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Towards Integrating Transformative Pedagogies to Generate Social Justice

Sara Jane VanVolkenburg

A Thesis

in

The Department

of

Education

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts (Educational Studies) at
Concordia University
Montréal, Quebec, Canada**

August 2009

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Your file *Votre référence*
ISBN: 978-0-494-63024-2
Our file *Notre référence*
ISBN: 978-0-494-63024-2

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ABSTRACT

Towards Integrating Transformative Pedagogies to Generate Social Justice

Sara Jane VanVolkenburg

Current debates and heated public dialogue about multicultural issues and minority rights underline the social importance of how to best understand, conceptualize and approach multiculturalism within an educational context. Recent research suggests that teacher educators lack the necessary information and academic curricular support to adequately deal with multicultural issues; thus, if a central aim of education is to create a more democratic and inclusive society, we must reflect on establishing a sound multicultural teacher education curriculum. This thesis examines and explores varying understandings, differing perspectives, and contrasting foundational approaches to both multiculturalism and anti-racism, and identifies common criteria in these theoretical and pedagogical approaches which support a social justice agenda and facilitate social change. Through summary and discussion of conservative and liberal multicultural approaches, the problematic aspects inherent in these approaches are identified which effectively limit, and, in some cases, even undermine the possibility of generating social justice. An in-depth examination and critique of critical multicultural, anti-racist, critical, black feminist, and women of color theory and pedagogy serves to identify the important shared fundamental principles upon which all of these theories/pedagogies are founded, which include addressing and challenging institutionalized racism and structural inequalities, and addressing white racism and whiteness as an invisible normative force. The practical extensions, implications and challenges involved in the implementation of

these theories within teacher education programs are discussed, and recommendations for future research are presented.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe a debt of gratitude to all of my professors at Concordia University. Their knowledge, expertise, and guidance helped to make this experience a rewarding one.

I would like to express my gratitude to my advisor, Dr. Joyce Barakett, for her valuable knowledge, insight, and advice throughout the research and preparation of this thesis.

In addition, special thanks are due to Dr. David Waddington for his guidance, support, enthusiasm, and constructively critical eye throughout this process.

Finally, this thesis would not have been possible without the support of my family, friends, and colleagues. A special thank you goes out to Janice, Sam, and Catherine for their time, support, helpful feedback and encouragement.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

“Schools cannot any longer avoid dealing with the root and cultural causes of domination, poverty, and unequal power relations” (Ghosh & Tarrow, 1993, p. 90).

Research Objectives

The aim of this thesis is to a) discuss and determine the multicultural/anti-racist theories/pedagogies which aim to generate social justice; b) identify the problematic aspects inherent in these theories/pedagogies, and explore how these problems can be effectively addressed; c) examine and discuss what kind of criteria should be used to classify and categorize these theories; and d) investigate and discuss the practical extensions, implications and challenges involved in the implementation of these theories within teacher education programs.

Current debates and heated public dialogue about multicultural issues and minority rights underline the social importance of better understanding and dealing with multicultural issues (Gutmann, 2000; McLaren, 2000; Carignan, Pourdavood & Sanders, 2005). Within academic, political, professional, and social circles, the ongoing contention over different conceptions of and varying approaches to multiculturalism highlights the ambiguous nature of the term (Li, 1999; McLaren, 2000; Ghosh, 2002; Shugurensky, 2006; Barakett & Naseem, 2009). This ongoing lack of consensus over what ‘multiculturalism’ signifies presents a difficult challenge for all of those involved in the debate over how to best address and approach multicultural issues. This ambiguity also results in many differing interpretations of multiculturalism which can be easily adopted to suit specific political agendas (Li, 1999).

Duarte and Smith (2000) suggest that the large variety of differing responses to the *multicultural condition* (defined as the demographic presence and related factors such as historical experiences, values, cultural beliefs and social status of different ethnic groups within a population) results in the existence of not one but a wide variety of “multiculturalisms.” Thus, *multiculturalism* can be defined as a response to the multicultural condition/demographic reality, as well as an individual’s understanding of the world and his/her place within it. Consequently, discussions and debates over multiculturalism are multiple in nature and mutually influential, as opposed to simply being an argument between opposing sides; this must be taken into consideration when trying to contemplate and examine the resulting implications an approach can have for educational policies and practice.

These ongoing debates over how to best understand, conceptualize and approach multiculturalism (specifically in a diverse, North American context) have important implications within education, and more specifically in the context of teacher education programs. The last few decades have seen dramatic changes in both the concept of education’s role within society and the diversity of students within the educational system, yet most North American teacher education curricula have not responded to changing demographic needs (Ghosh & Tarrow, 1993). Although the debate on implementing multiculturalism into the curriculum has been extensive (Branch, Goodwin & Gaultieri, 1993; Grant, 1992; Williams, 1993,) and there is also an abundance of research on program applications and the implementation of multicultural curricula (Gibson, 1984; Banks, 1994; Sleeter & Grant, 1998), research on implementing multicultural content into teacher curricula is less common. Research conducted at

McGill University and California State Long Beach University by Ghosh and Tarrow (1993) examined teacher educator conceptions of multiculturalism and various approaches used by teachers to deal with multicultural issues. This research found that “teacher educators generally tend to be in agreement that multicultural content should be part of pre-service training, although they need help with how to do it” (Ghosh & Tarrow, 1993, p. 89). Such research suggests that teacher educators lack the necessary information and academic curricular support to adequately deal with multicultural issues. Thus, Ghosh and Tarrow have identified a lack of guidance and resources related to multiculturalism for instructors in teacher educator programs. Furthermore, although some research has been conducted on Canadian teacher educator programs (see for example Levine-Rasky & Solomon, 2003) there is a demand for more extensive and up-to-date inquiry in this area. Recent research suggests that teacher educators lack the necessary information and academic curricular support to adequately deal with multicultural issues. Thus, if a central aim of education is to create a more democratic and inclusive society, we must reflect on establishing a sound multicultural teacher education curriculum (Carignan et al., 2005).

The variety of “competing” conceptions and interpretations associated with multiculturalism indicates a need for a study which can provide a more in-depth and comprehensive examination and analysis of the subject in question; one which will allow for a richer understanding of how multiculturalism is actually conceptualized and integrated into the teacher educator programs which shape and mold our future teachers. Meaningful connections must be made between theory and practice if we are to effectively work towards generating any real kind of social justice and social change.

Ghosh and Tarrow (1993) rightfully point out that it is essential to acknowledge that “no amount of curriculum material can make a significant difference if teachers, who present and translate the material, do not have the knowledge, attitude and commitment to the ideological change implied in equality and justice” (p.1). Furthermore, as Grinter (2000) suggests, multicultural and anti-racist approaches place different emphasis on cultural and political factors, and have different ideas of what social justice is. Consequently, they have very different educational aims. Thus, defining and understanding the concept of social justice is in and of itself also a controversial and challenging task.

As a student interested in conducting future educational research on multicultural issues within teacher education programs, it is my intent in this thesis to examine and explore varying understandings, differing perspectives, and contrasting foundational approaches to both multiculturalism and anti-racism. Through this process of exploring different theoretical and pedagogical approaches, I intend to identify and determine the common criteria in some approaches which support a social justice agenda and which facilitate social change. Ultimately, the practical aims of these theories/pedagogies in everyday teaching practice must be clarified if these theories are to have meaningful implications in teacher education programs.

I first summarize and discuss the conservative and liberal multicultural approaches, and identify the problematic aspects inherent in these approaches which effectively limit, and in some cases, even undermine the possibility for social justice and change. Through an in-depth examination and critique of critical multicultural, anti-racist, critical, and black feminist/women of color theory/pedagogy, I identify the important shared fundamental principles upon which all of these theories/pedagogies are

founded, and illustrate how all of these theories/pedagogies aim to support education as a means for liberation and social transformation. By addressing and challenging institutionalized racism and structural inequalities, and addressing white racism and whiteness as an invisible normative force, I examine how these theories/pedagogies go beyond simple, superficial approaches to promote genuine social change. As Giroux (2000) explains, a critical or insurgent multicultural approach

constructs an educational politics that would reveal the structures of power relations at work in the racialization of our social order while simultaneously encouraging students to think about the invention of the category of whiteness as well as that of blackness, and, consequently, to make visible what is rendered invisible when viewed as the normative state of existence: the (white) point in space from which we tend to identify difference. (p.196)

Rather than supporting assimilation as the only means for individuals to “fit into” dominant society, critical, critical multicultural, anti-racist, black feminist, and women of color theory/pedagogy support the argument of Habermas (as cited in Barakett & Cleghorn, 2008) that society is both exploitative and oppressive but also capable of being changed. Habermas emphasizes the empowerment of individuals, social transformation, and the importance of developing critical consciousness among students, and these multicultural/anti-racist theories effectively support these aims. Finally, all of these theories/pedagogies address hegemonic power by ‘dymystifying’ the unequal power relations and ‘social arrangements’ that effectively support dominant ruling class interests. If we can understand hegemony, we can understand how the “seeds of

domination' are produced, as well as how they can be challenged to overcome using resistance, social action, and critique (Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2003).

Methodology: The Research Process

Given that one of the primary goals of this thesis is to identify the common shared elements inherent in the critical multicultural, anti-racist, and black feminist/women of color theories and pedagogies specifically aiming to generate social justice, this study involves an extensive literature review of these perspectives. The objective is to bridge the gaps between these theories, as well as their application in everyday teaching practice. As Barakett and Naseem (2009) suggest, "however much we define and redefine multicultural and anti-racist education there is no agreement as to how to address these concepts through pedagogical practices within educational settings" (p.1). They further argue that "these concepts need to be re-examined and unraveled theoretically and linked to actual teaching or pedagogical practices...[if we are to] move further towards social transformation and a more equitable society" (p. 1). Thus, I believe that if a central aim of education is to challenge social inequalities and generate social justice, then we must first clarify and determine the common criteria in different multicultural approaches which can be used to support this important aim. These criteria can then be used as tools to effectively analyze and understand different theoretical/pedagogical approaches, as well as to identify and better analyze the aims of current teacher education programs, and integrate these theories/pedagogies in classroom practices to generate social justice.

Introduction to Literature Review

The literature review of this proposed research consists of an in-depth discussion, exploration and critique of different multicultural and anti-racist theories and pedagogies.

It begins with an examination of the conservative and liberal multicultural approaches, and then specifically focuses on the central elements and aspects of critical, critical multicultural, anti-racist, and black feminist/women of color theory/pedagogy which effectively support a social justice agenda. Due to the fact that the existing writing and research on multicultural and anti-racist education is extensive, and there is much contention both within and between the approaches as to exactly what these terms (and their corresponding theories/pedagogies) entail, this research first summarizes the main approaches, and then addresses the “common ground” upon which the aims of social justice and social equality can be promoted.

In summary, Chapter one introduces and outlines the structure of the thesis, while Chapter two summarizes and critiques the conservative and liberal multicultural approaches, and examines, discusses and addresses the strengths and limitations of critical theory and pedagogy. Chapter three discusses and addresses the strengths and limitations of critical multicultural, anti-racist, black feminist and women of color theory/pedagogy. Chapter four presents the criteria that can be used to effectively classify/categorize these theories/pedagogies and identifies which criteria specifically supports social justice aims. Chapter five then examines the practical implications and challenges involved in the implementation of these theories within teacher education programs, and presents the conclusions of the thesis, including recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CONSERVATIVE MULTICULTURALISM, LIBERAL MULTICULTURALISM, AND CRITICAL THEORY

Numerous frameworks have been proposed which contextualize, compare and contrast different multicultural perspectives and approaches in order to explain and distinguish between different interpretations of multiculturalism. These frameworks, however, do not necessarily recognize, categorize, or organize themselves in the same way, and often use very different criteria as a basis for selection and formation of categories. In the following chapter, I draw on different frameworks in order to briefly summarize and critique the conservative and liberal multicultural approaches, and examine, discuss, and address the strengths and limitations of critical theory and pedagogy.

Conservative/Corporate Multiculturalism

Carignan et al. (2005) define traditionally conservative multiculturalism within education as “an antagonistic tension between the recognition of diversity with the risk of fragmentation and the necessity of defining a common society with the affirmation of a national identity” (p. 4). As Taguieff (as cited in Carignan et al., 2005) suggests, this approach understands culture to be fixed, predetermined, and essentialist; thus, because culture is viewed as being “out there”, this approach effectively promotes assimilation (Hannoun, as cited in Carignan et al., 2005).

Proponents of this approach believe in a “hierarchically superior universal culture”, and think that some cultures must inevitably be subordinated due to their

inferiority. The authors argue, however, that what is considered to be “universal” culture is, in fact, the manifestation of Western-centrism (Carignan et al., 2005). Consequently, the conservative/traditional approach fails to “promote a systematic critique of the ideology of “Westernness” that is ascendant in curriculum and pedagogical practices in education... [although its] proponents articulate a language of inclusion” (McCarthy, 1994, p. 89). This process results in the perpetuation of the hegemonic power of the established dominant group at the expense of the marginalization of disadvantaged or segregated groups (Carignan et al., 2005). The authors consider the conservative approach to be one that supports the reproduction of mainstream society values within the educational system, or, as Bourdieu & Passeron (1970) suggest, “cultural reproduction.” Thus, from this traditional/conservative perspective, “neither mechanisms or racism nor ethnocentric biases regarding Occidentalism, Westernness, or Eurocentrism are questioned. Hence, from the traditional perspective, the world is what it is” (Carignan et al., 2005, p. 4).

McLaren (2000) identifies, discusses, and critiques the conservative (or corporate) approach to multiculturalism in “White terror and Oppositional Agency: Towards a Critical Multiculturalism”. According to McLaren, this approach is usually defined by its goal to forge a “common culture” by means of assimilation to the values and norms of the dominant group. McLaren, however, supports Macedo’s argument (as cited in McLaren 2000) that conservative multiculturalists aim to construct a “common culture” by delegitimizing foreign languages and regional/ethnic dialects, attacking “nonstandard” English, and undermining bi-lingual education, which invalidates the concept of border cultures. This argument supports Gramsci’s idea (as cited in McLaren, 2000) that there is

a close link between the linguistic stratification and social hierarchy; thus, the result of the arguably “monolingual” conservative focus effectively allows the state to establish linguistic conformity and maintains the “high ranking social status” of certain accents.

McLaren (2000) also argues that conservative multiculturalism is based on white supremacy doctrines, and supports U.S. manifest destiny, imperialism, and Christian imperialism. It is based on negative colonial views of African Americans as slaves, servants, and savages, and views which “were embedded in the self-serving, congratulatory, and profoundly imperialist attitude of Europe and North America” (p. 214). Furthermore, conservative multiculturalism “pay[s] lip service to the equality of all races while charging unsuccessful minorities with having culturally deprived backgrounds” (p. 216). As Mensh and Mensh (1991) argue, conservative multiculturalists support the use of the environmental position that confirms black cognitive ability as being inferior to whites, and this position is used to rationalize the lack of success within and between some minority groups, and effectively gives whites an excuse to occupy positions of power.

McLaren (2000) identifies and clearly pinpoints many problematic assumptions that are implicit in this definition of multiculturalism. Firstly, conservative multiculturalism refuses to include “whiteness” as a form of ethnicity. As Ghosh (2002) stresses “the notion of multiculturalism must include the dominant group that reinforces the norm” (p.4). By refusing to identify whiteness as a form of ethnicity, we “posit whiteness as an invisible norm by which other ethnicities are judged” (McLaren, 2000, p. 217). Secondly, conservative multiculturalism uses the term diversity to cover up an “ideology of assimilation” which views minority groups as being “added on” to dominant

groups rather than representing a sense of acceptance and celebration of different ethnicities, perspectives and backgrounds (McLaren, 2000). Thirdly, McLaren argues that it is essentially monolingual, and achievement for youth is “premised on the cultural capital of the Anglo middle class” (p.217). As Stanley Fish (1992) also points out, western languages are privileged over non-western languages, and this serves to validate the idea that western languages are sophisticated enough to grasp the truth as an essence. McLaren identifies this concept as a serious epistemological error which effectively defines language as a “truth telling status which remains exempt from its “ethico-political situatedness or embeddedness” (p.218). Fourthly, conservative multiculturalism fails to question both the ‘high status knowledge’ of the white, middle class to which the educational system is geared, and what (and whose) interests this knowledge serves. Fifthly, McLaren argues that it attempts to assimilate students to an “unjust social order” by conveying the idea that all people, regardless of their ethnic background can “reap the economic benefits of neocolonialist ideologies,” but in order to do so, must “become denuded, deracinated, and culturally stripped”(p. 217). Finally, McLaren argues that White, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant (WASP) values are considered to be more “American” than non-WASP values; thus, the values that determine “the good citizen’ are ultimately exclusively based on western values (p.217).

In *Insurgent Multiculturalism and the Promise of Pedagogy*, Giroux (2000) offers similar critiques of conservative/corporate multiculturalism, arguing that the conservative (and liberal) forms of multiculturalism have effectively rendered the related problems of social justice, white racism and power as “off limits” subjects. Giroux accuses conservative multiculturalists of using a discourse of blaming the victim, and argues that

the current conservative critique of schools and other cultural institutions “is based on the elitist and racist assumptions that the enemy of democracy is not intolerance, structured inequality, and social injustice, but cultural differences” (p.204). According to Giroux, many conservatives view multiculturalism as a force within American society which is disruptive, unsettling, and dangerous; in some cases, conservative multiculturalism is even being taken up as “a slogan for promoting an essentializing identity politics and various forms of nationalism” (p.206). Finally, Giroux argues that this form of corporate multiculturalism is reduced to a message without critical content, and specifically links the relation of the conservative response to multiculturalism to the broader assault on democracy that is occurring within the context of the U.S.

It is worth noting that some critics and theorists do not even recognize or consider the conservative or corporate forms of multiculturalism as being truly multicultural. In the introduction of *Foundational Perspectives in Multicultural Education*, Duarte and Smith (2000) provide an effective definition of a “foundational perspective” in multicultural education by qualifying what makes a view or position “multicultural.” They argue that a position can only be considered multicultural if it a) rejects the idea of assimilation (and the emphasis of cultural sameness); b) aims to oppose the dominant politics of cultural assimilationism within the U.S., and c) challenges or rejects institutions which repress pluralism. They argue, in particular, that multiculturalists use “a shared critique of the shared social order” (p. 8) and recognize that the core group values of some groups have gained hegemony over American culture to the detriment of other cultural groups’ values, resulting in inequality. Consequently, Duarte and Smith argue that conservative multiculturalism does not address systematic inequality or

effectively critique the existing social order, and consequently cannot be recognized as a multicultural perspective within their theoretical framework.

The implications of a conservative/corporate understanding and conceptualization of multiculturalism within educational, social, and political contexts are highly problematic. Such an approach, rather than rejecting assimilation, effectively supports this argument. It does not recognize or challenge the social institutions which work to effectively repress pluralism, nor does this approach critique the current social order in which inequality and racism are present. Rather than enabling citizens, educators, or students to embrace a social justice agenda which could promote and support the values of equality and social justice, it effectively promotes the continuation of inequality, injustice, and the perpetuation of social inequities that are currently in existence.

Liberal Multiculturalism: Liberal, Left-Liberal, and Liberal Democratic

Multiculturalism

It is worthwhile to note that there is some overlap between the different liberal approaches which are discussed and summarized in the following section of the chapter. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge and address the differences and variations between (and within) these liberal approaches.

A liberal approach to multiculturalism (as presented by McLaren, 2000) argues that equality naturally exists among all races and that all races are equally rational and intelligent; thus, all people are equally capable of competing in a capitalist society. This approach identifies the lack of social and educational opportunities (and not the cultural deprivation of minority groups) as the underlying cause of inequality in the United States. This results in the prevention of certain groups and individuals from being able “to

compete equally in the capitalist labour market” (p. 219). A liberal multicultural approach maintains that equality can be realized if existing social and economic restraints are changed and reformed.

Carignan et al. (2005) identify valuing cultural pluralism as a central aspect of liberal multicultural education. According to Bennett (1999) this approach is based on a theory which supports “an ideal state of social conditions characterized by equality and mutual respect among existing cultural groups” and “contrasts sharply with cultural assimilation, or “melting pot” images, where ethnic minority are expected to give up their traditions and blend in or be absorbed by the mainstream society or predominant culture (p. 11).

Carignan et al. (2005) support the argument put forth by Grant (1978) that liberal multicultural education aims to “adapt curricula, teaching styles, learning strategies, and communication between school and families”, as well as “favor[ing] the adaptation of school to the needs of the students and parents” (p. 5). They further state that the attempt on behalf of teachers to incorporate some aspects of cultural diversity, including diversity of religions, bilingual education, typology of racism, and reflection on the impact of ethnocentrism, is arguably not a new phenomenon.

In contrast with critics of a liberal multicultural approach, Carignan et al. (2005) argue that this approach effectively favors differences and similarities without trivializing and “folklorizing” cultures within the curriculum because this approach is willing to diversify the curriculum and add varied “cultural content”. As Banks (as cited in Carignan et al., 2005) suggests, these ideas/practices must be included in *all* aspects of the curriculum; teachers have a responsibility to be prepared to recognize/understand

students from a diverse range of cultural backgrounds, learn to effectively communicate with parents, and be capable of and willing to teach content beyond/outside of that of the mainstream culture.

Rather than seeing culture as something fixed and essentialist, ¹ Carignan et al. (2005) argue that the liberal multicultural position views culture as dynamic and flexible. Thus, from a liberal perspective, “mechanisms of racism requestion the social construction of superiority and inferiority, discrimination, and exclusion based on physical or ethnic differences, whereas ethnocentric biases revisit the perspective of universality. Hence, from the liberal perspective, the world might be different” (p.5).

There has, however, been much criticism and discussion over liberal multiculturalism. McLaren (2000), for example, points out that this can result in “oppressively humanistic universalism in which the norms that govern the substance of citizenship are identified most strongly with Anglo-American cultural-political communities” (p. 219). He further argues that both conservative and liberal multiculturalism make the error of using essentialist logic when constructing the notion of sameness and difference, and both make the assumption that individual identities are autonomous, self-contained and self-directed. This results in a view of culture that is “void of conflict, harmonious, and consensual”(p.221). Finally, McLaren argues that both conservative and liberal views of multiculturalism ignore the role of power and privilege within social relations, and offer an oversimplified vision of society where the viewpoints of minority groups are simply “added on”. McLaren concurs with Homi K. Bhabha

¹ Essentialism is defined by Stobel (2005) as “the perspective that reality exists independently of our perception of it, that we perceive meaning of the world rather than construct that meaning” (p. 35).

(1992), who identifies the problematic nature of common culture as the regulation and normalization of difference, stating that

Like all myths of the nation's "unity", the common culture is a profoundly conflicted ideological strategy. It is a declaration of democratic faith in a plural, diverse society and, at the same time, a defense against the real, subversive demands that the articulation of cultural difference – the empowering of minorities- makes upon democratic pluralism. (p.221)

Giroux (2000) also offers valid criticism of liberal multiculturalism, arguing that, similar to conservative multiculturalism, no space is given for discussion and exploration of important issues and problems such as white racism, power, or social justice.

According to Giroux,

Liberals have used multiculturalism to denote a pluralism devoid of historical contextualization and the specificities of relations of power, or they have depicted a view of cultural struggle in which the most fundamental contradictions 'implicating race, class, and gender can be harmonized within the prevailing structure of power relation'. (p.206)

Giroux also critiques the liberal emphasis on individual diversity for trying to assimilate differences into one common culture, and identifies multiculturalism as a political discourse which is too important to be exclusively appropriated by liberal and conservatives.

Left- liberal multiculturalism.

The left-liberal approach to multiculturalism, as summarized by McLaren (2000), emphasizes cultural differences and stresses the equality of races. McLaren critiques this

approach for “smother[ing] the important cultural differences of races that are responsible for different behaviors, values, attitudes, cognitive styles and social practices” (p.219). McLaren also argues that this mainstream approach does not account for differences related to race, gender, and sexuality, pointing out that cultural differences are often essentialized, and the “historical and cultural ‘situatedness’ of difference” is ignored (p. 219). Ignoring difference as a social and historical construction effectively results in treating “difference as an ‘essence’ that exists independently of history, culture and power” (p.220). The idea of “authentic experience” (wherein a position in or close to that of the oppressed gives the speaker the authority to speak about it) is discussed by McLaren, who warns that this can result in dismissing theory on the basis of our own personal or cultural identity. Finally, as McLaren points out, Giroux (1992) and Scott (1992) rightfully identify that this approach ultimately ignores the idea that “one’s identity is always being produced through a play of difference linked to and reflected by shifting and conflicting discursive and ideological relations, formations, and articulations” (p.220).

Liberal democratic multiculturalism.

Duarte and Smith (2000) present liberal democratic multiculturalism as one foundational perspective within multicultural education. This form of multiculturalism is based on the principles of individual rights and equal citizenship, which are highly valued in democratic societies, and aims to make collective decisions representing the consent of all citizens. In addition, within the context of liberal societies, there is focus and concern with the protection of the autonomy and sovereignty of all individuals, and this is often accomplished by granting all adult citizens a set of universal rights. Multiculturalism and

cultural pluralism, however, complicate this goal. Consequently, increasing cultural pluralism and debates over the role of specific cultural groups inform liberal democratic multicultural aims to construct a common political culture which will effectively represent the interests of all citizens. Duarte and Smith further argue that liberal democratic multiculturalism, which is rooted in the tradition of modern liberalism, aims to support institutions and principles which enable people with different values and beliefs to live together in a “stable” society. Consequently, individual equality and fairness are understood as being centrally important, and concern lies not over potential conflicts with diverse identities, but rather with the conflict between diverse values. Determining which values and institutions liberal democracies must share is a central concern of contemporary liberal democratic multiculturalists.

In response to the ethnic studies multicultural goal of cultivating the collective identities of specific cultural groups, liberal democratic multiculturalists ask if such groups should have rights (versus individuals having rights and individual autonomy), and how the needs of minority cultures can be balanced with the needs of a common political culture (Duarte & Smith, 2000). Finally, instead of focusing on challenging and eliminating discrimination and the equalizing of power relations, liberal democratic multiculturalists are concerned with what each distinct group must have in common to be able to function as a political unit.

The problems inherent in the liberal multicultural approaches discussed above pose significant barriers to educators and students who aim to support a social justice agenda and promote social change. As critics have pointed out, this approach a) ignores/fails to adequately address important issues such as power, privilege, white

racism/racism, discrimination, social justice, and the importance of equalizing power relations; b) constructs an oversimplified, problematic and ideologically conflicted version of a common culture which is void of historical contextualization and founded upon both essentialist logic and the assimilation/normalization of difference; and c) does not provide an adequate understanding of how individual identities are produced through and by difference and changing/conflicting discursive and ideological relations and formations.

Critical Theory and Pedagogy

The term critical theory refers to a school of thought, as well as to a process of critique (Freire, 2007; Giroux, 1992). Critical theorists argue that it is necessary to question the claims of all critiques, and to ensure that critiques do not simply uphold their own doctrinal assumptions. Critical theory stresses the use of social class as a unit of analysis, and understands everyday life to be a political and theoretical realm of struggle and investigation. In addition, this theory views society as being dialectical; that is, “it recognizes that existing problems in society do not occur in isolation, but are part of an interactive process between individuals and societal structures” (Barakett & Cleghorn, 2008, p. 42). There is also an underlying belief in critical theory that we do not need to passively suffer through the ‘inevitable’ social inequality in life; even economic systems are socially constructed, and we have the power to change our world. The development of “critical consciousness” is understood by critical theorists as being necessary in order to have politically involved citizens that can be effective agents for social change.

Kessing-Styles (2003) identifies the concern over issues related to the socialization of people within societies defined by dominant discourses as a starting point

of critical theory, and argues that critical theory and critical pedagogy share considerable historical and contextual history. Critical theory and critical pedagogy are both concerned with “investigating institutional and societal practices with a view to resisting the imposition of dominant social norms and structures” (p. 3); critical pedagogy is distinct, however, in that it is largely an educational response to existing inequalities and oppressive power relations within educational institutions.

The concept of being “critical”, which is identified by Kessing-Styles (2003) as important and desirable within contemporary educational theory, is also linked to the tradition of critical thinking. Critical thinking can be distinguished from critical theory/pedagogy in two ways: firstly, while critical thinking does encourage discernment with respect to the social and human condition, it does not demand social action; and secondly, critical thinking is focused on the individual and ignores pedagogical relations occurring between the teacher and learner/between learners, while critical pedagogy’s focus on collective action results in “individual criticality [being] intimately linked to social criticality” (Berbules & Burk, as cited in Kessing-Styles, 2003, p. 2).

Critical theorists believe that schools function to work against the class interests of politically and economically vulnerable students (Darder et al., 2003). They acknowledge that the production of knowledge and the structural relationships and policies shaping public schools are both impacted by competing economic interests of the marketplace, and this has a significant impact on the education of disenfranchised students. Critical theory aims to reveal and challenge this previously uncontested relationship between school and society and the traditional argument that claims that there are equal opportunities and access for everyone. Critical theorists examine the issue

of class reproduction and how racialized inequalities are perpetuated through schooling practices. Class and culture are understood as being inseparable within the context of daily life in schools, and material conditions within the lives of students and teachers contribute to our understanding of who we are and how we are perceived within society and school.

Darder et al. (2003) argue that critical pedagogy aims to enable radical educators to critique, understand, and deal with the effects of capitalism and gendered, racialized relations on students who have been historically disenfranchised. Their summary and discussion of critical pedagogy addresses the longstanding debate over public democratic schooling in America, which has focused on the principles of social justice and transforming the societal conditions that effectively threaten the democratic participation of certain members of society. The twentieth century vision of an emancipatory and democratic schooling system, and the many radical theories, principles and beliefs that contributed to this vision, have provided the basis for the development of critical pedagogy; its emergence is linked to a longstanding legacy of radical social thought and progressive educational movements which strived to establish democratic schooling practices and help oppressed groups through transformative social action. Critical pedagogy aims to develop a culture of schooling whose goal is to empower culturally marginalized and economically disenfranchised students, which includes transforming classroom structures and practices which contribute to the perpetuation of undemocratic life.

Critical pedagogy urges teachers to discover that “there is no historical reality which is not human” (Freire, 2007, p.130), helps students to understand themselves as

historical subjects, and ultimately encourages students to understand that the unjust conditions that were created by humans can also be changed by humans; a sense of social agency must be fostered within students. It stresses the “breaks, discontinuities, conflicts, differences, and tensions of history” (Darder et al., 2003, p. 12) which all serve to highlight human agency and the possibility for change. It calls on teachers to recognize that historically, schools have embraced theories and practices which united power and knowledge for the purpose of sustaining and reproducing unequal power relations, while seemingly claiming to have neutral and apolitical educational views. Power, politics, history, culture, and economics have shaped ideologies which are linked to these views; thus, schools are seen as “terrains of ongoing cultural struggle” over what will be determined as “legitimate” knowledge. Thus, as critical pedagogues, we must address this cultural politics by legitimizing and challenging the experiences and perceptions of students which “shape the histories and socioeconomic realities that give meaning to how students define their everyday lives and how they construct what they perceive as truth” (Darder et al., 2003, p. 11). Thus, a fundamental goal of critical pedagogy is to “place social and political critiques of everyday life at the center of the curriculum” (Kessing-Styles, 2003, p. 4).

It is important to acknowledge that no homogeneous representation exists that can be used to implement critical pedagogy in one universal way; critical pedagogy is not based on a homogenous set of ideas, and this is an important aspect that makes it critical in nature, and enables it to serve an emancipatory and democratic role (Darder et al., 2003, Giroux and McLaren, 1995, Kessing-Styles, 2003). Kessing-Styles (2003) supports the argument presented by Freire (2007) that “pedagogy is grounded in and influenced by

ideology, and through understanding that there are multiple social systems, defining a singular pedagogy of liberation becomes somewhat complex” (p. 4). Thus, instead of a singular pedagogy, we must have pedagogies “which respond to particular necessities, interests, and conditions (Gaudio & de Alba, 1994, as cited in Kessing-Styles, 2003). As Darder et al. (2003) suggest, these diverse and heterogeneous philosophies are consolidated by a common commitment to and goal of liberating oppressed populations. There is a set of basic philosophical principles that are rooted in the belief in the “historical possibility of change” and the possibility of transforming society that we can use to understand what it means to have a “critical” perspective of education, society, and the world.

Critical pedagogy supports a dialectical view of knowledge which aims to reveal the connections between objective knowledge and cultural norms, values, and societal standards, as opposed to more traditional educational theories which reinforce conformity, certainty, and technical control over power and knowledge. Thus, social problems are understood as moments resulting from the “interactive context” between individuals and society (McLaren, as cited in Darder, et. al., 2003, p. 12). Critical pedagogues encourage students to understand and interact with this complex and full world to find new ways to imagine and construct thought and action beyond its current existence. This approach supports dynamic interactive elements, views humans and nature as being relational, and views objectivity and subjectivity/theory and practice as being interconnected. Human knowledge and activity are both emphasized as products and forces to shape the world, both in the interests of domination and liberation.

The concept of ideology is a central philosophical principle of critical pedagogy. Ideology is defined as a framework of thought that people use to give meaning and order to the social and political world we live in, and is also understood as “existing at the deep, embedded psychological structures of the personality” (Darder, et al., 2003, p. 13). Critical pedagogues argue that ideology is important because it can be used as a pedagogical tool to question and reveal contradictions existing between the students’ lived experiences and knowledge they use to mediate the reality of school life and the mainstream school culture. The concept of ideology in critical pedagogy serves as a starting point for teachers to critically evaluate their own teaching practice and uncover how the dominant class culture is incorporated within a “hidden curriculum” which structurally reproduces the cultural assumptions of the dominant class, effectively threatening democratic education.

The conception and understanding of hegemony is also of central importance within a critical pedagogical approach. Hegemony is a process of social control of subordinate groups by the dominant sociocultural class carried out through moral and intellectual leadership (Darder et al, 2003). Within critical pedagogy, hegemony is an important conceptual tool we can use to understand and “dymystify” the unequal power relations and “social arrangements” that effectively support dominant ruling class interests. Hegemony also emphasizes the important and powerful connection between politics, culture, economics, and pedagogical practice. It is not static/absolute, but is an ongoing process which must be constantly battled over if it is to keep its privileged position of the status quo. An understanding of hegemony is essential if we are to challenge and transform unequal power relations.

Kessing-Styles (2003), like many other theorists, identifies and discusses Paulo Freire as a central figure to the development of critical pedagogy. Freire initially focused on adult literacy projects in Brazil, and later dealt with a wide variety of educational and social issues. His work became influential in the late 60s and early 70s, and then reemerged in the 1980s to dominate critical pedagogy literature. The heart of Freire's pedagogy "revolved around an anti-authoritarian, dialogical and interactive approach which aimed to examine issues of relational power for students and workers" (McLaren, as cited in Kessing-Styles, 2003, p. 4). Freire aimed to implement a variety of educational practices and processes in order to work towards the goal of creating both a better learning environment *and* a better world.

Freire understands culture to be political, and argues that the main purpose of the dominant culture is to "legitimate existing modes of social relations and production" (Barakett & Cleghorn, 2008, p. 87). He believes that ideology is in the realm of individual consciousness because it has the power to shape peoples' visions of reality. Ideology is defined by the dominant class and has the power to construct a person's vision and understanding of society and their place in it, and a "culture of silence" exists which ensures that the oppressed remain passive. According to Barakett and Cleghorn (2008), Freire argues that if we have the ability to understand reality, we can construct our own meanings, frames of reference and self-determining powers, and achieve liberation. He stresses that knowledge is not neutral, but political; it is not objective, but is used to legitimate belief systems. Therefore, we must "demystify" knowledge and question the processes used to construct and legitimate knowledge and experience; we must problematize the concept of knowledge itself.

Freire posits that education is not about politics, but rather is politics; thus, he believes that social and political analysis of life should be central to all curricula, regardless of the official content (Kessing-Styles, 2003). Rather than understanding education as a tool to transfer knowledge, Freire views education as “a collaborative and collective production of knowledge grounded in the reality of students’ lives” (Kessing-Styles, 2003, p. 4). Freire’s aim is to use a transforming pedagogy which would make knowledge accessible to the oppressed, as well as change the views of the elite. He critiques a “banking” form of education, where teachers consider students to be empty vessels to be filled, and the teacher “deposits” information into the student. He argues that this form of education based on the imposition of knowledge effectively pacifies students and does not encourage students to question or analyze the knowledge they receive; thus, if the teacher is to aid students in exposing, validating and critiquing their own experiences and knowledge, they must be encouraged to be active and questioning agents. While Freire views a “banking” style education to be domesticating and dehumanizing, a liberatory education aims to liberate and humanize both students and teachers (Kessing-Styles, 2003). As Freire (2007) explains, “Whereas banking education anesthetizes and inhibits power, problem-posing education involves a constant unveiling of reality. The former attempts to maintain the *submersion* of consciousness; the latter strives for the *emergence* of consciousness and *critical intervention* in reality” (p. 81).

Freire (2007) views schools as centres for Praxis (reflection and action) and places where social change can occur. Although schools are institutions that serve to maintain the status quo, the power of hegemony can be overcome in schools and students can learn that they have the power to be agents of social change. Praxis is understood as a

human activity that is self-creating, self-generating, and free, and involves an ongoing process of reflection, dialogue, and action (Darder et al., 2003). Through praxis, the individual can use a process of reflection-action-reflection in order to critique hegemonic ideologies, and this can lead to social transformation. Students need to question situations, their own lives, the world, history etc., and by doing so, learn to be critical thinkers and move towards liberation (Barakett & Cleghorn, 2008).

Freire (2007) views dialogue as a means of both validating the experiences of the oppressed and exposing the beliefs and practices that influence our actions and thoughts. In Freire's conception of dialogue, the student and teacher are treated as equal subjects. As opposed to the banking model of education, an effective problem posing approach uses critical dialogue to enable students to question knowledge, validate their own knowledge and subjective experiences, and make choices and take action to challenge dominating forces. Freire identifies dialogue as one of the most important and empowering aspects of critical pedagogy; it is "an encounter in which the united reflection and action of the dialoguers are addressed to the world which is to be transformed and humanized" (Freire, 2007, pp. 88-89). Through dialogue, students can challenge dominant educational discourse, which enables students to feel entitled and free to be subjects of their world (Darder et al., 2003).

Conscientization is the process by which students become empowered subjects who can have a deeper understanding and awareness of the social realities shaping their lives, as well as the realizing their own capacities to change and re-create their own realities (Darder et al., 2003). This process of awakening involves reinterpreting what we consider knowledge to be (Barakett & Cleghorn, 2008). In the first stage, referred to as

“native consciousness,” individuals are still “determined beings” because they cannot identify or understand how societal forces enable or limit people, and they do not see how these forces are linked to dominant interests. When individuals understand that knowledge is socially constructed and that they are part of that construction, they can become liberated and develop critical consciousness. Critical consciousness is also achieved by validating an individual’s subjective experiences (which provides students with voice) and critiquing school knowledge in order to deconstruct its’ supposed “objectivity” and uncover the interests of the dominant group (Barakett & Cleghorn, 2008). Thus, the process of becoming critically conscious, in which we question and critique our thoughts through dialogue, can lead towards social change and the construction of a better world (Barakett & Cleghorn, 2008).

Critiques of Critical Theory/Pedagogy

Darder et al. (2003) rightfully argue that if they are to stay true to the philosophical foundations of critical theory and pedagogy, they must include critiques that have fuelled debates amongst critical pedagogues. There are several relevant critiques of critical theory and pedagogy. The authors note that feminist scholars including Elizabeth Ellsworth, Carmen Luke, Jennifer Gore, Patti Later, Magda Lewis, and Maxine Greene have offered significant critiques of critical theory founded on views of identity, pedagogy, and politics.² Some feminist critiques include: a) the fact that critical pedagogy was developed, for the most part, by men, and does not reflect or

² It should be noted that the critiques advocated by the feminist scholars listed above come from a range of differing feminist approaches and standpoints. For more comprehensive information/background on differing feminist approaches, see, for example, Darder et al., 2003; Enns and Sinacore, 2005; and Barakett and Cleghorn , 2008.

include women's issues, perspectives, experiences or voices; b) the charge that critical pedagogy challenges the structures and practices of patriarchy on a very superficial level; and c) the failure to acknowledge the personal biographies, narratives, and the political and historical location of the knowing subject. As Darder et al. further explain, feminist and working-class educators have argued that the theoretical language used in critical pedagogy has effectively functioned to create a new form of oppression rather than liberating those people who have historically been "excluded" from classical intellectual discourse. In addition, feminists have also criticized the use of the masculine-only pronoun, and many have argued that the language used is too inaccessible to the very people it is trying to inform.

Those who are concerned with the struggle against racial inequalities note that most of the people working in the critical pedagogy field (with the exception of some important feminist scholars of colour) are primarily white men (Darder et al., 2003). This fact has raised major concerns about the failure of critical pedagogues to examine and deal with the issues of subordinate cultures/groups from the specific location of these populations themselves, as well as debates and questions over voice, agency and identity. Feminists/critics of colour have insisted that race, gender and sexuality must be given equal importance in any critical analysis of education, and have charged that critical theorists' link to Marxist analysis and classical European philosophical roots is reductionist and ethnocentric, thereby creating a "intersectionality" argument (Darder et al., 2003). The authors also discuss how postmodernism³ has been described as a

³ Postmodernism is defined by Abrams (1993) as a continuation of countertraditional modernist experiments, as well as "diverse attempts to break away from modernist forms which had, inevitably, become in their turn conventional, as well as to overthrow the

“double-edged sword”; on one hand it has raised legitimate questions surrounding the “sacred” Enlightenment, while on the other hand it has resulted in a fragmentation and dismantling of communities of difference and their previously unified political visions.

Critical theorists have been concerned about the lack of discussion about class in postmodern writings in relation to issues of culture, sexuality, race and gender (Darder et al., 2003). They argue that postmodernists do not address or acknowledge the danger or negative impact that advanced capitalism and globalization have had, and how this is connected to the commercialization of public schooling. Thus, several critical theorists (such as Peter McLaren and Michael Apple) stress educators to recognize the important role class relations play in shaping students’ school and community experiences, and emphasize the importance of class analysis in order to question the “postindustrial” economy’s effect on education. There are also questions surrounding how critical theorists can use class as both a political and analytical category without succumbing to reductionism and economic determinism. Consequently, critical theorists need to develop a new language for “our understanding of gendered and racialized class relations and their impact on education” (Darder et al., 2003, p. 19).

Finally, Darder et al. (2003) argue that the value of critical pedagogy is often dismissed by traditional and liberal educators, who argue that is too political and impractical within the classroom. Critical theorists argue that this opposition exists

elitism of modernist ‘high art’ by recourse to the models of ‘mass culture’ in film, television, newspaper cartoons, and popular music” (p. 120). Postmodern theories aim to “move away from all-consuming metanarratives, rejecting traditional notions of totality, reason, and the universality of absolute knowledge” (Darder et al., 2003, p.18). For further discussion/reading on postmodernism and critical pedagogy, see McLaren (2003).

because the development and establishment of critical teaching approaches threatens to transform power relations that are oppressive and effectively maintain the power and control of the majority. When undemocratic conditions are challenged within public schools by parents, teachers, or students, it threatens to disrupt and change “business as usual,” which results in strong negative reactions and critiques of critical pedagogical practice. Ultimately, such negative reactions highlight the “questionable” right that subordinated groups have to participate in critical social action and actually make changes to the system.

Barakett & Cleghorn (2008) summarize and discuss a number of critiques specifically focusing on Freire’s work. Some scholars have argued that his work is very situation specific and is too focused on the liberation of oppressed people in underdeveloped countries. However, oppression and domination are still a reality in more developed countries, and are more subtle in nature. It is also important to point out that there are different forms of legitimation that can occur, so the category of dominant ideology needs to be further clarified. There is also a need to examine dialogical communication more carefully in order to see if it is possible to clarify the intended and unintended consequences of the hidden curriculum through dialogue.

In addition, Freire’s work assumes the oppressed will move towards humanization without acknowledging that the oppressed can become the oppressors (Barakett & Cleghorn, 2008). Freire’s response to this criticism is to suggest that we must engage in self-critique to see how our practices can become oppressive. Finally, Freire assumes that the oppressed are a homogenous group who all experience oppression in a similar way

without acknowledging the existence of “within- group” forms of oppression, which must be considered.

While acknowledging that these critiques of critical theory and pedagogy are relevant, I nevertheless view this theoretical and pedagogical approach as an effective means to address some of the previously mentioned shortcomings of conservative and liberal multicultural approaches.

A conservative multicultural approach, as previously discussed above, promotes a common or universal culture through means of assimilation. The summary and critique of this approach provided in this chapter highlights several aspects of conservative multiculturalism which are highly problematic. Firstly, it is based on an essentialist understanding of culture as being “fixed”, and is based on the cultural capital of the white middle class, as well as being centered on Eurocentric values. In addition, it effectively perpetuates and reproduces mainstream societal values, including the hegemonic power of the dominant group, while marginalizing disadvantaged groups, and does not question or critique the existing social order, nor does it address issues such as whiteness, racism, ethnocentric biases, and social justice. Consequently, while this approach pays lip service to issues such as diversity and equality, it does not effectively support a social justice agenda aiming to generate social change.

A liberal multicultural approach, as previously discussed, emphasizes cultural pluralism, diversity, and the equality of all races, and advocates the incorporation of some aspects of cultural diversity into educational curricula and teaching practice. Existing inequalities resulting from the lack of social and educational opportunities are thought to prevent certain cultural groups from competing equally in the capitalist labor market,

therefore these social and economic restraints need to be reformed. This approach, however, is also problematic for several reasons, including the problematic conception of culture as conflict free and harmonious, as well as its conflicted vision of a common culture, which effectively supports the assimilation of difference. In addition, its construction of the concepts of sameness and difference is based on essentialist logic. Most importantly, a liberal multicultural approach fails to acknowledge or deal with important problems and issues such as power, privilege, racism, and social justice.

A left-liberal approach is also problematic for several reasons. While a left-liberal multicultural approach claims to emphasize cultural difference and the equality of races, it does not deal with the issues of difference effectively; it does not address issues of race, gender, and sexuality, nor does it acknowledge the historical and cultural contexts in which difference is situated, and cultural differences are often essentialized.

A liberal democratic approach to multiculturalism is based on the principles of individual rights, equal citizenship, equality, and the protection of individual autonomy, and is focused on constructing a common political culture in which all citizen's interests are represented. This approach is concerned with conflicts between diverse values and questions about cultural group rights, and what commonalities are necessary between different groups in order to function as a political unit. This approach is problematic, however, in that it is not concerned with eliminating discrimination and equalizing power relations, and consequently does not aim to support a social justice agenda to generate social change.

In contrast to conservative and liberal multicultural approaches, critical theory and pedagogy both ultimately aim to support social justice aims and help empower

oppressed groups through transformative social action. Through a constant questioning of taken for granted knowledge and assumptions, a dialectical understanding of society and the existing social inequality within it, and an understanding of the effects of gendered, racialized relations of historically disenfranchised students, educators aim to foster critical consciousness in students so they can understand and challenge undemocratic schooling practices and become agents of social change.

As this chapter has illustrated, multicultural approaches are founded upon fundamentally different, contrasting principles, and consequently have very different aims; in the ongoing multicultural debate, critiques of these approaches result in the development of new, distinct approaches which can address the shortcomings and limitations of existing multicultural approaches. The following chapter introduces and examines the strengths and limitations of critical multicultural theory and pedagogy, anti-racist theory and pedagogy, women of color, theory and pedagogy, and black feminist theory and pedagogy. These theoretical and pedagogical approaches each address the limitations of conservative and liberal multiculturalism, as well as some of the weaknesses and limitations of critical theory, and are founded upon common principles that support a social justice agenda.

CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CRITICAL MULTICULTURALISM, ANTI-RACISM, WOMEN OF COLOR FEMINISM, AND BLACK FEMINISM

The following discussion of critical multicultural, anti-racist, women of color and black feminism theory and pedagogy highlights the central features of these approaches which effectively support social justice aims. While all of these theories and pedagogies address the shortcomings of conservative and liberal multicultural approaches discussed in previous chapters, women of color and black feminist theory and pedagogy offer unique insights which address the limitations and problematic aspects inherent in both critical multicultural and anti-racist perspectives.

Critical/Insurgent Multicultural Theory and Pedagogy

Critical multiculturalism advocates a “transformative political agenda” which challenges the larger social order and the perpetuation of the social inequalities within it (McLaren, 2000). This perspective, which McLaren argues is based on a neo-Marxist,⁴ poststructuralist⁵ approach to meaning as well as a critical theory approach, examines

⁴ Neo-Marxist theory focuses on the relationship between economic and political forces, and examines how the social order (and the inequalities within it) is determined by the values and power of the economic structure. Neo-Marxists argue that the education system functions to reproduce the class structure of modern industrialist society and functions to benefit the dominant group. Education is equated with authority and control; thus, if education is to play a significant role in social change, teachers and students must be radicalized to engage in class struggle (Barakett & Cleghorn, 2008).

⁵ Abrams (1993) defines poststructuralism as “a variety of critical perspectives that in the 1970s displaced structuralism from its prominence as the radically innovative way of dealing with language and other signifying systems” (p.258). Proponents of poststructuralism such as Derrida critique the conception of the structure of language as presented by Saussure and Levi Strauss, arguing that the idea of a systematic structure (and, more generally, Western “logocentric” thinking) presupposes a “center” which organizes and regulates the structure, yet effectively evades “structurality”. Poststructuralist critics are skeptical about traditional conceptions of meaning and

how language and representation play a role in the construction of meaning and identity. In addition, it incorporates elements of postmodern theory, in which “signs and significations are essentially unstable and shifting and can only be temporarily fixed, depending on how they are articulated within particular discursive and historical struggles” (p. 221). In this approach

race, class and gender are understood as the result of larger social struggles over signs and meanings and in this way emphasize not simply textual play or metaphorical displacement as a form of resistance (as in the case of left-liberal multiculturalism) but stress the central task of transforming the social, cultural, and institutional relations in which meanings are generated. (p.221)

Critical multiculturalism acknowledges that, as Giroux and McLaren (1995) have suggested, democracy is not “smooth” by nature. Rather than having diversity itself as a goal, resistance/critical multiculturalists argue that “diversity must be affirmed within a politics of cultural criticism and a commitment to social justice” (McLaren, 2000, p. 221). This multicultural approach ultimately aims to challenge the idea that justice already exists and just needs to be evenly distributed, and emphasizes that just laws do not guarantee a just society. Instead, it stresses that the struggle for justice needs to continually be created and reinvented (Darder 1992; McLaren & Hammer 1992, as cited in McLaren, 2000). This argument supports criticism of multiculturalism as a superficial and uncritical approach “focusing on the 3 F’s of folklore, food, and festivities, and the 3 D’s of dance, dress and diet” (Shugurensky, 2006, p. 70).

knowledge, and aim to decenter and undermine “traditional claims for the existence of self-evident foundations that guarantee the validity of knowledge and truth, and establish the possibility of determinate communication” (pp.258-259).

Duarte and Smith (2000)'s summary of the specific aims of critical multiculturalism include dismantling the hegemony of the bourgeois "white-anglo-American" world view of education, and drawing from the liberatory educational Praxis of Freire and Dewey in order to politicize the educational sphere and challenge anti-democratic practices and ideology. Critical multiculturalists consider schools to be oppositional sites where assimilationist pedagogical practices can be challenged. Drawing on both Michel Foucault's idea of radical democracy and Freire's dialogics (2007), critical multiculturalists understand dialogue as having power to both liberate *and* to reestablish norms and rules and silence differences. This multicultural approach aims to go beyond the simple affirmation of diversity to truly contest assimilation. Duarte and Smith further argue that critical multiculturalism uses the "antimodern language game" which denies any unifying interpretation and draws from antifascist critical theory developed by Adorno and Horkheimer. By using a combination of Frankfurt school negative dialectics and French post-structuralist critique, antimodernism "defends difference by deconstructing language and communication" (p. 19). Anti modernists view dialogue, dissent, and/or counter-hegemonic discourses as ways to defend difference; thus, within a critical multicultural context, attempts at creating a unifying dialogue are viewed as being dangerous. In addition, the concept of negative liberty is central to antimodernism. This concept emphasizes that different cultural forms are not compatible with each other, but are instead identified as being incommensurable, and the rights of minority groups are protected from the "public sphere". As a result, negative liberty protects groups of individuals from having to legitimize their lifestyle practices and legitimize one's own language game within the mainstream framework.

Duarte and Smith (2000) argue that critical multiculturalism utilizes the concept of borderland and the mestizo (hybrid) form of consciousness, which emphasizes that an individual can occupy “a multiplicity of subject positions” (p. 20). Thus, the multicultural borderland defines cultural experience as “the crisscrossing of the lives of people(s) and expresses an understanding of self and society as processural, dynamic, open ended, or mestizo” (p. 20). In doing so, it seeks to undermine a monocultural ideology.

Proponents of a critical/radical multicultural approach also emphasize the importance of examining and questioning whiteness and white privilege, and creating a school system which disrupts the dominance of whiteness (Barakett & Naseem, 2009). Frankenberg (as cited in Barakett & Naseem, 2009), for example, defines whiteness as “first...a location of structural advantage of race privilege.....a ‘standpoint’, a place from which white people look at ourselves, others, and society [and] ...a set of cultural practices that are unusually unmarked and unnamed” (p. 3). As critics such as McLaren (2000) have pointed out, the impact of whiteness is significant in that it functions as an invisible norm to which other cultures are measured and defined; thus, multicultural education effectively focuses on the education of the “other”, while avoiding the importance of reeducating the white majority. Consequently, addressing the social phenomenon of whiteness and white privilege is a central aim of a critical multicultural approach.

Carignan et al. (2005) define a critical/radical multicultural perspective as one that attempts to “resist capitalist values of blind mass consumption and hegemonic power as well as criticize a dominant Occidental worldview that supports inequity” (p. 5). Central

aims of this multicultural approach include the elimination of oppression and the complete redesigning of the educational system to reflect the concerns of diverse cultural groups (Sleeter & Grant, 1994). Specific educational/pedagogical goals thus include a) preparing and enabling students to actively engage in bringing about social structural equality; b) promoting cultural pluralism and alternative life styles; and c) promoting equal opportunity in schools (Sleeter & Grant, 1994). Carignan et al. (2005) additionally argue that while some critical multiculturalists have focused on the development of learning skills to foster critical thinking and the development of conscious, socially active citizens, others have focused more on the establishment of a correspondence between what happens inside and outside of the classroom, particularly in relation to a student's sociocultural background. In this sense, multicultural education is understood as being political or social reconstructivist in nature. Thus, "the movement toward equity targets issues of accessibility to a rich and sound curriculum, within which all students will represent themselves when they attend school and, later, when they project their active and successful lives as wise citizens refuting predeterminism" (p. 5). Teachers aiming to implement a critical/radical multicultural approach within their classrooms are committed to denouncing stereotypes, prejudices, discrimination, racist attitudes, and ethnocentric biases, with the goal of supporting transformative social action, both in school and within society. As Carignan et al. (2005) explain:

From the critical-radical perspective, racial and ethnocentric biases are not only questioned but also involved in transformative actions regarding all aspects of educational practices and changes that are pluriethnic, pluricultural, democratic,

equitable, and inclusive. Hence, from the critical-radical perspective, the world must change". (p. 6)

Ultimately, a critical/radical multicultural pedagogical approach enables students to be aware of, understand and challenge the existence and perpetuation of institutionalized social inequality and undemocratic practices, and aims to actively engage and empower students as agents of social change.

Anti-Racist Theory and Pedagogy

Similar to other forms of multiculturalism, a great deal of controversy exists over the understanding and definition of anti-racist education and how to address this concept in pedagogical practice. While some theorists argue that the terms anti-racism and multiculturalism can be used interchangeably, others such as Dei (2000) argue that these concepts must be socially, ideologically, and politically contextualized. Dei emphasizes the necessity of creating a working definition of race, as well as recognizing that race is a socially constructed force which is used to justify power and maintain difference. For Dei, anti-racist theory also deals with representation, and emphasizes that mainstream social knowledge must be produced through multiple voices and perspectives. In addition, anti-racist theory should examine how institutions respond to the challenges of diversity and difference. As Dei (2000) explains:

Anti-racism deals foremost with *equity*; that is, the qualitative value of justice. It deals with *representation*; that is, the need to have multiple voices and perspectives involved in the production of mainstream social knowledge. Anti-racism also examines institutional practices to see how institutions respond to the

challenge of *diversity and difference*; understood as the intersections of race, gender, class, sexuality, language, culture, and religion. (p. 34)

Anti-racist theory, like critical multicultural theory, critiques invisible white norms of the dominant group, and defines whiteness as a social phenomenon of cultural and political identity, as well as white privilege and power. Ultimately, as Dei argues, we must recognize that race and difference provide the contexts for domination and power within society.

In their framework of differing multicultural perspectives, Duarte and Smith (2000) identify anti-racist multiculturalism as a perspective based on the belief that racism is not a problem of attitude, but is instead a problem at an institutional level. Rather than understanding racism as a problem of prejudice, anti-racist theorists view racism as a problem of domination; consequently, anti-racist pedagogical practices aim to produce an oppositional critique of racism in both its systematic and institutional forms. In addition, it aims to “inspire collective political action across race, class, and gender differences” (p. 16). The aim of this perspective is to be a location through which to build solidarity against racism, and to “undermine the normalized racist order of social relations by problematizing the political and economic systems that thrive within racist society” (p.17). Duarte and Smith also highlight three central points involved in the “antiracist language game,” which include 1) drawing attention to hegemonic ideology of monocultural white supremacy that legitimizes systematic exploitation of people of colour; 2) being the starting point for “initiating a political movement in opposition to systematic discrimination,” and 3) developing educational programs that are specifically “anti-assimilation” (p. 17).

In “Multicultural or Anti-Racist Education? The Need to Choose”, Grinter (2000) discusses the differences between multicultural and anti-racist education within the British context, and argues that these two approaches are incompatible because they are founded upon fundamentally different philosophies. Grinter identifies three major points of divergence between these two approaches: Firstly, anti-racist theory does not believe that the existing social structure can be perfected through assimilation; Secondly, rather than understanding racism and prejudice as an individual problem, anti-racist theory argues that we must address racism that exists at an institutional level. Finally, these two approaches place a different emphasis on cultural and political factors, and thus have different definitions and ideas concerning the nature of social justice. It is important to note that, based on Grinter’s description of the defining elements of multiculturalism, this term is being used in reference to the conservative and liberal forms of multiculturalism, and does not include critical multiculturalism. Nevertheless, Grinter’s discussion and analysis of anti-racist education highlights several key foundational elements within anti-racist theory.

Despite differing approaches to anti-racist pedagogical classroom practices, anti-racist pedagogues generally place equal importance on the analysis of race, gender, class, sexual orientation and ability, and how specific knowledge of these factors is legitimated within educational institutions (Barakett & Cleghorn, 2008). The authors emphasize the significant impact of social and educational inequities based on race, and the economic structures responsible for their production; they critically examine institutions, curriculum, classroom practices, and the legitimation of various forms of racism; lastly, they aim to empower marginalized groups. Most importantly, anti-racist pedagogues

prioritize the incorporation of an understanding of the ideology which contributes to racism in educational practice.

The debate and lack of consensus concerning the definitional aspects of anti-racism, multiculturalism and racial difference present significant challenges in determining how to best implement anti-racist pedagogical practices within educational settings. While acknowledging this problem, Dei (2000) does not suggest that these terms be completely rejected; instead he argues that we must develop “a theoretical understanding and concrete acknowledgment of race and difference as providing the contexts for domination in society” (p. 18).

In addition, Barakett and Naseem (2009) argue that “while scholarship on both multicultural and anti-racist education is rich and highlights the need to create a tolerant society through an education that is critical, inclusive, and affirmative, the academic discourse that has ensued remains deficient. As a result, pedagogical efforts and strategies arrived at through this discourse are, for the most part, ineffective” (p. 5). They critique both multicultural and anti-racist theory for being too narrowly focused. While multicultural education does aim to examine and analyze other forms of oppression such as gender, race, class, and ethnicity, culture is emphasized as the main unit and level of analysis; anti-racist education, on the other hand, primarily focuses on race as the main form of oppression despite claims by anti-racist scholars that it encompasses multiple modes and forms of oppression. The authors also identify the need for conceptual and theoretical clarity of concepts in order to enable the formulation of effective pedagogical strategies which can “address issues related to multiple forms of oppression in society” (p. 5). Consequently, their examination and discussion of research conducted by black

women feminists and women of colour provides insights that can aid in providing conceptual clarity within both multicultural and anti-racist educational practice, and address the limitations/shortcomings of critical multicultural and anti-racist theory/pedagogy. The final section of the chapter briefly summarizes and discusses central aspects of women of color feminism theory/pedagogy and black feminist theory and pedagogy.

Women of Colour and Black Feminist Theory

The task of defining the central features of women of color and black feminist theory must begin with a discussion of the existing debate and disagreement involved in the very definition of feminism itself. hooks (1984), for example, identifies the inability to reach a consensus of opinions about what feminism is, and to accept definition(s) that could function as points of unification as central problems within feminist discourse. She argues that the having agreed upon definitions is necessary if a solid foundation is to be built which can be used to construct theory or engage in overall meaningful praxis. She defines feminism as “the struggle to end sexist oppression” and explains that

Its aim is not to benefit solely any specific group of women, any particular race or class of women. It does not privilege women over men. It has the power to transform in a meaningful way all our lives. Most importantly, feminism is neither a lifestyle nor a ready-made identity role we can step into. (p.26)

Collins (1990) also discusses interrelated tensions in debates over defining Black feminist thought, which include questions concerning who can be a Black feminist, and how to define and determine what qualifies as Black feminist thought. Collins critiques definitions of Black feminist thought which argue that the biological category of

blackness is a necessary prerequisite for the possession of Black feminist thought, and assume that “being Black and ‘or female generates certain experiences that automatically determine variants of a Black and /or feminist consciousness” (p.20). In addition, she argues that definitions of Black feminist thought should also avoid the idealist position that it is possible to evaluate ideas in isolation from the groups that create them because “such positions risk obscuring the special angle that Black women bring to the knowledge production process” (p.20).

In order to address these tensions involved in defining Black feminist thought, Collins (1990) argues that we must “specify the relationship between a Black women’s standpoint – those experiences and ideas shared by African-American women that provide a unique angle of vision on self, community, and society – and theories that interpret these experiences” (p. 22). Her definition of Black feminist thought includes specialized knowledge that is both created by African-American women, and creates a standpoint of and for black women; it does not assume, however, that all African-American women generate feminist thought, and does not exclude other groups from playing a critical role in its production. Collins identifies five key dimensions of Black women’s standpoint, which include a) central core themes stemming from Black women’s common lived experience of oppression; b) the variations of response and reactions to core themes resulting from the diversity of lived experiences among Black women; c) the interdependence of experience and consciousness shaping the everyday lives of African-American women; d) consciousness and the struggle for a self-defined standpoint, focusing on the ability of Black women to “forge these individual, unarticulated, yet potentially powerful expressions of everyday consciousness into an

articulated, self-defined, collective standpoint” (p. 26); and e) the interdependence of thought and action, in which “the struggle for a self-defined Afrocentric feminist consciousness occurs through the merger of thought and action” (p. 28).

In their summary and discussion of women of colour feminism, Enns and Sinacore (2005) identify the demand for a more inclusive feminist approach which addresses and analyzes multiple/interlocking oppressions as a central aspect of women of colour theory. Collins (1990) and hooks (1984), for example, critique the assertion in modern/liberal feminist thought that all women are oppressed, because it does not acknowledge the diversity of women’s lived experiences resulting from factors such as class, race, religion, and sexual preference, nor does it address how these factors determine the extent to which sexism will be an oppressive force in individual women’s lives. As hooks suggests, this problematic emphasis on common oppression has “provided the excuse many privileged women needed to ignore the differences between their social status and the status of masses of women” and is “a mark of race and class privilege” (p.6). As a result, hooks argues that “privileged feminists have largely been unable to speak to, with and for diverse groups of women because they either do not understand fully the inter-relatedness of sex, race, and class oppression or refuse to take this inter-relatedness seriously”(p.14). In addition, the proposition by feminists that gender oppression be central to understanding all other forms of oppression may force women of colour to make an impossible choice between their identities as women or a people of colour, or feel obligated to prioritize their identities. The conception of the existence of a hierarchy of oppression, with sexism “at the top” effectively suggests a sense of competing concerns which is unnecessary. For these reasons, the concept of

differential oppression is identified as a primary tenet of women of color feminism (Enns & Sinacore, 2005).

Enns and Sinacore (2005) also identify the exploration of differential access to privilege as an essential element in the creation of relevant feminisms for women of color. Lorde (1984) argues that white women, due to their relatively privileged status, are “seduced into joining the oppressor under the pretense of sharing power” (pp. 118-119) whereas the option of sharing power is not available for many women of color.

In addition, Espin (as cited in Enns & Sinacore, 2005) suggests that

for poor or working-class men of color, asserting dominance over women and children may be nothing but a last desperate gesture to “prove their manhood” in a world that both expects all men to achieve certain success and systematically destroys the chances of some men to achieve that position. (pp. 48-49)

Thus, an understanding of the oppression and “double binds” faced by men of color of different socio-economic statuses must also be a central aspect of women of color feminisms. hooks (1984) also points out that white women and men of color, depending on the context, may act as both oppressors or be oppressed; thus an understanding of oppression that goes beyond a simple oppressed/oppressor relationship is essential. This knowledge of multiple oppressions experienced by women of color can be directly used to challenge racist, sexist, and classist notions, and a feminist theory of women of color can be used as a tool to enhance the feminist struggle and develop what hooks calls “a liberatory ideology and liberatory movement” (p. 15).

Enns and Sinacore (2005) also address the central roles that feminists of color play in the creation of more inclusive and pluralistic feminisms through their proposal of theories which reflect their personal worldviews and experiences. Collins (2000), for example, identifies the centrality of self-definition and self-evaluation, the analysis of the interlocking aspects of oppression, and the integration of Black women's culture and Afrocentric values with feminism as basic characteristics of Black feminist thought. Using the concrete everyday experiences of Black women, Black feminist thought aims to a) highlight the centrality of dialogue, which is linked to African and African American oral traditions, in order to explore and articulate knowledge concerning women; b) integrates a humanistic ethic of care into feminism; and practices an ethic of accountability, which involves the use of reason, emotion, and ethics to evaluate the character and ethics of those who propose knowledge claims. Thus, "the standpoints of Black women are used to rethink feminism and place the life experiences of Black women at the center of inquiry" (Enns & Sinacore, 2005, p. 49).

Activism is an important component for both women of color feminism and antiracist feminism (Enns & Sinacore, 2005). Although theorizing about the oppression of women of color is important, engagement in social change is identified as a priority, and feminist theory must be understood as being dynamic. Because feminisms of women of color are rooted in real life issues, activism must inform theory, or positive change will not occur (Saulnier, 1996, as cited in Enns & Sinacore, 2005). Enns and Sinacore (2005) point out that antiracist feminists and feminists of color both view agency as a necessary activity to bring about social change; consequently, individuals are encouraged to involve themselves in activities that confront and challenge racism, colonialism, sexism, and

classism, and participate in movements and interventions that confront alienation, marginalization, and exploitation of oppressed groups (Calliste et al., 2000; Ng, 1995, as cited in Enns & Sinacore, 2005). As Spelman (as cited in Enns & Sinacore, 2005) suggests, although “all women are women, there is no being who is only a woman” (p. 102). Thus, feminisms of color and antiracist feminisms both appreciate and use difference to inform multiple feminisms.

Collins (1990) additionally discusses how the intellectual work done by African-American women has functioned to foster Black women’s activism and resistance. The politics of Black feminist thought is shaped by the tension between the suppression of the ideas of Black women, and the intellectual activism in the face of this oppression. Thus, “for African-American women, the knowledge gained at the intersection of race, gender, and class oppression provides the stimulus for crafting and passing on the subjugated knowledge of a Black women’s culture of resistance (Caulfield, 1974; Foucault, 1980; Scott, 1985)” (p.10). Black women’s location in the labor market coupled with their grounding in the traditions of African-American culture resulted in the generation of an “outsider-within” perspective, which provides a material backdrop for a distinctive Black women’s standpoint concerning self and society; Black women, as outsiders within, have a unique view of the contradictions existing between actions and ideologies of the dominant group, which enables Black women to question and understand contradictions between ideologies of womanhood and the devalued status of Black women. Thus, as Collins (1990) explains,

while the economic, political and ideological dimensions of Black women’s oppression lead directly to the suppression of the Black feminist intellectual

tradition, these same traditions simultaneously foster the continuation of Afrocentric culture and the creation of an outsider-within stance essential to Black women's activism. (p.12)

Women of color and black feminism theory clearly offer several important insights that can enable educators to effectively support social justice aims within pedagogical practice. The non-hierarchical conception and analysis of interlocking oppression presented within these theories can be used to better understand and deal with issues connected to multiple forms of oppression within society. The analysis of differential access to privilege enables educators to challenge the oversimplified, binary conceptualization of oppressor/oppressed presented by critical theorists such as Freire (2007) in order to effectively understand and oppose racism, sexism, and classism. In addition, it provides conceptual clarity within anti-racist and critical multicultural theoretical and pedagogical approaches which have been critiqued for their failure to effectively address the inter-relatedness of different forms of oppression when dealing with multicultural issues. Women of color and black feminist theoretical approaches are grounded in the personal worldviews, everyday experiences, and real life issues of women of color, and argue that the unique standpoint of Black women and women of color as "outsiders within" can be used to identify and better understand the contradictory actions and ideologies of the dominant group. Finally, these theoretical approaches use difference to inform multiple feminisms, and aim to foster agency, activism and engagement in social change through involvement in activities that challenge the exploitation and oppression of marginalized groups.

Women of Color and Black Feminist Pedagogy

Enns and Sinacore (2005) point out that the pedagogy of many feminists of color and antiracist feminists is informed by the critical pedagogy of Paulo Freire. (See chapter 2 for discussion.) hooks (1994), for example, defines education as the “practice of freedom”, and argues that both students and teachers need to “transgress those boundaries that confine each pupil to a rote, assembly line approach to learning” (p. 13). If students are to have a critical voice in their learning, educators must be willing to relinquish power and let go of their traditional methodologies; consequently, a liberatory pedagogy demands that educators teach from a standpoint which includes an awareness of race, sex, class, and sexual preference (Enns & Sinacore, 2005).

The concept of *Conscientizacao* (defined by Freire (2007) as the development of critical consciousness) is also a central component of feminist pedagogy for people of color which can be used to deal with the negative affects of colonization (Enns & Sinacore, 2005). Enns and Sinacore (2005) draw on the work of several authors (Comas-Diaz, 1994; Ng, 1995; Omolade, 1987; Valle, 2002) to discuss and address the issue of decolonization. They argue that many people of color, due to the suppression or eradication of their own cultures, have been required to accommodate themselves to dominant colonizing cultures in order to survive. Experiences resulting from this colonization include victimization, alienation, self-denial, assimilation within the dominant culture, and ambivalence regarding one’s role in the dominant culture. Through the process of decolonization, students are able to become aware of how the racist/sexist beliefs of a culture have been internalized, and can learn skills to counter those beliefs. In order to address the effects of colonization, teachers and students are required to examine

the ways in which women of color have been marginalized; this information is then used to propose feminisms and visions of equality that enable women of diversity to be at the center of inquiry.

Feminists of color and antiracist feminists argue that examining the power dimensions of the student-teacher relationship and the learning environment is an important aspect involved in the deconstruction of traditional pedagogies (Enns & Sinacore, 2005). Rather than being controllers of the learning process, educators act as consultants (hooks, 1994). Feminist teachers consciously avoid the position of the “all knowing professor” (e.g. hooks, 1989), explain their pedagogical strategies/feminist views, and are open to criticism. As opposed to a “banking style” model of education, in which the educator imparts information and correct answers, the classroom becomes a democratic community, and each individual has a responsibility to contribute to discussion (hooks, 1994). In the classroom, information is shared and students learn to “generalize their life experiences within a community of fellow intellectuals” (hooks, 1994, p. 39). Enns and Sinacore (2005) discuss numerous female writers who emphasize this idea of the classroom as a community of knowers (eg., Clinchy, 1989; Romney, Tatum & Jones, 1992; hooks, 1989, 1994). They do, however, challenge the idea of the classroom as a safe space by pointing out that safety in the classroom may result in a pedagogy that supports “the politics of domination” by students who are the most vocal and assertive. Some students from exploited groups may be afraid to speak even if the feminist classroom is identified as a safe space in which the students can gain their voices; thus, “the goal is to enable all students, not just an assertive few, to feel empowered in a rigorous critical discussion” (hooks, 1989, p. 53). Feminists of color

ultimately emphasize “constant self-reflective attention to issues of power, position, and difference in the classroom” (Enns & Sinacore, 2005, p. 53) and the use of mutual dialogue and critical analysis to deconstruct power within the classroom (hooks, 1989).

Enns and Sinacore (2005) also identify the ongoing presence of racism, sexism, or other “isms” in the classroom as a relevant issue within women of color and antiracist pedagogy. Placing the lives and works of marginalized individuals at the center of inquiry enables teachers to provide the opportunity for students to understand difference in ground-breaking ways. In some educational settings, however, the authors point out that students may believe that certain groups are no longer marginalized, and that the centralization of voices of women of color, for example, is a form of “reverse discrimination”. Thus, as Ellenes (as cited in Enns & Sinacore, 2005) suggests, educators face a major challenge of helping students to understand that “naming one’s position in the world is not the same as erasing others’ existence” (p.54). The authors concur with TuSmith (1989-1990), who argues that the exploration by these students of their own cultural identities and the complexity of social locations and identities which contribute to their own lives may enable students to then understand and recognize the value of exploring the lives of women of color.

Inclusive and pluralist course content is of central importance for feminists of color and antiracist feminists (Enns & Sinacore, 2005). When literature about women of color is integrated into course content, academics must be mindful of the writer’s perspective, avoid the “add-and-stir” approach, and avoid relying on content about women of color which is based primarily on the scholarship of white women (Green & Sanchez-Hucles, as cited in Enns & Sinacore, 2005). Enns and Sinacore also discuss

methods proposed by Ginorio & Martinez (1998) to ensure that the content in question demonstrates an appreciation for women of color on their own terms, including a) the use of texts and readings (both autobiographical and academic) which explore the lives of women from the perspectives of women of color; b) the inclusion of material that is based on culturally sensitive definitions of constructs such as gender roles; and c) the choice of material centering on strengths/coping functions of behaviors, as opposed to actions that represent weakness/exceptional patterns when compared to dominant groups.

Ultimately, feminists of color and antiracist feminists aim to create and implement a pedagogy in which a) multiple voices are included; b) women of color and other marginalized groups are encouraged to have a central role in the learning environment; c) “all individuals in the classroom must struggle together to learn new ideas and models of scholarship” (Enns & Sinacore, 2005, p. 54); d) the classroom becomes a place where “student engage in political struggle to learn enough and know enough to transform our mutual futures within and without the academy” (Omolade, as cited in Enns & Sinacore, 2005, p. 54); and e) oppressions of racism, classism, and sexism can be overcome using as social theory of liberation and pedagogical agents of social change (Barakett & Cleghorn, 2008).

In summary, critical multicultural, anti-racist, women of color and black feminist approaches address the previously discussed shortcomings of conservative and liberal approaches, and effectively aim to support social justice aims. Each of these approaches advocates a transformative social agenda with the goal of challenging inequality and oppression at both the societal and institutional levels. These theoretical and pedagogical approaches are committed to examining and questioning whiteness and white privilege,

politicizing the educational sphere, developing critically conscious, socially active students, and challenging assimilationist and anti-democratic practices in order to generate social justice. There are, however, differences that can be found between these approaches.

Critical multiculturalism is informed by postmodern and post-structuralist theory, aims to examine the role that language and representation play in the construction of identity and meaning, and uses the “antimodern” language game to resist unifying dialogues and defend difference through deconstruction. In addition, this approach focuses on affirming diversity through cultural criticism, and uses culture as a main unit of analysis to analyze oppression. The concept of borderland and the mestizo form of consciousness are both used to highlight the multiplicity of subject positions that an individual can occupy in order to challenge monocultural ideology.

Anti-racist theory and pedagogy, similar to the other approaches, focus on the analysis of multiple oppressions including race, gender, class, sexual orientation, and aim to empower marginalized groups with the goal of challenging systematic discrimination. Importance is placed on understanding how the hegemonic ideology of monocultural white supremacy is used to legitimate systematic exploitation and oppression at the societal and institutional levels, as well as including multiple voices and perspectives in mainstream knowledge production. An anti-racist approach is unique, however, in that it places special emphasis on understanding the social construction of race, and priority is given to critiquing and challenging racism at the institutional and systematic levels.

Women of color and Black feminist theory and pedagogy stress the importance of analyzing interlocking and multiple oppressions and differential access to privilege in

order to better understand and challenge racism, sexism, and classism at the societal and institutional level, and ground theory in the unique personal standpoints and lived experiences of women of color. By critiquing a hierarchical and dualistic conceptualization of oppression, and effectively addressing the interconnectedness of different forms of oppression, these theoretical and pedagogical approaches provide unique insights which can be used to address the limitations of anti-racist and critical multicultural theory and pedagogy. Despite the differences between these approaches, all of these theories and pedagogies aim to foster agency, promote activism, and generate social justice.

The discussion and analysis of differing perspectives and foundational approaches to multiculturalism and anti-racism serves to highlight existing commonalities and differences within these theoretical and pedagogical perspectives. Clearly, if educators do, in fact, aspire to successfully support social justice aims within the classroom, they must first have an adequate understanding of different multicultural approaches, and a clear understanding of the concept of social justice. If these theories and pedagogies are to have meaningful implications within everyday teaching practice, it is my contention that educators must have a conceptual framework which can be used to provide a broad overview of contrasting multicultural perspectives, organize and categorize these approaches, and identify common criteria in these approaches which specifically support (or hinder) social justice aims. Consequently, the following chapter begins with a conceptual definition of social justice; it then examines what kind of criteria should be used to classify and organize different multicultural theoretical and pedagogical

approaches, and presents a conceptual framework which can be used to effectively integrate these theories and pedagogies in classroom practice to generate social justice.

CHAPTER IV

UNDERSTANDING MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVES: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The following chapter identifies and discusses the shared criteria in the multicultural and anti-racist theories and pedagogies discussed throughout this study which specifically support social justice aims. Notably, clear definitions of social justice are often absent from much of the literature dealing with multiculturalism and social justice aims. Social justice is often broadly defined as focusing on the equitable distribution of social and economic resources of society for the benefit of all individuals, (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2002) and the belief that “each individual and group within a given society has a right to civil liberties, equal opportunity, fairness, and participation in the educational, economic, institutional, social and moral freedoms and responsibilities valued by the community” (Degan & Disman, 2006).

For the purposes of this study, I have adopted the definition of social justice as summarized by Adam, Bell and Griffin (1997) which emphasizes a) the equitable distribution of resources for all members of society in order to ensure the physical and psychological safety and security of all individuals; b) the goal of supporting the development of individuals as both self-determining (able to develop full capacities) and interdependent (capable of interacting democratically with others); c) a society in which individuals possess social agency and social responsibility, both towards other individuals and society as a whole; and d) a democratic and participatory process which affirms human capacities for collaborative action with the goal of generating social change. Social justice education is thus conceptualized as “both an interdisciplinary

subject matter that analyzes multiple forms of oppression (such as racism and sexism), and a set of interactive, pedagogical principles that helps students understand the meaning of social difference and oppression in their personal lives and the social system” (p. xv). The main aims of social justice education include preparing citizens who are “sophisticated in their understanding of diversity and group interaction, able to critically evaluate social institutions, and committed to working democratically with diverse others” (p. xv).

Although the summary and discussion of the different multicultural approaches presented in the previous chapters is by no means exhaustive, it serves to provide an overview which draws on key works and authors in order to gain a better understanding and a broad sense of the important elements and issues of contention within and between each of these multicultural/anti-racist approaches. Considering the vast amount of work that has been done in the multicultural field, and the endless number of contentious issues that currently exist, I have chosen to discuss and explore the central issues of whiteness and institutionalized racism. These two issues serve to categorize all of the different approaches listed above into one of two groups/sides. While the conservative and liberal multicultural approaches do not aim (and even refuse) to address issues surrounding whiteness, white racism, and white hegemony, the examination, acknowledgement, and critique of issues related to whiteness is a fundamental part of critical, critical multicultural, anti-racist, and black feminist/women of color theory and pedagogy, all of which aim to support social justice objectives. Similarly, while conservative and liberal approaches to multiculturalism generally avoid discussion of racism altogether or identify racism and discrimination as an individual problem, critical, critical multicultural, anti-

racist, and black feminist/women of color approaches understand racism as a structural problem that needs to be addressed and dealt with at an institutional and societal level. These two issues can therefore be understood and defined as decisive factors within the multicultural debate. In the following section, I examine relevant critical multicultural, anti-racist, women of color, and black feminist critiques of institutionalized racism and whiteness.

Institutionalized Racism

As Grinter (2000) argues, multicultural education (in its conservative and liberal forms) is based on the belief that racism is the result of an individual's misunderstanding of non-white values and ways of life. In contrast, antiracist education views racism as an ideology of white superiority which has been historically exploited in order to maintain institutionalized unequal power relations, and ensure that these inequalities become naturalized and remain unquestioned. Thus, while conservative and liberal multicultural solutions to eradicate racism focus on helping individuals to develop a more positive attitude and understanding of black culture, anti-racist education argues that having good images of black people and "covering" up institutionalized racism will not put an end to inequality – structural changes are necessary at the societal level.

Grinter (2000) notes that anti-racist theory is more effective than its counterparts because it includes a full range of different factors which contribute to racism, including "the historical roots, class contexts, and the denial of political, social, and economic rights by group discrimination for the benefit of the existing holders of power" (p. 136). This approach rejects the notion of society as a neutral arena, and instead understands our society to be one in which the dominant, white, middle-class values are imposed on the

values of other cultures lacking equal power. Hence, this system is fundamentally built on racism and inequality. According to Grinter, anti-racist educators view the social and political structure as being organized by racism, and believe that society is structured and designed to perpetuate and facilitate social inequality. Thus, it is extremely important that discrimination be addressed at the institutional and societal level if the social system is to be changed. Ultimately, anti-racist theory aims to produce active agents of social change who will challenge the existing status quo, question the structure and assumptions of society, and oppose the existing class and race-based inequality within the system, as well as the educational practices that are believed to reinforce that structure.

Sleeter (2000) similarly argues that many of her students do not identify (or even ignore) the larger context of systematic racism and oppression, and instead focus on other more specific, multi-level causes of oppression, as well as offering “mild” solutions. Sleeter identifies a lack of awareness on the part of most people of how power and wealth is concentrated in a small elite group, and how this concentration of power is manifested within social institutions in contemporary culture. She argues, for example, that wealth is continuing to be transferred to the white elite through schools situated within a capitalistic structure. From her perspective, the European-American identity is based on defending an individualistic, meritocratic view of society which is founded upon the belief that all individuals have the power to overcome poverty and discrimination. As a result, the existence of the systematic oppression and racism on which our society is built is not recognized or acknowledged, and racism again becomes understood as a uniquely “individual” problem.

Critical multicultural theory also stresses the importance of recognizing and challenging institutionalized inequality as an important and necessary component of an effective multicultural approach. Giroux (2000), for example, argues that

A critical multiculturalism must shift attention away from an exclusive focus on subordinate groups, especially since such an approach tends to highlight their deficits, to one that examines how racism in its various forms is produced historically, semiotically, and institutionally at various levels of society. (p.198)

Giroux further argues that, in opposition to a quaint liberalism, “a critical multiculturalism means more than simply acknowledging differences and analyzing stereotypes; more fundamentally, it means understanding, engaging, and transforming the diverse histories, cultural narratives, representations, and institutions that produce racism and other forms of discrimination” (p.198). Ultimately, anti-racist, critical multicultural, women of color feminist and black feminist approaches recognize that addressing, critiquing, and challenging racism at the institutional level is necessary if we are to truly eradicate racism and discrimination within society.

Whiteness, White Privilege, and White Racism

Several authors have identified the importance of naming, defining and deconstructing whiteness and white supremacy as part of a critical multicultural and anti-racist agenda which supports social justice aims. Featherston and Ishibashi (2005) discuss the conceptualization and deconstruction of whiteness in “Oreos and Bananas: Conversations on Whiteness”. Whiteness, more than being color, is defined as “an interlocking pattern of beliefs, values, feelings, and assumptions; policies, procedures, and laws; behaviors and unwritten rules used to define and underpin a worldview” and

argue that whiteness “is embedded in historical systems of oppression that sustain wealth, power, and privilege” (p. 105). Colour is understood to be a primary marker, and whiteness is often equated with being good or perfect; furthermore, whiteness is manifested in socially sanctioned ways as being normal or morally superior. The miseducation of these aspects of whiteness, as well as the cultural biases, stereotypes, and racist views resulting from such attitudes, are embedded in educational institutions, which perpetuate the idea of the “rightness of whiteness”.

Featherston and Ishibashi (2005) further argue that whiteness functions to obstruct the mutual transmission of knowledge inside and outside classroom settings because the power to define rests with/within white culture; this notion is embedded in the idea of white supremacy. Thus,

all the unwritten rules, presumed truths, and definitions of beauty in the culture and the classroom exalt whiteness. This means that the values of whiteness are prized above others....Information about other cultures is often taught as an add-on, not as part of the central framework.” (p. 98)

This often results in treating complexities superficially, which makes both students and teachers uncomfortable; teachers, although well intentioned, mishandle topics of social justice and racial difference in a manner which creates guilt in white students, and anger in students of color.

Marx’s (2005) definition of whiteness acknowledges the complex nature of its construction, and is based on a socially constructed understanding of race, interwoven with notions of ethnicity and culture, and the centrality of power and privilege.

As Hartigan (as cited in Marx, 2005) explains, whiteness is “a concept that typically characterizes the racial interests of white people, linking them collectively to a position of social dominance” (p. 134). Marx supports the argument put forth by several critics (Katz & Ivey 1977; Rodriguez, 1998, Terry, 1981) that “the neutrality that typically characterizes whiteness is evidence of this power” (p. 134). An understanding of race as a social construction functions to highlight how it is linked to power relations and the process of struggle, as well as its connection to place and time; furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that the meaning of race changes over time (Frankenberg, 1993, as cited in Marx, 2005).

Marx (2005) additionally argues that “Whiteness, like every racial category, is a complex construction characterized by exceptions, inconsistencies, and frayed edges. Multiple identities and experiences complicate and humanize its articulation” (p. 134). As Winant (as cited in Marx, 2005) points out, many factors contribute to one’s racial identity; such factors include (but are not limited to) socioeconomic status, ideologies of individualism, opportunity, religious affiliation, citizenship status, and nationalism. Marx argues that gender, sexual orientation, political affiliation, and ability also function to situate individuals in different ways. Given the complicated nature of race, that naming of race (including whiteness) can function to essentialize such concepts; nevertheless, Marx argues that they remain useful tools to analyze, problematize, and interrogate whiteness, despite the limitations involved in the use of these terms.

Mathieson (2005) defines whiteness as “that unexamined, elusive part of ourselves that has remained very much taken for granted, unquestioned, and normalized,”

and, like Marx, argues that “tremendous diversity exists within whiteness” (p. 237); as Mathieson explains

Ethnicity, culture, religion, class, gender, sexual orientation, ableism, as well as other axes of difference intersect and overlap in complex ways. These social categories determine our identity and sites of power so that we experience our whiteness in varied, complex, and contradictory ways, yet our common task as whites remains to cast our gaze on our whiteness.” (p. 237)

In “Overcoming White Supremacy: A Comment”, hooks (2000) a) examines different terms used in discussions about racism, including the meaning and the use of the term white supremacy; b) discusses the continuing existence of white supremacy within the United States and the world; and c) identifies the attitudes and actions she feels are necessary in order to truly fight against white supremacy. According to hooks, visible and overt racism, discrimination, exploitation and oppression have decreased, however white supremacy and racism are still pervasive in our society. hooks uses the term white supremacy (as opposed to “internalized racism”) as a means to more accurately and effectively express the ideology that determines the perception and consequent relations of black people and people of colour by white people. While the term “internalized racism” suggests that the negative feelings and attitudes that white people have about blackness are “absorbed” by black people, the term white supremacy allows us to recognize that black people “are socialized to embody the attitudes and values of white supremacy,” (p. 112) and that black people can exercise “white-supremacist control” over other black people. Thus, black people exercise this power over each other when they perpetuate white-supremacist beliefs.

hooks (2000) further argues that the failure of liberal white people to see or acknowledge that they can or may embody white supremacy values and beliefs can result in their actions supporting the domination and oppression that they wish to eradicate. Some individuals, for example, deny the existence of racism; however, as hooks argues, white supremacy continues to “shape perspectives on reality and inform the social status of black people and all people of colour” (p. 113). hooks argues that assimilation is rooted in white supremacy, and is used as a mechanism to legitimate the shift in allegiance of black people to the dominant white group. Through assimilation, black people are told to negate their blackness and absorb the values and way of life of white people. Assimilation maintains white supremacy because there is not a strong active movement to end white supremacy, and black people are living in a social context that is unchanged and still functions on a framework of white supremacy, resulting in the need for black people to assimilate.

In addition to defining and conceptualizing whiteness and white supremacy, the identification and understanding of white privilege is recognized as being vitally important for educators as part of an anti-racist, anti-oppressive pedagogy. In “White Privilege and Male Privilege”, McIntosh (1988) discusses the link between different forms of privilege, and argues that both male and white privilege is “denied and protected, but alive and real in [their] effects” (p. 103). She discusses how, as a white person, she was taught to understand racism as something that puts others at a disadvantage, but was not taught to recognize the advantages that white privilege gave to her; thus, white privilege is identified as “an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in on every day, but about which I was ‘meant’ to remain

oblivious” (p. 103). McIntosh’s discussion and recognition of white privilege is very much in line with anti-racist and critical multicultural arguments that whiteness is constructed and treated as an “invisible norm” by which all other groups are “judged,” and also serves to highlight the continuing presence at a societal level of institutionalized, structural inequality. McIntosh’s understanding and articulation of white privilege and institutionalized racism is worth quoting at length:

My schooling gave me no training in seeing myself as an oppressor, as an unfairly advantaged person, or as a participant in a damaged culture. I was taught to see myself as an individual whose moral state depended on her individual moral will. At school, we were not taught about slavery in any depth; we were not taught to see slaveholders as damaged people. Slaves were seen as the only group at risk of being dehumanized. My schooling followed the pattern which Elizabeth Minnich has pointed out: white are taught to think of their lives as morally neutral, normative, and average, and also ideal, so that when we work to benefit others, this is seen as work that will allow “them” to be more like “us.” (p.104)

McIntosh’s (1988) work recognizes the importance of distinguishing between racial prejudice and privilege, and identifies the lack of awareness that white people have of the privilege that is accorded to them; furthermore, it identifies how privilege and prejudice are, through hegemonic forces, both perpetuated within a system in which institutionalized racism and inequality continue to exist.

In discussions surrounding white racism and white privilege, critics such as Sleeter (2000) have specifically addressed white people’s lack of awareness of and resistance to acknowledging racism, as well as the forms of social interaction between

white people which effectively limit critical discussion and self-analysis of one's role in its perpetuation. Sleeter argues that the important concepts of class hierarchy, patriarchy, and white racism are largely ignored in much of multicultural education, and focus is instead placed on cultural difference. She associates this lack of discussion about white racism in multicultural education with white people's reluctance to address white racism, as opposed to people of color's disregard for it. Sleeter additionally argues that white people usually live in a social reality that does not force us to confront and critique white racism, and our daily lives are governed by white elite norms and values which shape our version of reality; thus we only usually approve of other educators of colour whose work is framed within the parameters of "our" society.

Sleeter (2000) stresses that everyone's vision and understanding of the world is shaped through our own "filter" of our personal life history and ideological frameworks, and identifies four interconnected concepts which white pre-service students find difficult to understand, arguably because these concepts do not "fit" into these students' daily experiences or their own understanding of Euro-American history. These concepts include the historical roots of racist opportunity structures (including the difference between voluntary and involuntary immigrants and the resulting access to or restriction from opportunities,) the nature and impact of discrimination, the significance of group membership, and the nature of culture.

Sleeter (2000) also discusses white solidarity and white silence/racism, arguing that white people's discussion of racism is very limited, and that there is often a lot of silence around the subject. Furthermore, white people have developed different strategies to avoid discussing white supremacy, as well as their own participation within this

system, including equating racism with individual prejudice, equating ethnicity with race, treating whiteness as an invisible norm, and semantically constructing sentences that remove ourselves from the discussion/personify racism as the subject of the sentence. Another aspect of white solidarity is “white racial bonding,” which is defined as a process in which white people pressure each other to agree upon common definitions of racial issues in order to maintain racial solidarity. This is identified as being problematic because the interactions involved in this process effectively define racial lines and force individuals to either “declare their solidarity” or risk being marked as a “deviant” from the group. Thus, although many people do not support racism, the potential risk they face of losing their social bonds with other white people results in their decision to remain silent and not talk about racism.

The issues of white solidarity and white silence have also been addressed by critics such as Marx (2005), who discusses the idea of “White talk”. This term, proposed by McIntyre (1997), is defined as “conversation that serves to insulate White people from examining their/our individual and collective role(s) in the perpetuation of racism” (p. 45). When a discussion concerning race and white racism becomes too personal or critical, white people will often attempt to comfort the individual(s) participating in the discussion and restore “appropriate” conversation. Thus, if the goal of educators is to open up conversations about whiteness and white racism in order to “disrupt white talk rather than contribute to it” (p.139), and to build a more productive “White discourse on White racism” (Scheurich, as cited in Marx, 2005, p. 139) it is essential that both educators and students be aware of these (often unintentional/subconscious) techniques

for avoiding critical discussions about white privilege and racism if critical questioning, analysis, and change is to occur.

Featherston and Ishibashi (2005) also stress the importance of self-awareness and analysis of whiteness on the part of educators aiming to implement an effective, social justice curriculum within their classrooms. They argue that

Educators, no matter how well trained or how “culturally appropriate” their texts and collaterals, must reflect on the way whiteness informs their classroom practices. Teachers who are not truly self-reflective, teachers who fail to challenge their own cultural notions, assumptions and biases will recreate oppressive models; this is not necessarily intentional. It is the inexorable influence of white supremacy in an inherently racist culture, and it can be extremely subtle.

(p.91)

Thus, it is important for educators to recognize that all modern forms of oppression, including whiteness, are quite often unintentional.

Part of the process of recognizing and examining whiteness, white privilege, and one’s standpoint/identity involves the examination and questioning of one’s conceptions and understanding of knowledge itself. Strobel (2005), for example, discusses how non white teachers can teach about the social construction of whiteness and white privilege, and in doing so, addresses the problematic aspects of essentialism and the usefulness of a social constructivist approach to thinking as part of a liberating educational practice. Essentialism is defined by Strobel as “the perspective that reality exists independently of our perception of it, that we perceive the meaning of the world rather than construct that meaning.” (p.35). Thus, this perspective assumes that real and important essential

differences exist among categories of people. Consequently, the acceptance by some students that “whites have always been on top” and that “the world is the way it is” reflects an essentialist way of thinking which is problematic. Strobel argues, however, that a social constructivist approach can be used to challenge such ways of thinking by showing how these statements are social constructs rather than fixed truths about the nature of our differences. As Rosenblum and Travis (as cited in Strobel, 2005) argue, social constructivism “takes the position that reality cannot be separated from the way a culture makes sense of it – that meaning is constructed through social, political, legal, scientific, and other practices” (p.35).

O’Brien (2005) addresses the issue of how anger and acceptance of diverse “process” approaches can transform hierarchies of race, class, and gender and oppression, and be used to disrupt the normative hierarchies of white dominance in classroom space. The author offers a relevant critique of the intellectual (objective, civilized) vs. emotional (subjective and uncivilized) as false dichotomies which are based on Eurocentric thinking. As O’Brien explains,

norms of classroom behaviour that privilege “rational” intellect and devalue irrational emotion not only will continue to privilege members of dominant groups in the classroom, but also will squelch the more revolutionary possibilities for liberation from emerging from such classrooms, even if the curriculum reflects diverse perspectives. (p. 69)

Thus, rather than simply diversifying course content (which teachers seem more willing to do) O’Brien argues that educators must affirm diverse modes of expression (such as anger) and diversify process in order to create a more inclusive classroom.

Featherston and Ishibashi (2005) also critique the dualistic conception that places intellect above (and separate from) emotion, which can be traced back to Plato's dualistic assertion that we are either thinking or feeling beings; the authors argue that this resulting inability to recognize people and thinking and feeling beings effectively perpetuates domination. Ultimately, all of these authors aim to challenge an essentialist view of knowledge and reality, and identify a social constructivist approach as a means to both better understand the social construction of whiteness/white privilege and challenge Eurocentric norms within the classroom.

The analysis and examination of whiteness and white privilege also addresses issues related to language and identity. In dealing with issues of language, the recognition and naming of whiteness is linked to the attitude that Standard English is more "correct" than other home languages or communication styles. Featherston and Ishibashi (2005) discuss how choices made by teachers can validate and normalize the linguistic oppression of people for whom English is either not the home language, or is a second language, and how the transmission of these values of English as a superior language may force students to "split off from some aspect of their authentic self-expression to be acceptable to their instructors" (p.93). In such case, whiteness operates to hold Standard English as "normal".

Language is also an important issue within the realm of multicultural discourse; Mathieson (2005) argues, for example, that the "softer" language which is used (such as diversity, inclusivity, cultural sensitivity) reflects the ongoing resistance to incorporating antiracism practice in educational curriculum and practice; terms such as racism, domination, and oppression speak more directly to power inequalities.

Lastly, the acknowledgment of intersecting/multiple oppression and challenging of Eurocentric norms is (as discussed in previous chapters) also a central component of critical multicultural, anti-racist, and black feminist theory and pedagogy (see, for example, hooks, 1984; Collins, 2000; Lemons, 2005; O'Brien, 2005; Featherston & Ishibashi, 2005).

In summary, the recognition of institutionalized racism and inequality is a central principle of critical, critical multicultural, anti-racist, and black feminist/women of color theory and pedagogy. These theoretical approaches recognize that existing social and political systems are not neutral; they are structured by racism and inequality, and support a meritocratic, individualistic view of society which does not recognize the existence of systematic oppression. Unlike conservative and liberal multicultural approaches, these theories and pedagogies argue that discrimination and inequality must be addressed and challenged at a societal level, as well as within educational practice. All of these approaches emphasize the development of critical consciousness within students, and aim to produce agents of social change who can understand and challenge the systematic oppression and inequality present within society.

Critical, critical multicultural, anti-racist, black feminist and women of color theory and pedagogy also aim to generate social justice through a shared commitment to recognizing and critiquing whiteness, white supremacy, and white power/privilege. These theoretical and pedagogical approaches conceptualize whiteness as an unexamined and unquestioned neutral or invisible norm which is socially constructed, and serves the interests of the white dominant group. Whiteness, like other racial categories, is understood as a complex social construction; one's racial identity is shaped by many

different factors which situate individuals in different ways. Importance is also placed on understanding and challenging the existence of white supremacy at the individual, institutional, and societal levels. If students and teachers fail to acknowledge how they can embody white supremacist values and beliefs, they may, effectively, act in ways which support the very oppression that they want to eliminate. As educators, it is necessary to understand how whiteness is embedded in educational institutions if we are to adequately deal with issues of social justice and racial difference within the classroom.

These theoretical and pedagogical approaches address a number of fundamental issues related to whiteness, including the importance of recognizing and understanding white power and privilege, the problems involved with white people's lack of awareness of and resistance to acknowledging racism, and issues related to white solidarity, silence, white talk, and white racial bonding. They stress the importance of examining our personal life histories and ideological frameworks which shape our vision and understanding of the world, and the importance of self-awareness and self-analysis of whiteness. In addition, these theories and pedagogies examine our understanding and conception of knowledge, which includes challenging essentialist views of knowledge, and advocating the use of a social constructivist approach to effectively support social justice aims. Finally, these approaches promote the use of diverse process approaches to disrupt whiteness and transform hierarchies of oppression, and examine issues related to language and identity.

The acknowledgment of institutionalized racism/inequality and the identification and naming of whiteness, white racism, and white privilege are both essential if educators are to successfully support and implement a social justice agenda within educational

programs. While conservative and liberal multicultural approaches do not aim to address these issues (in theory or practice), these criteria are a central part of critical, critical multicultural, anti-racist, and black feminist/women of color theory and pedagogy. Thus, if the aim of educators is, in fact, to empower students to be critically conscious, transformative agents of social change, these criteria need to be used as a foundation on which to develop multicultural curricula and to guide and direct pedagogical practice. Future teachers need to have the opportunity to be exposed to and critically analyze varying conceptions of multiculturalism; if their aim is to implement a social justice agenda within their classrooms, they must also have knowledge of how theories can be effectively applied in their teaching practice. Praxis is, as Freire suggests, a continuing process of reflection and action; both components are necessary for both teachers and students if meaningful change is to occur. Teachers need to have concrete examples of how they can incorporate and effectively implement these pedagogies in everyday teaching practice. Thus, the following chapter discusses recommendations for the implementation of these criteria within teacher education programs, as well as recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER V

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AIMS WITHIN TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Proponents of anti-racist, critical/critical multicultural and black feminist/women of color theory offer several pedagogical recommendations which can be used to effectively support a social justice agenda within classroom practice. While some of these recommendations focus on secondary and university level education, all of the recommendations discussed in the following section are applicable to teacher education programs.

Firstly, educators need to address and discuss the existence of racism, whiteness, and white supremacy with their students; future teachers must have the opportunity to become aware of and examine these ideas. As hooks (2000) argues, perspectives of reality which do not acknowledge or attempt to deal with white supremacy must be challenged if real change is to occur. If teachers' perspectives continue to be shaped by white supremacy, no real changes can truly take place. In addition to resisting assimilation, hooks identifies other elements that are necessary to effectively challenge and eradicate white supremacy. These include a) the necessity of black people to confront their own complicity in the internalization of white supremacy in order to begin the self-recovery and renewal process; b) the willingness of black people to help those who are actively or passively benefiting from white supremacy, so that their cause is not undermined; c) the collective responsibility of all people to construct models for change together, educate for critical consciousness, and commit ourselves to the struggle to end

white supremacy; and d) linking the goal to change our individual consciousness to collective effort to transform the structures that reinforce and reproduce white supremacy.

Critical race theory and critical cultural therapy are identified as useful tools that can be used to effectively understand and address racism and white power/privilege, and support social justice aims in classroom practice. Marx (2005), for example, discusses the results of a study exploring the tutoring experience and beliefs about English language learners, which includes an integral analysis of whiteness, and provides recommendations for improving teacher education programs through courses which address the linguistic and cultural diversity of children.

Marx (2005) identifies critical race theory as a tool for understanding and explaining teachers' low expectations of second language students. In this framework, race is recognized as a continuing significant factor in determining inequity; rather than racism being understood as an individual act of hatred, racism is described as "a condition of American life" and "something that is "deeply ingrained legally, culturally, and even psychologically" (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, as cited in Marx, 2005). Thus, racism is understood as "a system of advantage based on race" that benefits whites in the United States while disadvantaging people of color (Tatum, 1999, p.7). As Marx (2005) explains, it is the "passive" (Derman-Sparks & Phillips 1997; Tatum 1999), everyday, "business as usual" (Tatum, 1999, p.11) that serves to reinforce, reproduce, and reiterate racial inequality on a daily basis" (p. 135). The ways in which whites benefit from the subtle and continuous oppression and negative characterizations of people of color is described as "white racism" (Scheruich, 1993, as cited in Marx, 2005); Critical race

theory and critical white studies specifically address this kind of racism, and thus provide a useful theoretical foundation for Marx's study.

Marx (2005) discusses the use of critical cultural therapy as an intervention methodology adapted from Spindler's work in cultural therapy with the goal of "mak[ing] visible the usually invisible aspects of one's culture" (p.138). Spindler (as cited in Marx, 2005) explains that "the job of a cultural therapist is to discover what the subject does not know and...then to help the subject to understand and reflect on these discoveries" (p.138). Marx incorporates a critical, race and power oriented focus to the notion of culture in order to "help participants become aware of the ways in which the whiteness and the white racism that were revealed through the interviews, observations, and journal entries that comprised study data" (p. 138).

In Marx's (2005) study, critical cultural therapy was conducted in two ways: through interviews discussing race and whiteness, and the participant's subsequent reading of transcripts and reflection upon these issues; and through the interviewer's individual discussions with participants to discuss and draw attention to whiteness and white racism. The steps involved in the implementation of critical cultural therapy include a) opening the floodgates and recognizing one's own racism in the torrent; b) calling attention to contradictions; c) sighting and denying the tip of the iceberg; d) constructing and challenging easy answers; e) drawing attention to the bigger picture; f) recognizing and accepting responsibility for white racism; and g) moving past the impotence of white guilt.

The results of Marx's (2005) study raised issues of the normalcy and invisibility of whiteness, and the prevalence of passive racism. Through this process

Each of these participants seemed to become critically aware of the ways in which white racism influenced their lives and some of the ways in which their own white racism influenced the children they tutored. Once they finally saw the influences of white racism in their lives...they attempted to become actively antiracist.”

(p.147)

The persistent examination of whiteness and white racism by participants throughout the study seemed to function to empower participants in the development of critical consciousness; as Marx explains, “By better understanding their cultural and racial positionality, the power that accompanies this positionality, and the biases contained within this positionality, most of the young women in this study set a course for becoming much better teachers for all the children who will someday populate their classrooms” (p.147).

In “Talking About Race, Learning About Racism: The Application of Racial Identity Theory in the Classroom”, Tatum (1992) discusses how Racial Identity Development Theory can be used to challenge racism within the classroom. Tatum (1992) discusses several working assumptions on which Racial Identity Development theory is based, which include a) acknowledgment of the pervasiveness of racism; b) the need to distinguish between prejudice and racism; c) the benefits that whites in the U.S. receive as a result of racism; d) the acknowledgment that although we cannot be blamed for what we were taught, we nevertheless have a responsibility to interrupt the cycle of oppression; and e) the assertion that individual and institutional change is, indeed, possible.

Tatum (1992) also discusses several sources of resistance which often occur within the classroom. Race is often considered to be a taboo topic that students shy away from discussing, and many students hold a strong meritocratic vision and understanding of the U.S. as a just and fair society. In addition, students often fail to recognize/deny their own personal prejudices, and fail to see the impact of racism in their own lives. Tatum argues that Racial Identity Development Theory can be used and applied within classrooms in order to enable students to become critically aware of the existence and impact of racism, and can be an effective tool to deal with some of the resistance that often occurs in students.

Helms (as cited in Tatum, 1992) defines Racial Identity and Racial Identity Development Theory as

a sense of group or collective identity based on one's perception that he or she shares a common racial heritage with a particular racial group...racial identity development theory concerns the psychological implications of racial-group membership, that is belief systems that evolve in reaction to perceived racial-group membership." (p.9)

Tatum's discussion centers on how this theory can be used to understand and deal with classroom dynamics during discussions of racism, as well as to provide a theoretical framework which can be used to develop strategies to deal with student resistance.

White Racial Identity Development, as proposed by Helms (as cited in Tatum, 1992) is used to describe a process in which an individual abandons racism and develops a nonracist White identity. This process involves accepting one's own whiteness, acknowledging the cultural implications of being White, and defining a view of Self "as a

racial being that does not depend on the perceived superiority of one racial group over another” (p. 13).

This model of White Racial Identity Development includes six phases: Contact, Disintegration, Reintegration, Pseudo-Independent, Immersion/Emersion, and Autonomy. The contact stage is characterized by “a lack of awareness of cultural and institutional racism and one’s own White privilege” (Tatum, 1992, p.13). In this stage, individuals may also possess “naïve” curiosity or fear of people of color resulting from learned stereotypes. In the disintegration stage, “the bliss of ignorance or lack of awareness is replaced by the discomfort of guilt, shame, and sometimes anger at the recognition of one’s own advantage because of being White and the acknowledgement of the role of Whites in the maintenance of a racist system” (p. 13). Many individuals in this stage of development may react to newly learned knowledge of racism in the form of denial or blaming the victim, while others may try to “change significant others’ attitudes toward African Americans and other people of color” (p. 14). As Tatum (1992) explains, individuals in this stage may feel socially pressured to accept the status quo, which may result in the individual moving from the disintegration to reintegration stage:

At this point the desire to be accepted by one’s own racial group, in which the overt or covert belief in white supremacy is so prevalent, may lead to a reshaping of the person’s belief system to be more congruent with an acceptance of racism. The guilt and anxiety associated with Disintegration may be redirected in the form of fear and anger directed toward people of color (particularly Blacks), who are now blamed as the source of discomfort.” (p. 15)

As a result, it is easy for white individuals to become “stuck” in the reintegration stage. Individuals that do continue critical self examination and reflection then enter the Pseudo-Independent stage, in which “the individual abandons the belief in White superiority, but may continue to act in ways that unintentionally perpetuate the system” (Tatum, 1992, p. 17). In the final stage of Autonomy, the primary task for the individual is “the internalization of a newly defined sense of oneself as White” (p.17). In this stage, “the positive feelings associated with this redefinition energize the person’s efforts to confront racism and oppression in his or her daily life” (p. 17). Rather than understanding this stage as “racial self-actualization”, Helms (as cited in Tatum, 1992) instead conceptualizes autonomy as an ongoing process in which “the person is continually open to new information and new ways of thinking about racial and cultural variables” (p.17).

Tatum (1992) argues that an awareness of the stages of racial identity development aids teachers in implementing strategies to “facilitate positive student development, as well as to improve interracial dialogue within the classroom” (p. 18). Tatum discusses four strategies which can be used to reduce student resistance and promote student development, including a) the creation of a safe classroom atmosphere by establishing clear guidelines for discussion; b) the creation of opportunities for self-generated knowledge; c) the provision of an appropriate developmental model that students can use as a framework for understanding their own process; and d) the exploration of strategies to empower students as change agents.

Tatum (1992) argues that it is necessary to provide a safe space for discussion to overcome students’ fears about the race taboo and reduce anxiety about talking openly and honestly about one’s own attitudes, prejudices, and internalized racism. In order to

accomplish this, she argues that it is important to discuss and lay out ground rules at the beginning of the class. Mutual respect for each other, encouraging students to speak from their own experiences without generalizing experiences to others, directing comments to each other instead of to the instructor, and discouraging the use of “zaps” (“overt or covert put downs often used as comic relief when someone is feeling anxious about the content of discussion”) are all important aspects which can enable students to feel comfortable to discuss their feelings openly and engage in critical dialogue (p. 4). In this sense, Tatum’s conception of “safe” space is not equivalent to avoiding taboo subjects or silencing students; it instead focuses on the creation of a space in which students can openly discuss issues such as racism in a critical way.

Tatum (1992) also identifies the creation of opportunities for self-generated knowledge as a powerful tool to reduce the initial stage of denial of racism that many students experience, because students, while being able to challenge the validity of what the instructor says/what they read, will have a harder time denying what they see with their own eyes. Such opportunities include giving students hands-on assignments outside of class in order to facilitate this process. In addition, it is also important for the teacher to acknowledge that emotional responses are a normal part of this process at the beginning of the class, so that students are prepared and can better understand their individual responses that may occur (such as wanting to withdraw from classroom discussion). Sharing the framework of racial identity development with students can also provide students with a tool to understand and evaluate their development, as well as being more sensitive to other students’ positions.

Finally, Tatum (1992) argues that students must be made aware of the possibilities for self empowerment and the ability to be agents of social change. As Tatum poignantly explains,

heightening students' awareness of racism without also developing an awareness of the possibility of change is a prescription for despair. I consider it unethical to do one without the other. Exploring strategies to empower students as change agents is thus a necessary part of the process of talking about race and learning about racism. (pp. 20-21)

Tatum argues that this can be done through examination of outside sources such as newspaper and magazine articles, as well as through the use of biographical and autobiographical essays; reading the biographies and autobiographies of White individuals who have been through a similar process of identity development can provide White students with important models of change. In addition, students can also work in small groups to exchange ideas and develop an individual "action plan for interrupting racism" (p.21). Offering students the opportunity to consciously observe their own development is also a key component of empowerment. For example, students in her class taped interviews with themselves in which they answered open ended questions about racial attitudes and opinions, and these tapes were purely for their own development; they were later asked to revisit their own responses at the end of the semester in order to critically reflect on their progress and development throughout the course.

The implementation of a social constructive approach is also identified as an effective means through which to challenge essentialist thinking/approaches to reality,

and examine and challenge existing social injustice and racism, both within society as a whole, and within the educational system. Strobel (2005) refers to the work of Charles Mills in "The Racial contract" (1997) as an example of how to incorporate a social constructivist approach to understand and address the issues of white supremacy and white privilege. The first line of the book states that "white supremacy is the unnamed political system that has made the modern world what it is today.", thus locating white supremacy within a historical time frame and geographical site. Strobel argues that statements such as these can, as Mills suggests, be reworded to reflect a more social reconstructive view; this statement can, for example, be rewritten to state that "while white supremacy may have dominated the last four hundred years, it is possible that the future will be transformed as white and nonwhite persons withdraw their consent from the racialized social contract that has put white supremacy in place" (p. 35).

Strobel (2005) argues that an understanding of how attitudes (such as the notion that whites will always be on top) are socially constructed and the subsequent possibility of the withdrawal of consent to such "truths" can become possible through an understanding of what Mills terms the "epistemology of ignorance" and "white moral cognitive disfunction", and how this has come to be. While many students respond to the U.S.'s history of imperialism and colonialism defensively (i.e. "I don't have any thing to do with the past", "Don't make me feel guilty" etc.), Strobel argues that an examination of the social contract of "all men are created equal" and "the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" is implicitly a racial contract because it was not meant to apply to non-white subjects. The justification and rationalization of genocide, slavery, and colonialism was made possible because "the social contract was written by and for white

subjects” (p. 36). Thus, as Strobel explains, “The state and its polity and judicial established a moral code that defined the rights and duties of civil society....categories of persons (those who had become civilized) and subpersons (still in a state of nature) were constructed and became part of the narrative of civilizing missions via colonization” (p. 36). This social contract effectively constructed concepts that were used to legitimize the racial order that placed white people above black people. Consequently, the social contract begins with the assertion that nonwhites are not fully human, but are rather less human, and are therefore in need of civilizing influences of those who are “fully human”. Strobel thus refers to Mills to support the assertion that this evasion and self-deception has become an epistemic norm; disagreeing with this norm would effectively turn the white world upside down. As Strobel explains, “In revealing the social contract as a racial contract, Mills is saying that it makes it easier for us to withdraw our consent from it and refuse to be complicit in the political and economic system that perpetuates it” (p. 36).

Strobel (2005) argues that this cognitive framework is both illuminating and liberating for her students; it enables them to see the political world, including its structures and institutions, as well as students’ location within them. Furthermore, it helps students to deal with feelings of defensiveness, guilt, and shame, and shows them a way to escape the “epistemology of ignorance” and “us” versus “them” thinking.

Acknowledging and challenging Eurocentric norms and conceptions of rationality/truth and implementing different process approaches within the classroom are also both useful for teacher educators aiming to generate social justice. O’Brien (2005), for example, addresses the issue of how anger and acceptance of diverse “process” approaches can transform hierarchies of race, class, and gender and oppression, and be

used to disrupt the normative hierarchies of white dominance in classroom space. The author offers a relevant critique of the intellectual (objective, civilized) vs. emotional (subjective and uncivilized) as false dichotomies which are based on Eurocentric thinking. As O'Brien explains

norms of classroom behaviour that privilege "rational" intellect and devalue irrational emotion not only will continue to privilege members of dominant groups in the classroom, but also will squelch the more revolutionary possibilities for liberation from emerging from such classrooms, even if the curriculum reflects diverse perspectives. (p. 69)

According to O'Brien, we are more willing to diversify content than process, and the processing of anger is complicated by the conception of anger as losing control. Her discussion centers on how an inclusive classroom can be created which affirms diverse modes of expression.

O'Brien (2005) draws on hooks' work *Teaching to transgress* (1994) in order to support the idea of non hierarchical learning community, in which misinformation (i.e. stereotypes, cultural biases) can be understood and dealt with as an attack on the system, and not as a personal attack on individual students. The classroom in this context cannot always be a safe and harmonious space; students must engage in dialogue and be free to express their emotions and thoughts, however ground rules must be developed together in order for this process to be effective, and implicit (Eurocentric) conceptions of "rational" and emotional must be made explicit. Educators must also anticipate classroom tension that can occur within these spaces; O'Brien discusses the example of the common white fear of being "attacked" as being racist as one such instance which must be addressed. In

addition, the perception of anger is linked to white privilege in the sense that white students may not have to take other racial groups' perspectives into account in order to survive in society. O'Brien draws on Tatum's stages of Racial Identity Development as an interesting tool to help students identify and deal with the process of coming to terms with institutionalized racism and the existence of white power and privilege.

As O'Brien (2005) suggests, the role of power can be a powerful tool within the classroom; anger can be understood as "A logical response to hearing stereotypes and misinformation about one's group" and "serves to educate us about how deeply painful some stereotypes are" (p. 82). In this sense, the discomfort (and the sense of "loss of control") that occur when strong emotions are expressed with the classroom can have important possibilities; although classrooms with multiple modes of expression can be difficult, then can also be very rewarding.

Featherston and Ishibashi (2005), like many other theorists and educators, stress the importance of addressing the reality of multiple interlocking oppressions within the classroom. One method for teachers to do this is to help students in developing an understanding of their own personal stories, definitions, and frameworks for communication and organization. The authors stress the importance of oral history as a means through which students can develop an analysis to "effectively address all oppressions at the interpersonal and institutional levels of interaction" (p. 105); this process requires that students have a sociological, historical, psychological, and emotional understanding of oppression. The use of oral history and sharing of personal stories enables students to identify what Bratt (as cited in Featherston & Ishibashi, 2005) calls soul wounds, resulting from learned stereotypes, internalized oppression, and

patterns of thought and behavior; oral history aids students in recognizing their place in history, and building alliances across categories of difference. Oral histories expose our relationships to and with ourselves, and with others. In addition, the authors identify the act of naming as the first step in honoring difference; it enables students to have the vocabulary to express personal feelings and experiences, and creates a space in which transformation can take place. When students are cognizant of their behavior and the internalization of their socially constructed beliefs, they then have the opportunity to consciously choose other options.

Autobiographical writing (specifically within Black feminist pedagogical approaches) is also identified as a means for students to understand and address multiple oppressions within the classroom. Lemons (2005), for example, discusses his experiences teaching a course on Black feminism with a groups of students that were mostly white/passing as white, and examines the intersection of sexism, classism, and homophobia in classrooms. Lemons contends that “Black feminist thought, a social theory of liberation and pedagogical agent of social change, can be a powerful tool toward the development of critical race consciousness in white students” (p. 214). He notes that black feminism is, in the words of Gloria Joseph, “the active engagement in the struggle to overcome the oppressions of racism, heterosexism, and classism, as well as sexism,” (p. 214) and aims to recognize and understand the lived experience of multiple oppressions.

Lemons’ (2005) course, *Womanist Thought*, is inspired by Alice Walker’s vision of black feminism, in which a black feminist is one who is “committed to survival and wholeness of entire people, male *and* female” (Walker, as cited in Lemons, 2005, p. 214).

Lemons' course centers on the intellectual history of black women in the United States in order to understand "the standpoint and theoretical foundation on which the Black/women of color represent themselves" (Lemons, 2005, p. 217); it emphasizes the multidimensionality of black feminist thought, and also serves as a catalyst for self-examination and the questioning of white power and privilege. Students are encouraged to question the terms of intellectual discourse, especially those which reinforce a mind/body split. Autobiographical writing is also of central importance; as Lemons explains, "When feminist antiracist teaching is linked to pedagogy of composition that privileges autobiographical writing as a strategy for enabling students to connect social theory with personal empowerment, intellectual labor becomes a catalyst for *self*-liberation" (p. 215).

Lemons (2005) identifies writing as an integral tool for learning in the course; in addition to writing weekly critical analytical papers, students also had to write and share a "rationale statement" stating their reasons for choosing to take the course, and a final assignment addressing what it meant to be "white" having just completed a course on black feminism. The rationale statement functions to provide students with space to share their desires and have them publically acknowledged, as well as to enable the professor to gauge where the students are intellectually and emotionally in relation to the course topic and what they would like to explore; it also aims to be open about what they want to learn, and is underlined by the hope that students will ultimately "feel compelled to embrace the liberatory ideology that characterizes black feminist thought" (p. 219). Students also revisit the rationale statement at the end of the course in order to "provide an autobiographical context in which to reflect on the personal, social, and political implications of their initial decision to enroll in the course – as white people"; this allows

them to reflect on their “own individual intellectual, critical, and emotional development through the course” (p.239). Lemons emphasizes the importance of including student voice for two reasons: 1) “to illustrate the effectiveness of teaching autobiographical writing focused on self-reflection linked to composition for critical social consciousness and 2) to demonstrate the viability of antiracist teaching founded on black feminist thinking” (p.220).

For Lemons (2005), Black feminist thought has a universal appeal as a liberatory theory of social change; the students in his class looked to Black feminist thought to find a place to ground beliefs in social justice, and the writings of many of his students illustrated the belief that Black feminist thought can be liberatory for those suffering from different forms of injustice. As Lemons explains, “In theorizing an end to the multiple oppressions of black women, it lays the groundwork for a social movement that includes everyone” (p. 230). Furthermore, Lemons maintains that

for some white students who have never really explored white identity, white supremacy, and white privilege, black feminism opens the possibility for radical self-transformation not only toward the attainment of antiracist consciousness, but the conviction of political activism that calls for an end to white supremacy.”

(pp. 231-2)

Process considerations are also identified as being an important part of effective teaching practice. Maxwell (2005) addresses strategies and challenges involved in addressing and dealing with whiteness in social justice education programs. Her discussion focuses on the reactions and resistance of some students to acknowledging the existence of white racism and institutionalized inequality, and offers solutions to aid

students in this process. She identifies the impact of the teacher's identity/worldview as an important process consideration in the classroom. As Maxwell explains,

before I can engage students in a process, I must be critically aware of the impact of my own identity on the classroom. Without knowledge about my own worldview and a commitment to challenge my own biases, I could, in fact, reinforce viewpoints that are intolerant and insensitive in the courses I teach.

Therefore, it is vital for me to remain present with my own learning about identity and white privilege. (p.159)

Maxwell advocates Holladay's idea of "white homework" for both teachers and students as a method to critically analyze one's own identity and world view; this "homework" involves reading, talking with others, and examining if one's behavior matches his/her values.

In addition, Maxwell (2005) also identifies the teaching style of the educator as a second important "process" consideration. She advocates a student-centered teaching style, which is designed to "take advantage of multiple opportunities we have to shape or influence student learning" (Maxwell, 2005, p. 161), and enables students to engage in a "deep" approach to processing material (Entwistle 1998; Marton & Saljo 1997, as cited in Maxwell, 2005). This kind of learning-centered approach enables students to engage with new knowledge in ways which support meaning making, as well as providing students with the opportunity to effectively engage with each other, the teacher, and the course material in order to tackle difficult issues such as socialization and knowledge construction.

Sleeter (2000) also discusses the importance of self-analysis as a regular component of effective teaching practice, and identifies education for critical consciousness as a central component of pedagogy supporting social justice aims. In her discussion of whiteness and the teaching profession, she argues that the continuing trend of an increasingly white teaching profession (and their consequent involvement within multicultural education) will result in a future multicultural education programs reflecting a white world view; one in which social change and social reconstruction is not prioritized. For Sleeter, multicultural education should be a collaborative, dialogical process which aims to achieve social justice and equality; thus, she identifies an important need for white educators to engage in regular self-analysis to recognize their own biases and interests, and engage in dialogue and collaborative work within their own communities with people of colour. This process will enable these educators to be able to better understand other people's experiences of white racism, understand their own world view, and participate in a more productive form of dialogue and action. Sleeter also stresses that white people need to ensure that their own desire to "convert" other colleagues does not take precedence over studying ourselves critically; critical self analysis is a difficult and important task. To effectively address white racism and oppression within the field of education, Sleeter additionally stresses that new vocabulary and action strategies must be developed, and educators must consider new possibilities for collective political action in order to achieve social change. Finally, people working with teachers to develop their understanding of different forms of oppression need to connect these teachers with other people who are actively engaged in working towards

social justice and dismantling white supremacy, because academic courses alone are not enough.

Critical, critical multicultural, anti-racist, women of color, and black feminist theories and pedagogies all provide relevant recommendations which can be used to effectively support social aims within teacher education programs. Although these recommendations are by no means exhaustive, they serve as a starting point for educators aiming to effectively apply these theoretical and pedagogical approaches within their own teaching practice in order to support social justice objectives. The final section of this chapter provides conclusions for this study, and discusses recommendations for future research.

Conclusions

The examination throughout this thesis of various multicultural and anti-racist theories/pedagogies serves to confirm the existing tensions and differences between and within these approaches. The analysis of these differences is significant because it highlights the problems inherent in the continuing conceptual ambiguity of terms and language within the multicultural debate, as well as the complications involved in the effective application of multicultural theory within educational practice.

Clearly, if one of the central aims of educational programs is, in fact, to create critically conscious, socially engaged citizens, the multicultural educational curriculum employed within teacher education programs must be founded upon a theoretical foundation which effectively supports these aims. The development of a conceptual framework to identify and categorize differing multicultural approaches is thus of central importance to those who design multicultural curricula, the educators who will interpret

and implement the material, and the students in teacher educator programs who must decide how they are to incorporate the knowledge they learn into their own educational practice.

The conceptual framework proposed in this thesis serves to categorize these various approaches in order to identify common criteria that effectively support social justice aims; the emphasis on institutionalized inequality/racism and analysis of white power and privilege found in critical, critical multicultural, anti-racist, and black feminist/women of color theories and pedagogies serves to provide a common link between these differing and distinct approaches. Admittedly, the examination and exploration of these two broad themes serves to introduce several other relevant issues for consideration when addressing the topic of social justice. The analysis of multiple/interlocking oppression and challenging of Eurocentric norms, are, for example, both of central importance within the broader context of inequality and power relations. The issues of institutionalized inequality and white power/privilege are, in and of themselves, complex categories which include and address many different related subjects and concerns. It is clear, however, that the analysis of these two general criteria do, in fact, serve to situate the multicultural theories and pedagogies discussed throughout this study on different sides of the multicultural debate; not all of these theories/pedagogies effectively support social justice aims.

The conservative and liberal multicultural approaches, as previously summarized, are problematic in that they do not challenge the current social order and the existence of institutionalized inequality, discrimination, racism, or address issues of whiteness, power, privilege, nor do they aim to challenge existing social inequities and injustice; they are

founded upon an oversimplified and essentialist vision of common culture; finally, they advocate the assimilation of difference. Consequently, the resulting pedagogical aims of these approaches do not effectively support a social justice agenda.

In contrast, critical theory and pedagogy aim to examine and challenge the existence of inequality and undemocratic institutional and societal practices with the goal of empowering oppressed groups. Through a dialectical understanding of society, and the critical analysis of class reproduction, critical theory and pedagogy examine how the economic interests of the marketplace impact school policies, and aim to identify how inequalities are perpetuated through undemocratic schooling practices; in addition, a critical theory/pedagogical approach emphasizes the development of critical consciousness as a means for students to become politically active agents of social change. Through constant questioning and critiquing of the social order, students are able to understand and challenge institutionalized inequality and racism, and address issues of power and privilege; thus, the struggle for social justice is a central component of critical theory and pedagogy.

Critical multicultural theory and pedagogy also meet the criteria identified in the proposed conceptual framework which are necessary to effectively support social justice aims. A critical multicultural approach aims to politicize the educational sphere using a transformative political agenda; it critiques superficial approaches to multiculturalism (including conservative and liberal approaches), and aims to affirm diversity within “a politics of cultural criticism and a commitment to social justice” (McLaren, 2000, p. 221); it focuses on the role that language and representation play in the construction of meaning and identity; it also challenges essentialist logic present when constructing the

notion of sameness and difference, and interrogates the construction of difference and identity in relation to radical politics. This multicultural approach addresses and critiques the normative presence and power of whiteness, as well institutionalized social inequities existing at the institutional level.

Anti-racist theory and pedagogy aim to challenge racism, discrimination, and oppression occurring at the institutional and systematic levels with the goal of promoting collective political action. An anti-racist approach focuses on the analysis of multiple/intersecting oppressions, the social construction of race, and the ideology of white supremacy, which is used to legitimate exploitation of people of color. It aims to problematize the economic and political systems which support and perpetuate racism and oppression, and critiques invisible white norms, power, and privilege within the dominant group. The objectives of anti-racist theory and pedagogy include (but are not limited to) developing educational programs which disrupt the dominance of whiteness and oppose assimilation, focusing on the production of knowledge through multiple voices, and challenging inequity and injustice. Thus, this approach is ultimately founded upon social justice aims.

Black feminist and women of color theory and pedagogy aim to identify and challenge racism, sexism, and classism, both within the classroom, and at the societal and institutional level, and empower individuals as political agents of social and educational transformation and change. Importance is placed on the recognition and understanding of multiple/interlocking oppressions (such as racism, classism, and sexism), differential access to power and privilege, power dynamics, the development of agency and critical consciousness, and activism. Black feminism and women of color feminism emphasize

the inclusion of multiple voices, including women of color and individuals of other marginalized groups, and the life experiences and worldviews of black women/women of color, as well as the importance of exploring the knowledge of women through the black feminist tradition. This approach also focuses on the awareness and analysis of power dynamics, both between student/teacher, and at the institutional level; it aims to deconstruct and challenge traditional pedagogies, and advocates the development of a more inclusive and pluralist course content; and it focuses on the importance of dialogue, African American oral traditions, and autobiographical writing to explore and articulate women's knowledge. Ultimately, both black feminist and women of color feminist approaches critique institutionalized inequality, power, and privilege, aim to empower students to confront and transform inequitable power relations, and support a radical social justice agenda.

Critical, critical multicultural, anti-racist, and black feminist/women of color theories and pedagogies all place important emphasis on institutionalized racism/inequality and whiteness, white power, and white privilege, and aim to challenge and transform unjust social relations; they share a common aim of generating social justice and empowering students to be agents of social change. Pedagogical recommendations for teacher education programs (as previously discussed) include a) addressing and challenging whiteness, racism, and white supremacy within the classroom using critical dialogue, as well as the application of critical race theory, critical cultural therapy, and racial identity theory; b) the application of a social constructivist approach to knowledge to challenge essentialist thinking, and to understand and challenge existing social injustice and racism; c) challenging Eurocentric norms and

conceptions of rationality and truth; d) implementing different process approaches within the classroom (such as a student-centered approach) which effectively support social justice aims; e) addressing multiple oppressions through the sharing of oral histories and personal stories; and f) providing students with opportunities for critical self-analysis through means such as autobiographical writing. These recommendations serve as a useful starting point for teachers aiming to generate social change and support social justice aims within teacher education programs.

Recommendations for Future Research

Given the variety of differing conceptions and interpretations of multiculturalism articulated in these theories, and the corresponding differences in pedagogical aims for each of these approaches, questions arise regarding the application of these theories and pedagogies in teacher education programs, and in particular with the development and implementation of teacher education curricula. What are the pedagogical aims of teacher education programs concerning multicultural issues, and what theoretical foundations are used as a basis for curriculum development? Do these programs include courses focusing on multicultural issues? If so, what content is included in these courses, and how do teacher educators “translate” and deal with this material? How do teacher educators conceptualize and understand multiculturalism? How do pre-service teachers conceptualize and interpret multiculturalism, and how does their conceptualization prepare them for their own future teaching practice? If meaningful connections are to be made between theory and practice, these questions must be adequately addressed.

Although there is an abundance of research on program applications and implementation of multicultural curricula, recent research indicates a lack of necessary

information and academic curricular support for teacher educators dealing with multicultural issues (Carignan et al., 2005). Thus, there is a need for an in-depth study involving a comprehensive examination of how multiculturalism is actually conceptualized and integrated within teacher education programs. Consequently, my proposed recommendations for future research include the development of a qualitative research study which will address these questions through an analysis of current teacher curricula within teacher education programs, and an examination of Canadian teacher educator attitudes and conceptions of multicultural issues. This proposed research should specifically aim to a) examine and analyze the theoretical foundations on which teacher education curricula is based using the conceptual framework developed within this thesis; b) examine and evaluate Canadian educators' attitudes and understanding of multiculturalism; c) gain a deeper understanding of how multiculturalism is incorporated into different Canadian teacher educator programs; and d) examine how multicultural issues are dealt with in teacher educator classes.

As Mathieson (2005) suggests, "If we are driven by a vision to create a more just and humane world, then what is called for is nothing less than a radical rethinking of our role as educators and of schooling, beginning with an interrogation of our own selves" (p. 241). Thus, if the central aims of education are, in fact, to generate social justice and foster the development of critically conscious, politically engaged citizens, we must effectively evaluate whether the teacher education programs that shape and mold our future teachers truly support these goals.

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