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**It may look good but does it actually work?
A critical race perspective on evaluating the effects of diversity
education programs on young children’s racial attitudes**

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Introduction

As Oakley (2000) has carefully documented, there is a very powerful discourse operating in educational research that tends to create two fundamental subject positions. It is a discourse familiar to most of us when expressed in terms of the ‘qualitative/quantitative’ divide (Hammersley, 1992). Such a divide is constructed around much more than just methods but has come to incorporate and be perceived to reflect fundamental methodological and epistemological oppositions. Thus, for example, quantitative research is constructed as ‘scientific’, ‘objective’ and ‘neutral’ and set against its qualitative opposite that is merely ‘anecdotal’, ‘subjective’ and ‘political’. Over the last decade or so, such discursive foundations have become the basis from which current developments within educational research have been named and situated. The evidence-based practice movement, for example, with its emphasis on systematic reviews and its valorization of randomized controlled trials as the ‘gold standard’ of scientific research has been set firmly in opposition to more qualitative, ethnographic research informed by a range of critical perspectives.

Some of the key characteristics of these binary opposites are summarized in Table 1. As with all discourses, this particular one has not only acted to define what is regarded as legitimate knowledge but also has a formative quality – what Foucault (1980) terms its ‘capillary form of existence’ – where it reaches into the very grain of individuals and inserts itself into their attitudes, behaviors and identities as researchers. While we are all too familiar with the way this discourse acts upon the subjectivities of those associated with the quantitative paradigm and manifests itself in the routine misunderstanding and dismissive approach to anything qualitative, its power is equally evident among those within the qualitative tradition (Oakley, 2000). Among critical researchers, for example, there tends to be a deep suspicion of all things quantitative that tend to be seen (often with some justification) as producing superficial research that routinely

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ignores the voices of the marginalized and powerless and fails to recognize and capture the complex processes by which power operates to dominate and subordinate particular groups.

Table 1. Dominant discourse on research

Quantitative Research	Qualitative Research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative Methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Surveys ○ Randomised Controlled Designs ○ Quasi-Experimental Designs • Scientific • Objective • Neutral • Evidence • Truth • Evidence-based • Systematic reviews • Simple theories of causation (of ‘what works’) • Men • White people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative Methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Semi- and Unstructured Interviews ○ Ethnography ○ Narratives and Storytelling • Political • Subjective • Partisan • Anecdote • Fiction • Not evidence-based • Unsystematic reviews • Critical theories (Neo-Marxist perspectives, feminist theory, Critical Race Theory, poststructuralism) • Women • People of color

In their review of the role of Critical Race Theory (CRT) in educational research, for example, Dixson and Rousseau (2005: 10-11) have pointed out how CRT scholars have tended to ‘utilize personal narratives and stories as valid forms of “evidence” and thereby challenge a “numbers only” approach to documenting inequity or discrimination that tends to certify discrimination from a quantitative rather than a qualitative perspective.’ As Dixson and Rousseau (2005) have argued, this emphasis on storytelling within CRT has played a crucial role in asserting the importance and legitimacy of the personal and community experiences of people of color as valid forms of knowledge (see also Parker and Lynn, 2002) and, through this, of providing new insights into the nature and forms that racism takes.

However, there is a danger – often implicitly realised – that the critiques of particular uses of quantitative methods become critiques of quantitative methods in themselves. For many critical researchers therefore, certain methods – particular experimental and quasi-experimental designs – are simply ruled out because of their explicit association with positivism. Instead, critical researchers have tended to embrace qualitative methods and, in rejecting the notion that research can ever be objective and neutral, have also unashamedly positioned their work as political and partisan. It is here, through the types of struggle touched upon by Dixson and Rousseau (2005) above, that critical researchers have actively promoted the subjective experiences and stories of powerless and marginalized groups.

While this latter approach is extremely important, it will be suggested in this paper that if it is accompanied by a wholesale rejection of quantitative methods then the wider discursive positioning of critical research as the marginalized ‘other’ will simply remain unchallenged. By drawing upon Critical Race Theory it will be argued that alongside championing and promoting qualitative methodologies, including narrative and storytelling approaches, the dominant discourse on research will only truly be disrupted and transformed once critical research begins to consciously appropriate, re-work and make use of some of the language and methods associated with quantitative research. Such an approach involving the tactical use of knowledge can, as MacNaughton (2005: 43) has suggested, ‘produce spaces for progressive social and political change in our truths and, thus, in our relationships; and it can shift knowledge/power relationships embedded in specific regimes of truth.’ This paper will tentatively present an example of one way in which this can be done by reporting the findings of an evaluation of an early years diversity education program that used a quasi-experimental design complimented with qualitative interviews (see Connolly and Hosken, 2006). Before looking at this, however, it is useful to begin with a brief outline and definition of what Critical Race Theory is and then what the implications of this definition is for issues of methodology.

Critical Race Theory (CRT)

Stemming from the field of critical legal studies, CRT has its origins in the 1970s and the concerns being raised at that time about the slow progress being made in the United States with regard to racial reform (see Crenshaw *et al.*, 1995; Delgado and Stefancic, 2000, 2001). While it is still largely a body of work located within the USA, it is now beginning to be taken up and applied in other contexts, most notably in the UK in relation to race and education (see Gillborn, 2005). CRT is a particularly useful framework with which to begin thinking about race issues in the early years because of the way that it problematises race and places a concern with racism at the heart of the analysis. According to Delgado and Stefancic (2001), while CRT embodies a wide range of research and scholarship it tends to be underpinned by at least five core principles. The first is that racism is not an abnormal nor aberrational aspect of society but is ordinary and routine; it is seen as ‘the usual way society does business’ and thus tends to be the common, everyday experience of black and minority ethnic people. Second, there is a recognition that racism serves important purposes, both psychic and material, and thus there is little incentive among the majority white population to challenge it.

Third, CRT adopts a social constructionist approach to race and is thus concerned with interrogating the processes by which particular groups of people become racialised over time and why. As Delgado and Stefancic (2001: 7) explain:

[R]ace and races are products of social thought and relations. Not objective, inherent, or fixed, they correspond to no biological or genetic reality; rather, races are categories that society invents, manipulates, or retires when convenient. People with common origins share certain physical traits, of course, such as skin color, physique, and hair texture. But these constitute only an extremely small portion of their genetic endowment, are dwarfed by that which we have in common, and have little or nothing to do with distinctly human, higher-order traits, such as personality, intelligence, and moral behavior. That society frequently chooses to ignore these scientific facts, creates races, and endows them with pseudo-permanent characteristics is of great interest to critical race theory.

Following on from this social constructionist approach is, fourth, a recognition that race is not a fixed category but one that changes both over time and from one context to the next. Thus, differing groups will become racialised and excluded at different times and for different reasons. Moreover, the ways in which race as a social process impacts upon black and minority ethnic people will vary according to context and will be fundamentally informed by factors such as gender and social class. It is in recognition of this that there is a strong emphasis within CRT on the notion of intersectionality (i.e. examining the inter-relationships between race, gender and social class as they impact upon people's lives) and an anti-essentialist approach.

The fifth and final key principle underpinning CRT is an emphasis on the unique voice of black and minority ethnic people. As Delgado and Stefancic (2001) concede, this sits in 'uneasy tension' with the previous anti-essentialist principle. However, there remains a need to foreground and prioritise the experiences and perspectives of black and minority ethnic people as, collectively, they are in a unique position to understand the nature and effects of racism and, through their narratives, to provide new and challenging ways to understanding existing systems and social relationships.

One of the key developments to arise from this body of CRT scholarship has been a renewed interrogation of the notion of whiteness (Dyer, 1997). From a CRT perspective, the power of whiteness as a racial identity can be seen not only in terms of its ability to impose itself as the central reference point by which all other groups are 'Othered' and are measured against but also, crucially, by the way that it is so normalised and taken-for-granted that it can remain unstated and unrecognised. As Wicomb (1998: 371) has explained: 'white is an empty signifier, both everything and nothing ... being invisible to itself it cannot acknowledge its existence ... it can only articulate itself in terms of the markedness of black, the contrast which supplies the meaning of white as the norm'.

Whiteness, therefore, has become the means by which race is capable of being, at one and the same time, both normal, ordinary and endemic and yet also unrecognisable and unknowable. In places such as the United States, this is achieved, as Frankenberg (1997a: 6) has argued, through the continual 'slippages' between discourses on race, nation and culture that 'continue to "unmark" white people while consistently marking and racialising others'. Thus, for example, whiteness has come to represent what it means to be such things as: American (Frankenberg, 1993) or Irish (Connolly and Khaoury, 2007); working class (Roediger, 1990); and also a woman (Carby, 1982). This has then become the measure against which the differences of others are identified and judged. Ultimately, it is only here that glimpses can be gained of the nature of whiteness itself as depictions of the 'other' offer some understanding of what it therefore means to be white (Dyer, 1997). As Aanerud (1997) has explained, for example, the many discourses that constitute 'the exotic, the promiscuous, the earthy and accessible female other' come, by definition, to define white female sexuality. Similarly, the construction of black and minority ethnic people as lazy and 'welfare scroungers' also come, by default, to define the white working class as 'decent', 'hard-working' and 'honourable'.

CRT and Implications for Methodology

While the above outline of CRT does little justice to the rich insights produced through this scholarship and also the diverse and sometimes competing perspectives found within it, it does illustrate quite clearly why qualitative research has and continues to be given prominence. Given the everyday and taken-for-granted nature of racism, it is only through the type of detailed 'critical race ethnography' as advocated by Duncan (2005) that researchers are able to identify

and draw attention to some of the processes that act to position and subordinate people of color. Indeed it was precisely this approach that I took in my early ethnographic research exploring the ways in which racism impacts upon the peer cultures and gender identities of young children (see Connolly, 1998). Moreover, it can be seen why ‘placing the stories that people of colour tell of their experiences’ is central to CRT especially as a ‘useful tool for examining how sociotemporal notions of race inform the naturalization of oppression and the normalization of racial inequality’ (Duncan, 2005: 94). It is only through this that the dominant and taken-for-granted discourses of whiteness can be recognized and effectively challenged through the production of ‘counterstories’ (Dixson and Rousseau, 2005: 11).

However, while qualitative research must clearly play a key role in the further development of CRT scholarship, I want to argue here that there is no reason why quantitative research cannot also be based upon the voice of people of color and, if used properly, cannot also play an important role in identifying and naming patterns of racial inequalities and processes of exclusion. Moreover, through the appropriate use of experimental and quasi-experimental designs, quantitative research has a powerful role to play in appropriating and using the methods associated with the evidence-based practice movement to bring into question the efficacy and effectiveness of existing policies, programs and interventions aimed at challenging racism and addressing racial inequalities. To illustrate this, the paper will now describe an evaluation that I recently directed that sought to identify the effectiveness of an early years pilot education program aimed at promoting respect for diversity, most notably racial diversity, among young children.

The Pilot Education Program

The education program that provided the focus for the evaluation – the Johnathan Ball Tiny Steps for Peace Project – was developed by the Tim Parry Johnathan Ball Trust based in Warrington, England.² The Trust was established in 1993 in memory of two boys who were killed following the IRA bombing of that town. The Trust itself is engaged in a variety of educational activities and programs aimed at promoting peace and resolving divisions and conflict that impact upon the lives of children and young people. The Johnathan Ball Tiny Steps for Peace Project is one of the latest of these programs that the Trust has developed and piloted over the last few years (2003 – 2005) and is aimed at younger children (aged 4-7 years). It has three main objectives:

- To research and develop learning resources which celebrate the concept of diversity through using drama as a learning medium
- To encourage young children's personal, social and emotional development, physical wellbeing and full social inclusion, regardless of ethnicity, culture or ability
- To lay the foundations for any subsequent work designed to reduce barriers to inclusion and equality of opportunity.

The pilot program arising from this project was developed for use in elementary schools and was delivered to eight Year 2 classes (6-7 year olds) in six schools in Warrington and Oldham between November 2004 and April 2005. The program itself comprised two main elements: an initial morning of activities including a drama delivered by a local theatre company followed by workshops and then a number of teacher-led classroom activities to be undertaken during the following days and weeks with the children.

² For further details on the work of the Trust see: <http://www.childrenforpeace.org> .

The first element consisted of a visit to the school by the theatre company and the project leader for the pilot program. The initial drama consisted of three short plays written by and performed to the children by the theatre company. Each play lasted about five minutes and was set within the context of a school. For each of the plays one of the characters was different to the others and was excluded by them as a consequence. In each case, the characters came to learn that it was better to be inclusive of others and all three plays concluded with everyone playing together. After each play, the character that was excluded was 'hot-seated' in that he or she sat on a chair in front of the children so that they could be asked questions concerning what had gone on in the play and how she or he felt. The actor remained in character for this and improvised her or his answers. The workshops that followed aimed to reinforce and build upon the key messages contained in the three plays. The workshops comprised a combination of circle time discussion, drama improvisation and arts-based practical activities. The emphasis within these was to: encourage the children to identify similarities and differences between themselves; understand and respect such differences; and appreciate how being included and excluded makes someone feel.

The second element of the pilot program, the teacher-led classroom activities, consisted of a range of short activities that the teachers were asked to undertake with their children during circle time over the following four weeks. A Teacher's Resource Pack was prepared and given to each teacher. The Pack provided details of a warm up activity and two circle time activities to undertake for each of the four weeks. The Pack was also accompanied by a Resource Box of materials required to complete each of the activities. The circle time activities aimed to encourage children to recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others and to understand and respect such differences. They also focused on increasing children's awareness and understanding of emotions and of how it feels when people are acting positively and negatively towards them.

Methodology for the Evaluation

Eight Year 2 classes (6-7 year olds) took part in the pilot program – four based in Warrington and four in Oldham. The eight classes were organised into four pairs, with each pair being matched as far as possible in relation to their location (either Warrington or Oldham), their ethnic breakdown and the socio-economic background of the children. Two pairs consisted of parallel classes in two respective schools. All the schools were located in what could be described as poorer, working class areas. The ethnic breakdown of the children in each class that took part in the evaluation is provided in Table 2. As can be seen, three of the pairs of classes were mainly White with the fourth pair consisting of approximately half White and half Asian children.

Table 2. Gender and Racial Breakdown of Year 2 Classes Participating in the Pilot Program

		White	Asian	African Caribbean	Mixed Parentage	Totals
Class 1 (I)*	Girls	6	5		1	12
	Boys	3	5			8
Class 2 (C)*	Girls	9	3		1	13
	Boys	6	8			14
Class 3 (I)	Girls	10			1	11
	Boys	17			1	18
Class 4 (C)	Girls	12			2	14
	Boys	17		1		18
Class 5 (I)	Girls	13				13
	Boys	15				15
Class 6 (C)	Girls	10				10
	Boys	12				12
Class 7 (I)	Girls	11				11
	Boys	5		1		6
Class 8 (C)	Girls	9			1	10
	Boys	16				16
Total (Intervention)		80	10	1	3	94
Total (Control)		91	11	1	4	107
Overall Total		171	21	2	7	201

*I = Intervention Group; C = Control Group.

For each of the four pairs of classes, one was randomly assigned to the intervention group and one to the control group. The classes that comprised the intervention and control groups are also indicated in Table 2. An experimental design was then employed to ascertain the program's actual effects on children's levels of racial awareness and attitudes, with the four classes comprising the intervention group undertaking the two elements of the pilot program over a four-week period and the four classes comprising the control group not undertaking any of the activities associated with the programme but continuing with their school activities as normal. For those four classes in the control group they subsequently undertook both elements of the pilot program during the four weeks immediately following the completion of the evaluation.

A research instrument was designed and used to measure aspects of the children's levels of racial awareness and attitudes before and after the delivery of the pilot program in the four intervention classes. Such measurements were also taken, at the same times, for the children in the matched control classes. Parental consent was gained in all cases before children took part in the evaluation. The children's consent was gained by offering them the choice as to whether they took part in the evaluation or not and also explaining that they could withdraw from the evaluation at any time. While 201 children took part in the evaluation in total, 27 children were either absent for the first tests before the pilot programme or the second tests afterwards. This left a final achieved sample of 174 children for whom measurements were gained both before and afterwards. In order to facilitate the delivery of the drama performances by the theatre company

as well as meeting the needs of individual schools, the actual delivery of the programme to each pair of classes was staggered between the period November 2004 and April 2005.

The research instrument itself, a copy of which is provided as an appendix, was specifically designed for the present evaluation and administered in a standardized manner by four independent qualified teachers specifically recruited and trained for this study. It was designed to test whether the pilot program had been effective in achieving three main objectives:

1. to increase children's ability to recognise, without prompting, instances of social exclusion.
2. to reduce children's tendency to stereotype others by increasing their awareness of the many different things that children share in common.
3. to increase children's willingness to be more inclusive of others who are different to themselves.

To accomplish this, five tasks were designed for the children to complete and these tasks formed the basis of the research instrument. For the sake of brevity, the tasks will be described later when reporting the findings from this experimental design. To compliment these statistical findings relating to measurable changes in the children's attitudes and awareness, semi-structured interviews were also undertaken with six of the eight class teachers to ascertain their perspectives on and experiences of participating in the pilot programme. The interviews were undertaken by the project leader for the pilot program. Each interview was tape recorded and then transcribed verbatim.

Teachers' Perceptions of the Pilot Program

Before examining the actual effects of the program on the children's racial awareness and attitudes, it is worth first examining the teachers' experiences of and perspectives on the pilot program. All of the six participating teachers interviewed were white and spoke very positively about the pilot program. For some, they felt that the programme did have a small but noticeable effect on the behaviour of some of their children. As the following teacher explained, for example, she felt that participating in the pilot program had led to more positive behaviour among two of her boys:

I've got one or two boys in particular that sort of dealt with situations ... who met confrontation with confrontation and having seen the workshop and done the work and the circle time sessions you know that I've just noticed little tendencies where they step back a little bit and I always reinforce what we've talked about and what happened in those sessions so yeah it hits home a little bit more now I think.

More generally, all of the teachers felt that the key themes underpinning the pilot program around understanding and respecting diversity were recognised and accepted by the children themselves. For some, they felt that the drama helped to facilitate this because it captured the children's interest and gave opportunities to participate both in relation to the drama itself as well as in the follow-up workshops. These sentiments are illustrated in the comments made by the following two teachers:

Yeah, I think the children understood the aims of it through the plays ... [b]ecause they were actually able to join in as well and do the role play after watching it. The chance too for them to join in made them feel the way the characters in the play would've felt and I think that helped them.

I think it was the idea that everybody has something worthwhile about them which came across very clearly in the play.

The ability of the workshop sessions to encourage the children to explore diversity through examining similarities and differences was also recognised by the following teacher:

Well, I think the children all enjoyed [the workshops], they all got something out of it and they were talking about it for weeks afterwards. ... It gave them the chance to compare themselves with somebody else, which things have we got in common, which things do we share, which things are different about us?

Measurable Effects of the Pilot Program

While the teachers' experiences of participating in the pilot program and their perspectives on the effectiveness of it are certainly encouraging, the crucial question from a CRT perspective is whether it actually had any measurable impact on the children's racial awareness and attitudes. In looking for change it is important to stress that it is not being implied that any change found here should be regarded as durable or long-lasting. Nor should it be implied that any changes in the children's awareness and attitudes found will necessarily be reflected in changes in their behaviour. It therefore cannot be claimed that programs such as this one can ever address deep-rooted and structural divisions between groups in and of themselves. Rather, the point is that any initiative aimed at addressing such divisions needs to be multi-faceted and should therefore, by definition, include educational programs with young children as just one element alongside broader efforts to resolve racial divisions between groups as well structural initiatives to address social and economic inequalities. This being the case, the purpose of this study was simply to encourage those responsible for developing such programs with young children to consider what the effects of these programmes are and thus what it is, precisely, they wish to achieve in relation to young children's racial attitudes and awareness.

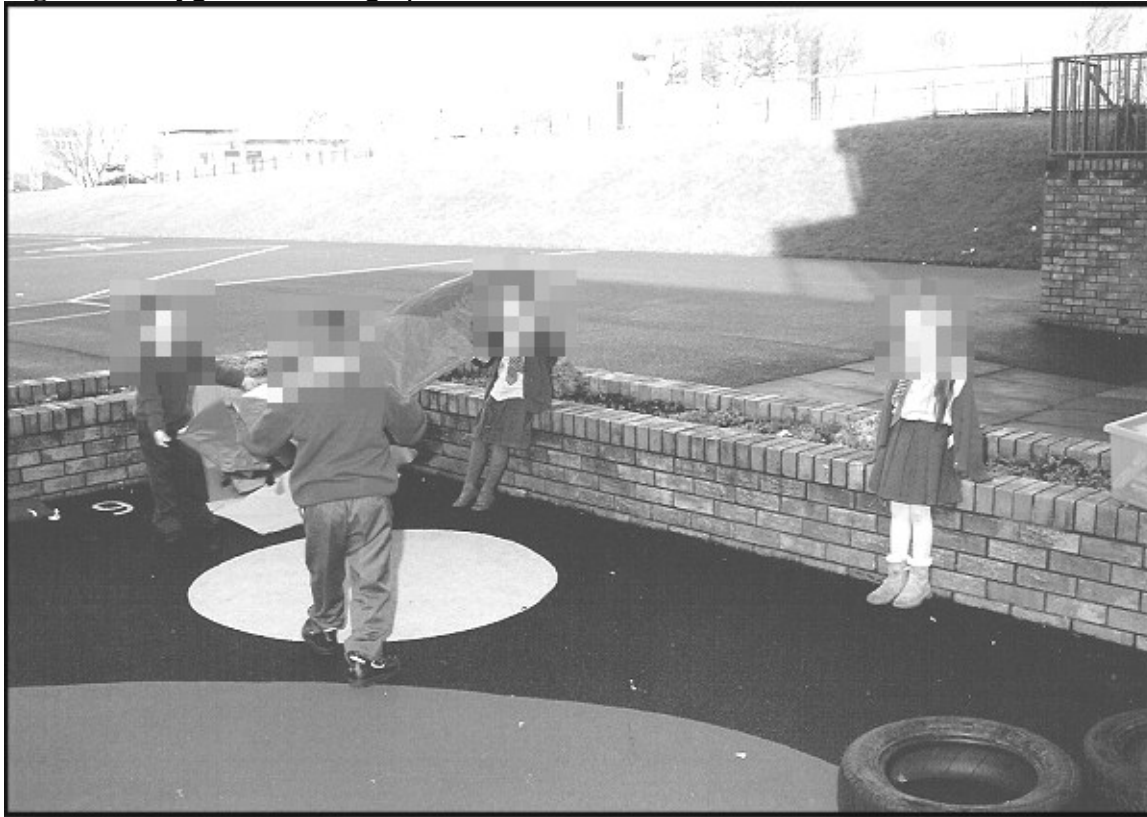
For the sake of clarity, the findings of the experimental design employed to identify any such changes will now be described in relation to each of the three objectives set for the pilot program in turn.

Objective 1: To increase children's ability to recognise, without prompting, instances of social exclusion

The effects of the pilot program in relation to this first objective were measured using a task whereby the children were asked to describe in their own words a photograph they were shown (see Figure 1) depicting a playground scene with three children playing together and a fourth child sitting a little distance away looking on. The fourth child was standing expressionless. The children's responses were recorded verbatim and then coded into one of three categories: that the children recognised, without any prompting, that the child standing on their own was possibly

being actively excluded by the others; that they recognised, again without prompting, that this child was feeling ‘sad’ or ‘lonely’; or that they did not recognise or refer to either of these.

Figure 1. Playground Photograph Used for the Evaluation³



The descriptions the children gave before and after the program were compared for both the control and intervention groups. While the control group demonstrated no significant change before and after,⁴ a significant increase was found among the children taking the programme in terms of their awareness that the fourth child may be being actively excluded.⁵ As illustrated by Figure 2, children were four times more likely to recognise that the fourth child may be being actively excluded by the other three children after the pilot programme than before (i.e. by comments such as ‘she’s left out’ or ‘they’re not letting her play’).⁶

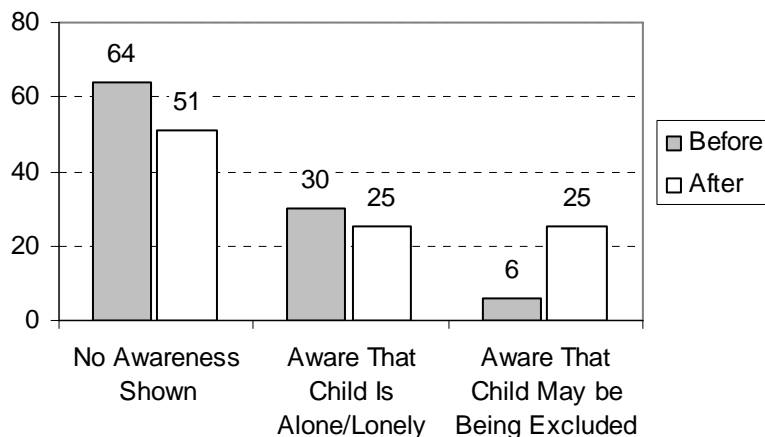
³ Original photograph used was in colour with the faces not obscured

⁴ Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test ($p=0.057$, $Z = -1.906$).

⁵ Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test ($p<0.0005$, $Z = -3.600$).

⁶ This change was significantly greater than the near-significant change found among the control group (see footnote 4). This was tested by analyzing a 2x3 frequency table comprising type of child (control, intervention) by the nature of the change in awareness before compared to afterwards (i.e. either reduced awareness, no change in awareness or increased awareness). A greater proportion of those in the intervention group than in the control group demonstrated increased awareness (30.9% compared to 12.4%) and this was found to be significant ($p=0.006$, $\chi^2_2=10.136$).

Figure 2. Children’s Awareness of Exclusion Before and After the Pilot Programme (Intervention Group) (%).



Objective 2: To reduce children’s tendency to stereotype others by increasing their awareness of the many different things that children share in common

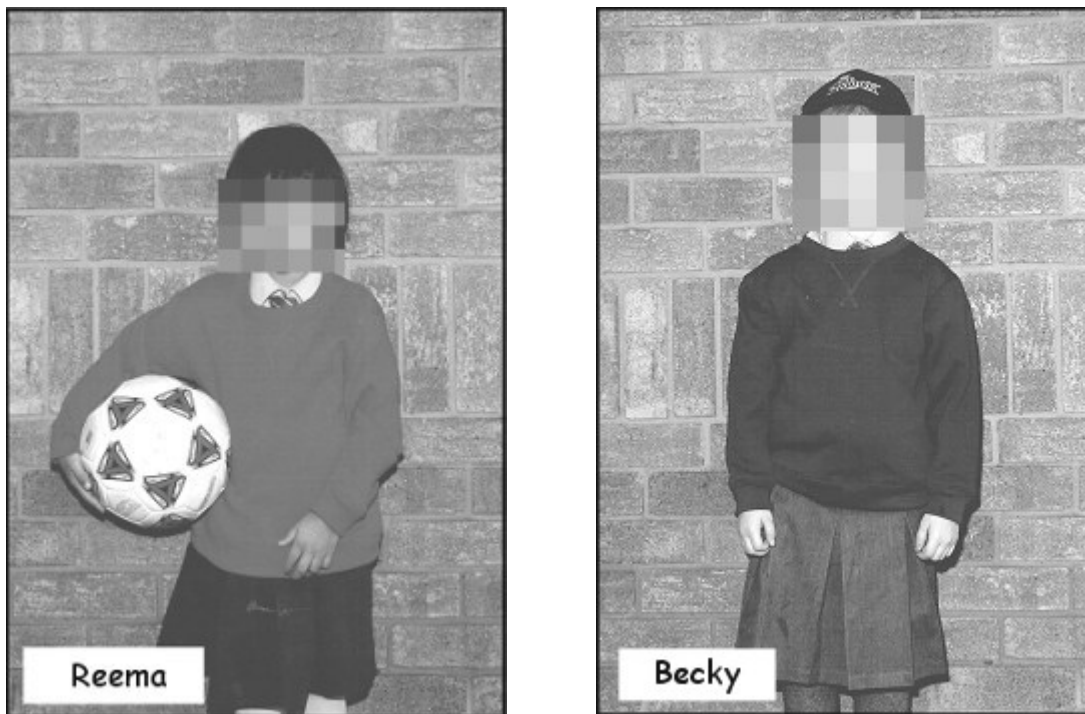
The effects of the pilot program in relation to this second objective were tested in two ways. First, the children were set a task whereby they were asked to sort eight photographs of individual children into two groups of four. The children in the photographs were chosen and dressed in such a manner that there were a number of ways in which they could be sorted into two groups. For example, and as detailed in Table 3, there were: four girls and four boys; four Asian and four white children; four children holding a football and four not; four children wearing caps and four not; four children wearing glasses and four not; and there were four children wearing red jumpers and four wearing blue jumpers. As an illustration, two of the eight photographs are reproduced in Figure 3.

A simple count of the number of differing ways the children were able to ‘sort’ the photographs was taken both before and after the programme for those in the control and the intervention groups. It would be expected that participation in the pilot program would have the effect of increasing the children’s awareness of differences and similarities and thus should result in an increase in the number of ways they can sort the eight photographs into two groups. The average number of times children in the intervention and control groups were able to sort the photographs, both before and after the four week intervention, is illustrated in Figure 4.

Table 3. Descriptions of the Eight Children Whose Photographs were Used in the Evaluation

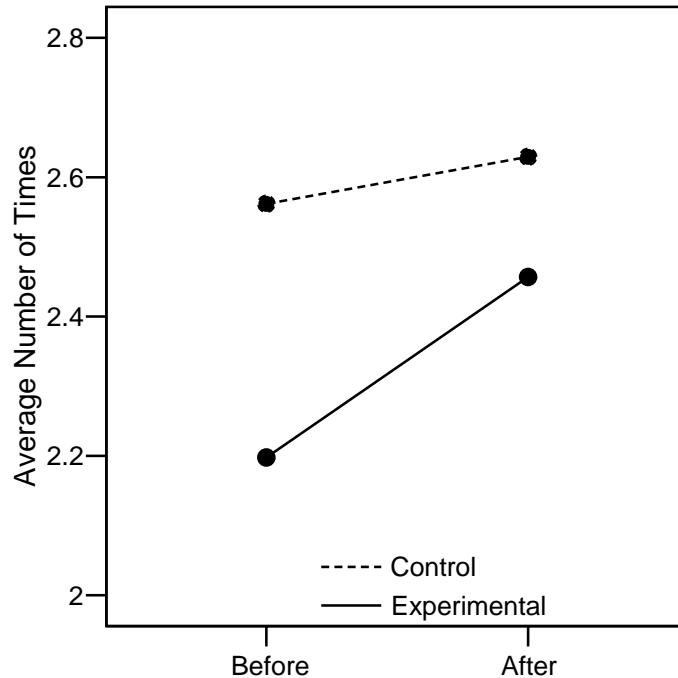
Asma:	Asian girl; blue jumper; holding a ball; wearing glasses; not wearing a cap.
Becky:	White girl; blue jumper; not holding a ball; wearing glasses; wearing a cap.
Carl:	White boy; red jumper; holding a ball; wearing glasses; not wearing a cap.
David:	White boy; blue jumper; holding a ball; not wearing glasses; wearing a cap.
Emma:	White girl; red jumper; not holding a ball; not wearing glasses; wearing a cap.
Mahmoud:	Asian boy; blue jumper; not holding a ball; not wearing glasses; not wearing a cap.
Omar:	Asian boy; red jumper; not holding a ball; wearing glasses; wearing a cap.
Reema:	Asian girl; red jumper; holding a ball; not wearing glasses; not wearing a cap.

Figure 3. Two of the Eight Photographs Used for the Evaluation⁷



⁷ Original photographs used were in colour with the faces not obscured. All children were slightly smiling.

Figure 4. Average number of times the children could ‘sort’ the eight individual photographs of children differently

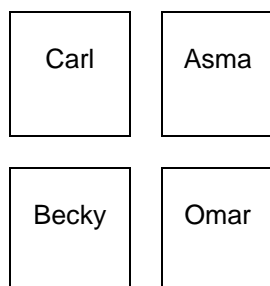


It can be seen that both groups of children increased the number of times they could sort the photographs differently afterwards compared to before. This, in turn, may partly reflect their increased familiarity with the task the second time around. However, while those in the control group only increased the number of times marginally (from an average of 2.56 to 2.63), those in the intervention group increased at a slightly greater rate (from an average of 2.20 to 2.46) and, while small, this latter change was found to be statistically significant.⁸ What this suggests, therefore, is that there is evidence that the pilot program did have a small effect in increasing the children’s awareness of similarities and differences.

A second method was also used to assess whether the pilot program had demonstrated any measurable effects in relation to this second objective. In particular this method was devised to assess whether the program had any specific effects on the children’s racial attitudes above and beyond the more general effects established above. The method considered whether the children were less likely to notice racial differences after the program than before. It involved a task whereby four of the eight photographs described earlier were positioned on the table in front of the child as illustrated by Figure 5. As can be seen, the four children comprised a White girl and boy and an Asian girl and boy.

⁸ The results of a two-way mixed ANOVA indicated that there were no significant differences between the control and intervention groups ($p=0.285$, $F_{1,168}=1.150$) and nor between the total number of times children could sort the photographs before and afterwards ($p=0.546$, $F_{1,168}=0.367$). However, the predicted interaction effect between the groups and the number of times the children could sort was significant ($p=0.031$ [one-tailed], $F_{1,168}=1.150$).

Figure 5. Order in Which the Four Photographs of Children are to be Placed in Front of the Child in Relation to Task Four



The remaining four photographs (also comprising a White girl and a boy and an Asian girl and a boy) were then shown in a random order to the children in turn. For each photograph, they were asked to compare it to the four laid out on the table and to identify which of the four looked most like the child in the photograph they were being shown.

For those White children who matched the photograph of the Asian boy with that of the Asian boy on the table (n=42 or 54% of the total) during the pre-test, an analysis of who they then matched the Asian boy with during the post test was made. The same process was also undertaken for those who matched the Asian girl with the Asian girl during the pre-test.⁹ The findings of this analysis for both the control and the intervention group are provided in Table 6.

Table 6. Results of pre- and post-test matching exercise

	Who the White children matched the Asian boy with post-test (who had matched the Asian boy with the Asian boy pre-test)		Who the White children matched the Asian girl with post-test (who had matched the Asian girl with the Asian girl pre-test)	
	Control Group	Intervention Group	Control Group	Intervention Group
Asian Boy	22 (55%)	25 (68%)	10 (23%)	5 (12%)
Asian Girl	9 (22%)	4 (11%)	24 (56%)	29 (67%)
White Boy	3 (7%)	1 (3%)	9 (21%)	9 (21%)
White Girl	6 (15%)	7 (19%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

As can be seen, for those in the intervention group, about a third of the children who matched the Asian boy with the Asian boy during the pre-test decided to match him with a different child during the post-test (i.e. 11% matched him with an Asian girl the second time around, 1% with a White boy and 19% with a White girl). A very similar finding is also evident

⁹ Because of the very small numbers of Asian children in the sample, it was not possible to conduct this type of analysis on the Asian children’s matching of White children.

in relation to the Asian girl. While this may appear to indicate a positive effect in terms of reducing the proportion of children tending to match those in the photographs by ‘race’, these proportions were actually not significantly different to those found in the control group.¹⁰ In other words, while the pilot program had some positive general effects in terms of increasing children’s awareness of diversity, there is no evidence that it had any specific effects in terms of reducing the tendency for the children to use ‘race’ as a means of matching the photographs before and afterwards.

Objective 3: To increase children’s willingness to be more inclusive of others who are different to themselves

Finally, the effects of the pilot program in increasing the children’s willingness to be more inclusive of children from other racial group swas measured using two tasks. The first involved placing all eight photographs of the individual children infront of each respondent in a random arrangement and asking the respondent to point out who they would most like to be friends with. Their selection was then removed and they were then asked, of the remaining seven photographs, who they would now want to be friends with the most. This process was continued until the respondent indicated that they no longer wished to make a choice. As a baseline measure, the average rankings that the White and Asian respondents gave to the eight photographs during the initial pre-test are detailed in Table 7.

Table 7. Asian and White Respondents’ rankings of eight photographs of individual children in relation to whom they would like to be friends with the most (pre-test results for intervention and control groups combined).

Asian Respondents’ Rankings (n=21)		White Respondents’ Rankings (n=159)	
Name	Average Ranking	Name	Average Ranking
David (White Boy)	2.6	David (White Boy)	3.0
Carl (White Boy)	2.9	Emma (White Girl)	3.0
Mahmood (Asian Boy)	3.7	Carl (White Boy)	3.8
Asma (Asian Girl)	3.9	Becky (White Girl)	4.1
Omar (Asian Boy)	4.0	Asma (Asian Girl)	4.5
Emma (White Girl)	4.4	Mahmood (Asian Boy)	4.7
Becky (White Girl)	4.6	Reema (Asian Girl)	4.8
Reema (Asian Girl)	5.1	Omar (Asian Boy)	5.1
Average Ranking of White Children	3.6	Average Ranking of White Children	3.5
Average Ranking of Asian Children	4.2	Average Ranking of Asian Children	4.8

As can be seen, the Asian repondents demonstrated no simple pattern in terms of their preferences, with the ranking of the White and Asian children appearing to be largely random. If

¹⁰ For the Asian boy matching: $p=0.380$, $\chi^2_3=3.079$. For the Asian girl matching: $p=0.343$, $\chi^2_2=2.138$.

anything there would appear to be a slight underlying tendency for the Asian respondents to prefer White children as friends as noted by the average rankings. However, because of the small numbers of Asian respondents involved these findings need to be treated with caution.¹¹ However, and in contrast, the White respondents demonstrated a clear preference for White children as friends over Asian children, with all four of the White children in the photographs being ranked more highly than the four Asian children. Moreover, the differences between the respondents to rank White children higher than Asian children was also found to be statistically significant.¹²

In terms of measuring the effects of the pilot program on these rankings, the respondents' preferences before and afterwards were compared for both the control and intervention groups. The results of this comparison are summarised in Table 8. It can be seen that no significant change took place in relation to the White respondents' average rankings of the Asian children before and after the programme and also that their rankings did not differ significantly from those of the control group.¹³ As can also be seen, the same was found to be the case for the Asian respondents' ratings of White children.¹⁴ Overall, therefore, it can be concluded that there is no evidence that the pilot program had any impact on the children's average rankings of those from the other racial group as friends.

Table 8. White and Asian children's average rankings of those from the other racial group as friends*

	White children's average ranking of Asian children		Asian children's average ranking of White children	
	Before	After	Before	After
Control Group	4.86	4.95	3.80	3.52
Intervention Group	4.76	4.80	3.27	3.07

*Average scores range from 1 (first) to 8 (eighth and last). Higher average scores therefore indicate more positive attitudes.

The second task used to evaluate this third objective involved the respondents being shown each of the eight photographs of the individual children in turn, in a random order. For each photograph they were asked how they would feel if they were friends with that child with the choice of responses being: '1=Very Sad'; '2=Sad'; '3=OK'; '4=Happy'; or '5=Very Happy'. To help the children distinguish between these five emotions, they were shown a 'Feelings Card'

¹¹ The difference in the respondents' average rankings of White and Asian respondents was not found to be statistically significant using a paired-samples t-test ($p=0.097$, $t_{20}=1.741$).

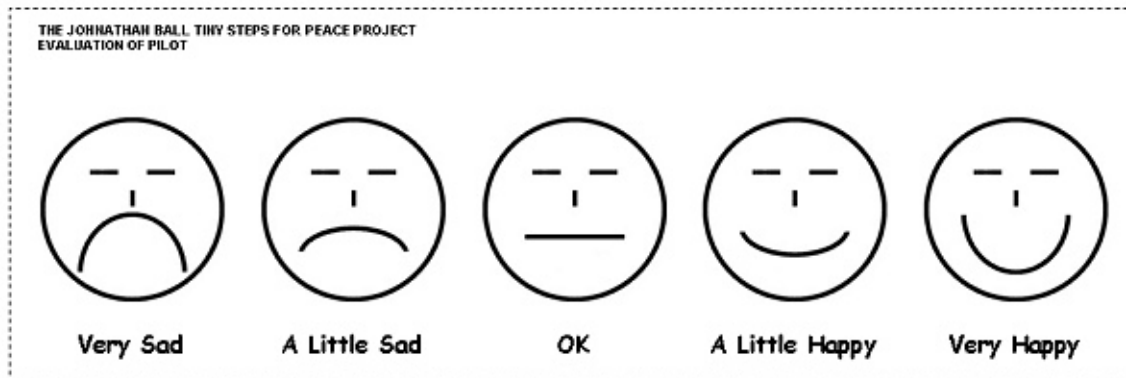
¹² $p<0.0005$, $t_{158}=11.728$ (paired-samples t-test).

¹³ The results of a two-way mixed ANOVA indicated that there were no significant differences between the control and intervention groups ($p=0.399$, $F_{1,143}=0.715$), nor the overall average rankings before and afterwards ($p=0.431$, $F_{1,143}=0.622$) and nor was there an interaction effect between the groups and the average rankings ($p=0.799$, $F_{1,143}=0.065$).

¹⁴ The results of a two-way mixed ANOVA indicated that there were no significant differences between the control and intervention groups ($p=0.241$, $F_{1,18}=1.468$), nor the overall average rankings before and afterwards ($p=0.266$, $F_{1,18}=1.318$) and nor was there an interaction effect between the groups and the average rankings ($p=0.858$, $F_{1,18}=0.033$).

as illustrated in Figure 6. When simply taking the children’s ratings made during the pre-test as a baseline, the same picture emerged as with the previous task. The Asian respondents’ average rating of Asian and White children was found to be the same (both producing an average rating of 3.8) whereas an underlying tendency was found among the White respondents to state that they would be happier being friends with a White child than an Asian child (average rating for White children was 4.1 compared to 3.7 for the Asian children). This latter difference was also found to be statistically significant.¹⁵

Figure 6. “Feelings Card” Used with Children for the Evaluation



As for the effects of the pilot programme on these ratings, the results are summarised in Table 9. As can be seen, there is no evidence that the pilot programme either had any effect on the White respondents’ attitudes towards being friends with Asian children¹⁶ or on the Asian respondents’ attitudes towards being friends with White children.¹⁷

Table 9. White and Asian children’s average ratings for how happy their would be being friends with those from the other racial group¹⁸

	White children’s average ranking of Asian children		Asian children’s average ranking of White children	
	Before	After	Before	After
Control Group	3.69	3.76	3.68	4.15
Intervention Group	3.67	3.65	3.85	3.78

¹⁵ $p < 0.0005$, Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test, $Z = -6.034$

¹⁶ The results of a two-way mixed ANOVA indicated that there were no significant differences between the control and intervention groups ($p = 0.734$, $F_{1,144} = 0.116$), nor the overall levels of happiness before and afterwards ($p = 0.414$, $F_{1,144} = 0.672$) and nor was there an interaction effect between the groups and the overall levels of happiness ($p = 0.334$, $F_{1,144} = 0.940$).

¹⁷ As can be seen, the change in the average ratings was minor and given the small sample size involved ($n = 21$) such a change will obviously be not significant.

¹⁸ Ratings ranged from: 1 (Very Sad); 2 (Sad); 3 (OK); 4 (Happy); to 5 (Very Happy). A higher average rating therefore represents higher levels of happiness.

Teachers' Approaches to Dealing with Specific Differences During the Pilot Program

Overall, and at one level, the findings from this evaluation of the effects of the pilot program are positive and encouraging. There is certainly evidence of some positive *general* effects in terms of increasing the children's ability to recognise instances of exclusion and also in terms of their awareness of diversity. Interestingly, however, these general effects did not appear to translate into *specific* effects in terms of changing children's racial attitudes. In reporting this finding it needs to be stressed that the pilot program was never intended to focus specifically on 'race'. Rather, the aim was to encourage children to develop an appreciation of and respect for diversity much more generally. There were thus no specific tasks set for the workshops or in the Teacher Resource Pack to be used for follow-up work explicitly on racial diversity. Rather, the teachers were encouraged to focus on a range of similarities and differences between the children, just one of which was 'race'. This more generalist approach was confirmed through the interviews with the teachers. As one teacher explained, for example:

[We] just emphasis[ed] the fact that we're all different on the outside you know we all sort of look different no-one's sort of the same but it's what's inside you that matters and I mean it's the message that we give through a lot of story time and a lot of problem solving is along those lines as well.

Within this context, some of the teachers did not explicitly raise the issue of 'race' at all. As the following two responses from two different teachers illustrate when asked directly about this:

Project Leader: In terms of racial differences in particular, did you raise this with the children?

Class Teacher: No, I don't think so...I just went with what the children brought up and they didn't highlight race as an issue.

Project Leader: Did you raise the issue of racial difference at all with the children?

Class Teacher: I don't think so, I don't remember doing so. Partly because it's not an issue for our children, it's not something that they would perhaps meet very often.

This type of more generalist approach was also evident in the comments from the following teacher¹⁹:

We kept it light hearted and we started off with things that were different, as in activities that we do, you know, "I do Morris dancing and this person doesn't". We didn't do a lot on, I mean we've got one boy in the class who is African so nobody said "My skin's white, Mackenzies' skin is black," you know we didn't do anything that was ... it was mainly things like eye colour, hair colour so and people weren't too, there was nothing there that would've upset them really you know.

For other teachers, while they tended to cover racial differences, these tended to be treated rather superficially as the following comments from one teacher illustrates:

¹⁹ All names referred to in this article are pseudonyms to ensure anonymity.

Yeah, we did talk [about racial differences] because of some of the pictures we had; some of the photographs you know with children of different races and we did talk about how even though our skin colour's different that they're still children just like, you know, we're all just the same. But we didn't go in depth with it.

Interestingly, for this particular teacher one of the reasons for not going into any depth was a slight fear of where that could lead. As she went onto explain when asked about how she dealt with racial differences:

Class Teacher: I was a bit unsure about how they would react, I was a bit concerned about ... in case they asked me some questions that I wouldn't, you know.

Project Leader: So, do you feel that you have the necessary knowledge and skills to deal with this issue with the children?

Class Teacher: I don't know, I wouldn't say a definite "yes" you know. Because they didn't actually ask any questions as such I don't know if I would be equipped to answer any questions about it so.

Discussion and Conclusions

Before discussing the substantive findings reported above and then the implications of these for further work in this area it is important to begin by clarifying the aims of this study. As described earlier, the study had a very specific aim of ascertaining whether the Tiny Steps for Peace Pilot Program had any measurable effect in terms of influencing the children's racial attitudes and awareness. To answer this question it was necessary to find ways of measuring the children's attitudes and levels of awareness so that these could be compared in a standardised and consistent way before and afterwards. It is with this in mind that we should assess the usefulness and validity of the measures used.

Clearly, the measures would be woefully inadequate if they were intended to be used as a means of helping us understand the nature and forms that racism takes in young children's lives. Infact I have argued strongly elsewhere and along with many others that racial attitudes are not fixed and amenable to quantification but are contradictory, contingent and context-specific (Billig, 1985, 1987; Reicher, 1986; Potter and Wetherall, 1987; Condor, 1988; Troyna and Hatcher, 1992; Connolly, 1996, 1998, 2001). It is only through ethnographic research that we can fully come to understand the salience and meaning of race in young children's lives. However, this was not the reason for using these measures. Rather, their use was much more restricted to identifying whether the pilot educational program was effective in influencing children's racial attitudes and awareness. In this sense it can be reasonably argued that if the program did have a positive effect on children's racial attitudes and awareness then we would have expected this to have been picked up by a corresponding effect on at least one of the measures used and reported above.

Also, and relatedly, it could be argued that even if an effect was found using these measures then they are of little use in helping us understand why such a change in the children's racial attitudes and/or awareness has taken place. However, and again, this would be to criticise the measures for something they were never designed to do. The experimental design described above had one specific but very important purpose and that was to ascertain whether the educational program actually had any effect on the children's racial attitudes and awareness. As

before, to understand why it did (or did not) have an effect then we would need to use different methods. Indeed this is what we did, albeit in a limited way, through the qualitative interviews with the teachers following the delivery of the educational program. This, in turn, provides an illustration of the potential for combining qualitative and quantitative methods in ways like this.

With these clarifying points in mind it is now move onto the substantive findings themselves. In this regard there are two key points worth drawing out. The first is that the study has provided clear evidence that young children's attitudes and perspectives are influenced by race. This is certainly evident in relation to the children's friendship choices as reported in Tables 7 and 8. As already acknowledged, these findings in themselves tell us very little in terms of why the children made the choices that they did and what the specific cognitive and social processes were that underpinned their decisions. Also, it would be wrong to assume that the children's friendship choices are fixed and static. As such, these findings provide no insights into the particular social contexts that are more likely to give rise to these choices. However, and even given these limitations, such findings remain important from a critical race perspective and can be used quite powerfully as evidence of the significance of race in young children's lives and the need for educational programs to begin addressing this.

The second key point, following on from the first, is the fact that the study has provided evidence that indirect, color-blind approaches to dealing with issues of race and diversity do not work. Perhaps the key argument that can be made from the evidence provided from this experimental design is that if educators wish to deal with young children's racial attitudes then these need to be dealt with specifically and explicitly. Of course this is something that has been acknowledged by critical ethnographer previously who have suggested from the findings of their own work that much can be gained from critically engaging with children directly and encouraging them to reflect upon their existing racial attitudes more explicitly (see Connolly, 1998; Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2001). However, given the dominant discourse outlined at the beginning of this paper it is not difficult to understand why this message has consistently failed to be accepted by educational policy makers and practitioners. It is with this in mind that the more that we can produce findings such as those reported above, that engage directly with and appropriate the 'gold standard' methods and language of the evidence-based practice movement, then the greater the potential for bringing about change in early years education. Certainly in this present case, the findings from this evaluation has played a key role in informing the next stages of the development of the Tiny Steps for Peace Program and have, in turn, provided evidence that the Trust can use in persuading schools that a more direct and explicit approach is needed.

Finally, it is hoped that this particular example can also act as an illustration of the compatibility of quantitative methods, including randomised controlled trials and other quasi-experimental designs, with CRT scholarship. It is certainly not being argued here that quantitative methods should replace qualitative methods but simply that they can and should be used in tandem. There will always be the need for strong qualitative research and other narrative and storytelling approaches in order to challenge the dominant discourses on whiteness and to provide the counter-narratives of people of color. However, and as Dixson and Rousseau (2005: 13) make clear, telling stories is not an end in itself: 'CRT mandates that social activism be a part of any CRT project. To that end the stories must move us to action and the qualitative and material improvement of the educational experiences of people of color'. It is in this sense, with the ultimate focus being on outcomes, that hopefully the potential role for the type of experimental designs outlined above can be seen.

It is precisely because experimental methods force researchers to define clearly what the outcomes of particular educational programs are going to be (so that they can then be measured)

that there is considerable potential for research of this type to focus the agenda on what Crenshaw (1988) referred to as the expansive vision of racial equality rather than the restrictive vision. This is certainly clear from the present case study where although the processes felt good (at least from the white teachers' perspectives), there was little evidence of any actual improvement in outcomes. Methods such as these have the potential therefore to make teachers and early years educators more accountable not just in terms of having them specify what their understanding of race is and thus what it is they hope to specifically achieve in relation to their own educational programs but then also in terms of whether such programs are actually having an effect or not.

Perhaps most importantly, such methods also provide an invaluable opportunity for people of color to find and express their voice by deciding through this type of research what the outcomes should be by which educational programs are assessed and evaluated. It is with this in mind that it is worth stressing in conclusion that it is not the experimental methods themselves that are a problem – they are, after all, just objects like any other – but it is the way they have been defined and given meaning through discourses. It is not surprising that critical scholars are currently wary of quantitative methods, and experimental designs in particular, given the way they have been so strongly associated with the positivist discourse stressing their scientific, neutral and objective nature. The purpose of this paper is to suggest that this need not be the case. Such methods, if appropriated, used and defined differently can become very powerful tools for CRT scholarship in early years education and beyond. The key problem is therefore not with methods such as randomised controlled trials as such but simply with the way in which they have been used. In relation to issues of race, therefore, there is the need for people of color and for critical anti-racists to begin using these methods but on the basis of asking very different research questions and thus setting very different outcomes measures that clearly emphasis issues of racial equality and justice.

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Appendix: Research Instrument Used for the Evaluation of the Effects of the Pilot Programme on the Children's Attitudes and Awareness

Introduction

Each child was interviewed individually, sat at a table in the classroom away from the other children. Each interview was standardised and followed precisely the format set out below. Text in italics and contained within square brackets represents instructions to the interviewee. Normal text represents what the interviewee said to the child.

Standardised Interview Format

Familiarisation with the Feelings Faces

[Place the Feelings Card (Figure 6) on the table in front of the child].

- Can you see these faces? Can you tell me how these two people are feeling? *[Point to the two sad faces]*. That's right, they're both feeling sad.
- Do you think one's feeling more sad than the other? Yes that's right. That person's feeling 'very sad' and that person's just feeling 'a little sad'.
- Now what about these two people, can you tell me how they're feeling? *[Point to the two happy faces]*. That's right, they're both happy.
- Do you think one's feeling more happy than the other? Yes that's right. That person's feeling 'very happy' and that person's feeling 'a little happy'.
- What about the person in the middle? How are they feeling? That's right they're not feeling happy or sad. They are in the middle, they just feel 'OK'.
- Now, I'm going to show you photographs of some children. For each child I show you, I want you to tell me whether you'd feel happy or sad being their friend. I want you to do this by pointing at one of these faces.
- So, if I showed you one of the children and you think you'd feel 'very happy' being their friend then you would point to this face, if you'd feel 'a little happy' you'd point to this face, if you wouldn't really feel happy or sad you'd point to this face. However, if you'd feel a little sad you'd point to this face and if you think you'd feel 'very sad' you'd point to this face.
- Is that OK? Shall we get started?

Task One

[Properly shuffle the eight photographs of the children before you start (Table 2 and Figure 3). Place them in a pile face down. Pick up the top photograph and turn it over and place it in front of the child].

- Here's the first child, she/he is called _____. How would you feel being their friend? Can you show me by pointing to one of the faces?

[If the child has pointed to a face but has not also said what the face is i.e. 'very happy' then ask the following question for confirmation].

- So how would that make you feel?

[Take the next photograph and place it in front of the child on top of the last one].

- Now here's the next child, she/he is called _____. How would you feel being their friend? Can you show me by pointing to one of the faces?

[If the child has pointed to a face but has not also said what the face is i.e. 'very happy' then ask the following question]

- So how would that make you feel?

[Continue with this process for the remaining six photographs].

Task Two

[Remove the eight photographs from the table. Place the photograph depicting the children playing in front of the child].

- Now, here's a photograph of some children. Can you tell me what they are doing?

[Record what the child says verbatim]

[If Response given]

OR

[If no response]

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What else can you tell me? • Is there anything else you can tell me? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there anything at all you can tell me about what the children are doing here? • What else can you tell me? |
|---|--|

[If child at any stage indicates that they can say no more write 'No Response' in the box(es) and say]

- That's OK, let's move onto something else.

Task Three

[Remove the photograph depicting the children playing from the table. Take the pile of eight photographs of individual children, shuffle them properly and then place them all randomly face up in front of the child so s/he can see them all].

- Now, here's the children I showed you earlier. Can you have a good look at them all and tell me which child you'd like to be your friend the most?

[Remove the photograph of the child chosen].

- OK, and who would you like to be your friend the most now?

[Remove the photograph of the child chosen].

[Continue this process until there is only one photograph left or until the child does not want to make any more choices. If the child says they cannot make any more choices then simply record 'Stopped' on the appropriate line].

Task Four

[Remove the eight photographs from the table. Place the photographs for Carl, Asma, Becky and Omar in front of the child (as in Figure 5). Take the remaining four photographs and shuffle them properly. Place them in a pile face down on the table. Take the first one and turn it over face up].

- Now, here's _____. Can you tell me which of these four children [pointing to the four photographs as laid out] is the same as him/her?
- Why is she/he the same?

[Turn over the next photograph and place it on top of the first one].

- Now, here's _____. Can you tell me which of these four children [pointing to the four photographs as laid out] is the same as him/her?
- Why is she/he the same?

[Continue with this process for the remaining two photographs].

Task 5

[Take the pile of eight photographs of individual children, properly shuffle them and then place them all randomly face up in front of the child so s/he can see them all].

- Now this is the last thing I want you to do. Here's all the children again. Can you look at them carefully and think of a way of sorting them into two groups of four children each?
- Let me show you what I mean. If you look carefully you can see that there are four children wearing glasses [*point them out*] and also four children who are not [*point them out*]. We can therefore sort them like this with four over here and four over there [*sort into two distinct groups*].
- Now, can we see if you can do it?

[*Mix the photographs up a little and put them all back together in front of the child*].

- Can you see another way of organising the children into two groups of four?

[*If the child does not seem to understand then say the following:*]

- Other than the glasses, can you see anything else that four of the children have alike so that you can sort them into a group?

[*If the child still does not understand, indicate this on the Record Form and end the task, otherwise continue as below*].

- That's good. Can you tell me why you have organised them like that?

[*Mix the photographs up a little and put them all back together in front of the child*].

- Now, can you think of any other way in which these children can be organised into two groups of four children?

- You're doing really well. Why have you organised them like this?

- Let's see if you can think of any other way of organising these children into two groups?

[*Continue with process until the child says or demonstrates that they cannot think of any further ways to organise the photographs. In such circumstances write 'End' on the appropriate line*].

- That's brilliant! You've done really well. Thank you very much for helping me.