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We Know it's Service, But What are They Learning? Preservice Teachers' Understandings of Diversity

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A great deal of research on multiculturalism looks at different approaches to multicultural education and visions of multicultural teaching and learning. Though some research theorizes about how preservice teachers might learn about race or gender, there is very little work that helps teacher educators understand what learning about diversity more broadly, might look like. This study uses the conceptual framework developed by Paine to raise questions about and illuminate differences in the learning outcomes of preservice teachers who participated in two similar yet notably different service-learning experiences. Through examinations of writing tasks we find that teacher learning did indeed depend on the opportunities to learn provided by service-learning placements. Service-learning experiences that facilitated non-traditional power dynamics, engaged out-of-school contexts, and connected to teaching pedagogy were associated with more complex understandings of diversity. We suggest that attention to the relationships between service experiences and learning will help us better manage service learning limitations, better understand the impact of service-learning, and better understand the opportunities to learn inherent in such activities.

Provocative research in the areas of multicultural curricular reform, approaches to multiculturalism, and multicultural teacher education (e.g., Banks, 1993; Cochran-Smith, 2003; Sleeter & Grant, 2003; Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996) has clarified what teaching and teacher education for social justice might look like. Research into teachers' learning in specific domains, such as race (e.g., Tatum, 1992), gender (e.g., Lowery, 2002), and ability and disability (e.g., Southerland & Gess-Newsome, 1999), has helped us understand how teachers' might learn in each of those domains. These broad visions and domain specific studies have done less, however, to help us understand how and what preservice teachers learn more broadly about diversity. Thus, when we face a group of 25 teachers for 15 weeks in the only "diversity" course in the preservice curriculum, we do not have a unified conceptual framework in which to place teachers' emerging understandings.

Many questions remain. For example, how do teachers learn to become multiculturally competent? Are there stages in their learning? If so, what causes them to move from one stage to another? Is learning in one area (e.g., race) related to learning in other areas (e.g., social class or gender)? What expectations should we hold for preservice teachers at the beginning, middle, and end of their programs?

Although these questions will take many years to answer, this study takes one step forward by investigating teachers' learning in the context of a popular pedagogy, service-learning. Service-learning has demonstrated some potential to deepen preservice teachers' learning (e.g., Capella-Santana, 2003; Slavkin, 2002) and facilitate understandings of social justice (e.g., Boyle-Baise & Langford, 2004). We begin with two questions. First, what do preservice teachers learn from two different versions of the same diversity course? Second, what is the relationship between the service-learning dimensions of the course and preservice teachers' learning?

We argue that the complex and contradictory learning teachers' experienced depended on the opportunities to learn provided by their service-learning placements. In order to make this case, we first clarify what we mean by diversity. We also specify what learning about diversity might look like. After describing the methods used to investigate teachers' learning, we analyze the opportunities preservice teachers had to learn in both versions of the course. Next we describe what teachers learned about diversity and how their learning is related to the opportunities presented to them through service-learning. Finally, we consider the difficulties inherent in measuring teachers' views of diversity as well as the implications of using service-learning as an instructional pedagogy.

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THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to understand what teachers learn, we define diversity as it has been defined in the course syllabi. One syllabus reads:

> This course introduces prospective teachers to the ways in which social inequality affects schooling and schooling affects social inequality. We will examine the ways in which social differences, such as race, class, gender, and ability, too frequently become the basis for inequality in schools and in society. Additionally, we will explore the interplay among work, peer groups, family, and schooling to understand the processes at work that affect learning opportunities for students. We will distinguish between the ways in which school promotes social reproduction or social mobility.
>
> Some of the questions we will explore include:
>
> - In what ways do schools mitigate social inequality?
> - In what ways do schools create, maintain, and exacerbate inequality?
> - What is it about school knowledge and the ways it is transmitted that makes learning easier for some students than others?
> - In what ways do teachers and students jointly produce conditions for successful learning or frustrating failure?
> - How do school-community relationships affect student opportunities to learn?
>
> (Roxas, 2004, p. 1)

This definition, taken from one instructor's syllabus, was substantively the same across participating instructors' syllabi. The use of this definition was deliberate. Using instructors' definition of diversity allows us to judge students' learning against the conception of diversity presented in course texts. The definition is broad. It includes many types of difference: race, class, gender, disability, language, and sexual orientation—to name a few. In this sense the definition is consistent with other scholars' definitions, which often include race, ethnicity, language, social class, sexual orientation, gender, and cultural group (e.g., Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 1997; Banks, 1993; Hollins & Guzman, 2005). The inclusiveness of this definition is both strategic and philosophical. We are interested in understanding preservice teachers' learning and therefore must be open to evidence of that learning in whatever area it may occur. Philosophically, we do not see diversity inside neat categories, such as race and class; we conceive of diversity broadly and operationalize it as such.

Understanding Teachers' Ideas of Diversity

As mentioned above, there is scant research that theorizes about how teachers learn about diversity (for a synthesis of some notable exceptions see Garmon, 2005).

Paine (1989) has developed one such framework. Paine's framework is powerful for many reasons, but perhaps most importantly, it allows us to view teachers' understandings on their own terms instead of through a deficit lens (Lowenstein, 2003). It describes what teachers understand rather than what they do not. The framework's broad treatment of diversity, as compared with a single dimension (race, gender, etc.), reflects the complex intersections that exist in schools and classrooms. Rarely are the narrow issues of race or gender or social class operating alone. In any given situation, these issues are intersecting and shifting. This framework conceptualizes diversity across traditional dimensions, thereby allowing us to notice and understand the complexity of preservice teachers' learning.

Paine's (1989) framework sorts teachers' understandings of diversity into four categories: individual, categorical, contextual, and pedagogical views. Paine theorized that some teachers understand diversity principally as a result of *individual difference*. This view posits that people differ from one another in idiosyncratic ways. She explains, "An individual difference perspective draws on psychological and biological explanations of diversity. This orientation directs teachers to seek the sources of pupils' problems and the solution of those problems, in the individuals concerned" (Paine, 1989, p. 3). A second orientation views diversity as a result of *categorical differences*. In this view, people differ by categorical affiliation—social class, race, gender, and so forth. A categorical view may be associated with other differences such as behaviors, ways of speaking, and preferences, but this is not necessarily the case. In a categorical view there is little attempt to understand why those categories might have meaning. Nor is there an attempt to understand why a given category may be linked with other salient features.

A third view of difference focuses on the *contextual differences* that arise from patterns of difference. In this view the context matters because it gives meaning to difference. "Contextual differences exist in part because of the social context; difference is understood as, in part, socially constructed. ... This approach, in contrast to the other two, takes into consideration causes of difference" (Paine, 1989, p. 3).

Finally, the *pedagogical* view of difference is one in which differences among individuals and groups are seen as having "consequences for teaching and learning." Thus the focus moves beyond causes of difference to the implications of those differences. This does not mean that all differences require a teacher to change the way that she teaches. But it does mean that the teacher acknowledges and takes account of difference in her teaching and her students' learning. This includes considering the possibility of action.

Paine's (1989) framework has an implied hierarchy or developmental path. Teachers might begin with an

individual perspective. As they start to investigate the sociopolitical context of schooling their understandings of diversity change, eventually reaching a pedagogical view. The framework does not however, specify how teachers might move from one kind of understanding to another. In the final section of this paper we take up these issues using the data we have collected.

CONTEXT AND METHODS

The preservice teachers in this study were enrolled in a required semester-long "diversity" course in the College of Education at a large, public, midwestern university. The course, Diversity 200,[1] is the only course in the five-year teacher education program that focuses exclusively on issues concerning diversity. Preservice teachers generally take the course before they are admitted to the teacher preparation program and thus, are often first- or second-year students. All nine sections of Diversity 200 require a 15-hour service-learning component that is completed over the course of the semester, mostly through after-school tutoring experiences in local youth programs and schools. Diversity 200 is taught by doctoral students and faculty. All instructors participate in a weekly seminar with the course coordinator, a full professor in teacher education. The seminar supports instructors through discussions of course content and organizational issues.

Sampling

In order to understand how teacher learning might vary across service-learning experiences, we utilized a purposeful sample that included three sections of Diversity 200. Two sections focused more specifically on "urban" issues and required a service-learning experience in which preservice teachers mentored one student at one local elementary school in a nearby city, Greenville. We refer to these sections of service-learning as the "mentoring" experience. The third section, which is representative of the other six Diversity 200 sections that were not studied, had a service-learning experience that focused on tutoring students from Greenville. We refer to this service-learning section as the "tutoring" experience. While both experiences included mentoring and tutoring, these general labels signify the emphasis of each service-learning experience.

The two service-learning experiences are further differentiated by the people with whom the preservice teacher interacted, the location(s) of the work, and the opportunities to learn implicit in the experiences. Mentoring preservice teachers worked inside and outside the school setting with students and their classroom teachers, as well as with parents and community members. Mentoring experiences were characterized by opportunities to learn implicit in both traditional learning

activities (e.g., helping a child with homework or reading books together) and "friend" activities (e.g., playing on the playground or going to a play). In contrast, the tutoring experiences took place in schools, almost entirely with students (the exception was the classroom teacher or after-school supervisor with whom the preserve teacher worked). The opportunities to learn in the tutoring experiences focused on traditional learning experiences.

Preservice teachers, course instructors, and course readings were similar across sections. Preservice teachers in all sections were predominately white middle-class women whose mothers graduated from college. They attended suburban public high schools in which Whites were the racial majority and all spoke English as their first language (see Appendix). All three sections of Diversity 200 were taught by pre-candidate doctoral students with excellent teaching reputations as judged by the University's formal student evaluations. All instructors had previously taught the course and are professionally committed to the goals of the course. Course readings differed slightly but generally focused on the institutions and institutional practices that perpetuate inequality. Thus, the substantive difference between the mentoring and tutoring sections was the nature of the service-learning experience.

Data Collection and Analysis

The three instructors of the courses were approached in December 2003. Once they agreed to participate in the study, instructors asked preservice teachers if they were willing to participate in the study on the first day of class, and 86% agreed. Participation included filling out a pre- and post-course survey and giving permission to researchers to analyze students' regular coursework. Data were collected during the 15-week semester in Spring 2004. There were no modifications to course syllabi as a result of study participation.

The study draws on two data sources: course assignments and written surveys. Preservice teachers who agreed to participate in the study gave researchers permission to analyze course assignments, which included a pre-course survey, several analytical and autobiographical essays, journal entries, and a post-course survey. The specific tasks of the written assignments differed in each course section; however, this analysis draws from two common assignments (journals and service-learning papers) and pre/post questionnaires.

The study measures learning through a very narrow lens—teachers' writing within a course. Of course, there are validity issues associated with such a measure. It is quite possible, for example, that we will underestimate teachers' learning because we are not analyzing learning in other forms, such as their conversations, their actions, or their writing outside of the course. Teachers may be

learning but not reporting that learning in the documents we are analyzing. On the other hand, it is also possible that we are over-estimating their learning. Teachers may be writing what they think the instructor wants to hear in order to get the grade they desire.

Despite these limitations, writing is a measure of learning that is important for teacher educators. From a practical perspective, many teacher educators only have access to preservice teachers' writing. Instructors are not present during service-learning so they must rely on written and verbal reports in order to ascertain what preservice teachers are learning. Thus, writing is an important representation to investigate. Writing also removes the varied social pressures present in a whole class or small group discussion. The pressure to sound "smart" or "cool" or "politically correct" in front of one's peers is somewhat lessened when a student is writing for the instructor alone. Further, in writing, preservice teachers do not have to react to whatever was just spoken; they can complete their sentences and, through subsequent drafts, revise their thinking.

We conducted analyses along two dimensions: preservice teachers' conceptions of diversity and opportunities to learn in the two service-learning experiences. The analyses of teachers' conceptions of diversity were conducted first. For these analyses, all data were collected, scanned, and entered into the qualitative analysis program, N6. Data were coded with the four categories explained above—individual, categorical, contextual, and pedagogical difference. As it became clear that any one piece of written work was often a combination of multiple views of diversity, the data were analyzed for prevailing trends within an individual over time. Throughout the process, analytic memos were used both to reduce and interpret data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Descriptive statistics were used to describe the prevalence of patterns. Data arrays of both individuals' learning and the group's learning were developed.

The second analysis focused on understanding the opportunities to learn present in each service-learning experience. This analysis relied on teachers' descriptions of what they did with the K-12 student with whom they were paired. These descriptions were taken from their weekly journal entries. Axial codes were developed and tested (Miles & Huberman, 1994); we report the resulting themes.

ANALYSES

In this section we first describe the opportunities to learn that are present in each service-learning experience. Next, we consider the ways that preservice teachers viewed diversity over the semester. Finally, we look across this evidence to consider the relationship between teacher learning and the service-learning experience.

Opportunities to Learn about Diversity

Preservice teachers in both the mentoring and tutoring sections were paired with a K-12 student. Mentoring teachers all volunteered in the same K-5 school, Turner Elementary. Turner teachers selected K-5 students to participate in the mentoring program. Most often the students might be struggling in one or another area of school but were open and ready to develop a relationship with a preservice teacher. Mentoring at Turner varied but usually included the following activities: observing and helping students in the classroom, tutoring students, supervising recess and/or lunch, attending field trips into the community (e.g., to a play, to a museum, on a tour of the neighborhood), participating in a civic "speed-bump" project in the community, and having two potluck dinners with parents, students, siblings, and teachers.

Teachers in the tutoring section volunteered with students ranging from K to 12th grade. Some participated because they were on an athletic team that required participation, others had been expelled from the public schools, and still others voluntarily participated in tutoring services offered to all students who attend elementary schools in Greenville.[2] Preservice teachers volunteered in a variety of settings, including in an after-school tutoring program for athletes, neighborhood elementary schools, and an alternative secondary school for students expelled from Greenville Public Schools. Service-learning in these settings included academic tutoring, supervising students during lunch and recess, doing guided reading with small groups of students, playing games with students, and helping them with their homework. Like the mentoring teachers, tutoring teachers were paired up with a single student but often worked with additional children at their service-learning site.

As Table 1 summarizes, there are both similarities and differences between the service-learning experiences. Teachers in both sections reported spending similar amounts of time in their sites. All the teachers participated in tutoring activities. Roughly one-third of tutoring teachers did mentoring type activities, while all teachers in the mentoring section participated in such activities. Each time the preservice teacher went to the service-learning site, called the parent, or called the child's teacher, we counted that interaction as a "contact." Mentoring teachers had more contacts than did tutoring teachers. Most of the difference between these averages is accounted for by the field trips, parent phone calls, and potlucks that were a regular part of the mentoring teachers' responsibilities.

The surface differences between the two service-learning experiences are sizable. Below the surface, the nature of the opportunities to learn are even more disparate. Mentoring teachers not only had more opportunities than tutoring teachers to explore their student's school and life context, but also were able to step out

Table 1
Comparison of Mentoring and Tutoring Service-Learning Experiences

Description of service-learning	Section	
	Mentoring	Tutoring
Reported mentoring activities	1. Field trips to museums and plays 2. Discuss student's career goals 3. Play board games 4. Write letters to student and student's family	1. Watch movies together 2. Assist in school lunch room 3. Supervise "problem" students in small groups
Participating students	1. K-5 graders in a local urban school selected by their teacher to participate in the service-learning program	1. 12–17 year olds who had been expelled from school 2. K-5 graders in a local urban school 3. Public school students who were good at sports but needed support academically.
Percent who tutored	100	100
Percent who mentored	100	36
Percent who called student's parent	100	7
Percent who met student's parent	100	7
Percent who went on a field-trip	100	0
Mean number of hours (SD)[†]	18.8 (2.4)	18.4 (5.7)
Mean number of contacts (SD)[†]	16.2 (2.5)	12.1 (3.5)
Number of preservice teachers	29	19

[†]The sample size for these calculations is $n = 21$ (mentoring) and $n = 19$ (tutoring). Some teachers' journals did not record all of their tutoring hours and contacts so they were not included.

of the traditional power relationship—which positions teachers as knowers and students as receivers of that knowledge—to connect their own evolving understandings to teaching pedagogy. Although teachers in the tutoring service-learning had some of the same opportunities mentoring teachers had, their opportunities were fewer and often relied on the extra efforts of the preservice teachers.

Learning about context. All teachers were paired up with a single student; however, mentoring teachers had opportunities to learn about their student's school and home context more than tutoring teachers. Mentoring teachers saw their students in multiple school and non-school contexts; they learned about people who were important to the student; and they had the opportunity to do non-academic tasks together.

Mentoring teachers met parents during potlucks and when the parents were picking up and dropping off children for field trips. During the field trips and potlucks, teachers were able to interact with parents and siblings around both academic and non-academic topics. This provided teachers with the opportunity to see students as family members. It also provided the opportunity to see parents talking about and being involved in their child's education. Activities like student-led neighborhood tours or a group project designed to install a speed bump on a busy neighborhood street, provided preservice teachers the opportunity to see the neighborhood in

its social and political context. The large proportion of mentoring activities (as compared with tutoring activities) provided opportunities to interact with students around non-school-based issues in non-school contexts. In the car on the way to a field trip or while they were making a collage, teachers and students could easily discuss music, families, TV shows, holidays, and other non-academic topics. There were more possibilities for these conversations because mentoring teachers' weekly visits to Turner did not require tutoring for urgent academic needs, such as the current homework assignment or next day's exam. This was not the case for tutoring teachers.

Tutoring teachers did not see their students outside the one-on-one tutoring sessions that dominated this groups' experience. For the most part, preservice teachers did not meet parents, see neighborhoods, or do non-academic tasks with their students. Tutoring teachers reported that they learned how many siblings their student had or how their student liked to use free time, but these conversations took place in school contexts, where the child was still in the role of the student. Further, these conversations were not a main topic in teachers' journals, suggesting that they were limited in frequency and impact.

Changing the traditional power dynamic. Mentoring teachers participated in activities that held out the possibility for non-traditional power relationships between students and teachers. Mentoring preservice teachers

were often in situations in which they were not the "expert." When the students led them on a walk of the neighborhood, played board games with which the teacher was unfamiliar, or collaboratively invented interview questions for the speed-bump project, preservice teachers had the opportunity to be a learner, to ask questions, and to listen carefully to students. Because these mentoring activities took place outside of school, the opportunity for the teacher to see non-academic dimensions of the child increased the potential to view the student as a whole person rather than only as a student.

In contrast, tutoring preservice teachers engaged in traditional activities that put them in the role of expert. More than two-thirds of the tutoring teachers only tutored. In a one-on-one, school-based activity such as tutoring, teachers did not have as many opportunities to learn about students. They were required to be the expert. They were required to focus on the students' academic needs. Some of the teachers worked very hard to get to know and learn from the students with whom they worked, but these efforts were idiosyncratic. To the extent that mentoring activities existed, they all happened in the school context. The tutoring service-learning experience did not provide teachers with the opportunity to see their students outside the school context. With few exceptions, any opportunities to learn from the student were created by the preservice teacher, not the service-learning experience.

Connections to teaching and learning. A final difference between mentoring and tutoring service-learning opportunities is the degree to which preservice teachers had the opportunity to make connections between their own ideas and the teaching they saw in their respective placements. In the mentoring service-learning, preservice teachers saw their student both in the student's own classroom and in a tutoring situation. This provided the opportunity to make connections between large group and one-on-one learning. As part of the service-learning requirement, preservice teachers communicated regularly with the classroom teacher and had the opportunity to ask questions about what kinds of strategies might work best with their student. Classroom teachers also ran a panel discussion with all the mentoring preservice teachers to discuss issues that were surfacing in their service-learning experiences. In that conversation, preservice teachers discussed teaching pedagogies and philosophies. They were able to ask questions, offer explanations, and have longer conversations with the classroom teachers.

Tutoring service-learning did not provide formal opportunities to discuss connections to teaching pedagogy. Similar to the effort to do activities with non-traditional power arrangements, tutoring preservice teachers took advantage of opportunities to discuss teaching strategies with classroom teachers (or supervisors) in their sites. When they were having trouble figuring out how to manage a group of students or how to help their own student with homework, the preservice teachers often made the effort to seek out advice from a more experienced person at the school. The tutoring service-learning experience did not provide teachers with intentional opportunities to make connections to teaching practice however, the presence of classroom teachers and site supervisors made it possible for informal opportunities to be created by the preservice teacher.

These descriptions demonstrate that the details of a service-learning experience dramatically shape the learning opportunities available for participants. Mentoring teachers had many more and varied opportunities to learn than did the tutoring teachers. Mentoring teachers had opportunities to see their students in multiple contexts, to learn in non-traditional power arrangements, and to make connections to teaching and learning. While some tutoring teachers created similar opportunities for themselves, their service-learning experiences did not systematically provide such opportunities.

Preservice Teachers' Views of Diversity

Analyses of writing at the beginning and end of the semester suggest that teachers in both experiences began with similar understandings of diversity; however, mentoring teachers developed more elaborated understandings than did tutoring teachers. Pedagogical understandings of diversity were elusive for most teachers in both service-learning settings.

Preservice teachers in all sections began with an individual orientation toward diversity. Many were unsure of what lay ahead of them and did not say that differences between themselves and the students with whom they worked might be potential barriers to their mentoring experiences. Andrew's comments are representative both in terms of the substance and depth of comments across sections. When asked what role he hoped to play in his mentee's life, he explained, "I would like to be a friend to my mentee and be someone they feel they can talk to if they have a problem" (Andrew, pre-survey). Like many other preservice teachers, Andrew began the semester wanting to make a difference in a child's life and perceived that goal as one that hinges on a personal connection with the child (being a friend or someone with whom the child can talk). Systematic differences that might influence the development of that relationship (race, social class, and gender, etc.) were not discussed.

When differences were mentioned, they were discussed as individual characteristics that might simply make people different from one another and create different needs. For example, Whitney explained, "I was working with Sarah who has muscular dystrophy. The areas that Sarah required the most attention in were, word recognition, basic subtraction, and reading skills. We also talked about making learning fun for Sarah,

like combining one learning activity followed up with a game of tic-tac-toe." (Whitney, service-learning paper). Whitney's other statements about Sarah did not demonstrate an understanding of the particular needs a person with muscular dystrophy might have that could be different from someone without that disability (a categorical understanding). Nor was there any evidence that Whitney understood Sarah's special needs in the broader social and political context; for example, how her needs might relate to standardizing testing, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (2002), or inclusion. NCLB, the federal legislation that mandates yearly testing in grades 3–8 for all public school students, has increasingly put pressure on students with special needs to perform on standardized tests like their peers who do not have special needs. There are many implications of such pressures. One particularly damaging implication is that students who have special learning needs (e.g., second language learners) may come to be viewed by the larger community as a barrier to the school making "adequate yearly progress."

Though most preservice teachers began the course with an individual approach to diversity, some demonstrated a categorical understanding. Joseph explained, "Teachers are needed everywhere, from Orange County to Downtown Detroit. The kids who need the best teachers are those who are facing the toughest challenges not those who have everything handed to them on a silver platter" (Joseph, pre-survey). Joseph's observation about the kids who "face the toughest challenges" suggests that he understands that children face different circumstances and some circumstances require more support than others. But he does not comment on why those circumstances might exist (a contextual view), and he does not mention how those challenges might have implications for teaching and learning (a pedagogical view). This pattern of understanding was consistent across preservice teachers at the beginning of the semester.

Over the course of the semester, preservice teachers' writing changed. Without knowledge of condition, we categorized each teacher's writing from the beginning and end of the semester into one view of diversity (see Table 2). Over time, teachers' writing shifted from predominantly individual or categorical views of diversity toward categorical and contextual views of diversity. Mentoring preservice teachers shifted from just 7% of teachers demonstrating a contextual view of diversity at the beginning of the semester, to 52% expressing those views at the end of the semester. In the beginning of the semester, 67% of tutoring teachers' writing showed an individual understanding, but by the final assignment almost all of those individuals demonstrated a categorical understanding. Only a handful of teachers in both service-learning experiences developed pedagogical understandings of diversity.

Figure 1 visually depicts how the course expanded preservice teachers' views of diversity but did so differ-
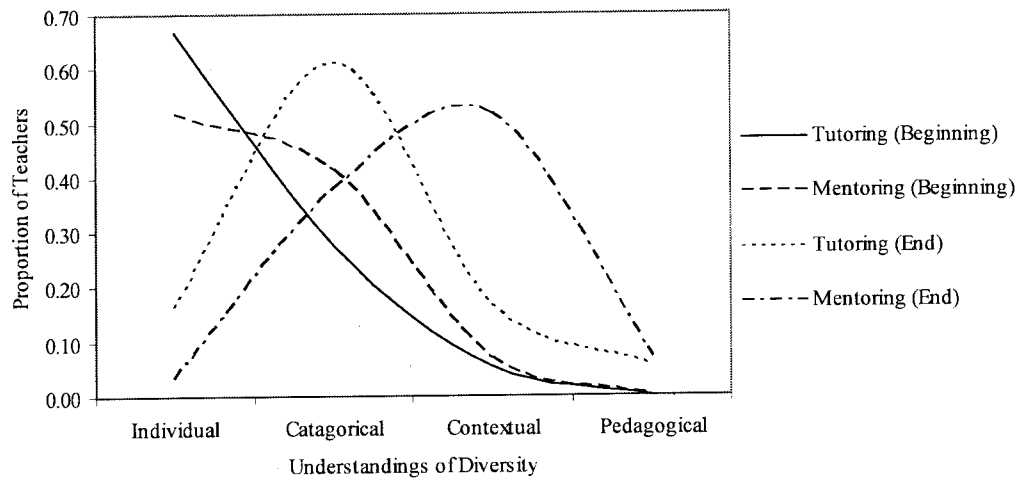
Table 2
Proportion of Preservice Teachers' Writing with Individual, Categorical, Contextual, and Pedagogical Views of Diversity at the Beginning and End of the Semester, by Service-learning Experience

Service-Learning	Beginning of Semester				End of Semester			
	Ind	Cat	Con	Ped	Ind	Cat	Con	Ped
Tutoring (n = 19)	.67	.28	.06	0.0	.17	.61	.17	.06
Mentoring (n = 29)	.52	.41	.07	0.0	.03	.38	.52	.07

Note: Views of diversity are abbreviated as follows: Individual (Ind), Categorical (Cat), Contextual (Con), Pedagogical (Ped).

entially, depending on the teachers' service-learning experience. The steep slopes of the two "beginning" lines show that both the mentoring and tutoring teachers began the semester writing about diversity in similar ways. Over the semester, the lines shift into more bell-shaped distributions, with teachers' writing clustering around categorical and contextual explanations of diversity. The line showing the mentoring teachers' writing at the end of the semester is shifted to the right of the line for the tutoring section, graphically depicting the larger proportion of mentoring teachers whose final writings demonstrated contextual understandings of diversity.

While the movement toward more complex understandings of diversity is positive, the small proportion of tutoring teachers who demonstrated contextual understandings and the small proportion of all teachers who demonstrated pedagogical understandings is concerning. For many of these preservice teachers this course may be the only "diversity" course they take before they are full-time teachers. If they enter their teaching careers viewing student diversity as the result of group-level categorical differences, the desire to critique and change systems of privilege may never have the chance to develop. It seems unlikely that teachers with primarily individual and categorical understandings will have the desire or skills to re-envision teaching such that diverse learners will see themselves, their communities, and their struggles in the curriculum. The degree to which these preservice teachers continue the learning they began in their service-learning experiences will depend, in part, on the schools in which they take jobs. The professionals, support structures, curriculum, and philosophies of the school contexts in which they are ultimately employed will profoundly shape their teaching practice (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman, & Liu, 2001; Kauffman, Johnson, Kardos, Liu, & Peske, 2002). That said, there are teaching contexts that could further teachers' learning by building on the types of understandings documented here. However, as a systemic approach to teacher learning and social justice, we are hesitant to place too much faith in the serendipitous pairings of preservice teachers and schools rich

Figure 1
Preservice teachers' views of diversity at the beginning and end of the semester, by service-learning experience.

in opportunities to learn. We worry that such schools are uncommon, thus making the number of teachers who might seize such learning opportunities rather small.

Despite the limitations of teachers' learning, preservice teachers' writing showed complex views of diversity.[3] In the same essay, a teacher might explain that her student liked rap and was "loud" but would also explain the potential social and economic factors contributing to a parent's absence from parent teacher conferences. The complex and competing views of diversity within an individual support the conclusion that learning in this domain is uneven. One does not simply begin a course (or experience) with an individual perspective of diversity and end with a contextual one. Teachers may hold contextual understandings of race but still have individual understandings of gender. As we show in the next section, these complex and competing views of diversity are related to the types of opportunities to learn provided by service-learning.

The Relationship between Opportunities to Learn and Learning

All service-learning experiences are not created equal. Teachers in the mentoring service-learning sections were presented with rich opportunities to learn, and more of those teachers developed complex understandings of diversity. Although we cannot say that service-learning alone caused these learning differences, we believe that the opportunities to learn in the mentoring service-learning—seeing students in multiple contexts, doing activities with non-traditional power dynamics, and connecting ideas to teaching and learning—facilitated the development of more complex understandings of diversity. This finding is consistent with others' work that examines teachers' experiences in other service-learning

programs with rich opportunities to learn (Boyle-Baise & Langford, 2004; Donahue, Bowyer, & Rosenberg, 2003).

It is tempting to presume that service-learning is a powerful teaching tool. However, restraint is warranted. As we reflect on the possibilities and limitations of service-learning as a pedagogical tool, two tensions remain: the first concerns learning by exception and the second concerns the unique support problems service-learning creates for instructors.

In this study, service-learning often helped teachers learn about diversity in a very specific way—by exception. Course instructors encouraged preservice teachers to work with a single student. This was done because the semester is short and such pairs would encourage deep knowledge of a single child, rather than shallow knowledge of a group of children. While this strategy was successful on a number of fronts, it essentially created existence proofs for preservice teachers. Preservice teachers could say (or think), "Rosa's parents come to parent teacher conferences so not all urban parents are apathetic." Stereotypes were proven false by a single case but those cases did not support systematic examination of the preservice teachers' stereotypes. For example, in the scenario above, the preservice teacher could continue to think that parents who attend parent teacher conferences are "good" parents, and those who do not, are "bad." The exception of Rosa's parents would not help the teacher understand parent participation as a sociocultural construction. In order for preservice teachers to develop the cognitive skills necessary to recognize, critique, and work against systems of privilege and power, preservice teaching pedagogies cannot teach by exception. Thus, as we construct service-learning experiences and investigate teachers' learning in those experiences, we must be mindful of what and how service-learning is teaching our teachers.

A second caution regarding service-learning concerns the support necessary to make it work well. In service-learning experiences with rich opportunities to learn, many preservice teachers have interactions that raise new moral and political issues. Teachers have varying levels of experience handling such interactions. For some, these experiences can be upsetting, effectively teaching teachers that they do not know how to handle uncomfortable interactions. This can cause them to retreat into less vulnerable contexts and ways of viewing the world. For others, these interactions are opportunities for thought, questioning, and ultimately, change. Alyssa, a mentoring teacher described one such experience in her journal. Alyssa was on a field trip to a local science museum and in the gift shop she offered to buy Alexis, her assigned student, a souvenir. She wrote,

> As she [Alexis] was looking around she kept asking for more stuff. I said that one thing was enough but I felt bad because she looked disappointed. She made me feel as though it was almost expected that I would have bought her something. Along with this, her friend also asked me to buy her something. This situation made me feel very uncomfortable because I didn't think it was right to buy her friend something, however I felt bad saying no. It also made me feel bad that Alexis was not appreciative of me buying her a souvenir.

This small exchange, which lasted only minutes, was a rich learning opportunity. Alyssa's thinking raises many issues including economic privilege, cultural beliefs about "manners," power, and issues of child development. The existence of such a rich experience does not, however, guarantee Alyssa's learning. Rich learning opportunities can be, in Dewey's (1937/1997) words, either "educative" or "miseducative." The degree to which experiences like Alyssa's are educative depends on the scaffolds in place to facilitate Alyssa's learning. Her learning depends in part, on the course instructor's knowledge of, ability to analyze, and skill in discussing such incidents. It also depends on her prior training and experiences. Thus, while service-learning can be a powerful pedagogy, it demands high levels of support and scaffolding. Without support, service-learning can unintentionally reinforce existing stereotypes and leave teachers without the analytic skills and/or desire to teach in socially conscious ways.

PRESERVICE TEACHER LEARNING THROUGH SERVICE-LEARNING

This study has both conceptual and pedagogical implications. Paine's (1989) framework provides a useful and powerful tool for conceptualizing preservice teachers' learning about diversity. The framework crosses categories of difference and allows us to see teacher learning from a conceptual level. This is a welcome advancement.

In terms of teaching for social justice, the framework provides clear targets for teacher educators. Individual and categorical understandings of difference will not help teachers teach for social justice. Our goals must be to develop contextual and pedagogical understandings of a broad range of differences.

Pedagogically, it is clear that teacher learning in this domain is neither straightforward nor easy. If we are going to help preservice teachers understand and be skillful with students different from themselves, we must pay careful attention to teachers' ideas and experiences. Teacher educators should not glibly judge preservice teachers' understandings. Those understandings are complex and contradictory. Instead, teacher educators should look for and scaffold from the multiple views of diversity that preservice teachers hold. By paying attention to the complexity of teachers' ideas, teacher educators will be more likely to find ways to help preservice teachers understand and aim for social justice teaching.

While this study offers some insights into the development of preservice teachers' learning, we are mindful of its limitations. We do not know for example, how preservice teachers of color might experience and learn from such service-learning opportunities. Further, we take seriously other work (e.g., Garmon, 2005) that suggests that teachers' experiences, openness to learning, self-awareness, and commitment to social justice contribute to their learning. Thus, our principal insight—that the nature of the service-learning experience significantly influences teachers' conceptions of diversity through opportunities to learn—must be further developed and investigated across teacher education programs and the varying groups of teachers they engage.

Finally, although we are convinced of the potential power of service-learning, this study shows the simplistic notion that we just need to "get them out there serving" is short-sighted. Service does not equal learning. Service-learning can be both educative and miseducative. If service-learning enhances preservice teacher education, it will only be in places where teacher educators have carefully conceived, supported, and funded it. With that challenge in mind, we join the large group of teacher educators working to convince their colleagues and institutions that this work has potential and must be better documented, more carefully researched, and most importantly, continued.

NOTES

1. All names, both place and individual, are pseudonyms unless otherwise noted.

2. Greenville Public Schools enrolled 17,616 students in the 2003 school year. Data from the 2000 census revealed that students living in the city of Greenville are 52% White, 29% Black, and 14% Hispanic, and 5% other race (National Center for Education Statistics, 2004).

3. In an alternative analysis we dealt with this by allowing an individual teacher to have multiple codes associated with her (e.g., having an individual and a contextual view of difference). The results of that analysis are consistent with the results presented here.

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APPENDIX

Background Characteristics of Preservice Teachers by Service-Learning Experience

Characteristic	Service-Learning Experience	
	Mentoring ($n=29$)	Tutoring ($n=19$)
Racial affiliation		
White	85.1	89.4
Of color	7.4	10.6
Gender		
Male	24.1	26.3
Female	75.9	73.7
First language		
English	100.0	100.0
Mother's educational attainment		
Less than college graduate	30.8	31.6
College graduate or higher	69.2	68.4
Social class[a]		
Poor or working-class	23.1	31.6
Middle or upper-middle class	69.3	68.4
Upper-class	7.7	0.0
High school type		
Private	15.4	26.3
Public	84.6	73.7
High school racial characteristics		
Majority White	76.9	68.4
Majority of color or no majority	23.1	31.6
High school location		
Rural	15.4	15.8
Suburban	73.1	84.3
Urban	11.5	0.0

Note: Categories may not sum to 100 due to rounding.
[a]Social class was self-reported by preservice teachers.

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