

Programs of teacher education as mediators of White teacher identity

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A growing body of scholarship in teacher education has explored the historical, systemic, interactional, and individual factors that create possibilities and challenges in White teachers' reconceptualization of their racial identity and of the purpose and nature of their work in a racialized society. However, there has been little attention to programs of teacher education as critical mediators of such learning and change. Through an analysis of in-depth interviews with four prospective White teachers in the United States, we develop a framework of White teachers' racial identities as situated within racial ideologies and mediated by the context of teacher education programs. The framework helps elucidate how teachers' racial identities are instantiated through interactions and available identities in a program space, which are in turn shaped both by ideology and program structure and culture. The framework and findings urge an insertion of our own agency, as teacher educators, into the analyses of White prospective teachers' learning and change, by highlighting our role as individuals who co-construct the programmatic structure and culture that partially instantiates these teachers' racial identities.

Keywords: teacher racial identity; ideology; program structure and culture; race; Whiteness

Introduction

The stark imbalance between the growing number of students of color and the overwhelming majority of White teachers in schools in the United States is often invoked to emphasize the imperative for these teachers to more deeply understand the implicit and explicit racialized practices that affect the educational access, opportunities, and outcomes for students of color (Garcia, Arias, Harris Murri, & Serna, 2009; Zeichner, 2003). In particular, White teachers have been encouraged to (1) move from deficit understandings of communities of color to understandings that value their cultural wealth (Valencia, 2010; Yosso, 2005), (2) to engage in teaching practices that build on the funds of knowledge of their students and are culturally relevant (Gay, 2000; Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 2001), and (3) to examine the historical, social, political, and economic processes that have created and continue to sustain a society that disproportionately benefits Whites (Leonardo, 2004; Mueller & O'Connor, 2007). However, much of the

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scholarship in this field has not been optimistic and has shown that White teachers routinely engage in practices that ignore, avoid, disrupt, and resist attempts to genuinely explore race and racism (Haviland, 2008; Marx, 2004; Picower, 2009). While these studies have been instrumental in understanding the historical, systemic, interactional, and individual factors that create possibilities and challenges in White teachers' reconceptualization of the nature and purpose of their work in a racialized society, they have largely overlooked institutions and programs of teacher education as critical mediators of learning and change. Building on calls to examine issues in teacher education programmatically (Cochran-Smith, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Sleeter, 2001; Villegas & Lucas, 2002), we use in-depth interviews to study the development of White teacher identity through a lens that nuances scholarship underscoring the active investment of Whites in sustaining Whiteness (Giroux, 1997; Leonardo, 2009) with research that highlights the role of localized institutional spaces as mediators of racialized and academic identity (Cassidy & Bates, 2005; Conchas, 2001; Nasir, McLaughlin, & Jones, 2009; Rodriguez, 2008). While our nomenclature, analysis, and claims are focused on the United States at this historical juncture and apply specifically to the context of a multiracial, White dominated society (and in some instances are even distinctive to particular teacher education programs and regions within the country), we hope that the framework we present will seed generative dialog about how programs of teacher education in other international settings mediate identities that are historically entrenched and exceedingly powerful in structuring people's lives.

Theoretical framework

The scholarship on White prospective teachers is heavily influenced by conceptualizations of Whiteness as an invisible and normalized privilege (Frankenberg, 1993; McIntosh, 1992). A growing body of work in teacher education has paid close attention to how White teachers engage in "White talk," which "serves to insulate [them] from examining their individual and collective roles(s) in the perpetuation of racism" (McIntyre, 1997, p. 45). According to McIntyre (1997), the tactics of White talk include "derailing the conversation, evading questions, dismissing counter arguments, withdrawing from the discussion, remaining silent, interrupting speakers and topics, and colluding with each other in creating a 'culture of niceness' that makes it very difficult to 'read the White world'" (p. 46). Researchers such as Case and Hemmings (2005), Haviland (2008), Mazzei (2008), and Solomon, Portelli, Daniel, and Campbell (2005) have extended this line of scholarship by demonstrating the multiple strategies that White teachers employ in conversations among themselves to deflect deep explorations of racism while validating each other as "good Whites."

Scholars such as Giroux (1997) and Leonardo (2004, 2009) have called for more explicit attention to the active investment of White teachers in the reproduction of structures and ideologies that benefit Whites. Seeking to demonstrate such intentionality, Picower (2009) explored how the life experiences of White prospective teachers shaped their understandings of race and difference, which they protected and maintained among themselves through "tools of Whiteness." She urges teacher educators to conceptualize these tools not as "passive resistance" to the examination of racism, but as an "active protection" of these teachers' incoming stories and White supremacy (Picower, 2009, p. 197). Similarly, Mueller and

O'Connor (2007) showed how White prospective teachers, when prompted to examine issues of race and class through a course assignment, actively ignored data that they had collected about the experiences of others and contradicted several of their own analyses in order to maintain their assumptions about the reasons for differential success in schools.

While there are important differences in the theoretical underpinnings of the scholarship cited above (and related work that we do not review here due to limitations of space), we collectively refer to them as Whiteness models of White teachers. This body of scholarship emphasizes that a society structured by Whiteness promotes White identities that in turn preserve Whiteness. These analyses have been crucial in dislodging narratives that romanticize racial progress. They have also demonstrated that racial oppression is re-inscribed in ways that rely on liberal, purportedly colorblind, and supposedly well-intentioned participation. To surface some of the shared assumptions and implications of Whiteness models of White teachers, we delve more deeply into Leonardo (2009) as an illustrative example.

Leonardo (2009) challenges educators to seriously contend with what he terms "the myth of White ignorance," a construct through which Whites abdicate and are allowed to abdicate responsibility for the racialized structure that disproportionately benefits them. He argues that an avoidance of issues of race by Whites should not be equated to a lack of awareness of race or racism or "nonparticipation in a racialized order" (Leonardo, 2009, p. 108). On the contrary, in the contemporary sociopolitical context, racialized hierarchies are perpetuated in part through the "new racism" that relies on claims of colorblindness (Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Forman, 2004; Lewis, 2001). The construction of White teachers as "oblivious to the question of race," particularly by educators attempting to engage them in deeper analyses of race and racism, obscures their "full participation in race relationships" and the benefits they receive from the current racialized structure (Leonardo, 2009, p. 107). Leonardo argues that such notions of innocent ignorance manifest themselves in teacher education classrooms through the assumption that it is the obligation of people of color to "become the tutors for Whites, the ones 'tapping Whites on the shoulder' to remind them how they have 'forgotten' about race once again" (Leonardo, 2009, p. 110). Quoting Nieto (2003), Leonardo underscores that placing the onus on people of color to educate Whites allows White educators to abdicate their responsibility in making "the problem of racism *their* problem to solve" (Nieto, 2003, p. 203 as cited in Leonardo, 2009, p. 110).

Leonardo (2009) takes to task the frequent calls for the affirmation of the experiences of Whites within discussions of race and racism. As an example, he recounts an experience with one of his White students, who felt that her peers had "negative reactions to her ideas about race" and did not treat her thoughts about race seriously because she was White. Leonardo (2009) argues that this student's reaction to her classmates is a patterned response among Whites, where they might eschew explicitly racialized analyses when making sense of the experiences of people of color, but "when personally confronted with a negative situation, [they] interpret it as racial prejudice against [Whites as a group]" (p. 116). He points out that the student did not engage with the "more obvious reason" that her peers might have disagreed with her because "they found her ideas problematic" (Leonardo, 2009, p. 116). Instead, she interpreted her dealings with her peers through a lens that portrayed Whites as the victim.

Leonardo's (2009) analysis uncovers other patterned interactions that disrupt deep engagement with issues of race and racism. He argues that when "discussions become tense or uncomfortable and people of color show some anger or outrage," the "racial resolve" of Whites wane and they "opt out of racial dialog" (Leonardo, 2009, p. 116). He contrasts such behavior with the conduct of people of color who cannot simply withdraw from racial conversation because "understanding racism and formulating accurate racial knowledge are intimate with the search for their own humanity" (Leonardo, 2009, p. 116). Similarly, he argues that Whites often personalize institutional analyses of racism and perceive such analyses to be about them as individuals, thus derailing deep scrutiny of racial patterns.

Leonardo (2009) proposes four ways in which Whites might disrupt racial hegemony. They must:

- (1) "Disinvest in the notion that they do not know much about race."
- (2) "Critically decode" supposedly "color-blind" discourses.
- (3) Question why they choose race as a "legitimate theme to invoke" in some contexts and not others.
- (4) "Participate in building an antiracist pedagogy against White mystification" and work to displace "White racial knowledge from its privileged position as the center of classroom discourse" (p. 117–118).

While Leonardo's (2009) proposal describes how Whites might begin to disrupt re-inscriptions of Whiteness, it also introduces a quandary of how such engagement is prompted when we all live in a society structured by Whiteness and we make sense of society and interactions, at least partially, through ideologies that promote Whiteness. How do people and Whites in particular, deconstruct Whiteness within the very contexts that induce them to maintain the invisibility of Whiteness? How and why do certain Whites embrace Leonardo's vision, while others engage in liberal stances that reproduce Whiteness, and still others vehemently defend an explicit form of White supremacy? Why was the particular student Leonardo discussed so adamant on resisting an examination of Whiteness, while other White students in the same class were engaged more deeply? While Leonardo's powerful analysis explicates the relationship between Whites and Whiteness, it does not address the role of local contexts as mediators of White racial identity. For teacher educators concerned with learning, change, and growth, it is critical to scrutinize the structure and culture of teacher education programs as mediating contexts, in addition to the dimensions of Whiteness, ideology, and agency that Leonardo explores. By program structure, we mean the relatively stable arrangements of a program such as admission prerequisites, course offerings, placements of students into cohorts, student teaching requirements, procedures for faculty hiring, etc. that largely determine the program's membership and shape interactions among the members. Program culture refers to "the set of norms, values and beliefs, rituals and ceremonies, symbols and stories that make up the 'persona' of the [program]. These unwritten expectations build up over time as [faculty, students, co-operating teachers, and administrators] work together, solve problems, deal with challenges and, at times, cope with failures" (Peterson, 2002, p. 10). Before leveraging scholarship that can contribute to a framework that explicitly integrates the structure and culture of teacher education programs, we briefly explain our rationale for the synthesis we undertake.

When the role of teacher education programs as mediators of racial identity is not explicitly engaged, there is a susceptibility to interpret prospective teachers' racial identities as static and decontextual. The programmatic lens accentuates that racialization and racialized identity not only emerge from historical, social, political, and economic processes but are also negotiated and take meaning in local interactions. Additionally, a framework that incorporates the programmatic context bridges two important strands of research in teacher education that concerns issues of race and racism. On the one hand, there is an increasing recognition that the intended beneficiaries of the "progress over the last 15 years toward making the teacher education curriculum more multicultural" have "largely been White preservice teachers" (Villegas & Davis, 2008, p. 596). A critical shift in teacher education research is emerging as programs are contending with their excessive focus on helping "young White preservice students (mainly women) develop the awareness, insights, and skills for effective teaching in multicultural contexts," often to the detriment of prospective teachers of color (Sleeter, 2001, p. 101). In an attempt to counteract this "overwhelming presence of Whiteness" (Sleeter, 2001), a growing body of scholarship has documented and studied the experiences of prospective teachers of color within their institutional spaces. These studies push for change in teacher education in order to better meet the unique needs of prospective teachers of color and to build on their distinctive assets (e.g. Gomez, Rodriguez, & Agosto, 2008; Kohli, 2009; Weisman & Hansen, 2008). During this period, another strand of scholarship, rooted in critical theories of Whiteness, has focused largely on the personal, interpersonal, and ideological reasons for prospective White teachers' "resistance" to adopting perspectives on race and racism that teacher educators promote (e.g. Haviland, 2008; Leonardo, 2004; Marx, 2004; Mueller & O'Connor, 2007; Picower, 2009). A focus on programs of teacher education as mediators of teachers' racial identities begins to bridge these two important strands of research as it seeds an analysis in which the experiences, needs, and identities of prospective teachers of color and White prospective teachers are not entirely independent or separate, but co-construct each other in important ways in their shared programmatic spaces.

The programmatic level of analysis that we propose is also promising to address a chasm that is developing in teacher education. A relatively new wave of scholarship (Conklin, 2008; Laughter, 2011; Lowenstein, 2009) acknowledges and strives to address the racial and class inequities that permeate schooling, but raises concerns that scholarship and practice in teacher education tend to homogenize White prospective teachers and fail to see important diversities among them. As a result, they claim that teacher educators often treat White prospective teachers "with little respect and compassion" (Conklin, p. 654). These critiques highlight the potentially detrimental practices of teacher educators as they attempt to teach about race and racism. Simultaneously, however, this body of work risks the trappings of "color-blind" ideologies (Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Forman, 2004; Lewis, 2001) that minimize the relevance of historical and contemporary forms of racial oppression that structure and shape people's lives. While Conklin, Laughter, and Lowenstein highlight the dangers of practices that might erase important diversities through the use of a homogenizing racial label of "White," their own focus on diversity and compassion can obscure (perhaps inadvertently) the significance of Whiteness and the power and privilege of being White. This tension between a deep engagement with Whiteness on one hand, and the emphasis on diversity and nurturing

relationships on the other, prompt the necessity for a theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical lens that addresses these multiple demands. The framework developed in this paper engages these tensions by bridging the dynamic possibilities of programmatic spaces, while also emphasizing the structuring context of Whiteness.

Given the opportunities, gaps, and needs for research on White prospective teachers' racial identities, we explicitly bring attention to the role of program structure and culture. Previous calls for programmatic level analyses have emphasized the importance of developing coherence across components of a program, reading the program as a text for perspectives that are excluded, and articulating core guiding principles throughout the program (Cochran-Smith, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Sleeter, 2001; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). However, there is an absence of scholarship on *how* program structures and culture mediate prospective teachers' racialized learning, engagement, and identity development. Given this paucity, we turn to educational research outside of teacher education (Cassidy & Bates, 2005; Conchas, 2001; Nasir et al., 2009; Rodriguez, 2008) to inform a framework that attends to program structure and culture.

Cassidy and Bates (2005), Conchas (2001), Nasir et al. (2009), and Rodriguez (2008) have demonstrated the importance of school structure and culture in shaping the academic and racialized identities of youth of color. Conchas's (2001) analysis of academic achievement among Latino students in three programs within a single high school demonstrates how racialized and academic identities are not fixed and static but are shaped by factors such as school demographics, opportunities for social bonds among students, competition and teacher support, peer investment in mutual success, alignment of academics with career opportunities, and a sense of belonging. Conchas's findings speak to the importance of institutional and classroom settings as mediators of racialized academic identities. Similarly, based on a study of a predominantly African-American high school, Nasir et al. (2009) argue that racial identity must be understood both as "membership in a racial group and as fluid and reconstructed in the local school setting" (p. 73). Their analysis illustrates how historical trajectories and the popular media make certain racial identities available and perhaps even likely for African-American students, but these identities are negotiated and take meaning within the cultural contexts of schools and particular neighborhoods. Cassidy and Bates's (2005) study of an alternative school in Canada for students who had been referred by the courts and the probation system explores how a culture of care might permeate an institutional context and thus transcend the efforts of individual teachers alone. While the study did not explicitly address the development of racial identities, it demonstrated how care was actualized through school structure and culture. Paralleling many of Cassidy and Bates's (2005) findings, Rodriguez's (2008) study of two high schools underscored the centrality of supportive relationships for the development of school-oriented academic identities in youth of color.

Building on the work of Cassidy and Bates (2005), Conchas (2001), Nasir et al. (2009), and Rodriguez (2008), we attempt to move away from static conceptualizations of White teachers' racial identities. Working at the intersection of Whiteness models of White teachers and frameworks that emphasize school structure and culture, we explore White teachers' racial identities as situated within racial ideologies structure and ideology and mediated by the institutional and programmatic contexts of which they are a part. However, as Conchas (2001), Nasir

et al. (2009), and Rodriguez (2008) studied youth of color within school settings and Cassidy and Bates (2005) studied a school that primarily enrolled youth of color who were labeled as having a “severe behavior disorder,” an indiscriminate fusion of these frameworks is unreasonable. It is critical to explicate both the potential and caveats of leveraging these frameworks, which focused on the racial and academic identity of youth of color, to study White prospective teacher identity. In terms of potential, these frameworks offer insight into how structure and culture never determine, but always partially construct possibilities and constraints for students’ learning and identity. For instance, drawing from Nasir et al. (2009), program structure and culture can be examined for the ways in which they provide and limit access to various identities for White prospective teachers, thereby shaping how they see themselves and imagine who they can become as they grow as teachers. Similarly, building on Conchas (2001), the structure and culture of a teacher education program can be scrutinized for how it promotes or discourages processes such as mutual learning among peers, investment in the success of fellow prospective teachers, and competition between students over markers of being a good teacher, and how these factors cumulatively shape White prospective teacher identity.

Given the positionalities and histories of youth of color and White prospective teachers in their respective institutions of learning, there are significant caveats to consider when attempting to transpose frameworks centered on youth of color to the context of White prospective teacher identity in programs of teacher education. To elaborate, the students in the study by Nasir et al. (2009) navigated “street-savvy” and “school-oriented” identities. Rejecting a school-oriented identity has severe consequences for a student’s life opportunities. While a street-savvy identity might have certain local affordances, it also carries with it, in most cases, detrimental value within the larger societal context, such as the judicial and educational systems. Ensuring that the structure and culture of a school facilitates relationships that support school-oriented identities for youth of color has far reaching implications for their lives. In the case of White prospective teachers, however, rejecting a program-oriented identity associated with social justice might have some adverse consequences within the local context of the program, but may not adversely affect their long-term opportunities. Dissimilar to the street-savvy identity, White prospective teachers may actually benefit personally in many socio-political contexts, given contemporary relationships of power, by rejecting a “program-oriented” identity of social justice and maintaining or becoming further entrenched in identities that reflect their families and communities’ deficit views of students of color. Similarly, the personal relationships, respect, and support provided by the administrators and teachers in Rodriguez’s (2008) study was meant to help students overcome historical and contemporary forms of exclusion. Relationships, respect, and support are equally important in programs of teacher education as prospective teachers must struggle through the immense professional, personal, and emotional difficulties of learning how to teach, but these empathetic interactions are significantly different in meaning and purpose. While teacher educators must “compassionately” (Conklin, 2008) affirm White prospective teachers as they learn the difficult art of teaching, they must also dis-equilibrate and uncomfortably challenge deep-seated ideologies in order to encourage these novice teachers to examine their racial privilege and the historical and contemporary relationships of power that have benefitted them and continue to do so.

Methods

Site

The participants in this study were first year students in a two-year master's and teacher credential program at a public research university in a metropolitan area on the West Coast of the United States (hereafter referred to as "the program"). They were all prospective teachers who had completed the first year of the program, which largely consists of coursework and student-teaching. The second year entails full-time teaching and the completion of an action research project for their master's degree. The prospective secondary school teachers were in mixed-subject teams of approximately twenty students, while the prospective elementary school teachers were grouped with their peers. The program has a widely recognized reputation for its focus on social justice and urban schools, which is communicated to students during recruitment and orientation, and through its day-to-day workings. The program is also relatively unique in that it enrolls a majority of students of color, many of whom have extensive experience as community activists and organizers.

The program's commitment to social justice and urban schools is reflected structurally in its requirement that during their second year, students teach in approved schools that primarily enroll low-income students of color. As a part of the program's culture, students and faculty largely share the language that they are "teaching to change the world." The vast majority of students choose the program for its institutional commitment to urban schools, the emphasis it places on teaching as a political act, and its academic standing. Thus, the hope and expectation of the faculty and the majority of students are that graduates of the program will continue teaching in urban schools beyond their mandated period, which is most often the case. A number of researchers in teacher education have identified the program as one of the finest in the country, particularly for its concerted efforts to address racial and class disparities in public urban schools. In my own observations, the distinct reputation of this program is merited and serves as an excellent model of what can be achieved with shared programmatic and institutional ideals and practices. That said, a program's commitment to issues such as racial and class justice and how it enacts these values can never be stagnant. The strong commitment to social justice on the part of the students, faculty, and staff presents new challenges – issues that are very different from programs trying to first incorporate the language of social justice or from programs where a few isolated faculty attempt to "teach for social justice" as they swim against the oppositional tide of the institution.

One of the most prominent challenges observed within the program, given its institutional commitment to social justice, was an unintended competition over the label of a "social justice" teacher. Many of the students of color, who had academic experience with theories of race and racism and who had experience as community and college activists, positioned themselves or were positioned by others as more "socially-just." Paralleling school students for whom labels such as smart, athletic, or popular might be out of reach, prospective teachers who felt that they were unable to garner the social recognition of a "social justice" teacher sometimes rejected, minimized, or redefined its meaning within the program. During the year that this study was conducted, the polarization between some of the students was more significant than in the past. A small fraction of the students, who were disproportionately prospective secondary school teachers of color, critiqued the program for not adequately addressing what they saw as racist, classist, and homophobic

speech and actions by their peers. Another small fraction of the students felt they were unable to express themselves freely for fear of being labeled “not social just enough” or racist, classist, or homophobic. The program attempted to promote dialog between these students through various processes including a town-hall style meeting, but these two groups largely remained opposed and their tensions shaped the experiences of all the students in the program.

Data collection

The first author recruited participants for this study by sending an informational email, through an administrator, to all incoming students in the program. The email explained that the purpose of the study was to better understand (1) how students experienced the program, particularly its social foundations course, and (2) how students thought about the purpose and nature of their work as teachers as they progressed through the program. The informational email also stated that participants would be provided with a small stipend to compensate them for the time they spent in the study. Fourteen students responded to the email and were enrolled in the study. The participant pool included four White students and ten students of color. The participants were interviewed before they began the program and also at the end of their first year. They were also observed during every class session of their social foundations course, which was offered during the first 10-week term of the program. The purpose of this foundational course is to engage students in exploring the historical, social, political, and economic processes that shape schooling and learning. While issues of race and class permeate the program, the social foundations course is pivotal in providing an overview of some of the most pertinent theoretical frameworks.

Given our concentration on White teacher identity in this paper, we focus on the year-end interviews with the four White participants. In the semi-structured interviews (Fontana & Frey, 2005), conducted by the first author, the participants were asked to reflect on their experience in the program, particularly the social foundations course, to elaborate on what they saw as the strengths and weaknesses of the program, and to describe what they saw as the purpose and nature of their work as educators given their understanding of social justice.

Focus participants

The focus participants described in this paper include three females who were preparing to become elementary school teachers and whom we will refer to as Lisa, Kristin, and Alice. The fourth participant was a male high school social studies prospective teacher, whom we will refer to as Curtis. Lisa, Kristin, and Alice were raised in families where their parents were high-income professionals and small-business owners. Alice’s parents were immigrants from Eastern Europe for whom the “American Dream” had worked. Curtis was raised in an upper-middle class family where both his parents were teachers. All the students entered the program, as evidenced in the initial interviews, with a strong commitment to work toward greater educational opportunity and access for poor students of color. While all the participants acknowledged the importance of the resources and support they received in the suburban schools that they had attended, Curtis was the only

interviewee to address the historical, social, political, and economic contexts of Whiteness that have led to such disparities.

Analysis

Drawing on Sfard and Prusak (2005), we conceptualized identity as narratives and as stories that people tell about themselves and others. We found this analytical approach to identity particularly powerful given that we were analyzing interview data. Since interviews are personal accounts, we diverged from Sfard and Prusak's typology and analyzed the data for the following types of narratives:

- (1) Narratives that one tells about oneself.
- (2) Narratives that one tells about others.
- (3) Narratives that one thinks that others tell about him or her.

Each of the interviews was transcribed and was coded for the three types of narratives identified above. Themes that emerged from these narratives included tensions between students based on race, the ability to participate in racially diverse university classes, validation in racially diverse university classes, learning about social justice as a process, learning to collaborate with colleagues who share different perspectives, the relationship between university-based courses on social justice and classroom practice, and developing a shared sense of purpose with colleagues. Given the relative overlap between Lisa, Kristin, and Alice's narratives, their stories are represented together and contrasted with the narratives of Curtis.

Findings

Lisa, Kristin, and Alice

Lisa, Kristin, and Alice drew a stark contrast between their experiences with prospective elementary teachers and their limited interactions with the prospective secondary teachers. As Lisa explained, being in a team with elementary teachers "worked" because students "knew each other's story, each other's background" and could therefore talk about difficult issues. In courses with both elementary and secondary students, where Lisa felt she "didn't know the majority of people" and where there was little "communication" between them, she felt students "were more likely to break out into disagreements." In these settings, she felt that:

often times it'd just turn into a fight about why I'm on this side and I'm on this side. But, we're not going to try and see each other's side. We're just going to push back against each other and I felt like there was no forward progress in that.

Kristin expressed a similar sentiment that "people [in her team] knew who [she was] as a person," but in courses with secondary students, "things got more heated because [they] were with people [they] didn't necessarily know as well."

Lisa, Kristin, and Alice described their frustrations about not being able to fully participate in the program. For Lisa, a key barrier was her hesitance to share her own life experiences. She explained:

I felt like I couldn't talk in that classroom, because I felt there were a lot of people expressing their interest on their experience being a Latina or a person of color. And I

felt like my opinion wasn't valued because I was White, then supposedly privileged. That I don't know what it's like to go through something hard. So, a lot of times I feel like I was frustrated because I felt like I was the White girl of privilege. I guess I felt judged before I got to know these people. It would've been nice to get to know some of them.

Lisa dreaded "going in [to class] knowing that [she'd] be made uncomfortable, while other people would be held up as 'this is the good thing' and [she] was, kind of like, the bad thing." She wished she could have engaged in conversations more deeply:

I wish I could've jumped into some of those conversations and, maybe have, shared my own personal experiences; but I felt like if I did that that I would've been yelled at by someone because that happened a lot in the classroom. Where somebody would say something and they'd be like, "No, that's not right!" So, like, I don't want to be told that "no, that's not right" because that's my personal experience; but I just felt like I wasn't able to do that.

Lisa thus struggled within a context where she thought that the personal experiences of others were valued, but where she felt her own experiences were diminished or derided.

Similar to Lisa, Kristin expressed the sentiment that others made "assumptions about where everyone is coming from because of what they look like or because of what [they're] assuming their life background is and stuff like that." Kristin explained that she desired a space where people could make mistakes and learn along the way:

And in a society where things are so polarized, and there are all of these issues, people are going to make mistakes and speak of things the wrong way. But, if you consider yourself a social justice educator, you need to see where they're coming from and understand that they're trying to. Yes they may have said something that's completely insensitive, but 99% of the time they're not meaning it insensitively.

Kristin also felt that the language of "are you social justice enough," which her peers often used, created an environment that discouraged deep learning:

What is it if you're just recruiting everyone that's like-minded to you? That's not a democracy and that's not education. It's about expanding critical thinking and getting people to think about things in different ways and right or wrong, realizing that different people come to the table from different backgrounds and different experiences that influence where their views are from.

She expressed multiple times that the program, particularly her interactions with the secondary teams, did not allow for such learning and dialog.

Alice expressed frustrations that her peers were "unable or unwilling to have critical conversation." She desired a space where people were able to:

disagree with someone and have a conversation with one of them, where it ends in mutual disagreement and being okay with that. [...] Seeing where they're coming from and why they might be acting a certain way or saying a certain thing.

She felt there was little room to acknowledge that "obviously what you say was not 100% right, what I say was not 100% right, so maybe let's collaborate and figure

out what works from what you're saying and what works from what I am saying." She felt this rarely happened and her peers would "shut off." She recounted that when anyone tried to "play Devil's advocate," other students would "roll their eyes and just be completely not even engaged in a conversation about it." Similar to Kristin, Alice stressed that people should have some room to learn and grow. In her words, "So instead of attacking them, realize they're coming from a good place and it's just that they don't personally know something or they don't have the experience with."

Lisa, Kristin, and Alice found it difficult to navigate their own sense of purpose within the program. Lisa never felt she was able to "come together" with her peers "as a unified group, working together toward one thing." She acknowledged the importance of differences, but felt that the "dichotomy between students" in the program was always highlighted and there was no space to also explore commonalities and "what [they] are all [there] for." She perceived that many of her peers were interested in being "the social justice educator," rather than "a social justice educator" who "works with others to create change." She "felt like people were telling [her] all the time that because [she was] a White educator in urban schools that [she] couldn't connect with the kids." She added, "that made me a little angry, to be honest." Similarly, Kristin explained that she wanted "pushback," but did not want to be "written-off." Not pushing back, to Kristin, is an indication of "writing people off" and feeling that they "don't deserve your time." She believed that pushing back while "still engaging in conversation" reaffirms that her peers "are in this for the same thing and want the same things," and that they "have the same vision." Connecting these sentiments to their future work as a teacher, Alice wished that the program was a space where they could learn how to communicate with people with diverse perspectives and "help people see where you're coming from." She would have liked to see the quality of "giving the benefit of the doubt," which she finds as "a huge part of being a teacher," modeled within the program's learning spaces.

Lisa, Kristin, and Alice also questioned the purpose of the social foundations course. Lisa explained that she was "not really sure what the class's place is" and that she "didn't get much out of the class." She felt it "touched on" broad topics of inequity, but glossed over the "in schools part." She would have "liked to see a 'so, what does this look like in the classrooms segment'" where there was "direct application to classrooms." Similarly, Alice saw a missed opportunity where the prospective teachers could have learned the "very, very hard" skills of "facilitating conversations" about power and difference. Without these skills, she feels teachers often fall into the trap of "telling their students what they should think" when engaging them in conversations about social justice. All three teachers lamented that the social foundations course encouraged prospective teachers to develop critiques without offering them any tangible, positive alternatives.

Through an analysis that prioritizes Whiteness models of White teachers, Lisa, Kristin, and Alice all act in ways that reproduce Whiteness. They seek the affirmation that Leonardo's (2009) student pursued and disengage from deeper examinations of race and racism due to the lack of perceived validation. In their critiques of their peers of color for not allowing space for them to make mistakes, to engage in dialog, and to share their experiences, and of the program more generally for not creating more amicable contexts for discussions, they assume the role of the White victim who is presumably denied equal participation. There is no recognition, as Leonardo noted, that disagreements and challenges might have arisen because their

peers found what they had to say fundamentally problematic. Nor was there a recognition that they enjoyed and exercised their privilege by withdrawing from these conversations in ways that students of color often cannot. Claims of playing the Devil's advocate and needing a space to learn without disagreement are tropes through which Whites can indirectly introduce problematic statements without taking ownership of their effects. The premise that no one is ever entirely correct enables a space of relativism where individual and collective accountability are diminished. In addition, maintaining that they never felt included in a struggle for a more just society and that they did not see the applicability of what they learned about race and racism in their own classrooms, return to the notion that it is the responsibility of others to guide them through these processes. It provides another narrative through which they can abdicate their responsibility in critically engaging with the question of what it means to be a White teacher in a racialized society.

If we were to extend the findings of Cassidy and Bates (2005), Conchas (2001), Nasir et al. (2009), and Rodriguez (2008) to the context of a teacher education program, another portrait of Lisa, Kristin, and Alice's racial identity might emerge. From a perspective that highlights institutions as mediators of identity, the programmatic context increased the likelihood that Lisa, Kristin, and Alice were prompted to see their identity as White teachers as incompatible with identities perceived to be available to teachers committed to social justice. First, the program structured a deep division between the secondary teams and the elementary teams. The rift was amplified by the identities that were readily available to these groups of students. As caricatured by Lisa and Kristin, elementary school teachers seek to ensure that their students are happy and cared for, while secondary teachers, particularly the social studies teachers, attempt to politicize and radicalize their students. Given the lack of programmatic space for these groups to interact in ways that promote mutual respect and understanding, the differences between these adopted and prescribed identities became magnified. Second, the norms of interaction between students encouraged some students to distinguish themselves as "more socially just than others" instead of seeing everyone in the program as co-learners. As described above, the administrators of the program had to convene a town-hall style meeting to address concerns and statements by self-described "critical" students that other students should be asked to leave the program since they were acting and speaking in ways that reproduced racist, classist, and homophobic patterns. When asked about the meeting, the interviewees stressed that they felt that it devolved into another instance where firm lines were drawn between students and that it did not lead to mutual understanding or respect. Similarly, the norms of interaction encouraged students from historically oppressed groups to share their experiences of oppression, and students from historically privileged groups to share examples of how they disrupted their own privilege. However, the program context did not prompt students like Lisa, Kristin, or Alice to understand why it was important to not simply equate all forms of experience. Thus, they perceived that their experiences were not valued, rather than understanding the meaning their experiences took within the space they shared with their peers. In addition, the program context did not motivate students who saw themselves as more critical, to acknowledge the multidimensionality of human experience. They were not prompted to understand that the experiences of students like Lisa, Kristin, and Alice, whether related to identities such as gender and sexuality, or to ability and peer social groups in predominantly White schools, can deepen their analyses of race and racism and also

provide a more encompassing vision of social justice. Finally, the cultural context of the program prompted students like Lisa, Kristin, and Alice to feel that they could not be co-invested in a struggle for a more just society with their peers due to lack of acceptance. In a similar vein, the design and enactment of the social foundations course did not provide a context where they could see how the analyses of oppressions with which they engaged could translate into their work as teachers. They saw these analyses as ways in which students of color, who considered themselves to be critical, could morally distinguish themselves from others, but not as a medium to prompt inquiry into their own practice.

Contrasting the interpretations above that emphasize Whiteness models of White teachers on one hand, and programs as mediators of identity on the other hand, is not to imply that one is more accurate than or superior to the other. On the contrary, we see these as legitimate and complementary analyses that highlight productive tensions on which we build.

Curtis

Within the context of the teacher education program, Curtis saw himself “straddling a fence” in a way he had never done before. On the one hand, he described himself as “radical” and “left-leaning,” and felt that he had far more experience thinking and talking about social justice than many of his peers. On the other hand, “some people in the program had spent the past four to six years of their lives doing community organizing, working in nonprofits, and doing the kind of work that [he’s] done very little of,” so he recognized that others have enacted his beliefs in ways that he has not. Curtis explained that none of his peers with more community-based experience had ever “questioned [his] experience or motives,” but he had been “pushed [by them] in a good direction to be a more active teacher, to develop activism in [his] students,” and to pursue social justice with his students “outside the classroom as well as inside.”

Curtis appreciated the mix of “good people, both philosophically and politically” and in terms of “ethnic, social, and cultural background” in the program. “Getting tons of different points of view of things” was helpful to Curtis since it gave him the opportunity to develop the skills that he will need in schools. In particular, interacting with peers who had beliefs that he “did not fundamentally agree with,” allowed him to have “productive but very sensitive and diplomatic discussions with those people.”

As a secondary social sciences teacher, Curtis saw direct connections between the content of the social foundations course and his own teaching. He described his role as a social justice educator in terms of “teaching students how to defend themselves intellectually.” To do so, he wanted his students to understand the relationship between perspective and power. While he acknowledges that his “students probably won’t remember a whole lot from eighth grade US History,” he wants to ensure that “every single time they read something,” they “shouldn’t take it at face value” and should critically examine “who wrote it and what perspective they’re coming from.” Much of what Curtis encountered in the social foundations course engaged him in what he considered parallel learning for a teacher. It provided him additional content knowledge that he could eventually use in his own teaching and it developed his ability to defend his approach to teaching. Curtis tried to strike a balance between engaging students so that they are “critical” and making sure they

do not become “cynical and pessimistic.” He believed that the “the act of questioning a dominant narrative should provide [students] hope,” because they will be “able to uncover [things and] see things that they were previously blinded to.” In this light, he summarized his purpose as a teacher as “teaching students to defend themselves and encouraging them to remain hopeful.” Throughout the interview, Curtis provided concrete ideas on how he would incorporate these approaches in his classroom. For instance, he discussed how he was leading a unit in his student teaching placement that examined President Polk’s invasion of Mexico in light of national debates on the expansion of slavery. In his placements, he incorporated activities where students would practice taking and defending positions that they might not necessarily agree with, in order for them to understand the interests, constraints, and logic of people with differing perspectives.

Curtis emphasized that it was important to acknowledge that “moderate students” in the program might not have been “exposed to the social justice mission before,” but if “somebody wants to become a better educator and a more just person, it’s like criminal not to give the opportunity to learn.” He finds it counterproductive when prospective teachers who “come in with a social justice mindset” are unwilling to engage other educators. He argues that “people aren’t going to change minds or open minds if they just immediately shun everybody.” Instead, such insularity would create “a room of like-minded people” who would compose “a small pocket of guerilla social justice fighters in a world full of very complacent people.” Such a group is “not going to grow” and “it’s not going to go anywhere.” It is therefore essential that prospective teachers committed to social justice work to engage others in dialog.

Curtis emphasized that everyone in the program ultimately “has something to offer” and has “their heart and their head in the right place.” Through engagement with the “moderate middle ground students,” he has learned to be “more sensitive and diplomatic,” “a little more open minded,” “more patient” and a “better listener.” Curtis acknowledged that it is “often very hard to just listen” and not “pontificate,” which he described as a partially true “typecast and stereotype” of people committed to social justice. He believes that attentive listening and dialog is an “important skill” that teachers must nurture.

Over the course of the year, Curtis developed a close friendship with Saul, a student of color in the program who questioned many of the systemic explanations brought up in the social foundations course. Saul often voiced arguments that were interpreted as advocating for people of color to “pull themselves up by their bootstraps.” While Curtis disagreed with many of Saul’s arguments, he “knew that [Saul] had the interest of the oppressed at heart.” Curtis explained that at times when Saul brought up these arguments, other students “hissed.” Curtis found such actions “cowardly and childish,” but also stressed that when Saul “brought up similar points in much smaller discussions and smaller classes, those discussions were allowed to continue and they became very productive.” While Saul “hasn’t changed his views [over the course of the year], he has opened his mind to different perspectives.” Through his close interactions with Saul, Curtis realized that if “the minute someone opens their mouth, you insult them,” it will close off the possibility of further conversation. Instead of potentially “radicalizing them,” such responses will cause them to “totally [...] shut their ears to you.” Curtis’s friendship with Saul also helped him appreciate the importance of understanding individuals’ backgrounds. For instance, Curtis acknowledged that Saul’s support of charter

schools or privatizing education to which more “radical” students objected, has to be contextualized within the ubiquity and the appeal of such dominant discourses in the current political climate. Curtis found it important to consider that students like Saul, who “might have been a whacked out hippy liberal” in college are suddenly the “moderates” in this particular teacher education program, forcing them to rethink fundamental aspects of who they are. Ultimately, Curtis underscored his belief that the program and Curtis himself have “only benefited from the presence” of students like Saul.

Through an analysis that prioritizes Whiteness models of White teachers, Curtis might be interpreted as a White prospective teacher who has begun to more deeply examine his Whiteness. He acknowledged what he has to learn from his peers who have far more experience as community organizers and embraced his role as someone who must dialog with others in their analysis of equity and justice. Extending Cassidy and Bates (2005), Conchas (2001), Nasir et al. (2009), and Rodriguez (2008) is powerful in the exploration of the contextual factors that supported Curtis in his identity as a White teacher. His recognition by critical students of color as a White educator who was committed to social justice, created a context that tremendously benefited Curtis’s learning. He was “pushed in a good direction” by his peers more experienced in activism and was able to mature as an educator as he engaged others in examining what it meant to be an educator committed to social justice. His social location within the program allowed him to maximize the rich diversity of the entire cohort, unlike the more critical students of color and students like Lisa, Kristin, and Alice, who were alienated by it for different reasons. Unlike Lisa, Kristin, and Alice’s lack of clarity regarding the purpose of their efforts, Curtis identified with the struggle of the critical students of color, and appropriated the role of engaging the “moderate” students in that struggle. In addition, Curtis saw a clear connection between the social foundations course that engaged the prospective teachers about issues of race and racism, with his own work as a social studies teacher.

It is often tempting to understand Curtis’s experience solely from a perspective that highlights his individual choices and actions within a context of Whiteness. Even prior to entering the program, as evidenced in the initial interviews, Curtis thought deeply about his positionality as a White male and his role as an ally in the struggle of people of color. To a certain degree, Curtis’s identity within the program was highly shaped by his prior experiences working with students of color who had systemic analyses of race and racism. However, the programmatic culture also significantly shaped who he could be within that space. His recognition as a White ally was an identity that was valued by faculty and the critical students of color. His close friendship with Saul, however, also nuanced what it meant to be a White ally in ways that were new for Curtis. The need for allies to be co-learners was entirely absent in Curtis’s first interview, but central to his sense-making in the second interview described above. Through his relationship with Saul, Curtis became acutely aware of the frustration, alienation, and disengagement that he experienced. These feelings arose in Saul, according to Curtis, as he attempted to make sense of his positionality as a teacher of color whose beliefs ran counter to many vocal students of color in the program. The camaraderie between the two created the context for Curtis to re-envision what it meant to be a White ally, including moving from judgment to co-learning. Curtis benefited from his close relationship with someone who thought about social justice very differently, an opportunity that

Lisa, Kristin, and Alice at least stated that they yearned for, but never experienced in the program.

As we stated about Lisa, Kristin, and Alice, we do not see an analysis that prioritizes Curtis as an individual who comes to terms with his relationship to Whiteness as oppositional to a perspective that surfaces the programmatic culture, interactions, and norms that facilitated nuanced changes in his identity as a White teacher. Instead, as discussed below, we see the potential of creative frictions between these perspectives.

Discussion

Based on the findings above, we propose a framework, represented in Figure 1, which attempts to understand White teachers' racial identities at the intersection of Whiteness and programmatic contexts.

Ideology is one of the significant ways in which Whiteness co-constructs White teacher identity in programmatic spaces. Borrowing from Hall (1996), ideology includes “the concepts and the languages of practical thought which stabilize a particular form of power and domination,” and “reconcile and accommodate the mass of the people to their subordinate place in the social formation” (p. 27). It can also refer to socially shared mental frameworks that challenge the prevailing system. Ideology often operates at the level of statements that are considered to be natural and taken for granted. Racial ideology is evidenced in a range of such statements that invoke superiority (e.g. “Racial differences are biological,” “Whites are inherently superior,”), victimhood (e.g. “Whites are now the victims of reverse-racism,” “Just because I’m White, they don’t think I have anything to offer,” “I didn’t get the job because it was given to a less qualified person of color”), colorblindness (e.g. “I didn’t own a slave and don’t owe anything to anyone,” “I judge people by character, not by race”) and antiracism (e.g. “Whites must be allies in the struggle against racism,” “Whites have a responsibility to right past racial injustices”). These are all examples of ways in which people make sense of race. Whiteness and a society structured by Whiteness are continually reinforced and challenged by statements such as these. There are patterned ways in which groups of people draw on and employ these statements. Through racial projects (Omi & Winant, 1994), different

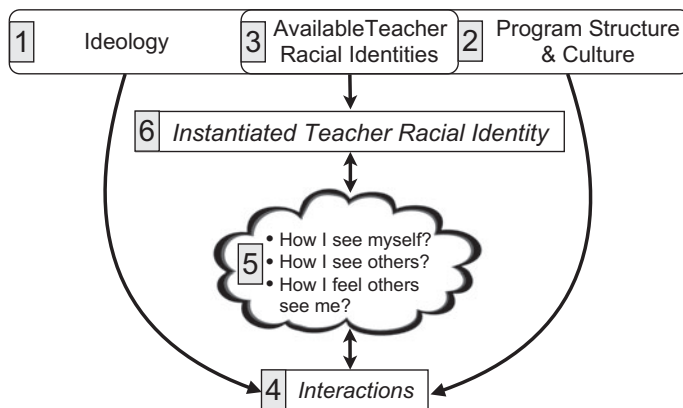


Figure 1. The instantiation of teacher racial identity in programs of teacher education.

groups such as White nationalists, White race-traitors (Garvey & Ignatiev, 1996), anti-affirmative action activists, and antiracist Whites, invoke and deploy different constellations of these ideological statements with different frequencies. In their daily lives, however, most people move between many of these usages. It is within this ideological context (Figure 1: Frame 1) that White prospective teachers negotiate their racial identity.

Available White identities in teacher education programs (Figure 1: Frame 3) exist at the intersection of ideology and program structure and culture (Figure 1: Frame 2). While multiple White identities and associated racial discourses exist within the larger social context, the structure and culture of teacher education programs often exclude particular types of White identity. Through application statements, interviews, self-selection, etc. certain identities, such as avowed White nationals, are either unavailable, or highly improbable for the teacher candidates, while other identities are significantly more likely. Similarly, though mission statements, word-of-mouth reputation, and value and recognition within program spaces for particular ways of being, there is a tendency for certain identities to be more readily available to students than other identities. Based on the interview data, three available identities for White prospective teachers in the program we studied were:

- White teacher allies committed to co-learning with all their colleagues (e.g. Curtis).
- White teacher allies committed to working exclusively with other “social justice” educators (e.g. students who called for other students to be expelled from the program).
- White teachers who equated social justice with student achievement and considered the race of a teacher irrelevant (e.g. Lisa, Kristin, and Alice).

Examples of other possible available identities in the program, not reflected in the interview data include:

- White teachers who acknowledge that cultural differences shape interactions and therefore try to make the curriculum more culturally relevant.
- White teachers who argue that in the post-Civil Rights era race is relatively insignificant in comparison with class.

Interactions within a program space (Figure 1: Frame 4) are shaped both by ideology and program culture. For example, when students like Lisa state that they cannot share their experiences “like Latina students,” it stems from immediate and real feelings of isolation in the program. Lisa’s alienation emerged from norms of interaction in which her stories about her personal experiences were often countered by responses such as, “You say that because you’re privileged” – statements that ended communication and prevented deeper dialog. Students like Lisa perceive that if they were to continue to share their experiences, it would further entrench the stereotypes that students of color have of them. Norms were not present within the programmatic space for students like Lisa to understand that such a response by students of color should be an important cue to step back and examine how their positionality as upper middle-class Whites shapes their interpretations and explanations. As real and personal as these feelings might be for students like Lisa, and as much as they emerge within the cultural context and norms of the program, they simultaneously are embedded in and reproduce ideologies of Whiteness. By

declaring that her experiences are not valued like the experiences of students of color, Lisa discounts the historical specificity of the experiences of her peers and invokes the narrative of Whites as the new victim. This interpretation of Lisa's stance – that acknowledges both its basis and effects within the context of Whiteness and the real and personal frustration from which it arose for Lisa – is distinct from other theories of ideology. As Hall (1996) argues, building on Gramsci's (1971) notion of hegemony, statements such as "I can't share my experience because I'm not a Latina" are ideological precisely because they appeal to people's commonsense and to their real, but partial, experiences. Simultaneously, these statements work to reproduce or challenge relationships of power by contesting or asserting the authority of particular racialized narratives.

Through interactions within the context of the program, students continually make sense of how they see themselves, how they see others, and how they feel others see them (Figure 1: Frame 5). For instance, Lisa, Kristin, and Alice saw themselves as hardworking and dedicated teachers who were excluded from a collective purpose because of the preconceptions others had of them. Curtis perceived himself and saw himself perceived by others, as a good listener who bridges very different groups of educators. It is at the tension of these perceptions of self and other, within the context of a range of available identities, that particular White prospective teacher identities are instantiated (Figure 1: Frame 6). We therefore argue that White prospective teacher identity must be explored and engaged as a contextually instantiated identity that emerges from the intersections of ideology, program structure and culture, available teacher racial identities, interactions within a program, and perceptions of self and other.

Given the importance of context, the framework we propose does not offer generic strategies for use in teacher education programs. However, it provides a lens through which teacher educators might reflect on how their programs afford or constrain particular instantiated racial identities. For instance, with the program described in this study, teacher educators might employ the lens represented in Figure 1 to further understand and address how the structure and culture of the program inadvertently promotes competition over the label of a "social-justice educator." The divide between the elementary teams and the secondary teams could be mitigated through changes to the program structure that would create more authentic opportunities for these groups of students to interact. Similarly, the program might reflect on the culture it nurtures. As an example, the program's usage of the term social justice might be overly focused on school students, with the inadvertent consequence that it does not develop a commitment in prospective teachers to the mutual growth of their colleagues. Norms that support the necessity of co-learning and collective transformation could be established through the concerted participation of faculty and administrators. Cutting across structure and culture, the camaraderie between Curtis and Saul, and Lisa, Kristin, and Alice's lack of an equivalent experience suggest that the program could have potentially supported the development of different teacher racial identities in the three elementary teachers by facilitating a greater range of relationships. As another potential change, a re-design of the social foundations course to speak more directly to elementary teachers could help prospective teachers like Lisa, Kristin, and Alice see the relevance of the course topics for their work as teachers in the classroom. Reiterating the particularities of this program, the evolving challenges that are described here emerged from the very success of the program in integrating a well-articulated

and coherent focus on social justice. The findings, analysis, and possible ways forward for this setting cannot simply transpose into another program with a different history and context. Instead of providing ready answers (that are likely to fail because they lack site specificity), our framework is meant to engage programs in a generative, iterative, and contextualized process of reflection on how they co-construct teacher racial identities.

In our data and analysis, we highlighted the ideological dimensions of Whiteness, particularly as they are manifest in personal accounts. Our intention in taking this approach was to emphasize the possibilities in shaping teacher racial identity through program structure and culture – a lens that we find has been neglected in teacher education research. However, this effort also risks reducing Whiteness to ideology, neglecting other important dimensions of Whiteness such as its “embodied” nature (Yancy, 2008) and its value as a form of “property” (Harris, 1993). While we cannot explore the tensions and possibilities in depth here, given our data and the constraints of space, we believe that our programmatic lens has rich potential to mutually complement these theories of Whiteness. For instance, Yancy (2008) argues that challenging one’s racism involves “more than a cognitive shift,” it must also reside at the “somatic level” (p. 5). It involves a “continuous effort at performing [the] racialized interactions [of one’s body] with the world differently” (Yancy, 2008, p. 5). While one might come to judge his or her racism “epistemologically false,” it “may still have hold on [his or her] body” (Yancy, 2008, p. 5). As the performance of the racialized interactions of prospective teachers are partially reproduced or created anew within program structure and culture, we see promise in extending our framework to attend more closely to the somatic level by studying how prospective teachers’ racialized gestures, postures, and other body language change over programmatic experiences in relationship to their narrative accounts. Similarly, Harris’s (1993) discussion of Whiteness as property provides a lens through which to see the teacher education program we studied as situated within a university that is governed by state laws that have banned affirmative action for historically marginalized groups, all within a national context that is increasingly antagonistic toward affirmative action and obscures its “property interest in Whiteness.” There is potential in bridging our programmatic lens with Harris’s (1993) argument by examining how the structure of the program is constrained by, reproduces, challenges, subverts, and resists the property interest in Whiteness. Such a synthesis can bring to light how the nature of programs of teacher education as mediators of White teacher identity subtly adjust or drastically transform with shifts in judicial rulings and university, state, and national policies that contest or reaffirm Whiteness. Scholarship such as Yancy (2008) and Harris (1993) are powerful reminders of those facets of Whiteness that we have not adequately explored here – potential linkages that we hope to eventually establish in a more comprehensive framework.

By highlighting Whiteness and programmatic structure and culture, we do not mean to gloss over the importance of other factors. Given our data, it is difficult to assess the role of gender in shaping Curtis’s experiences as contrasted to the three women. Life histories undoubtedly also influence the participants’ experiences. Curtis’s perspectives were likely shaped by his parents’ work as teachers. Similarly, Alice’s stances were certainly influenced by her faith in the “American Dream” given the economic success of her parents who immigrated from Eastern Europe with limited financial resources. Rather than diminishing the significance of these

factors in the development of teachers' racial identities, our framework brings attention to the interactional contexts in which they play out. In our future work, we intend to explore how these multiple identities and life histories co-construct racial identities within programmatic spaces.

Conclusion

The framework depicted in Figure 1 compels us, as teacher educators, to closely attend to program structure and culture as mediators of instantiated racial identity. It nuances Whiteness models of White teachers and provides a cautionary note that analyses that highlight Whiteness should not dissuade us from closely attending to those aspects of program structure and culture over which we have a relative degree of influence. The framework acknowledges the potential for individuals to learn and change through supportive relationships as argued for by Conklin (2008), Laughter (2011), and Lowenstein (2009). However, unlike this body of scholarship, our framework emphasizes that learning and change with respect to racial identity cannot be separated from the ideological context of Whiteness. The framework thus urges an insertion of our own agency into how we study and address the instantiation of White teacher identity, by highlighting our role as individuals who co-construct programmatic structure and culture within a society structured by Whiteness.

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