Technological University Dublin

ARROW@TU Dublin

Stream 2: Curriculum

Higher Education in Transformation Conference, Dublin, 2015

2015

Critical Race Theory: a Strategy for Framing Discussions Around Social Justice and Democratic Education

Wesley Crichlow
University of Ontario Institute of Technology, wesleycrichlow@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: https://arrow.tudublin.ie/st2

Part of the Curriculum and Instruction Commons, and the Higher Education Commons

Critical Race Theory: A Strategy for framing Discussions around Social Justice and Democratic Education

Wesley Crichlow

Faculty of Social Science & Humanities – www.uoit.ca

Abstract

The increasing diversity of our classrooms means we must learn to work with, and across, cultural, racial and gendered differences, without falling into diversity management. This paper employs Critical Race Theory (CRT) and paradigmatic frameworks to address social crises in our classrooms—thus demonstrating how we can value (i.e., not erase) our differences and equitably share power in the classroom. Employing an CRT intersectional analysis, I will explore the social, economic, and cultural dimensions of racial (in) justice in diverse contexts (within frameworks that recognize the salience of social identities including, but not limited to, class, and race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, immigration status and ability). Examples will be provided from my own teachings of how CRT has been employed in the university classroom setting and how student's powerful testimonies and voices connect storytelling to validate their lived experiences. The aim of this presentation is to facilitate an ongoing dialogue about the meaning of contemporary racism and how CRT storytelling education can be used as strategy for framing discussions around social justice and democracy.

Keywords: critical race theory; intersectionality; oppression; power; privilege; ant-racism; social justice; transformation, pedagogy

Introduction and Origins of CRT

> Many teachers who do not have difficulty ... embracing new ways of thinking, may still be as resolutely attached to old ways of practicing teaching as their conservative colleagues ... Even those of us who are experimenting with progressive pedagogical practices are afraid to change. - - bell hooks, teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom (1994)

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is a conceptual tool designed to challenge the colorblind notion of law; the neutrality of law; subtle forms of racism; racial discrimination in law, as well as suggest how law can be used as a tool to challenge racism (Delgado, 1989, 1995; Crenshaw, 1995). Critical Race Theory (CRT) originated in the United States, in the 1970s (e.g., see Matsuda, et al., 1993, Delgado, 1995; Crenshaw, et al., 1995; Matsuda, 1996; Valdes et al., 2002, Bell, 1980) from the 'work of legal scholars to contest the absence of attention to race in the courts and the law; however, its use and influence has extended to other disciplines' (Iverson, 2007, p. 588). Crenshaw, informs us that the objective of CRT is to understand how a regime of white supremacy and its subordination of people of color have been created and maintained in America, and beyond understanding, attempt to change the vexed bond between law and racial power. (Crenshaw et al., 1995, p. xiii). For Delgado, CRT is built on the realization that the civil rights movement of the 1960s had stalled and new approaches were needed to deal with the complex relationship[s] among race, racism and American law. Derrick Bell and others began writing about liberalism's deficits and the way our system of civil rights statutes and case law reinforces white-over-black

domination (Delgado, 1993, p744). The extension to other disciplines to include marginalized voices shaped education, sociology, ethnic studies, women's studies, and queer studies to name a few. This has not diluted the core elements of the anti-racist movement which 'advocates for social justice for people who find themselves occupying positions on the margins. It spotlights the form and function of dispossession, disenfranchisement, and discrimination across a range of social institutions, and then seeks to give voice to those who are victimized and displaced. CRT, therefore, seeks not only to name, but to be a tool for rooting out inequality and injustice' (Trevino, Harris, & Wallace, 2008, p.8). Second generation CRT scholars have 'taken Bell, Delgado, Williams and Crenshaw's ideas and employed an intersectional analysis to include but not limited to gender, ethnicity, language, culture, sexuality, and other key markers of difference'(Morfin et al., p. 266). Intersectionality is another way or methodology for studying the relationships among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relationships and subject formations" (McCall 2005). Intersectionality holds that the classical conceptualizations of oppression within society, such as racism, sexism, homophobia, and religion-based bigotry, do not act independently of one another; instead, these forms of oppression interrelate, are tied to each or are connected to each other creating a system or faces of oppression that reflects the "intersection" of multiple forms of discrimination. (http://dictionary.sensagent.com/Intersectionality/en-en/).

The concept of intersectionality, was advanced by feminist writers (hook, Davis, Williams, Crenshaw, Smith,) as integral to CRT. It recognizes the saliency and importance for seeing sexual orientation, social class, religion, disability, race, age and other subordinating social categories that influences one's identity, behavior and access to resources. Therefore CRT's 'evolution into first generation and second generation indicates the increasingly prominent position of the intersectionality premise. Consequently, CRT has splintered into a number of sub-groups' (Closson, 2010, p. 276) including Critical Feminism (Crenshaw, 1995), Critical Whiteness (Carr & Lund, 2007), AsianCrit (Heer et al., 2012), LatCrit (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002), QueerCrit (Crichlow, 2004, 2011, 2014), and TribalCrit (Cannon, 2011; Chesler, Lewis, & Crowfoot, 2005)). In using this lens, CRT scholars often acknowledge their gender, sexual orientation, and other multiple identities, but highlight race to foreground the impact of race as a social construction in their scholarship. In sum, three main tenets of CRT are: (1) Recognize *interest convergence* – Interest convergence is the process whereby the white power structure 'will tolerate or encourage racial advances for blacks only when they also promote white self-interests' (Delgado & Stefancic,2001). These scholars contend that efforts to eradicate racism have produced minimal results due to the insufficient convergence of interests by both white elites and people of colour; (2) Reject *colour blindness and race neutrality* that liberalism promotes, ideologies that ignore the realities of race are embraced…it creates a lens through which the existence of race can be denied and the privileges of whiteness can be maintained without any personal accountability'(Harper and Patton (2007, p. 3) and (3) Refutes and critiques *claims of meritocracy* that sustain normative white supremacy- Meritocracy is defined in the dictionary as 'a system in which the talented are chosen and moved ahead on the basis of

their achievement, or that leadership is selected based on able and talented persons who are rewarded and advanced from an elite group whose progress is based on ability and talent rather than on class and privilege' (The Canadian Oxford English Dictionary, 2012). In the following sections I discuss, why does CRT education matter and provide examples from my own teachings of how CRT has been employed in the classroom and how students can connect storytelling to validate their lived experiences.

Why Does CRT Education Matter

> *Dear Teacher, I am a survivor of a concentration camp. My eyes saw what no man should witness: Gas chambers built by learned engineers; children poisoned by educated physicians; infants killed by trained nurses; women and babies shot by college and high-school graduates; so I am suspicious of education. My request is: help your students to become human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths, educated Eichmanns. Reading, writing and arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more human.* – Haim Ginot (1972).

CRT critiques and refutes this assertion that those who hold power are selected according to merit, a concept that assumes everyone has the same opportunity and that everyone is *equal*. CRT scholars promote *equity* that recognizes the playing field is unequal and stresses the importance of dismantling the inequality in processes, structures, and ideologies that uphold white privilege and advantage (Croom & Patton, 2010; DeCuir & Dixson, 2004, Parker & Villalpando, 2007).

Toni Morrison (1992) informs us that despite the scientific refutation of race as a legitimate biological concept, and attempts to marginalize race in much of the public (political) discourse, race continues to be a powerful social construct and signifier (Morrison, 1992, p63). Race used as a signifier and metaphor is another way of referring to and disguising forces, events, classes, and expressions of social decay and economic division far more threatening to the body politic than biological race ever was. Who is white and who is not white? Expensively kept, economically unsound, a spurious and useless political asset in election campaigns, racism is as healthy today as it was during the Enlightenment. It seems that it has a utility far beyond economy, beyond the sequestering of classes from one another, and has assumed a metaphorical life so completely embedded in daily discourse that it is perhaps more necessary, and more on display than ever before. (Morrison, 1992, p63). Who is white and who is not, also fertilizes racist discourses for the creation of antiblack racism and alienation within the school curriculum against Black youth, Black educators and Black administrators.

Given that CRT uses race to foreground the impact of racism as a social construction in its scholarship, the intersections of CRT with antiblackracism in education is crucial for measuring student retention. Antiblack racism is a conceptual framework for understanding a dialectic which involves a) "a particular form of systemic and structural racism in North American and

Canadian societies, which historically and contemporarily has been perpetrated against Blacks" (Benjamin, 2003: ii) and b) highlights the "resistance against dominant and hegemonic systems of Whiteness and the building of agency and social transformation against racism and other forms of oppression" (Benjamin, 2003: ii). Antiblack racism, demonization of Blacks, get tough-on-crime and the war on drugs all gave rise to the use of CRT for framing discussions about social justice and democratic education in Canada. Canadian social justice educational activists and legal scholars began to demonstrate their dissatisfaction with the application of Canadianness, in particular within the educational and criminal justice systems. CRT and antiblackness is one way to address what Fanon calls the Manichean construction of our world. It demands that we recognize that the last five hundred plus has been fundamentally forged on and in opposition to black people and blackness as outside the category of the human (Wynter, 2001). Thus CRT and antiblackness is to be understood firstly as structural – that is, all of the ways in which we conceive of present modes of life are lodged against black life as a life. This is both philosophically and literally in terms of the very material conditions that makes life possible or makes one human. All of the conditions for human life are foreclosed for black peoples. As Frank Wilderson has argued those conditions are foreclosed by structure, antagonism and gratuitous violence all of which are epidermalized onto black flesh (2011). Indeed, such an articulation of anti-blackness does not mean that individual black people do not enter and gain some foothold in the anti-black structures, but rather that such footholds are not generalizable. It is indeed the promise of generalizability by minor representation that produces a politics of inclusion. CRT consistently probes, analyzes and demonstrates how, why and when antiblackness and bias emerges and is enacted to delimit black lives wherever black people are. CRT became a key theoretical framework and analysis for examining and questioning the racialization, antiblackracism and colorblind notion of law & education to give voice to Black and racial minority students' experiences.

CRT also argues that race is a social construction that exists for the purposes of separation and stratification by the dominant group. Thus race matters (West, 1993) in the educational curriculum where policies and practices could inhibit learning, and the forming of knowledge (Brown, 2012, Ladson-Billings, 1998). As Swartz (1992) argues, this learning is inhibited by the master scripting which silences multiple voices and perspectives, primarily legitimizing dominant, white, upper-class, male voicing's as the standard knowledge students need to know. All other accounts and perspectives are omitted from the master script unless they can be disempowered through misrepresentation. Thus, content that does not respect the dominant voice must be brought under control, *mastered*, and then reshaped before it can become a part of the master script. (Swartz, 1992, p341).CRT educators insist on recognition of the experiential knowledge of people of color and our communities of origin in analyzing law and society, valuing personal narrative and interdisciplinary analyses as important tools towards eliminating racial oppression (as part of the broader goal of ending all forms of oppression) (Matsuda, 1993). For example, decolonial critics position colonization as endemic and posits that Indigenous people are not only racialized, but also

have a unique history and political relationship with the federal government, which is central to experiential knowledge for Aboriginal peoples (Cannon & Sunseri, 2011). CRT therefore challenges us to reflect upon how various social identities and systems of oppression converge in lived experience, and in turn influences who has access to privilege (Agnew, 2007; Aylward, 1999; Backhouse, 2010; Baldwin et al., 2011; Gonzalez & Harris, 2012; Markus & Moya, 2010). CRT is built upon several basic tenets and themes and insists on contextual /historical analysis of institutions to address marginalized groups (Williams, Berger, & McClendon, 2005), as often institutional histories lack accuracy (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). The following tenets have two interrelated themes - one from an institutional perspective (educational) and the other from a personal perspective. Both allege that racism is a normal part of life and thus difficult to eliminate and address. First: CRT acknowledges that race and racism are embedded in the structures, discourses, and policies that guide the daily practices of universities (Delgado, 1993, Walker, 1998, Taylor, 1999). Second: Race and racism are central constructs that intersect with other dimensions of one's identity such as language, gender, class, and for people of colour these dimensions can potentially elicit multiple forms of subordination, yet each dimension can also be subjected to different forms of oppression (McCall, 2005). This means that individuals need to examine themselves and institutions in society need to examine their everyday professional and systemic practices. DeCuir and Dixson declare that 'given the insidious and often subtle way in which race and racism operate, it is imperative that school youth workers, social workers and educational researchers explore the role of race when examining educational experiences of [North] American students [and employees]' (2004, p. 26). Similarly, Dionne Poulton teaches educators and employees in the workplace how to explore, uncover and critically analyze their unconscious and conscious racial biases, and argues that even the most self-proclaimed 'liberals' can make racial gaffes (Poulton, 2014). Because of the insidious and dehumanizing nature of racism in society, CRT 'relies on racial realists who [have examined themselves] and recognize the hierarchy that determines who receives benefits and the context in which those benefits are accrued, yet [the racial realist] still works to create a set of strategic approaches for improving the plight of historically excluded groups' (Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009, p.392). Therefore CRT can play an important role when discussing how schools and higher education institutions work toward becoming more equitable, diverse and inclusive as a means of centering social justice in schools and higher education (Patton, Shahjahan, & Osei-Kofi, 2010). Hence the CRT perspective forms a lens to be used to uncover the ingrained societal disparities that support a system of privilege and oppression (Parker & Villalpando, 2007). CRT education also acknowledges the centrality of experiential knowledge of people of colour as legitimate and critical to understanding racial subordination (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Parker & Villalpando, 2007; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Color blindness, does not allow for governments and legal actors in the courtrooms to take race into account and forbids any race-based decisions. Lopez (1996) informs us that race matters, in order to get beyond racism we have to account for race within law. He argues that, in order to move past racial beliefs (i.e. antiracist pedagogy), we must first be race-conscious. This is the basic flaw of color-blindness as a

method of racial remediation. Racism will not be eliminated through the simple expedient of refusing to talk about it. Racism permeates our society on both ideological and material levels (1996, pp176-77). This is further exemplified by leading Canadian (1993) CRT case is R. v. Parks[36] (84 C.C.C. [3d] 353 [Ont. CA.]) and the American case was, *Brown v. Board of Education* of Topeka (1954). CRT in essence recognizes interest convergence; rejects colour-blindness in the curriculum and society, rejects race neutrality that liberalism promotes; and refutes and critiques claims of meritocracy that sustain white supremacy.

Storytelling as Hidden Curriculum

Pedagogy is for two people...or three... sometimes more – the school community (my emphasis added). In pedagogy, there's an exchange, something circulates, something mobilizes--hands, bodies, minds, and the actions/words that go between. Pedagogy is a practice, an event. Something happens having to do with power and energy between people and desires that live inside. It can be witnessed. It is experienced. It can be felt as something delicious or, in bad times, something that hurts. When the time of pedagogy is over, the learner, the teacher and the community can feel loss.... (Robertson, 1997, p77).

The beauty of CRT in education is that it is one of many pedagogical views that exists. Crenshaw informs that there is no fix set of doctrines or methodologies to which CRT'S subscribe (Crenshaw et al., 1995, p. xiii). It is the teacher's pedagogical responsibility when using CRT storytelling in the classroom to recognize as many world views, oral traditions and cultures exists in our classrooms. I am also living proof of the many world views and various oral traditions in the teaching profession who sees CRT storytelling as a project for social justice scholarship. I allow my students to express themselves through Black signifying communication of the spoken word poetry[37], prose and counter-storytelling narratives are pedagogical methods employed in CRT, to give voice to subordinated and historically marginalized voices in the classroom. It can be seen as pedagogically emancipatory and liberating for those telling stories which challenges the dominant colour-blind curriculum and race neutral discourses. Delgado and Stefancic, asset that storytelling and counter-storytelling are proactive methods for tackling preconceptions that marginalize others or conceal their humanity (2001, p43). As a Caribbean scholar working and living in the Canadian diaspora, I have

---

[36] The Ontario Court of Appeal agreed that the accused who is a Black man, charged with murder of a white victim, should be allowed to challenge jurors for racial prejudice, because of the nature of anti-black racism Canadian society. (1993, R. v. Parks, p366).

[37] Spoken word poetry allows students to use language for its true purpose; to acknowledge that teaching canonical texts, analytics, and mechanics ultimately serves a larger goal, that of allowing students to "take control of the language of our lives ... to unlock the true magic of their growth and learning"(Reyes, 2006). Spoken word and Black culture have many things in common parlance from gestures, rhythm, and originality. When I have combined spoken word with storytelling, it builds another non-western way of learning about democracy and social justice. It is also associated with hip-hop & rap culture, hence it's strong ties to CRT storytelling.

always know the importance of learning history through oral traditions from my elders. CRT legal storytelling use counter-narrative (Delgado, 1989), and to offer racially different interpretations of policy, and challenge the universality of whiteness as right and assumptions made about people of colour' (Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009, p. 391). Similarly for the past 15 years as an educator teaching in university settings, with criminology, social work and teacher education candidates. I have pedagogically employed storytelling as a way to develop innovative and theoretical ways of framing discussions about social justice and democracy with my students. While most of the students in my classes have an ancestral, communal and cultural history of storytelling in their lives, they also learn the importance of storytelling as a way to close the gaps in the dominant educational canon by hearing and learning from the expertise and experiences of students who otherwise would not be heard. We all were induced into some form of orality before entering "school." Fisher reminds, storytelling is human nature. (1984). Therefore, since every student has a story, they should be given an opportunity to share/tell their story from a personal and in-class narrative, while finding their voice and developing new skills. My classes attract large numbers of African, Asian, South Asian, Indo and Afro Caribbean Indian/Black, Arab, LGBT, Eastern European, Latino and ESL students. They enjoy the practice of storytelling, which allows them to discover a great deal about themselves, while they work with and across each other's' differences and similarities. CRT storytelling education makes the curriculum culturally relevant, by embodying what shapes students' lives. We also avoid reinforcing the cult of the expert, by giving students an opportunity to teach and share their own powerful living testimonies and stories.

This said, sometimes students are resistant to tell their stories, asking "why do you want me to share my life story?" Their question is completely fair so I always spend time explaining how invaluable storytelling is to the learning process and also linking it for example, to the mission of universities, and whiteness studies, which ask us to seek out objective, fair and unbiased knowledge. I inform them according to Bell (1995a: p899), *critical race theory* writings are "characterized by frequent use of the first person which *storytelling* narrative employs. CRT theorists informs us that any "story" that claims to include or refer to the lives of subordinated peoples is incomplete until it takes into account and includes the voices of those people who have lived the experience of subordination (Delgado, 1988; Solorzano & Yosso, 2001). Storytelling is another way to break the predictable manner and method of teaching, making teaching and learning unpredictable, exciting and engaging. When a student story is told orally, the storyteller's pitch, accent, tone of voice, gesture, pronunciation, emphasis and some other salient speech features helps improve students listening skills and attention span, while reducing pedagogy boredom. Educator Ringo Ma, believed that storytelling is an efficient teaching strategy for nonnative instructors in the U.S. higher education. Foreign teachers sometimes find it hard to build trust among native students. Emphasizing his or her teaching experience or scholar accomplishment in the subject does not work so well. From the rhetoric perspective, "the logos, ethos, and pathos derived from storytelling can make a nonnative instructor both meaningful and attractive to students" (Ma, 1994: 7).

When students start to share their stories pedagogically, I find they learn about themselves through vulnerable moments and in turn, some request that this format be used in every classroom setting. Examples of 'vulnerable' moments include students talking about the course content and how the reading materials changed their perceptions of justice, poverty, and other social issues, sharing past abuses and traumas in their lives or their families; and others talk about how this form of learning and sharing allows them to confront writing illiteracy – replacing it with oral literacy. Functional literacy is a serious concern in white dominant societies such as Canada, where Caribbean and other Black students face systemic disadvantages in the educational system, prior to reaching university (James, 2012, Dei, 2008). Additionally, students from Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe the Caribbean, and elsewhere may relate storytelling to ancestral oral traditions. Students are sometimes reminded of the conviviality of storytelling in their parents' country of origin while they are vacationing, listening to storytelling in a family member's yard, or in a barbershop, or at the market. In spaces where Black people's stories have not been part of the historical or official records, conversational traditions also become an important means to pass on information. For example, "old talk" is defined in the Caribbean Dictionary as idle chit chat (Allsop, 2003), but it is much more. It is open to exaggeration, elaboration, humour, self-critique, critical thinking, contestation, and a back and forth communications that enriches stories, while offering an informal means for reflecting and analyzing collective knowledge among story telling participants (Mohabir 2012). In this context, shared storytelling practice also becomes a decolonizing practice, which draws attention to alternative pedagogical, cultural practices, and embodied ways of knowing. A decolonizing practice employing storytelling allows for the most reticent and marginalized students who would traditionally, not reveal their thoughts or feelings readily to bring their voice to the classroom, gain confidence and become engaged using I, think, I feel I see, I hear. According to Bell (1995a:899), *critical race theory* writings are "characterized by frequent use of the first person which *storytelling* narrative employs. CRT theorist educators informs us that any "story'' that claims to include or refer to the lives of subordinated peoples is incomplete until it takes into account and includes the voices of those people who have lived the experience of subordination (Delgado, 1988; Solorzano & Yosso, 2001). Storytelling employed in my university teachings, allows students the opportunity to share their own lived experiences of race, identity, sexual orientation, gender, ethnicity and/or Indigeneity. This is important so that students learn not only from theory, but also from the theorization of their/our complex lived experiences or lives. A text without a context is pretext – we must start all journeys with ourselves. The use of personal knowledge is a way of giving voice to the unique perspectives and lived experiences of people of colour and the marginalized. We all know that students who are socially marginalized by intellectual categorizations, are further alienated by the text which serves as authority. But allowing them to locate their voices in the classroom and the text, it requires teachers to switch roles and see themselves equally as learners regardless of our professional credentials. Teaching social justice in the field of education with other people's children are a real challenge for us as

educators. Delpit reminds us that, how we/you teach and the decisions we/you make are influenced by your life experiences. Delpit also informs us that, we do not really see through our eyes or hear through our ears, but through our beliefs. To put our beliefs on hold is to cease to exist as ourselves for a moment — and that is not easy. It is painful as well, because it means turning yourself inside out, giving up your own sense of who you are, and being willing to see yourself in the unflattering light of another's angry gaze. It is not easy, but it is the only way to learn what it might feel like to be someone else and the only way to start the dialogue (Delpit, 1995, pp46-47). Moreover, Poulton (2014) suggests that we also hold our assumptions in abeyance when interacting and learning about others because assumptions can cloud or perceptions, judgments and behaviour. CRT storytelling as experienced by my students allows for the formation of perception of self, family, culture, community, identity and politics. By embracing CRT storytelling education is we are decolonizing and indigenizing our teaching practices and this can be of the greatest value for marginalized voices, particularly when their storytelling foregrounds social relationships otherwise disrespected by mainstream culture. To speak means …. Above all is to assume a classroom culture. (Fanon, 1967, pp1-2). Storytelling demonstrates how non-western cultures (not reliant on paper trails) pass on histories and cultures while affirming one's link with their past and present sense of self. How we teach and the decisions we make are in essence influenced by our life experiences, both consciously and subconsciously. CRT storytelling 'uses counter-narratives as a way to highlight discrimination, offer racially different interpretations of policy, and challenge the universality of assumptions made about people of colour' (Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009, p. 391). CRT operates with two distinct storytelling paradigms. Majoritarian stories as told by privileged white persons and counter-stories, as told by subordinated Black and racialized persons (Delgado, 1989; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Because most black and racial minorities belief that the educational system and criminal justice systems are racist, a validation of their identity and their story is necessary. Pedagogically employing storytelling supports retention, interests and motivation in learning, unlearning and relearning (Alvin Toffler (Thinkexist.com). Stuart Hall writes in *Negotiating Caribbean Identities:*

> that ……. identity is not only a story, a narrative which we tell ourselves about ourselves; it is stories which change [and shift] with historical circumstances…Far from only coming from the still small point of truth inside us, identities actually come from outside, [identities] are the way in which we are recognized and then come to step into the place of the recognition which others give us. Without the others there is no self, there is no self-recognition (Hall, 1995, p, 3-14).

Thus listening to someone's story is a way of empowering them, of validating their intrinsic self. (Crichlow & Visano, 2009, p60). The recognition of the experiential knowledge of people of color" (Matsuda et al., 1993, p. 6) can be used to counteract the stories of the dominant group. Use of personal narratives and stories as valid forms of "evidence" to document inequity or discrimination and respond to only quantitative data that measures discrepancies "the voice of people of color is required for a complete analysis of the educational system" (Ladson-Billings and Tate, 1995, p. 58). Delgado

suggest that there are at least three reasons why it is important to name one's reality in legal (educational – emphasis added) systems: (1) much of "reality" is socially constructed; (2) stories provide to members of outgroups a vehicle for psychic self-preservation, and (3) the exchange of stories from teller to listener can help overcome ethnocentrism and the dysconscious (King, 1992) drive or need to view the world one way (Delgado, 1989, p.2073). By employing storytelling to validate one's experience, we are also affirming the rhythm that characterizes Black and racial minorities' linguistic patterns, including the Black historical and present–day oral incantations. Additionally, CRT allows for an awareness of the social context of each person in question and awareness of knowledge of the prevalence of racism. CRT storytelling is based upon the centrality of several tenets that challenge the manner in which the social construction of race is manifested in society. My ultimate goal in using CRT storytelling with my students is to humanize and validate their feelings and inspirations - where they are seen by their peers and themselves as having multiple identities, needs and are not just disconnected brains on campus or life in general.

Conclusion

> *CRT embraces a new movement of left scholars, most of them scholars of color, situated in law schools, whose work challenges the ways in which race and racial power are constructed and represented in American & North American legal culture and, more generally, in American and North American society as a whole* (Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller & Thomas, 1995, p.xiii).

CRT deconstructs whiteness, which is a system that is rooted in social, economic, political and cultural history that has established institutional structures that privilege white people in relations of white supremacist domination over Aboriginal and racial "others" (Dei, 2008). Whiteness has a property value (in terms of rights), with the core characteristic of "…the status quo as a neutral baseline…masking the maintenance of white privilege and domination" (Harris, 1993, p. 1715). "The law has accorded 'holders' of whiteness the same privileges and benefits accorded holders of other types of property" (p. 1731). One of these privileges and benefits of property is the absolute right to exclude. It is a race-based theoretical tool for examining power differentials at all levels of society and the educational system. CRT has moved beyond the black-white dichotomy and binary. CRT now 'grapples with such provocative and weighty issues such as same-sex rights, trans rights, as immigration, language rights, sexism, internal colorism, sexual oppression, transnationality, and citizenship status ' (Crichlow, 2014, Trevino, Harris, & Wallace, 2008, p. 7), and is in danger of losing its critical edge. On the one hand CRT is used as a tool to 'eludicate the subtleties of inequality across a number of social domains, [while on the other hand scholars] advocate the use of CRT to articulate better the complexity and insidiousness of racism' (Trevino et al., p.10). CRT is an oppositional framework geared toward naming and disrupting white supremacy and white experience as the normative standard in legal structures, educational systems, and social institutions (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Rosemary Closson feels that 'higher

education, and human resource development (HRD) affirmative action policies, the multicultural [organization change], and diversity movements are ripe for examination with a CRT lens' (2010, p. 278). One lesson educators can take from CRT is that teaching anti-oppression, diversity, anti-racism, gender studies, and history is more complex than critically attending to differences among and within people in capitalist societies. CRT encourages and reminds us to examine historical and contemporary structural and systemic structures, institutions, and the traditional cannon of educational discourses. Educators can facilitate storytelling in their classrooms by asking students to link their story to learning, unlearning and relearning of racism, social justice, equity, and prejudice, employing course material and personal narrative. CRT educators should want to know how CRT has influenced their everyday feelings, understandings and emotions about race and antiblackness, and other forms of social and structural discriminations. CRT storytelling in education enacts equivalency and offers exciting possibilities to create a richer, non-Eurocentric learning environment in which students from non-Western cultures do not have to put their cultural knowing's aside and take up Western ways. Storytelling also forces to rethink our pedagogical practices and notions of literacy while assisting students in articulating their voices. At the same time, students from the dominant culture have an opportunity to learn 'other' ways of thinking and acting in the world. Educators, policymakers, teachers, students, parents, and community members employing CRT storytelling pedagogy and narrative have to be aware and act on the experience of the subordinated when they hear their stories. As educators, we cannot afford to render invisible, minimize, trivialize, and/or distort students' stories in the classroom. The hidden curriculum also allows us to ask what purpose, beyond storytelling or information sharing, is served by the students' stories and how can they be used as a teachable moment in the classroom, thereby building student community and enriching the school curriculum.

References

Allsop, R. (2003). *Dictionary of Caribbean English usage.* Kingston: University of West Indies Press.

Agnew, V. (Ed.). (2007). *Interrogating race and racism.* Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Alfred, M., & Chlup, D. (2010). Making the invisible, visible: Race matters in human resource development. *Advances in Developing Human Resources,* 12(3), 332-351.

Aylward, C. (1999). *Canadian Critical Race Theory: Racism and the Law.* Halifax, NS: Fernwood Publishing.

Backhouse, C. (2010). *Colour-Coded: A legal history of racism in Canada, 1900-1950.* 2nd ed. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Baldwin, A., Cameron, L., & Kobayashi, A. (Eds.). (2011). *Rethinking the great white north: Race, nature, and the historical geographies of whiteness in Canada.* Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Benjamin, Akua. (2003). *The Black/Jamaican criminal: The making of Ideology.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Toronto: University of Toronto.

Brown v. Board of education of Topeka., 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

Brown, M. (2012). Why race matters in Canadian higher education: Discourses of inclusion. Paper presented at the Widening Participation Conference at Whittlebury Hall, Northamptonshire, UK.

Brigham, M. (2009). Global citizenship as a corollary of decolonization: Practical applications in the Aboriginal context. *Global Citizen Digest*, 1(1), 15-25.

Cannon, M., & Sunseri, L. (Eds.). (2011). *Racism, Colonialism, and Indigeneity in Canada.* London, UK: Oxford University Press.

Carr, P., & Lund, D. (Eds.). (2007). *The great white north? Exploring whiteness, privilege, and identity in education.* Rotterdam, NE: Sense Publishers.

Chesler, M., Lewis, A., & Crowfoot, J. (2005). *Challenging racism in higher education: Promoting justice.* New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield.

Choudry, A. (2010). What's left? Canada's 'global justice' movement and colonial amnesia. *Race & Class*, 52(1), 97-102.

Chun, E., & Evans, A. (2011). *Diverse administrators in peril: The new indentured class in higher education.* New York, NY: Paradigm.

Crichlow, W. (2011). Hyperheterosexualization & masculinity. In L. Tepperman & A. Kalyta (Ed.). *Reading Sociology: Canadian Perspectives* (Chapter 42. pp.   ). 2nd ed. London, UK: Oxford University Press.

Crichlow, W. (2004). *Buller men batty bwoys: Hidden men in Toronto and Halifax communities.* Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Crichlow W (2014) Weaponization and prizonization of Toronto's male black youth. *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy* 3(3): 113-131. doi:10.5204/ijcjsd.v3i2.120

Crichlow, W. (2009). How Far Have Our Courts Come and How Far Will They Go? Racializing Courts and Racializing Judgments**.** In Reza Barmaki (Ed.) *Racism Culture & Law: Critical Readings - A Collection of Essays.* APF Press, Toronto, Ontario. Pages 43-67.

Closson, R. (2010). Critical race theory and adult education. *Adult Education Quarterly,* 60(3), 261-283.

Crenshaw, K., Gotanda, N., Peller, G., & Thomas, K. (Eds.). (1995). *Critical race theory: The key writings.* New York, NY: The New Press.

Croom, N., & Patton, L. (2011-2012). The miner's canary: A critical race perspective on the representation of black women full professors. *The Negro Educational Review,* 62&63(1-4), 13-41.

DeCuir, J., & Dixson, A. (2004). 'So when it comes out, they aren't that surprised that it is there': Using critical race theory as a tool of analysis of race and racism in education. *Educational Researcher*, 33(5), 26-31.

Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2001). *Critical race theory.* New York, NY: New York University Press.

Delgado, R. (1989). Symposium: Legal storytelling . Michigan Law Review, 87, 2073.

Delgado, R. (1990). When a story is just a story: Does voice really matter ? Virginia Law Review, 76, 95- 111.

Delgado, R. (1991). Brewer' s plea : Critical thoughts on common cause. Vanderbi lt Law Review, 44, 1-14.

Delgado, R. (Ed.). (1995). Critical race theory: The cutting edge. Philadelphia : Temple University Press.

Delpit, Lisa. (1995) "Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom". New York: New Press, 46-47.)

Fanon, Frantz. (1967) *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York, New York: Grove Press.

 -------- (2004) *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York, New York: Grove Press.

Ferdman, B. (2007). Inclusion starts with knowing yourself. *San Diego Psychologist*, 22(4), 5-6.

Fisher, Walter. (1984). Narration as a Human Communication Paradigm: the Case of Public Moral Argument. Communication Monographs. vol. 51 March 1984: 1-23.

Gonzalez, C., & Harris, A. (2012). Introduction. In G. Guiterrez y Muhs, Y. Flores Niemann, G. Gonzalez, & A. Harris (Eds.). *Presumed incompetent: The intersections of race and class for women in academia* (pp. 1-23). Logan, UT: Utah State University Press.

Hall, S New Left Review 209, 3-14. 1995.

Harris, C. (1993) Whiteness as Property. Harvard Law Review 106(8): 1709–95.

Harper, S., Patton, L., Wooden, O. (2009). Access and equity for African American students in higher education: A critical race historical analysis of policy efforts. *Journal of Higher Education*, 80(4), 389-414.

Heer, J., Ma, M., Bhandar, D., & Gilmour, RJ (Eds.) (2012). *"Too Asian?": Racism, privilege, and post-secondary education*. Toronto, ON: Between the Lines

Henry, F., & Tator, C. (Eds.) (2009). *Racism in the Canadian University: Demanding Social justice, Inclusion, and Equity*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Hughes, R., & Giles, M. (2010). CRiT walking in higher education: Activating critical race theory in the academy. *Race, Ethnicity & Education,* 13(1), 41-57.

Iverson, S. (2007). Camouflaging power and privilege: A critical race analysis of university diversity policies. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 43(5), 586-611.

James, Carl. (2012). Life at the Intersection: Community, Class and Schooling. Fernwood Press. Halifax.

Johnson Flash, L. (2011). Multicultural competence in student affairs organizations. Paper presented at the annual ACPA conference held in Baltimore, MD.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1998). Just what is critical race theory and what is it doing in a nice field like education? *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 11(1), 7-24.

Ladson-Billings, G. & Tate, W. (1995) Toward a critical race theory of education, *Teachers College Record,* 97(1), 47–68.

Lewis, S. (1992). *Report to the Premier on racism in Ontario*. Toronto, ON: Government of Ontario.

Ma, Ringo. (1994). Story-Telling as a Teaching-Learning Strategy: a Nonnative Instructor's Perspective. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Association (80th, New Orleans, LA, November 19-22, 1994).

Markus, H., & Moya, P. (Eds.). (2010). *Doing race: 21 essays for the 21st century*. New York, NY: Norton Books.

M'Baye, B. (2011). The Myth of Post-Racialism: Hegemonic and counterhegemonic stories about race and racism in the United States. *Critical Race and Whiteness Studies*, 7, 1-25.

McCall, L. (2005). The complexity of intersectionality. *Signs,* 30(3), 1771-1800.

Mohabir, N. (2012) *The Last Return Indenture/Ship*: *Diaspora, Decolonization and Douglarized Spaces*. PhD thesis, University of Leeds.

Morfin, O., Perez, V., Parker, L., Lynn, M., & Aronna, J. (2006). Hiding the politically obvious: A critical race theory preview of diversity as racial neutrality in higher education. *Educational Policy*, 20(1), 249-270.

Morrison, T. (1992). *Playing in the dark : Whiteness and the literary imagination.* Cambridge, MA : Harvard University Press.

O'Neil Green, D., & Trent, W. (2005). The public good and a racially diverse democracy. In A. Kezar, T. Chambers, & J. Burkhardt (Eds.). (pp. 102-123) *Higher education for the public good: Emerging voices from a national movement.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Osei-Kofi, N., Shahjahan, R., & Patton, L. (2010). Centering social justice in the study of higher education: The challenges and possibilities for institutional change. *Equity and Excellence in Education*, 43(3), 326-340.

Parker, L., & Villalpando, O. (2007). A race[cialized] perspective on education leadership: Critical race theory in educational administration. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 43(5), 519-524.

Parker, L., & Lynn, M. (2002). What's race got to do with it? Critical race theory's conflicts with and connections to qualitative research methodology and epistemology. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 8(1), 7-22.

Patton, L., & Catching, C. (2009). 'Teaching while black': Narratives of African American student affairs faculty. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 22, 713-725.

Patton, L., Shahjahan, R., & Osei-Kofi, N. (2010). Emergent approaches to diversity and social justice in higher education. *Equity and Excellence in Education*, 43(3), 265-278.

Patton, L., McEwen, M., Rendon, L., & Howard-Hamilton, M. (2007). Critical race perspectives on theory in student affairs. *New Directions for Student Services*, 120, 39-53.

Poulton, D. (2014). *It's Not Always Racist but Sometimes It Is: Reshaping How We Think About Racism,* Indianapolis, USA: Archway Publishing.

Reyes, G. T. (2006). Finding the poetic high. Institute of Educational Sciences. http://eric.ed.gov. Retrieved December 5, 2013, from http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ759646.

Robertson, Judith, P. (1997). Popular Culture and the Education of the Female Primary-School Teacher. In S. Todd (ed.), Learning Desire: Perspectives on Pedagogy, Culture, and the Unsaid. New York: Routledge, 77

Rothenberg, P. (Ed.). (2007). *White privilege: Essential readings on the other side of racism*. 3rd ed. New York, NY: Worth Publishers Incorporated, Macmillan Higher Education.

Solorzano, D., & Yosso, T. (2002). Critical race methodology: Counter-storytelling as an analytical framework for educational research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 3,23-44.

Sue, D. (Ed.). (2010a). *Microaggressions and marginality: Manifestation, dynamics, and impact*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Sue, D. (2010b). *Microaggressions in everyday life: race, gender, and sexual orientation.* New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Swartz, E. (1992). Emancipatory Narratives : Rewriting the master script in the school curriculum. *Journal of Negro Education*, *61*, 341± 355.

Taylor, E., (1999). Critical Race Theory and interest convergence in the desegregation of higher education. In L. Parker, D. Deyhle, & S. Villenas (Eds.). *Race is—Race Isn't: Critical Race Theory and Qualitative Studies in Education* (pp*.* 181-195). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Trevino, AJ, Harris, M., & Wallace, D. (2008). What's so critical about critical race theory? Introduction to the special issue. *Contemporary Justice Review*, 11(1), 7-10.

Valdes, F., McCristal Culp, J., & Harris, A. (Eds.). (2002). *Crossroads, directions, and a new critical race theory*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

West, C. (1993). Race Matters. Boston: Beacon Press.

Wilderson, F. (2011). Red, White and Black: Cinema and the Structure of US Antagonisms. Duke University Press.

Williams, D. (2012). The Cheetah & the Wolf: Diversity & innovation in the New Economy. Paper presented at the AAC&U Network for Academic Renewal, Baltimore, MD.

Williams, D., Berger, J., & McClendon, S. (2005). *Towards a model of Inclusive Excellence and Change in Post-Secondary Institutions.* One in a series of three papers commissioned as part of the Making Excellence Inclusive Initiative*.* Washington, DC: American Association of Colleges & Universities AAC&U.

Wynter, Sylvia. (2001) 'Towards the Sociogenic Principle: Fanon, Identity, the Puzzle of

Conscious Experience, and What It Is Like to Be "Black"', in National Identities and Sociopolitical Changes in Latin America, ed. Mercedes F. Duran-Cogan and Antonio Gomez-Moriana. New York: Routledge. 30–66.