2018

Victims, Victors, or Bystanders? African American College Students' Perceptions of African American Agency During the Civil War

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VICTIMS, VICTORS, OR BYSTANDERS?

AFRICAN AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES OF AFRICAN

AMERICAN AGENCY DURING THE CIVIL WAR

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Virginia Commonwealth University.

by

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ABSTRACT

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This dissertation examines African American students' perspectives of African American agency during the Civil War. It also seeks to understand where their knowledge of African Americans during the Civil War comes from. The topic fits within the Critical Race Theory framework and utilized a mixed methods approach to understand the study findings. The methodology included an online survey completed by forty-two participants at a Historically Black university and 3 semi-structured interviews using the interview protocol. Descriptive statistical demographic data, open-ended responses and interview transcripts were analyzed using the agency rubric developed by the researcher. The themes that emerged from the study included the limited agency of African Americans during the Civil War, silenced voices of African American women, students' limited knowledge of ancestors' emancipation and

emancipation narratives, and little specific knowledge of African Americans involvement in the Civil War

Key Words: African American college students, Agency, Critical Race Theory, Civil War, Historical Actors.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Kathy is a fourth grade classroom teacher in Virginia. She is teaching a lesson on the Civil War today. This is typically a two-week long unit that highlights the causes of the war and important leaders on both the Union and the Confederate sides. The standards give some information about a few decisive battles during this four-year conflict. During the two-weeks, she discusses these events included in the standards that led up to the war including Harriet Tubman's support of the Underground Railroad. She also explains to the students that Nat Turner led a slave revolt against plantation owners in Southampton County to free enslaved people.

Kathy's focus today however, is to discuss the involvement of African Americans in this war. She explains to the students, during the Civil War, some African Americans believed that their freedom would best be secured by following the northern army. Because of this, many of them decided to follow Union army regiments. Other African Americans felt that they would have a better chance at survival in the south so they supported the Confederate Army. Leading up to the war, many abolitionists campaigned to end slavery.

The teacher is cognizant of the fact that she only has two weeks to teach this unit and she wants her students to do well on the state exam so she aligns herself closely with the essential knowledge and understandings. Kathy seldom adlibs or adds extra information that would paint a more in-depth picture of the individuals involved on either side. For example, when she

teaches about John Brown, an abolitionist who led the raid on Harpers Ferry to arm enslaved individuals, most of the students think that he was a black man until they see a picture of him in their textbook. This lesson ends the unit on the Civil War in this fourth grade class after a short discussion about the war ending at Appomattox Courthouse when Robert E. Lee surrendered to Ulysses S. Grant.

Some teachers add more information based upon their own knowledge or interest that better illustrates one or both sides of the war and all of the people involved. Most teachers adhere to the specific bulleted points included in the curriculum framework. Most fourth grade children learn this narrative in the state of Virginia.

This type of narrative is ineffective in engendering a sense of agency amongst African Americans because African American historical actors are either absent from the narrative or they are rendered voiceless. Overall, students who learn this version of history from standards and textbooks receive a sanitized version of historical facts that stretches the truth. Conversations about motivations, causes, or effects of actions are absent from this type of narrative. The idea that African Americans supported in substantial numbers or willingly supported the Confederacy is not challenged. Conversations about collective or individual agency of any kind other than that of Nat Turner and Harriet Tubman are absent as well. The information included is vague at best and leaves students wondering, "Who were these people?"

Now let us imagine a different story. The lesson is taught using a set of standards that includes the story of Robert Smalls. Smalls commandeered a cotton steamer with other enslaved African Americans and sailed into the open sea where he then surrendered to the Union Army on May 13, 1862. This action helped secure his freedom and the freedom of his co-conspirators and family members. Smalls spent many years enslaved, but had become a successful ship navigator

and used this knowledge on that fateful day to change his life and the lives of so many others. Would this narrative help students recognize the agency that existed amongst African Americans during the Civil War?

Statement of the Problem

As a connoisseur of history and as a college history instructor, I have implemented routines with my students that push them to delve deeply, 'take apart', and better understand historical and current events. As was customary at the summer program that I taught, my gifted students we read *The New York Times* every morning and discussed world affairs. On August 1, as I read the following headline in the *New York Times,* "Norma Gabler, Leader of the Crusade on Textbooks, died on July 22, 2007 at age 84" (Martin, 2007), I was immediately intrigued.

As I (or as my students and I) read this editorial, we came to understand a little more about Norma Gabler. During the 1950's and 60's, Norma Gabler and her husband, Melvin embarked on a mission to transform textbooks by deleting statements that they considered to be "anti-family, anti-American, and anti-God" (Martin, 2007). In spite of significant challenges, their methods, born at their kitchen table in Texas, were highly effective in influencing the way that textbooks describe historical events in America (Martin, 2007).

The Gabler's story illustrates how targeted goals from "special interest groups" can influence venerable institutions, such as the publishing industry, in the United States. Efforts by special interest groups are often a part of a larger political initiative for change. The Gablers give a face to the forces behind the creation of history narratives and standards in this country. As George Orwell states, "Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past." (Orwell, 1949, p. 35) Norma and her husband are examples of two people

who helped create a historical narrative that many students throughout this country use to interpret historical events and understand trends and ties to current (and future) events.

During my 16-year tenure as an educator, I have encountered students who have very little knowledge of African American historical actors. This is due, in large part to the lack of focus on people of color and people from marginalized groups (Dean, 2009; Martin, 2007; Willis, 1996; VanSledright & Kelly, 1998). Historical actors from marginalized groups are not featured as central characters in American history textbooks and curriculum (Dean, 2009; Martin, 2007; Willis, 1996; VanSledright & Kelly, 1998). In this regard, students from marginalized groups seldom get an opportunity to explore historical narratives with historical actors from their ethnic or racial group (Epstein, 1998; King & Swartz, 2014; Willis, 1996).

In recent years, the importance of curriculum standards has increased because of standardized tests (Epstein, 1998). As a result, textbooks companies have aligned their content to the curriculum standards of specific states. Therefore, students are receiving the same messages from both textbooks and curriculum standards (Loewen, 2010; VanSledright & Kelly, 1998).

Additionally, curriculum standards and textbooks often offer low-level cognitive tasks that fail to challenge K-12 students to think critically given the complexity of events and actors (Loewen, 2010; VanSledright & Kelly, 1998). When faced with the opportunity to wrestle with historical information, students too often lack the skills needed to construct a nuanced understanding. Therefore, these students rely on simple memorization and regurgitation of the facts (Loewen, 2010; VanSledright & Kelly, 1998).

These factors: sparse representation of African-Americans in history standards and textbooks coupled with their low-cognitive demand, provide the 'perfect storm' in my college

classes. Most of the students that I teach are African American and their interest in American history is often very low. As an adjunct instructor at a historically black university, I have observed the impact that years and years of these types of educational experiences and low cognitive demand tasks have had on African-American students' understanding of history and their interest in the subject.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it examines the intersection of historical representation and the effect that the *Whitewashing* of history and dominant ideology has on African American college students as they work to understand historical events that shaped their Civil War memory. The study is also significant because it analyzes how present-day African American college students understand the agency of their Civil War era ancestors.

This study will present perspectives of the African American experience during the Civil War described by African American young adults. This type of information gathering, particularly around history, standards, and cultural/racial efficacy and memory will present findings that specifically examine African American students' views of agency during this pivotal period. Few studies focus on African American students' perceptions of African American agency. Even fewer studies provide an analysis of African American students' understanding of the agency that African Americans possessed during the Civil War.

Rationale for the Study

I often ask the students in my African American history college course to name ten prominent African Americans whom they have learned about throughout their K-12 schooling. They often fail to include individuals such as Crispus Attucks, Oloudah Equiano, or Anthony Johnson. These are lesser-known African American historical figures and often are not the focus

of study in most K-12 history curriculum standards. While this may seem like a small gap in their knowledge, the exclusion or lack of knowledge of many seminal historical figures who are described as agentic gives me an idea of how much history is withheld from standards and textbooks.

More interesting than students' apparent lack of breadth and depth concerning African American historical figures is their skewed perceptions of the Civil War and the role of African Americans in this national conflict. For instance, when asked why the Civil War was fought, many students will respond, "to free slaves". When asked to talk about African Americans who fought or were actively involved in the Civil War, most students refer to the 54th Massachusetts Regiment based on the movie *Glory*. When probed, it is often difficult for students to think of many other examples of African-American involvement during the Civil War. In recent years, I have observed fewer students with knowledge of the 54th Massachusetts, therefore having no knowledge of any African Americans who participated in the war. The idea that African Americans possessed a sense of agency during this period in American history seems foreign to many students.

Social cognitive theorists define agency as the ability to have an impact on individual life choices and decisions (Bandura, 2008). This means that an individual has the forethought and the desire to make choices that may change their lives (for better or for worse). In order to be able to conceive of African Americans as agents in securing their own freedom during the Civil War, students must have some knowledge of the role of African Americans during the war. By and large, this knowledge is limited by the scarcity of historical documents that are featured in textbooks and curriculum with the central premise of African American agency.

Research Questions

Considering the literature and the anecdotal data, the following research questions are posed:

1. What knowledge do these African American college students have of the roles of African Americans during the Civil War? From where did they obtain this knowledge?

2. What are these African American college students' perceptions of the agency that African Americans possessed and utilized during the Civil War?

These questions represent a new direction for history research because there have been so few studies conducted that focus on African American HBCU students' perceptions of historical agency.

Methodology

This research study was conducted in a mid-sized city at a historically Black, private university in Virginia. The total population for this study was 80 students enrolled in four African-American history classes as part of their undergraduate study. From the overall 80 students who received the survey (see appendix D) through email, 42 freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior students responded and completed the survey. The researcher used these results compile data about their perceptions of the Civil War and more specifically, the role of African Americans therein.

The survey data was collected and analyzed to help the researcher chose a critical sample of three from the 42students who completed the survey. These students then participated in one-on-one interviews based upon their self-identification as graduates of public high schools in Virginia, and as such, they offered a salient perspective on K-12 history instruction and curriculum. This was an integral part of the sampling choice because the study focuses on

perceptions of African agency as taught in Virginia K-12. The participants were interviewed and asked questions that delve deeper into responses analyzed from the survey. The interview responses were then transcribed, analyzed, and coded using the agency rubric.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this research study the following terms will be used:

Afrocentric Approach to Education- An approach that locates people of African descent at the center of educational instruction (Asante, 1991).

Agency- People's ability to empower themselves and control the things around them (Asante, 1988, 1999; Bandura, 2008).

Collective Memory- The widely accepted narratives that large groups of individuals learn that shape their thinking and understanding of events (Letourneau & Moisan, 2004).

Critical Case Study Method- This type method is often used because the researcher wants to explore a specific idea or phenomenon and therefore, the sample chosen is critical to the outcome of the study. Additionally, critical case sampling works best when the overall population being studied is small so in order to yield the most profound outcome this type of sampling is critical (Patton, 1990).

Critical Race Theory- Critical race theory arose from critical legal studies and it asserts that racism in America is central to understanding how citizens interact as well as how they are perceived and treated (Solórzano, 1997).

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy- A pedagogy and theoretical way of thinking about the education of students from marginalized groups that informs teaching practices, assessment, and all other educational decisions to improve education for these students (Ladson-Billings, 1995)

Culturally Responsive Teaching- An approach to teaching that validates students' cultural beliefs and experiences by centering teaching practices on these experiences (Gay, 2010).

Dominant Ideology- Social standards or supposed norms that are presented as objective, however, they express the specific cultural, racial, economic, and/or political perspective of persons in power (Anyon, 1979).

Historical Agency- Historical agency refers to the choices and actions taken by historical actors that have an impact on the events and evolution of their lives (Sexias, 1993).

Historical Understanding- An individual's capacity to cognitively place an event along the continuum of time in a historical narrative and effectively contextualize the event and historical actors involved (Mink, 1996).

Lost Cause Narrative- The Lost Cause Narrative refers to the approach that some southerners took after the Civil War when they attempted to influence and shape the legacy of the Civil War (Blight, 2001).

Multicultural Education– Addresses racism, sexism, and ableism in education by changing the content and process of educating students in schools (Sleeter & Grant, 1987).

Race– categorizing people based upon physical attributes (Smedley, 1998).

Racism- the persistent need to identify people based upon physical attributes and treat people differently based upon these "racial" attributes (Coates, 2015).

CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter presents a review of the literature related to African American agency and Civil War memory. The chapter begins by describing the methodology used by the researcher to identify relevant sources. The researcher then introduces the theoretical lens that will be used to examine all findings and help frame the study. A review of the research on each approach to teaching history and research on the Virginia's Standards of Learning are included to help contextualize the current state of history education. The chapter ends by describing relevant research on Civil War memory and African American Civil War memory as well as studies that examine African American students' perceptions of history and historical agency among African American historical actors.

Methodology of the Research

The researcher used a two-step approach to select articles and studies for the literature review. The researcher first utilized the search terms to locate a broad list of articles and studies using search engines such as JSTOR, ERIC, and Google scholar. Once this was completed, articles were analyzed to locate specific search terms and topics relevant to the overall research study. The researcher searched through the broad list of sources using hand searching, terms in the subject or title, and analyzing reference lists.

The researcher used specific terms such as United States history, Civil War history, Civil War memory, AND African American students' perceptions or Carter G. Woodson AND

African American education, African American agency, agentic theory, historical agency, multicultural education, Afrocentric education, collective memory, and historical understanding. Hand searches were also conducted on Google scholar, JSTOR, and ERIC to find relevant sources. Citation searches were used to find relevant studies or articles cited in other journal articles that could be relevant to the researcher.

Studies used met a specific criterion that included a focus on African American students' perspectives and K-12 United States history instruction, curriculum and textbooks, Civil War history and instruction, Civil War memory, and historical agency. It is important to note that many of the sources used in the literature review are not empirical because there is a lack of empirical work on African American historical agency. Since many of the research articles are theoretical, the researcher selected specific studies written by pioneers in the history education field providing either theoretical or empirical literature on the topic. All studies and theoretical articles were categorized using over-arching themes related to the research topic such as three approaches to righting the wrongs in history instruction, Civil War memory, African American students' perspectives, etc.

Theoretical Framework

Race

Examinations of histories of people throughout the world indicate multiethnic societies existed as far back as the ancient world (Smedley, 1998). However, researchers agree that race is a relatively new construct that has been in existence for less than five centuries (Smedley, 1998). Smedley (1998) asserts that race is often difficult to define and its origins trace back to geographic areas largely influenced by colonization. Smedley (1998) defines race as "the organization of all peoples into a limited number of unequal or ranked categories theoretically

based on differences in their biophysical traits" (Smedley, 1998, p. 693). While race was not prominent in the narrative of ancient people, in recent centuries, this construct has caused people to form opinions and espouse generalizations about groups of people. In the United States, race helps to control and define the masses through rigid cultural and social norms (Banks, 1995; Solórzano, 1997; Smedley, 1998).

Researchers affirm race and racism as social constructs engrained in American history, society, culture, and the educational system (Coates, 2015; Parker, 2003; Smedley, 1998; West, 1994; Woodson, 1933). Racism is the persistent need to treat people differently or inferior based upon these "racial" attributes (Coates, 2015). West (1994) argues that race is a pivotal factor in shaping the successes and failures of people from many different ethnic groups in America. West (1994) and Smedley (1998) both agree that Jim Crow segregation, economic hardships, and social stigma are byproducts of a root cause in America, and that racism is that root cause. Failure to discuss and explore racism distorts conversations about the problems that plague communities of people from marginalized groups (Smedley, 1998; West, 1994). Researchers and theorists must first acknowledge that racism exists and that it matters in order to have an honest and productive conversation about economic, political, and social problems (Blanchett, 2006; Briscoe, 2015; West, 1994).

Recently, we have observed examples of racism's pervasiveness as cellphone technology has captured deadly encounters between the police and African Americans. Events such as the arrest and murder of Michael Brown, Sandra Bland, and Eric Garner, to name a few, conjure up images of American racism and the pervasiveness of race (Coates, 2015). Recognizing that racism exists helps Americans understand that the bodies and the minds of individuals from

marginalized groups are systematically under attack (Coates, 2015). In essence, African

Americans are in a constant battle to possess their bodies and minds (Coates, 2015).

Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory (CRT) developed during the 1970's as a way to combat racism and

failed desegregation efforts (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Solórzano, 1997). CRT challenges the

stereotypes widely accepted by the White majority and uses the stories and perceptions of

marginalized groups to bring forth a more balanced version of history that uses race as a central

thematic focus (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Critical race theory arose from critical legal studies and

it asserts that racism in America is central to understanding how citizens interact as well as how

they are perceived and treated in the legal system (Solórzano, 1997). CRT uses minorities'

personal experiences of racism to challenge the status quo, particularly in the legal arena

(Solórzano, 1997). CRT seeks to examine the evolution of race in the African Diaspora and calls

for a more accurate account of race in litigation (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Solórzano, 1997).

In education, CRT examines experiences of minorities and the stereotypes perpetuated in

curriculum (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Solórzano, 1997).

Solórzano (1997) states:

> Critical race theory in teacher education focuses on the work of professional teacher
>
> educators of color…who are trying to develop a pedagogy, curriculum, and research
>
> agenda that accounts for the role of race and racism in U.S. education and works toward
>
> the elimination of racism…(p. 7)

In a sense, critical race theory research in education seeks to uncover the various forms of racism

in education and how it affects minorities throughout the educational system (Solórzano, 1997).

Building upon Solórzano's (1997) framework and Woodson's (2016) study examining African American students' perceptions of agency, the researcher will use CRT as a lens to examine the pervasiveness of race and racism in history curriculum standards. The researcher will also use CRT to understand how the presence of race and racism in history education has an effect on minority students' perceptions of African American agency during the Civil War. This theoretical framework will examine the narratives purported about African American involvement during the Civil War.

CRT Rationale. Recently, I was asked to teach a group of Black teens African American History for one hour a week at a Baptist church summer camp. The reverend asked me to focus only on the Civil Rights movement. I chose to begin with summarizing and helping them understand the climate of the time and some of the events that led up to many of the Civil Rights events they learn about and are familiar with.

One Wednesday afternoon we discussed lynching. We defined the term and to their surprise, the definition of a lynching was much more than just hanging a person by the neck. The students had the opportunity to examine the Emmett Till case, watch a film titled "Without Sanctuary" and read and discuss Ida B. Wells' essay titled "Lynch Law in America". I then showed them the Sandra Bland arrest tape for approximately 1 minute and 30 seconds and discussed her case a little. One student stated: "Why is she showing us this?" I always close my discussion with the students as I do with my college classes by asking: "Where is the ripple?" Could this case be an example of ripple? The ripple represents the effects of historical events on current or modern history. The young student mentioned did not see the correlation and could not recognize the ripple.

The example above illustrates why CRT is the most appropriate theoretical framework for this study. CRT as a research lens will effectively examine perceptions of African American agency during the Civil War and the effect that current history curriculum has on African American students' perceptions because this framework acknowledges race and racism as a real issue pervasive in the this country. Although these young students are growing up in what they consider a post-racial America because of the election of Barack Obama, this America does not exist (Coates, 2015; Parker, 2003; Smedley, 1998; West, 1994). Critical Race Theory is a powerful framework to use when examining the perceptions of students influenced by racist agendas and White privilege in education and curriculum. African American students' perceptions continue to be influenced by dominant ideology and because of this, many of them continue to consent to the status quo.

Agency

Agentic Theory

Agentic theory developed from a social cognitive perspective to help people understand how individuals think, transform, and assimilate in different situations throughout life. Bandura (2006) describes agency as the ability "to influence intentionally one's functioning and life circumstances" (p. 164). In this respect, the psychologist assumes that people are constantly analyzing their lives and making decisions that would alter their circumstances in positive or negative ways (Bandura, 2006). The four core propositions of this theory maintain that human beings are intentional, possess forethought, activate self-reactiveness (self-regulation), and possess self-examination (Bandura, 2006). This theory relates to historical agency because it provides the foundation for the theory that historical actors have always engaged in some

15

cognitive interplay that has influenced the decisions that they have made throughout history, be the effects of these decisions positive or negative.

Historical Agency

Historical Agency describes the historical actor, writer, and consumer in the structure of historical narratives, the construction of historical narratives, and the metacognitive interplay between consumers and historical narratives (Damico et al., 2010; Den Heyer, 2003; Ferario, 2014; & Sexias, 1993). Researchers believe when students gain an understanding of historical agency they feel empowered and believe that they are or can be part of a larger political system (Barton, 2012; Den Heyer, 2003; & Sexias, 1993). In other words, if history education cultivates an understanding of historical agency, students should be able to understand that it is their duty and right to engage in political discourse and action.

Sexias (1993) summarized previous researchers by stating, "Historical agency implies that people in the past faced choices, that they made decisions, and the resulting actions had consequences" (Sexias, 199, p. 303). Den Heyer (2003) describes how understanding historical agency helps people make sense of history by stating:

> Historical agency, as a second order historical concept, is a tool that helps students both to make meaning out of history, as historical thinkers, and enhances their capacities as agents in the present (p. 411).

In other words, historical agency as a metacognitive tool helps students understand and process historical events. Historical agency develops as students gain deeper historical understanding and historical consciousness (Barton, 2012; Den Heyer, 2003; & Sexias, 1993).

Many researchers assert that students must first possess a level of historical agency themselves in order for them to recognize agency throughout history and historical texts (Den

Heyer, 2003; Etheir et al., 2013). In other words, individuals must be able to see themselves as having an impact on their own lives and understand that they have the ability to affect change in order to be able to consider historical actors as agentic (Den Heyer, 2003; Etheir et al., 2013).

Do students really need to see themselves as agentic first or must they first observe and learn about people who are agentic in order to develop their own agency? According to Woodson (2016), some historical narratives leave African American students feeling less agentic because these narratives frame African Americans leaders as larger than life characters giving them almost god-like qualities that students have a hard time relating to. This makes students believe that they could never be agentic because they are not like these historical actors. If this is the case, then historical narratives need to give more texture to historical actors. This aids students in understanding that these individuals were people who had faults and were human too (Woodson, 2016).

Ferario (2014) traces the first representations and identification of historical agency back to ancient Greece. The idea of eminent (messianic) historic figures and their portrayals became very popular during this period (Ferario, 2014). Ferario suggests that long before American scholars were formulating history standards and writing textbooks, ancient Greeks were ascribing agentic characteristics to individuals and collective movements through literature, images, and historical writings (Ferario, 2014). According to Ferario (2014), "the assignment of historical agency or responsibility rests significantly upon the interpreters' evaluations of event outcomes" (p. 12). This suggests that defining a person or a group of people as agentic falls heavily on the writers of history and consumers of historical events. If Ferario's findings are true, then writers and consumers of history do in-fact determine if individuals and collective movements are portrayed as agentic. In fact, agency is usually ascribed during or after events by

the viewers of history and the perceptions can differ, based upon each consumer's individual experiences.

Historical agency and agents exist in our textbooks and curriculum standards. People also encounter them their communities each day (Barton, 2012). While including a wide array of historical subjects and actors in textbooks and standards helps mold students into historical agents, it is important to point out that their inclusion alone does not necessarily encourage students themselves to feel agentic. People characterize historical actors as being more agentic than others because of the specificity of the information included about those individuals and the amount of "coverage" that they receive in historical texts. (Barton, 2012).

Barton (2012) presents ideas to help solve the problem of not only defining agency, but also helping us understand what actually counts as agency and how we can be more inclusive in our definition. One idea is for historians, textbook writers, and standard bearers to widen the definition of agency to include the pursuit of jobs, building families, and otherwise ordinary life tasks as examples of being agentic. Barton states "...students need to understand that history is not only made when they engage in the dramatic transformations of public life, but also when they make decisions in their personal lives that affect other people, both near and far" (Barton, p. 10, 2012).

The author also cautions to focus less on the actions of one individual only and look at "collective movements" of larger groups (Barton, 2012). Woodson (2016) refers to this trend in American history texts or messianic master narratives as the chosen one theme. When examining the information included in history texts pertaining to the Civil Rights Movement, the researcher found that most texts chose to focus on a singular individual as the hero or savior. When exploring African American students' perceptions of civic agency during the time most of

the participants supported this idea that Civil Rights leaders where "chosen ones" and possessed "righteous blood" (Woodson, 2016). Ferario (2014) would describe this focus on a singular individual as the "great man" portrayal observed in many Greek narratives of historical events. Campbell points out this idea of a singular heroine can often be observed in literature as well, sometimes referred as "the hero's journey" (Campbell, 1949).

In recent years the focus in the African American community on a single hero or heroine who seeks to thwart the effects of racism has shifted. Instead, events and movements are being captured and interpreted in real-time. The "Black Lives Matter" movement is often characterized as a collective group of individuals who possess a high-level of agency in the Black community. However, "Black Lives Matter" is often criticized by media outlets and political pundits who portray this group as a leaderless movement because of their distributed leadership style (Ransby, 2015). Ferario (2014), Woodson (2016) and Barton (2012) reveal that simply including African Americans, women, and other minorities in standards and textbooks does not help students recognize agency and become more agentic themselves because many students perceive these individuals to be on a pedestal or to have achieved a level of success that to them is unattainable (Woodson, 2016).

A rubric for identifying and measuring historical agency was developed using the framework titled "Uncovering Human Agency" on the teachinghistory.org website. This rubric was designed by the researcher to measure four domains of agency including actions, decisions, sources of power and impact on action. The researcher used the rubric to connect the perceptions of African American agency to Multicultural, Afrocentric, Culturally Relevant pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching. Using this rubric, the researcher evaluated Virginia's Standards and the approach exemplified in these standards.

Three Approaches to Righting Wrongs: Multicultural, Afrocentric, and Culturally

Relevant Pedagogy

Three approaches to teaching have been widely used during the last century in American schools. Each of these approaches seeks to address and control the effects of racism by engaging students of marginalized groups. These three approaches are multicultural education, Afrocentric education, and more recently, culturally relevant pedagogy. Each of these schools of thought provides educational methods and content to address the needs of the diverse students in America.

Multicultural Education

Multicultural education is an attempt to alter students' historical consciousness so that when they encounter information about the past (and present) they focus on issues of social justice and challenge racism. This tool helps social studies educators combat the overarching master narrative typical in history curriculum (Bennet, 2001; Lazerow, 1994). Multicultural educators believe that the inclusion of African Americans and people from other marginalized groups helps students feel more connected to the history of America and gives them a voice (Bennet, 2001; Lazerow, 1994).

Assumptions about the roots of multicultural education differ amongst researchers. Some scholars believe this approach dates back to the 1920's and Marcus Garvey's movement or the push to democratize education. Other researchers insist that multicultural education's beginnings are rooted in the Civil Rights movement of the 1950's and 1960's because it challenged racism and promoted the inclusion of women and minorities in curriculum (Baker, 1979; Banks, 1989, 1995; Newby et, al., 1996; Wills, 1996). Either way, most agree that multicultural education can

reshape school culture, as well as curriculum, in addition to transforming students thinking about historical events (Baker, 1979; Banks, 1989, 1995; Newby et, al., 1996; Wills, 1996).

At the heart of multicultural education, theorists and practitioners seek to give students of marginalized groups a voice (Banks, 1995). Banks (1995) identifies five dimensions of multicultural education that include: content integration, knowledge construction, prejudice reduction, equity pedagogy, and empowering school culture. As teachers move to deepen their pedagogical practice around multicultural education, they are able to provide increasingly more democratic experiences for students, thus allowing students to acutely recognize racial, ethnic, and cultural biases that exist in the curriculum (Banks, 1995). This deeper use of multicultural education allows students to construct their own knowledge of history given the variety of sources they encounter (Banks, 1995). Teachers further on the continuum allow student to construct their own knowledge.

Criticisms of Multicultural Education

Critics of multicultural education insist this approach often fails to fully discuss the stories and various aspects of American history as they relate to women and minorities (Wills, 1996). The multicultural approach often leads to simply adding a few minority and female historical actors in a narrative as a way to make minorities feel included (Lazerow, 1994). The problem presented is that minorities and women are not central in these narratives (Lazerow, 1994). Because of this, their thoughts and actions are not analyzed and understood by consumers of historical texts (Lazerow, 1994).

In the case of African Americans, multicultural historical narratives include African American actors in events but the focus is usually on "African American issues," such as the fight for civil rights (Wills, 1996). This often confuses students and leads them to believe that

African Americans contributions only exist during certain periods and are limited to these "African American issues" (Wills, 1996). For example, when examining American history textbooks and curricula that claim to use a multicultural approach, one often finds that they tend to only discuss African Americans in readings focused on the Civil War, the Civil Rights movement, and slavery in America. This has a profound effect on the psyche of a young child and leads them to believe that African Americans made no other contribution to history or humanity other than at these specific points in history when the issue of slavery or civil rights was central (Wills, 1996; Woodson, 1933). These narratives neglect to include the voices of African Americans when discussing the founding of American Constitutional government (Wills, 1996). It also paints a picture that African Americans are not involved in civic discourse (Wills, 1996).

Afrocentric Education

Another approach to addressing the needs of African American students is the Afrocentric approach. The Afrocentric approach to education strives to locate African people (and people of the African Diaspora) at the center of the historical content taught (Asante, 1991). Carter G. Woodson described the educational system as one that "psychologically lynches" (Levine, 2000, p. 6) African Americans because it cuts them off from their heritage and cripples their ability to cultivate an identity rich in African culture (Woodson, 1933). In effect, the American history narrative that African Americans learn in school sends the message that Africans and African Americans are less historically significant and have never reached the same level of civilization as Europeans and European Americans (Woodson, 1933).

Woodson argued that the American school system during the early 1900's used history instruction as a subtle way of controlling the masses of African American people (Woodson,

1933). In Woodson's seminal piece, *The Mis-Education of the Negro* (Woodson, 1933), he summarized some of the major issues that he observes in the American educational systems as it relates to the "Negro" and how it has crippled African Americans and kept them from achieving the "American dream" (Woodson, 1933). Concerning history texts, Woodson noted that Africa is rarely discussed and when it is, Africa is painted as a dark continent devoid of any worthy contributions (Woodson, 1933). He stated,

> No thought was given to the history of Africa except so far as it had been a field of exploitation for the Caucasian. You might study the history as it was offered in our system from the elementary school throughout the university, and you would never hear Africa mentioned except in the negative (Woodson, 1933, p.18).

According to Okafor (1992), several dominant themes about education are surmised in Woodson's, *The Miseducation of the Negro.* The overarching theme purported by Woodson is that education in America is oppressive to Black Americans (Woodson, 1933). Of similar importance is the idea that the Western experience is upheld as the standard in American education (Woodson, 1933). People are not taught about the educational experiences of other cultures nor are they taught to view education or history through the lens of different cultures. Finally, Woodson asserted that education in America makes Whites hate African Americans and African Americans in-turn hate themselves (Woodson, 1933).

King & Swartz (2014) posit Woodson's ideas about Afrocentric education a step further by designing and advocating for the implementation of an Afrocentric, culturally informed teaching praxis. One strategy to achieve this goal is to use *re-membering*- "a process for recovering history by putting back together the multiple and shared knowledge and experiences that shaped the past" (King & Swartz, 2014, p. xii) as a vehicle to help students process

information. Remembered texts combine dominant narratives with silenced voices to democratize history for people of marginalized groups (King & Swartz, 2014).

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Culturally Responsive Education

Culturally relevant pedagogy and culturally responsive education are two   approaches often discussed synonymously, however they differ slightly. Aronson & Laughter (2016) describe both culturally responsive teaching and culturally relevant pedagogy as approaches to education "committed to social justice" (p. 164).

Culturally relevant pedagogy focuses on teachers' thinking and beliefs about education as it relates to minority students. This type of pedagogy informs not only teaching practices and other instructional decisions, but also school culture and classroom climate (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Aronson & Laughter, 2016). Many disciplines use culturally relevant pedagogy. This approach is conducive to social studies classrooms (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Ladson-Billings defined culturally relevant pedagogy as "a theoretical model that not only addresses student achievement but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools (and other institutions) perpetuate" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 469). Teachers who ground their practice in culturally relevant pedagogy identify with students' experiences and give them value (Aronson & Laughter, 2016).

Ladson-Billings (1995) highlighted the pedagogical practices of eight teachers of African American students. The eight teachers were chosen through a community nomination process that was completed by parents and principals. The study revealed the teachers involved possessed an ethic of caring in the utilization of specific pedagogical methods that affected how the students thought about themselves, their community, and history. Students in the classrooms

24

of the teachers involved in this study also achieved at higher rates (Ladson-Billings, 1995). For

example, the researcher found students these eight classes scored at or above grade-level on

standardized tests and exemplified achievement through classroom observation of students

working on other assignments (Ladson-Billing, 1995). These students displayed greater ability

to problem solve, write, and articulate their knowledge (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

The researchers attributed the success of these students to the teachers' ability to tap into

the things that the students were interested in such as music and other aspects of pop culture.

The researchers believed that these teachers possessed the ability to channel the talents of

students who had previously exhibited discipline problems to leadership roles in their classrooms

and schools (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Additionally, students in these classrooms were engaged in

service learning projects that assisted the improvement of their communities (Ladson-Billings,

1995). The author concluded the study by stating that culturally relevant pedagogy is an

effective approach to educating minority students because it cultivates a community of students

who work collectively towards academic achievement and it discourages competition amongst

learners (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Building on the work of Carter G. Woodson, culturally

relevant pedagogy also allows students to actively engage in and create knowledge centered on

their cultural beliefs.

Culturally responsive teaching focuses more on teaching practices and less on the

theoretical understandings that govern teaching practices (Gay, 2010; Aronson & Laughter

2016). Gay (2010) defines this teaching approach by saying it uses "…the cultural knowledge,

prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to

make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them (p. 31). These teachers use

cultural references in their teaching methods and create high expectations for all students

(Aronson & Laughter, 2016). In this way, students feel valued and therefore, work to reach the expectations set forth by the teacher. Aronson & Laughter (2016) summarizes six critical tenants of culturally relevant teaching practice which includes: setting high expectations, creating educational experiences that thwart oppressive educational structures, validating cultural experiences, teaching "the whole child", teaching to students' strengths, and considering the different dimensions of students' culture.

Multicultural education continues to be the norm in most history classrooms in America today (Banks, 1989, 1995; Newby et al., 1996; Willis, 1996). Often, state boards consult multicultural theoretical frameworks when creating their standards for students. Afrocentric education is similar to multicultural education in that it seeks to make standards and educational approaches less centered on the European perspective (Asante, 1991; King et al., 2010; Okafor, 1992, Woodson, 1933). The Afrocentric approach signals a focus on African American students needs and caters to a minority of the population (Okafor, 1992, Woodson, 1933). However, some researchers advocate that an Afrocentric approach can be used even in Eurocentric school systems through remembered text and offering counter narratives (King & Swartz, 2014; Loewen, 2010). Culturally relevant pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching have become popular instructional approaches used in history classes across the nation in the late 20th and 21st century, but this popularity has not had a major impact on curriculum standards (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay, 2010). Many researchers would note that culturally relevant pedagogy works well in the "urban" classrooms of progressive school districts throughout this country (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay, 2010).

Virginia's Social Studies Standards of Learning

Many states have adopted Common Core Standards the students that they serve; however, the state of Virginia continues to use the Standards of Learning to serve as minimum competencies for students. Virginia has a prescribed process for writing curriculum standards, essential knowledge, and adopting textbooks. The process begins three to four years before the standards are to be implemented (van Hover, Hicks & Stoddard, 2010). In the recent curriculum revision cycle in 2008, the State Board of Education allowed various interest groups such as the state chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Humanities Foundations, councils for Economic Education, and other groups to lobby for content to be included in the curriculum standards (van Hover, Hicks & Stoddard, 2010). These interest groups, along with teachers and administrators gave their input on the content that should have been included in the Social Studies standards during each cycle of the standards revision process (van Hover, Hicks & Stoddard, 2010).

As part of the lobbying, organizations solicit constituents to write their state legislative representative on behalf of the interest group and highlight the significance of a favorite historical event or individual. If there are enough letters written, then the particular piece of information is likely to be added to the list of essential knowledge as a topic or individual important enough to be studied. Highly qualified teachers apply to write curriculum for the state and serve on committees for each grade level and course in social studies (van Hover, Hicks & Stoddard, 2010). Once these curriculum guides are written, they are then available on the Department of Education's website for public comment. Depending on the feedback from the public, the information is edited and the standards are adopted (van Hover, Hicks & Stoddard, 2010).

There is a similar process for social studies textbooks. Once this process is completed, the Department of Education publishes a list of state approved textbooks available on their website to choose from. It is not mandatory that school districts choose one of the textbooks on this list (Virginia Department of Education Staff, 2007). However, most superintendents would refrain from choosing a textbook that is not on the approved state board of education list. This long and grueling process is the same for all disciplines, but certain subjects, specifically social studies and science, are more controversial and debate surrounding these topics can be very divisive (Van Hover, 2010).

Anderson & Metzger (2011) conducted a mixed methods text analysis of US history curricula to examine how the standards portray the experiences of African Americans during the American Revolution and the Civil War and whether or not states addressed controversial issues in American history. The researchers used a multi-perspective critical conceptual framework (Anderson & Metzger, 2011). This mixed- methods study examined curriculum standards in New Jersey, Michigan, South Carolina, and Virginia. The researchers analyzed and coded the standards to identify dominant themes. The researchers wanted to analyze how the standards in each state engaged students in a conversation about race. The standards were sorted into the following categories: contributory (praised African Americans), progressive/exceptional (noted democratic progress on race relations), or discordant/conflict (questioned the master narrative). Findings concluded that most of the states include a significant amount of information about African Americans, however; most of the standards glossed over slavery and failed to address racial hierarchy in America during these pivotal periods in history.

Anderson and Metzger (2011) found that Virginia's standards make general mention of slavery but do not engage students in higher- level thinking about the institution of slavery. In

addition, the researchers point out that the standards do not lend any understanding of the intricacies and harsh aspects of slavery. The researchers found that 83% of Virginia's standards were in the contribute category (Anderson & Metzger, 2011).

Few studies exist that specifically examine Virginia's curriculum standards. Heilig, Brown, and Brown undertook one such study. They examined 11th grade Texas social studies standards and coded them based upon how they address race and people of color (2012). Using a two-pronged approach, the researchers first highlighted the number of people of color discussed in the standards then they focused on how issues of race and racism were addressed throughout. The researchers revealed that many state standards often marginalized the impact of race progress and attribute that progress to one individual or a small group of people. Heilig et al. (2012) found that in large, Texas standards failed to use the words "race" or "racism". They only found one standard that specifically included the word race and addressed issues of race and race relations. Similarly, racial ambiguity was found to be present in many of the 11th grade US history standards. Heilig et al. (2012) posit this often happens throughout the United States and it lessens students understanding of the impact that historical events had on certain racial groups.

Civil War in History Curriculum and Collective Memory

Historians and writers throughout the 20th century and beyond have analyzed the Civil War. The historiography of the Civil War has long considered the role of African Americans, both free and enslaved, before during and after the war (Du Bois, 1935; Foner, 2006). However, for over 100 years after the war ended, popular representations have occluded African Americans from the war (Blight, 2001; Coates, 2014). Blight (2001) and Coates (2014) argue that the lack of minority voices can be attributed to the popularity of the "Lost Cause" narrative that dominated media, textbooks, and curriculum standards around the country until the 1970s (Dean,

2009). Blight (2001) calls the 100 years when the Lost Cause narrative was ascendant a period

of "collective forgetting" of the real causes and effects of the Civil War.

Journalist Ta' Nehisi Coates explored the unwillingness of African Americans to study

the Civil War. This lack of interest, according to Coates is because popular narratives of the

Civil War may discuss slavery as an issue, but do not include African-Americans as historical

agents who lived through a wrenching time and who exercised agency when they could to better

their conditions. Coates explains the perspective of African Americans:

> The Civil War is a story for white people—acted out by white people, on white people's
>
> terms—in which blacks feature strictly as stock characters and props. We are invited to
>
> listen, but never to truly join the narrative, for to speak as the slave would, to say that we
>
> are as happy for the Civil War as most Americans are for the Revolutionary War, is to
>
> rupture the narrative (Coates, 2011, pg. 16).

Coates also points out that many Americans receive their messages about the Civil War not only

from curriculum, textbooks, and other nonfiction texts, but also from media such as movies and

dramatic portrayals of the time. Many of these productions silence or otherwise marginalize the

voices of African Americans.

The Lost Cause narrative took shape right at the end of Civil War (Blight, 2001).

Southerners like Jefferson Davis began his campaign to influence the narrative of the Civil War

immediately after the war. As a part of his rhetoric, Davis maintained that while the South had

lost the war, the soldiers were gallant, and if they remained steadfast, they might one day see the

South restored (Blight, 2001). Jefferson Davis also gave speeches in which he blamed slave

traders for the institution of slavery rather than the southern slave owners (Blight, 2001). He

maintained that southern plantation owners were gentile towards these enslaved persons, treated

them well, and brought them Christianity (Blight, 2001). This rhetoric came to dominate the discourse well into the 1960's, shaping the minds and hearts of some of the individuals who would later go on to produce films such as "Birth of a Nation" and novels like *The Clansmen* (Blight, 2001).

Blight (2001) explains that in essence, the North had to begin a process of collective forgetting in order to reconcile with the South and mend the country. In so doing, White Southerners honored their heroes and erected monuments proclaiming their place in history. In return, the North refrained from gloating about their victory and recognized their opponents as strong soldiers who were worthy of their self-proclaimed glory. Furthermore, historians point out that the North "turned a blind eye" when African Americans were discriminated against, thus all but ensuring that the hopes and freedoms written into the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments were never realized (Blight, 2001; Woodson, 1933).

By the early 1900's a new group of historians would begin to shape the Civil War memory using historiography and primary sources as a way to substantiate their claims (Foner, 2013). As a historian and professor of history, William A. Dunning trained graduate students at Columbia University to use research methods and collections of oral history to capture analyze and document the history of the Reconstruction and Civil War eras (Foner, 2013). One by one, prospective historians from the south traveled to the north to attend this University and learn historical methods under Dunning's influence. Dunning, who himself was influenced by a notable southern historian, John W. Burgess', wielded a level of influence that had a major impact on how this era would be perceived in textbooks, film and later scholarship (Foner, 2013).

Students like Ulrich Phillips gathered stories from White Americans who lived through the Civil War and Reconstruction in the south. These stories would then be interpreted as fact and published in scholarly journals (Du Bois, 2013; Foner, 2013). These historical studies were considered problematic because historians believed they were interpreted through a racist lens (Du Bois, 2013; Foner, 2013). Historians argued that the research consistently attributed the central issue of the time to political party differences and the unpreparedness of African Americans to govern effectively (Du Bois, 2013; Foner, 2013).

Ulrich Phillips became one of the most noted and celebrated students influenced by Burgess and Dunning during the 20th century (Du Bois, 2013; Foner, 2013). Phillips, like other Dunning students, grew up in the south and purported ideas that in later decades would be considered racist by many historians (Du Bois 2013; Foner, 2013)

Historians and scholars throughout the nation lauded his knowledge and research of slavery in America and throughout the world (Foner, 2013). Phillips however diverged from other Dunning students because he believed the major issues that plagued the south during the Reconstruction era were issues concerning race, corrupt Reconstruction governments spearheaded by Republicans, and the void left by an absent free labor source (Foner, 2013; Moroney & Phillips, 1920).

In their seminal piece, *American Negro Slavery*, Moroney & Phillips (1920) give American readers a glimpse into slavery's beginnings from the shores of Africa to the Americas. The writers describe indigenous people on the continent of Africa as impulsive beings who often practiced cannibalism and polygamy because of the inferior status of women throughout the continent (Moroney & Phillips, 1920). The historians also questioned the fate of African descendants after their interaction with Europeans. The researchers state:

Yet the question remains, and may long remain, whether the manner in which the

Negroes were brought into touch with civilization resulted in the greater blessing or the

greater curse (pg. 4).

Phillips was considered the foremost historian on the subject of slavery and this designation

afforded opportunities to spread his influence through courses taught at prestigious universities

and several journal articles and books that he published or co-authored (Foner, 2013).

In later years, notable White Virginians would attempt to build upon the foundation laid

by the Dunning school scholars through textbook and curriculum creation (Dean, 2009; Foner,

2013). In explaining how the Virginia Civil War narrative was propagated, Dean (2009) turns to

the process whereby textbook and curriculum committees were formed in the 1940's, 50's, and

60's, without consultation from African Americans. Dean analyzes methods in the1940's

amongst politicians, which focused on reversing the effects of Civil Rights and other "radical"

movements. Dean (2009) explains:

In Virginia, segregationist politicians, such as Harry F. Byrd, Sr., J. Lindsay Almond,

John Stewart Battle, Garland Gray, and William Tuck, intended to keep Lost Cause

history alive by creating a series of history textbooks that they hoped every Virginia

school child, Black and White, would read. (p. 320).

Some of these textbooks, intended for students in grades 4, 7, and high school (usually 11th

grade), included *Cavalier Commonwealth* and *Virginia: History, Government, and Geography*.

The proponents of these textbooks were against instruction that sought to "use instructional

devices' to 'advocate changes in the racial or economic structure of society" (Dean, 2009, 327)

and the committees maintained that the purpose of history instruction should be to encourage

patriotism and a love of Virginia in young children and adolescents both White and Black. Over

the years, textbooks written and adopted by these types of committees were responsible for publishing the following information:

- "Slave-owners were good people" (Dean, 2009, p. 337).

- "The War of Northern Aggression came…and the South lost but the South had honorable men who led the battle" (Dean, 2009, p.337).

- "Life among the Negroes of Virginia in slavery times was generally happy. The Negroes went about in a cheerful manner making a living themselves and for those for whom they worked" (Dean, 2009, p. 332).

- "The northern people did not need much help to work their small farms. The planters in Virginia and in the South needed many men to work for them. They had slaves to do their work" (Dean, 2009, p. 331).

Dean uses Benjamin Muse to illustrate the impact that the Lost Cause narrative can have on individuals. Muse grew up in Virginia and watched films such as "Birth of a Nation." He also read books like, *The Clansmen* and *The Leopards Spots* --all of which espouse racist ideals (Dean, 2009). Not surprisingly, Muse took on the belief that African Americans were indeed inferior and treated them as second-class citizens. However, his experiences traveling overseas reshaped his views of race and race relations in America. Recognizing that much of what he believed early in his life came from messages received from books and films that shaped his childhood, Muse became an advocate for social change and desegregation.

As in the example of Benjamin Muse, narratives present in many of the textbooks published during the 1950's and 1960's attempted to support the master narrative that African Americans, as a whole, supported the Confederacy's and their masters. While these ideas are no longer found in textbooks used in Virginia, Neo-Confederate myths made their way into political

discourse (Kumar & Helderman, 2010) and even textbooks. In 2010, textbooks published by

Five Ponds Press highlighted some of these same ideals in their Virginia History textbooks for

4th grade students. *Our Virginia: Past and Present* textbook contained many inaccuracies.

However, the most glaring mistake was the information included about black Confederates. In

the section about black Confederates, the textbook stated that thousands of African Americans

fought for the Confederacy (Sieff, 2010). The author later admitted that she retrieved this

information from a pro-Confederate website that was not vetted (Sieff, 2010). In light of this

admission, the textbooks in question were quickly removed from classrooms.

It is important to point out that ultimately students learn information in their classrooms

that comes from the information from the standards and textbooks along with the knowledge and

experiences of the teachers in their classrooms. The enacted curriculum in classrooms shapes

students' understanding of history.

African American Civil War Memory

As Blight points out, this emerging master narrative was challenged from the beginning

as states were re-entering the union during the half-century period after the Civil War. Blight

uses race as a central lens through which to view events that happened after the war as well as all

of the stories that exist and serve as memories of this conflict in the United States. He notes that

three voices or visions of the Civil War emerged through his research, the reconciliationists'

vision, the White supremacist vision, and the emancipationist vision.

Blight (2001) recognizes that in the decades following the Civil War, African Americans

developed several different viewpoints of the period that often ranged from one of a dark and

debilitating era in African American history to one that translated into progress for African

Americans immediately after the war. In his chapter "Black Memory and Progress of the Race,"

Blight (2001) illustrates many of the events occurring in 1883, the 20-year anniversary of the Emancipation proclamation. As Blight notes, African Americans were a central focus of the celebrations, dinners, parades, and lectures that commemorated The Emancipation Proclamation. In one illustration, Blight describes when Frederick Douglass was honored at a banquet that included the most affluent African American men in the United States during that time. During the banquet, Douglass delivered a speech in which he recited the words, "Until this day" over and over again (Blight, 2001, p. 303). In Douglass' speech, he makes the audience recognize that only then, 20 years after the Emancipation Proclamation, were African Americans beginning to realize the promises of the Emancipation Proclamation.

In addition to celebrations focused on the Emancipation Proclamation, other notable events were commemorated. Decoration Day ceremonies served as reminders for African Americans concerning the Civil War and were a place to publicly honor their achievements (Blight, 2001). African Americans were the first to memorialize their dead at the first Decoration Day (now known as Memorial Day) gathering in Charleston, South Carolina immediately after the war. The first Memorial Day was observed by African Americans to memorialize dead martyrs who had fought the Civil War and helped secure their freedom. In this way, African Americans were attempting to create a collective memory of the war that highlighted the freedom of enslaved people and the efforts of northern soldiers. As time passed, Decoration Day ceremonies grew and were observed by proponents for and against slavery, north, and south, newly freed, and former slaves.

Frederick Douglass is one of the best sources when analyzing memories of the Civil War and the African American effort put forth during the war. To Douglass, the war was a war for abolition from its inception, or at least this is what he hoped it would be (Douglass, 2003).

Although Douglass admits that neither the North nor the South wanted this in the beginning, nor did they want African Americans to be actively involved in the war effort, it would prove to be inevitable that African Americans would support the Union in ways that led to their winning the war and led to the abolition of slavery.

Blight (2001) points out race remains a pivotal factor in shaping the portrayal of African Americans involvement during the Civil War and other historical events and has had a profound effect on how African Americans view their place in the collective memory of the Civil War. In *Race and Reunion* Blight shares, "With the color line sharpening, the black community faced decisions over just how to compete for its place in America's collective memory" (Blight, 2001, p. 311). Coates corroborates the idea that with all of the revisions to the actual historical facts included in the narrative African Americans have long felt that their voices and contributions are absent (Coates, 2011).

A Pew Research study titled "The Civil War: Still Relevant, Still Divisive," (2011) polled 1,507 Americans about the relevance of the Civil War in politics. Results indicated that 56% of Americans report that the Civil War was an important event. Additionally, 49% of White Americans who participated in the study believed that political leaders should not praise confederate leaders, while 36% believed that praise is appropriate. Amongst African Americans polled, 33% agreed with this sentiment. The data presented by the Pew study revealed that a significant proportion of African Americans are in support of praising Southern Civil War leaders. This leads one to question the overall understanding that African Americans possess today about the war and whether or not they recognize the role the African Americans played during the conflict.

African American Students' Perspectives of American History

Epstein (1998) examined the differences in historical perspectives of African and European adolescents in an eleventh grade classroom. The findings from 10 African American students and nine European American students showed the African American and European American students had different perspectives about important themes and historical actors throughout history. African American students chose African American historical actors, such as Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, and Harriet Tubman, as the most significant. European Americans students selected George Washington, JFK, and Martin Luther King as the most important historical actors. There was some overlap in the historical actors students reported as most important. However, African Americans chose African American historical figures as important figures 75% of the time, while European Americans reported European American figures as important historical figures 82% of the time. Six of the African American respondents cited the Civil War as having led to African American's freedom. For example, one African-American student, Sheree, cited the Emancipation Proclamation as an important document because it freed the slaves. However, the students polled did not cite African Americans as having greater amounts of agency. One could infer that these students believed that African Americans had some sense of agency during the war because 13% of the students reported that Harriet Tubman was a significant historical actor. Epstein (1998) infers that the differences in perspectives stem from different experiences.

Wineburg & Monte-Sano (2008) conducted a study that polled students and adults to find out whom they believed were "famous" Americans. In the study they asked whether or not curriculum changes have had an effect on students' historical consciousness. In their introduction Wineburg and Monte-Sano point out that, much of the curriculum currently uses

38

tokenism as a way of including minorities and women in their curriculum. The researchers

explain that true inclusion and multicultural curriculum does not exist. Instead, tokenism masks

itself as inclusion and multiculturalism.

In their summary, Wineburg and Monte-Sano explain that the effects of race are

noteworthy, but so too are the effects of age. As a part of their methodology, Wineburg &

Monte-Sano (2008) conducted a comparison study and polled over 2,000 high school students

and 2,000 American-born adults. Among high school students of all backgrounds, the most

"famous" Americans were African Americans. The top three most popular individuals were

Martin Luther King Jr., Harriet Tubman, and Rosa Parks. When comparing the two groups, both

high school students and adults named eight of the same figures as the most famous Americans.

Students were more than four times as likely as adults to name King and Tubman, and almost

four times more likely to name Parks"(Wineburg & Monte-Sano, 2008, p. 1193). When

comparing African American and White students, African Americans were more likely to name

Martin Luther King, Harriet Tubman, and Oprah Winfrey as important historical figures

(Wineburg & Monte-Sano, 2008). Another comparison amongst White and Black students

revealed Black students listed nine African Americans as their top ten famous Americans and

White students listed five African Americans on their famous Americans list (Wineburg &

Monte-Sano, 2008). In addition to these findings, White students named the White famous

Americans at higher significance on their famous Americans list (Wineburg & Monte-Sano,

2008).

Carter G. Woodson (1933) worried that African Americans were not getting a history

education that supported a positive self-image. As a historian, textbook writer, and educational

reformer, he worked to bring positive accounts of African American history to young people.

According to Wineburg and Monte Sano (2008), the reforms Woodson advocated have changed the content that students, both African American and European American, learn in school. The effects of the inclusion of this material on African American students' sense of historical agency, however, are more complicated than Carter G. Woodson may have imagined. Ashley Woodson (2016) conducted an ethnographic study to examine nine African American high school students' perceptions of civic agency during the Civil Rights movement. The study conducted spanned three years and included focus groups, analysis of field notes, and participants' journals. Woodson identified four dominant themes that include: defining civil rights leaders, righteous blood, holy and acceptable, and the chosen ones (Woodson, 2016). Of these four themes, the righteous blood theme and chosen one theme most deals with the agency of historical actors.

The participants in the study expressed several times that real Civil Rights leaders had "righteous blood" (Woodson, 2016, p.11). This theme describes participants' perceptions that Civil Rights leaders were willing to risk their lives, and in many cases, die for their cause. To these students, this willingness is the true mark of a Civil Rights leader. One of the participants stated about the death of Medgar Evers: "Civil rights leaders is people who laid down their lives for our people. We have the rights we do today because of them" (Woodson, 2016, p.195). The idea that Civil Rights leaders have to be willing to sacrifice their lives for the cause emerged several times. The researcher noted that many of the students who participated in her study were discouraged to become a Civic leader in their community or to aspire to be a Civil Rights leader themselves because of the perceived risk involved (Woodson, 2016). One student even noted that documentaries on Civil Rights leaders always end with funerals because many prominent Civil Rights leaders have died (Woodson, 2016).

The "Chosen One" theme emerged in one of the participants named Qahir's responses. To Qahir, a Civil Rights leader is chosen "by God" (Woodson, 2016). These are not his exact words but this theme is implied in his commentary (Woodson, 2016). He appeared to believe that Civil Rights leaders had to all be of a certain pedigree and have a certain level of education. He also perceived Civil Rights leaders as lonely people who had to give up their lives and friends and any hope of ever having fun in order to be dedicated to their cause (Woodson, 2016). To him, this was a level that he did not aspire to or believe he could attain.

These two idea ideas represent the overarching theme of many messianic master narratives that we see in curriculum standards and textbooks. In many cases, standards and historical texts portray African American leaders as "Chosen Ones" who were ready to die for their cause. What does this then say to the future generation of leaders who might be leading a "small" movement in their local community? Can they still aspire to be leaders of any movement national, local, or even in their own families? The researcher will explore these ideas through interview questions to see how students' perceptions of African American agency during the Civil War connect to the agency that they do or do not exhibit in their own lives. Measuring the impact that historical agency has on the agency that African American students possess in their own lives needs to be explored in order for us to understand the implications that this might have on the African American community.

Literature Gap

While there are many studies conducted analyzing students' perceptions of history both in the United States and abroad, few studies exist that solely focus on African American students' perceptions of United States history curriculum, instruction, and textbooks (Epstein, 1998; Epstein, Mayorga & Nelson, 2011; Woodson, 2016). The studies that do exist focus on

41

comparing and contrasting African American and White American or Latino students' perspectives of history instruction (Epstein, 1998, Mayorga & Nelson, 2011; Woodson, 2016). None of the aforementioned studies examined provide an in-depth analysis of African American students' perceptions of history instruction, curriculum standards, and textbooks. Fewer studies exist that analyze how African American students' perceptions of African American agency during the Civil War has an effect of their perceptions of their own agency. Gaps in students' knowledge of African American's involvement in historical events also provide an important basis for this study and others like this. Especially when these gaps in knowledge are noted at Historically Black Colleges where much of the information taught is centered on the African experiences.

This study will build upon the findings of Woodson (2016) by exploring Virginia's Standards of Learning and their portrayal of African Americans historical actors during the Civil War. It is important to create a body of research that focuses solely on African American subjects and their opinions of Civil War standards and the agency of historical actors. This period of history continues to encompass a considerable amount of the information included in textbooks and curriculum standards about African Americans (Blight, 2001; Epstein, 1998; Loewen, 2010). This information in turn, continues to shape what African Americans believe about their involvement in this country (Woodson, 2016).

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to explore African American students' perceptions of African American agency during the Civil War. This study was conceived as a way to understand and share these perspectives while simultaneously analyzing the impact history curriculum standards has on African American students perceptions of the Civil War in this state. This research study answered the following questions:

1. What knowledge do these African American college students have of the roles of African Americans during the Civil War? From where did they obtain this knowledge?

2. What are these African American college students' perceptions of the agency that African Americans possessed and utilized during the Civil War?

Research Design

This study used a mixed-methods approach designed to analyze the perspectives of African American students at a Historically Black University. Mixed-methods research is the most appropriate method for this study because it draws upon the most useful aspects of both quantitative and qualitative research to examine the responses of the participants in educational research (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The quantitative methods used in this study include a report of descriptive statistics from survey data (Appendix D). The researcher also analyzed open-ended survey responses and semi-structured interview responses from a critical sample of study participants as a part of the qualitative methods.

The survey was used in a similar study (Reich & Corning, 2017), at a larger university; however, it was modified to meet the needs of this specific study. The researcher used the survey to collect baseline ideas about the Civil War to better understand their opinions about why the war was fought. The survey also gathered data about students' perceptions of African American agency during the Civil War and the Civil War in general. The survey results served as a way to select the most appropriate sample of students to participate in the interviews.

The results from the survey painted a broad picture of the participants' experiences. For example, question seven asks the participants if they believe the Civil War is historically significant today. Answers to this question helped the researcher gauge the participants' knowledge of or interest in the Civil War. Survey questions also helped the researcher identify participants who attended public K-12 schools in Virginia. Additionally, questions 9, 13, 15-19, and 20 are Likert scale or yes or no questions that aided the researcher in understanding the participants' perceptions about the Civil War. These questions explored the experiences that study participants have had during their K-12 schooling that shape their thinking about the Civil War and African Americans' contributions.

A framework for historical agency created by the researcher was utilized to code the participants' open-ended responses from the survey and interviews. This allowed the researcher to measure the participants' perceptions of the agency of African Americans at the time of the Civil War. The specific descriptors used to measure agency include actions, sources of power, decision makers, and impact on events and individuals. The framework was created to categorize participant perceptions of African American agency. The categories in the framework were created using a rubric for measuring agency in textbooks from teachinghistory.org (de Oliveria, n.d., October 16, 2016). The researcher used the rubric to create descriptors of agency on a

continuum. Using this framework the researcher coded these responses to identify if they perceived African American historical actors as agentic or not agentic. Together with other survey responses, this analysis helped build an argument for maximum variation sampling in the selection of interview participants. For the purpose of this study, the qualitative approaches will be more dominant because the researcher focused heavily on the interview and survey responses gathered in an open-ended manner (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

Case Study Methods

Flyvbjerg (2006) describe case study as a method to understand human behavior in a way that quantitative research does not allow. Case studies are designed to give researchers the opportunity to analyze a specific sample of a population (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Janesick (2004) advises when conducting case study analysis the researcher should seek to answer the Who (who are the participants?), Why (Why did you choose these specific participants?), How (How will you conduct and interpret the research and where?) and Where (Describe the setting of the school, community etc.) before conducting their research.

Critical Case Study. According to Klein and Myers (2009) "a critical case study aims at social critique and at being emancipatory, i.e. identifying different forms of social, cultural and political domination that may hinder human ability" (p. 135). Critical case sampling is best explained by Patton (2001) as the identification of a small number of participants to be used in qualitative research because their perspectives will provide the most salient results. This critical sample often leads to the specific development of new knowledge often not captured when using larger samples. It also helps the researcher identify larger cultural or societal phenomenon that impact participant's narratives and experiences.

Rubin & Rubin (2005) developed a framework for case study analysis that the researcher utilized when conducting this research study. The researcher identifies steps and actions that should be considered at each stage of data collection and analysis.

Table 1

Rubin & Rubin Steps toward Data Analysis

Step	Action	Purpose
1	Recognize	Find the concepts, topics, and words in the interview or documents
2	Examine	Clarity what is meant by these concepts topics and words. Synthesize in order to form a narrative.
3	Code or Name	Find a label or signifier to designate these concepts, topics and words. Then rename families of the concepts and topics.
4	Sort	Group them once again and sift through them to find nuance and overall unity.
5	Synthesize	Put the concepts, topics, and identifiers into themes and connect these to your research questions.

(Rubin & Rubin, 2005, pp. 206 – 208)

Population

In order to achieve the optimal results for this study, participants were chosen based upon their enrollment at a Historically Black University. As mentioned, the researcher used survey data to create a pool of potential interviewees with the goal of sampling for maximum variability. The survey responses were not anonymous because specific criteria including students' names and contact information was used to select participants for the interview portion of this research study.

Access

Before conducting this study or interacting with participants, the researcher gained permission from the university by contacting the director of the Department of Research at the university. The study took place on a Historically Black University campus. The acronym HBCU

is used to refer to the university and maintain anonymity. All interviews were conducted on the college campus in the library in a private room.

Setting

The study will take place on a Historically Black University campus. The HBCU chosen as the site for this research is a small private Baptist liberal arts college in a mid-sized South-Atlantic city. This historically Black college has been in existence for over 150 years and has a rich history. The university has nurtured the educational and professional careers of prominent African American politicians, historians, and activists, educators, and sports figures. The university is also home to all nine of the "Divine Nine" Black Greek letter organizations. Many of these Greek organizations are single letter chapters meaning that they were some of the first chapters chartered in their organization, one as far back as 1906.

During the Civil Rights movement, the university served as the meeting and planning center for Civil Rights demonstrations in the city. During that time, many of the students served as charter members of SNCC and received training on the campus by Civil Rights leaders like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Reverend Wyatt T. Walker. In recent years, Barak Obama, Jay Z, and Russell Simmons have visited the campus to urge students to vote in presidential elections.

The university often fails to receive accolades in the city for its accomplishments; however, one cannot deny that it has made an indelible mark on the African American community in the region and has served many alumni who now work in the area and other parts of the country. Despite its rich history, the university has struggled in recent years to keep its doors open. Overall, many students and alumni have described this university as their second home and many of them make the annual pilgrimage each year to return to the homecoming

football game. Homecoming football games are a rich part of the HBCU culture and it often becomes an annual family reunion amongst alumni and current students.

Researcher Positionality

It is important to point out that the researcher has worked at the HBCU that serves as the site of this study for 11 years. The researcher is not currently employed at this university, however, it is possible that the researcher has come in contact with some of these students in the past on campus and the some of the participants may have taken a class taught by the investigator. The researcher also attended the University as a part of her undergraduate education so this topic is very personal to the investigator as is the success of the university and its students.

Participants

Eighty students from this small HBCU were given an opportunity to respond to the study. The students were selected because they are currently enrolled in history courses at the university and as such could provide a unique perspective on the research topic. Of the 80 students who received an invitation to participate, 42 responded and completed the survey. The survey participants were both male and female, 61.9% were female and 38.1% were male.

Although the university is a Historically Black College, the survey participants represent different racial or cultural backgrounds.   Ninety percent of the students surveyed identified as African American, 2.4% Latino, 2.4% North/East African, 2.4% White, and 2.4% multiracial. The students home states include Virginia, Florida, New Jersey, New York, Maryland, Washington D.C., Delaware, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Washington State, Arizona, and one student identified as a "military kid" who lived in several of the states listed above as well as Georgia and Oklahoma. When asked about the racial demographics of their k-12 schools 16.7% of the

participants stated that they attended predominantly White schools, 31% predominantly African American, 16.7% and even mixture of White and Black students, and 35.7% a diverse mixture of people of all cultures.

The students who participated in this study were currently enrolled in African American history courses or American history courses. At this point in their matriculation, each of these students has taken at least one African American history course (HIS 225). All students are required to take two sections of African American history and American history. Some of the students may have taken the second half of the African American history courses required at the university (HIS 225). As an instructor at the university, the researcher has taught a section of all of the required history courses at the university. The familiarity with the coursework and the student body helped the researcher assess some of the gaps in the students' knowledge. It also helped the researcher understand the teaching the expectations of students and faculty in history courses, preferred teaching style and course materials.

Interview Participants. The researcher selected 3 participants who identified as African American and attended K-12 schools in Virginia to participate in the one-on-one interviews. Each of the participants was selected based upon the following criteria: (a) participants identified that they matriculated through K-12 schools in the state of Virginia (b) identified that they have a specific connection to the African American experience of the Civil War (c) self-identified as African American and (d) based upon their answers to questions 3, 4, and 5 on the survey:

1. What is your impression of the main cause of the Civil War?

2. As far as you know, did African Americans directly participate in <u>any</u> way in the Civil War?

3. In what way did African Americans participate in the Civil War?

The researcher focused on answers to these questions as the basis for the selection of the critical interview sample because these questions represent the core of the study. Students' answers to these questions gave the researcher a snapshot of their understanding of the War. Interview participants needed to signal that they were knowledgeable of African Americans involvement in the war in order to provide a perspective of agency. Additionally, their willingness to provide a short answer to the open-ended question was critical to the study as well. Each interview was very open and honest and our conversations helped the researcher understand some of the similarities and differences of African American students' perceptions of African American involvement in the Civil War and the war itself. The table below summarizes demographic information about the three interview participants. Pseudonyms were used to maintain anonymity.

Table 2

Interview Participants Descriptive Statistics and Survey Responses

Pseudonym	Attended K-12 schools in Virginia	K-12 Educational Background	Reasons the Civil War was fought	Did African Americans Participate in the War?	How did African Americans Participate in the War?
Ms. Lauryn	✓	Rural Mostly White	Mainly about states' rights	Yes	They were the first on the line to fight
Ms. Sophia	✓	Urban Diverse mixture of many cultures	Mainly about slavery	Yes	African Americans fought for the Union army in hopes of being recognized as citizens and abolishing slavery as a result.
Ms. Edna	✓	Rural An even representation of White and African American students	Mainly about slavery	Yes	African Americans were soldiers that fought for the Union Army

Ms. Lauryn. Ms. Lauryn (a pseudonym) is a 21-year old senior from a rural area of Virginia. She identified as African American. She attended schools that were predominantly White schools and most of her teachers were White. In her survey responses, she stated that she did have enslaved ancestors and that some of her ancestors fought during the Civil War for the

North, however, none of these stories or stories of Emancipation were handed down in her family. When I interviewed Ms. Lauryn, she expressed feelings of learning incomplete narratives in history courses about African Americans. At one point, she said that she believed that most of what she was taught was just not true. In terms of her understanding of the Civil War, she is one of the few survey participants and the only interview participant who described the main cause of the war as state's rights and sectionalism. She seemed to hold this belief even now in college. As I talked to her, her understanding of the conflict seemed to be unclear and often mixed with other historical events such as Civil Rights, slavery itself or Reconstruction.

Ms. Sophia. Ms. Sophia (a pseudonym) is as a 23-year old senior who stated that she grew up in an urban area of Virginia and went to schools with students of a diverse mixture of racial/ethnic backgrounds. In her survey responses she identified that her ancestors were also enslaved, however, she has no known ancestors who fought in the Civil War on either side. When asked to describe her upbringing and where her knowledge of the Civil War came from, she described rich experiences where she learned about African Americans' contributions from her parents and through books and films in her home. She also stated that as a family they often visited local libraries, museums, as well as the local Black history museum to learn about topics in African American history. While it seems that she learned extensive knowledge of Black historical figures and inventors at home, her knowledge of African American Civil War figures was limited.

Ms. Edna. Ms. Edna (a pseudonym) is a 23-year old junior who left the university and is now returning to finish her degree. She is an education major who went to k-12 schools in a rural area in Virginia. She describes her formative educational years in a small private African American church-based school that had an Afrocentric curriculum. This experience, while at a

young age, seems to have had an indelible impact on her understanding of history and Black history specifically. She vividly describes the differences between her experiences at the private school verses the public K-12 schools. Most of her educational years were spent in public schools. In her survey response she stated that her ancestors were enslaved however none of them fought in the war on either side. My conversation with Ms. Edna was one of the longer interviews and her perspectives was very interesting on a number of topics ranging from public schools, Black culture, HBCUs to the Civil War.

Instrumentation

Researchers from another local public university in the same mid-sized city created the survey instrument used in this study (Corning & Reich, 2017). The researchers originally used the survey to understand the effects of history instruction on college students and how they describe Civil War actors. The original survey was also used to measure the perceptions of students of all ethnicities at a mid-sized public university. The results from the study were presented at a national conference and published in an education journal.

While concepts about agency exist in the survey instrument, the original design of the instrument focused on perceptions of the Civil War and its actors as a whole. The original survey included photos that participants were asked to analyze to measure agency. Also, the instrument did not focus solely on African Americans and the participants were not all African American. For this reason, the survey instrument was altered to meet the needs of this study. The photographs of Abraham Lincoln that were to be analyzed by survey participants through open-ended responses were removed from the survey. Instead of using photographs, the researcher used experts from Virginia curriculum in the interviews because this study focused on examples of agentic African American voices captured in Virginia's standards.

The researcher also added a question on the survey that allowed participants to choose the names of films that they have viewed recently that deal with the Civil War topic. Gallagher (2008) discusses the impact that Hollywood and films have on shaping Americans understanding of the Civil War. The researcher posits most Americans do not read long exhaustive studies the Civil War so the films that they view are the biggest factor that shapes their understanding of the Civil War (Gallagher, 2008). The researcher included names of recent movies that were not captured in this survey such as *The Birth of a Nation (2016)*. These movie names were changed were made because they were specific to the population and study topic.

The survey served as a glimpse into the participants' thoughts about the Civil War. A more in-depth understanding of race, agency, and the effects of Virginia standards were gleaned through the interview responses.

Procedure

The study utilized a mixed methods approach to analyze African American students' perceptions of African American agency during the Civil War. The investigator explored students' knowledge about the Civil War as it relates to African Americans and where they acquired this knowledge using the online survey. The study responses were both quantitative and open-ended responses. The investigator analyzed students' liker-scale responses or responses that involved yes or no questions to gather data about students' perceptions about the Civil War and African American Involvement in the conflict. Open-ended responses were also analyzed using qualitative methods to code their responses. The researcher then used a critical case study approach to explore the perceptions of a critical sample of the study participants. The researcher asked open-ended questions using the interview protocol and the coded the responses based upon the criteria in the agency rubric.

Data Collection. Data collection began during the fall semester of 2017. The researcher created the survey using RedCap. A link to the survey was emailed to the population of 80 participants enrolled in two history courses. Once all surveys were completed the researcher selected 6 students to participate in interviews. The investigator vetted these participants and ultimately chose 3 students to be interviewed. Each interview participant received a $10 gift card for his or her participation in the study. Member checking was used to validate the accuracy of the transcribed interviews. Each participant was emailed a transcript of their interview and given the opportunity to validate the authenticity of the transcript.

Data Analysis of Survey Responses. Once all data was collected and validated, survey responses were initially analyzed using SPSS software and descriptive statistics. Constant Comparison was used analyze relationships between variables. Online survey responses to questions were analyzed to understand and present descriptive statistics about the study participants and answers to baseline survey questions. The researcher attempted to conduct a comparative-analysis tests based upon the specific study questions, however, since the sample size was small, these test did not yield any relevant data. Therefore, the researcher concluded that only descriptive data including percentages were necessary. The descriptive statistics included yes or no questions about demographics, Civil War Importance, African Americans involvement, and stories handed down in families about the Civil War and Emancipation. The researcher also analyzed and presented information to questions with drop down responses. This data was analyzed and presented using graphs and tables.

The open-ended or forced response questions were coded using the framework developed by the researcher (See Appendix D). Responses to these questions were sorted into two categories, agentic or not agentic. In other words, did the participants view African Americans at

the time of the Civil War as decision makers, having an impact on events and other individuals, or displaying active involvement in historical events related to the Civil War. The researcher analyzed the open-ended survey responses on an ongoing basis. The investigator analyzed the open-ended question about African American agency during the Civil War using agency framework.

As a part of this part of the study, the researcher read the transcripts from the interviews several times to fully understand the participants' responses before assigning codes and categorizing information in distinct categories. The process of coding Interview responses was as follows:

1. The researcher coded any responses about African American historical actors based upon two categories: agentic or not agentic. Agency was identified based upon statements that aligned with the 4 exemplars (1) actions (2) decision makers (3) sources of power (4) impact on action.

2. The researcher then identified significant themes that emerged from the survey and interview responses that do not fit into these categories.

Data from both the quantitative and qualitative portions of the study were used to answer each of the research questions.

Interviews. The researcher used the critical case study approach along with CRT and agentic theory to develop the research protocol and analyze the interview responses. These interviews captured the perceptions of African Americans involvement in the Civil War as presented to them through the state standards. The questions designed for the purpose of the focus group were semi-structured and the researcher asked follow-up questions when needed.

The researcher initially selected 6 survey respondents to interview. However, after examining the survey responses further and having an introductory conversation with these participants, the researcher recognized that 3 of them would provide the most comprehensive perspective because of their experiences and demographic information. Three of the survey participants were excluded because one participant self-identified as African American, however; when the investigator conducted the initial screening of participants, he revealed that he was North African. Another participant stated that she was very nervous and did not seem comfortable with the interview process. The final participant never responded to a request to participate in the interview after our initial conversation.

The investigator then conducted 45-minute to 1-hour interviews with these 3 participants using the interview protocol. Interview participants were also given the task of reading two excerpts from the VA and US History Standards of Learning from the VA US History curriculum scope and sequence document (Virginia Standards of Learning, 2008). Once the interviews were conducted, the researcher transcribed the interviews using the Trint.com online transcription service and then systematically reviewed all recordings and transcripts for accuracy. Once the surveys were completed and all interview responses were transcribed, the researcher initiated the analysis process. Member checking was utilized to validate that transcribed responses were accurate.

VCU IRB

Before conducting the research study, the researcher will complete the Institutional Review Board (IRB) process. The research process will be consistent with the research standards of Virginia Commonwealth University and the Institutional Review Board will approve the study before beginning any research.

Chapter 4. Findings

This study utilized a mixed methods approach to analyze the quantitative and qualitative survey data as well as the interview responses. The quantitative data includes descriptive statistics that helped the researcher better understand the students overall perceptions of the Civil War and African American agency. The researcher also analyzed students' open-ended responses organizing these responses by research questions and themes that emerged. The three interview participants participated in one-on-one interviews using a critical case-study approach to analyze the perceptions of African American agency during the Civil War cite. The results from the interviews were also organized by research questions and themes that emerged and supported by the participants responses. Specific questions about agency were coded and sorted using the agency rubric.

Impression of the Civil War Today

Some of the (N=42) general responses to the survey questions helped the researcher examine the participants' understanding of the Civil War in order to select a sample of students to interview. When asked to describe how they feel about the importance of the Civil War today, 70.7% responded that the Civil War is still relevant to American politics and public life today. However, 29.3% of the participants responded that the Civil War was important historically, but has little relevance to public or political life today. When asked what is your impression of the

cause of the War? 61.9% answered that the war "was mainly about slavery" while 38.1% stated that it "was mainly about states' rights."

The participants' cited reasons why the Civil War is important today in open-ended survey responses. Many responses include phrases such as freedom, abolished, emancipation, and liberation. Some students included the 13th Amendment as a reference to freedom as well. Most students seem to have an understanding that whether intended or unintended freedom from enslavement was the result of the Civil War. Other participants mentioned voting as one of the reasons the Civil War should be important to African Americans today.

Perceptions of Abraham Lincoln

The survey participants also described their views of Abraham Lincoln and his opposition to slavery by checking if they agreed with one of two statements about Abraham Lincoln. When asked if Abraham Lincoln himself morally opposed slavery 59.5% stated this was very important, 24.1% somewhat important, 11.9% not very important, and 7.1% not important at all. The researcher could conclude the students believe Abraham Lincoln morally opposed slavery and that this was important to the war.

Ancestors Enslavement

The chart below shows the students' responses to the question about whether or not their ancestors were enslaved. Overall, most students reported that they did have an ancestor who was enslaved. However, when asked about whether or not stories of emancipation were handed down in their families only 9.5% of the students answered yes while the other 90.5% answered no. Most of the students who completed the survey were African American and most likely had enslaved ancestors. However, knowledge of the origin of these ancestors and their stories of freedom were never passed down orally because they stated that they never learned any stories

about their ancestors' emancipation or any family experiences during the Civil War/Emancipation period.

Civil War Era Films

The survey also revealed Civil War films that participants have viewed in recent years that may have shaped their understanding of the conflict and African American involvement.

Figure 1

Survey Participants – Recent Civil War Films Viewed
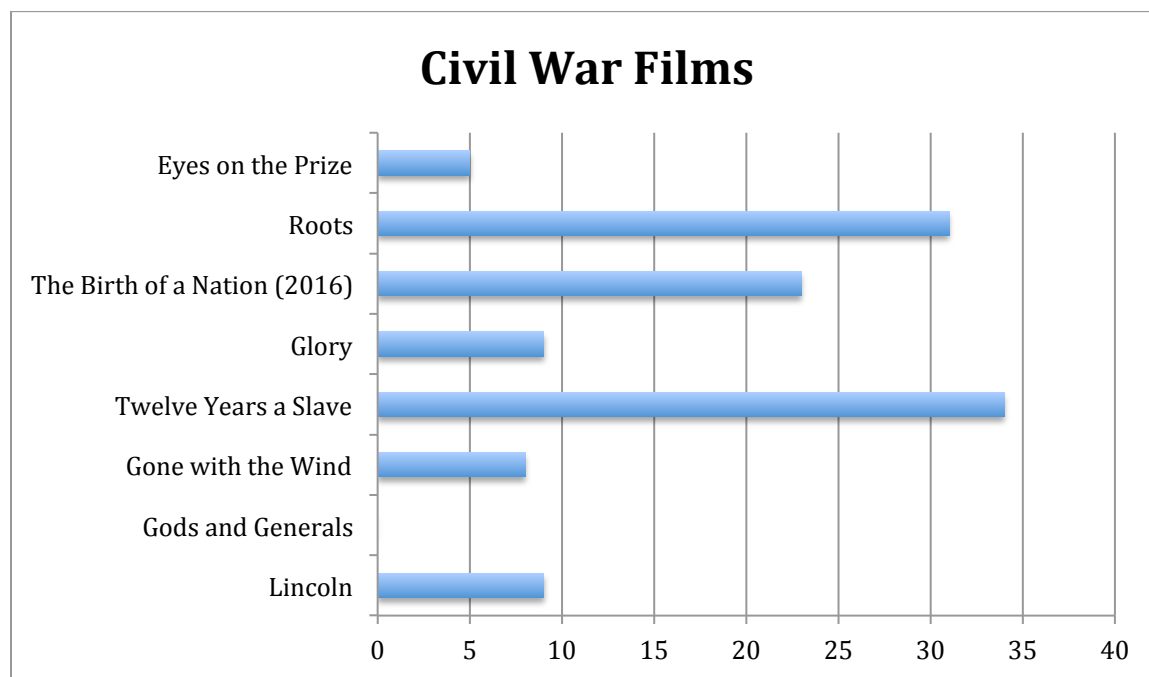
Study participants also identified other films that they have viewed related to the Civil War in their open-ended response. Some of these films included: *Gettysburg* (Maxwell, Esparza, & Katz, 1993)*, Four Little Girls* (Nevins & Lee, 1997), *Alex Haley's Queen,* (Erman, Wolper, and Sofronski, 1993)*, Selma* (DuVernay, Colson, Winfrey, Gardner, & Kleiner), *Django* (Tarantino, Sher, Hudlin, & Savone), and films on specific battles on the history channel. Some of these films are unrelated to the Civil War such as *Four Little Girls* (Nevins & Lee, 1997), *The Butler*

(Daniels, Ziskin, Elwes, Williams, & Patrick, 2013)*, Selma* (DuVernay, et al.)*, and Django* (Tarantino, et al.).

Each of the interview participants described the films related to the Civil War that they have viewed in the survey along with other participants. However, the investigator separated the interviewees' responses to understand how these films have shaped this sample of participants' understanding.

Table 3

Interview Participants – Recent Films Viewed

Films	Ms. Lauryn	Ms. Sophia	Ms. Edna
Lincoln			
Gods and Generals			
Gone With the Wind	✓		
Twelve Years a Slave	✓	✓	✓
Glory			
The Birth of a Nation	✓	✓	✓
Roots		✓	✓
Eyes on The Prize	✓		
Other Films	The Butler		

The data collected and presented here helps the researcher recognize that there is a need for African American students to be educated about their enslaved ancestors in a very specific way. It also helps the researcher understand how the perceptions of Abraham Lincoln align with the idea that he was the great Emancipator. One of the biggest questions that surface after examining these findings is whether or not recent events in the U.S. including the protest in Charlottesville have made the Civil War seem more relevant in the hearts and mind of African American students today.

What knowledge do these African American college students have of the roles of African

Americans during the Civil War? From where did they obtain this knowledge?

African Americans in the Civil War

Overwhelmingly, the participants' responses revealed a belief that African Americans

were actively involved in the Civil War, in particular as soldiers fighting in the war. Survey

question number 6 asked participants were African Americans involved in the Civil War and

78.6% of the responses were "yes". Only 9.5% of students responded that they were not

involved in the Civil War. There were 11.9% of the participants who were unsure of whether or

not African Americans participated in the conflict.

Participants were also asked to give some examples of their knowledge of African

American involvement in the Civil War. Most of the survey open-ended responses were short,

but these responses specifically cite some knowledge of African Americans contributions. It is

important to note that most of the responses were vague and participants did not cite specific

instances, names or battles. Survey responses are captured in the table below.

Table 4

Perceptions of African American Participation in the Civil War

In What Ways Did African Americans Participate in The Civil War?
• Speaking and protesting   • Some of them fought and loss their lives as a result of the war   • They helped build weapons   • They were first in line to fight   • Slaves were allowed to enlist   • Some of them fought for the Union Army   • The African Americans were soldiers on both sides, some fighting for their rights, others fought for promised freedom if the South won   • Fought as soldiers   • Provided shelter for soldiers and raw materials

When Interview Participants were asked about whether or not African Americans were

involved in the Civil War each of them stated that they had knowledge of African Americans

involvement. For example, Ms. Sophia stated, "OK well at home I've learned that a lot of African-Americans were of some somewhere had joined the Union Army." Her response confirmed aligned with the survey responses. Other interview participants echoed similar sentiments such as Ms. Lauryn

> They were heavily involved. Like heavily involved. Like the Emancipation Proclamation, you know and how they all were freed in the opposite states. I mean I would say like basically you know that they fought their life for something they really didn't know was really going on. You know what I'm saying. I always look at it like they're fighting for war. They really don't know what it's about.

Ms. Lauryn's answer shows an understanding that African Americans were involved in fighting the war. However, part of her response speaks to the uncertainty of freedom and the Aims of the war. Her response also reveals the misguided notion that African Americans aimlessly wandered into the war not knowing what that their motivation was freedom.

Most students were very unclear about what African American involvement really looked like during the war other than serving as soldiers. There were a few other responses such as speaking and protesting, which aligns more with the collective memory of the Civil Rights movement (even though Black activism for Emancipation was important during the Civil War). A few survey participants included responses that showed knowledge of African Americans serving in medical roles or even helping build encampments. Other than that, their knowledge was unclear and vague at best. In each case, no specific examples were cited. The interviews did not contradict these findings because the interview participants also described African American men as soldiers.

Civil War Actors

The interview participants provided an understanding of how state standards have shaped their understanding of African Americans and the Civil War as well as their overall general impression of history education as taught in Virginia. When asked to name some of the African American Civil War actors that she learned about in K-12 schools Ms. Edna responded:

Um...In K-12 I learned…. We didn't talk about the Civil War and that aspect at all…It was basically….It was basically that the Civil War was between the North and the South and Robert Lee and Ulysses S. Grant were the people that you needed to know. And...that was it. You know they didn't…They talked about the Emancipation Proclamation and all the major battles, Gettysburg and things like that, Abe Lincoln, but they don't talk about…they don't even really talk about the point it is about slavery.

When pressed further, and asked if she felt like she had an idea of what African Americans were doing or how they were involved during the conflict she stated:

It seems like they've depicted it as though White people were fighting for them. And so if they mention slavery it was White people were fighting your fight, meanwhile you were still enslaved. And...there aren't a whole lot of other...places to find that information. Then... you know unless you actively go find like a history video or maybe some movies. But, the major movies they, they minimized they minimalize so many things you know like Glory. Even if you see the Glory...the signature scene where the scene ends with the one tear. There's not a whole lot of context to know that he is a soldier in that movie. Unless you actually go see the movie to figure out why he was being beat. So I, in all honesty, I thought he was a slave for long time.

Ms. Edna went on to state that teachers have showed the clip of Denzel Washington being beaten in the movie Glory without showing the movie in its entirety. This led her to believe that Denzel Washington played an enslaved character in the movie without understanding that his character was a soldier that fought alongside other African American soldiers as a depiction of the 54th Massachusetts regiment.

Other sample participants who were interviewed echoed similar sentiments and found it hard to name any African American Civil War historical actors who they learned about in K-12 schools. For example Ms. Sophia stated:

During the Civil War... I don't know if that counts as a Civil War and I hope I will remember…that was something that I learned in high school. I'm trying to make sure I'm not getting it confused with my freshman year of college. Dred Scott.

When I explained to her that most people would categorize Dred Scott as an Antebellum figure she responded:

But again, those were the names. It's like I didn't learn in-depth about them. Their names were just written out as figures of that era. So really outside of you know again names like Dred Scott... I honestly do not remember any specific African-American key figures. Like if you asked me to name someone during the Civil War like Robert E Lee. That's easier to name.

I then asked her to summarize her understanding of how African Americans were involved in the Civil War effort. She included some of what she learned at home and at school during her k-12 matriculation.

Well at home I've learned that a lot of African-Americans were… some had joined the Union Army. So I knew that much. Some were just idly waiting to see the results of the

war. Some were excited and some were actually nervous. While they desired this

freedom, you know. What did this freedom actually entail? This is their way of life. And

even though that they may not particularly care for it again, generalizing, they don't know

what they're going to do once the war actually ends. So, I think it differed by where they

came from and personality things like that. Overall, the slaves in the South would be

excited to be free. But, in the north, you know, you have the African-Americans again in

the Union army and then you have the abolitionists. And really I think they just they all

were looking toward the same goal for slavery to end. But that's just a general statement.

I mean, again since college I've learned quite a few different things.

She did go on to state after this that she does remember learning about Frederick Douglass in K-

12 schools but the information was again very vague. She knew he had been enslaved and was

an Abolitionist who wrote a narrative of his life. However, the overall narrative features African

Americans during the Civil War period but they seem to be absent from the Civil War narrative.

Ms. Lauryn's response to the same question was similar to the previous two responses.

She too could not identify any African American Civil War actors by name.

No they never talked about it. They never really said anything. Their main focus was

slavery. That was all it was. That's what the Civil War was for it was for slavery. And

like actors wise, they never really said names. They never really say...All they talk about

was John Brown's raid Harpers Ferry…So that's about it. They never really...never really

said any particular names. Because like...um because we never touched on like the Civil

War. It was always brief as into African Americans. It was never like, you know, like

what was going on during that time or nothing. It was more so like Abraham Lincoln and

you know what was going on with him and you know Robert E. Lee. That's all they talked about.

Three themes emerge from each of their responses to the same questions. The first theme is that the participants have an unclear understanding of African Americans involvement in the Civil War. Even their understanding of the role that African American men played as soldiers is vague at best. Second, it is very clear that they are well versed in their knowledge of Confederate generals and Abraham Lincoln's passing of the Emancipation proclamation. Third, these students cannot name one African American involved in the Civil War and many of them struggled to even mention Frederick Douglass. When they did, it was often an afterthought. He is only mentioned once they begin to discuss the Civil War and remember his involvement as a part of the discussion.

The Origin of Knowledge of African American Involvement

Knowledge of African American involvement in the war seems to come from various places. While each of the students that I interviewed stated that they went to museums and learned about Black history at home or at church, most study participants stated they did not learn about the Civil War at home. Over 90% of the survey responses (N=42) show that students have not had stories about Emancipation or the Civil War handed down in their families.

Figure 2

Were there stories about the Emancipation of African Americans handed down in your family?
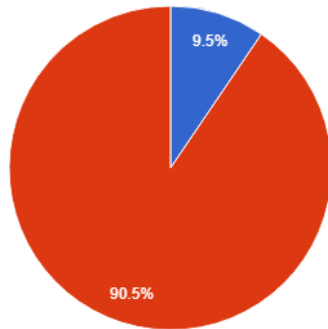
The 9.5% of students who stated that they had stories of Emancipation handed down in their families were not among the participants interviewed. Their open-ended interview responses revealed specifically where these stories came from in their families.

Table 5

Stories of Emancipation

Were there stories about Emancipation handed down in your family?
• Stories based upon on how WE built this country and never got recognition. Stories about how WE as blacks were brutally beaten and called horrible slurs because of the fact that we were black.
• They were simply history lessons my parents and grandmother shared with me about how African Americans felt at that time.
• Juneteenth. Speaking of slaves not knowing of their freedom for months in some states.
• My great great great Grandfather grew up as a slave, but his wife was a slave owners' daughter. Him being free created my family.

The last two responses seem to be specifically related to Emancipation, but the first two responses seem like these might have been stories or lessons handed down about African American history in general. However, none of the responses directly speak to African American involvement in the Civil War. There is no mention of stories about an ancestor who fought in the war or who helped enlist African American soldiers in any of the response. In response to the questions about stories about the Civil War being handed down in their families, two students stated that there were handed down in their families, but only one of these students provided an open-ended explanation in their survey response. "Men in my family

participated in the Civil War. Many frightening stories of the trenches were brought back and shared for years."

Figure 3

Were there stories about the Civil War handed down in your family?

95.2%
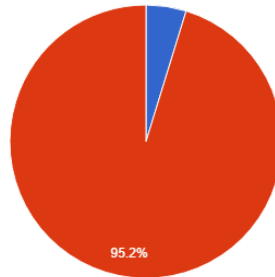
Interview participants were also asked about where their knowledge about the Civil War specifically comes from. Overall, the students described learning about the Civil War in their K-12 history classes. In each case, the students cited that they learned more about the Civil War generals from the South and individual battles than they did about African Americans involvement in the Civil War.   However, two of the interviewees described learning about African American history and some topics related to the Civil War at home. For instance, Ms. Sophia stated:

> I know a lot of people don't look at it but when I was a kid I looked at Roots. My mom has always had black history kind of films like Amistad. I think we had to the Malcolm X movie around here somewhere. It's just basic things that I knew would not be taught in school and those were some of the things. Like they might tell you these names but they didn't go in-depth about who they were. Nat Turner too. We went to the Valentine Museum. I think we went to a few museums and I can't remember which ones but I didn't

know that they had African-American exhibits. The Black History Museum as well. We also went to the library a lot. And the library while here. During my childhood we lived closer to one library, and that library had a huge African-American collection. So my mom would often take us there to read.

<div align="center">**Research Question 2**</div>

What are these African American college students' perceptions of the agency that African Americans possessed and utilized during the Civil War?

Perceptions of agency were captured in both the quantitative and qualitative data included in this study. When analyzing the open-ended survey responses on African Americans involvement in the Civil War, the researcher examined these responses using the agency rubric. The researcher identified words or phrases that signaled different levels of agency. If students recorded phrases such as *"African Americans fought as soldiers"* or even *"soldiers"* these responses were coded as agentic because they show students describing the historical actors as actively engaged through their words deeds or actions. This signaled a sense of agency. However, if the participants' responses included phrases such as *"they were allowed to enlist"* or *"they were invited to fight"* these responses were considered not agentic because the participants do not use phrases that show individual or collective agency on the part of the historical actor.

African American Agency During the War

Most of the survey responses about African American involvement in the Civil War, 71%, were agentic. The researcher identified nine survey responses as not agentic and twenty-three responses as agentic. Since these responses specifically described the actions of African Americans, the researcher only used the action domain of the agency rubric to categorize the participants' responses.

Many of the students included something about African Americans serving as soldiers in their responses. This idea of African American men as soldiers is consistent with the findings of Reich & Corning (2017). However, it is important to note that it unclear where this knowledge of African Americans as soldiers comes from. Also, there is no mention of African American women and their involvement. No survey participants mentioned women in any of their responses about African American involvement in the Civil War. There is also no mention of African Americans following Union regiments as they traveled throughout the South, which really forced the United States Army and Abraham Lincoln to designate African Americans who were runaways as contraband. This designation brought African Americans one-step closer to participating in the war in many different capacities.

There are also many responses that characterize African Americans as *"cannon fodder"* for the Union Army. This idea that African Americans were on the front lines is often characterized as a myth of the Civil War. African Americans fought to be included to be recognized as men and as citizens so the idea that they would be put on the front lines in order to protect White soldiers does not align with historical evidence.

There were also a four survey responses including beliefs that African Americans fought for the Confederacy. One example was: "*The slaves in the south were made to fought (fight in) the war as the African Americans in the north volunteered to fight the war"* or *"The African Americans were soldiers on both sides, some fighting for their rights, other fighting for promised freedom if the South won".* When the investigator examined the demographic information from the surveys with these responses, the students identified as female (both); one student identified as White, the other multiracial. Also, both students stated that they attended predominantly White schools; one in Washington State and the other in Virginia.

Table 6

Participants Perceptions of African American Involvement in the Civil War

	Not Agentic	**Agentic**
Actions *Identify any actions taken by African American historical actors. Describe the actions based upon passive or active action and sort them into one of the three categories: individual, collective, or institutional agency.*	*Actions of historical actors are passive if present at all and show no individual, collective or institutional agency.* • Slaves were allowed to enlist • They helped build weapons • The slaves in the south were made to fought the war as the African Americans in the north volunteered to fight the war. • There were some African American units in the Civil War that were essentially used as cannon fodder. • Slaves were allowed to enlist but not a lot did but there were African American soldiers. • I believe, that most African Americans were forced to fight in the war. • African Americans were forced to serve as well as willingly served in the Civil War. They were just as relevant as a white soldier whether fighting for the Union or Confederacy. • Most African Americans fought in the war on either side, or were in support positions. • They was invited to fight	*Historical actors are actively engaged in a historical event through their words or deeds and show evidence of individual, collective, or institutional agency.* • Speaking and protesting • Some of them fought and loss their lives as a result of the war • They were first in line to fight • Some of them fought for the Union Army • The African Americans were soldiers on both sides, some fighting for their rights, others fought for promised freedom if the South won • Provided shelter for soldiers and raw materials • Fought as soldiers • They were fighting against the union • African Americans fought in the civil war. • Many African Americans fought in the Civil War and sacrifice so much for the generations to come and many of us now either forget that or never knew. • Fighting in on front line. • They fought in the war. • They fought against the confederate • They fought directly in the Civil War. Once the Emancipation Proclamation was issued, it not only freed blacks in the opposite of the union army. It also allowed them to fight for the union as well. See people don't really understand how slavery itself was never an issue it was states' rights that really started it all. • African Americans fought for the Union army in hopes of being recognized as citizens and abolishing slavery as a result. • Well Without the African Americans many of the buildings that housed soldiers or many of the raw materials available to the citizens would probably not be available • 189,000 of them served in the union and were guaranteed land. • soldiers • Soldiers • Many of them fought in the civil war. • Over 200,000 African Americans served in the war. • African American did have roles in the civil war such as cook, help out the wounded, and were also blacksmiths • As soldiers

Identifying African American Agency in SOL Objectives

Interview participants were given the task of reading two excerpts from the VA and US History Standards of Learning from the VA US History curriculum scope and sequence document (Virginia Standards of Learning, 2008). These standards are taught in high school, usually in 11th or 12th grade to students in the state of Virginia. These standards are taken from the most recent version of the curriculum that was adopted in 2008. The researcher chose this standard because it included information about Frederick Douglass, an African American Civil War actor. The researcher deemed this particular excerpt important because it included a substantial amount of information about Douglass in the "essential skills and knowledge" (Virginia Standards of Learning, 2008, p. 23 & p. 28). More information than other African American historical figures.

It is important to note that Douglass is the lone African American Civil War historical actor represented across all Virginia Standards. Other figures appear in standards taught before the Civil War such as Nat Turner, Gabriel Prosser, and Harriet Tubman, however; these figures are categorized as antebellum figures or figures who were involved in events that served as a catalyst for the war. The exact excerpt and standards that the students read can be found in the table below.

Table 7

Standards of Learning Objectives – Virginia and US History

VA US History Standards	Essential Questions	Essential Knowledge
VUS.7b The student will demonstrate knowledge of the Civil War and Reconstruction Era and their importance as major turning points in American history by identifying the major events and the roles of key leaders of the Civil War Era, with emphasis on Abraham Lincoln, Jefferson Davis, Ulysses S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, and Frederick Douglass.	Who were the key leaders of the Civil War?	**Frederick Douglass**: Former enslaved African American who became a prominent abolitionist and who urged Lincoln to recruit former enslaved African Americans to fight in the Union army
VUS.7F The student will demonstrate knowledge of the Civil War and Reconstruction Era and their importance as major turning points in American history by explaining **postwar contributions** of **key leaders of the Civil War.**	What were the postwar contributions of Ulysses S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, and Frederick Douglass?	**Frederick Douglass** • Supported full equality for African Americans • Advocated for the passage of the 14th and 15th Amendments • Encouraged federal government actions to protect the rights of freedmen in the South • Served as ambassador to Haiti and in the civil service

Virginia Department of Education (2008) Curriculum Framework

Each participant read the excerpts above and then they were asked questions 17 – 20 on the interview protocol.

17. Let us take Frederick Douglass as an example. Read the information in the standards about him.

18. Where do the sources of power come from/the historical actor or someone else?

19. Does this historical actor challenge the sources of power?

20. Describe the impact that the historical actor has had on historical events or other individuals connected to historical events.

The students had the opportunity to refer back to the standards if needed when they answered the questions. Because some of the responses included information that addressed several domains, these responses may be sorted in more than one domain. Additionally, one response

may be categorized as agentic in one domain while considered not agentic in another because of the specific aspects of agency that it speaks to. The interviewees were asked: *Where do the sources of power come from? Does the power come from the historical actor or someone else?*

Actions. Ms. Lauryn describes Douglass' actions as agentic after reading the essential knowledge included in the standards. She states:

> It made it seem like he recruited them…'Encourage federal government actions.' And, I guess ambassador for Haiti. I guess because like if he had more …Yes. I mean he's an ambassador he had to have some kind of like power.

In this instance she is describing Frederick Douglass' actions as agentic because he encouraged President Lincoln to recruit African Americans to fight in the war and he served as Ambassador to Haiti. The researcher categorized these responses as agentic descriptions of the historical actor's actions because she specifically described him as being actively involved in the war or his role as ambassador and she also described him as having power.

Like Ms. Lauryn, Ms. Sophia described Douglass as agentic in her description of his influence on Abraham Lincoln. She states:

> That Despite his color he influenced President Lincoln to allow African-Americans to fight in the army.

Ms. Edna also echoes statements that align with the other interview participants and describes Douglass as agentic in his actions.

> Those are major. Major changes that he was not going to be able to do by himself. And so he needed people behind him.

Decision Makers. Each of the interview participants' responses that described Frederick Douglass' decisions were considered agentic because in each instance they described his

74

decisions and actions taken in spite of adversity. For example, Ms. Lauryn describes Douglass as not having the power, however she insists that he was an advocate for African Americans to become soldiers. Ms. Lauryn states:

> He doesn't have the power in this case. He's like asking basically he's trying to like…like he's trying to urge Lincoln to do something…to recruit African-Americans. So he's not… really, he doesn't really have the power. Well I feel like he doesn't really have the power he's more like the advocate.

Ms. Sophia described Douglass' background and decisions he made as a self-taught individual who rose above his circumstances. Much of the knowledge that she describes was her own knowledge and this information was not included in the essential knowledge. She stated:

> I understand that Frederick Douglass was at one time he went around and he's self-taught. So when…when I look at well in parts. First, look at African-American...the impact he had on African-Americans I'd say that most of us are, most anyway, inspired by this man who again, taught himself to read. Who despite his circumstances the different slave masters he had. You know again his circumstances despite all of that he managed to build something out of it within himself. So I say that inspired me and other African-Americans to become better. If that's the right way of putting it. That you are.. that no matter where you are down below you can always rise.

Ms. Edna describes Douglass as an innovative thinker who introduced African Americans to new ideas. However, she does state that the information included in the essential knowledge does not help students learning this that he was a slave and rose above those circumstances. She was the only participant who pointed this out in their commentary. She believes that students would be better served knowing more background information about Douglass.

He introduced ideas that a lot of people were not seeing yet. People were thinking it.

They were either too afraid or too uncertain to allow others to know what they were

thinking. And so the…I think he is innovative. He's and innovative thinker. But even in

those statements they don't say he was a slave.

In this statement, Edna is describing not learning Frederick Douglass' "backstory." She

expressed being taught about Frederick Douglass the abolitionist before learning about how

Frederick Douglass became free and what he went through when he was enslaved.

Sources of Power. Each of the participants responded to the question about power.

They were asked if they believed the historical actor had power or challenged sources of power.

Ms. Edna stated,

The actual power comes from other people….It's coming from whoever is in government.

So he's really…although they're giving him credit for things for ideas, he's really not

embarking on change. He's really influencing other people to agree with him.

I probed Ms. Edna further and asked: So you think he is influencing people to agree with him?

She went on to state,

So that they can make a change. He knows he is not in a position power. He's just in an

influential position. He's in a position of influence instead of a position of power. Which

can be just as impactful. Nonetheless you don't have power.

Ms. Lauryn stated: "Well I feel like….he doesn't really have the power…he's more like an

advocate." In an earlier question, the researcher asked Ms. Lauryn about the broader agency of

African Americans during the Civil War, she stated,

No. I felt like they didn't have any agency like they were like the small pieces to the

bigger puzzle. In a sense, it wasn't like you know this is a person. This is what they're

76

here for, this is what happened, this will lead to the Civil War. They never really spoke

about any of that. So like I felt the agency was like very little.

Ms. Sophia stated:

In that particular era I don't feel like any of them had power. I feel like that perhaps with

again assistance from abolitionists who we all know were not all black. I think assistance

from those white people who were not for slavery is really where the power came from.

Overall as sad as it is to hear that.

Each response echoes similar sentiments. The participants described Douglass as an advocate

for African Americans during the time period, however; they do not believe that he had much

power in because of white supremacy and racism in American society during the time period.

As you analyze their statements, it is clear that they ascribe some agency to his actions but the

ultimate power came from someone else. In some instances the interview participants described

him as challenging power sources. The researcher categorized these statements about sources of

power as agentic; however, the participants describe the historical actors as having limited

power.

They describe the interpretation of Frederick Douglass as a man who had power when he

was Ambassador to Haiti, but in other instances. One could infer that these participants

understand power as being something connected to titles and in the case of Ms. Sophia even race.

She states that in order for African Americans to have agency they needed the assistance of white

abolitionists in her statement above. The interview participants described the people with the

actual power as White abolitionist or even Abraham Lincoln himself. Could they be projecting

their feelings of being marginalized or feeling powerless on Frederick Douglass? Have they

developed a cultural understanding that power only comes with "BIG" titles. While each of

them seems to believe that Douglass was influential, it is obvious that this influence does not equal power to them.

      Impact on Action. The participants' responses were also coded and sorted to describe examples of agency in the historical actor's impact on action. The participants each described Frederick Douglass impact on action as agentic. The researcher looked for words of phrases that described how he influenced the progression of historical events or even historical figures. In Ms. Lauryn's response she described his advocacy work and the impact that these actions had on the passage of the 14th amendment.

> So I feel like he was more like talented power especially for the second one [In this statement she is referring to the second bullet in the second standard. "Advocating for the 14th and 15th Amendment"]. Well basically for all of us advocating for the 14th amendment basically all of them supported full equality for African-Americans. He was challenging. You know, the power, and you know white supremacy is really what they need to do.

Ms. Sophia describes the impact Frederick Douglass had on Abraham Lincoln's decision to allow African American men to fight in the Union army.

> That Despite his color he influenced President Lincoln to allow African-Americans to fight in the army.

Ms. Edna like Ms. Lauryn, describes the impact that Douglass' actions had on Reconstruction Amendments (13th-15th Amendments to the US Constitution).

> I do. With the 14th and 15th amendment. You know. That's a huge one about abolition of slavery was the 15th black vote.

Summary

Using the Agency rubric, the researcher observed both survey participants and interview participants describe African Americans as agentic during the Civil War. However, this agency was not specific as participants described African American men in most instances as soldiers and not as political actors. Women were totally absent from all responses. Participants in this study did not use the word contraband or describe African Americans as contraband or as auto-emancipated people. The participants also did not describe them as agentic historical actors escaping enslavement and following the Union Army to secure or advocate for their freedom. When we examined Frederick Douglass in the text of the Virginia "Curriculum Framework" (Virginia Department of Education, 2008), they described him as a person who was very influential but had no real power until he was given a title.

As the researcher examines all of the data gathered in this chapter about these African American College students perceptions of African American agency during the Civil War the evidence shows that they have little knowledge of the Civil War and even less knowledge of African Americans involvement in the war. The researcher also observed that there is little known about family history and family emancipation narratives. When examining the interview participants' responses, the researcher noticed the participants' understanding of the Civil War and the major historical figures involved align closely with the Virginia narrative purported by the Standards of Learning. This Virginia narrative is a reconcilliationist narrative that highlights the efforts of Abraham Lincoln and the Emancipation Proclamation. It also celebrates the efforts of southern generals like Robert E. Lee. The narrative purported by the Virginia Standards vaguely discusses the contributions of African American men stating that they were soldiers.

Even though the participants overwhelmingly stated that the Civil War is still significant today, it is unclear why. It is possible that this idea of importance be a result of recent conversations about Charlottesville riots and debates over Civil War monuments. It could also be that these respondents believed that was the answer they were supposed to put.

Lastly, the researcher observed through interview responses and conversations with the participants that there is a great need for more representation of African Americans in curriculum and in classrooms serving as educators. In two instances, interview participants described having few African American teachers and they truly believed that they would have been better served if they had more African American teachers in their classrooms.

Chapter 5. Conclusions and Implications

This study is the first to examine African American college students' perspectives of African American agency during the Civil War. More importantly, it is the first study to explore these perceptions of agency as they relate to the Virginia Standards of Learning. Overall, findings reveal that African American students' perceive African American historical actors actions during the Civil War as agentic. However, it is also clear that most of the examples these were of soldiers in the Union Army. The singular narrative that most of the participants described was absent of any other roles that African Americans played in the Civil War effort and the responses were not specific. In most cases, the participants did not name specific soldiers or even regiments. The interview participants identified African Americans as having agency in their actions, decision, and impact. However, each of the interview participants failed to describe Black Civil War actors as having power. The researcher will further explore these perceptions of limited agency and the separation of agency from power in this chapter.

Another significant finding was evidence of the alignment interview participants' perspectives with the Virginia SOL as it relates to the Civil War narrative. In each interview, participants described a similar narrative with attention to specific Civil War generals or other historical actors singled out in state standards. These responses support the idea that many students in Virginia walk away with, and possibly subscribe to, this narrative even after they are no longer in K-12 schools. In other words, the standards have an impact on the collective

memory of African American Virginians, an impact that in their experiences was seldom challenged at home (with the exception of Ms. Sophia), in school, or in African American religious institutions.

Finally, the researcher observed evidence of a significant gap in survey participants and interview participants' knowledge of emancipation narratives. Overwhelmingly, African American students acknowledged knowing that they had enslaved ancestors; however, none of these students could articulate any emancipation narratives handed down in their families. One could conclude that this gap in knowledge exists because of the legal practice before the Civil War of counting African Americans in this country as chattel or property and not as humans. Still, for centuries, African and African American culture maintained a tradition of oral history. This finding points to a need for more education on emancipation narratives at the school or even at the community level.

Theoretical Discussion of Findings

This study was not designed to generalize all of the experiences of African American college students, nor was it designed to answer all of the questions about filling gaps in research on African American students' perceptions of the Civil War. In contrast, the researcher sought to start a conversation that solely focuses on Black Students as the central storytellers. A conversation that helps researchers and educators understand how curriculum and standards shape the psyche of African American students. The goals of this research study align with the central themes of Critical Race Theory. CRT focuses on understanding how racism impacts education to ensure that positive steps are made to empower people of color (Soloranzo & Yosso, 2001). The five tenants of CRT focus on (1) the centrality of race and racism, (2) challenging dominant ideology, (3) the commitment to social justice (4) the centrality of

82

experiential knowledge, and (5) the transdisciplinary perspective (Soloranzo & Yosso, 2001).

Using the five themes, the researcher will examine and connect the framework and findings with literature in the field.

African American Agency

As discussed in the literature review, Critical Race theorists seek to analyze research through the lens of students of color (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Solórzano, 1997, Soloranzo & Yosso, 2001).   It also seeks to challenge stereotypes held by White majority in education (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Solórzano, 1997). The findings of this study show that students have internalized some of these long-held stereotypes or generalizations about African American historical actors. As the data show, students' perceive African American men as agentic in their actions and decisions. Over and over, participants described African American men as soldiers in both open-ended survey responses and in their interview commentary. However, this singular narrative of African American men only as soldiers feeds the misconception that black men and women were not agentic in other ways. The participants never cite specific names of historical Civil War actors. Findings from Reich & Corning (2017) corroborate with these conclusions. This study utilized the survey instrument that Reich & Corning (2017) developed and disseminated to a multicultural group of students at a larger public university. The data from this study show 80% of the participants described African Americans as soldiers or mention something about fighting in their responses (Reich & Corning, 2017). However, a larger percentage (15%) of their participants described African Americans as fighting for both the Union and Confederacy than found in this study.

Woodson (2016) and Guinier (1991) would describe the types of narratives these students learned in K-12 schools as examples tokenism. The idea that one or a few examples can be

included to represent the actions or impact of a whole group or race of people. According to Gallagher (2008) much of what these students know about the Civil War has also been shaped by Hollywood and other films that they have viewed. He posits films more than any other factor have influenced the ideas and opinions held by Americans that African Americans served as soldiers. These films represent the emancipationist version of the Civil War (Gallagher, 2008), however they also represent the type of tokenism that Woodson (2016) and Guinier (1991) believe handicap minority students and actually perpetuate dominant ideology and racism (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Solórzano, 1997, Solórzano & Yosso, 2001).

When interview participants were asked to discuss Frederick Douglass as a historical actor presented in the Standards of Learning they repeatedly described him as agentic because he held a title as Ambassador to Haiti and encouraged Lincoln to pass Reconstruction Amendments and enlist soldiers (as described in the Virginia Standards of Learning). Their summary judgment, however, was that he had no real power because the people with power during that time were political figures like Abraham Lincoln or others in White society at large. This finding illustrates CRT's tenants of the centrality of racism (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). The interview participants' responses reflect their understanding of racism as it existed in the 1800's and today. To them, a Black man would not been able to possess or exercise real power during that time period (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001).

Coates (2011) argues that this inability to see Blacks as being fully agentic and possessing power could be attributed to African Americans being excluded as central characters in the Civil War narrative. Historians have argued that this type of Civil War narrative is in fact a "Lost Cause" narrative (Blight, 2001; Gallagher, 2008). Woodson (1933) would describe these feelings of powerlessness as a direct byproduct of the education system and possibly even a

reflection of their own feelings of powerlessness. He states in his seminal work, *The Miseducation of the Negro* (1933)

> As another has well said, to handicap a student by teaching him that his black face is a curse and that his struggle to change his condition is hopeless is the worst sort of lynching. It kills one's aspirations and dooms him…(pg. 3)

What is and is not included in curriculum standards and education are important are and speak volumes to African American students (Fahs & Waugh, 2005; Dean, 2009; Loewen, 2010).

The inclusion of Frederick Douglass as a Civil War actor in Virginia's standards gives students great example of an agentic Civil War figure but he alone is not enough. Students are often taught about Black historical figures during the ante-bellum period, and then Douglass is featured during the Civil War. African Americans often disappear from history narratives after the Civil War and Reconstruction and do not reappear until the Civil Rights movement is taught. Woodson (2016) would advocate for a narrative that includes lesser-known historical actors and everyday people who are relatable to students and inspire in them a sense of agency and help them understand the role that they played.

Miseducation About the Civil War

Critical race theorists seek to challenge dominant ideology and racism through their research (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Solórzano, 1997, Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). Each of the interview participants could not name any specific Civil War actors and one when probed was able to name Frederick Douglass. In each instance, the interview participants expressed that they don't remember their teachers ever talking about anyone by name that was African American when they were in their K-12 history classes in Virginia schools. However in each instance students remembered learning about Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant, and Robert E. Lee..

These characters are used as icons to represent massive changes; much like messiah figures are used in religious texts. Inclusion of historical actors like Lincoln and Grant in Virginia's Civil War narrative shows an attempt at inclusivity of historical figures who, 50 years ago, would not have been taught in curriculum in this state (Dean, 2009). However, one could echo the question that Frederick Douglass asked many years ago "Is in not about time that this bombastic laudation of the rebel chief should cease?" (Douglass, 1870).

To challenge the racism implicated in K-12 classrooms and dominant ideology framed in historical narratives, DuBois (1935) would argue that students should be taught about how African Americans really won the Civil War through their impetus to turn Union regiments into Emancipation armies and their decision to labor for the North instead of the South. To DuBois, much of the debt and credit for preserving this nation is owed to African Americans, not just the leaders who appear in state standards, but masses of enslaved people who used what little agency they had to act for freedom.

The intersectional discourse of racial and gender disparities present in these findings reveal a need for more representation of African American women in Civil War narratives. Forbes (1998) supports the idea that Civil War narratives are patriarchal and when women are featured in antebellum discussions they are often larger than life characters like Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth but when the actual war narrative begins women disappear. Forbes (1998) believes that the objectification of African American women as "mammy" characters in support of White women further complicates and disrupts the inclusion of Black women. However, Forbes (1998) posits African American women during the time period recognized that their support of Black men would help the liberation effort; therefore, most black women were okay with putting progress of the race before gender progress. However, today it is important that the

voices and contributions of these women be brought to the forefront. "Nameless" black women who refused to cook in the plantation home when the masters went off to war and stopped working on plantations are not given their credit (Forbes, 1998, Glymph, 2003). Also women such as Mary Elizabeth Bowser, a Union spy who worked in the White House of the Confederacy; Mary Ann Shadd Cary, journalist; Susie Taylor, nurse to the an all Black regiment; Elizabeth Draper Mitchell (Mother to Maggie L. Walker), served as cook in Elizabeth Vann Lew's home and helped Union soldiers escape (Forbes, 1998). These women should be studied and given credit for their agency, their successes and their failures, and their importance to the overall effort to liberate African Americans from enslavement. Black women should also be featured in the other roles that may be perceived as less exciting but never the less essential to the war effort such as their role as cooks and teachers and the efforts they made to sustain their families when their husbands, sons, and fathers enlisted (Forbes, 1998, Glymph, 2003).

Knowledge of Ancestors and Emancipation

The findings of this study reveal students lack knowledge and understanding of their ancestors' stories and emancipation narratives. The art of storytelling as a way of passing down family history seems to be absent from the students' perceptions. CRT is committed to social justice and this type of gap in students' knowledge is truly a social justice issue (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Solórzano, 1997, Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). Ms. Edna summarized it best when she expressed her experience of being taught about Frederick Douglass the abolitionist without first being introduced to his story of liberation. While I recognize that the narrative of social ascendance present in the stories of historical actors aligns with the messianic narratives that Woodson (2016) argues stifles students sense of civic agency, it is clear that some understanding of African American stories of freedom are needed to connect Black students with their ancestral

past (Woodson, 1933). There is a need for more culturally relevant pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching that could help bridge this gap (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 1998; Gay, 2010).

<div align="center">

Implications

</div>

Black Representation Matters

Representation in curriculum matters to African American students. Scholars like Frederick Douglass (1881), Woodson (1933), DuBois (1935) and Quarles (1953) among others were committed to scholarship that placed African Americans in the narrative of the Civil War and portrayed them as agentic figures. This type of curriculum has never been widely accepted in America and only exists in Afrocentric schools. Curriculum writers and educators must advocate for a more inclusive narrative that is not akin to tokenism but truly tells the story of African Americans inclusive of women and people from marginalized groups (Glymph, 2003, Forbes, 1998, Ladson-Billings, 1998; Solórzano, 1997; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001; Woodson, 1933; Woodson, 2016).

Black representation must also include the recruitment of more Black teachers. Black teachers matter to these Black students. In fact, a recent longitudinal study strongly indicates Black teachers matter for all students (Cherng & Halpin, 2016). There is a need to recruit and retain more African American teachers (Gershenson, Hart, Lindsay, & Papageorge, 2017). These teachers need to be equipped with culturally relevant pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching methods to ensure that they are committed to social justice and validate students' experiential knowledge (Aronson & Laughter 2016; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Solórzano, 1997; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001).

The Role of the HBCU

Historically Black colleges and universities have been responsible for educating the best and the brightest in the African American community for over 100 years. According to Nichols and Evans-Bell (2017), HBCUs educate more low-income African Americans than predominantly white institutions. Their study shows that HBCUs have to do a better job at retaining and graduating these students. However, the research presented in this study indicates that HBCUs must also give African American students more about their knowledge of their own heritage and emancipation narratives. Historically Black Colleges and Universities that educate African American students should create curriculum and courses that give students the opportunity to explore their own ancestry and give them a deeper understanding of a the centrality of African Americans in the Civil War. Instructional methods that promote critical thinking and cause African American students to be more interested and involved in learning their own history need to be incorporated at Historically Black colleges. These institutions also need to be committed to providing students with in-depth study of African Americans involvement in history.

The Role of Black Families and Churches.

Families, churches and other local civic organizations must be vigilant in the education of African American students. Local historical societies and libraries are a wealth of knowledge and could assist students in learning the emancipation narratives of their ancestors. Black churches historically have kept detailed records about the church founders and information integral in telling the history of their church. These churches can also serve, as resources to help young students better understand their own family history.

Virginia Standards of Learning

In order for students to truly understand, subscribe to, and be interested in history and social studies they need to be engaged in the art of creating and making meaning out of history and various narratives (Loewen, 2010). America needs equitable narratives in history and social studies that tell the stories of various racial and ethnic groups and provide balanced coverage of these groups when compared to Caucasian Americans. Virginia's Standards of Learning need to be significantly modified to ensure that there are more agentic voices represented. People from marginalized groups and women need to be able to see themselves in the narrative of American history.

The question remains, how do we achieve this for all people in an educational system overrun by standards-based education and standardized tests? Based upon the research, one way to achieve this goal is to begin to allow all students, especially African Americans, the opportunity to drive their instruction (Loewen, 2010). This does not mean that teachers do not follow curriculum standards and utilize textbooks, however, it does mean that they recognize that these materials are only supplemental and not the blueprint for teaching history. Teachers need to allow students to choose some of the materials that they would like to utilize to learn about various topics. Students must be given the opportunity to consult primary source documents, historical fiction, and multimedia outlets, among other educational tools to create a more diverse historical understanding (Loewen, 2010). This will give students the opportunity to take ownership of their learning and develop an interest in the subject matter. This will help students gain information from sources that have varying perspectives about various topics and help them develop their critical thinking skills.

History standards have to help students understand that there cannot always be a right answer. History, unlike math and science, cannot be viewed in "black and white" terms. It is not that concrete. As a discipline, new theories about historical events are being generated daily. Overtime, the narratives read in textbooks may shift. Students need to be made aware of this and also be given the opportunity to investigate these types of phenomenon. Teachers should give students the chance to consult different textbooks and allow them to examine how each textbook discusses the issue of slavery in America. This type of activity would be a great way to engage students in a discussion that allows them to think about authorship, perspective, dominant voices, and alternate narratives. We should no longer seek to solely feed students factual minutia to be memorized and later forgotten once the course ends.

Limitations

There are several limitations that must be highlighted when considering these findings. The study focused on African American students who attend the small private Historically Black University, this resulted in a small sample of student participants. Also, since the sample size was small, therefore, the researcher focused heavily on qualitative data from the surveys and interviews. This study did not include the perspectives of African American students who attend predominantly White institutions. Results from this study should not be generalized to represent the perceptions of African American college students at large or African American students at all Historically Black colleges.

Conclusions

History classes in America have long served as the vehicle through which students acquire civic agency and are shaped by national dominant ideology. Similarly, there is a long-standing practice of excluding the voices of African Americans, other minorities and women

91

from the discourse that takes place in these classrooms. In the case of Civil War narratives, this study finds the voices of African American men and women, who were central to both the war beginning and ending, have been silenced. There is a need for more research that examines African American students perceptions of African American agency throughout history and using this data, state departments of education or district and building level administrators are urged to create instructional methods that are more inclusive and foster a sense of agency in African American students.

There is a need for a complete educational overhaul in this country, one that considers people of all races, ethnicities, and genders. However, a good place to begin would be by revamping history education. The narratives taught in history classes throughout this country provide the basis for the creation of political, social, and economic ideals. Our ideas about citizenship, laws, and even the definition of marriage are created and solidified in history and civics courses. If America is ever going to be a country that is truly inclusive of all people, then Americans must consider revamping the historical narratives and the history instruction that America purports to be true.

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Appendices

Appendix A

<u>University Initial Contact Email/Letter</u>

Stephanie Hooks

RE: Permission to Conduct Research Study

Dear Dr. Johnson:

I am writing to request permission to conduct research at your institution. I am currently in the Instructional Leadership program at Virginia Commonwealth University and am in the process of writing my dissertation on African American students' perceptions of African American agency during the Civil War.

I hope the school administration will allow me to recruit 50 or more students enrolled in African American history courses to complete an anonymous survey on their perceptions of African American agency during the Civil War. Once the survey is completed, students will be asked to self-identify that they attended K-12 schools in the state of Virginia. They will then be asked to participate in a one-on-one interview to gather more qualitative data. A copy of the survey and the interview protocol are attached to this letter.

If approval is granted, participants will complete the survey online. The survey should take no longer than 30 minutes and 5 participants will randomly be chosen to receive a gift card for their participation.   The results will be used in the reporting of data for my study and pseudonyms will be used when discussing responses from the interviews. The university and the study participants will incur no cost.

Your approval to conduct this study is greatly appreciated. I will follow up with a telephone call next week and would be happy to answer any questions that you might have at that time. You may contact me directly through email at shooks@rvaschools.net or (804) 986-7144.

If you agree, kindly sign below and return the signed form in the enclosed envelope.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Hooks

Enclosures

cc: Dr. Gabriel Reich, Research Advisor, VCU

Approved by:

_____   _____   _____

Print your name and title here   Signature   Date

For Questions Please Contact

Dr. Gabriel Reich

greich@vcu.edu

804 – 888 - 1305

Appendix B

Research Subject Information and Consent Form

TITLE: VICTIMS, VICTORS, OR BYSTANDERS? AFRICAN AMERICAN COLLEGE

STUDENTS PERCEPTIONS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN AGENCY DURING THE CIVIL

WAR

VCU IRB NO.:

This consent form documents your consent to participate in the study described below. If you

need clarification about any of the information included in the explanation of the study below

you may contact the researcher for more information. Also, if you need time to think about your

participation in this study you may take an unsigned copy home to discuss it with family

members or friends.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to explore African American students' perceptions of African

American agency during the Civil War. This study was conceived as a way to understand and

share these perspectives while simultaneously analyzing the history curriculum standards in this

state.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AND YOUR INVOLVEMENT

This study involves the participation in a survey and possibly an interview that will last approximately 45 minutes to one hour. Survey responses will be anonymous, however, the participants will receive a number. The researcher will ask students to identify whether or not they matriculated through Virginia K-12 schools. Based upon the students' self-identification, the researcher will choose 4-6 students to participate in the interviews.

RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

It is not anticipated that talking about issues related to African American perceptions of African American agency will create any psychological or

emotional discomfort. However, you do not have to talk about any subjects that you prefer not to address and you can stop the interview at any time.

BENEFITS TO YOU AND OTHERS

You may not get any direct benefit from this study, but, the information we learn from people in this study may help us design better processes for students in schools.

COSTS

There are no costs for participating in this study other than the time you will spend participating in the interview.

PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

Five Sugar Shack donut gift cards in the amount of $5 randomly will be given out to survey participants. Students chosen to participate in the one-on-on interviews will receive a $10 gift card to Kroger/Starbucks.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Potentially identifiable information about you will consist of interview notes, memos, and recordings. The interview data collected is for the purposes of this research study only. Your data will be identified by a letter, not names, and stored separately from any contact information you provided to schedule the interview. All personal identifying information will be kept in password-protected files and these files will be deleted three months after the close of the study.

According to Virginia Commonwealth University policy, participants must provide an address in order to receive a gift card. This information will be limited to Virginia Commonwealth University and will be stored in a secure and protected location for one year, after which it will be destroyed. The consent forms and any notes will be kept in a locked file cabinet and will be destroyed within three months of the end of the study. Access to all data will be limited to study personnel. A data and safety-monitoring plan is established. We will not tell anyone the information you provide; however, the information from the study and the consent form signed by you may be looked at or copied for research or legal purposes by Virginia Commonwealth University.

What we find from this study may be presented at meetings or published in papers, but your name will never be used in these presentations or papers. The interview sessions will be audiotaped, but no names will be recorded. At the beginning of the interview, you will be identified by a number and asked not to disclose any identifying information related to yourself, your university, your location, or your community. The tapes

and the notes will be stored in a locked cabinet. The tapes and notes will be destroyed within

three months of the study close.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You do not have to participate in this study. If you choose to participate, you may stop at any

time without any penalty. You may also choose not to answer particular questions that are asked

in the study. You may withdraw from the study at any time.

QUESTIONS

In the future, you may have questions about your participation in this study. If you have any

questions, complaints, or concerns about the research, contact:

Dr. Gabriel Reich

Associate Professor, School of Education

804-828-5298

greich@vcu.edu

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact:
Office for Research
Virginia Commonwealth University
800 East Leigh Street, Suite 113
P.O. Box 980568
Richmond, VA 23298
Telephone: 804-827-2157
You may also contact this number for general questions, concerns, or complaints about the
research. Please call this number if you cannot reach the research team or wish to talk to
someone else. Additional information about participation in research studies can be found at
http://www.research.vcu.edu/irb/volunteers.htm.

_____   _____   _____
Print your name   Signature   Date

Thank You,

Stephanie Hooks
hookssl@vcu.edu

Appendix C

Interview Protocol

"Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. As explained in the initial contact email, this study is designed to explore African American students' perceptions of African American agency during the Civil War. This interview should last anywhere between 45 minutes and 1 hour. It will not go beyond an hour. You will receive a $10 gift certificate for your time and participation. For the purpose of accuracy, I would like to record our conversation here today. I ask that you refrain from identifying yourself, the schools that you attend or formerly attended. Once all interviews have been transcribed, you will have an opportunity to see the typed transcript to validate the accuracy of the transcript. If you have any questions, you can ask them at any time and if you feel uncomfortable, you may stop at any time. Do you give permission to proceed with this interview?"

21. Did you attend schools in a rural or urban area of Virginia?

22. What were your favorite subjects during your K-12 schooling?

23. What do you think about your experiences in you history classes? Were they positive or negative?

24. Did you only learn about history at school or do you remember other times throughout your K-12 years when you learned about history in a setting other than school? Who initiated these experiences?

25. What was your general impression about the "coverage" of African Americans in K-12 standards during your K-12 schooling?

26. Do you remember any time when you had a really memorable/exciting experience learning about history topics related to African Americans?

27. Name the African American Civil War actors that you learned about in K-12 schools.

28. What do you think about the portrayal of these African American actors? We have talked a lot about agency. Do you feel like they were portrayed as agentic? Did they have power or control over any circumstances?

29. If you can, give me an example of one African American Civil War actor whom you believe was portrayed as having agency.

30. Why do you believe this historical actor has agency? Give examples.

31. Can you give me an example of a Civil War actor who you believe had or was portrayed as having very little or no agency?

32. Why do you believe that this historical actor has little or no agency?

33. Think back to the overall events that you learned about in K-12 history classes (American Revolution, Civil War, World War II, Reconstruction, The Vietnam War). Which events paid the most attention to African Americans?

34. Why do you think this is?

35. How did it make you feel when you learned about African American actors in general? How did it make you feel when you learned about African American Civil War actors?

36. Did it make you feel like you had agency and could effect change in your own life?

37. Let us take Frederick Douglass as an example. Read the information in the standards about him/her.

38. Where do the sources of power come from/the historical actor or someone else?

39. Does this historical actor challenge the sources of power?

40. Describe the impact that the historical actor has had on historical events or other individuals connected to historical events.

Closing Statement

"Thank you so much for your time and openness today. As soon as the interviews are transcribed, I will send you a copy and get your feedback on the accuracy of the transcription. Here is a gift card as a token of my appreciation of you participation here today. Take care and I will see you soon!"

Survey

1. As you may know, April 2010 was the 150th anniversary of the start of the American Civil War. Do you think (please check one response):

_____ The Civil War was important historically, but has little relevance to American politics and public life today

_____ The Civil War is still relevant to American politics and public life today

2 In what ways is the Civil War important to African Americans today?
_____

_____

_____

3 What is your impression of the main cause of the Civil War? Was the Civil War…?

_____ Mainly about slavery

_____ Mainly about states' rights

4. As far as you know, did African Americans directly participate in <u>any</u> way in the Civil War?

_____ Yes

_____ No

_____ Don't know

5. [IF YES:] In what way did African Americans participate in the Civil War?

_____

_____

_____

The next questions have to do with Lincoln's decision to sign the Emancipation Proclamation. Nobody knows for certain exactly why Lincoln decided to sign the proclamation freeing African-American slaves, but people have different opinions. What do you think, how important were

each of the following in Lincoln's decision -- very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important?

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important
6. He himself was morally opposed to slavery				
7. Abolitionists were demanding an end to slavery				
8. He thought freed slaves would help fight the war				
9. Many slaves were already running away anyway				
10. He thought ending slavery would hurt the South's economy				

11. Were there stories about the emancipation of African-American slaves handed down in your family?
> Yes
> No

12. [IF YES] In just a sentence or two, what were the stories about?

13. Were there stories about the Civil War handed down in your family?
> Yes
> No

14. [IF YES] In just a sentence or two, what were the stories about?
Demographic Questions: Please fill out in pen.

Are you male or female?

____ Male

____ Female

15. How old were you on your last birthday? _____

16. Do you consider yourself Hispanic or Latino?

____ No, not Hispanic or Latino(a)

____ Yes, Hispanic or Latino(a)

17. With which racial/ethnic category do you most identify?

____ Asian/Pacific Islander

____ Black/African-American

____ Latino(a)/Hispanic

____ Middle Eastern

____ Indigenous/Native American

____ White

____ North African/East African/Middle Eastern origin

____ Multiracial

____ other

____ I prefer not to respond to this question

18. Which of the following best describes the student body at the K-12 schools that you attended?

____ Predominantly White students

____ Predominantly African American/Black students

____ An even representation of White and African American/Black students

____ A diverse mixture of people from many different cultures

19. Which of the following best describes the student body at the K-12 schools that you attended?

____ Predominantly White teachers

____ Predominantly African American/Black teachers

____ An even representation of White and African American/Black teachers

____ A diverse mixture of teachers from many different cultures

20. In what state did you attend high school? (If in more than one state, in which state did you spend most of your high school years?)

_____

21. As far as you know, do you have any ancestor who was a slave?

____ Yes

____ No

22. As far as you know, do you have any ancestor who fought in the Civil War?

____ Yes

____ No

23. [IF YES] Did your ancestor fight for the North or the South?

____ North

____ South

____ Both North and South

23. Do you consider yourself a Southerner, or not?

____ Yes

____ No

24. Identify any of the films that you have seen in recent months or years.

____ *Lincoln*

____ *Gods and Generals*

____ *Gone With the Wind*

____ *Twelve Years a Slave*

____ *Glory*

____ *The Birth of a Nation*

____ *Roots*

____ *Eyes on the Prize*

The rubric below was developed by the researcher using the "Recognizing Agency" rubric

developed by teahinghistory.org (de Oliveria, n.d.). This rubric will be used as a framework to

understand what constitutes agency. The categories below will be used to analyze participants'

responses when asked about African American historical actors. This framework will also be used

when examining the Virginia Standards of Learning essential knowledge as it relates to the Civil

War and the African American historical actors included. Historical actors will be rated on a

continuum from Not Agentic to Highly Agentic.

	Not Agentic	**Agentic**
Actions *Identify any actions taken by African American historical actors. Describe the actions based upon passive or active action and sort them into one of the three categories: individual, collective, or institutional agency.*	*Actions of historical actors are passive if present at all and show no individual, collective or institutional agency.*	*Historical actors are actively engaged in a historical event through their words **or** deeds and show evidence of individual, collective, or institutional agency.*
Decision Makers *Identify the decisions made by historical actors. Describe the decision based upon extent to which these decisions influence the progression of historical events.*	*Historical actors make no decisions that have impact on the progression of historical events.*	*Historical actors acted with agency despite the restrictions that sought to prevent their agency.*
Sources of Power *Identify the sources of power. Do African American historical actors possess any power in the narrative? Do the sources of power come from some other historical actors? Do the African American historical actors challenge the sources of power?*	*Sources of power **do not** come from African American historical actors and African American historical actors **do not** challenge sources of power.*	*Source of power come from either African American historical actors or African American historical actors challenge sources of power.*
Impact on Action *Describe the impact that the historical actors have on historical events or other individuals connected to historical events.*	*Historical actors' actions **do not** have an impact on future events or other individuals connected to these historical events.*	*Historical actors' actions **have** an impact on future events **or** other individuals connected to these historical events.*

Ms. Lauryn

	Not Agentic	Agentic
Actions *Identify any actions taken by African American historical actors. Describe the actions based upon passive or active action and sort them into one of the three categories: individual, collective, or institutional agency.*	*Actions of historical actors are passive if present at all and show no individual, collective or institutional agency.*	*Historical actors are actively engaged in a historical event through their words or deeds and show evidence of individual, collective, or institutional agency.* It made it seem like he recruited them. Encourage federal government actions. And, I guess ambassador for Haiti. I guess because like if he had more …Yes. I mean he's an ambassador he had to have some kind of like power.
Decision Makers *Identify the decisions made by historical actors. Describe the decision based upon extent to which these decisions influence the progression of historical events.*	*Historical actors make no decisions that have impact on the progression of historical events.*	*Historical actors acted with agency despite the restrictions that sought to prevent their agency.* He doesn't have the power in this case. He's like asking basically he's trying to like…like **he's trying to urge Lincoln to do something…to recruit African-Americans** so he's not really he doesn't really have the power. Well I feel like he doesn't really have the power he's more **like the advocate …**
Sources of Power *Identify the sources of power. Do African American historical actors possess any power in the narrative? Do the sources of power come from some other historical actors? Do the African American historical actors challenge the sources of power?*	*Sources of power do not come from African American historical actors and African American historical actors do not challenge sources of power.*	*Source of power come from either African American historical actors or African American historical actors challenge sources of power.* ***He's definitely challenging sources of power.*** **He doesn't have the power in this case.** He's like asking basically he's trying to like…like he's trying to urge Lincoln to do something…to recruit African-Americans so he's not really he doesn't really have the power.
Impact on Action *Describe the impact that the historical actors have on historical events or other individuals connected to historical events.*	*Historical actors' actions do not have an impact on future events or other individuals connected to these historical events.*	*Historical actors' actions have an impact on future events or other individuals connected to these historical events.* Well basically for all of us advocating for the 14th amendment basically all of them supported full equality for African-Americans. He was challenging. You know the power and you know White supremacy.

Ms. Sophia

	Not Agentic	**Agentic**
Actions *Identify any actions taken by African American historical actors. Describe the actions based upon passive or active action and sort them into one of the three categories: individual, collective, or institutional agency.*	*Actions of historical actors are passive if present at all and show no individual, collective or institutional agency.*	*Historical actors are actively engaged in a historical event through their words **or** deeds and show evidence of individual, collective, or institutional agency.* That Despite his color he influenced President Lincoln to allow African-Americans to fight in the army
Decision Makers *Identify the decisions made by historical actors. Describe the decision based upon extent to which these decisions influence the progression of historical events.*	*Historical actors make no decisions that have impact on the progression of historical events.*	*Historical actors acted with agency despite the restrictions that sought to prevent their agency.* I understand that Frederick Douglass was at one time he went around and he's self-taught. So when I look at well in parts. First, look at African-American...the impact he had on African-Americans I'd say that most of us are, most anyway, inspired by this man who again, taught himself to read. Who Despite his circumstances the different slave masters he had. You know again his circumstances despite all of that he managed to build something out of it within himself. So I say that inspired me and other African-Americans to become better. If that's the right way of putting it. That you are.. that no matter where you are down below you can always rise.
Sources of Power *Identify the sources of power. Do African American historical actors possess any power in the narrative? Do the sources of power come from some other historical actors? Do the African American historical actors challenge the sources of power?*	*Sources of power **do not** come from African American historical actors and African American historical actors **do not** challenge sources of power.*	*Source of power come from either African American historical actors or African American historical actors challenge sources of power.* In that particular era I don't feel like any of them had power. I feel like that perhaps with again assistance from abolitionists who we all know we're not all black. I think assistance from those White people who were not for slavery is really where the power came from. Overall as sad as it is to hear that.
Impact on Action *Describe the impact that the historical actors have on historical events or other individuals connected to historical events.*	*Historical actors' actions **do not** have an impact on future events or other individuals connected to these historical events.*	*Historical actors' actions **have** an impact on future events **or** other individuals connected to these historical events.* That Despite his color he influenced President Lincoln to allow African-Americans to fight in the army.

Ms. Edna

	Not Agentic	Agentic
Actions *Identify any actions taken by African American historical actors. Describe the actions based upon passive or active action and sort them into one of the three categories: individual, collective, or institutional agency.*	*Actions of historical actors are passive if present at all and show no individual, collective or institutional agency.*	*Historical actors are actively engaged in a historical event through their words **or** deeds and show evidence of individual, collective, or institutional agency.* Those are major. Major changes that he was not going to be able to do by himself. And so he needed people behind him. He introduced ideas that people. Were not seeing people thinking it. They were either too afraid to. And so the people I think he is innovative. He's and innovative thinker. But even in those statements they don't say he was a slave.
Decision Makers *Identify the decisions made by historical actors. Describe the decision based upon extent to which these decisions influence the progression of historical events.*	*Historical actors make no decisions that have impact on the progression of historical events.*	*Historical actors acted with agency despite the restrictions that sought to prevent their agency.* I do. With the 14th and 15th amendment. You know. That's a huge one about abolition of slavery was the 15th black vote He introduced ideas that people. Were not seeing people thinking it. They were either too afraid. Surgeon to allow others to know what you were thinking And so the people I think he is innovative. He's and innovative thinker. But even in those statements they don't say he was a slave.
Sources of Power *Identify the sources of power. Do African American historical actors possess any power in the narrative? Do the sources of power come from some other historical actors? Do the African American historical actors challenge the sources of power?*	*Sources of power **do not** come from African American historical actors and African American historical actors **do not** challenge sources of power.*	*Source of power come from either African American historical actors or African American historical actors challenge sources of power.* The actual power comes from other people so they can get referrals, from whoever is in government. So he's really, Although they're giving him credit for things for ideas. He's really not embarking on change he's really influencing other people to agree with him. So it's not.
Impact on Action *Describe the impact that the historical actors have on historical events or other individuals connected to historical events.*	*Historical actors' actions **do not** have an impact on future events or other individuals connected to these historical events.*	*Historical actors' actions **have** an impact on future events **or** other individuals connected to these historical events.* I do. With the 14th and 15th amendment. You know. That's a huge one about abolition of slavery was the 15th black vote

VITA

Stephanie Hooks was born on May 29, 1977 in Brooklyn, New York. She graduated from Sheepshead Bay High School in 1995. She attended Virginia Union University where she received a B.S. degree in Interdisciplinary Education. In 2004, she graduated from Virginia State University with a M.A. in History.

EDUCATION

2008 – 2018	Ph. D., Candidate, Virginia Commonwealth University
2001- 2004	M.A., Virginia State University
1995-1999	B. S., Virginia Union University

AWARDS

2015-2017	R.E.B. Award for Teaching Excellence
2005-2025	National Board Certified Teacher – Recertified 2015
2003-2004	John B. Cary Elementary School, Teacher of the Year

EMPLOYMENT

2013-2013   Adjunct Instructor, Virginia Commonwealth University
- Instructing graduate Elementary Education students in a social studies methods course.
- Creating the syllabi and lesson plans to teach students based on their specific needs.
- Coordinating class speakers and presentations that align with the specific content of the class.
- Creating tests and evaluating students' assessments and projects.

2012-Present   Teacher, Richmond Public Schools, Ginter Park Elementary School
- Responsibilities include instructing fourth and fifth grade students in math, science, social studies, and reading based upon the Virginia Standards of Learning Objectives.
- Responsible for attending social studies department meetings and serving as the social studies lead teacher.
- Responsible for planning lessons for the fourth and fifth grade team and sharing these lessons with each member of the team.
- Member of the School Leadership Team and transformation under our School Improvement Grant.
- Grade-level Chairperson responsible for planning field trips, graduation ceremonies, remediation plans, and allocation of grade-level resources.

2011-2012   Teacher Incentive Fund Grant Program Specialist, Richmond Public Schools

- Responsibilities include managing the Teacher Incentive Fund grant and working with grant partners at the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and various school districts in Maine.
- Conducted professional development sessions for National Board candidates and National Board Certified Teachers throughout the district.
- Assisted with the implementation of the grant and paying teachers performance incentives.
- Attended United States Department of Education Meetings to monitor the progress of the grant.
- Attended an annual symposium at the White House to meet with Arne Duncan and other NBCT's from across the nation to brainstorm ways to improve the teaching profession nationally.

2008 – 2011 Social Science Lead Teacher, Richmond Public Schools
- Responsibilities include coordinating monthly meetings and workshops for teachers, lead teachers, assistant principals, and principals from 28 schools.
- Organizing district-wide workshops for general education teachers and the Virginia Grade Level Assessment process.
- Creating benchmark assessments for 1st through 5th grade students.
- Analyzing data using edusoft and developing action plans to improve SOL scores and academic instruction in social science.
- Writing curriculum and lesson plans that align the Virginia Department of Education's curriculum with Richmond Public Schools' curriculum guides.

2006 – 2007 Model United Nations and Advanced Geography Instructor (Summer Program), Center For Talented Youth, Johns Hopkins University
- Developed a syllabus and lesson plans to teach advanced students the Model United Nations and Advanced Geography content.
- Organized activities that helped the students develop their written and verbal skills through writing position papers and debating subjects such as globalization or world hunger.

2005 – 2017 Adjunct Instructor, Virginia Union University
- Instructing students in Western Civilization, American History, and African American History.
- Creating the syllabi and lesson plans to teach students based on their specific needs.
- Coordinating field trips that align with the specific content of the class.
- Creating tests and evaluating assessments and papers written by students.

2004 – 2007 Adjunct Instructor, J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College

- Taught Western Civilization and American History.
- Created the syllabi and lesson plans to teach students based on their specific needs.
- Created tests and evaluated assessments.

1999- 2009   Teacher, Richmond Public Schools, John B. Cary Elementary School
- Responsibilities included instructing fourth grade students in math, science, social studies, and reading.
- This instruction was taught based upon a thorough knowledge of the Virginia Standards of Learning.
- Served as a Member of the NASA grant writing team and helped John B. Cary become a NASA explorer school.
- Completed NASA training at Goddard Space Center in Maryland and Langley Space Center in Virginia.
- Served as John B. Cary's social studies lead teacher for seven consecutive years.
- Served as a member of the SPMT.
- Served as grade-level chairperson for six consecutive years.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Fall 2011   NCSS – Washington, D.C. – "African American Students Perspectives of History and Social Studies Instruction in America".

Spring 2011   AERA – British Vancouver, Canada – "Writing self-efficacy, self-regulation, and motivation".

Spring 2011   MERC Conference – Virginia Commonwealth University – "Best Practices in Teaching Social Studies".

Spring 2011   The Student Town Hall Lecture – Virginia Union University – "Questing for the Greeks – An Oral History Project Chronicling the History of VUU's Greek Organizations".

Spring 2011   The University of Central Florida – "Differentiating Instruction in Social Studies for Urban and Diverse Learners".

Spring 2011   The International Society for the Social Studies – "Differentiating Instruction in Social Studies for Urban and Diverse Learners".

Spring 2010   Virginia Union University: The Richmond 34's 50th Anniversary Conference – "Jackson Ward: Remembering Our Heritage".

Fall 2009   Virginia Council for Social Studies Educators Conference – "Using Historical Fiction to teach Social Studies".

Fall 2009   Virginia Council for Social Studies Educators Conference – "Examining Jim Crow and Segregation: Richmond's Jackson Ward, A Local Example".

Spring 2004   Virginia Union University: Brown vs. The Board of Education's 50th Anniversary Conference – "A Community Dismantled? Richmond's Jackson Ward in the Wake of Desegregation and Urban Renewal".

INSTITUTES
  Summer 2017 Gilder Lehrman Institute – University of Virginia – "Civil War Memory".
  Summer 2014 NEH Landmarks – University of California, Berkley – "Bay Area Home
     front"
  Summer 2013 Gilder Lehrman Institute - Yale University – "Using Slave Narratives to
     Teach Reading".

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
  2009 – 2012 Virginia Consortium for Social Studies Specialists and College Educators
  2009 – 2012 National Council for Social Studies
  1999- Present Richmond Educational Association

CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS
  1999- Present Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, Henrico County Alumnae
Chapter.

GRANT WRITING
  2017-2017 Chesapeake Bay Trust Foundation Grant – Ginter Park Elementary School
  2014-2015 Chesapeake Bay Trust Foundation Grant – Ginter Park Elementary School
  2014-2015 Target Field Trip Grant – Ginter Park Elementary School
  2011-2012 Teacher Incentive Fund Grant – Richmond Public School and National
      Board for Professional Teaching Standards
  2005-2009 NASA Explorer School Grant– John B. Cary Elementary NES School