

University of Southern Queensland

Becoming Racially Aware: Explorations of Identity and Whiteness with Pre-service Teachers

A Dissertation submitted by
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For the award of Doctor of Philosophy
July, 2001

Abstract

This dissertation reports on the use of dialogic forms of engagement with white pre-service teachers in exploring the processes and events that led to self-awareness of the racialised aspects of their personal identities. The nature of whiteness as a structural system of privilege and of white racial identity as an individual dimension of identity in the Australian context forms a major part of the contextual background to this study. The study concludes that white racial self-awareness is a necessary pre-requisite to white identity reconstruction and that certain types of experiences seem to provoke and promote this awareness. Giroux's notion of identity trauma and Spivak's 'moments of bafflement' provide major planks of the conceptual framework here. Based in life history techniques, the main evidentiary material was elicited by the use of learning conversations and was analysed with the assistance of the NUD•IST 4 software package. Considerable attention is paid to methodological issues of transcription, the role of the researcher and the incorporation of researcher presence into the study and the report thereof.

Certification of Dissertation

I certify that the ideas, experimental work, results, analyses, software and conclusions reported in this dissertation are entirely my own effort, except where otherwise acknowledged. I also certify that the work is original and has not been previously submitted for any other award, except where otherwise acknowledged.

Signature of Candidate

Date

ENDORSEMENT

Signature of Supervisor

Date

Signature of Supervisor

Date

Acknowledgments

To my family, Helen, Sybilla and Hugo, who have been patient beyond belief. It's o.k. to be noisy around the house again.

To Tony Rossi, a friend, fellow traveller, and confidante.

To Frank Crowther, a colleague and friend, my supervisor who admitted he sometimes didn't know what I was talking about and let me keep talking anyway. Thank you for your insights and your honesty.

To the people who let me into their lives and who listened to parts of mine. May your teaching be all that you each believe it will be.

To Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren, the intellectual provocateurs who have challenged me to make something of my time.

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