select to attend to from my corpus of data? I think my attention to race is in part connected to my social networks and institutional contexts. Race talk is predominant in a few of the spaces I engage with at my college and recently it has been bubbling up in other spaces campus wide. Talking about race and racism in institutional spaces is often contentious but contention is where/when new understandings can be constructed.

Within the realm of race, I believe it is necessary to reframe critical consciousness as not only for whites to attain to teach children of color. In terms of race, color does not always equate to consciousness, as hegemony is a powerful shaper of ideologies. And

³² These differing pedagogies do overlap. For example, a tenet of multicultural education is that it is teaching for social justice (Nieto & Bode, 2011). Critical literacy stems from critical pedagogy and different approaches within anti-oppressive education can align with any of the other pedagogies (Kumashiro, 2000).

engaging white students in consciousness raising only seems to make sense if educators want the world to be more just.

A second theme in the literature about critical consciousness is the framing of critical consciousness as an individual, cognitive experience. Similar to critical literacy, it is often grounded in the rational as the focus in teacher education courses is getting students to question assumptions, engage in analysis of power, and critique the status quo. Most of these practices happen in single course experiences and, of late, critical consciousness has become an objective in teacher education. It is seen as something that can be taught. My research project suggests that rational engagement is only one of necessary aspects, or entanglements of critical consciousness.

In terms of research design, two patterns are most relevant here. The first is that most of the literature is similar to self-studies. Teacher educators write about and collect work samples from the classes they teach. They are studying their own classes but not necessarily themselves. The focus is on student learning, but not as much on the ways in which the teacher educator practices may construct or inhibit enactments of critical consciousness. The second important pattern is that the studies about critical consciousness and teaching primarily focus on preservice teachers with little attention to inservice teachers. This dissertation attempts to add new perspectives to the literature by attending to my role in constructing critical consciousness and through the construction of a project that involves inservice teachers.

Critical Consciousness as an Entanglement

In Chapter 4, I borrowed the concept of entanglement from Karen Barad (2003) and attempted to demonstrate that critical consciousness is a dynamic entanglement of knowledge, emotion and relations. An entanglement represents the synchronous intra-activity of things and ideas, or the material-discursive in a process of becoming. Taken up by Barad and other feminist new materialists, entanglements can demonstrate ways of thinking about identity performances as interconnected with the material world. This onto-epistemological stance does not privilege knowing over being or the discursive over the material (i.e. emotions, bodies, environment). In this study then, critical consciousness is not a source that constructs our identities or initiates our actions, but is produced in moments of entanglements or intra-actions with knowledge, emotions and relationships.

Rather than positing critical consciousness as only rational thinking or a cognitive activity, I aimed to illustrate how knowing, feeling, and relating each play a role in critically consciousness enactments. While critical consciousness has often been constructed as an individual's mindset, I argue that it is an embodied experience that is also collective. Through an exploration of participants' talk and actions, as well as reflection on my own moves as a researcher, I began by considering the work emotions do in relation to criticality. Sara Ahmed's (2004a) theory of emotions as relational offered insights about ways emotions can work to move persons toward and away from each other and toward or away from engaging in the reflection necessary for critical engagement. Using Savannah as an example, I addressed how discomfort can propel teachers or students to engage with ideas and realizations that made them uncomfortable

rather than the oft-expected reaction of shutting down their engagement. Savannah embraced discomfort as a signal that there was something she needed to attend to in her own learning.

I primarily focused on the role of discomfort since it is a primary discourse in courses that address race, class, gender and power, such as in my experiences teaching *Racial and Cultural Identities*. Discomfort also was a common feeling a number of the participants spoke of directly in relation to their enactments of critical consciousness. Savannah's explanation of the role of discomfort for her initiated my subsequent section that focused on discomfort and public versus private spaces. Here the consideration was how racialized spaces shape comfort for whom. In the discourses at my institution and one of the high schools in this study, white discomfort is allowed to become public whereas discomfort for students of color was often left to their private spheres.

Using Ahmed's theory of emotions as relational underscores the entanglement of emotions and relationships within critical consciousness. Disentangling emotions from relationships is necessary for this study so I can consider the nuances of critical consciousness and yet it is somewhat of a false distinction since they seem almost inseparable in the study of a construct (critical consciousness) that is emphasizing human connections. But to answer one of my research questions, how is critical consciousness evoked and sustained?, I did tease out relational enactments as separate from the work of emotions.

In the final section of Chapter 4, I considered the work relationships do in constructing critical consciousness. Having an awareness of the role of relations in enacting critical consciousness is central to my argument that critical consciousness is

collective and public rather than an individual, private act and so I will say more about relations in the section that follows: critical consciousness as a collective.

Finally, to conclude Chapter 4, I take up one more entanglement—that of love. I refer to love as an entanglement because it can overlap into the realms of affect, relationships, and pedagogy. In that chapter I discussed love as a relationship enacted through anger, trust, and response-ability (Oliver, 2001). In these instances love is not merely an emotion felt by the educators but as action – actions of engaging in relationships. The anger of the educators over the treatment of children, usually told through stories of the marginalization of children of color, invoked love as action through renewed dedication to students. The injustices they witness fuel their work and initiate new commitments, new engagements and they recommit themselves to teaching as an act of love (Nieto, 2003). I also frame love as trust as I witnessed many educator-student exchanges where trust was a way of relating. As a third way I consider love in action is to plug in Kelly Oliver’s representation of responsibility as response-ability, the ways educators create spaces for students to respond as subjects, not just be acted on through schooling as objects. Considering love as action in educational spaces equates love as political-ethical. Defining love as a political-ethical construct rather than an emotion raises questions about the entanglement of love with criticality; are they one in the same? Does one invoke the other? It is these questions that I take up in the coda of this final chapter.

Critical consciousness as performative

In the second findings chapter, I consider critical consciousness as performative and performed. I apply Judith Butler's theory of performativity to suggest that it is not a critically consciousness identity that is expressed through language and action, but rather it is language, discourse, and action that constitute a critically consciousness identity. My role as researcher here is key in this chapter because through my interviewing practices and facilitating of focus groups, I am in part shaping the participants as critical. I first, in a section called "The Politics of Naming", find that my positioning of participants and their repositioning around how they identify is part of a critical identity. Participating educators did not commit to claiming an identity through a label such as multicultural educator but instead referenced the ways they teach or the actions they do. Identity thus is constructed out of action. In a subsequent section, I position the educators as the *experts* in a focus group and listen in hopes of learning from them about critical consciousness. Through sketches and conversation they attempt to describe critical consciousness. I say attempt because we all discovered it is an ephemeral construct when it comes to offering specific descriptions. In these focus group settings, the performative is through our engagement with each other explaining critical consciousness and discussing its relevance to teacher education. We are constituting ourselves and each other through this dialogue. Then, through a poetic analysis of their definitions and descriptions, the themes of embodiment, relations, and affect were apparent – the same entanglements I wrote about in Chapter 4.

A final finding that I selected to include in this dissertation is the inclusion of four pedagogical themes or practices: attending to everyday moments, supporting critical-

analytical thinking, guiding, and provoking. These pedagogical practices in and of themselves do not construct criticality or guarantee critically conscious teaching performances. Yet, reconsidering the metaphor of an entanglement, a gathering together of instances constructs criticality of what standing alone, may look banal. The educators rethought use of their own language while teaching, made use of opportunities to explore or question the language of students as two main ways of attending to the everyday moments. Educators also aimed to guide students to make their own judgments about ethical and political issues in the classroom rather than, in the words of Jocelyn, “indoctrinating them”. Developing analytical thinking and questioning among their students was high on all the educators’ priority list. While I do argue earlier that a pedagogy of critical consciousness that relies only on the rational is likely to fail, I do want to be sure and acknowledge that critical analysis is an important part of the knowledge-emotions-relations entanglement. And finally, these critical educators aimed to provoke as well as acknowledged feeling provoked at times. Using performativity as a lens, rather than conceptualizing critical consciousness as a state of being, I suggest it be reconceptualized as a performative becoming.

I remember starting off on this project and embracing the opportunity to invite myself to any number of schools and classrooms, seeking exciting critical spaces. I definitely saw teaching and exchanges that I found exciting, but I also realized that there is an imaginary of what critical teaching (social justice, multicultural education, anti-oppressive) looks like. In that imaginary the mundane, the routine, the failures are omitted.

Critical Consciousness as Collective

Relations take up important work in initiating, shaping and sustaining critical consciousness. Rather than considering critical consciousness as an independent action, it is co-constructed by engaging with others. Relational work is key to the educators in this study. I highlighted their engagement with ideological allies to embolden their pedagogies and their focused efforts to be mindfully present, or intentional with students. Then with the help of Deleuze and Guatarri (1995), I considered how the interaction of social relations in spaces may create instances or opportunities to reterritorialize.

I end Chapter 4 with an important question about relationships – what is the role of students in constructing critical consciousness? Most often in the literature the focus is on the efforts of the classroom teacher or teacher educator to incite critical consciousness among the students. It is a one-way, top-down, if you will, energy-force. By sharing some exchanges in Kedejah's English class, and by recalling some exchanges in my own teaching, I suggest that students are a key part of shaping the consciousness of teachers and fellow students. Through the emphasis in Chapter 4 on emotions as relational and on social relations, I position critical consciousness as a collective, public experience rather than solely individual and private. Critical consciousness is not just reflexive awareness but intersubjective.

Enactments of critical consciousness are with and for others. They are with others as there is no self without the other. Identities meet in order to be possible (Berrigan & Nhat Hanh, 1975). Critically conscious identity enactments are also with others in the ways I demonstrated the entanglement of emotions and relations, neither happen solely alone. Critical consciousness is *for* others in that the impetus for critical consciousness is

to dream and shape a more just world. Thus, critical consciousness is intersubjective. As inter-subjects “our actions and thoughts are not reducible to us alone” (Crossley, 1996, p. 173). Intersubjectivity, argues Crossley is the “fabric of our social becoming” (p. 173). Our words, our relationships, our actions are always in relation to others and always shaping the world. Intersubjectivity is of shared thoughts, meanings and actions (Crossley, 1996). This is not unlike definitions of culture and Terry Eagleton (2000) makes the comparison of culture as universal subjectivity. Rather than reading that as a sameness, consider universal as collective. Then, critical consciousness is a collective re/engagement with others to re/shape culture.

Critical Consciousness as Embodied

An important finding that surfaces when considering that critical consciousness is an entanglement of knowing and feeling is that critical consciousness is also embodied. Drawing on the ancient practice of yoga, one does not gain a consciousness through only a study of the sutras (philosophies) but through both an engagement with the body in the asanas (poses) as well as reading the sutras. The work of the body brings the teachings and consciousness to a place of awareness (Iyengar, 2005). To draw a parallel to teaching and critical consciousness, then we do not always have to attend to and *master* the mind first (study) and then enact (do) relationships and critical pedagogies with our bodies but should think of the relationship as dialectical.

Merleau Ponty’s (1962) theorization of what we know as thoughts are the results of what we know or understand through our body is an overarching guide for thinking about my engagement with the research process, findings about the agency of emotions,

representing critical consciousness as embodiment, and the method of performance ethnography. Reasoning develops out of experiences with the body as bodies interact with other subjects and the environment (Johnson, 1999). Or, as stated by Ian Burkitt (1999), “knowledge is located primarily in the experiences of the active body” (p. 5). Subjects’ sense of self and critical knowing is rooted in their bodies – the feel, their experiences, their movement through time and space (Burkitt, 1999). “The body is the medium for sense-making” (Macintyre, Latta and Buck, 2007, p. 316). Thus, critical consciousness, which is usually presented as cognitive engagement, then is reformed as an embodied phenomena. The entangled nature of critical consciousness is onto-epistemological (Barad, 2003) or an experiencing of being-knowing.

Implications for Teacher Education

What might it mean then for teacher education if we conceptualize critical consciousness as performative, collective (intersubjective), and embodied? I want to offer a number of considerations for teacher education. But first I want to emphasize that these implications are intended to build upon the current practices of attending to pre-service teachers’ engagement with critical thinking as analysis (Doughty, 2006; Zamudio, Rios & Jamie, 2008) and developing their knowledge of histories, perspectives, and tools of varying disciplines (i.e. sociological constructs). Rational engagement is a necessary part of critical consciousness. Being able to think critically, analyze, question, and wonder all work synchronously with the entanglements of critical consciousness I highlight in this study. These proposals can be taken up by individuals within individual coursework but

will be more impactful if programs can consider how to address implications across multiple teacher education experiences.

Attending to the Performative

For teacher education to consider critical consciousness as performative enactments attention to discourse, power and the tool of critical literacy can be considered. Attending to the performative also suggests acknowledging that critical consciousness is an on-going becoming where attending to the everyday moments acknowledge the ruptures in preservice teachers ways of being and naming the P/political (Janks, 2010).

Discourse and Power/knowledge

I do not advocate for any one definition of discourse over another because teacher education pedagogy would benefit from different approaches to studying multiple meaning of discourse and multiple discourses. If a main focus in critical consciousness pedagogy is the critique of power and ideology, and ideology is achieved through language (Fairclough, 2001; Janks, 2010; Pennycook, 2001) then it is necessary to attend to the role of discourse. Another focus of critical consciousness pedagogy is the examination of one's assumptions and identity. Here too, discourse studies would offer ways of looking at how persons are recognized, or not, within social groups (Gee, 2005) and how our subjectivities are constituted (Davies, 2000).

David Bloome and his colleagues (Bloome et al., 2008) organize theories of discourse into four categories: discourse as text, discourse as language-in-use, discourse as identity, and discourse as rationality/truth/commonsense. Analyzing discourse as text

would require teacher educators to look at multiple representations of texts; texts as print, as spoken, as semiotic. Texts can also be reconceptualized to include all that we can *read* such as everyday practices and lived curriculum (Botelho & Leoni, 2008).

Discourse as language-in-use might include a close look at Fairclough's (2001) three explanations of discourse as a form of social practice. Preservice teachers and teacher educators can look at how language is woven into society and does not stand separate from society. The dialectics of discourse and society is Fairclough's first premise: each informs and shapes the other. Neither function as independent from the other. Examples of how persons shape the language of technology and how the languages of technology shape us offer just one of many examples for preservice teachers to explore. Second, Fairclough explains discourse as social processes of producing and interpreting texts. Texts are produced and interpreted based on social interactions which are connected to the identities of the participants. What do preservice teachers draw on to produce and interpret texts? The same question can be asked of P-12 students as preservice teachers plan curriculum and pedagogy. Third, the production and interpretation of texts are socially conditioned processes or influenced by society. Texts are not consumed and produced as individual cognitive acts but in relation to social conditions.

Using James Gee's (2005) definition of Discourse as an identity kit is one example of Bloome and colleagues' discourse as identity category. Gee defines Discourse as a "dance that exists in the abstract as a coordinated pattern of words, deeds, values, beliefs, symbols, tools, ...as a performance that is recognizable..." (p. 28). The key to Gee's concept of discourse as identity is recognition. Persons recognized as certain types

of people who do certain types of things have then “pulled off a Discourse” (p. 27). This theory of discourse provides opportunities for preservice teachers to explore themselves as well as look at who their students are, without essentializing either.

Discourse as rationality and truth brings us to the work of Michel Foucault. Discourses are bodies of knowledge which overlap and intersect. Discourses are often written about separately but they interact with one another (Foucault, 1972). For Foucault, his writings on madness, criminality and sexuality might take the appearance of three separate discourses. Yet each inform the other in subtle and not so subtle ways. This review separates the discourses of multicultural education, race, and teacher preparation for the purposes of writing, but they are interdiscursive along with others that I did choose not to include (i.e., class, globalization). Discourses form over time and in interaction with us.

Discourses, as bodies of knowledge are also systems of power. It is power that produces or sustains truth through discourse and thus power/knowledge represents this intimate connection (Foucault, 1980). Since power produces knowledges and “knowledge bolsters power” (Janks, 2010, p. 50) power \leftrightarrow knowledge can represent the dialecticism between the two. The concept of discourse as bodies of knowledge may challenge preservice teachers but exploring how power/knowledge is formed and exercised through techniques (Foucault, 1977/1995) such as classroom management principles and state tests makes that concept more accessible.

Since discourse is in all that we do and constructs who we are, then studying discourse in teacher education will allow for preservice teachers to see multiple truths and question dominant forms of knowledge. Infusing critical discourse analysis or critical

language awareness into teacher education is one pedagogical tool to bring theories of language and discourse studies into the conversation about critical consciousness.

Engaging Critical Literacy for Critical Multicultural Education

Many empirical and conceptual pieces from critical literacy studies do address critical consciousness (Comber & Wells, 2001; Cooper & White, 2008), yet rarely is that construct explicitly used. Readers may ask why I suggest that pedagogies of critical consciousness in critical multicultural education include critical literacy. Is not a Freirian perspective of multicultural education (or critical pedagogy) a form of critical literacy? It is and yet critical literacy has changed since the linguistic turn. As poststructural theory grew out of critiques of structuralism, language was re-examined and re-conceptualized as something that produced meaning and power rather than just reflected its existence in reality. Taking up critical literacy theory within multicultural education requires a broader scope and re-envisions Freire's pedagogies and goals (Kamler, 2001).

Critical literacy is often described as theory (Berhman, 2006), an orientation to literacy (Wooldridge, 2001) and as attitudinal and a way of being (White, 2008). It offers a perspective from which to include the study of discourse. Theoretically, critical literacy offers a number of ways to “study the relations of power and political contexts” (Comber & Simpson, 2001, p. 273). According to Barbara Comber and Anne Simpson (2001), critical literacy examines power through textual practices, explores identity, promotes questioning, and builds new knowledge along with new teaching practices. Using discourse analysis to study how language constitutes subjectivities and identities would address the goals of multicultural teacher educators who are incorporating consciousness-raising pedagogies in their courses.

A challenge for some educators to take up critical literacy is its focus on varied and layered theory rather than on practice (Berhman, 2006). A literature review completed by Berhman (2006) identified broad categories of critical literacy practice. These included: reading supplementary texts, reading multiple texts, reading from a resistant perspective, producing counter texts, conducting student-choice research, and taking social action. There is a place for all of these practices in all courses of teacher preparation programs.

A critical literacy perspective is not just about how to look at students, whether preservice teachers or P-12 students, but how to understand our own assumptions and practices as teacher educators. Nathalie Wooldridge (2001) offers four guiding questions that she and her colleagues use to read their own teaching:

- What view of knowledge do we present? (Who has it? Where is it found? What counts?)
- How else might the lesson have been taught/the aims achieved?
- How do we construct ourselves as teachers in the lesson and how are the students constructed?
- What are the students learning besides particular content? (p. 267)

By taking up these questions, teacher educators can generate new meaning in the relationship among critical consciousness, critical multicultural education and critical literacy. That work has begun in some spaces. Joyce King (1991) calls for a critical literacy approach to disrupt preservice teachers' dysconsciousness³³. Hilary Janks (2010)

³³ Dysconsciousness as described by Joyce King is a misinformed way of thinking about society and inequality which limits our ways of knowing. This construct is how King explains "being

references the scholarship of Sonia Nieto. Jerri Willet, Judith Solsken, and Jo-Anne Wilson-Keenan (1999) join critical language studies in the “dialogue about multicultural education” (p. 166). Critical multicultural analysis (Botelho & Rudman, 2009) is a powerful example of the infusion of critical literacies as tools for analytically reading children’s and young adult literature to meet the goals of critical multicultural education. These are good beginnings and more collaboration across these fields is necessary to prepare critical teachers.

Attending to the Collective

Considering critical consciousness as a public, collective experience can significantly reshape some of the practices in teacher education. Use of dialogue in preservice education classes is often cited as a practice that initiates or supports critical consciousness, thus there is an inferred need for the collective. Yet, most of the data for studies is individually created work such as papers and reflection journals. What might result from collaborative projects that involved art, drama, interviewing community members, or a group final product? Considering collaborative inquiry among classes or cohorts (Botelho & Gibson-Gates, 2008) or a collaborative problem-solution project (Stenhouse & Jarrett, 2012) could create smooth spaces (Deleuze and Guatarri, 1987) and more opportunities for the collectivity of critical consciousness.

It is commonly understood that teachers in schools need colleagues to support them but finding ideological allies is not always easy and many social justice teachers, like Emma of this project, feel alone or marginalized. A second implication for teacher educators is to consider our own roles and opportunities in creating networks of critical

misinformed” as a result of what discourses are made available to us rather than situating blame within individual fault or characteristics.

teachers. Connecting current students with alumni, becoming involved in identifying mentors for student teachers, recruiting prospective teachers, and linking interested students with local and national groups such as Teacher Activist Groups (TAG) are all possibilities for teacher educators to support growing networks (Ritchie, 2012). A related implication is to consider our own relationships with our students.

Developing close relationships in typical graduate teacher education programs is not always easy because of the short time span of most programs and contact through only one or two classes. With undergraduates it is somewhat easier because of their life on campus. I have found that attending sporting events or plays that my students are in, going to occasional ‘town hall’ meetings where students discuss campus life, and eating in the dining hall now and then are all ways of connecting with my students.

I recall the first time I joined a service learning trip to New Orleans, just after Hurricane Katrina hit. It was during January break and I was sitting at Logan Airport early in the morning with thirty undergraduates and two other faculty members. The sun was rising over the runway, I was tired and sipping coffee while some of the more awake students were chatting, laughing and playing card games. I remember thinking why did I give up my time off from students, my time to re-energize to not only be with students to facilitate learning but travel and live with them for a week? I felt deep regret for agreeing to go on this trip. Of course, it turned out to be one of the best decisions I’ve made in relation to my teaching and I have returned numerous times. Working side by side with students to put up dry wall, paint, lay tile, and meet the families returning to the homes we helped repair have created strong relationships among all of us. Returning to campus for spring semester after January trips with students feels different. Our shared

experience outside of classes shapes how we connect in classes. I observe the ways in which they sometimes bring learning from coursework to the situations we encountered in New Orleans, or how their experiences on this trip sparks a new interest for them in their studies.

A Sociopolitical Imagination

Perhaps the argument can be made that if teachers are enacting critical consciousness then their work itself is an engagement with the sociopolitical imagination. I do not think that connection is that easy to make. In Bolotin-Joseph's (2007) piece on developing cultural critical consciousness she identifies one of the challenges faced by preservice teachers is the ability to imagine alternative possibilities to the taken-for-granted practices of doing school. Imagination is necessary for all political change to occur and can be difficult not only for preservice teachers. Gloria Anzaldúa (1999) argues that, "Awareness of our situation must become before other changes, which in turn come before changes in society. Nothing happens in the real world unless it first happens in the images of our heads" (p. x). We need to use our hearts to guide our thinking (heads) and collectively imagine new ways of being in the world that afford more equitable opportunities and democratic possibilities for all.

Assisting preservice teachers to question assumptions, deconstruct "commonsense" practices, and critique the status quo is only part of the work of scaffolding critical consciousness (Sleeter, Torres & Laughlin, 2004). Teacher education needs to take up conversations about the sociopolitical imagination. A sociopolitical imagination considers alternative ways of being (Greene, 2007) and thinking about the *production of tomorrow* (Freire, 2007, p. 25).

Every tomorrow, however, that is thought about, and for whose realization there is a struggle, necessarily implies dreaming and utopia. There is no tomorrow without a project, a dream, without utopia, without hope, without creative work, and work toward the development of possibilities.” (Freire, 2007, p. 26).

How might teacher educators and preservice teachers work together to imaginatively create the possibilities of the tomorrows? I explore ways of understanding imagination from framings of philosophy (Maxine Greene) to language and literacy (Frank Smith, Gunther Kress) to postcolonial theory (Yatta Kanu). My efforts are aimed at pushing beyond the boundaries of an everyday understanding of imagination as playful fantasy. Davies (2000) states agency is “a sense of oneself who can go beyond the given meaning in any given discourse and forge something new...through imagining what might be” (p. 67). One role of teacher education then must be to help preservice teachers reflect on how they are constituted by discourses and to imagine *discourses of possibility* (McDonough, 2009, p. 528).

Lev Vygotsky, known for his extensive writings about sociocultural theories of learning, addressed imagination in a small selection of writings. He connects imagination to both the intellect and emotions, and ultimately to “ways of making sense of the world” (Gajdamschko, 2005, p. 14). His theories, or what he calls *laws of imagination* describe the complex relationship between reality and imagination. While intended to explain childhood thinking, his points are applicable to anyone. Vygotsky’s first “law” is that imagination draws on prior experiences and is therefore based on a person’s given reality. Second, imagination expands reality since the experiences of others through art, music, and stories broaden one’s own experiences. Third, emotions are intimately connected to the imagination and link to reality because texts create images that create feelings.

Finally, imagination becomes reality with the creation of a new product such as a painting or invention (Eckhoff, 2008).

Connecting imagination to reality is also in the work of Frank Smith (1990). Smith asserts that since the brain does not just respond to the world but *makes* it, then imagination is what makes reality a possibility. Interpreting experiences, revising histories and anticipating futures is the work of the imagination. He also notes that imagination constrains both experience and culture because we can only understand and explain the world through the language in which we have access. In addition, Gunther Kress (1997) notes that different modes of making meaning (language, visual, tactile) instigate different kinds of imaginations. Thus, differing pedagogies can limit or open imagination. Herbert Kohl (2007) also states that experiences inform our imaginations and culture channels it (p. 62). Therefore his plea to produce radical children's literature (literature about collective action) reminds educators of their role in helping students go beyond personal experiences. Like Vygotsky, Kohl sees stories as one mode of meaning making that expand imaginative possibilities.

Drawing on one aspect of Fairclough's (2003) definition of discourse also frames imagination as a space for possibility. He states, "discourses are imaginaries...[they] include representations of how things are and have been as well as imaginaries...how things might or could be" (p. 207). Maxine Greene's extensive writing on imagination unites intellect with the aesthetic, and the individual with society. Greene (1995) advocates for engagement with the arts: dance, music, literature, to initiate new and multiple perspectives. New perspectives can then change some "dimensions of our lives" (p. 140). Empathy is another quality that Greene relates to imagination. It is through

empathy that gives one the “ability to respond to others...[and] return to that person a sense of wholeness” (p. 38). Coupled with individual change is the development of a social imagination or the “capacity to invent visions of what should be and what might be in our deficient society” (p. 5). Imagination is both the possibility to see new perspectives and to envision social change (Greene, 1995). To pursue democratic communities, to pursue freedom requires going beyond known boundaries, searching for alternatives, and “speculative audacity” (Greene, 1988, p. 128).

But is imagination always going to lead to more democratic possibilities? Herbert Kohl (2007) offers a warning. He writes, “of course imagination is not so benign a power. As much as we have the power to imagine the world better, we also have the imagination to imagine it worse” (p. 65). By example, the colonial imagination subjugated, deculturalized, and repressed while the postcolonial imagination empowers and offers justice (Kanu, 2006). Something in need of consideration is how might imagination be engaged for democratic purposes?

The work of C. Wright Mills (1959/2000) and his explanation of the sociological imagination might offer some guidance. Mills’s work was about demonstrating or connecting how individual experiences relate and connect to larger societal patterns as well as history. Somewhat of an engagement with the agency versus structure debate, he sought to encourage awareness of links between individuals and society. Mills references the sociological imagination as a *quality of mind* (p. 15) and a *form of self-consciousness* (p. 7) that is not unlike some of the ways critical consciousness has been represented in some of the literature in teacher education. Two key points that Mills makes that can link his described awareness of society to a sociopolitical imagination are such. First, Mills

reminds us that just by living, we each contribute, no matter how small, to history and how society gets shaped. When teachers enter the profession to change the world, sometimes the vision only centers on grand projects and significant change. It is easy to forget what I wrote about earlier – that the everyday moments also matter. Each thing we do shapes the present, makes the past and has implications for the future. The second point by Mills to consider is his vision of imagination as perspectives that are multiple: wide and varied, impersonal to intimate, a linking of the historical to the present in order to re/envision the future.

Attending to the Embodied

In thinking about the embodiment of critical consciousness, teacher educators might consider how to tap into the power of learning through bodies and through/with emotions by engaging the aesthetic and put into practice a pedagogy of discomfort.

Engaging the Aesthetic

Tapping into a sociopolitical imagination suggests attention to and intention toward the aesthetic. Aesthetic engagement leads to imagination and “imagination is intersubjective [and] opens in-between spaces” among people enacting different identities (Kraehe & Brown, 2011).

Earlier in this dissertation I used Hilary Janks’ (2002) argument that moving to territories beyond reason are necessary in order to explore new directions in critical literacy. She acknowledges that powerful affective experiences can block one’s ability to reason and thus a pedagogy of discomfort, which I address in the next section, is one

possibility for teacher educators to consider. There is much to gain by engaging in aesthetic experiences that invoke affective responses. While sometimes, strong emotional reactions can stall criticality, others such as humor and pleasure can initiate it (Janks, 2002; Sadlier, 2012). Using arts-based pedagogies in social justice courses creates generative spaces where “knowledge, pleasure, anxiety and confrontation with material and symbolic bodies [occur].” (Kraehe & Brown, 2011). Embodied performances and art as a pedagogical tool disrupt ways of thinking and can create an in-betweenness of thinking and feeling (Kraehe & Brown, 2011).

In agreement with Janks, Ray Mission and Wendy Morgan (2006) name critical literacy as a rationalist practice and contend that analysis for whose views and interests are being served as well as what cultural assumptions are embedded are inadequate. Rather, critical engagement practices need a theory of the aesthetic so a critical understanding is woven with an emotional understanding. Emotional understandings, provoked by aesthetics, works through our bodies. It is a way of bodily knowing in concert with intellectual understanding. Engagement with aesthetic experiences helps students to “disrupt normalized ways of thinking” (Kraehe & Brown, 2011, p. 489), perceive and reimagine moral situations (Abowitz, 2007), and ask how things can be otherwise (Greene, 2007).

Mingshui Cai (2008) in revisiting Louise Rosenblatt’s transactional theory (1982) argues that there must be space for aesthetic response when engaging critically in reading texts. Aesthetic responses are not just responses of pleasure but are deeply connected to the individual’s prior experiences, belief system, and ideology. Readers feel as they read and images are evoked. The feelings and images can be pleasant, unpleasant, and create

sensations. The act of reading is embodied. Performing critical consciousness is also an act of reading – reading the world as text. Therefore, taking up Cai’s argument, the aesthetic and critical need to be bridged because individuals always engage and respond emotionally to *texts*. “Only after the reader participates emotionally and intellectually in person transaction...can she understand and benefit from the teaching of critical perspectives.” (p. 219).

A caution from the work of Jacques Ranciere is that critical-political engagement will be countered if using the aesthetic with predetermined outcomes or anticipated effects (Ruteinberg, 2011). This is where I return to trust and suggest that teacher educators come to trust that preservice teachers will engage in the ways that they are afforded, that encountering aesthetic experiences will push at their experiential boundaries, and that conversations and experiences can be revisited.

Pedagogy of Discomfort

It is the tension that moves us to new places (Fecho, 2011). I appreciate Bob Fecho’s reminder that tension exists in the applied world and surrounds us. Whether it is the tension in architecture that holds up a building, in yoga to provide feedback in poses, or in music to create profoundly aesthetic experiences. I once wrote that one of my goals when teaching was to “caringly unseat the assumptions of preservice teachers” (McDonough, 2009, p. 535). I think both care and discomfort can work together in an unexpected partnership to provoke critical moments. *A pedagogy of discomfort* is suggested by Boler (1999), Brooks (2011), and Leonardo & Zembylas, (2013). While I agree with Boler that I do not intentionally aim to make students upset or angry, I also do not intentionally avoid issues that might incite those feelings. I know from semesters of

teaching RCI, that particular issues will make students uncomfortable and which can then get demonstrated as anger, guilt, or embarrassment. I do not remove those topics from my syllabus, always a danger for course evaluations, but I continually rework how to help students engage.

A pedagogy of discomfort is situated as learning to see differently and exploring “how we are taught to see in historically specific ways” (Boler, 1999, p. 198.). Thus, emotions bubble up when exploring cherished beliefs. I, like Boler, find some of the most discomfoting experiences rise when questioning issues of race. What is key is that “a pedagogy of discomfort aims to invite *students and educators* [emphasis added] to examine how our modes of seeing have been shaped specifically by the dominant culture of the historical moment” (p. 179). It is not an exclusive pedagogy aimed at the students. Teachers, and in my case, teacher educators are not immune to the discomfort nor the excavation/reflection and action about one’s own discomfort.

Study and Story

Recently I have been thinking about a part of my teaching philosophy, that is engaging students in *study and story*. I have found that in classes addressing class, race, sexuality, and gender often whoever the dominant group members are engage in the class around their opinions rather than informed knowledge (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2012). Their opinions, shaped by their own stories, create the hegemony in the classroom. Attempts to broaden their knowledge base through readings, video, or statistics sometimes is impactful but can also work to solidify their own beliefs. For example, sharing data about

the overrepresentation of boys of color in special education³⁴ (Harry & Klingner, 2005) can cause some students to wonder why that is, consider it might be unfair, and provoke them to explore more. For others, the data can work opposite to my intention and serve as proof for them that there is something inherently wrong with boys of color, which necessitates special education services. Study and story is an approach of using counter-stories through personal narrative, drama, music, art, etc. to sit alongside study of theory, concepts, and data. It is an aesthetic engagement to evoke emotion and close the distance between the space some students feel exists between themselves and theory or research.

Consider Critical Ontology

In a piece on critical pedagogy, Joe Kincheloe (2007) offers that critically conscious persons are “aware of their self-production and the social conditions under which they live” (p. 37). This critical awareness also includes an understanding of the “many planes of history” (p. 38) in which individuals function and subjectivities are constituted. Kincheloe’s (2003) work on critical ontology in education offer fresh, nuanced perspectives for conceptualizing critical consciousness.

Ontology, or the study of ways of being human, can help us to explore our subjectivities and our consciousness. Kincheloe’s overlay of critical theory ensures that these explorations happen within “the context of power” (p. 55). In essence, I have come to see some of Kincheloe’s work as instantiations of Freire’s call for a ‘consciousness of consciousness’ (Duarte, 1999) with an emphasis on reflexivity. Kincheloe asserts a

³⁴ Beth Harry’s work addresses the overrepresentation in subjective categories of special education such as emotional disorders as compared to equitable representation in objective disabilities such as vision impairment.

number of goals of critical ontology in education, and I argue that these overlap with engaging preservice teachers in considering stories about who they and we all are as they study constructions of society. The goals with the most direct connections are:

- to develop new forms of self-awareness and an understanding of consciousness construction;
- to understand the importance of socio-historical consciousness concerning the production of self;
- to recognize dominant power's complicity in self-production vis-à-vis ideologies, discourses, and linguistics;
- to develop a critical ontological agency to act on self and world in a just and intelligent manner;
- to appreciate that political empowerment, community building, and the cultivation of both the individual and collective require a constant monitoring of the relationships that shape us. (Kincheloe, 2003, p. 47-48)

We can read through these goals reiterations of key ideas from some of this study. The attention is to understanding self in the relation to the historical moment and sociopolitical context. Individual and collective agency is apparent and facilitated through relationships which can only occur through dialogue. And finally, there is attention to the mediating forces that shape us. All these dimensions are relevant to the construct of critical consciousness.

These goals also bring a fresh perspective to thinking about critical consciousness and address some of the silences. First, there is an emphasis on looking at consciousness construction as well as the production of the self. Both are ways of exploring how our subjectivities are constituted. Rather than just naming one's social identity group memberships, Kincheloe's suggestions require a more careful look at who we are. Second, he relates self-production to discourses. This goal again links to my suggestion of incorporating critical literacy practices into teacher education. Third, Kincheloe raises the importance of relationships and the collective.

Critical ontology locates opportunities for learning and imagination by pushing back against Cartesian thought and embracing subjugated and Indigenous knowledges – oft lost to the dominance of Western thinking. By recovering these knowledges, educators can open possibilities of new ways of being, for themselves and their students (Kincheloe, 2003).

Implications for Future Research

Much of the literature that addresses preparing teachers is situated within teacher education programs and coursework. This project helps to fill one of the gaps in the research preparing critical teachers and the experience of critical consciousness as it involved nine practicing educators with one to thirty-two years of teaching experience. One of the aims of this study was to fill a void in the current research – that which explores critical consciousness and practicing teachers. In particular, a goal of this study was to consider how the findings might guide teacher educators and teacher education programs that aim for supporting justice oriented preservice teachers. I suggest continued research with inservice teachers to continue exploring their experiences and how those

might inform the preparation of future teachers. My project also addressed some aspects of teaching practices, but mainly relied on interview data and autoethnographic data. A second recommendation for future research is to continue a deeper exploration of teaching practice and praxis. More research is needed in this area and future studies exploring some of the recommendations are worth consideration. For example, looking more closely at how practicing teachers and teacher educators use arts-based pedagogies or collaborative experiences to foster critical consciousness and/or a sociopolitical imagination.

Another area that is under-researched is who are the teacher educators? More research is needed about teacher educators; what experiences and supports they need in order to prepare critically conscious P-12 teachers, and the (un)intended effects of their curriculum design and instructional practices. An assumption is made that teacher educators are critically conscious if teaching for critical consciousness. This is not necessarily true and needs more exploration (Stenhouse, 2009). The second area that has been extensively documented as an area of needed research is connections between preservice teacher practice and inservice teacher practice (Zeichner, 2005). Without the study of teacher practice, critical consciousness is constructed as a state of awareness or an intellectual exercise rather than an enactment of teaching. Researchers need to interpret the texts of teaching practices not just the texts of preservice teachers' academic performance.

A third area of consideration is to design research projects that bring together critical literacy and other critical pedagogies such as multicultural, social justice, and anti-oppressive education. A critical literacy lens (a lens on language use and discourse)

may illuminate patterns among critical pedagogies that inadvertently replicate the status quo, and may demonstrate how language/discourse study helps achieve the goals of critical pedagogies.

Teacher educators might choose to take up some of the implications of this study and include the study of language and discourse with preservice teachers, have conversations about imagination and love, and push beyond reflection to critical reflexivity. Multicultural and critical literacy educators might see more possibilities inherent in each other's work and draw from both fields to re-envision the work of preparing teachers. Performativity may be taken up as a theoretical explanation for critical consciousness and reshape the pedagogies of teacher preparation programs. What would teacher preparation pedagogy look like if critical consciousness was reframed as performances of *everyday life* (de Certeau, 2002)? How would understandings of performances be shaped by taking up Kincheloe's (2003) suggestion to attend to relationships and the collective community?

Paulo Freire, himself an example of humility and wholeheartedness, requested that his theories be reshaped and re-envisioned to meet changing contexts and continue the work of a critical and liberatory education. I have taken up his request and I invite my readers to do the same.

Coda: Is it Love?

Earlier, I wrote about the role of love in the entanglement of critical consciousness and I have been left wondering if perhaps this research project has all along been about love – a political, ethical love that guides the work of the nine educators who have journeyed with me, the same kind of love that is necessary for broad-reaching

social change. Perhaps critical consciousness is a part of this political ethical love, perhaps love is a part of this consciousness, perhaps it is something else all together.

Love, central to Freire's philosophy, is a key part of his version of critical consciousness. Love of humanity was Freire's guide to his literacy movement and imagining a liberatory education. Freire wrote about love as both a passion for learning and as what drives a commitment to teaching for social justice. Freire's love is rigorous and driven, not "paternalistic coddling" (1998b, p. 3). He called for an "armed love" (1998b), a love that takes both courage and humility to pursue justice. He acknowledged that many teachers work in difficult conditions – buildings in disrepair, lack of materials, and the continuous assault of bureaucracy and mind-numbing curriculum initiatives. To speak out and for better schools, and better curriculum takes courage: the courage to speak out, and the courage to face the fear of the possible consequences of speaking out. In these efforts toward democratic education, Freire also emphasized the importance of humility or the openness to listen, dialogue, and reconsider (Freire, 1998b). An armed love without humility can become dogmatic rather than democratic.

An ethic of love is also at the center of Cornel West's (1993) *politics of conversion*. This is a politics based on love and care to counter nihilism, tackle injustice and foster hope. While West's politics of conversion specifically addresses the "nihilism of Black America" (p. 15), it is not a politics only for Blacks. West calls for a "transracial coalition" (1993, p. 30), beginning at the local level and moving through grassroots organizations to address racism, classism, and other inequalities. A politics of conversion is not based on sentimental love but on love as hope and self-affirmation "to generat[e] a

sense of agency..increas[e] self-valuation and encourag[e] political resistance in one's community (West, 1993, p. 29).

What if love itself is the combination of social movement, a different consciousness, and practices that move us all toward a more democratic society as argued by Chela Sandoval (2000) as a “physics of love” (p. 183)? By drawing on Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Donna Haraway and third world/US women of color such as Patricia Hill Collins, Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa, Sandoval constructs a hermeneutics of love. This love is based mainly on her methodology of the oppressed – an intersection of technologies such as “deconstruction of signs, semiotic reading and a moral commitment to equality” (p. 180) and Barthes’ *differential consciousness*. Differential consciousness, hard to define by even Barthes himself, is a site of identity, a place of third meaning, a process and a shifting location – all “accessed through poetic modes of representation” (p. 136). Together, a methodology of the oppressed and differential consciousness “comprise a hermeneutic for defining and enacting oppositional social action as a mode of love in the postmodern world” (p. 146).

Sandoval’s work shows love as political and active. Framing love as action (hooks, 2000) affords openings to see how love *is* social movements and *is* engagement with the P/political. bell hooks writes extensively about love and borrows, from West, his *love ethic*. Again, hooks’s love is not a feminized, romantic love but a political and powerful force for social change that is both individual and collective. “When love is the ground of our being, a love ethic shapes our participation in politics” (hooks, 2006, n.p.). Love is political because it connects humans across difference for more democratic possibilities and requires resisting the status quo (hooks, 2006). Glass (2009) states that

hooks's love is a location for engaging in change, as well as a condition that creates meaningful change. It is love that provides insight about actions for transformation. hook's (2006) states that love is a combination of commitment, care, knowledge, trust and responsibility. In looking back at the stories of the nine educators and the examples of trusting students, response-ability, and their commitments to critical education for the common good, it is possible to see those as enactments of an ethic of love.

I close with a quote that is about the essence of critical consciousness, teaching and learning, research, and becoming.

“We have two lives...the life we learn with and the life we live after that.”

-Bernard Malmud, (1952, p. 152)

Onward...

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