

CHANGING SOMEONE ELSE'S STORY: HOW SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS
TRANSFORM THE DISCIPLINE

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ABSTRACT

Tommy Ender: Changing Someone Else's Story: How Social Studies Teachers Transform The Discipline

(Under the direction of Juan F. Carrillo)

This dissertation examines the influence of critical pedagogy in social studies. Research indicates critical pedagogy's lack of influence on social studies teachers (Ross, 2016; Maloy & LaRoche, 2015; Evans, 2008). However, recent political events in North Carolina and the United States, as well as the long-term effects of neoliberal policies in education, have encouraged teachers to engage in pedagogical resistance. This three-article dissertation studies the pedagogical practices of current K-12 social studies teachers in North Carolina who identify themselves as critical teachers.

The first article illustrates common themes found within the teachers' pedagogies. Using narrative inquiry, I interviewed teachers at different times of the study. The findings indicate the recognition of students as knowledge holders, evoking social justice as part of the curriculum, engaging in self-reflection, the assertion of local communities into social studies, and demonstrating critical care pedagogies as contributors to the existence of critical pedagogy in social studies classrooms. Implications suggest that scholars need to reconsider the existence of critical pedagogy in social studies.

The second article investigates the effects of the body and voice on critical thought in the social studies classroom. Using the sociology of the body as a theory, I discovered three manifestations through observations and interviews: the mobility of the teacher's body, positive voices, and situating the body as a commodity. The research suggests that these three

manifestations supported the development of critical conversations in social studies classrooms. The introduction of a sociological theory indicates the need for critical, interdisciplinary work in social studies research.

The third article provides space for the voices of two teachers of color in the form of counter-narratives. Grounded in Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Latino Critical Theory (LatCrit), the teachers and I created counter-narratives as resistance to dominant narratives found in social studies. The counter-narratives challenge racism and other forms of prejudice. The counter-narratives also establish community and social justice as integral pedagogical components. The implication of counter-narratives suggests the need to establish new historical and contemporary chronicles within social studies. Furthermore, it suggests the need to engage with the increasing diversities of K-12 student populations in North America. While each article represents a divergent view, all three articles reconceptualize critical pedagogy as organic practices, with little influence from higher education. The research positions these teachers as organic intellectuals.

Para Rubia, Zozzie, y Papo

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PREFACE

“Why do I need to learn about this stuff? There’s never nothing about Latinos¹ in social studies.”

The class worked on a small group assignment on World War II. I taught seventh grade social studies as a second-year Latino educator in Raleigh, North Carolina. I circulated around the classroom, and I noticed the student visibly upset. When I asked what was wrong, he said the above statement. I stopped walking around. More importantly, I could not respond to him. At that point of my teaching career, I focused on teaching the social studies curriculum, as it was, to my students. After what appeared to be a long time, I responded with the following statement:

“I honestly do not know.”

I could tell from the negative reaction of that student (putting his head down) that I had lost him for the lesson. I then spent the rest of the day pondering his question. Days became weeks. Weeks become months. By the time May rolled around, I started including narratives on Latino role models and details about historical settlements in the Southwest and West that were not included in the curriculum. However, every time I looked at that student’s face, I knew it was too little, too late. He had stopped contributing to class discussions.

I began to critically examine the curriculum. I dreaded the start of the year curriculum meetings with colleagues. I scanned the sheets for notable persons of color and empowering

¹ While “Latinos” was used for this vignette, I use the term “Latino” as a personal identifier and “Latinx” as a plural term. “Latinx” disrupts the traditional, gender separation of “Latino” and “Latina” found in the Spanish language, and acknowledges indigenous ancestry.

experiences beyond tokenized narratives, and I often found the same individuals and stories depicted: Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglas, Cesar Chavez, and Martin Luther King. The same narratives played out in different states. Whether it was New Jersey, North Carolina, or New Hampshire, the curriculum portrayed them and other well-known individuals of color as uplifting contributors to American society. Yet, the curriculum never went deeper. Why were they uplifting? Anytime I asked questions to curriculum writers and fellow social studies teachers on the lack of emphasis on people of color in the curriculum, I typically received the following two comments:

“We devote a whole unit on the Civil Rights. That should be enough.”

“Why study a group of people who can work hard if they wanted to succeed?”

These comments always hurt me. After expressing my dissatisfaction with the curriculum and a willingness to go “off on my own,” those in leadership roles typically said to me:

“Do your own thing, but if you get into trouble, then don’t say we supported you.”

I often travelled alone on the road to change social studies. Times when I allied with other critical educators and students, we developed units that got students out of their seats physically and involved in dialogue intellectually. They taught other disciplines, such as Language Arts, Science, and Physical Education. For example, we learned and practiced the historical power of step dance in African American communities and urban street art with outside members of the community. I went beyond the traditional narratives on Harriet Tubman and Cesar Chavez. However, those experiences were limited as I often taught with a majority white educator force that showed no interest in changing social studies in general. Rarely did I

have a community of critical teachers to rely on for guidance and support. I received comments like

“Your students really like your class”
Or
“I could never do that amount of work.”

Towards the tail of my K-12 career, I started receiving this comment:

“How will your students achieve passing scores on the end of grade test?”

After reflecting and writing this vignette, I ran into three former students working at a major department store. All three commented on how our conversations and activities prepared them for high school. When I asked them how, they all said similar statements that I combined into two statements:

“You let us talk in class. The high school social studies teachers have us copy definitions from textbooks and answer questions on worksheets.”

While I realized once again that I painfully worked alone, I also understood that the work I started needed to continue in order to transform social studies. This is why I am writing this dissertation.

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AN INTRODUCTION

Teach about what matters. Our job is to excite students about the world, to help them see the role that they can play in making society more equal and more just, to express their ideas powerfully, to see that social studies is about real people's lives and about their relationship to each other and to nature. Enter the profession as a scholar, an historian, an activist, a curricular artist -- not as a subordinate to some "official" curriculum established far away from our classrooms by self-interested parties. (Bigelow, 2012)

Social studies needs to be relevant. Teaching social studies in critical ways often proved to be an isolating and difficult process, as the preface illustrated. However, my students provided me with a much-needed in-school community. Whenever I run into former students, they often bring up how much they loved my teaching style and the class itself. We connected current events to the past. We discussed race and culture. My students relearned social studies in critical and empowering ways.

At the same time, I learned from them. Students taught me about their own worlds, communities, and interests. They pushed me to expand my teaching pedagogy. We created unique educational experiences, such as practicing our First Amendment rights in the school setting (*It was worth getting in trouble!*). By the end of my K-12 career, I interrogated social studies, instead of just “teaching it.” Transitioning to graduate school, I expected to find more research on similar experiences. I discovered limited research on teachers disrupting traditional norms and practices in social studies.

Research on social studies characterizes the discipline as out of touch with reality. Social studies teachers continue to use textbooks and worksheets, lecture as the main tool of discussion, and ignore discussions on race, gender, and other issues (Maloy & LaRoche, 2015; Loewen,

2007). Recent scholarship (Busey & Waters, 2016; Harshman, 2016; Meuwissen & Berger, 2016; Bermudez, 2015; Chandler, 2015; Chandler & Branscombe, 2015; King & Finley, 2015; Shear et al, 2015; Helmsing, 2014; Jorgensen, 2014; Ross, Mathison, & Vinson, 2014; Mayo, 2013; Ramirez, 2012; Daniels, 2011) supports the argument that students find social studies uninspiring and/or boring. To better understand how significant change is necessary for recalibrating the discipline, I studied social studies teachers who view themselves as critical teachers. Through qualitative research, I learned about practices, experiences, and ideas from these teachers. The results from this dissertation offer different presentations of current social studies engaging in critical practices.

The results address a number of gaps in social studies literature. First, the results illustrate the teachers' different examples of critical engagement as their settings become more corporatized. Second, the manuscripts demonstrate the need to situate new ideas into social studies research. Third, the manuscripts provide teachers and educators with suggestions in continuing the cultivation of future critical social studies teachers. Lastly, the overall results narrow the gap between theory and practice.

This introduction will discuss the dissertation format, theoretical framework connecting the three manuscripts, the research agenda, general statements regarding the research methodology, and summarizations of each manuscript. I place vignettes throughout the chapter. The vignettes contextualize the personal attachment to this dissertation. They provide the reader with the sense that I make "no apologies" for my perspectives and understand "the goal of righting the wrongs" I find with social studies research (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018, p. 294).

DISSERTATION FORMAT

There is too much here that I cannot ignore. I recall a class with George Noblit, where he said that the data that ends up on the “cutting room floor” have stories to tell. It is up the researcher to do something with this. I perceive a number of gaps in the social studies literature. The data collected supported my perception. However, I could not leave behind some data, that with rigorous analysis and additional collection would yield substantial support in covering those gaps. Ultimately, I know I will leave some details on that floor. But I will use a non-traditional route to show three different viewpoints of the data. And for those details on the floor, don't worry, I'll come back and get you in the future.

The foundation for this dissertation originates from the central tenets of my doctoral training. The dissertation critiques the lack of critical perspectives in social studies. The results illustrate practices that address systemic inequalities. The results also critically engage with social studies itself. My dissertation produces new theories and practices. The results will encourage two future objectives: supporting critical research and developing future critical social studies teachers.

In preparation for this research, I questioned the relevance of the traditional dissertation format. The data collected provided me with numerous opportunities to address significant gaps in the literature. From the amount of data, I collected, I could craft numerous articles. With an eye towards the future as a faculty member, I sought out a different format that would use my training on creating new scholarship ready for immediate dissemination and publication. I first discovered the three-article format from scholarship conducted in the Graduate School at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte.

The academy views journal publications as a central aspect of a faculty member's career. Manuscripts developed for publication typically contain the following characteristics: (1) page lengths between 25 and 30 pages, (2) a format illustrating structure and functions, and (3) a rationale that encourages further scholarly discussions (Bowen, 2010). As preparation for entry into the academy, my dissertation is presented using the three articles format. I seek a wider audience to demonstrate my work. I constructed this three-article dissertation from guidelines developed by the Graduate School at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, The University of Texas-Austin School of Social Work, and Loyola University Chicago and vetted by my dissertation committee. This non-traditional dissertation reflects the type of writing that will be expected throughout my career as an activist scholar (Bowen, 2010).

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

"Scholarship, like culture, is fluid..."
Gloria Ladson-Billings

"It doesn't hurt to repeat here the statement, still rejected by many people in spite of its obviousness, that education is a political act."
Paulo Freire

I selected these two quotes because they accurately represented how I viewed the study and the discipline. First, I believe in the idea that the individual needs to be continuously learning. Culture is always on the move; it is always evolving (Ladson-Billings, 2014). I find social studies incredibly resistant to societal changes. Maybe it is the struggle for teachers to separate critical thinking from critical teaching, or an unwillingness to learn new strategies and pedagogies, but students continue to feel left out and disinterested. How would I know this? Early on in my teaching career, I experienced this firsthand!

Second, I view my roles in social studies and academia as political acts. I rejected the authoritarian approaches associated with social studies after some difficult experiences as a teacher (Freire, 1998). I inspired my students to reject the status quo and find value in the world. I encouraged my students to not only prepare for life beyond the K-12 setting, but also for change in the world (DeLeon & Ross, 2010). I still encourage change in the world with my undergraduate students today. I know that students enrolling in my courses will leave with a sense of empowerment, since they learn how to create their own critical qualitative research projects. The projects allowed them to understand worldly experiences while breaking down constructs affecting them (Evans-Winter, 2009).

Critical pedagogy serves as the theoretical influence on my research. However, I argue critical pedagogy is a complex idea, existing in a state of flux. Even though scholars tend to portray critical pedagogy as a liberating concept (Giroux, 2009; McLaren, 1989), the theory garners significant criticism. Whether the concept is rooted in patriarchy (Lather, 1998; hooks, 1994; Luke & Gore, 1992; Weiler, 1991; Ellsworth, 1989), or the concept lacks influence from scholars of color (Evans-Winters & Piert, 2015; Gist, 2015; Troutman, 2015; Anzaldúa, 2012; Darder, 2012; Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008; Mayer, 2007; Lynn, 2004), critical pedagogy has difficulty settling into the K-12 setting. As Gibson (1999) pointed out, “Consciousness alone will never lead to democracy” (p. 147). I now discuss critical pedagogy, critical pedagogy within social studies, and critical practices in the K-12 setting from the literature.

Critical Pedagogy

Critical pedagogy pushes individuals to understand and deconstruct the variety of privileges they experience in society. The root of the contemporary development of critical pedagogy come from the works of Paulo Freire. Freire experienced poverty as a child and

military government interference as an adult in Brazil. Freire's work with illiterate Brazilian adults in marginalized communities motivated him to publish his experiences (Freire, 1970/2000). North American scholars learned from Freire, and subsequently developed a label for this work: critical pedagogy.

Critical pedagogy draws attention to the influences of neoliberalism in education in North America (Giroux, 2009; McLaren, 1989). Neoliberalism encourages a sense of individualism within the context of capitalism. Neoliberalism allows a student graduating from education to make economic choices that benefit them while obstructing others (Hursh, 2007). Neoliberalism practices contribute to a widening gap of inequality in society and in schools (Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2009). Curriculum development, classroom management strategies, and high stakes testing culture all reflect neoliberalism in schools (Sleeter, 2012). In social studies, the standardization of social studies forces students to "master" information instead of questioning the information (Leahey, 2014, p. 56). Neoliberalism essentially suppresses critical discourse. Critical pedagogy works to expose the dominant overt and hidden narratives found in schools (Darder, 2012). Critical pedagogy also encourages political, economic, cultural, and social agency for disenfranchised students and individuals (Darder, 2012; Giroux, 2009; McLaren, 1989).

Even though critical pedagogy, in theory, advocates for all individuals, scholars have argued that the first generation of critical pedagogy thinkers created a theoretical paradox. Feminist scholars point to the overwhelming majority of white males in privileged educational settings who identify as critical scholars (Lather, 1998; Weiler, 1991; Ellsworth, 1989). Critical pedagogy represses individuals who are not "European, White, male, middle-class, Christian, able-bodied, thin, and heterosexual" (Ellsworth, 1989, p. 304). Critical pedagogy does not take

into account the additional layers of oppression accumulating when individuals became more human (Weiler, 1991). The consistent referencing of these theorists (Paulo Freire, Henry Giroux, Peter McLaren, Michael Apple, and Joe Kincheloe) as the “founding fathers” enable them as the leading thinkers in the field of critical pedagogy while ignoring feminist viewpoints (Breuing, 2011, p. 16).

Critical pedagogy draws from European philosophical thought, also made up of males. Critical pedagogy “owes a profound debt to its European progenitors” (McLaren, 1989, p. 159). Giroux (2009) cites The Frankfurt School, a collection of pre-World War II Marxist thinkers, as a major influence on his interpretation of critical pedagogy. Theorists also cite Pierre Bourdieu and Michel Foucault as influential thinkers (McLaren, 1989; Apple, 1979). References to these thinkers invoke exclusivity since only a small number of individuals can engage with one another at such an abstract level of knowledge (Knight and Pearl, 2000; Ellsworth, 1989).

Along with the elitism of white, male dominance in the field, critical pedagogy encourages a similar form of oppression by the once oppressed when liberated (Orelus, 2015). Scholars condemning the hypocritical nature of critical pedagogy provoke strong reactions from the first generation of critical thinkers (Breuing, 2011; Lather, 1998). Mainstream journals, as a result, seldom published works critical of critical pedagogy (Martin, 2001).

While debates over the interpretations and underpinnings of critical pedagogy now extend into a fourth decade, the theory remains stuck in abstract form (Brock, 2015). Scholars and teachers continue to perceive critical pedagogy to be elitist in nature (Orelus, 2015). The perceived gatekeepers of critical pedagogy continue to disregard new arguments and perspectives, especially thoughts that would help bridge the significant gap between the academy and the K-12 setting (Lynn & Jennings, 2009).

However, criticisms of critical pedagogy do introduce new perspectives into the discussion. Rhetoric and theory positioned within an African-American, feminist framework creates new spaces for scholars (Evans-Winter & Piert, 2015; hooks, 1994). Borderland identity gives voices to Chicanxs and Latinxs sharing deeply personal connections with ancestral and current homelands while directly attacking the Anglo-American, patriarchal, heterosexual hegemony (Anzaldúa, 2012). Queer theory provides researchers with opportunities to interrogate and transform “rigid normalizing categories...beyond the binaries of man/woman, masculine/feminine, student/teacher, and gay/straight” (Mayer, 2007, p.15). The promise of these perspectives supports the notion of critical pedagogy existing social studies, and providing voices to teachers and students engaging in resistance (Bermudez, 2015).

Critical pedagogy in the social studies

Being a child of immigrants, I grew up hearing how the United States provided my parents with opportunities to improve their lives. It begins with my first name: Thomas. My parents wanted me to have an American sounding name. Given the fact that Ender was already my surname, it made it easier for them to give me an American identity.

Beginning in elementary school, I quickly gravitated towards social studies. I ate up facts, dates, and famous people. My parents and teachers conditioned me to love the American flag unconditionally. I often re-read the textbook and materials at home for fun. I did extra projects. I really liked social studies.

However, my parents started realizing by sixth grade that I had changed. I stopped speaking Spanish, insisting to my mother that she needed to learn English. I stopped kissing them on the cheeks when I arrived from school. I preferred peanut butter and jelly to empanadas for lunch. I started going to a non-Catholic church with friends. I talked in the “I” instead of

we. I even collected trading cards of politicians and military leaders engaged in conflict in 1991.

Looking back, I realized my formative years of soaking up social studies subconsciously and consciously encouraged me to turn my back on my other histories. While I have returned to speaking Spanish and engaging in Latino cultural practices as an adult, I still deal with the residual effects of that initial education.

Critical pedagogy's perceived elitism and the oppressive actions create a significant implication with the setting most needed for change: K-12 schools. Knight and Pearl (2000) argue that critical pedagogy's major fallacy was the clear disconnect from the realities of the K-12 classroom. Evans (2008) goes further in stating that critical pedagogy was too dogmatic for implementation in social studies. Yet, curriculum standards and textbooks continue to provide superficial accounts of people of color (Maloy & LaRoche, 2015). Social studies teachers continue to face accountability, stagnant pay, corporate influences, business-based teaching standards, and an intense standardized testing culture (Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2009).

The existence of critical pedagogy would allow students and teachers to cooperatively reshape social studies. Enter any K-12 classroom today, and you will find a multiplicity of cultures, languages, and ethnicities (Ladson-Billings, 2009). According to Daniels (2011):

We need to be deeply aware that who we are and what we teach are interconnected. Our social identities and understanding (or misunderstanding) of historically marginalized people has to be taken into account in order to be remedied. (p. 218)

Schools are the "distinct and legitimate" settings to "teach students to interrogate" the world around them (Bermudez, 2015, p.116). Advocating for change allows educators to give voices to students who have been "disenfranchised and disempowered by dominant social and economic

relations” (Au, 2009, p. 34). Critical pedagogy in social studies also encourages teachers to be active citizens. Teachers advocate systematic change, both inside and outside, the school setting (Gist, 2015; Evans-Winters, 2009). The objectives for constructive action in social studies is twofold: providing spaces in the literature for teachers currently using critical practices to transform the discipline, and emphasize the voices of those teachers.

Critical practices within the K-12 setting

I cannot even tell you how many social studies teachers I had who just stood in front of the class and lectured to us. I found it boring. Often times, I acted up in class just to get out of those lectures. 7th grade, 8th grade, 9th grade...the social studies educators I had told long stories about people who did not look like me, sounded like me, or even walked like me. Anytime I had a chance to show a different side to the narrative on a test or in class conversations, these teachers told me that I had my facts wrong or I did not know the correct information.

So, entering my 10th grade US History class, I expected another boring year. I saw the seats lined up in rows, facing the chalkboard. Newspaper and magazine covers from decades earlier laminated and stapled to the back. Windows slightly opened, but the blinds were closed. I just went to a seat and sat down.

Then, Mr. A. walked in. As soon as he put his newspaper down on his desk, he started asking questions. No roll call, no rearranging students in seats in alphabetical order, no syllabus discussions. Instead, he asked us questions on the upcoming election (it was an election year). Even though the school categorized this course as an honors course, we all expected to be in our seats and copy everything the teacher said. So, it was a surprise to us when Mr. A. asked us for our thoughts.

10th grade US History changed my life. For the first time, an educator asked for my thoughts on issues. We read parts of critical works in the classroom. We developed projects that we could actually implement in our neighborhoods. We listened to (now) classic hip-hop and punk rock in class. And here's the kicker: he was a white teacher who got it. My neighborhood was 99% Latino. Yet, he always allowed us to bring our cultural and historical strengths into this class.

I cried when I learned that Mr. A was not going to be my 11th grade history teacher. And guess what...

That 11th grade teacher was just like the 7th, 8th, and 9th grade social studies teachers: boring. And guess what else....

I got into trouble, and instead of going to the assistant principal's office, I was always sent to Mr. A's classroom.

The vignette above illustrated the traditional approaches I experienced in social studies classrooms starting in 7th grade. Students today continue to find social studies unimaginative and uninteresting (Johnston, 2012; Loewen, 2007). Saye and SSRIC (2013) observed over 50 teachers in six U.S. states that mandated state testing in social studies using authentic pedagogy as a theoretical framework. Authentic pedagogy “challenges students to construct knowledge through disciplined inquiry to produce work that has value beyond success in school” (Saye & SSRIC, 2013, p.90). They found that only 21% of teachers surveyed provided their students with meaningful opportunities in the classroom to develop new knowledge. Social studies teachers, while trying to teach “real world” concepts, often ignore or disregard the “lived experiences” of their students outside the school setting (Harshman, 2016, p.281).

Social studies educators continue to rely on traditional methods to disseminate information to adolescents and young adults. Enter a social studies classroom today, and one will most likely see an educator lecturing to adolescents sitting in rows (Saye & SSRIC, 2013). This common approach relies heavily on the notion that the information learned in a social studies class as fact, details that go unchecked or questioned (Segall, 1999). The social studies teacher is complacent in depicting social studies as a presumed set of events (Stanley, 2015; Ross, Mathison, & Vinson, 2014). Teachers continue to view students as lacking knowledge, due to outside pressures or political points of view (Saye & SSRIC, 2013). This, in turn, allows them to maintain a banking system approach when they teach (Freire, 1970/2000).

A possible reason is the lack of awareness of critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy is largely anonymous with teachers. Most students training to become social studies teachers never encounter controversial subjects at both the undergraduate and graduate levels of education (Loewen, 2007). Ignoring these issues further enhances the disconnect between the teachers and the students. Students, as a result, continue to remain apathetic towards social studies (Maloy & LaRoche, 2015).

Research, however, points to a willingness by experienced teachers to critically engage social studies beyond superficial levels. Winstead (2011) surveyed nine elementary teachers involved in a graduate program. The nine teachers all taught social studies in schools with No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability. Winstead (2011) learned that even with minimal resource and time constraints, all nine teachers viewed social studies as a “vehicle to help students make experiential connections” (p. 224). The study also revealed the level of importance social studies held by these teachers. All nine teachers incorporated elements of social studies into language arts lessons (Winstead, 2011). McCall, Janssen, and Riederer (2008)

investigated collaboration between a university professor and two elementary teachers in a social studies methods course. The researchers learned how “powerful social studies” practices allowed educators to position the students as the knowledge makers (p. 139). The literature demonstrates that reconceptualizing the concept of critical pedagogy in social studies is possible and productive.

RESEARCH AGENDA

I view my research as part of a growing field of critical social studies scholars. Social studies research, similar to the K-12 praxis, tends to suppress critical scholarship (Howard, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 2003). As a response, social studies scholars (Shear, 2016; Crowe & Cuenca, 2015; Woodson, 2015) have attempted to incorporate critical theories and methodologies in attempts to change this perception. I aim to add new tactics to the on-going conversations. First, I use critical qualitative methodologies uncommon to social studies research. Second, I look to bridge the open space between theory and practice and practice and theory. While it is important for a theory to inform practice (Stanley, 2015), I also argue that practice needs to inform theory (Ritter, 2012). A two-way street type of methodology encourages critical perspectives in social studies research while disarming the banking view of academia towards the K-12 setting (Freire, 1970/2000).

Uncommon qualitative methodologies reveal new possibilities for social studies research. The first manuscript uses narrative inquiry to extract the experiences of the teachers through respectful and cooperative means. The third manuscript demonstrates the power of counter-narratives in resisting dominant stories. The roots for this type of research approach stemmed from previous scholarship that extended beyond the social studies setting. Along with a colleague at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, we used meta-ethnography to

synthesize the experiences of Latino families in North Carolina (Ender & Rodriguez, 2016, In press). The methodological process of engaging and reengaging with the data led to the discovery of critical themes. In addition, employing letter-writing techniques provided a different example of counter-narratives. With two other Latino fathers established in academia, we wrote letters to our children. Each letter addressed past experiences and future situations with candor and wisdom (Carrillo, Ender, & Perez, 2016). Our letters, thus, disengaged deficit perspectives. Engaging in non-traditional methodologies would position social studies research as a discipline more aware with the realities and experiences of the students learning it.

I also situate my own experiences as a K-12 social studies educator. I incorporated new pedagogical methods and concepts. I, however, never had an opportunity to demonstrate the strengths of my critical pedagogies. This dissertation seeks add the voice and experiences of Mr. Ender into the research. I position the teachers as advocates. For example, the second manuscript explains how teachers, in establishing critical spaces within social studies, understand how their bodies and voices influence learning. In addition, I wrote a book chapter on involving the keyword “Ethnic” in social studies education (Ender, 2016). In the original call for book chapters, the keyword “ethnic” was not even listed as an option. I reflected on my K-12 experiences in constructing the chapter. I used the keyword to challenge aspects of the social studies curriculum. The chapter also challenged any deficit perspectives in regards to the term “Ethnic.” The chapter positions practice as the driving force in developing a new concept. From past scholarship, I seek to be a different voice in social studies research.

GENERAL RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section discusses the research methodology for the dissertation. Modeled after the concept of *methodology as recipe*, I first describe how I complied the research framework

(Mathison, 2017). I will list the research methodology in the listing style of a recipe. I then offer the reader an understanding on how I conducted the research. Lastly, I will describe each part.

Critical Practices in Social Studies

personal and professional experiences, pedagogical rituals, artifacts

field work: sustained engagement, formal and informal interviewing, observations, document collection

field notes, photographs, drawings

inductive analysis, thick description

Methodology

To learn how these social studies teachers developed critical practices in their classrooms, I used informed grounded theory in conjunction with ethnography. Informed grounded theory encouraged reflections on the existing literature (Thornberg, 2012). I took those reflections and applied them to the collected data. This process then constructed new concepts.

I also took into account my positionalities. I arrived at the research from two points of view: a former insider (K-12 social studies teacher) and an outsider scholar (engaging in critical research on social studies). The experiences of being a social studies teacher informed my scholarship. I understood the discipline from different points of view, i.e. urban social studies middle school teacher, suburban middle school social studies teacher, rural high school history teacher. Being an outsider, I view the majority of the research created within the discipline as opportunities for criticism. I look for opportunities to take the literature to parts unknown (Thornberg, 2012). Using informed grounded theory allowed me to deconstruct critical pedagogy in relation to my own knowledge and experiences (Thornberg, 2012).

I then synthesized new theories from the data for implementation in social studies education research. I construct these new ideas “from the ground up” (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). Since I am arguing for critical social studies approaches, I present these new ideas in ways that show that my research did not simply repackage critical pedagogy. This was a difficult process before, during, and after conducting the research. As a result, I created two general research questions:

1. How do social studies teachers navigate the discipline for their students?
2. How do social studies teachers utilize practices that differ from traditional approaches?

The research questions allowed flexibility in conducting the research. By using a variety of methods, the overall study articulated new knowledges from numerous settings and experiences (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). The dissertation reflected my own personal growth and understanding. I discovered certain themes within the data that pushed me to develop manuscript-specific research questions (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). Each manuscript lists the related questions.

I found ethnography helpful in addressing the research questions. Even though I reflected on my own experiences in the K-12 classroom as a critical social studies teacher, I pursued other manifestations of critical social studies teaching. I developed a field work approach that would provide numerous opportunities to collect data (Reeves, Kuper, & Hodges, 2008). I also planned to use a variety of data collection techniques to learn about each teacher (Patton, 2002). Lastly, I sought to understand why these teachers were willing to disrupt the discipline (Steinberg, 2012).

I engaged in purposeful sampling of the participants. I deliberately set out to find social studies teachers who engaged in transformative practices (Patton, 2002). I relied on my network of social studies teachers in North Carolina (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). I selected participants

who held licensure in social studies, worked in an educational setting, and taught at least one class on American history. The participants received no compensation of any sort in exchange for their participation. They also selected pseudonyms. Purposeful sampling encouraged a triangulation of data collection and in-depth data analysis (Patton, 2002).

I set out to examine three components of critical teaching in social studies. First, I characterized the teachers' experiences into two categories: personal and professional. For personal experiences, I sought to learn how their own involvements as K-12 students and/or students in teacher education programs influenced their pedagogical development. For professional experiences, I encouraged them to discuss their working relationships with colleagues and administrators regarding their critical approaches. Second, I studied pedagogical rituals in the classroom. I focused on how the teachers communicated with the students. I also examined how they understood their bodies, body language, and voices. Third, I surveyed each teacher's classrooms for visual representations of critical learning. This included non-traditional textbooks, posters, and timelines. I used these components in my field work.

Field Work

I planned a six-month study timeline. I started collecting data in October 2016, when I received IRB approval from the university. I relied on formal and informal interviews, observations, and document collection as the data collection methods. I also used research journals to help deconstruct my thoughts and experiences out in the field. I concluded my research in March 2017.

Interviews required me to establish levels of trust at the start of the research. Interviews often a significant amount of personal data. (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). I valued highly the level of engagement with the teachers beyond the scope of the research. As a result, I engaged

with the teachers formally and informally. Formally, I conducted interviews in a book-end format: one interview at the start of my research and one interview at the end of my research. I also engaged in informal conversations before and after the formal interview. We shared personal stories, discussed mutual interests, and life in general. This approach authenticated the relationships between myself and the teachers, as well as provided validity checks to my analysis (Mears, 2009). I then started interpreting the meanings and intentions behind their words (Crotty, 1998). Establishing trust also helped the teachers address issues with social studies, the curriculum, and research (Charmaz, 2016).

Observations represented opportunities to see connections between the words of teachers, and their actions in the classroom (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). I observed teachers in their respective educational settings over a nine-week period from November 2016 to January 2017. The amount of time observing differed with each school (due to school bell schedule differences between elementary and secondary school settings). However, the average time for each observation was about 45 minutes. I observed multiple classes during a visit. Similarly to the interview protocol, I briefly spoke with the teacher after each observation. This method allowed me to verify any inconsistencies in my observation data, while engaging in a form of member-checking with the teachers (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018).

I collected a variety of documents. Teachers provided me with digital and paper copies of their activities used in the classroom on the days I observed them. I also received documents of lessons that were taking place the day following my observation. The teachers emailed me URL links to school websites, department pages, and homework sites. Lastly, I used photography as a source of data collection. I visualized the settings around the school. The documents, as part of the data collection process with interviewing and participant observations, enhanced the

credibility of the research (Bowen, 2010). The documents produced an additional set of rich and valuable details, which helped situate the teachers within their settings (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Data Analysis

I implemented an induction process for the data analysis portion of the research. Inductive analysis supported the theoretical framework of this research through the discovery of certain patterns from the data (Patton, 2002). I understood the data would offer a rich amount of details that would answer the overall research questions and manuscript-specific research questions. The experiences of these teachers are unique, yet complex. The induction process signaled a two-step approach: unifying the data, under the guise of the general research questions, and splitting them into new categories to make sense of their worlds (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018, Patton, 2002).

I also simultaneously engaged in data analysis as I collected the data. The articles reflect “description” (Bowen, 2010, p.867). Thick description involves a balance of analysis and interpretation from the data as it will “inform writing and further data collection” (Bowen, 2010; Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 6). I implemented two methods. First, I developed substantive and theoretical categories (Maxwell, 2009). I searched for connections between the statements of the teachers and the actions taking place in the classroom as examples of critical pedagogy (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Maxwell, 2009; Freire, 1970/2000). Second, I engaged in continuous reflection. In the margins of the word document or in my notebook, I addressed the data through comments, questions, or drawings in pushing the research forward (Charmaz, 2016). The finalized set of analyses reflects a certain messiness of my research. But it also illustrates the

growth I experienced as a critical researcher (Denzin & Giardina, 2016). Each manuscript will discuss more specific inductive practices related to their research questions.

SUMMARIES

My sitting area is completely littered: books, clean papers, dirty papers, papers with marks, notebooks, notepads, pens, pencils, and a digital recorder. The laptop sits in the middle, surrounded by the organized chaos. I am engaged in a continuous search for answers. I alternate from file to file, composing paragraphs and editing them. The illustration of my sitting area is a metaphor for the type of radicalized research I'm engaged in. The research is personal. But anything with change, the process takes time, patience, and evokes a flurry of thoughts and feelings. At the end, the sitting area will be cleared. While the research technically ends with the presentation of these manuscripts, the journey continues. The results from this research will change social studies.

This non-traditional dissertation highlighted critical ideas and practices from three different angles. The first manuscript generated narratives from the stories articulated by teachers through interviews. The second manuscript positioned the sociology of the body as a relevant theory in interpreting the critical practices of social studies teachers. The third manuscript amplified the power of counter-narratives for teachers of color working in a politically volatile setting such as North Carolina. The summaries also reveal the inspirations for each manuscript.

Article 1

"Nothing Clean or Sanitary in My Classroom": Narrative Inquiries into the Social Studies Teacher

The inspiration for this manuscript came from another idea I first proposed to my dissertation committee. I originally sought to create autoethnographies with the teachers. I knew

that the teachers retained unique voices and experiences. I wanted to “extract meaning from experience rather than depict experience exactly as it was lived” from these teachers (Denzin, 2014, p. 36). However, I realized that multiplicity of relationships in the research would take a significant amount of time in creating autoethnographies (Hughes, Pennington, & Makris, 2012). The depth of this type of work required far more time than the research timeline allowed. Following conversations with my committee members, I changed the focus to narrative inquiry. I then realized how two facets of narrative inquiry that would critically engage the data: narrative inquiry required particular attention to the teachers telling their stories and my own positionalities and standing in the research (Clandinin, 2016).

The narratives revealed current social studies teachers critically engaging with their students. First, even though each teacher came from different parts of the United States, taught in different regions of North Carolina, and at different levels of instruction, they integrated common ideas in developing critical conversations. They viewed their students as intellectuals. They saw social justice as a significant component of their teaching. They engaged in constant self-reflection. They asserted the community as part of their learning sphere. And, they all demonstrated caring towards students. As a result, they constructed their own versions of critical pedagogy without much input from higher education. Overall, the narratives showed interpretations of critical pedagogy already in practice in social studies.

Article 2

The Body: Clarifying Theories from the Experiences of Social Studies Teachers

I realized early on during my doctoral training that I needed to diversify my intellectual knowledge. I started reviewing courses in other departments. I ultimately settled on sociology and enrolled on a course studying social movements. While I criticized the lack of critical influence on sociology in the course, I discovered that my sociological curiosities grew as I

started expanding from social movements into other concepts. The idea of involving a sociological concept when I presented my original findings of this manuscript to my advisor, Dr. Juan Carrillo.

Similarly to the first manuscript, I changed my original focus for the second manuscript. I settled on critical pedagogy of the flesh as a theoretical focus. However, when I spoke with Juan about my initial findings, he informed me that my analysis sounded more like sociology of the body. I researched the concept and realized that I briefly studied sociology of the body in my social movements course. I then switched concepts.

The manuscript uncovered teachers' understandings of their own bodies and voices in relation to critical learning. The body, as a material object grounded in reality, situates the person in two ways: finding comfort in familiar settings and resisting other, more chaotic settings (Engman & Crawford, 2016; McGuire, 1990). Because social studies is rooted in the mindset of American exceptionalism, the body finds comfort in learning about the United States in uncritical terms. Different experiences outside the classroom, i.e. racism, gender, inequality, impact the body as well. Social studies teachers who engaged in critical practices start clearing up those confusions and encourage a reconceptualization of social studies. Their own understandings of the body and voice does not fit neatly into the scope of American exceptionalism. Their willingness to "change up how social studies is taught," as one teacher stated, stresses the understanding of overt and implicit ideas in the classroom. As a result, they start to define critical social studies from a non-educational theory.

Article 3
Counter-Narratives From Current Social Studies Teachers

Deconstructing my own ancestry has been a complicated journey. In the past, I have used the following identities: Hispanic, Hispanic-American, Colombian-American, Hispano-

Latino, *mestizo*, and Latin American. I currently use Latino. But during my doctoral training, I learned that my mother was a Quechua woman from Colombia and that my great-great grandfather from Spain colluded with the U.S. government in building the Panama Canal. He also helped the country of Panama declare independence from Colombia. These stories add to the complication of understanding my own identity. I also felt the sting of microaggressions in education, due to my complex identity. I found power in the counter-narratives facet of Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Latino Critical Theory (LatCrit).

The manuscript presented the counter-narratives of two teachers in the study. The teachers, one who identified as a Latina and one who identified as an African-American, recognized the power of constructing their own narratives in challenging the majoritarian stories (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). I also wrote a short counter-narrative as the epilogue. We constructed the counter-narratives that not only addressed racism, bias, prejudice, and other injustices, but entrenched our voices within the literature.

“Nothing Clean or Sanitary in My Classroom”: Narrative Inquiries into the Social Studies Teacher

With every lesson, there is a framing as to why the lesson is important or relevant to present-day. With our slavery unit, students were shocked to learn about how the conditions of enslaved Africans then is resembled in the current injustice happening in the black communities. For tomorrow's lesson, we will compare maps of free/slave states, mass incarceration per state, and the Election 2016 results. (Rosita)

I had just finished an interview with Rosita. She articulated a range of experiences that left me dazed, excited, angry, and ready to change the world. I opened up the car door, and upon sitting down, I pulled out my journal from my book bag. I started scribbling in it. I realized how much time I was taking in writing in my journal when two cars honked at me. The initial takeaway, one that I still understand as the significant understanding for this manuscript, was the connection I had with the teacher. The teacher opened up her book of experiences, and shared many with me. The trust she had in me allowed her to stress certain sounds and words in her thoughts; she went beyond answering the questions I originally asked her by offering detailed descriptions. By the end of the interview, I was exhausted. I realized I was not exhausted by the interview process itself, but at the complexity and perspectives of the teacher herself (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). I also understood how her own experiences contributed to her teaching pedagogy.

Narrative inquiries into the experiences of social studies teachers remains a concept under-utilized in social studies research. While some researchers (Salinas, Franquiz, & Rodriguez, 2016; Salinas, Blevins, & Sullivan, 2012; Manfra, 2009) have incorporated critical inquiry as a narrative methodology, the research has focused on social studies curricula or

teacher education programs. The opening vignette, conducted in an interview with Rosita, a Latina social studies teacher in North Carolina, detailed a wide variety of reflections that extended beyond the classroom setting. The narratives illustrated complex representations of her life experiences (Riessman, 1993). These complex representations revealed the potential for critical pedagogical development in her classroom (Freire, 1998). As a result, I saw her narratives as phenomena that called for further understanding (Riessman, 1993).

This study illustrates experiences that have contributed to the development of critical pedagogies in the social studies classroom. The stories came from interviews with three current teachers of social studies in North Carolina. The results indicated the pedagogical transformation of social studies occurring in the K-12 setting, since one teacher taught 5th grade, one teacher taught 8th grade, and the third teacher taught grades 9-12. The teachers resisted fact recall and lecturing, and focused more on conversations on race, prejudice, and inequalities (Maloy & LaRoche, 2015). They also accepted student and community (de los Rios, Lopez, & Morrell, 2014).

Following the introduction, I review critical pedagogy and critiques of the theory. I then analyze the narratives appearing from the teachers' understandings of critical pedagogy. I conclude by clarifying the influence of grassroots critical pedagogy on the field, along with recommendations on enhancing the visibility of critical perspectives in social studies.

FRAMEWORK: CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

Significant principles underline critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy attempts to restrain the influences of neoliberalism in education, while developing economic, social, political, and cultural agency for marginalized individuals (Darder et al. 2009; Giroux, 2009; McLaren, 1989). It uncovers the implicit and explicit roles the educational system has in advancing dominant

narratives, and encourages individuals to confront them (Darder, 2012). Individuals confront them through the use of community-based knowledge, which encourage problem posing practices and dialogue (Nygreen, 2010). In theory, critical pedagogy advocates for all individuals.

CRITIQUES OF CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

Even though the theory of critical pedagogy has existed for decades in North America, widespread attempts at implementing it in K-12 settings have failed. US schools require students to take numerous standardized tests at various stages of their K-12 educational path (Ross, Mathieson, & Vinson, 2014). Teachers now prioritize academic calendar days for testing preparation, thus losing opportunities to engage critically with their students (Sondel, 2015; Villaverde & Carter, 2015). School districts, “racing to the top” to earn federal government money, force teachers and staff members to engage in pedagogical practices that undermine critical thought and put forward performance as the main reason for academic learning (Villaverde & Carter, 2015). Standardized testing only concentrates on facts and concepts; it does account for thinking critically about topics and issues. For school districts facing socio-economic inequalities, teacher shortages, and/or administrative mismanagement, they receive fewer funding opportunities and resources, thus continuing the vicious cycle of underperformance (Winstead, 2011).

A significant issue in applying higher education versions of critical pedagogy into K-12 settings has been the lack of diverse perspectives advocating the practice of critical pedagogy. A theoretical paradox exists, since those articulating for systematic change have been mainly privileged, white males (Orelus, 2015; Darder, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Cook-Sather, 2007; Lather, 1998; hooks, 1994; Weiler, 1991; Ellsworth, 1989). The abstractness of critical pedagogy

invokes an aura of exclusivity and prestige, concepts teachers find unrealistic when their classrooms welcome diverse groups of students (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Knight and Pearl, 2000; Ellsworth, 1989).

The patriarchal system associated with critical pedagogy results in condemnations from feminist scholars (Breuing, 2011; Cook-Sather, 2007; Lather, 1998; Ladson-Billings, 1995; hooks, 1994; Weiler, 1991; Ellsworth, 1989). Critical pedagogy subjugates individuals who are not “European, White, male, middle class, Christian, able-bodied, thin, and heterosexual (Ellsworth, 1989, p. 304). The theory also does not take into consideration the concealed levels of oppression when individuals became more human (Weiler, 1991). The constant referencing of Giroux, McLaren, Kincheloe, Freire, and Apple in critical pedagogy literature characterizes them as “founding fathers,” a narrative that authenticates a paternalistic reflection while discounting or ignoring other viewpoints (Breuing, 2011, p. 16). It is important to note that white, feminist scholars articulated the first set of critiques of critical pedagogy. As a result, other scholars and scholars of color have attempted to question critical pedagogy.

A growing literature on black feminist critical pedagogy, deconstruction of heterosexual narratives, voices from the borderlands/*testimonios* and the development of queer and transgendered critical pedagogies have expanded the criticism of critical pedagogy (Cortez & Flores Carmona, 2015; Evans-Winters & Piert, 2015; Gist, 2015; Troutman, 2015; Mayer, 2007). Rhetoric and theory situated within the frames of feminism and African-American thought develop new spaces for scholars (hooks, 1994). Critical cultural democracy aims to stimulate the different cultures situated within the individual (Darder, 2012). Borderlands thought gives voices to Chican@s and Latin@s sharing intimate connections with ancestral and contemporary

homelands while directly attacking the patriarchal, heterosexual, Anglo-American supremacy (Anzaldua, 2012).

Thus, the pedagogical, philosophical, and theoretical foundation of critical pedagogy, based on European models, remains a theory stuck in the abstract (Brock, 2015). Scholars, as a result, perceive critique pedagogy to be elitist (Orelus, 2015; Nygreen, 2010). Even when new scholars express theoretical arguments and didactic actions reflecting forms of critical pedagogy, they go unnoticed by the mainstream thinkers (Lynn & Jennings, 2009). Because of this perceived ignorance, a gap exists between critical scholars and K-12 educators. This has significant implications for social studies K-12 educators.

Very few social studies teachers are familiar with critical pedagogy. Many do not know how to implement it in the classroom (Evans, 2008). Evans (2008) noted that existing literature on critical pedagogy, mired in abstract language and concepts, prove to be too difficult for social studies teachers to understand. Teachers rarely learn about critical pedagogy, either during teacher education training or in the field (Sondel, 2015). Maximizing the view, critical pedagogy has experienced intense debates over the lack of diverse perspectives, the gendering of the theory, and elitism (Orelus, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Lather, 1998; Ellsworth, 1989). While these conversations have gone back and forth for decades now, it remains a theory residing among educational elites (Gibson, 1999). The future of critical pedagogy depends on teachers willing to continuously learn from themselves, and the worlds around them (Ross, 2016).

Consequently, the challenge begins with teachers. Social studies teachers need to understand student interpretations of the world, and learn from those narratives in order to outmaneuver the dominant ideologies (Villaverde & Carter, 2015). Social studies teachers must understand that the diverse students sitting in their classrooms have been inadequately prepared

for critical education: past educational experiences have already marginalized them, present curricula fail to take into account different viewpoints, and future experiences could revert them to bystander status in an environment dominated by a small population of affluent power holders (de los Rios et al., 2015). It is up to the critical social studies teacher to establish a pedagogical environment where learning involves constant questioning of discipline and the inequities surrounding it (Segall, 1999).

RESEARCHER POSITIONALITIES

I brought some unusual perspectives to the research. My own K-12 experiences disrupted the conventional applications of a passive observer in the field (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). I taught social studies/history for nine years. I taught elementary and secondary school social studies in rural, suburban, and urban settings. As an active researcher, I participated in the research through conversations about my own experiences as a social studies teacher. Yet, as a complete researcher, I lived “the same experiences as those observed” in the classroom (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). I focused on developing positive relationships with all of the students. The level of trust I developed with them allowed for critical conversations on race, ethnicity, and gender to occur in my classroom. I also realized the continued lack of teachers of color. I often worked as the only Latino in the school, along with a small number of African-American and multi-racial teachers. Incorporating graduate training as a Latino critical theorist and critical social studies educator perspectives, I bring a variety of positionalities that influence the development of this study.

I, therefore, used a number of tools to continually deconstruct my dual research positionalities (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). I created reflections in my research journal. I wrote analytic memos on field work and data analysis documents. I spent some time quietly reflecting

on the data. The reflections not only established credibility with the data, but also encouraged me to maintain a constant receptivity to research surprises (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The purpose of this research was to explore how current social studies teachers have interpreted their own transformative pedagogies. I relied on the following questions to guide the research:

- (1) How do teachers perceive social studies?
- (2) What do teachers take into account in developing their pedagogies?

I collected data from a six-month study of current social studies teachers in North Carolina. I conducted research in rural, suburban, and rural settings. I relied on a combination of informed grounded theory and ethnographical methodology. Using this tactic provided an understanding of existing literature on the topic of narrative inquiry while being situated in the data collection and learning from it (Thornberg, 2012; Charmaz, 2006). Each teacher described critical components that contributed to their pedagogies (Riessman, 1993). The teachers' stories encouraged awareness of new concepts of critical pedagogy from the data (Thornberg, 2012). The teachers' narratives embodied both the story-telling aspect of the interviews and the phenomena of the research (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The variety of stories supported the notion that current social studies work to resist dominant ideals and labels in order to engage their students critically (Clandinin, 2006).

Participants

I selected teachers for this study based on previous professional relationships (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). The longevity of teaching social studies within the state of North Carolina

helped develop a comprehensive network of colleagues. I relied on that network to gather a sample of teachers (Patton, 2002). Once I received IRB approval, I then engaged in conversations with several possible participants via email and the telephone. I chose individuals teaching in the field to inform the research. The selected teachers would provide an abundant amount of data to answer the research questions (Patton, 2002).

Three teachers participated in this study. Rosita, identifying as Latina, is in her fourth year teaching social studies. She taught the first two years of her career in an urban public school district, and has been teaching in an urban charter elementary school since 2014. She is originally from Los Angeles, California. Charlie, identifying as an African-American male, is in his eleventh year of teaching social studies. He has taught his entire career at the same public high school in a rural district close to the North Carolina-Virginia border. Charlie returned “home” to teach in the county; he attended K-12 schools in the same district. Panadoro, identifying as a White male, is in his fourteenth year of teaching social studies. He has been teaching in a suburban charter school for the past four years. Prior to that, he taught in middle schools in North Carolina and Florida. He is originally from Miami, Florida.

Participation in the study required the following criteria: (1) holding a state-recognized teaching license in social studies/history, (2) employment by a school or school district, (3) teaching a course on American history as part of their employment, and (4) demonstrating a commitment to using a critical teaching approach. I emailed consent forms to all three individuals. They were given opportunities to ask questions, both in person and via email prior to engaging in the research. After all questions were answered, they signed the consent forms.

Limitations existed with the research. Two teachers who were willing to participate in the study dropped out because of heavy testing schedules. Another teacher elected not to

participate due to the lack of administrative support. Despite these limitations, the remaining participants responded to questions about their experiences of teaching social studies through a combination of formal interviews, numerous informal interviews, and observations. The findings from this study will further support the growing sphere of critical social studies research. The narratives also reveal the potential for future qualitative research on the topic of critical pedagogy in social studies.

Process

I utilized in-depth interviews and follow-up questioning as the primary methods of data collection. The interviews reflected a semi-structured, informal approach. I created a set of questions to evoke responses from the teachers (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). The questions were to invoke two viewpoints. The first perspective engaged teachers in reflection. Teachers recalled and detailed their experiences as both a student and as a teacher. The second perspective addressed the pedagogies used by teachers in connecting with students. The informal setup allowed follow-up questions to be developed during the interview. The new questions expanded the scope of the conversations: I encouraged the teachers to explain further certain concepts or statements. The follow-up questions also illustrated my heightened attention to their narratives (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). All interviews lasted between 30 and 90 minutes.

Participant observations provided a secondary data collection method. I wrote field notes. The statements made on my field notes not only bolstered the words of the teachers, but also illustrated the representations of their experiences (Baker, 2006; Riessman, 1993). Even though I taught social studies for a number of years, I maintained a form of peripheral membership. Straddling between participant (as a former critical social studies teacher) and

observer (as a researcher) allowed me to understand the teachers' practices in the classroom as both an insider and an outsider (Baker, 2006).

I recorded all interviews with a digital audio recorder, with written permission obtained from each teacher. I then transcribed the interviews. I shortened the transcripts through the process of interview condensation. I eliminated "extraneous and tangential comments" that did not directly address the research questions (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018, p.118). I provided condensed the transcripts to the teachers for verification and accuracy (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018).

Analysis

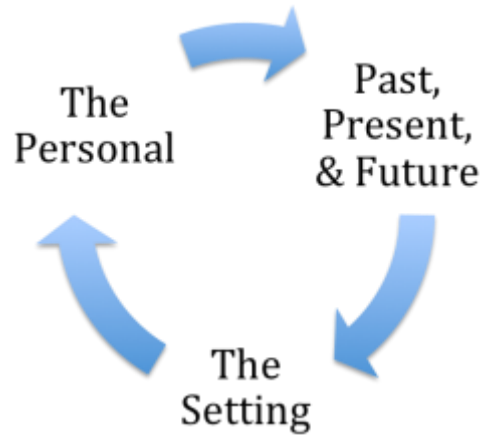
I engaged in continuous data analysis and reflection. I took notes and wrote memos on the margins of the sheet during the interviews. I used these reflections to inform the formal process of data analysis. I developed codes, both analytical and in-vivo, via the computer program MaxQDA. I reassessed the codes two additional times. As I engaged in the coding process, I kept replaying the conversations I had with the teachers. I did not want to rely on the computer program as the primary analytical approach. The words on paper, or in this case, in digital written form, only provided one point of view. In listening to their conversations numerous times, I picked up instances of accenting certain words, spaces between words, and other verbalizations not found in a transcript. Their stories provided illustrations of space and time in their lives (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). This process developed the themes that I will discuss in the following section.

DISCUSSIONS

I discovered a common thread from the data collection and analysis. The roots of the narratives came from three different yet interrelated aspects: (1) their personal experiences in

social studies, (2) their understandings of the students' past and present experiences in social studies and the future for them, and (3) perceptions of the classroom, school, and outside communities. I created a design, Figure 1, to illustrate the spaces studied within this research.

Figure 1 – Cycle of Knowledge
Based on Clandinin (2006) & Riessman (1993)



I discovered five common themes from the narratives of the three teachers. The themes, with supporting examples, are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1 – Common Themes

Recognizing Students as Intellectuals	“I have a more sophisticated group of kids. When they come in the door, they don’t have to wait to 6 o’clock to get the news. It’s been tweeted, and it’s trending before they walk into my classroom.”
Caring	“Caring for the students means that you will do whatever it takes in the interest of the child.”
Evoking Social Justice	“Teaching U.S. History...you can’t get away from social studies, like the issue is coming really and totally interwoven into every single aspect of U.S. History.”
Engaging in Self- Reflection	“When you think back to my own experience with history, I absolutely hated history the entire time I was in my K-12 because it was irrelevant to me. It all was.”
Asserting Community	“I’ve got six political candidates coming, from the sitting secretary of state, sitting insurance commissioner coming in. And that is so when we’re talking about voting and getting involved in politics, I want to bring in as much as I want to really draw from that.”

The first theme emphasized the importance of recognizing the intellectual strengths of students. The second theme showed the level of caring the teachers had for their students. The third theme illustrated the interconnectivity between social justice and teaching social studies. The fourth theme situated self-reflection as a significant part of their practice. The final theme incorporated the worlds outside their classrooms as relevant and valuable settings. All teachers viewed their work as life lessons. They all expected their students to leave their classroom with certain academic and social tools to address inequalities in society.

Recognizing Students as Intellectuals

The teachers’ narratives seem to indicate a respect for the students as knowledge holders. The teachers understand how students bring knowledge on issues and topics discussed in social

studies. Panadoro said, “They are making the connections between their personal lives to the lessons they have learned in the classroom.” Charlie said, “I have a more sophisticated group of kids. When they are coming in the door, they don’t wait to 6 o’clock to get the news. It’s been tweeted and it’s trending before they walk into my classroom, and they already have questions” Rosita said, “So where I am, our students, most of them watch the news either as they are walking by the TV set or maybe their grandparents watched that afternoon. So, they are very much aware of what's going on. They just don't have the time to talk about it, you know.”

Yet, each teacher used different techniques to draw out student knowledge into forms of critical thinking and conversations. Panadoro attempted to help students articulate those thoughts into more cohesive arguments. He discussed an interaction with a student who openly supported Trump in his class:

I didn’t personally agree with him [the student] but I got him to think about it. There, he's a critical thinker. And if you're critically thinking, if you're looking at your world around you, and you're bringing in facts, you're bringing in facts that leads you to the conclusion that the country needs a wall. At least I can respect your decision because you can explain it to me.

For Panadoro, putting aside personal beliefs belied the importance of articulating a position thoroughly. He explained, “I’d rather train a kid to make their own decisions than to just force them into agreeing with me.” Panadoro was quite aware that he was engaging with his students in forms of critical consciousness. He was equally aware of the fact that his students needed to develop their own forms of critical questioning from their knowledge bases. Instead of viewing the student Trump supporter as a deficit thinker and dismissing him, Panadoro chose to engage with him in the hopes of establishing more democratic participation in his social studies classroom.

For Charlie, he prepared himself for students to ask critical questions at any point of instruction:

You know, if you talk about ideas of revolution and you have no basic understanding of the Haitian, French Revolution, American Revolution, you know all these things, then you can't fully develop ideas in your classroom that really builds your confidence. Particularly if you got this savvy kid who was online last night and he learned about Toussaint L'oeuvre and he hits you with that on the second day...

He talked about connecting history to other history-makers who were not typically mentioned in textbook books or the curriculum:

I say history is a puzzle, borderless puzzle. And there are pieces that you have been able to put in place throughout your entire experience. Martin Luther King, y'all know a lot about him. I'm not really going to talk a lot about him in this class. Why? Because you've heard a lot about him before. You'll hear me talking about Fannie Lou Hamer and Stokely Carmichael.

For Charlie, extending their knowledge by discussing other notable figures brought new profound perspectives for his students. He explained, "It's relevant teaching. It takes very little effort when you connect the material to their personal, academic, and social experiences."

Rosita sought to establish more critical understanding through questioning and conversations. She mentioned teaching about two well-known figures in social studies: "They will ask questions about like why did this happen and what did they do in it. I realized that a lot of stuff was blanked over or blacked out, which led to me having to do my own research to best instruct students. So, they didn't get a pretty picture of Christopher Columbus. They didn't get a pretty picture of Abraham Lincoln." Rosita understood the power behind this approach because it allowed her students to speak back. Rosita said, "I encourage them to talk to their families about the history we are learning. If a student has an alternative perspective or opinion, we listen to it."

Charlie, Panadoro, and Rosita articulated views of their students as intellectuals entering their classrooms ready to engage with their teachers. They encouraged their students to use that knowledge. Students, as a result, feel more connected with one another, their teachers, and their communities. Maloy and LaRoche (2015) supported this theme. They called on current teachers to establish and engage in genuine conversations in social studies classrooms. Genuine conversations, combining respect for the students and inclusivity of different thoughts, help students “feel their ideas matter and adults are willing to listen, even when adults disagree with what is being said” (Maloy & LaRoche, 2015, p. 98).

The findings for this theme went beyond honest conversations. All three teachers framed their conversations with critical ideas. Because the teachers all accepted student-based knowledge, they helped establish empowering relationships with their students. The findings for this theme support the call made by Villaverde and Carter (2015) for educators to develop their own interpretations of critical pedagogy for the benefit of their students. Teachers understood the positive power behind constructive discussions. As a result, they all started fundamentally changing their students’ understandings of social studies (Maloy & LaRoche, 2015; Freire, 1998). Students would leave these classrooms more empowered at the end of the year than they had when they entered at the start.

Caring

The teachers’ narratives indicated forms of caring towards their students. Exhibiting a caring pedagogy allowed them to establish positive relationships that allowed the teachers to engage in critical practices.

For Rosita, she connected caring with her own critical pedagogy. Because she was open with her students regarding her own experiences with social studies, she did not want her

students to have similar experiences. She said, “History is history and there's a lot of it. Because I care for my students, I choose to teach history that's important to them. I choose history that is going to empower them.” Caring, according to Rosita, takes into consideration the total student. She said, “Caring for the students means that you will do whatever it takes in the interest of the child.” As a result, Rosita gives her students her complete attention while she is at her school. She said, “Because I care for them, I stay after school even on the days I'm not assigned to stay after school to help. Because I care for them, I will update mom and dads on the progress of their education, or the lack thereof.”

Rosita also paid close attention to her own personal stances with certain topics in social studies. This particular focus aligned with her concept of attending to the full interests of her students. She said, “My own conflicts with certain issues needs to stay separate.” She understood the diversity within her community, especially when she is answer questions from students who come from more conservative households. She said, “I have to be very careful when I am ready to say something in return that is child appropriate. But I also explain this [Rosita’s response] in a way that is not only going to offend them, but also best relate to them.”

Lastly, Rosita articulated her own upbringing as a Latina growing up in Los Angeles as an example of caring. Her female students told Rosita about the dangers of playing outside after sunset. Rosita then conceptualized the roots of this fear in her students and she based it from her experiences:

I have had female students who have said, ‘I’m scared to go play outside.’ I was like, ‘girl, I know. I grew up in L.A. As a female, I was told not to go play outside. I was told to come in at a certain hour. I was told of all the dangers but they were never broken down to me. They were just told and there's an understanding of why something is happening as opposed to just knowing that it is.

For Panadoro, caring justified his teaching of social studies. He viewed caring as vitally important because “there isn’t an alternative.” His caring for his students accentuated his social justice approaches. He said, “Social studies education offers students the best opportunity in school to find out who they are as a person, what their place in the world is.” Considering the vastness of social studies, and his own critical pedagogies, Panadoro saw caring as the key ingredient in critically engaging with the discipline. He said, “Because I care, I want to teach my students as much as I possibly can.”

Panadoro also sought to establish productive relationships with the students through caring, especially for some students who may resist his social justice teaching style. He said, “My job, once the facts are to be discussed, is to referee the students’ discussions. My personal opinion isn’t important in terms of the education of the students.” By giving those resistant students space to articulate their thoughts, Panadoro creates an understanding that he is willing to hear their opinions. However, Panadoro draws a line when those opinions become inflammatory in nature. He said, “And you, as a student, is just refuting it [topic] out of hand, then I’ll call you out on that because that’s not necessary. Not that student isn’t wrong because they disagree with me. But the student is wrong because they’re not backing up their argument with the facts.”

For Charlie, his interpretation of caring echoed Panadoro’s first example of caring. He said caring for the students was “the only way.” Similar to Rosita, Charlie took the total student into consideration when demonstrating caring. He said, “Caring is listening and acting. Students feel valued when you listen, and when you act on their concern, problem, or inquiry. Then, to them, you care. It’s genuine and active.” Charlie drew from his experiences as a student in the same county as a significant consideration in caring for his students:

Rita Pierson said that ‘kids don’t learn from people they don’t like.’ Well, students don’t learn from people that don’t care. I draw a lot on my academic experiences, and have a very detailed recollection of my teachers. If a teacher cared for me, as well as their content, then I did the same. Now I just follow suit, especially since I now teach in the same setting where I was taught.

Charlie also mentioned his interconnectedness with his community as part of his caring towards students. He talked about a student who opened up to him about his future aspirations:

I’m supplementing him with a certain set of life skills to help him out because I know he may want to become a welder one day. So, my question is, alright, listen, yeah, you’re going to pass social studies. But let’s also bring in somebody who can talk to you about how to get from point A to point B with that. And also address the fact that you’re having some issues at home.

Charlie understood the realization that not all of his students were going to continue studying social studies in higher educational settings or in their professions. Charlie did know, however, that the aspirations of his students in his community were key for him to discuss life concepts within the realm of social studies.

In summary, the teachers connected caring with learning. Caring is pivotal for social studies teachers when engaging in critical pedagogies. Without caring, the students have no vested interest in learning.

This theme suggested love and appreciation for students. The teachers viewed caring as an opportunity to critically engage with their students (hooks, 1994). All students seek teachers who demonstrate absolute love and care towards them (Valenzuela, 1999). Because of that love and appreciation, all three teachers established high levels of trust with their students that encouraged them to question the material and engage in critical learning (Stanley, 2015; Ross, Mathison, & Vinson, 2014). The narratives demonstrating caring also defied traditional

portrayals of social studies teachers in the K-12 setting being distant and indifferent (Maloy & LaRoche, 2015).

The theme also suggested continued critical examinations of diversity in the social studies classroom. Rosita, Panadoro, and Charlie acknowledged the intersectionalities in existence. They all used caring in cooperative ways that helped students understand how the complexities of their daily lives. Their critical approaches encouraged their students to cooperate with one another (Valenzuela, 1999). As a result, the narratives situated caring as a significant element in the critical development and identity of these teachers (Johnson, 2015).

Evoking Social Justice

All three teachers identified social justice as a significant influence in their pedagogical practice. Panadoro contended that his teaching of social studies was rooted in a social justice approach. He said, “Teaching US History, you can't get away from social justice. Really and totally interwoven into every single aspect of US history.” Rosita saw social justice as a form of curricular disruption. She said, “My passions lie in social justice. If we did read Howard Zinn, as like an alternative perspective read like the truth, I ask ‘what would this look like in a tradition text?’ Those are my goals for teaching history. It was never like memorize all fifty states and memorize all presidents.” Charlie mentioned connecting his realities of the outside world with his teaching. He said, “Social studies began before I walked into the classroom. So, it’s civic engagement. It’s social awareness. It’s history. It’s culture.”

Further conversations on their interpretations of social justice revealed resistance toward deficit perspectives held by other educators. For Charlie, he understood the daily lives of his students, and related it to his class. He said,

I tell everybody man, you would be amazed at the stuff our kids see from Friday afternoon to Monday morning. We approach them with the same kind of presumption that all is well and all is fine. But these kids live a stressed life. How do you create a classroom environment that supports them, achieving their goals under those circumstances?

Panadoro understood the homogeneity existing at his school, and how it influenced his students' perceptions. He said, "Being able to expose them to social justice movements of the 50s and 60s...it gives them this ability that helps them when they start getting much more exposed to Native Americans, African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans in their high schools." He extended his interpretations of social justice to topics on climate change and world hunger, pointing out "why there are seven billion people in the world, and why that is a big deal." With such a significant number of people on the planet contributing to both crises, Panadoro wanted his students to understand that there are "a lot of good things going on as well, and there's a lot they can do within that world." Rosita used social justice to incorporate current events into class conversations. Rosita said, "Yes, these shootings are happening in Tulsa, these shootings are happening in Texas. Yet, these shootings are happening here. So, I need to question why this is happening." She then connected police brutality on persons of color with the perceptions held by the overwhelmingly white school administrators and colleagues on the students of color at her school. She explained:

Someone said the other day, the comment was from a white female counterpart. She said, I went zero to hero on him. And I was like 'are you calling yourself a hero? Is this white savior complex that you are displaying currently?' And so, I mean, she was very uncomfortable by the comment. But we have had extensive professional development or conversations on like we are not here to save these children. You need to realize the implications of that.

The narratives in this section firmly establish social justice as a compelling part of teaching social studies. The teachers understand the complex intersectionalities existing in education. They rely on these understandings to cement their critical pedagogies.

All three teachers saw teaching as practices in social justice. They understood their school settings examples of inequality. Rosita acknowledged the concept and implicit power of the “white superhero” trying to save the students of color existing in her school. Rosita, as a Latina, called out her white peers who did not understand the inherent racism in their words (Ewing Flynn, 2012). Panadoro conceded the overwhelming dominance of a white population within his school setting. Yet, he did not rely on his privileges as a white male educator to fall into line by teaching the dominant narratives. He studied the challenges brought on by a dominant white student body in order to find openings for critical engagement (Ewing Flynn, 2012). Charlie realized that comparisons to other, more wealthy communities in North Carolina would not hamper his teaching. Instead, he relied on the cultural and historical strengths of the communities surrounding his school to engage in social justice (Bermudez, 2015).

Rosita, Charlie, and Panadoro also condemned the narrow construction of the social studies curriculum. Rosita used alternative texts, such as *The People’s History of the United States* and *Harvest of Empire*, in illustrating silenced perspectives in social studies. Charlie relied on hip-hop and social media in his classes for new avenues of discussion with his students. Panadoro introduced topics, such as climate change and the election of Trump, into discussion when examining past historical events. This theme answers the question posed by Johnston (2012), in which he asked, “What evidence is there that students are attuned to social justice?” (p. 17). The theme is supported by previous studies that critically connected past events with contemporary implications (de los Rios, et al, 2015) and encouraging students to openly discuss

issues of race in class (Ewing Flynn, 2012). In conclusion, the three teachers voiced “disturbing practices” that occurred within their settings, and offered “powerful ideas” to change the worlds of their students and their own (McCrary & Ross, 2016, p. 3).

Interestingly, as an important side note, two of three teachers taught in public charter schools. Critics allude to charter schools being thought factories churning out individualist, neoliberal citizens (Sondel, 2015). However, the narratives suggest that Rosita and Panadoro used the charter school system to directly address inequalities. Both Rosita and Panadoro transitioned from public schools to charter schools. Both acknowledged experiencing intense pressure from their administrators to maintain curriculum pace and uniformity. In the charter school setting, they both developed and executed curricular units in their classrooms that directly addressed issues of race and inequalities. While they found the neo-liberal influences in their respective charter schools troubling, i.e. the concept of competition as a mechanism for change, they were willing to work within that setting in order to exploit “loopholes” in the system, as Rosita articulated.

Engaging in Self-Reflection

Self-reflection also appeared to be a significant part of the teachers’ pedagogies. Each teacher uniquely described self-reflection. Panadoro engaged in lesson self-reflection. He said, “I make sure to keep track on my calendar. My old calendars keep track of standard things like pacing and everything like that. It kind of helps jog my memory: ‘How did the kids react to this lesson? Did they jump up or did they shrink away from it?’” His reflections helped him understand how his pedagogy critically engaged with his students. He said, “To teach in a vacuum and to ignore what people are bringing into the room is an exercise in futility. So, if you

can't relate it to what a person is going through in their own personal lives, then it's difficult for them to make a connection.”

Rosita saw her own experiences in social studies and history classes in her self-reflections. She said, “When you think back to my own experience with history, I absolutely hated history the entire time I was in my K-12 because it was irrelevant to me. It all was.”

Rosita realized the power of a critical pedagogy when she was exposed to the works of activists such as Howard Zinn and Juan Gonzalez as a college student: “I really didn’t see myself in any of it [history] until I read minority perspectives. All I was ever told about was illegal immigration. So, I didn’t understand my relevance to history of what they were teaching me.”

Rosita then connected that moment to her own critical pedagogy, one rooted in transparency: “I was very honest with my students. One, I wasn't there so I don't know everything. Two, everything that you are being taught is through my bias, like I'm choosing what I'm teaching you and how I'm teaching it.”

Charlie understood self-reflection from two points of view: the influence of his high school history teacher and active listening. Regarding his high school teacher, Charlie saw the importance of learning all sides to an event or issue as part of critical conversations. He said, “He was the teacher who really had me truly engaged in social studies. Even though there were times I didn’t agree with him, he had a strong mastery of his subject that I had to respond. That’s a biggie. Know what you are talking about. So, I respected him, even though sometimes I didn’t agree with him.” It appeared that Charlie’s willingness to be open to all perspectives helped him develop a form of active listening that he employs in his classroom. He said, “Listen twice as much as you talk. Let them know they matter. Their ideas are important.” In summary, the narratives in this section indicate that self-reflection is important to the teachers. Self-reflection

allows the teachers to understand how students understand their lessons. Teachers use self-reflection to rely on their own experiences in social studies to enhance their pedagogies.

Self-reflection, as part of their critical pedagogy, played an important role in creating critical discussions. Adler (2008) argued the setting most conducive for self-reflection in social studies was in a teacher education program, as part of their pedagogical development. However, this theme suggests that self-reflection continues well into the careers of social studies teachers. Panadoro pointed out his reliance on past calendars, with notations of practices that worked and did not work, as part of his self-reflections. The theme also suggests that self-reflection began at a point earlier than the teacher education program. Charlie engaged in self-reflections beginning as a high school student. Rosita engaged in self-reflections beginning as a college student. Continued self-reflection allows the teachers to understand the numerous inequities existing in their educational settings (Darder, 2012). The results from these self-reflections encourage further actions that help break down systematic inequality.

Community as Part of Teaching

The teachers' narratives indicated the importance of community in developing their own critical pedagogy. I learned that each teacher connected community through multiple angles.

Charlie saw the community as an integral part of his teaching:

My style of teaching really came more so from understanding the needs of my community. Understanding my own personal experience in education in my community. Honestly, my style of teaching is born from understanding my community, my students, understanding their goals, understanding the availability of resources what we have to work with.

As a result, Charlie wanted to establish clear lines of communications between himself and his community. He labeled it as "feedback." He measured his teaching through "feedback from the

community; feedback from my kids.” Adjusting his critical approaches saw his students “become more invested in education.”

Charlie also saw another type of community influencing his teaching: the Hip-Hop community. His reliance on Hip-Hop started with his own experiences as a high school student during the Reagan administration:

For me, I was dealing with an experience that was becoming politicized. Because it was the music I was listening to. So, I started asking questions. Hip-hop was the ghetto CNN for me. And so, I had questions about, y’know, things such as Reagonomics, Iran Contra, things like that my uncles didn’t know about. So, when I got into my civics class, I had a teacher who really hit on this is what’s going on outside our door right now and here’s how history applies to it. And that I think is how that’s where it first kind of got me, when I first thought that wow, that’s pretty cool. And because that teacher did that, it engaged me. Y’know what I mean? I was like tapped in because I’m hearing this on TV on the late-night news. I hear Chuck D talking about it too. But nobody in my house is really talking about it.

Charlie continues to engage with hip-hop as part of his teaching today. The use of Hip-Hop in social studies illustrates a critical pedagogy, articulated by Akom (2009), that confronts issues of racism and other prejudices facing students of color. By utilizing the lyrics of Kendrick Lamar and Fetty Wop in his teaching, he continues to “pattern work in the classroom” first started by his civics teacher. He views it as “bridging that gap” between critical knowledge and the community.

Rosita also saw the community as an integral part of her teaching pedagogy. She stressed to other teachers the importance of knowing the various communities that send students to their school. She said, “I would say that before you do anything, before you plan a lesson, before you find a job, you need to know your community, the students you are serving or hope to serve.” Rosita also incorporates events taking place in the local communities near her school. She does this because she sees other teachers who ignore what’s going on in the communities. She said,

“We bring in all of these issues that are happening within their homes, within their communities. I do this because no one else is talking about them, for whatever reason.”

Panadoro understood his local communities through two different views. While he acknowledged his desire to “serve his community,” he lamented the lack of racial and ethnic diversity. He said, “One of the things the school I’m at gets a bad rap for lack of diversity. But if we are pulling from the areas around, it’s not a particularly diverse area.” He did, however, understand the political diversity existing within the area. Panadoro capitalized on this in the weeks leading up to the 2016 general election. He convinced state and local elected officials, and their opponents, to visit their school. He wanted them to directly converse with his 8th grade students. He talked about the attendees and objective of the event. He said, “I’ve got six political candidates coming, from the sitting secretary of state, sitting insurance commissioner coming in. And that is so when we’re talking about voting and getting involved in politics, I want to bring in as much as I want to really draw from that.” The activity he discussed involved a town-hall style meeting between his students and local elected officials and their opponents. His students listened to each candidate, and posed questions afterwards. Panadoro saw this as an opportunity “to establish a baseline of how the world works.” This activity was one that he did every year around the fall. While he articulated a sense of political empowerment, the forum failed to address power through critical lenses. Interestingly, this event was not “part of the curriculum” at Panadoro’s school.

In summary, all three teachers located the community as central in developing their critical pedagogies. The community provided additional knowledge that expanded and/or resisted the curriculum. The teachers learned from their communities.

Incorporating community into their critical pedagogies provided glimpses into the future. With Panadero arranging visits by politicians and candidates to his school, Rosita counseling current teachers moving to new schools or future teachers entering the profession, and Charlie relying on the feedback from his community, these teachers worked to advance a better society in light of testing pressures. The narratives support the call made by Villaverde and Carter (2015) for teachers to engage in futuristic thinking. Futuristic thinking, taking into account the high levels of risk, uses holistic methods to question and deconstruct the unknowns of the world (Villaverde & Carter, 2015). All three teachers used social studies to challenge assumptions. The discipline gave them opportunities to positively influence the futures of their students.

Also, teachers incorporating communities into their critical pedagogies appeared to change traditional understandings of community service learning projects. Traditional service learning projects involve a one-way delivery of discussions and knowledge dissemination to local communities (Maloy & LaRoche, 2015). Maloy and LaRoche (2015) suggested an incorporation of a critical service learning program in schools. This approach would require social studies teachers, students, and community members to work together as “allies/comrades” in addressing inequities (p. 203). This theme suggests a modification. In order for a learning program to engage critically with communities, social studies teachers must be *hyperaware* of the diversity of their communities. The teachers must establish transparent relationships with all existing communities, not just the ones whose dominant ideologies are reflected in the social, cultural, economic, and academic capitals within their schools. Social studies teachers can then engage in critical service programs.

CONCLUSION

The themes confirm the existence of critical pedagogy in social studies classrooms. All three teachers incorporated critical pedagogies in their classrooms. I determined each teacher's motivations for teaching social studies, expectations from students and themselves, and societal perceptions. The teachers all cared for their students, viewing them as knowledge holders. The teachers incorporated the local communities into the classroom. They perceived inequalities existing in society, and worked with the students to remedy them. They integrated their own experiences as students and humans, which shaped the relationships with students.

The results from this study reveal the diversity of critical pedagogy. As a result, I argue that these forms of critical pedagogy in social studies classrooms reveal organic roots. The three teachers demonstrate how they can develop forms of critical pedagogies without even knowing what "critical pedagogy" is. I connect this realization with Gibson's (1999) argument on carrying out critical pedagogy, "You simply cannot get there from here on a singular route" (p. 147). The three teachers all took different paths in developing their own critical pedagogies. Inside the classroom, the three teachers used a variety of instructional tools to critically engage with their students. All three teachers addressed controversial issues, something not commonly found in social studies classrooms (Maloy & LaRoche, 2015). The teachers not only understand the importance of engaging in meaningful conversations with their students, but also understand the background of each topic as well as the future implications of such conversations (Evans, 2008). The teachers resisted the tradition of social studies, where memorization and fact regurgitation reign, and instead, attempted to illustrate concepts and topics that made real-life connections with the students (Johnston, 2012).

I also discovered three different concepts of a critical social studies teacher. While all three teachers demonstrated unique examples of a critical pedagogy, they all triangulated their experiences: they analyzed the environments around them, they reflected from their own experiences in social studies, and they engaged with their students. As teachers of color, Rosita and Charlie saw themselves in the students they worked with. As a white teacher, Panadoro understood the privileges associated with his identities, yet, sought to introduce critical concepts to his homogenous white student groups.

I anticipate these narratives encouraging social studies teacher educators and critical theorists to connect with local K-12 schools. They will discover teachers already engaging in critical pedagogy. Panadoro called on teacher educators to visit his, and other, critical social studies classrooms. He said, “Research tends to have this image of research being set in clinical, aesthetic in a clinical way, and there is nothing clean or sanitary about what happens in my classroom.” Moreover, I acknowledge the need for further scholarship in order to increase the visibility of critical pedagogies in social studies. According to Ross (2016), in order to construct future interpretations of critical pedagogy, researchers and educators have to understand and learn from the realities around them. They also need to take into account the preexisting agency found in students and educators (Ross, 2016). As a result, reconceptualizations of teacher educational programs can start, which would help develop critical social studies teachers (Evans, 2008).

Implications

The narratives have implications for social studies research. The narratives suggest that social studies scholars need to reconsider the existence of critical pedagogy in K-12 settings. While each teacher differed in the construction of their critical pedagogies, all three relied on

experience, practice and their interpretations of school and community settings (Nygreen, 2010). The teachers engaged in meaningful, clear conversations with a diversity of students and educators (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Evans, 2008). The teachers also encouraged their students to engage in critical reflection of the social studies material (Bermudez, 2015). This approach permits previously silenced students to speak back to the narratives found in social studies. Lastly, the teachers used a critical care ethic to situate their own critical pedagogies in a discipline not widely regarded for openly cherishing students (Johnson, 2015; Maloy & LaRoche, 2015). Future research examining critical care pedagogies, curriculum redevelopment, and community pedagogies would broaden the critical social studies literature.

Summary

Narrative inquiries provide a starting point for scholars to learn about the experiences of K-12 social studies during times of political divisiveness. The narratives show how teachers can deliver critical instruction in volatile times. The roots of their critical instruction did not come primarily from their higher education experiences. Instead, life experiences, connections with different communities, and profound awareness of inequities existing in schools and society influenced their critical pedagogies. Individuals studying to become social studies teachers would benefit from a teacher education program that not only teaches “the basics,” such as lesson planning and educational philosophies, but also critical concepts such as critical care and culturally relevant classroom management. For current teachers who are willing to continue learning about their craft while adapting to changing classroom populations, the narratives would help provide data that would lead to valuable, critical professional development programs within those settings. The end results would enhance the development of critical education in social

studies, especially during a time period of “alternative facts” or expressing opinions without supporting details.

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The Body: Clarifying Theory from the Experiences of Social Studies Teachers

Social studies, a discipline mired in historical traditionalism and conservative research ideas, serves as the most appropriate setting for an empirical introduction into the sociology of the body. The concept of studying the social manipulations of the body originate in sociology (Adelman & Ruggi, 2016; Wacquant, 2016; Wacquant, 2015; Shilling, 2012; Okely, 2007; Cregan, 2006). The body, as a material object grounded in reality, engages individuals in two ways: finding comfort in familiar settings and resisting other, more chaotic settings (Engman & Crawford, 2016; McGuire, 1990). The body, as a result, has been portrayed as a habitus due to the accumulation of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986). I connect these interpretations to social studies.

The discipline conforms students to certain rituals and myths, actions that perpetuate social and academic inequalities (Maloy & LaRoche, 2015; Harker, 1984). When a student or teacher enters the social studies classroom, their bodies experience a form of trauma often unacknowledged or understood (Wacquant, 2015). The root of this trauma revolves around a singular idea: American exceptionalism. American exceptionalism, as Zinn (2011) articulated in his keynote speech to the National Council of the Social Studies, makes students “grow up with the premise that the United States is somehow unique in the world.” Not just being unique, but better than everyone else. Physical and digital textbooks, constructed by corporations, evaluate the notion of American exceptionalism ad nauseam (Loewen, 2007). Given its’ reconstructions of decisive military victories, poor to rich successes, and selective retellings of critical actions, social studies hits the body in great force. Yet, when teachers introduce critical thinking units,

the body experiences confusion. The body is already “emotionally loaded” by various notions of American exceptionalism (Evans et al. 2005, p. 132).

However, I believe that social studies teachers who are engaged and centered in critical practices start clearing up those confusions and encourage a reconceptualization of social studies. Their own understandings of the body does not fit neatly into the scope of American exceptionalism. Their willingness to “change up how social studies is taught” stresses the understanding of overt and implicit ideas in the classroom. Shilling (2012) termed this approach “dualism,” where the body experiences something, then it reacts to it (experiences-> reactions). Other labels include nature-> culture and action-> structure. By acknowledging the complexity of the body in the classroom and how it contributes to learning, social studies teachers can engage in critical discourses that challenge American exceptionalism, racism and other prejudices.

I divide the article into three parts. The first part of this article delineates the theory of the sociology of the body while linking it to education and social studies. The second part of the article presents relevant empirical research. The third part describe the methodology used to collect data. The final part illustrates empirical examples of the theory in the social studies classroom. I studied three current social studies teachers in North Carolina and found three manifestations of the body as bodies of change. They are 1) physical manifestations, 2) vocal manifestations, and 3) historical-> contemporary manifestations. The manifestations suggest profound influence on their critical pedagogies in social studies. Working with the results, I also deconstruct my own understandings of the body. I will interweave my own experiences, in *italics*, as data analysis, since I view my fieldwork as part outlier, part embodiment (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018; Okely, 2007). This hybrid manuscript may provoke conversations and research

within the literature. The results represent the potential for the expansion of the sociology of the body in social studies and education research (Adelman & Ruggi, 2016). Equally relevant, I start a journey beyond “the privileged settings” of social studies research to situate the role of the body as relevant in the literature (DeLeon, 2014, p. 86).

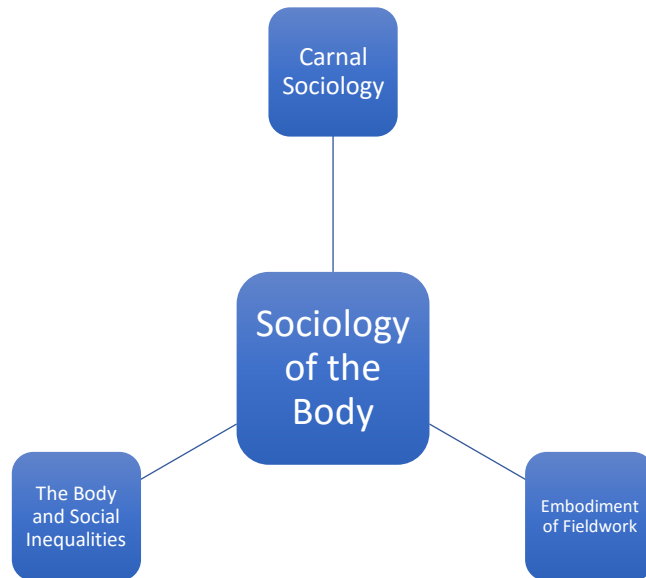
Triangulation of Different Concepts Within Sociology of the Body

As I started writing in my journal about what I saw and felt in an observation, I knew something was different. I stopped writing, and started recalling my own teaching experiences. I went back to the 2008 presidential election results, when I taught 7th grade social studies. I recalled my surprise that a nation with a profound and troubling history with people of color, one that included de jure and de facto practices, had elected a person of color as president. I went in on January 20th, 2008, and in silence, showed the inauguration to my 7th grade students on television. Afterwards, I moved around the room and answered questions individually. I remember one question quite vividly: “Do you think racism has been eliminated?” Looking at myself from a third person perspective, I recalled shrugging my shoulders, lifting my hands up to reveal my palms, and pulling my lips back in. My body synthesized my feelings in a way that conflicted with my response to her question: “Maybe?” (Wacquant, 2015). The reality of the Obama inauguration disrupted history for me. However, I prepared for the reactions by others.

The vignette above illustrates how my own body internalized one specific, historical event. The human body elicits and accepts the world; it equally accepts and elicits the world (Wacquant, 2015). Understanding how reality saturates the body in social studies is necessary because education continues to remove opportunities for critical discourses through accountability structures. I used a theoretical approach that incorporated carnal sociology, the body and social inequalities, and the embodiment of fieldwork. The framework attempts to

situate these three sociological concepts within the realm of education. Figure 2 illustrates the relationships between the three concepts:

Figure 2 - Triangulation of Different Concepts



Carnal Sociology

I draw from Wacquant’s writings on the sociology of the body, specifically *carnal sociology*. Wacquant (2015) noted that *carnal sociology* “recounts the fact that the social agent is a suffering animal, a being of flesh and blood, nerves and viscera, inhabited by passions and endowed with embodied knowledges and skills” (p. 120). The flesh acts as a sponge, soaking in the actions of the world. The blood processes those experiences, through nerve and organ filters, that later produce numerous reactions to those experiences. Those reactions then re-engage the body, acting out in complex yet fluid ways (Wacquant, 2015). The body breaks down the world in six different ways (Wacquant, 2015).

First, the body symbolizes the world. My current role as a researcher reveals my body as being “embodied and embedded” with the study (Wacquant, 2015, p. 5). We use the body to

construct different systems to process and internalize the world. Culture, mythology, science, religion, art, and education all reflect symbolic constructs of the body (Wacquant, 2015). Every day, teachers internalize the explicit and implicit influences of contemporary education.

Second, the body makes sense of the worlds around us. The body synthesizes the experiences in different ways. It also connects feelings with those experiences (Wacquant, 2015). Politicians and school districts enforce neoliberal professional standards on teachers as indicators of advancement (Ross, Mathison, & Vinson, 2014). As a social studies teacher who critically engaged with students, I dealt with a range of emotions and experiences that contributed to negative views of accountability.

Third, the body witnesses and experiences the pain of the social and natural worlds (Wacquant, 2015). One significant result is living in anguish. The bodily experience engages us in a form of endurance critical to our survival (Wacquant, 2015). Standardized testing rules and practices intensifies the teaching experiences, since I saw colleagues lose employment over unacceptable test scores.

Fourth, the body reacts to these experiences in ways that enable the individual to engage in critical work (Wacquant, 2015). The body dissects the experiences. It uses new approaches to 'make a difference' (Wacquant, 2015, p.3). Teachers resisting accountability change their methods. I started closing the door and viewing my students as humans just like me. I began to realize that the human interactions taking place within my social studies classroom reflected forms of critical consciousness (Au, 2010).

Fifth, the body evolves after every experience (Wacquant, 2015). The ability to adapt is not taught to an individual. The body instead builds up a collection of experiences, a sort of depository, that it relies on when engaging in critical actions (Wacquant, 2015). I did not discard

my initial experiences in education as examples of “lost years.” I, instead, constructed a type of cultural identity that recognized the professionalization of education and the conservatism of the social studies curriculum.

Lastly, the body learns from the physical and social spaces it occupies (Wacquant, 2015). As it grapples to understand those spaces, the body works in two interrelated ways at different points. The body protects from the world; the body also isolates itself within the world (Wacquant, 2015). Teachers learn how to develop their pedagogies in one setting: typically, at a college or university with minimal entries into the K-12 classroom. But once teachers situate their bodies within K-12 settings on a consistent basis, they no longer rely heavily on those teacher ed spaces. The body incorporates the "traces of the many places we have occupied over time" (Wacquant, 2015, p. 4). While Wacquant’s research stems from observing and engaging in the sport of boxing, his theory is applicable in this research because the social studies teacher’s body experiences daily trauma from accountability standards, testing pressures, intrusions from non-educators, and the curriculum itself. Understanding how the body accepts and articulates these practices are needed to attack inequities.

The Body and Social Inequalities

I then connect with Shilling's work on situating the body within social inequalities. Shilling (2012) contends that the body is not only a biological machine conscious of the worlds around it, but it is also influenced by social factors. These social factors contribute to life-long, rooted patterns. The patterns, often difficult to break, provide glimpses into how the body can either perpetuate social practices or transform societies (Shilling, 2012). Most of the time, the body represents the social order (Shilling, 2012). In education, especially in social studies, these patterns connect with the concept of American exceptionalism. Adelman & Ruggi (2016)

characterized this separation as one rooted in “cultured rationality” (p. 911). Cultured rationality places a higher value on the cultural practices and experiences of white, upper class, Protestant, heterosexual males (Adelman & Ruggi, 2016). If the bodies are not white and male, then they are othered. As Loewen (2007) pointed out, social studies textbooks fail to illustrate or support the experiences of the othered. Stories related to people of color or the Civil Rights Movement are both limited and do not explain why they are significant. The stories found in these textbooks reinforce the concept of American exceptionalism (Noblit, 2015). Instead, the curriculum typically articulates the success stories of individuals such as George Washington, Andrew Carnegie, and Thomas Edison.

The Embodiment of Fieldwork

Last, I connected with Okely’s work on the role of the body in fieldwork. Okely (2007) asserts that ‘taken-for-granted’ bodily movements provide actual explanations on “new, unpredictable scrutinies” (p. 68). Okely examined the roles of movement, race, gender, and work. The body has the potential to reveal the cultural, social, and educational influences on it (Okely, 2007). This applies to the researcher engaging in observations and the observed. This type of field work “involves deconstructing the body as a cultural, biographical construction through a lived and interactive encounter with others’ cultural construction and bodily experience” (Okely, 2007, p.77). The researcher cycles around classes. While a researcher may be familiar with the setting due to past experiences in research, teaching, or both, an element of unfamiliarity still exists. Within this element is the possibility of the researcher learning from their past in order to help them understand the field (Okely, 2007).

Concerning how the body is viewed, very little exists within social studies research. DeLeon (2014) identified the capitalistic influences on the body, and the need to reconceptualize

how it is viewed. Inside the social studies classroom, the body accepts covert and overt capitalistic influences (DeLeon, 2014). For example, when teachers utilize computers as learning tools, the students understanding the complacency of being in physically in front of the machine as normal. The students rely on the machine to inform them (Freire, 1970/2000). The teachers view this reliance of technology as reward for good behavior or good work (Maloy & LaRoche, 2015). Capitalism works the body into submission, which allows accountability, standardized testing, and strict curriculum adherence to have profound influence on it (DeLeon, 2014; Ross, Mathison, & Vinson, 2014). Extending this argument to social studies in its current representations recognizes the need to systematically change it:

Social studies is the possibility of what can be; it is the pointing toward a future nowhere that remains unwritten; social studies is an escape mechanism for our fractured selves (DeLeon, 2014, p.80).

Drawing in the voice, I argue that the voice produces noise from these bodily experiences. Scholars have attempted to interpret the role of the voice in social studies and education (Southall & Bohan, 2014; Broom, 2013; Meyer, 1977; Gracey, 1972). One concept of the voice is rooted in the belief that the voice is a missing component in learning. Southall and Bohan (2014) engaged in self-reflection as social studies educators teaching English Language Learners (ELL). The results encouraged other teachers to develop flexible pedagogies that allow ELLs to participate (Southall & Bohan, 2014). Another concept of the voice is seen as an instrument for students and teachers to verbalize their interpretations of social studies. Broom (2013) examined how students and teachers defined and understood social studies across the secondary levels of education in Canada. While the results of the study generated a consistent view of social studies being out of touch with students, it also demonstrated the possibility of the voice being a critical contributor to the transformation of social studies (Broom, 2013).

Yet, the voice of the teacher has been viewed as being presumably ‘uniformed.’ Hargreaves (1994) argued that the voice of the teacher “has been made into a romanticized singularity claiming recognition and celebration” (p.27). Education, as an institution with set rules, creates a hierarchy of rules and regulations that influence the socialization of teachers and students (Meyer, 1977). The process begins in Kindergarten, where teachers employing this strategic voice implant a collection of conforming rules they view as appropriate for the school setting (Gracey, 1972). Students, as they continue sitting in social studies classrooms, learn additional aspects of the “hidden curriculum” that conceal critical understandings of the world (Maloy & LaRoche, 2015; Gracey, 1972). Teachers instill the myth of education being a legitimate institution that assigns certain constructs to students, with life-long implications (Meyer, 1977). One can argue that both teachers and students are essentially embodied by these power dynamics.

As a result, opportunities exist for the research to uncover new understandings of the body and voice in social studies. I developed the following research question to help investigate this new framework: How does the body influence the development of critical conversations? Creative and critical practices help students realize that social studies can be transformative in their lives. However, the current state of the discipline, one rooted in traditionalism, place minimal emphasis on the body and voice. For an insurrection of the discipline to occur, the body and voice must play pivotal roles in its transformation (DeLeon, 2014). Understanding how the body is viewed from historical, social, and physical standpoints, along with the role of the voice in articulating knowledge and encouraging conversations will allow the discipline to become more consciously aware of the realities of our society (Broom, 2013).

Methodology

I travelled all over the state of North Carolina, observing teachers in action and interviewing them before or afterwards. I spent countless hours glued to chairs during class sessions. I walked with them and their students to different areas of their schools. At Panadero's school, I walked in circles with others as political candidates took turns arguing their platforms. At Charlie's school, I went from one end of the school to the other as he introduced me to different staff members. At Rosita's school, I spent time in the lunch room, taking in the sounds and smells. At all three schools, I engaged in numerous conversations with the students. It was tiring!

I reached a point where I did not know where to start deconstructing the impact of this research on me. I knew that I had soaked in a lot of information. I first decided to jump right into the results. I immediately realized that this was a futile effort. I became frustrated with myself. The data was too rich to simply jump in. I then stepped away, and continued with the observations. It changed when I visited Charlie. As he discussed two speeches from the 1850s, one from Frederick Douglas and one from the US senator from South Carolina, with his students, I realized my plan. Within the span of five minutes, Charlie went from funny to serious to pensive. He gestured with his arms to engage with the students and walked around. He attempted to illustrate the value placed on the bodies of slaves from the two speeches. I knew then what I needed to do.

The study consisted of three social studies teachers currently teaching in North Carolina. All three teachers represented experiences that would be later compared with one another as part of a multi-case study (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). Contrasting approaches help start the discussions on how the body and voice influence learning in the social studies classroom. To

understand how each teacher took into account the body and voice, I learned their various identities. Each teacher self-identified their ethnicity, gender, educational setting, location of upbringing, professional association with the state of North Carolina and current teaching position. I also drew from interviews to construct additional identities, such as critical philosophies and length of experience. I also included my own identities. All of the individuals profiled viewed critical teaching practices as central to their pedagogies. Table 2 breaks down the identities.

Table 2 - Identities of Participants

<p>Rosita</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Latina - Female - Urban school setting (Predominately African-American and Latinx students) - Outsider (Los Angeles, CA) - Social studies teacher - Critical sociologist - 4+ years teaching in elementary settings
<p>Panadoro</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - White - Male - Suburban school setting (Predominately White students) - Outsider (Miami, FL) - Social studies teacher - Social justice advocate - 10+ years teaching in middle school settings
<p>Charlie</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - African-American - Male - Rural school setting (Predominately African-American students) - Insider (Warren, NC) - History teacher - Storyteller - 8+ years teaching in high school settings
<p>Tommy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Latino - Male - Urban/ Suburban - Outsider (Jersey City, NJ) - Critical theorist - Former critical social studies teacher - 10 years teaching in K-12 settings

Consistent with the volatility of qualitative research, I used a different methodology for this research. I originally developed a triangulation plan for data collection: interviews at the

start of the research, conducting observations, and collecting documents as data collection (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). I subsequently kept the initial interviews, but I eliminated document collection. I then placed a higher emphasis on observations and added informal interviews. The informal interviews took place in between observations and through digital lines of communications such as emails and text messages. I also now viewed myself through a participant-as-observer lens (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018).

My own experiences as a social studies teacher situated my research subjectivity. Engaging in self-reflection helped enhance the informal conversations between myself and the teachers. Opening up to the three teachers about my own experiences in social studies allowed a more thorough participation in the research (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). These informal moments, taking place both in person and through technological devices, encouraged the teachers to respond with details that added to the breadth and analysis of the data (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018).

As a result of these changes, I observed the teachers in different settings. I observed classrooms, cafeterias, outside school settings, conference rooms, gymnasiums and school hallways. Observations took place at each teacher's school over the span of four months. I ultimately spent over ten hours in the field studying the teachers. I wanted to gain perspectives not only on the lives of the three teachers, but how their bodies and voices changed as they switched locations (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018).

Field notes captured a significant source of research data. I wanted to capture as much tangible evidence from the observations (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). All field notes contain identifying headings. I listed the day and times of observations and the number of individuals involved at the top, time stamps on the left-side margins, and memo headings on the right

margins. For many field notes, I drew diagrams. Diagrams included desk and seat positioning within the classroom setting, location of students during lessons, and reactions to certain events within the observations. Subsequent write-ups from the observations took place as immediate reflexive practices (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). Depending on time, I either engaged in write-ups in my car following an observation in my journal or later on in the day back at my desk. I also engaged in informal and formal interviews with the three teachers. While some of the initial interviews provided information on how the body has been perceived historically, the informal and final interviews added more personal reflections. I directly addressed the concept of the body and voice via the following question: What are your thoughts on how your voice and body language influence learning in your class? I prefaced the question, indicating how in my observations, I started noticing students responding not to what they were saying, but how they were speaking and moving in the classroom.

Once the data collection process started, I engaged simultaneously in data analysis. As I interviewed the teachers, I memoed on the margins of my field notes. The memos reflected certain thoughts or questions I had during the interview process (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). Once formal interviews were transcribed, I highlighted certain words and phrases as part of my in-vivo coding process. I developed themes from the words of the teachers, thus recognizing the patterns existing from apparently different and unique experiences (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018).

In further establishing credibility with my data collection, I engaged in a number of practices. During field observations, I used diagrams to visualize the setting. I also timestamped my field notes, with dates, times, and locations written on the sheets. I also engaged in memoing. Following informal conversations, I reflected in a journal I kept in my backpack. I wrote statements, drew diagrams, and asked further questions. Memoing not only

helped me understand what the teachers were saying, but it also encouraged me to conceptualize their views on the body and voice (Groenewald, 2008). I also conducted member checks with the participants. I emailed or showed my interpretations to them at different points of the writing. In synthesizing the research in relation to the theoretical framework, I paid close attention to the interdisciplinary development of the study and how the results both impact educational and sociological research on the sociology of the body (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018).

The Different Manifestations of the Body in Social Studies Learning

The concept of the body influencing the learning of critical social studies stems from the teachers themselves. The students subsequently learn from this type of pedagogy only if the individual teachers understand the roles of the body (Jones & Hughes-Decatur, 2011). The interviews following the observations confirmed each teacher's understanding of their bodies and how it manifested as forms of critical pedagogy. The results characterize the body as a form of critical pedagogy, which transforms the view of the contemporary social studies teacher from being distant and superficial to close and interconnected with students (Maloy & LaRoche, 2015). I highlight three manifestations of the body significantly contributing to the learning in the classroom: the mobility of the body, variations of the voice, and the body as commodity.

The Mobility of the Body

All three teachers walk around the classroom during class. All three teachers kneel down to get eye level with students. All three teachers encourage students to move around. All three teachers invited me to move around the building.

Rosita

One of the first things I noticed about the roving body in the classroom was the desk arrangement. The teachers configured their classrooms in ways that resisted the traditional setup

of desks and chairs lined up in rows, facing the teacher. Rosita's classroom contained 25 chairs and desks. Rosita organized them in a U-shaped pattern. The back section directly faced the white board, while the two other sections required students to look to the left or right, depending on their location. Her desk sat to the right of the whiteboard. I observed her from a half-circle shaped table behind the U-shape. During warm-up lessons, Rosita circulated in front of the students. Depending on the lesson, she either checked the previous day's homework assignment or progress on the warm-up. Once the lesson began, Rosita typically walked back and forth in front of the white board. On breakout sessions, the students worked in small groups around the classroom. Rosita employed a four-stations type of method for student circulation. One instructional period ran for sixty minutes.

Panadoro had a different pattern. Instead of desks, his classroom contained tables. He organized the tables and chairs into three sections. Looking at the white board from the back of the classroom, the left table ran length-wise with three chairs. Two chairs faced the white board, while the third chair was situated on the left-hand side. The other two tables were placed in a backwards-L formation, with nine chairs each. All but three chairs required students to look either left or right. His desk sat in the back-right corner of the classroom. I sat at Panadoro's desk during observations. He also circulated around the room the majority of the class period. He typically walked back and forth in front of the tables during warmup lessons. He also snaked his way around the tables at other points. During class lessons, he paced in front of the classroom. When students worked individually or in small groups, he checked in with each student. One instructional period ran sixty-five minutes.

Charlie's classroom also used tables as desks. However, his pattern is similar to Rosita's pattern. Facing the whiteboard, he organized three tables in a U-shape, five seats to each side.

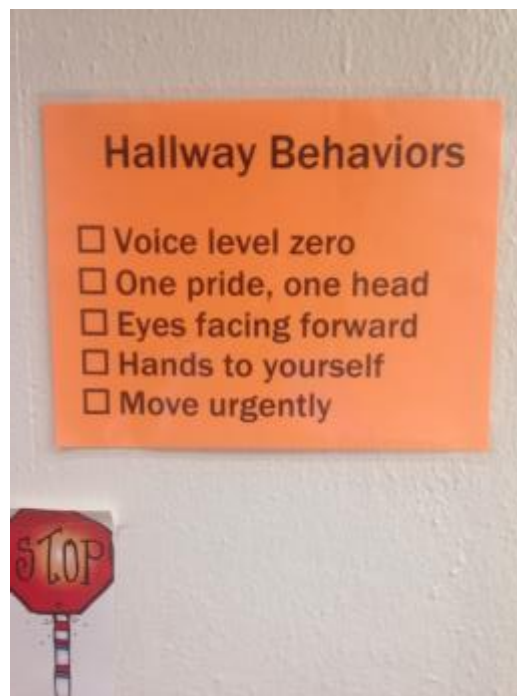
There was an additional table to the left of the U-shape, with three chairs. The U-shape was off-center, due to the dimensions of the classroom. A storage closet took up significant space in Charlie's classroom. His desk sat in the front left corner of the classroom. I observed Charlie from the additional table area. His movements were less pronounced than Rosita or Panadero. Charlie mainly walked back and forth in front of the whiteboard during warm-up. He also stood in the doorway at different points during the lesson. However, Charlie was much more active in his movements when students used other spaces. He encouraged students to use conference rooms, the library, hallways, and other available classrooms. One instructional period ran ninety-minutes.

Because all three teachers identified themselves as critical teachers, their classroom arrangements rejected the traditional view of the teacher being the sole authority in the classroom (Freire, 1998). The arrangements redefined how the three teachers were viewed by the students. For example, Rosita displayed a keen sense of compassion when she circulated around the room. Her interactions with several of her ESL students revealed this understanding. She consistently walked over to their desks and checked on them. If the student's first language was Spanish, she switched into Spanish to assist. She also paid attention to the in-school suspended students. Rosita's school, instead of isolating the students in a separate classroom, forced them to sit separately from the rest of the students in all of their classes. Rosita walked over to those students and engaged in short conversations with them. Lastly, students who appeared to be already engaged in the classroom also received a quick check-in from Rosita. Rosita's movements created a world within her classroom that only recognized the students, but also heightened the awareness that she offered a different portrayal of authority (Fassett & Warren,

2007; Freire, 1998). I confirmed this when Rosita asked me to walk with her and her students to lunch.

I walked with her, and noticed a different vibe with her students. As soon as they left her classroom, they formed a line, and barely talked with one another. About ten feet from her classroom, I came to a sign. I then realized why this happened. The sign, “Hallway Behaviors,” outlined a checklist of acceptable behaviors in the hallway:

Hallway Behaviors



When I saw that sign, it hit me: I understood more fully what Rosita is resisting when she talked about empowering her students. This sign forced students and Rosita to behave a certain way. They experienced the embodiment of conformity every single day. Even if Rosita attempted to extract those experiences from her students inside her classroom, that sign would then attempt to unravel any progress (Wacquant, 2015). That sign, with copies hung up around different parts of the school, forced students to suffer (Wacquant, 2015). “Hallway Behaviors” held those

students to standards that did not acknowledge their own cultural, racial, or linguistic diversities. We continued to the cafeteria.

As I sat at the table with her students, Rosita moved around again. I noticed her former students running over to say hi. She checked in with the table of students serving in-school suspension. She kneeled to speak to two students. Her movements in the lunch room communicated a sense of caring for her students (Shilling, 2012) Her students started asking me questions. “Why are you here again?” “Are you Ms. Hernandez’s brother?” As I answered their questions, I discovered Rosita’s two colleagues sitting separate from their students. They only interacted with them if the students got too loud or left their seats without permission. I got the impression the teachers did not want to freely interact with the students. They embodied a certain impression that informed students to stay away from them (Wacquant, 2015). I asked Rosita about this, and she alluded to them being the “white superhero” teachers at her school. When lunch ended, we returned and a new group of students were quietly standing still, waiting to enter. I returned to my observation seat while Rosita dismissed her students and distributed warmup sheets to that waiting group. The daily confusion of learning how to conform AND resist the system must have been overwhelming for her fifth-graders (Wacquant, 2015; Shilling, 2012).

The implications of her moving around, as well as encouraging her students to move around, counteracted the school’s view on student movement. Rosita framed her movements as evidence in caring. Caring meant that as a teacher, “you will do whatever it takes in the interest of the child.” Rosita’s experiences learning social studies as a Latina K-12 student in Los Angeles influenced her in a significant way. Even though she was not the “perfect mold of a student,” she understood the root of her actions as resistance to the disengagement she felt with

her teachers and social studies in general (Johnson, 2015). Understanding that she “couldn’t teach the same social studies” in her current city compared to Los Angeles, her constantly checking in with her students actually strengthened the trust between her and them (Johnson, 2015). Her constant circulation also made up for what she’s observed in other classrooms within her school. She said, “I’ve seen teachers that don’t care teach, and all they’re doing is seeing the time go by.” Her comment suggests her internalization of the teachers’ lack of care. She understood it as a detriment to her students. She recognized the negative implications of that internalization, and developed her critical care ethic as a response (Johnson, 2015; Wacquant, 2015). Rosita essentially resisted the school’s interpretation on limiting student movement.

I also saw Rosita kneeling down to interact with her students on numerous occasions. She took into consideration her own physical capabilities in practicing her own critical care pedagogy. She said, “it’s more comfortable to squat down or kneel when I know I’m going to be with a student for a while, if the correction/conversation is going to be a longer check in than a ‘good job or show your work’.” Rosita also perceived the imposing figure of standing instead of kneeling. She said, “it’s more personal than towering over them. I feel like when I get at eye level with them, they’ll feel less policed than if I’m over them as I correct them or speak to them.” Rosita’s positioning of her body displayed her investment in establishing positive and critical experiences with her students in her classroom (Cregan, 2006). She relied on the skilled understandings of her movement to engage critically with her students (Wacquant, 2015). She understood how her own physical statute would influence learning in her classroom.

For Panadoro, his movements conveyed a different explanation: attempts at disengaging students from the norms they were accustomed to. Unlike Rosita’s racial diverse student population, Panadoro’s students were overwhelming white. In the months leading up to the

presidential election, he attempted to engage with students on a number of national issues. However, when he checked in on students, some students had difficulties articulating each major party's platform while other students only focused on "disliking the other side's candidate." His circulations helped Panadoro feel the rapid growing "tense" moods between his students (Wacquant, 2015). Instead of isolating the students and relying on the curriculum to break down the tension, he pushed his students to make sense of the worlds immediately around them (Wacquant, 2015). In "pivoting" the students' gaze away from the presidential election, he quickly constructed a new unit on the state elections. He encouraged his students to research state issues of importance to them, and instructed them to "compose letters" to state elected officials. Through this letter writing campaign, a week before election day, nine elected officials and candidates visited his school to talk with his students. His students could now personally question these elected officials and opponents, instead of relying on a textbook or curriculum for information (Loewen, 2007).

That day, the parking lot of Panadoro's school was full: personal vehicle, state vehicles, news vehicles. Nine local and state elected candidates appeared at his school. I had seen before how his students wrote letters to these individuals, asking them to visit their school prior to the November election. The turnout was tremendous: besides the nine political candidates, there were almost 100 parents in attendance. I noticed how Panadoro dressed for the occasion: three-piece suit, with his hair slicked back. His students were similarly dressed. The majority of the males wore dress shirts, a tie, slacks, and shoes. The majority of the females wore dresses or business suits. I recalled Panadoro's assertion of the local community: "not much diversity." I connected that comment with a perceived lack of racial diversity, since the majority of his students were white. However, I realized the clothing worn by many of the school's community.

The clothing worn reflected the dominant social and cultural cues; ones that essentially required both Panadoro and his students to replicate since the school had a dress code (Shilling, 2012). However, clothing demonstrations revealed a different type of embodiment. A small number of students, male and female, wore flannel shirts, music artist t-shirts, ripped jeans or hosiery with holes, and sneakers. I then questioned their desire to wear such clothing. I surmised that the clothes displayed a certain resistance, rejecting the unstated 'rules of behavior' of the event (Cregan, 2006, p.70). They refused to adhere to the perceived cultural norms of wearing "Sunday's best" (clothes saved for visiting churches) (Shilling, 2012).

I couldn't help internalizing this event as another demonstration of capitalism in the schools. The format of the event mimicked a town-hall style event. Each candidate spoke to 15 students for about 15 minutes, and then they engaged in a question and answer session. After 30 minutes, the candidates and students rotated to different areas. Even though Panadoro wanted to establish political empowerment within his students, the event itself demonstrated a certain process conducive to production. The students did ask questions to the candidates, but many of them "were afraid that the information on the poster boards would be wrong." The event was designed to establish new lines of communication between the students and political leaders. However, I am not sure how or if the students digested the event in the way Panadoro wanted them. The students were disciplined enough to move when the time expired (Shilling, 2012). The students communicated "safe" comments and questions that ensured the maintenance of social order (Shilling, 2012). Essentially, Panadoro and the students rejected isolating themselves from the world, choosing instead to be part of it (Wacquant, 2015). As for the students who rejected the social order through their own embodied representations, they did not

attempt to establish any communication with the candidates. Panadoro encouraged them to ask questions, but they chose to remain silent.

Panadoro did not kneel down when he interacted with his students. Instead, he sat down in order to engage with them at eye level. He attributed this to his size. As a “6’3,” 245 lbs.” male, he stood “more than a foot over many of them.” If he stood over them, he felt he was “intimidating” them. Understanding this gap between his own body and the students’ bodies reveal a significant aspect that contributed to his critical teaching: intimidation served no purpose (Shilling, 2012). He wanted his students to become informed constituents as adults. Narrowing that gap indicated a change in understanding the future body, from being afraid to becoming more aware of the inequalities in existence (Shilling, 2012).

Charlie expressed a similar statement. Charlie consistently kneeled down whenever he engaged with his students. He said, “It’s instinctive. Because of my size and stature, when talking to kids or young adults who are seated, I tend to physically bring myself down to their level by kneeling down. In my mind, this helps relieve the intimidation factor. I also feel like I connect to them a lot more when I am not standing over them, but looking them in the eye and valuing their opinion.” By portraying his influences in an elevated status, his actions rejects the notions of the teacher being a dominant body (Shilling, 2012). He uses his bodily movements as demonstrations of caring (Johnson, 2015). He said, “Students feel valued when you listen, and when you act on their concern, problem, or inquiry, then to them, you care. It’s genuine and active.” He understood how fellow teachers tended to view students having a perceived lack of knowledge or understanding of the world (Freire, 1970/2000). Charlie, however, did not subscribe to such deficit perspectives. The observations showed Charlie checking in with current

and past students on a regular basis. His actions led me to understand how students in his class embodied knowledge, and how he was willing to engage with that knowledge (Wacquant, 2015).

Charlie's movements also presented him with opportunities to learn from his students. He specifically mentioned how their physical reactions to his lessons contributed to his approach. He said, "As I am moving from place to place in my room, I am paying attention to their facial experiences, posture, note taking, hand raising, and vocal tone to determine how to adjust my instruction." Charlie mentioned how his movements are connected with influential teachers he had as a high school student. He said, "I was fortunate to have a few high school teachers who were very knowledgeable and passionate about their subjects." His movements reflected those sedimented influences (Wacquant, 2015). His movements transmits certain cues to his students, such as empowerment and responsibility, which help develop critical conversations in his classroom (Shilling, 2012). This approach extended to beyond his class setting.

Charlie invited me to eat lunch with him and his students. As we walked from his classroom to the cafeteria, I couldn't help but notice how much he valued his interactions with students. He would stop a couple of times, and check in with former students standing near their lockers. Every time, he introduced me to his formal students. I noticed how they went from being very casual with Charlie to shaking my hand and saying, "pleased to meet you." Other former students would walk up to him and ask him questions such as:

"Hey Mr. Smith, did you see that game last night?"

"Mr. Smith, you gotta tell me that new J.Cole album isn't as good as the last one?"

Even though the conversations lasted maybe 30 to 45 seconds, they revealed the impact of his active engagements in class. Charlie not only discussed the lessons in class, but he also about their outside interests. He drew correlations between the learning and life. He allowed

their experiences to enter the classroom. That's the key component to consider. Social studies teachers typically avoid bringing outside experiences into the classroom (Maloy & LaRoche, 2015). Charlie encouraged his students to learn from the embodiment of their experiences, since he encourages them to speak out against injustices (Wacquant, 2015; Shilling, 2012).

Once we reached the lunch room, we sat down at a table and continued our conversations. He ate his lunch and drank from his water bottle. However, I noticed how he squared his body towards me and responded to my comments and follow-up questions. There, I understood why he has established numerous positive relationships with students. His body language reflected the "emotion work" associated with teaching (Shilling, 2012, p. 124). Charlie managed his own feelings while deciphering the feelings and words of others. Shilling (2012) asserted that the emotional nodes demonstrated by Charlie highlight the possibilities of engaging in ending gendered and social inequalities.

Variations of the Voice

I also noticed how each teacher's voice articulated certain bodily experiences. Rosita's voice grew noticeably stronger following the 2016 US presidential election. The following vignette extends an argument made by Arnot & Reay (2007). Arnot & Ready (2007) articulated the need to distinguish the variety of students' voices used in the classroom, such as "classroom talk, subject talk, identity talk, and code talk" (p.323). The vignette draws in the teacher's voice into the discussion. I argue not as a voice researcher, but as a researcher connecting the results of a political election on the body and how those results were enunciated by the teacher who identified herself as a teacher of color (Wacquant, 2015; Shilling, 2012; Arnot & Reay, 2007).

The classroom was very quiet. Rosita getting ready for the first class of the day. She saw me and said, "Good morning." I responded in kind. Then, after a minute of silence, she asked

me what I thought about the results of the election. I said I was still stunned to respond. She murmured something, and continued her preparation. I found a seat toward to the back and prepared for the observation. She glanced at the clock on the wall, and realized that her 5th grade students were going to be arriving soon. Her pace picked up as she walked from one end of the class to the other much faster than before. I then heard a surge of sound coming from outside her class door. I saw her students lining up. She saw them too and with a stack of papers in her hands, she walked out and met her students.

The students entered quietly, and began working on their first assignment of the day. Rosita walked around the classroom, and in a low voice, offered praise for each student. She also crouched down and was at eye-level with them. After five minutes, the timer went off and Rosita began talking. The students appeared to be tired, disinterested, upset, or some other emotion. She stood in front of the students, her back to the computer screen. She wore blue and black colors. Instead of going directly into the first assignment, she addressed the election results. As she started speaking, her voice became stronger and louder. She emphasized certain words. She told her students that, “no one could ever take their voices away.” In her classroom, they would continue “learning how to be question” the information presented to them. Her hands gestured in definitive ways: her right index finger pointing up, her right hand in a fist hitting her open-palmed left hand. She moved back and forth, almost in rhythm with her words. By the end of her soliloquy, heads that were originally perched on students’ hands raised up. Hands in the air, ready to ask questions. Rosita clearly struck a chord, as questions started to flow out of the students.

It was difficult to not feel the power of her voice. Her words, a combination of anger, anticipation, and inspiration, appeared to awakened everyone in the classroom out of the election

hangover, including myself. The students, feeling Rosita's power and confidence, interacted in a back and forth conversations for the duration of the class period. Her voice referenced the real world, and the implications of the election on people of color (Fassett & Warren, 2007). Rosita understood her own internalization of the election, and used those feelings to communicate with the students in ways that reflected the complexity of her thoughts. She said, "Teachers must possess a strong voice. However, a strong voice doesn't mean a loud voice. I try to talk to my students with a compassionate voice. I'm very passionate about what I teach and thus it is noticeable in the way that I talk about it."

I also learned why she viewed her voice as a "strong voice." She saw aspects of her own self within her students. She said, "I am very proud to consider myself an equal with my students. We come from similar backgrounds. Their story is my story." Rosita acknowledges the various funds of knowledge her students bring to the classroom (Moll et al., 1992). Her acknowledgement essentially rejects the body being bounded by certain belief systems or controls found in education (Shilling, 2012; Cregan, 2006). She views her classroom as a safe space of knowledge exchange, knowing that the moment they step outside the room, her students face and experience overwhelming rules that contradict her work (Wacquant, 2015; Cregan, 2006). She said, "So when I talk to them and address them, I want them to feel my presence as a welcoming one. I will get to their level because eventually I want them to get to mine or above." Rosita's strong voice projects a certain confidence that she hopes the students will embody as adults when they engage in social justice (Shilling, 2012).

Panadoro's voice characterized a humorous reaction to the realities around him. Initially, he exemplified the traditional social studies teacher. Panadoro lacked the relational practices with the students, which exacerbated his students' disregard for social studies (Smyth, 2012). He

originally embodied his grandmother's pedagogy towards teaching (Wacquant, 2015). He said, "I started my career the same year my grandmother retired from her 35 years of teaching. She told me 'don't let them see you smile 'til after Christmas.' I tried it and began acting like an autocratic dictator. Kids had no respect for me and therefore refused to comply. The first year was exhausting." Panadero first year experience triggered a critical action. Feeling ineffective and weakened, Panadero transformed his pedagogy through the incorporation of humor (Wacquant, 2016). He said, "The next year I began to open up and use more humor. Because I was a real person who could laugh, they paid more attention." Bell and Pomerantz (2016) argued that whenever teachers rely on humor, they are resisting working place conditions, having issues with classroom management, or attempting to replicate social media behaviors in the classroom. Panadero's reliance on humor extends their argument. Since he views himself as a social justice teacher, he recognizes the power of humor as a critical practice. "I'm joking with them constantly. I think it helps them pay more attention in class too." The social inequalities Panadero deconstructs in his classroom requires humor. "In a lecture setting, I can use humor to break up time and then ask them to reflect when we get back on task."

I observed Panadero's humor many times. I entered his classroom for my first observation, and heard laughter. By the second observation, I reserved a section of my field notes with the title "Humor." I checked off the number of times I saw him engage in this manner. I listed ten instances of humor during his lessons during one observation. At another observation, I could not stop laughing myself as he taught the class. It was easy for me to identify humor as his significant voice in his classroom. However, I had to dig deeper. How did he make students laugh while at the same time, engaging in critical conversations about slavery?

How did he demonstrate his humor at appropriate times? How did the student know when to be appropriate? I discovered this a couple of days before the December holiday break.

Panadoro pulled up a seat in front of the class. Instead of a warm-up, he wanted to have a “life discussion.” Life discussions provided students with an opportunity to reflect on their experiences outside his classroom. He made a couple of jokes during the discussion, but I noticed the following words as signifiers: “But let me be serious here.” Those words signaled a transition from funny to serious. The laughter ceased and they returned to their original discussions.

Charlie embodied a similar approach with humor. He strategically used humor at different points. During this observation, he engaged his students in a test review session. He wanted them to do well, since passing the course was a state graduation requirement. The students were responsible for typing in answers to his questions into a website that appeared live on his white board. At one point, he said that “we’re going to have a dance battle,” since his students had trouble answering a question. I realized how his humor broke the tension. His comment initiated a conversation, while encouraging the students to take a step back and reassess their learning (Bell & Pomerantz, 2016). Two minutes after this interaction, answers started showing up on his whiteboard.

Bell and Pomerantz (2016) suggested that researchers needed to observe how teachers responded to student-led humor. During a different review session, students worked on verbally answering a question he posted on his whiteboard. He called on one student, who remained quiet. At the same time, a second student whispered statements to him. Charlie picked up on this and said, “Stop feeding him wrong answers.” The second student laughed, and then apologized. After about 30 seconds, the first student offered an answer. Charlie wrote it on the

board. Then, he called on the second student to add additional details. Charlie's use of humor to redirect student behavior, according to Bell and Pomerantz (2016), demonstrated an effective use of communication. However, his humor embodied the influential teachers he had as a high school student (Wacquant, 2015). He learned better from "teachers who were humorous and knowledgeable at the same time." Charlie realized the power of combining humor and knowledge in establishing and engaging in critical conversations in his classroom (Shilling, 2012). Even though he may have not agreed with his influential teachers on political issues, he respected them because they pushed to think.

Lastly, Charlie exhibited a form of storytelling. At another observation, the students worked on deconstructing two speeches on slavery from the 1850s. One speech came from an abolitionist and the other speech from a US senator from a slave-holding state. Charlie broke the students into groups, and he instructed them to engage with one another as active listeners. As he rotated around the groups, he engaged with the students through quick stories. Once the student laughed or reacted, then they asked him a question. The students' body language displayed vested interest in his stories. I did not see students slouching down in their seats, distracting themselves with their mobile phones, or exhibiting other non-academic behaviors. Even through the amplification of voices and movements from the activity, Charlie managed to get their attention with stories.

His storytelling abilities demonstrated how his upbringing influenced his teaching (Wacquant, 2015). He said, "I come from a lively, upbeat family who are always animated when they tell stories or recall events. Typically, when we are together, it's a large gathering and the speaker gets the attention of the rest of the family by their voice inflection, hand gestures, tone, volume and humor. So, it's natural for me to borrow from that in my teaching." His storytelling

connected one world, his world, with the other worlds in his classroom (Fassett & Warren, 2007). His storytelling, symbolic of his interpretations of reality, constructed a new view of reality in his classroom that would serve as a meaningful setting for social change (Wacquant, 2015; Fassett & Warren, 2007).

Charlie is a raconteur. The class began with a question for his students: “What’s up with this weather?” Meteorologists forecasted a half-foot of snow, starting in the afternoon. For this part of North Carolina, where snow is an uncommon weather event, students were buzzing about it. Charlie understood the excitement, since he was from the same county. So, in order to keep them engaged, he told a story about a similar weather event in high school. His students asked many questions. He responded to all of them with a blend of humor and matter-of-fact ness. Once he finished, he then moved on to the lesson, which was a review session for an end-of-course, state mandated exam. As the students left the classroom, Charlie couldn’t help but chuckle at their excitement. “I’m glad they have something fun to look forward to.”

The Body as Commodity

Commodity - *noun*

- 1. something useful or valued***
- 2. one that is subject to ready exchange or exploitation within a market***

Definitions - Merriam-Webster Dictionary

(<https://www.merriamwebster.com/dictionary/commodity>)

“This is important!”

Rosita said this to her students as she discussed an upcoming field trip to a local museum. The museum illustrated the history of a slave-holding plantation in North Carolina. Rosita attended this field trip the previous school year. She mentioned how the museum ignored human

trafficking and profit from slavery. She said to the students, “the slave owners used the crops grown by the slaves for profit” at this museum. A noticeable quietness fell over the class. One student raised her hand, asking Rosita to explain further her statement. She explained how the plantation owners used slaves to make money. Rosita then showed two images of living quarters from the museum to support her answer: one image showed an antebellum home for the plantation owners; the other image showed a log-cabin home for the slaves. Students continued asking questions.

In a different class, she portrayed the commodification of the slave in numbers. Rosita said that in the South, the number of slaves owned equated to power. It was “related to land ownership.” The higher number of slaves owned, the larger your property was. At this point, eight students have their hands up for questions. One student asked how slaves became free. Rosita stated that plantation owners “placed a currency value” on slaves trying to become free. Another student asked what currency meant. After explaining the definition, Rosita transitioned the class to a visual on her whiteboard. The visual was a pyramid, listing the different socio-economic classes in North Carolina with population percentages. ‘Cottoncracy’ was listed at the top, followed by ‘planters,’ ‘small farmers,’ ‘whites, no slaves,’ and freed African-Americans’. At the bottom was ‘enslaved African-Americans.’ Rosita stressed that the ‘cottoncracy’ only consisted of a fraction of the populace, yet because they owned the majority of the slaves, they held the most political power. “Those who benefitted from it were just a specific group of slave owners.”

“Dehumanizing.”

That’s how Panadoro addressed slavery at the start of the lesson. The students in his class learned about the slave trade. He presented slavery from a different point of view.

According to him, he wanted “to humanize” the slave trade in order for his students to “connect with them.” He used primary sources to help achieve this objective. He incorporated an autobiography written by a former slave and a letter written by a slave trader. He also used information the International Slave Museum website as a resource. The students barely murmured any reactions. It wasn’t until he illustrated actual auction receipts that his students started verbalizing their reactions. One student, without a prompting from Panadoro, shouted out “It’s morbid.” The auction receipts evoked the concept of slaves as commodities in his students.

Panadoro continued the conversations on the economics of slavery. He stressed the understanding that slaves provided financial and political capital for the auctioneers in the colonies. Auctioneers placed a monetary value on the slaves and “negotiated a single price for every slave.” He mentioned two types of auctioneering that took place: “grab and go” and “highest bidder.” The lesson, taking place right before the December holiday break, stuck a chord with the students. As the conversations ended, I noticed students energetically typing on their computers. As we both walked around the classroom, he explained how he required students to create Google Documents for two reasons: a space for “personal reflections” and “figurative language.” He did not want students to just regurgitate facts about the slave trader; he wanted them to understand “the modern-day connections” we have with it.

“Being a black male in a poor county in the South of America.”

He said this during an interview. Following the interview, one observation captured the essence of his statement. He attempted to illustrate the commodification of the slaves’ bodies for the financial benefit of slave owners, auctioneers, and slave traders. Conversations around the “complex layers” of slave economics developed as a result. Charlie mentioned that even after slavery ended, many emancipated slaves stayed on as “workers” for the rest of their lives.

Political leaders then enacted Jim Crow laws to ensure that any progress made by African-Americans were limited. Charlie saw these laws as actions with implications for today: “The backlash to policies benefiting African-Americans following the Civil War, students drew parallels between Reconstruction and the Obama years.” He then draws in his statement. Charlie comprehended the reality of life for his students in his community. His rural community, “a largely African-American community and school” as Charlie described it, embodies the historical results of the commodification of the body. He connected that understanding with the contemporary issues. Subsequently, students connected issues of race with the upheaval of state and federal elections:

The timing of the election was perfect as I was beginning my discussion of the factors leading to the Civil War. My students began asking questions about issues of race, the 14th amendment, and discrimination before I dove into the unit. The presidential election actually helped my students conceptualize the electoral process.

All three teachers pointed out critical viewpoints of slavery that social studies tends to ignore. They illustrated how traditional narratives portrayed the slave body as a mode of production, valued by the power of their labor (Sharp, 2000). Rosita, in discussing the field trip to the local plantation museum, identified the dominant, white-washed narrative associated with the museum (Loewen, 1999). In turn, she articulated a personal experience to her students that required further investigation, one that would lead students to understand the complex history behind the museum and ultimately, question the narratives on their field trip (Jones & Hughes-Decatur, 2012). Panadoro, in applying the term “dehumanizing” to describe the slave trade, incarnated the victims of the slave trade (Sharp, 2000). He attempted to reverse the objectification of the black body by whites (Adelman & Ruggi, 2016). He also sought to provide

students with opportunities to speak to the dominant arbitration of body and skin color (Jones & Hughes-Decatur, 2012).

Rosita's understanding of the body as a commodity also extended to her students. She acknowledged the school administration's singularity in addressing the student population, which was clearly defined in the hallway behaviors sign shown above:

What I'm saying is that from the eyes of our students, they're being told not what to do by a white person. All of these things go from tuck in your shirt, stand in line, be quiet, etc. They're seeing a white person telling that. And so that leads to further questions of authority, and like who's in power and who's not. Who's manipulating bodies, manipulating black and brown bodies.

The manipulation of bodies by school administrators connects with the view by Sharp (2000), who argued that aggressive targeting of bodies by the dominant group reflected a desire for added commodification. By forcing these students to adapt certain cultural behaviors transitioning from class to class with the fear of reprimand, school administrators devalue the students' own community-based behaviors. This devaluation then creates a vacuum with the body. Within this vacuum, school administrators can start reproducing conforming students (Willis, 1981). Students have no choice but to adapt (Wacquant, 2015). As a result, the remodeled students are portrayed by the school administrators as good students.

Conclusion

The results from this research indicate critical teaching involves more than just disseminating information. The study of the body and voice provides clues into how the teachers experience the complex worlds as individuals, educators, and critical actors. The study suggests that each teacher's body experiences daily occurrences both inside and outside the social studies classroom. The complexity of the body reveals the complexity of the society (Wacquant, 2015).

The three teachers, however, demonstrate a willingness to confront the complexities through critical actions.

The results also indicate the importance of not ignoring the roles of the body and voice when training new social studies teachers. The teachers, through their understandings of the body and voice, illustrate the divergence of the complex worlds. They rely on those understandings to establish critical spaces (Wacquant, 2015). Building upon those critical approaches, the teachers resist cultural, educational, and structural norms through their words and physical actions (Shilling, 2012). The observed behaviors reveal the teachers' reactions to those levels of conformity, which help lead to critical dialogue in their classrooms (Okely, 2007). The implications from this research reveal different routes for future research.

While research suggests that the reconceptualization of social studies begins in the theoretical mindset (Shear, 2016; DeLeon, 2014), this article directs us to the present moment, where an interconnected theoretical and methodological ethos discovered critical practices already in place. While I acknowledge that the results provide initial understandings, future research is needed to broaden these discoveries. The current political climate, along with the acceleration of accountability practices intended to standardized the discipline, provides opportunities for scholars to study the impact of these events on the body. The research could focus on the teachers not incorporating critical pedagogies in the classroom but resisting the standardization of social studies. Also, further research could examine how student bodies are reacting to these events.

Positioning the body as a mode of inquiry within social studies pushes the sociology of the body into a different research perspective than examined within this study. Howson and Inglis (2001) argued that the strains between sociology and cultural studies caused theorists to

focus more on the socio-cultural influences rather the social influences. A future research study could position the body as conversations countering the social studies narratives. Social studies represents one view of the world and its history. Introducing a socio-cultural-educational spin to this theory might encourage scholars to situate the body as inquiry, since this understanding enhances the student's awareness of the world (Howson & Inglis, 2001).

An interdisciplinary approach enhances the awareness of the body within educational research. Adelman and Ruggi (2016) have advocated for extensive theoretical and empirical research. Within the field of education, incorporating the sociology of the body would expand the representations of the body from decolonial and critical theoretical frameworks, as Darder (2009) and Saavedra and Marx (2016) have done. I hope that a richer understanding of the body would encourage scholars constructing educational administration and policy scholarship to recognize the body as a significant contributor to learning. Collaborative research with critical scholars from sociology and anthropology would present additional viewpoints helpful in deconstructing the body in the classroom setting. This can include the scholarship by Pereira da Silva (2017) in analyzing of the intersubjective relationship between democracy and social justice, the call made by Buechler (2008) to define the concept of critique through an understanding of authenticity, and Hage's (2012) advancement of trans-disciplinary work in thoroughly establishing critical discourse with the academy.

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Counter-Narratives From Current Social Studies Teachers

Introduction

I hope to bring light to the trends of oppression since the 1600s in this country, and how not surprising it is that a racist, misogynist person would be elected right after our first Black president. - Rosita

Rosita teaches social studies. She is also aware of the implications of teaching in a country where race has been part of the cultural fabric. Social studies and race have had a complicated relationship, to put it kindly. Bluntly put, social studies ignores race. The discipline has routinely failed to address racism within the curricula, teacher education preparation, and continued professional development (Chandler, 2009). By not acknowledging race in social studies, many social studies teachers inform their students that such critical conversations are not important. A dangerous silence, as a result, continues to exist in social studies (Chandler, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 2003).

The relationship between race and social studies has been further complicated by the results of the 2016 US Presidential Election. Donald Trump, articulating racist, misogynist, and xenophobic rhetoric, won the presidential election. The political and social normalization of Trump's campaign brought racism out of the shadows and into the open again. Anytime a political transition occurs, social studies starts a paradigm shift (Evans, 2008). This paradigm shift, however, might be different. Ross (2015) argued that teachers who attempt to engage in transformative practices often leave out the realities of everyday life. The results from this research will show how social studies educators draw in these racialized realities into the

classroom. They engage in critical conversations that connect race with the recent presidential election and the overall history of the United States. Through counter-narratives co-constructed with the teachers, I begin to answer the question posed by Chandler (2015) “What do we mean when we say that we ‘do race’ in social studies?” (p.5).

Framework

I lean on Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Latino Critical Theory (LatCrit) in framing the research. I describe CRT and LatCrit beliefs that connect with the research presented here. I then briefly discuss the roles of CRT and LatCrit in social studies. Lastly, I summarize the framework.

Critical Race Theory

According to Delgado and Stefancic (2012) and Solórzano and Yosso (2002), five themes have traditionally defined CRT in education.

- Racism is Ordinary - Intersects with Gender and Class
- Challenging Colorblindness and Meritocracy - Dominant Ideologies
- Transdisciplinary Perspectives
- Experiential Knowledge - Storytelling, *Cuentos*, Counter-narratives
- Commitment to Social Justice

The first theme situates race as part of everyday life in our society. White supremacy permeates in law, economics, politics, and education. Textbooks often fail to illustrate the effects of White supremacy (Loewen, 2007). CRT interrogates structural foundations in society, such as law, government, and education (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). The second theme identifies the benefits whites have from this supremacy. The concept of “color-blindness” only reinforces discriminatory practices in educational settings, such as reliance of standardized testing as

indicators of school growth and de facto segregation following *Brown v. Board of Ed* (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Taylor, 2009). Additionally, CRT disrupts the practice of powerful whites granting marginalized peoples equality only when it benefits the power-holders (Taylor, 2009). The third theme develops the concept of transdisciplinary perspectives in challenging historical and modern dominant narratives in education (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Drawing from an infusion of humanities and social science perspectives, CRT provides individuals opportunities to draw attention to issues of race and inequality to whites and others who lack knowledge (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Taylor, 2009). The fourth theme identifies the bridging of racist practices with economic opportunities. Whether it is the conformity of thought and learning in school through accountability or reliance on undocumented persons by multinational corporations or local businesses, white power-holders racialize marginalized groups in order to meet the needs of the labor market (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Accordingly, CRT evokes storytelling, counter narratives and other examples of stories as sources of strength for affected individuals. Using these narratives disputes “the experiences of Whites as the standard, since every person does not have a ‘single, easily stated, unitary identity’” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012, p.10). The final theme highlights the social constructs devised by White power-holders in perpetuating inequality and racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). CRT implicates schools as the setting most responsible for reproducing dominant cultural practices. By developing and disseminating a social justice curriculum, CRT helps eliminate racism and other forms of prejudice (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

Latino Critical Theory

LatCrit advances CRT's interrogations of these structures through the situating of Latinx² people. LatCrit establishes a beginning for critical conversations on race because Latinxs also deal with added layers of prejudice. LatCrit "theorizes and examines that place where racism intersects with other forms of subordination" such as language, sexism, and classism (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 479). LatCrit also supports social justice as a tool of empowerment for not only Latinx students and teachers, but all affected individuals (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). It calls for unity among Latinxs (Delgado Bernal, 2002). LatCrit brings in those students who have felt invisible, or have experienced self-doubt after receiving negative feedback from teachers (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). It also validates the thoughts of marginalized teachers.

Counter-narratives help validate the experiences of silenced teachers. Counter-narratives depict the non-majoritarian experiences of individuals (Delgado Bernal, 2002). Historically, the practice of storytelling as acts of defiance and survival have stretched back hundreds of years (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Contemporarily, counter stories build community. These stories, combining interpretations of reality with the artistic development of storytelling, open up new avenues of thought and conversations (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). LatCrit seeks to link abstract ideas with the practice, with the purpose of disrupting educational norms. (Delgado Bernal, 2002).

However, both CRT and LatCrit remain on the outside of mainstream social studies research, and practice in the social studies classroom (Ladson-Billings, 2003). LatCrit is virtually nonexistent in social studies (Salinas, Franquiz, & Rodriguez, 2016; Daniels, 2011).

² I choose to use the term "Latinx" as a unifying term to disrupt gender separation found in Spanish.

Education policies and practices in the United States overall have paid little attention to the experiences of Latinx students and teachers in constructing culturally relevant pedagogy in social studies (Howard, 2012; Gillborn, 2009).

Critical Race Theory in Social Studies

In situating CRT in the social studies, Chandler (2015) advocates a redefining framework, *Racial-Pedagogical-Content Knowledge* (RPCK), which encourages teachers to become familiar with CRT and implement it into their own pedagogies.

- Racism as normal
- Race as a social construction
- Interest Convergence
- Revisionism/Historical Context
- Use of Narratives/Counter-narratives
- Anti-essentialism
- Intersectionality
- Racial realism
- Critique of Liberalism

The framework extends the acknowledged five themes of CRT through the addition of anti-essentialism, intersectionality, racial realism, and critiques of liberalism. Anti-essentialism defies the notion that the experiences of people of color and other marginalized individuals are the same. Oppression is individualized according to gender, class, and race (Chandler, 2015). Racial realism declares racism as a permanent fixture in educational settings, institutions, and belief systems (Chandler, 2015). The critiques of liberalism dismiss traditional approaches for change through legal actions. Using the legal system involves a slow, and often painful, process that fails to yield significant social changes because of its' investment in property rights over human rights (Chandler, 2015). Chandler's framework defines the methodology I use for this study.

With this framework in mind, I examined the current literature. I found minimal applications of CRT in the K-12 social studies classroom. Power holders hamper discussions of race. Social studies teachers find discussions of race problematic and too political (Chandler, 2015). Teachers value the security of their employment over engaging in such discourse. Teachers disseminate knowledge from the narratives told by digital and physical textbooks, pushed by curricula, and consensus from professional learning team meetings (Ross, Mathieson, & Vinson, 2014; Loewen, 2007). These narratives reflect American exceptionalism layered with inequalities (Shear, 2015). Policy-makers and non-educators often design social studies courses in the K-12 setting (Martell, 2015). Without teacher input, including those with training in culturally relevant and culturally sustaining pedagogies, these courses are not conducive to discussions of race even when the classrooms reflect a variety of diversities (Martell, 2015).

Research on teachers indicate that engaging in discussions of race remain limited. The central focus of the published research has been US history (Chandler, 2015). Considering the breadth and timeline of US history, scholars have been able to capture instances of teachers engaging in conversations of race (Castro, Hawkman, & Diaz, 2015). Attempts to study other aspects of social studies, such as geography and economics, however remain limited (Chandler, 2015; King & Finley, 2015). A certain marginalization of research situating race exists within the discipline (Castro, Hawkman, & Diaz, 2015). Historically, the National Council of Social Studies (NCSS) have engaged in a sustained approach of ignoring the implications and complications of race within social studies (Ladson-Billings, 2003; Tyson, 2003). Research journals tend to limit publication of such research, and scholars tend to study topics unrelated to race (Howard, 2003).

Latino Critical Theory in Social Studies

While other educational settings, such as school finance and after school programs, have experienced the application of LatCrit into practice, limited research exists situating LatCrit in social studies classrooms. The lack of Latinx teachers in social studies significantly contributes to this issue. According to Flores et al. (2007), financial constraints, a lack of respect for the teaching profession, personal experiences, and the definition of diversity in higher education settings all contribute to the low number of Latinx teachers. Busey and Waters (2016) discovered that just under 5% of current social studies teachers surveyed identified as “Latino/Hispanic.” Given the extremely small number of Latinx teachers in social studies, the research needs to examine their experiences and how they developed their pedagogies.

Salinas, Franquiz, and Rodriguez (2016) discovered the power of engaging Latina student teachers through counter-narratives. The students, all enrolled in a bilingual social studies program, deconstructed their experiences (academic and personal) prior to entering the classroom. Latina student teachers spoke to the assimilation and nationalism connected with the social studies curricula (Salinas, Franquiz, & Rodriguez, 2016). Narratives of Latinxs, Chicanxs, and other persons of color were nowhere to be found in the social studies curricula. Latina student teachers also spoke of their own ignorance with their own cultural histories. Through counter-narratives, they discovered new understandings; these understandings would help their future students through learning about their own communal histories (Salinas, Franquiz, & Rodriguez, 2016).

Summary

The application of CRT and LatCrit in social studies opens up possibilities of teachers and student empowerment. Students and teachers learn how the complexities of race permeates

all aspects of our society (Daniels, 2011). Teachers engaging in the application of CRT and LatCrit in their instruction provide students opportunities to create new narratives (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). These narratives encourage youth to address racism through writing, social media, and other aspects of social importance to them (Ladson-Billings, 2014). Students can then apply these narratives to the social studies curricula. The power of history, disseminated from power-holders looking to replicate dominant cultural cues and narratives, changes from one of one-sided, selective portrayals found in school approval physical and digital textbooks to stories, poetry, political action, drawings, and other depictions (Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008; Loewen, 2007; Stovall, 2006). CRT and LatCrit redefines the linear aspect of social studies: history is not meant to be taught in a straight-line (Trouillot, 1995).

Methodology

For this study, I chose to study current social studies teachers who situated race, sexism, and cultural prejudice in their instruction. As a Latino who taught social studies in North Carolina for nearly ten years, I formed a network of colleagues who approached the teaching of social studies from similar critical frameworks. After securing IRB approval, I began conversations with several teachers. For the finalized paper, the experiences of two social studies teachers of color are illustrated: Charlie and Rosita.

Charlie

Charlie was in his eighth year of teaching social studies at the time of the research. Charlie identifies as an African-American male from North Carolina. He attended a public university in the state of North Carolina. He entered the teaching profession via lateral entry. As lateral entry, Charlie did not study in a traditional teacher education program. Instead, he learned the foundations of education and social studies methods through a state-approved, accelerated

program. He has taught in the same rural county he attended elementary and secondary schools for the entirety of his career. Charlie plans to continue teaching at the same high school in the near future.

Rosita

Rosita was in her fourth year of teaching social studies. Rosita identifies herself as a Latina from Los Angeles, California. She attended a private university in North Carolina. She majored in sociology, with a minor in education. Rosita has taught for the past two years at an urban, charter elementary school. Prior, she taught at a public, urban elementary school for two years. She also volunteered as a tutor for the same district for a number of years prior to teaching. Rosita plans to enroll in a graduate program in the near future.

Data Collection

I used three approaches for this study: interviews, observations, and document collection. I incorporated this triangulation of data collection for three reasons. Interviews provide actual data on the stories shared by the participants (Holliday, 2007). Their words illustrate unique experiences that carry significant personal and professional weights. In understanding the words of the teachers, I continually paid attention to the dynamics of the interviews. I attempted to “create as equitable a relationship” as possible between myself and the teachers (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018, p. 90). Observations provide opportunities to study and understand the teachers within their essential settings (Baker, 2006). At the same time, I viewed their everyday pedagogies through my own filter and lenses. I undertook an active role in conducting observations (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). At times, students asked me what my role was in the classrooms. Those interactions provided direct, first-hand experiences into the inner workings of the teachers’ classrooms (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). Lastly, document collection

provides opportunities to understand the words used in constructing the documents, overt and hidden symbolisms found in the documents, and how they contribute to the delivery of instruction. Acquiring documents from these teachers allows the discovery of manifest and latent contents within them (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). The documents also act as a defining artifact to the particular teacher's setting (Holliday, 2007).

The data collection took place between October 2016 and March 2017. I formally interviewed the teachers at the start of the research. These initial interviews helped construct the foundations of the research (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). The interviews ranged from forty minutes to one hour and forty minutes. At the conclusion of the research, I conducted shorter, formal interviews. These interviews lasted between twenty and thirty minutes. I also engaged in informal interviews following observations. The informal interviews helped clarify questions I had for the teachers. The teachers provided access to their classrooms. Both teachers worked with their administrators in granting access. I also met with their respective administrators, and after explaining the research, they granted me permission. I ended up conducting approximately ten hours of field work with the teachers. I spent four hours with Charlie and six hours with Rosita. Lastly, I collected worksheets, took pictures of their classrooms and school settings, and studied Internet resources. Overall, the data triangulation method revealed a number of patterns that were then processed during analysis.

Data Analysis

All data collected for this research underwent numerous analysis. During the interviews and classroom observations, I simultaneously engaged in data analysis. In my field notes, I recorded my observations on the center portion of my form using a writing utensil. In the margins, I wrote codes and memos for further reflections. I also highlighted certain passages or

comments at the end of each observation. The practice of thick description helped “inform writing and further data collection” (Bowen, 2010; Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 6).

I created substantive and theoretical categories using the computer program MAXQDA (Maxwell, 2009). I searched for connections between the statements of the teachers, the actions taking place in the classroom as critical practices, and the documents themselves (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Maxwell, 2009; Freire, 1970/2000). I came to the realization that data, identified under codes such as “Critical,” “Race,” and “Narratives” came up numerous times. However, I did not discount the other codes that appeared once or twice. I continually created and edited codes through rounds of analysis. The numerous roads of readings helped gain a comprehensive understanding of the data (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). Using member checking, Rosita and Charlie provided feedback in my data analysis, as well as the construction of these counter-narratives.

Presentation

These counter narratives serve as active resistance (Cook, 2013; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002)). Their words tell stories in dealing with elements of oppression, racism, sexism, and other prejudices in social studies (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Engaging as an activist fighting for equality, I will disrupt the traditional presentation of the results section by presenting two counter narratives (Cook, 2013). The counter-narratives are written in *italics*. Words not written in *italics* indicate analytical moments, the recollection of observations, or the inclusion of images. Writing in *italics* advance a more focused reading of their stories, since the representations of these teachers continue to be absent in social studies (Wills, 2001).

Counter-narratives establish historical and contemporary chronicles within social studies. Charlie and Rosita’s counter-narratives encourage you to reconceptualize your own

interpretations of race and racism in social studies (Wills, 2001). The counter-narratives also illustrate how critical teachers grapple with the results of the US Presidential election, rooted in a system that values whiteness over others (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Wills, 2001). The counter stories also encourage you to think of the larger picture, in this case, the realities of engaging in race discussions within social studies (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). The construction of this section reflects my own desire to write a counter-narrative to the traditional approaches to illustrating the results from the research. The epilogue will leave the reader with an understanding of my personal experiences engaging in this research through my own counter-narrative (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018).

Nearly Empty Pizzeria, College Town NC

Rosita and Tommy

We met up in front of the pizzeria. As we walk into the building, Rosita shares some experiences from her day at her school. As we go back and forth, the pizza aromas from the ovens suddenly overwhelm us. We decide to order a couple of slices each. We both noticed that the individuals working behind the pizza counters were speaking Spanish with one another. When it was our turn, we both spoke Spanish to the man taking our order. He was at first surprised; but he quickly switched into Spanish. We finished ordering and then, we sat down. We continued talking about her day at work. A few minutes later, a lady brought out our slices to us. We both said “*Gracias*” and with a big smile on her face, she said “*¡Buen provecho!*”

Now that we have enjoyed some good pizza, talk to me about your overall experiences teaching social studies.

So, I was told it was a time period that I was going to teach. 'You're going to teach 1492 through the American Revolution, because my school does it in a very non-traditional way and we want you. It was very much my desire to do it in a non-traditional way. I was not given any textbooks to do it off, but what I knew about history was my own experiences in the K-12 system, as an undergrad, and I knew exactly what perspective I want to teach history through, which is the untold story. So, I start with Howard Zinn.

As Rosita begins to illustrate her experiences using Zinn (2003), whose work attempted to uncover the silences social studies has tried to employ when discussing racism, sexism, and other forms of prejudice, I start thinking about the students in her classroom. What kind of opportunities will they have in her class to critically think?

They don't get a pretty picture of Columbus. They don't get a pretty picture of Abraham Lincoln. Everything was told to my own understanding of social studies, and essentially my truth.

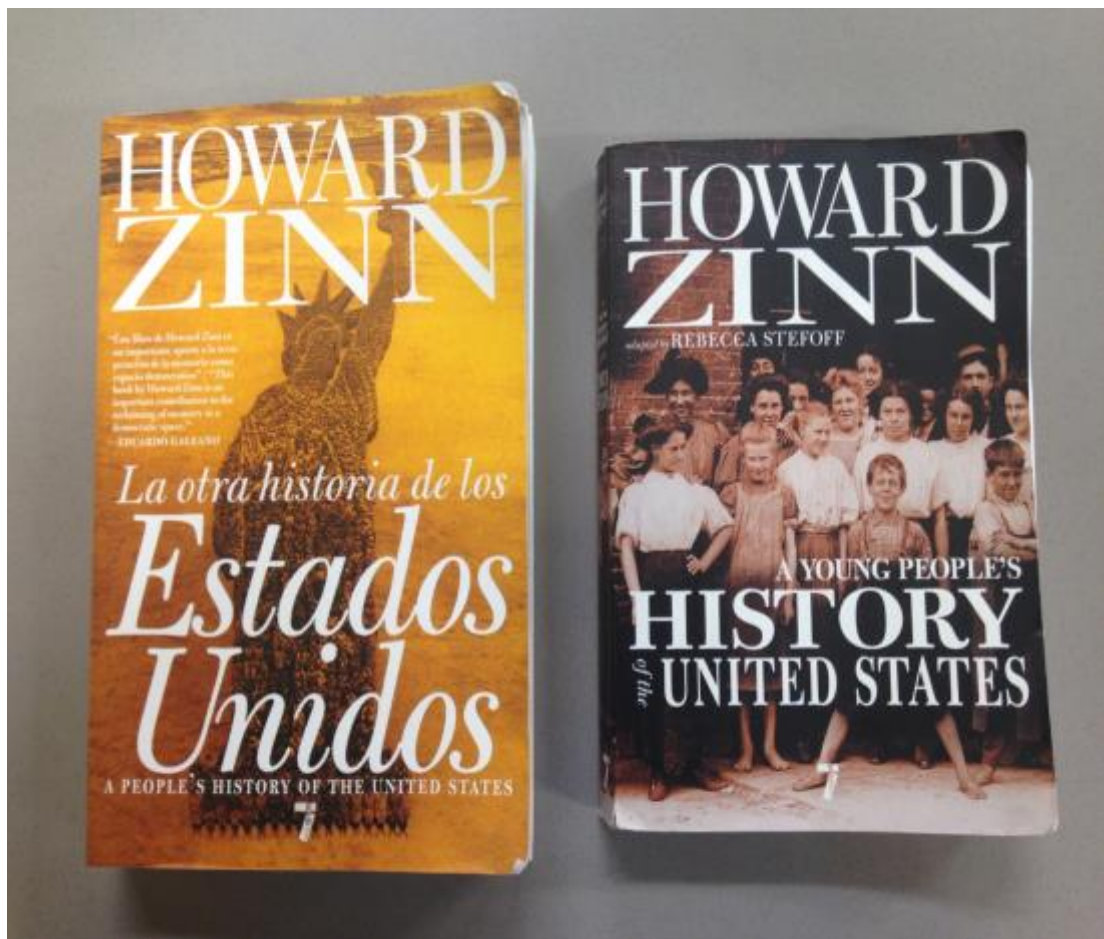
Illustration 2 – Timeline



I think of the timeline above the door in her classroom. The first entry simply says “1492 - Columbus reaches Hispaniola.” Then, she introduces two significant results from the “Columbian Exchange:” slavery and colonialism. The next four entries describe how European nations, while colonizing the “New World,” introduced slavery as a common practice.

My goals during teaching history is to cover the material, but never teaching facts or memorizing all fifty states and presidents. It is never about that. I see less importance in memorizing the years of the Civil War as opposed to the causes and effects of it. And in a larger scheme, why did the Civil War even happen? Did it solve the issue? I'll speak to Columbus Day. We talked about the age of exploration, Columbus, and the greedy motives for exploration.

Illustration 3 - Zinn



Her classroom reflects her commitment to social justice. I found books such as *A People's History of the United States* (both in Spanish and English), *Separate is Never Equal*, *Funny Bones: Posada and His Day of the Dead Calaveras* easily accessible to her students. I also found empowering profiles of famous Latinxs, in English and Spanish, dotting the walls of her classroom.

Did your pedagogical approach come from the way you were taught in your teacher ed program?

I got my teaching certification through a program that molded teachers to teaching in privileged settings. During the observation process, most of the schools I saw were the cream of the crop within traditional public, private, and charter schools. So, of course, it never became about what makes school important for children. The best methods were set up in an empty classroom. It did not take into consideration what one child is doing over here, or the reading live of another child, or what's going through the mind of the child sitting in the middle.

Watching Rosita teaching, she has one clear objective: instilling the concept of critical thinking. Her approach differed from the common critical thinking methods articulated by professional development programs. She instead wanted her students, all students of color, to see how race impacted them, the history they are learning, and their futures. She also wanted the student to understand how prevalent racism is in society (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

What I learned came from a dominant perspective. It's a white male, from a middle class or upper class classroom, who has no vocabulary deficits, no other labels, might even be considered gifted or talented. These best practices are going to work best for him, as someone to go off with all of these resources. As a Latina who grew up in Los Angeles, California, I did not

see myself in any of it. When I think back to my own experiences with history, I absolutely hated history the entire time I was in K-12. It was irrelevant to me...it all was!

How then did you take that and adjust or change your actual teacher experiences of today?

I can tell you a couple of things that have definitely worked for me. There's the understanding by design backwards model of life. Where do you want to get the kids to go to, and how you can work backwards from that? So, if I want to talk about what I want to get my students to articulate social injustices, I ask why? I also help students learn how to critically read a text. What is the power of the words? Why did the author choose this word in place of this other word? How does that change the perspectives?

How do you then draw in current events?

I remember this one class I taught. It was actually about the last two shootings, the one in Charlotte, and the one in Tulsa. I was like 'What was the most important thing that you learned from this class?' A kid said 'It's bad to kill people.' I was like, 'Hold up! Are you telling me that before you walked into this class, you didn't know that?'

At this point, I noticed that Rosita starts engaging in some reflection of that experience.

I was talking about this, this event, and this suspect and this incident. So, I can understand how all of it got jumbled into one big picture of 'violence is bad.' So, I need to take back the steps of how do I break these very critical and hard to understand issues to my students because they clearly missed the point. It's how do I break down this super abstract and complex idea that even adults have a hard time recognizing for students?

I saw Rosita understanding the complexity of trying to discuss these racialized experiences with her students. To her credit, she examined her own pedagogical methods in

drawing in the narratives of these two incidents into her classroom. But what I sensed was a local connection she was trying to make with her teaching.

So then how do you bring in the community into your classroom?

These shootings are happening in Texas. These shootings are happening in Tulsa. These shootings are happening here, right near the school! I brought to their attention the case of Jesus, who to them, was a child in the same school district. So, I needed to ask the question why is this happening? I want to the kids to know that I care about them, and that we acknowledge that they are in danger here for being black males, people of color. I think they see it too, but they don't have a space to talk about it. Maybe not every child has experienced it, but some had.

Rosita understands the racial realism of these shootings (Chandler, 2015). She extends this realism to Latinx students by bringing up Jesus. He was an adolescent who died in police custody a year earlier in the city Rosita taught. Outside her classroom, there is a large board with the words “Black and Brown Lives Matter” on it. In the middle is a map of the United States. Strings connect thirteen pictures of individuals killed by law enforcement to different parts of the country. Jesus is there; it is a powerful image to see every day.

Illustration 4 – Black and Brown Lives Matter



Since you mentioned black males, what about females?

I recall one parent resisted when I talked about females. Not necessarily because she didn't believe what I was teaching but because there was some misunderstanding of why we were doing this. She was like, 'She's young and learning about this, and it's not relevant to their lives yet.' And in a very kind way, I had to tell her that her good daughter, as a black female, is oppressed in our society. So, when we talk about issues of sexism or issues of race, this is relevant to her. She may not be experiencing it blatantly, but she is seen as an other.

Since Rosita mentioned resistance from a parent, I wondered about resistance from fellow colleagues. Even though Rosita taught in an urban school setting, I noticed a significant number of white teachers in the building. I thought about her fellow teachers expressing any concerns about the nature of her teaching, since she critiqued the dominant racial dogmas in social studies (Castro, Hawkman, & Diaz, 2015).

Oh, they love me! My degree is in sociology. I was gifted with these pair of sociology lens so I see everything through them. I see student teacher interactions, parent interactions, movies, etc. Someone said something the other day that caught my attention. The comment was from a white female counterpart. She said 'I went zero to hero on him.' And I was like 'Are you calling yourself a hero? Is this a white savior complex that you are displaying currently?' She was very uncomfortable by my comment. But we have extensive conversations on how we are not here to save these children. They don't need us to save them.

At that moment, I just wanted to jump out of my chair and rejoice. For too many years, I saw that same scenario occur in front of me. I would call white teachers out for those comments, and often, it cost me social capital within the building. Unlike Rosita, I never had extensive conversations with other teachers. I also saw the disconnect between the school administrators and myself (Castro, Hawkman, & Diaz, 2015). The school administrators did not establish official school policies or professional development on understanding local communities of color. She continued about connecting the local communities of color with her critical approach.

What I'm asking you (anyone entering her classroom) is that you're going to have students walk into the school that they've never been happy because our structure, our discipline, our approach to a lot of things are very different. All of these bodies are black and brown bodies walking in. The instruction or discipline is coming down from white people.

How do these same students see you?

To all the black students, I'm not one of them. They don't see me as black. Half of them think I'm white with a really dark tan. You have to realize the implications of that. From the eyes of our students, they're being told what to do by a white person: tuck in your shirt, stand in line, be quiet.

I thought about the school to prison pipeline. I thought about the black prison diaspora, how the long road to imprisonment begins in elementary school (Simmons, 2016).

How do you use the system against itself?

I think you always have to find loopholes. I think about myself as a student, and as brilliant as I am, I was not the perfect mold of a student. In social studies, you're going to have a lot of current issues that you hold your own opinions about. So, I have to be prepared to answer some of those questions. I have to guide them. I must equip them with their tools to make their own conclusions because they had such a great social studies teacher who taught them how to look at different text and question them.

That week, Rosita was preparing her students for a field trip to a local museum. The museum previously served as an antebellum plantation. She pulled details from the museum's website, and presented them to the students. She wanted them to "experience a different story being told" (observation, 2016). She had the students read out loud the narratives. Then, Rosita and the students engaged in a back-and-forth discussion that lasted about 20 minutes. Towards the end of the class, Rosita distributed one assignment sheet to each student. Table 3 illustrates the specific details of the assignment.

Table 3 - Lesson

<p>Do Now #3.13 – Local Plantation</p> <p>Directions: Answer the following question using complete sentences.</p> <p>(Resistance) – effort made to stop or fight against someone or something</p> <p>(Resist) – to stop or fight back against someone or something</p> <p>Describe the different ways that enslaved Africans resisted slavery.</p>
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Realizing that Donald Trump was elected to the US Presidency, how did you draw in the election in your classroom?

With every lesson, there is a framing as to why the lesson is important or relevant to present-day. With our slavery unit, students were shocked to learn about how the conditions of enslaved Africans is resembled in the current injustice happening in the black communities. For tomorrow's lesson, we will compare maps of free/slave states, mass incarceration per state, and the Election 2016 results. Students are in disbelief that someone as offensive as Trump could be elected. I hope to bring light to the trends of oppression since the 1600s in this country and how not surprising it is that a racist, misogynist person would be elected right after our first Black president.

We realize that our conversations have stretched into the evening, so we decide to depart. Before we separated from the conversations, I said the following:

I think you said so many powerful things, that I don't know where to begin. But at this point, I want to thank you. I truly believe these words will strike a chord with people out there, and it needs to be heard. So, thank you.

Her words hit me hard, especially as a male Latino in a privileged research setting. This conversation educated me far more than I anticipated. It served as the foundation for the continued resistance towards Trump and racism in social studies (Chandler, 2015).

Crowded Sports Bar, Rural Town, NC

Charlie and Tommy

I arrived a few minutes prior to our meeting. I go inside to scope out the scene. The restaurant is packed with people. Replays of last night's sports games are playing on the giant

television screens. Yet, strolling around the place, I hear conversations about the election. I go back outside and wait for Charlie. About five minutes, he arrived and we exchanged hugs. We are then seated by a host. Our conversations begin after we have been seated.

So, tell me about your experiences with social studies?

Charlie takes a couple of seconds to reflect on the question.

It's, it's hard to explain. However, social studies began before I walked into the classroom. So, it's civic engagement. It's social awareness. It's history. It's culture. And it's just gaining a firm understanding of how these things connect.

Charlie then makes a poignant comment that links his own experiences as a student with the discipline.

*So, you know, my experiences with social studies, is that it began when I was in their shoes, in the same county where I now teach. Struggling with a lot of different aspects of my own personal experience. Y'know, **being black male in a poor county in the south in America.** Family history, all of these things came together. So, you know, I grappled with a lot of these ideas well before I decided to, to start teaching.*

I noticed how he emphasized the words in bold: “**being black male in a poor county in the South in America.**” Each word had a forceful sound to it, which is why I placed them in bold. The words reflected a combination of things: a realization of who he was, how those words defined him as a teacher, and how he continued to view the world. The understanding of his own racialized experiences informed him as a teacher (Chandler, 2015).

So, you mentioned that it began way before you even became a teacher. What was it about that one social studies or history teacher that really connected with you?

They answered questions that my family and immediate friends couldn't answer. They had legitimate well-thought answers and responses to my questions.

Charlie viewed his teachers as elders who had some answers to his questions. Yet, he was not an individual who was devoid of knowledge (Freire, 1970/2000). He then talked about the influential hip-hop he grew up listening, and how the lyrics provided different perspective not found in social studies.

I was in high school from 89-93. The benchmark of that experience was largely hip-hop. So, it's like 89, looking at the rise of A Tribe Called Quest, Public Enemy, and then going into Snoop Dogg and all that stuff. For me, I was dealing with an experience that was becoming politicized because it was the music I was listening to. So, I started asking questions. Hip-hop was the ghetto CNN for me.

Hip-hop provided Charlie with an avenue to process his experiences as an African-American male growing up in a rural setting in the South. Hip-hop served as a critical pedagogy for Charlie (Pulido, 2009). The lyrics in the songs of A Tribe Called Quest and Public Enemy provided him some context into the racialization of his experiences (Akom, 2009). His hip-hop education helped Charlie construct his own culturally-responsive teaching pedagogy for use in his social studies classroom (Martell, 2015).

You make such a connection with reality. Y'know, going back to how you said hip-hop was the ghetto CNN. Let's bring it back up to speed with today. How do you do that as a teacher?

Y'know, last week, we were talking about the electoral college and I brought it up. And it wasn't in the unit we were necessarily discussing. But I brought it up for my kids because I knew

that first thing's going to happen on Tuesday night, they'll gonna be sitting there and watching those votes coming in. So, let's talk about that.

Charlie wanted to give his students a space to understand, digest, and predict the election results. He then connected the results with a renewed sense of optimism and action. Charlie saw growth in his teaching, and learning for his students (Ladson-Billings, 2014).

I'm telling you, it's a good time to teach history and social studies. It's a great time, man. So many resources! For us teachers in the relatively poor counties, y'know, we are in a place where our kids have the technologies on their phones. We might not have a lot of the outside resources that, y'know, that they have at the school for kids to extend their learning. But we can take that as a win-win.

I started realizing how much Charlie valued his surroundings. I got the sense it also defined him as a teacher. I then asked him about how his training to become a teacher contributed to his teaching style.

My style of teaching really came more so from understanding the needs of my community. Understanding my own personal experience in education, in my community. Honestly, my style of teaching is born from understanding my community, my students, understanding their goals, understanding the availability of resources, what we have to work with. But more so, community.

So, you really stress that you are a community-based person, community-based teacher, community based leader. Why is the community so important to you in regards to teaching social studies?

Because my history, my own personal history, was created in that. I'm born of that community experience.

At the point, I realized the power of drawing from the strengths of his community. While other may view his community from a racialized, deficit perspectives, Charlie drew from its' power and strengths.

Your approach is so rooted in community. How do you take into account then those who try to resist you?

We don't get a whole lot of resistance because it's a vision and it's not fractured.

Charlie then makes a critical connection with a teacher who profoundly influenced him, both as a person and as an educator.

How do you bring those kids on board? You buttress with facts. It's not promoting your own agenda. But providing solid answers for much like that teacher I told you about when I was in high school, the teacher who really had me truly engaged in social studies. Even though there were times I didn't agree with him, he had, he had a strong mastery of his subject that I had to respond. That's a biggie. Know what you are talking about. So, I respected him, even though sometimes, I didn't agree with him.

Charlie values the importance of engaging with all sides of an issue. Charlie sees the whole picture in his teaching when engaging in critical conversations. He connected his past student experiences with his present teacher experience. Charlie understands the reservations he felt whenever his history teacher articulated a critical or controversial idea. At the same time, Charlie is aware that even with a student of color majority in his classroom, talking about racial issues could be tricky (Crowley, 2015).

I say just pay attention to them and care for their values. Especially those who throughout their entire experience have been labelled. Why? Because he doesn't come from your experience, because he doesn't look like you, because he listens to music that goes against

the music that you listen to. Now all of the sudden, you have bothered him, and you wonder why he don't want to listen.

So how do you reach out to those kids? How do you keep that consistency up to know that you are reaching out to those students who have been already othered?

It doesn't happen overnight because it's like balance. It is like how we would address any other person who's suffering or any other person in pain or whatever else. You know, I have to say this, but listen twice as much as you talk.

I wrote down on my notes “*listen twice as much as you talk.*” I then circled it. Something about that statement made me think about the importance of hearing out those students who have experienced some form of prejudice. That comment made me think about my own experiences with racism and prejudice. Charlie then mentions how other colleagues tried a more direct approach to talking about race.

We had one teacher, she had the kids up in a roar last year after Mike Brown, Trayvon Martin, and all that stuff. Class was in a roar because she was pushing an agenda. You know she wanted them to take it and grapple with it. So, it was very incendiary, you know what I mean? But had her class been a place kids felt comfortable from the beginning exchanging ideas, then you don't have that resistance.

I perceive his reflections on his colleague's pedagogy as an experience that could have made profound impacts on the students. However, his colleague did not establish clear relationships with their students. If his colleague had developed connections from the start, then opportunities for significant conversations on Mike Brown, Trayvon Martin, etc., would have occurred (Castro, Hawkman, & Diaz, 2015).

Do we have that first discussion on the first day of class? No, because we have other things we're taking care of, and I'm kind of watching the class to gain a better understanding. So that when something like what happened this week hits, they're comfortable enough sharing their ideas because they know Mr. Smith is not going to chop me down because, y'know, I'm a Republican or I'm a Democrat. Establish it from the beginning, maintain it, and model it.

I realize, at this point, that his thoughts could be applied to the future of social studies in the classroom.

If you can go and influence how social studies teacher ed programs produce teachers, what would it look from your point of view?

From day one, I would have them in the communities. Day one. I would have more community outreach in the diverse set of communities. Take them to Eastern North Carolina, then take them to Cary. Take them out to the mountains. Allow them to have those experiences and allow them to also receive immediate feedback.

You talk about community on the first day. What is one other important aspect that you want to stress?

I would say content mastery. I was talking the other day about, you know, the reaction of the Dixiecrats to the Civil Rights Movement. I was talking about the actions of the Redeemer's movement following Reconstruction. Reconstruction was, man, a hot time for black people in this country, majority black legislators just in the South. It was a great time to be in this country, but then what happened immediately afterwards. You had the redeemer's movement. You had the failure of Reconstruction with Rutherford B. Hayes, and then you had Plessy vs. Ferguson. Sixty years, you had institutionalized racism of our culture. So now, when I see, y'know, with having eight years of bliss. Really good run. And now I see what the reaction to it is. I'm

seeing themes. I'm seeing Dixiecrats, I'm seeing Redeemers, I'm seeing now the Trump followers.

Since you draw in the presidential election, how did you address it in your social studies classroom?

The timing of the election was perfect as I was beginning my discussion of the factors leading to the Civil War. As a largely African-American community and school, my students began asking questions about issues of race, the 14th amendment and discrimination before I dove into the unit. The presidential election actually helped my students conceptualize the electoral process, as well as better understand Reconstruction. More specifically, the backlash to policies benefiting African-Americans following the Civil War. Students drew parallels between Reconstruction and the Obama years. Unfortunately, much like the fall of Reconstruction, most of them see our country following a similar route.

By this point, we have finished eating. We prepare to get up. But before I leave, I let him know how powerful his words were for me.

You made so many great points during our conversations here! Your words need to be heard by others. Your actions as a critical history teacher help establish not only a setting for these conversations to take place, but also allow you to continue to develop and be complacent. I really appreciate your time and conversations!

Charlie summarizes the cornerstones of his own critical pedagogy when discussing race: community and content mastery. I'm glad Charlie had an opportunity to expand his definition of content mastery. He alluded to his influential history teacher in high school earlier in the conversation. He paints a clearer picture of a social studies teacher knowing the facts or had some answers to his questions. He illustrates White reactions to African-American

advancements in US history. Those reactions connect racism with power reclamations. He uses past historical events and political actions to continue the “destruction of race,” even with white inferiority arise again, as demonstrated with the recent election (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012).

Concluding Thoughts

We believe a strength of critical race and LatCrit theory and methodology is the validation and combination of the theoretical, empirical, and experiential knowledge. Through counter-narratives, we delve into the lives of human characters who experience daily the intersections of racism, sexism, and classism (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 489).

The counter-narratives above demonstrate the possibilities of transforming social studies in the K-12 setting. As more scholarship engages with the racial implications of social studies, counter-narratives will assert the experiences of teachers, scholars, students, and other activists (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). As social studies teachers, Rosita and Charlie experience life through the intersections outlined by Solórzano and Yosso. However, the counter-narratives no longer marginalizes them; they speak freely and openly to those experiences (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Their counter-narratives resist majoritarian stories that permeate the academy, K-12 education, and social studies (Cook, 2013). Rosita spoke against the safe and heroic portrayal of individuals such as Columbus and Abraham Lincoln found in the curriculum. She also addresses current events, such as the violence by law enforcement towards people of color, and makes connections to similar experiences occurring near her school. Charlie found value, agency, and empowerment in hip-hop, a musical genre originally developed by communities of color in marginalized settings. Charlie also found power in the strengths of his local communities, and situated them within his teaching and classroom space.

Their counter-narratives also illustrate how their views encourage critical conversations in the classroom. Social studies is the appropriate setting for these conversations. Rosita and Charlie maintain hope for themselves and their students through these conversations. They also,

as Castro, Hawkman, and Diaz (2015) pointed, willing to walk the “tightrope alongside their students” that other social studies teachers are not prepared to do (p. 146).

The counter-narratives also illustrate the potency of critical perspectives within the literature. Counter-narratives help describe how social studies, a social construction itself, is rooted in prejudice (Chandler, 2015; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). In order to engage the transformation of the literature, critical social studies scholars will acknowledge the rapidly growing diversity of their settings. According to de los Rios, Lopez, and Morrell (2014), K-12 schools are projected to have a majority of multiracial student populations by the end of the 2010s. With changing demographics, it is pertinent for scholars to understand the explicit and implicit roles of race and other prejudices in the social studies discipline. Along with the influence of social media illustrating the murders of black and brown bodies to wide audiences, ignoring these realities continues the preverbal “head in the sand” mindset to social studies (Chandler, 2015). Both Rosita and Charlie openly discuss their experiences in dealing with racism, sexism, classism, and other prejudice. They draw in the local communities, the events taking place within them, and relate them to the history taught in the classrooms. Rosita and Charlie’s words bring light to the lived realities of the students sitting in social studies classrooms.

The counter-narratives also firmly establish LatCrit in social studies research. Building on the growing scholarship of CRT in the social studies (Chandler, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 2003), LatCrit brings awareness to the experiences of Latinx teachers and students. LatCrit exposes additional barriers and prejudices Latinxs face in educational settings, such as legal status, deficit perceptions, or educational labeling (Oliva, Perez, & Parker, 2013). Even though Busey and Waters (2016) discovered a micro-percentage of social studies teachers identifying as

“Hispanic/Latino,” it is important to draw in the experiences of those teachers and how they connect with their students. Rosita was quite aware that she was one of two Latinx teachers at her school. Yet, she was “very transparent” with her students. She discussed her own experiences in the K-12 settings as a student of color. She also connected those experiences with her expectations for her students, in order to develop them as agents of change. LatCrit illustrates the potential for more visible examples of social justice in social studies. We bear witness to a Latina social studies teacher who fights racial, cultural, and language discrimination every day (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

Lastly, the counter-narratives firmly establish current social studies teachers who directly discuss and challenge race and its’ implications in the classroom. Placing these counter-narratives within the social studies literature starts a new era of critical research. Expressive and decisive counter-narratives that “tell a different story” in social studies reveal both the racialization of the discipline and retaliation against racism (McKnight & Chandler, 2009, p. 71).

Epilogue

As I think about my own intersectional experiences as a Latino scholar, I go back to the conversations with Rosita and Charlie. I wish I could have spent more time with Rosita and Charlie, engaging in more conversations instead of sitting here in this coffee house. But, curriculum demands on Rosita and Charlie, my own requirements to finish this research, and that damn testing schedule at their schools worked against me. I would trade the sanitary feel of sitting in this educational space, writing this paper, for the realities of their classrooms in a heartbeat. But, I view the glass as half-full. We constructed some incredible and potent narratives, narratives that need to illustrate additional realities in the literature (Chandler, 2015). I also know that their work is not in isolation (Branch, 2003). We gotta get our shit

together, to make something happen as critical scholars in social studies (Fareed, Taylor, & White, 2016, Track 1).

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A CONCLUSION

This dissertation investigated the existence of critical pedagogy in social studies classrooms. Critical pedagogy seeks to disrupt inequalities in place and give voice to marginalized individuals. Conversations regarding the application of critical pedagogy have consistently taken place between scholars. With an elected president willing to use divisive executive tactics on the American populace, and Congress engaging in similar legislative action while appearing unwilling to stand up to him, teachers in the K-12 setting become the focus of these conversations. How will critical pedagogy adjust to the Trump presidency? How will social studies teachers take into account the various diversities existing in their classrooms? Current K-12 social studies teachers willing to counter racism, the standardization of the profession, Trumpista rhetoric, and majoritarian narratives in the discipline epitomize the torch holders of critical pedagogy.

The manuscripts within this dissertation illustrated the grassroots, or organic, development of critical pedagogy. The first manuscript demonstrated the common experiences shared by social studies teachers who view their teaching as critical. Extending beyond the textbook and curriculum and drawing from a variety of sources, such as local communities and own experiences in social studies, these teachers fashioned their own interpretations of critical pedagogy. The second manuscript introduced a new concept to the social studies literature. The theory, sociology of the body, describes the body as a material object reacting to the worlds around it. In education, the body takes into account the learning both inside and outside the classroom, as well as issues of inequality. The teachers exhibited actions, such as kneeling when

speaking with students and viewing the body as a commodity, that contributed to critical discussions in their classrooms. The third manuscript situates counter-narratives as a relevant methodology in resisting the traditionalism of social studies. The two teachers discussed how their critical pedagogies spoke out against the injustices they faced. They also proposed ideas for future teachers willing to enter the field, such as recognizing local communities and learning from their own experiences, in order to create additional critical spaces in social studies.

Even though each manuscript framed critical practices through different lenses, the overall dissertation suggested the existence of critical pedagogy in social studies. The first manuscript positioned the importance of understanding students as intellectual equals in the classroom. The knowledge the students learned at home, in their communities, and other non-academic settings contributed to the critical discussions in the classroom. The second manuscript associated the body as a vital component in establishing critical conversations and learning. The teachers understood how their bodies and voices recognized the feelings and awareness of their students. The third manuscript characterized the importance of one's voice in confronting discrimination. Teachers articulated a variety of techniques aimed at developing students into agents of change. Together, the manuscripts represent social studies teachers willing to be individuals who challenge the status quo. Their classrooms serve as critical spaces for conversations not found in other social studies classrooms.

Even though my dissertation findings offer positive directions into developing critical social studies research, I offer two significant limitations. First, I acknowledge the limited number of participating teachers. While gracious towards the three teachers who participated in my dissertation study, I understood that access to additional teachers would have yielded a larger body of collected data. Additional teachers would have participated if my research timeline

aligned with their own instructional responsibilities. Second, the amount of data collected for this research reflected a limited time of field work. Administrative pressures to use classroom time for test review or actual testing prevented further data collection, as the third manuscript articulated. Furthermore, the limited time frame prevented additional conversations with teachers “on the fence.” Two other teachers expressed interest in participating. However, due to calendar conflicts, they chose not to participate. One teacher did not get approval from their administrator. And one teacher did not participate due to living in a different region of the United States. The limitations provide structures for future research.

Future Research

The results from this dissertation study, along with the limitations, offer ideas for future research. I plan to embark on three research avenues. First, I will examine the influence of existing examples of critical pedagogy on teacher education programs. Second, I will situate art as a critical apparatus for teachers and students in addressing racism and other prejudices. Lastly, I will introduce the idea of *détournement* as an instructional tool in social studies.

Teacher Education Programs – Social Studies

A developing field of discourse have suggested the need for more critical conversations within teacher education programs. Crowe and Cuenca (2016) and Meuwissen and Berger (2016) argued for teacher education programs in the social studies to situate critical conversations as central to their curricula. These conversations would better prepare students teachers for entry into diverse K-12 settings (Crowe & Cuenca, 2016). Angus (2012) claimed that profound, critical discussions in teacher education programs would lead to collaborative practices not only between teachers, but also between teachers and students. Critical

preparations of social studies student teachers for entry into the K-12 setting provides the foundation for these teachers willing to establish their own critical pedagogies.

Future research could take into account how critical student teachers in social studies perceive their school settings. Student teachers traditionally engage in observations at the start of their program, usually selected by the university. Understanding that student teachers did not choose the school, how did they interpret the various communities existing both within and outside the school setting? How do accountability requirements from school administrators and questioning from more conservative teachers contribute to the development of critical social studies teachers? They would also learn how to resist practices that render teaching to activities solely focused on students passing standardized tests (Leahey, 2014; Angus, 2012). “Good teaching” as Smyth (2012) pointed out, is based on student concerns, not private or business interests (p. 2). Social studies teachers could learn how the concept of neutrality does not exist in the classroom (Angus, 2012). Teacher education programs would better prepare student teachers for the realities of the classroom.

Arts as Critical Literacy in Social Studies

The inclusion of art as a critical tool in learning social studies remains an under examined concept (Vittulli & Pitts Santoli, 2013; Zwirn & Libresco, 2010; Kosky & Curtis, 2008). Teachers see the arts as critical learning options in examining historical events and concepts in the classroom (Barone & Eisner, 1997). This includes, not limited to, drawings, photography, lyricism, musical composition, and painting. Leavy (2009) saw the arts as a coping technique for students who endured negative learning and behavioral experiences in the classroom. Petersen (2012) argued the arts help teachers and researchers understand the multi-dimensionality of the students.

Future research could focus on redefining critical thinking as a concept not rooted in a traditional definition. Vittulli and Pitts Santoli (2013) characterized the use of art as a relevant option in interpreting and analyzing historical events. How would teachers and students, as a reciprocal learning unit, use art to respond to dominant narratives? Or, for a student identifying as Latinx, Chicanx, or Mexican, how would they use the arts to respond to curriculum details about the Mexican-American War, immigration, or Trump? How can students apply their funds of knowledge in addressing cultural chauvinism or American exceptionalism? I would further extend the research to teachers, since they are obligated to disseminate these narratives. How can they use art as a response? Using the arts would provide new critical consciousness spaces for teachers and students in social studies.

Détournement in Social Studies

Détournement reroutes majoritarian thought. Even though Debord would dislike me for citing his thoughts here, he made a point regarding *détournements* that one could connect with critical social studies: "...any elements, no matter where they are taken from, can serve in making new combinations (Debord & Wolman, 1956, p. 9). *Détournement* critiques the system with its own tools (Debord, 1967). Social studies teachers and students, through the application and execution of *détournements*, could unsettle traditional approaches of learning while creating new spaces for knowledge. Using their sophisticated understanding of technology and software, popular culture, and advertisements, teachers and students could produce powerful results. The "ultimate goal" of a *détournement* is to expose marginalized individuals to opportunities where they can engage in resistance (Debord & Wolman, 1956, p. 14).

One future study could focus on the introduction and use of *détournement* in social studies classrooms. Students could address the visualizations they experience on a daily basis.

How would students deconstruct their daily, hourly, and even their six-second or 140 character experiences? Developing *détournements* empower students to establish critical connections between their own lives and elements of popular culture, such as social media, music, film, and art (Morrell, 2002). For teachers who engage in critical practices, incorporating *détournement* as a practice would allow their students to construct additional new narratives. Teachers could speak to issues of school culture, policies, and curricula (Trier, 2004). *Détournement* retains the potential to engage individuals in critical conversations in social studies, instead of limiting opportunities.

APPENDIX 1: INITIAL INTERVIEW
Semi-structured

1. What do you currently teach?
2. How would you describe your teaching style?
3. How would you describe experiences in your teacher education program?
4. How would you describe social studies as a discipline?
5. How do you incorporate your students' home experiences into your planning?
6. How do you incorporate current events into your planning?
7. How do you develop lessons around race and/or cultural issues?
8. Why is your teaching pedagogy different from your colleagues?
9. Why are your teaching experiences important for future teachers of social studies?

APPENDIX 2: FINAL INTERVIEW

Semi-structured

1. How do you want to be describe in my write-ups? Often, participants choose a pseudonym if you like.
 1. Where are you from?
 2. How long have you been at your current school?
 3. How many years have you been in education?
 4. Where do you see yourself in the near future, in terms of education? (State: Near future = 1-2 years from now)
2. How would you rate the impact of the presidential election on your teaching? Planning? Actual instruction? Please elaborate if you can.
3. What are your thoughts on how your voice and body language influence learning in your class? (State: It is an interesting question, since I realized how much students responded not to what you were saying, but how you were saying things. I also noticed how students reacted to the ways you kneeled to be eye level with them)
4. Describe your own definition of caring.
5. Why is caring for the students important to you as a teacher? How does it reflect how you view social studies education?
6. How do you encourage your students to speak to the history lessons in your classes?

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