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Compounded Whiteness:
White Teacher Antiracist Ideological Commitment Development in Predominantly White Elementary Schools

By

ALICIA HERRERA
DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

in

Educational Leadership

in the

OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

of the

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

DAVIS

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2021

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Compounded Whiteness:
White Teacher Antiracist Ideological Commitment Development in Predominantly White Elementary Schools

ABSTRACT

Motivated White elementary teachers working in schools with predominantly White students face numerous challenges in the development of their own antiracist ideological commitments while simultaneously working to dismantle racism and disrupt White normativity in their teaching within elementary classrooms. By using White racial identity development (Helms, 1990, 2020) and White zone of proximal development (Leonardo & Manning, 2017) frameworks, this qualitative study explored the antiracist ideological commitment development of elementary teachers who have been racialized as White and teach through a racial justice lens in schools with predominantly White students in Davis, California. A purposive sample of six White elementary teachers were selected to represent variation in age, elementary educational roles, and points in racial identity development. Through semi-structured interviews, the participants' voices detailed the racial identity development journeys that led to their antiracist ideological commitments, the roles these commitments play in their thinking about their teaching, and the perceived institutional, programmatic, and policy supports needed to continue their development. Four major themes emerged- sense-making of White racial identity within a context of compounded Whiteness, embodying a commitment to antiracism, teaching as antiracist praxis, and addressing White racialized trauma. This study supports emerging evidence for the creation of guided and sustained antiracist learning outcomes across all courses in teacher education programs and in-service professional development opportunities, as well as the creation of state-level K-6 racial justice standards and curriculum. Further, the results have implications for districts to consider therapeutic affinity groups to address racialized trauma, community outreach, and parent education.

Keywords: antiracism, critical Whiteness, White elementary teacher, racial identity development, elementary education, antiracist ideological commitment development, compounded Whiteness

DEDICATION

This is for the teachers, particularly the White elementary teachers who so generously, honestly, and humbly contributed to this study. May you continue your radical awakenings. May you continue to choose to change your own hearts and minds and model this change for all of whom come into your spheres of influence. It is my greatest wish that our collective cultural understanding of race and racism in the United States shall eventually shift enough so that someday our communities will no longer need critical Whiteness studies such as this one, and that the knowledge within this dissertation will be obsolete. May all who identify as teachers continue to gather the strength to do their part to make it so.

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Worldwide, I have experienced diverse communities of learning wide and deep. The ones that I have encountered have been strong enough to support me though several career evolutions in the field of education. With children and adults, stateside and abroad, I have been able to find places to connect and belong along the way as I continued to learn, grow, and develop alongside my students in Japan, Thailand, Costa Rica, and the United States.

I am grateful for both of my graduate school experiences at the University of California, Berkeley and Davis, where I was prodded to develop a nimble teacher-researcher identity, committed to learning in every manifestation of the word. At Berkeley in my youth, my eyes were peeled open. At Davis, years later, my vision was sharpened. Both university experiences emphasized the reciprocal, interactive nature of learning that I have come to understand as truth in my life. To teach well is to be awake and connected enough to learn.

Some specific people have dedicated so much care and time to this study that I can only hope to have enough strength to pass this gift forward. Deep gratitude to my advisor, Dr. Elizabeth Montaño, and committee members Dr. Faheemah N. Mustafaa and Dr. Vajra Watson, for your academic guidance, providing peer review, and being so present and so fierce in our challenging conversations about race and education.

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I would not have been able to even entertain the idea of committing to graduate school without support from the California State University, Sacramento and the Chancellor's Doctoral Incentive Program (CDIP), which made it possible to travel and present research at conferences and also connected me to my brilliant and kind mentor, Dr. Kimberly Biddle, whose frequent check-ins, even after her retirement, bolstered my strength to continue. Among many other things, Dr. Biddle models the generous spirit and transparent dedication that I hope to emulate with my own mentees.

Personally, I would like to thank friends Emily Ryan and Tami Hackbarth, both of whom provided their own brand of no-nonsense, ride-or-die support that one needs when facing the inner demons that inevitably come to visit while slogging through a doctoral program. Take note world: make deep friendships with therapists and life coaches! All of those long walk-and-talks were restorative and left me feeling strong.

I want to send thanks to the spirits of my ancestors, bearing us forward in love, in particular my grandmother (aka, The General) who passed away in 2020. At the end, she made sure to tell me frequently how fortunate I was in this life and how proud she was of my work. I can only hope to be as tough and dedicated as she was in all things. Her descendants' accomplishments are always in part due to her guidance, and I feel her energy in the work that I do in this world.

I would like to thank my living family, who just plain show up in general, and who showed up the last three years specifically to give concrete support in the form of high-quality childcare, infinite patience, and, in the final stretch, our Pandemic Pod. A special thanks to my husband Brad Ensminger, and son, Oz Herrera, who ate one million and one cheese quesadillas for dinner as I tucked myself away to complete this research and degree. I love you.

TERMINOLOGY

As language, like race, is socially constructed, the meanings of words used in this study are in flux and will continue to evolve. As the constructs of race and racism are particularly charged subjects in the United States, this study uses some terminology that should be explained for the reader at this moment in time in order to avoid misunderstandings.

Why is the "W" capitalized in the word "White" in this study? I have chosen to capitalize the "W" in White in this dissertation to speak to a central issue explored in this research- the racialization of White people as a group in their own consciousness, in order to further promote the development of White perspective-taking and reflexivity regarding their racialized experience as oppressors within this dominant culture in the United States. In the U.S., Whiteness historically has been the norm, centered and universalized to the point of invisibility, which is suggested by the lower case "w". Recognizing the importance of language, the detachment of "White" from being a proper noun enables White people to distance themselves from grappling with race. The capitalization of "White" brings the racialized experience of the oppressor to the reader's consciousness. The capital "W" in White is not universally accepted, in part due to its historical usage by White supremacists and the violence it suggests. It is my hope that by capitalizing White in this dissertation, the reader is forced to consider how Whiteness has functioned in the U.S. and continues to do so in systematic ways, including the written word. Finally, the capitalization of White is supported by the APA 7th edition insomuch as it is a racial identity.

White Teacher/White Student: A person who has been socialized to understand their racial identity to be White, as one of many intersecting, nuanced and complex identities. An individual who exhibits the physical characteristics of what are considered White Europeans and

has been assimilated and acculturated into White Anglo-Saxon culture as it exists in the United States (Helms, 2020).

White Supremacy: For the purpose of this study, “White supremacy” does not only mean the self-conscious racism of White supremacist hate groups, but the political, economic and cultural systems in which those who are racialized as White “overwhelmingly control power and material resources, conscious and unconscious ideas of White superiority and entitlement are widespread, and relations of white dominance and non-White subordination are daily reenacted across a broad array of institutions and social settings” (Gillborn, 2006, p. 499). Specifically, a set of educational social norms and expectations predicated on White habits, or the preferences, tastes, emotions, and perceptions of White Americans, for instance what is considered common sense, standard, intelligent, and good.

Compounded Whiteness: For the purpose of this study, an educational environment in which predominantly White teachers and predominantly White students come together within a predominantly White community to teach and learn through the racialized lens of their social experiences in a context that renders the racialized experiences of White people the social norm.

Race: “A power construct of collected or merged differences that live socially” (Kendi, 2019, p. 60). Specifically, a socially constructed understanding of the way human beings are classified based on external physical characteristics that, in this study situated in the United States, have social consequences rooted in power dynamics. It should be noted here that ethnicity and race are distinct constructs whose lines are sometimes blurred in the understandings shared by participants in this study.

Racist Idea: “Anything that suggests one racial group is inferior or superior to another racial group in any way. Racist ideas propose that inferiorities and superiorities of racial groups explain racial inequities in society” (Kendi, 2019, p.20).

Antiracist: “The practice of dismantling a system marked by White supremacy and antiblackness racism through deliberate action” (Kendi, 2019, p.24).

White Space Racism: “A powerful collection of racist policies and practices that lead to resource inequity between racialized spaces or the elimination of certain racialized spaces, which are substantiated by racist ideas about racialized spaces” (Kendi, 2019, p. 166).

White Space Antiracism: “A powerful collection of antiracist policies and practices that lead to racial equity between integrated and protected racialized spaces, which are substantiated by antiracist ideas about racialized spaces” (Kendi, 2019, p. 166).

Antiracist Ideological Commitment: For the purpose of this study, an antiracist ideological commitment will be defined as actively increasing one’s racial literacy as part of a commitment to racial identity development in the pursuit of both thinking and acting in antiracist ways in all areas of one’s life. Antiracism requires both understanding and action and is not a static identity. As Ijeoma Oluo said, “The beauty of antiracism is that you don't have to pretend to be free of racism to be an antiracist. Antiracism is the commitment to fight racism wherever you find it, including in yourself. And it's the only way forward” (Twitter, July 14, 2019). A White teacher, in particular, has much ongoing racial identity development and ideological development to do as prerequisites and corequisite of operationalizing antiracism in the classroom.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY

Introduction

> White People: I don't want you to understand me better; I want you to understand yourselves. Your survival has never depended on your knowledge of White culture. In fact, it's required your ignorance. (Oluo, 2017)

> Until recently, hiding behind the curtain of White-body supremacy has been an option for many White Americans. But not anymore. For many reasons . . . retreating into a cocoon of White-skin privilege is no longer possible. The game is up. (Menakem, 2021)
> For racism to disappear in the United States, White people must take the responsibility for ending it. (Helms, 2020)

> Nobody's free until everybody's free. (Hamer, 1971)

It is mid-August. A newly minted elementary school teacher has landed her first job teaching in the 1st grade. Her school is in a primarily White, liberal, suburban, college town in California. All the teachers in her grade level, including herself, are White. She has palpable enthusiasm and a sense of purpose. She came to teaching because in part because she wants to make the world a better place through her influence on student development and can recite her teaching philosophy, which contains words like "equity," "social justice," and "antiracism." Our new teacher is seated at a large kidney-shaped table with her grade-level team, planner open, asking clarifying questions and taking notes about the scope and sequence for the first few months of school.

The school is old. It has traditions. There is a well-trodden curricular path to follow, and she is grateful for the scaffolding this will provide for her, as there will be a steep learning curve for her in the coming year. The new teacher wants to collaborate and belong, getting support and guidance as she rides the arc of this important first year of elementary teaching. She is blocking

out weeks and highlighting months in her planner for each subject matter area, keeping up with her grade-level partners.

When they get to the month of November, the most veteran teacher explains the annual 1st-grade Thanksgiving performance: "For decades, we have done this performance. It is a school tradition made by beloved retired teachers. Some of our current parents did this performance as children, as well! We sing these songs, recite these poems, read these picture books. During station time, the children make Indian paper bag vests, dyed macaroni necklaces, and headdresses with feathers. It is thematic instruction that will combine state grade-level English language arts, social studies, math, music and art standards. Here are the instructions for how to dye macaroni. Here is a sample of what the paper bag vest should look like. Here are the song lyrics." Our new teacher is quiet in this moment, but inside her mind begins the storm.

The above vignette illustrates the way that race and school culture converge to provide the context for meaning-making about the role of Whiteness in education in the antiracist ideological commitment development of a teacher who has been racialized as White. The normative culture of most predominantly White school environments accepts an avoidance of deep examination of the role of racism and Whiteness in everyday life (Allen, 1999; Cabrera, 2017; Case & Hemmings, 2005; DiAngelo, 2018; Gorski, 2016; Heuschkel, 2013; Jupp, 2017; Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Pennington, 2007; Picower, 2009; Ullucci, 2011). Motivated by the taboo against speaking about subjects perceived as controversial as race and racism, teachers who have been racialized as White and work in predominantly White environments have often avoided directly addressing race through the development of colorblind dispositions (race invisibility, not "seeing" or explicitly addressing race), epistemologies of ignorance (not recognizing that to be "White" is also a racialized experience in itself and claiming racial

innocence while having the expectation that what is normed and centered is one's own White culture by default), ontological expansiveness (the unconscious habits of racial expectations and privileges based on White normative standards), and assumed racial comfort (the expectation prioritization that one should feel comfortable and safe when thinking and speaking about race) (Cabrera et al., 2017; DiAngelo, 2018; Heuschkel, 2013; Matias, 2014; Pennington, 2007; Sullivan, 2006).

These extensively researched (White) racialized social responses are in part enabled when educational spaces are filled with a population that predominantly identifies as White. The absence of a large presence of students of color, whose existence could provide a visible signal to teachers of a diverse juxtaposition of identities and needs in the classroom, creates a kind of "compounded Whiteness" in which the norms of Whiteness permeate the social landscape (Leonardo & Manning, 2017). Recognizing White cultural signs in such a school is a critical piece of understanding how to engage and challenge White normative thought in order to dismantle it (Helms, 1995, 2020; Leonardo & Manning, 2017). When those who identify as White in the field of education better understand how White students benefit from a White teacher's antiracist development, teachers' antiracist ideological commitments can be more widely reinforced in curriculum and pedagogy, even in settings where the majority of students and families are White (Cabrera et al., 2017; DiAngelo, 2018; Heuschkel, 2013; Pennington, 2007; Sullivan, 2006).

Currently, the policy and programmatic language that exists in California's Teacher Performance Expectations and California Standards for the Teaching Profession points to cultural competence for White teachers who cross-culturally teach students of color, without an explicit connection in the learning outcomes for developing teachers that can continually address

their own racial ideology development explicitly around Whiteness and the antiracist work that White teachers need to be also doing within White populations (Brown, 2011; California Commission on Teacher Credentialing [CTC], 2009). In schools consisting of a predominantly White population, developing teacher antiracial ideology and racial justice-related curriculum and pedagogy not only lack a sense of urgency, but can feel optional.

The race-related work that White elementary school teachers do or do not do—consciously or unconsciously—in their classrooms is incredibly impactful. Although many elementary educators and parents are unaware, children have already been organizing cultural messages about race coming from a variety of modalities for years by the time they enter elementary school (Aboud, 2008; Feagin & Van Ausdale, 2001; Hagerman, 2016; Katz, 2003; Katz & Koftkin, 1997; Patterson & Bigler, 2006; Winkler, 2009). Elementary education provides an early opportunity to actively guide developing children in sense-making as they continue their organization of broad cultural messages about race (Hagerman, 2016). Research on race, racism, and the developing child indicates that schools play an important role in socialization around the construct of race, a role in part shaped by teachers' ideologies, who exercise great control over the learning environment in elementary classrooms (Feagin & Van Ausdale, 2001; Hagerman, 2016; Helms, 1995, 2020; Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Lewis, 2003; Picower, 2021; Tatum, 1997; Winkler, 2009). Teachers enact this power when they participate in complex relational intersections between their own identities, their students' identities, the curriculum, pedagogy, and context in which racial and cultural identity development occurs (Aboud, 2008; Bronfenbrenner, 1992; Hagerman, 2016; Helms, 1995, 2020; Hirschfeld, 2008; Hurtado et al., 2012; John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996; Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Picower, 2021; Rogoff, 2002; Super & Harkness, 1986; Winkler, 2009).

Although Elementary school-aged children arrive to school with many pre-existing ideas about race, they are still actively developing the formation of cognitive, social, and emotional constructs that support perspective-taking and empathy-building, ingredients that foundationally support the development of antiracist thought and action (Hagerman, 2016; Helms, 1995, 2020; Selman, 1971; Winkler, 2009). Without careful, critical guidance, ethnocentric orientations can occur when White people in the United States are not taught to imagine themselves as racialized actors in a multicultural society (Gardiner, 2001; Helms, 1995, 2020; Rogoff, 2002). Children who are racialized as White will eventually become adults, coming of age in a country in which they wield White immunity from the negative effects of living in a racist society, with the power and agency to establish many of the rules and regulations of public space that have very direct impacts on the lives of people of color (Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Cabrera, 2017; DiAngelo, 2018; Feagin, 2010; Tatum, 2007). If the normative culture of most predominantly White schools accepts and perpetuates an avoidance of deep examination on the part of its teachers of the role of racism and Whiteness in everyday school life, unless a teacher has chosen to do so, White children raised in predominantly White communities who pass through the public school system, may enter adult society without having guided experiences around race in their formative years (Allen, 1999; Brown, 2011; Helms, 1995, 2020). In addition to all of this, White teachers were once these White children themselves, and most moved through the public school system themselves, and may have not had a sustained, guided critical education about race when they were young themselves. Without actively engaging in antiracist ideological commitment development for themselves in their own lives, a White teacher cannot begin to approach the task of guiding the antiracist ideological commitment development of young children in their own classrooms.

Problem Statement

In an era of heightened public awareness of the systemic impact of racism in the United States, amidst increasing calls for educational policymakers for institutional practices and programs that are attuned to intersecting sociocultural identities between teachers and students, the way in which thinking and teaching about these racial identities is done in elementary settings necessitates critical examination. The 2020 George Floyd murder that sparked racial justice uprisings across the nation prompted many educational institutions to begin to respond to the increased visibility of systemic racism, first by releasing position statements for public consumption (Howard, 2020). Subsequently, as the Black Lives Matter movement became increasing visible, conventional, and mainstream during later 2020, more teachers who identified as White felt emboldened to renew or created first-time commitments to learn, grow, and make changes in themselves and how they view their role in teaching for racial justice in their work (Howard, 2020). A demand for antiracist curriculum, programs, and antiracism task forces have sprung up across the nation. These recent developments affirmed the need to gather current data on the experiences of White elementary teachers who are already actively developing their antiracist ideological commitments and how these commitments are centered in their work.

Although the need for racial equity consciousness development for White teachers in itself is not a new phenomenon, the current social movement surrounding racial justice and the way racism is increasingly being understood *systemically* by dominant White culture has given much energy to a rapidly growing educational movement around understanding and dismantling the ways systemic racism operates within the context and policy of schools (Howard, 2020; Kendi, 2019). That noted, the existing policy and programmatic language in California's Teacher Performance Expectations and California Standards for the Teaching Profession still used points

to “cultural competence” for teachers who teach BIPOC students, without an explicit learning outcomes for the development of teachers who have been racialized as White to continually address their own antiracist ideology development and commitments to the antiracist work that White teachers need to be also doing within White populations (Brown, 2011; CTC, 2009). In this era of rapidly changing understandings about the responsibility for people who identify as White to dismantle Whiteness and the systemic racism upon which educational institutions are built and sustained, it is timely to learn from the experiences of White elementary teachers who have been and/or currently are working in White educational spaces while actively thinking about and deepening their understanding of antiracist education for themselves and their White students. What is currently happening in these educational spaces of compounded Whiteness?

Much of the existing national-level research about teachers’ perspectives on everyday antiracism in elementary schools is conducted in urban, multicultural settings, which is usually related to a large presence of BIPOC identities in the classroom (Hagerman, 2016). Yet over 80% of K-12 teachers in the United States are White, and the communities in which they teach are largely self-segregated, creating large swaths of de facto White landscape (Rothstein, 2017; U.S. Department of Education, 2016). My study departed from trend by examining the development, perspectives, and racial interactions of White teachers in predominantly White school communities.

The State of California is no exception to national demographic trends and has many communities that are largely self-segregated by race (California School Dashboard, 2018; EdData, 2020; National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2017; Rothstein, 2017). Many public schools consist of a predominantly White student population that are served by a predominantly White teacher workforce, what in this study is referred to as “compounded

Whiteness" (California School Dashboard, n.d.; EdData 2020; NCES, 2017). There is currently little research that illuminates the development of antiracist ideological commitments of White teachers who work in these schools, particularly in predominantly White elementary schools (with few related exceptions such as Derman-Sparks & Ramsey, 2011; Heuschkel, 2013; Rogers & Mosley, 2006). There are even less data about White elementary teachers determined to sustain engagement in their own development of antiracist ideological commitments around their own work. This study of White elementary school teachers who have and continue to actively engage in their own antiracist ideological commitment development while teaching in the context of elementary schools with predominantly White student populations contributes to the growing body of White teacher identity studies in an important foundational way by painting a complex, nuanced portrait of their experiences, in part due to what is known about the impactful nature of teacher-student interactions (Aboud, 2008; Bronfenbrenner, 1992; Hagerman, 2016; Hirschfeld, 2008; Hurtado et al., 2012; John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996; Rogoff, 2002; Super & Harkness, 1986; Winkler, 2009). That is, that teachers' racial understandings and ideologies mediate their enactment of curriculum and pedagogy as the children in their care are actively constructing their own understandings of race in their classrooms (Hagerman, 2016; Helms, 1995, 2020; Picower, 2021).

Despite various efforts in California to develop a diverse teacher workforce, over 80% of elementary school teachers in the United States currently identify as "White" and their racialized experience teaching in predominantly White elementary schools remains largely invisible (Hrabowski & Sanders, 2015). This invisibility, coupled with existing research on the absence of and recent changes associated with White teachers' development of antiracist ideological commitments in their own educational experiences pointed to a need for more information about

White elementary school teachers who do use their role to address racial injustice within the very communities that most benefit from structural racism (Brown, 2011; Cabrera et al., 2017; DiAngelo, 2018). The majority of existing race-related educational research focusing on White teachers and their active antiracist ideological commitment development lies in middle and high school settings (Berchini, 2016; Chubbuck, 2004; de los Ríos et al., 2015; Ness et al., 2010) and with students in higher education (e.g., Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000; Cabrera et al., 2017; Warren & Hytten, 2003; Marx & Pennington, 2003; McIntyre, 1997; Solomon et al., 2005). Much of this existing research, situated in secondary and higher education, cites beliefs about identity and race that were previously established and reinforced in the younger years of development, often in education environments guided by White elementary teachers. Current state and local level conversations around Ethnic Studies initiatives in both K-12 and undergraduate settings continue to cite the need for antiracist curriculum in order to undo, or "decolonize" what was first taught- and how-in the early, foundational years of elementary school (Argawal, 2020; Fensterwald, 2020; Sleeter & Zavala, 2020). For instance, in August 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom signed AB 1460 requiring all 430,000 California State University undergraduates to take ethnic studies courses in part due to the growing push for ethnic studies in public education following Black Lives Matter protests and calls to dismantle systemic and unconscious racism that is perpetuated in schools, as a similar bill AB 331 that impacts K-12 was being considered, and ultimately discarded (Argawal, 2020; Fensterwald, 2020). These types of passionate political conversations that could lead to grand curricular changes rarely extend to policy and programmatic changes that directly impact the way California's youngest learners approach race or how their elementary teachers learn about racial identity development and their roles in addressing racism in elementary school settings. In 2021,

the idea of critical race theory has become highly visible and politically charged on both state and national stages. Former President Trump pushed for "patriotic education" and issued an executive order banning certain types of diversity training for federal employees (EducationWeek, 2021; Flaherty, 2021).

For White teachers to decenter and dismantle White normative thought embedded in their teaching and the centering of Whiteness in elementary curriculum and policy, they must explicitly make the dismantling of White supremacy for themselves and their White students a constant priority in their practice (Picower, 2021; Tatum, 2007). Even so, White teachers may not be adequately supported in this endeavor, in part because they do not have substantial experience in the practice of developing their own antiracist ideological commitments from their own schooling. This not only includes their P-16 education, but their teacher preparation programs and professional development once in the field (CTC, 2009).

Ignoring and avoiding the subject of race has been well-documented in White populations in U.S. schools (Cabrera et al., 2017; DiAngelo, 2018; Tatum, 2007). Whiteness has traditionally been centered as the universal, normative, dominant culture in the U.S. educational system and White teachers who work in predominantly White communities frequently turn their pedagogical dilemmas into pedagogical silences (Hayes & Juarez, 2012; Vaught & Castagno, 2008; Yosso 2005). Yet, if White teachers do not actively develop antiracist ideological commitments and begin to address racial justice in their thinking about their work with their White students, the process of socialization in schools continues to support the replication of past social conditions, specifically White supremacy (Helms, 1995, 2020; Leonardo & Manning ,2017; Picower, 2021; Rogoff, 2003; Tatum, 2007).

Purpose Statement

Despite much research showing that most teachers who were racialized as White are not actively working to dismantle their White normative thought in their classrooms, there are some White elementary teachers who are aware of, and are motivated to, develop their own antiracist ideological commitments as they teach within predominantly White elementary classrooms. This study describes the unending, non-linear antiracist journeys of six of these teachers who see themselves as committed to developing their antiracist thoughts and actions and who continue to do this work in schools with a predominantly White student population. Some of these teachers are choosing to develop their own antiracist ideological commitments with the goal of decentering Whiteness in their work specifically in schools of compounded Whiteness, with groups of White elementary students after (and concurrently) doing much personal racial identity work themselves around their role as someone who identifies as White in a world in which they directly and indirectly have benefited from the systemic oppression of others. These teachers have recognized for themselves what Resmaa Menakem (2017) stated plainly:

> Many White progressives believe that they deserve a free pass because they are the "good ones," but White body-supremacy is itself a sort of dirty pain. If you are a White progressive, you benefit as much from the structural inequalities of White body-supremacy as a conservative or a White supremacist. (p.167)

Educational leaders will benefit from better understanding more about these teachers' complex, unending, non-linear journeys of antiracist ideological commitment development and knowing more about the perceived supports required to sustain this kind of antiracist development in what is currently, unfortunately, and for the foreseeable future, a predominantly White elementary teaching force.

The purpose of this study was to describe the experiences of teachers who have been racialized as White and who are working to disrupt racism through decentering White normativity in their thinking about their work, detailing what a complex commitment to antiracism looks like for White elementary teachers who teach in schools with a predominantly White student population. The racial justice uprising of 2020 sparked calls from educational leaders for schools and communities to take action to address institutional racism and educational inequality at the national, state, and local levels and in a June 2020 California Department of Education news release, California State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond responded to the death of George Floyd by calling on communities across the state and nation to take action to dismantle institutional racism and inequities in public schools. He also invited students, educators, families, and partners to participate in honest, courageous conversations that can help inform the work ahead (California Department of Education [CDE], 2020).

This research responded to that call through the exploration of the development of elementary teachers' identities as they continue to develop their commitments to antiracist thought, policy, and action through a study purposefully situated in Davis Joint Unified School District (DJUSD) in Davis, California. Using qualitative methods, I considered the antiracist ideological commitment development of self-identified White teachers and the role that these teachers' nuanced understandings of their own and White students' racialized identities play in their adaptive approaches to their curriculum and pedagogy using terminology based on Ibram Kendi's work around antiracism (2019-present), White racial identity development (Helms, 1995), and (Antiracist) White zones of proximal development (Leonardo & Manning, 2017) frameworks. Educational policies intended to impact the antiracist ideological commitment

development of White teachers, in particular, the development of teacher education programs and curriculum, including curriculum and pedagogy for use in elementary teacher professional development, can be informed by this research on these teachers' experiences and perspectives. Educational leaders can benefit from listening to and better understanding the perceived supports needed by these teachers in this moment in order to build White educator capacity for better understanding the ways that race, specifically White supremacy, permeates educational contexts and mediates interactions between White teachers and students.

This qualitative study wove White racial identity development and educational institutions as settings of cultural context by exploring how White elementary teachers committed to racial justice characterize their own (continuing) racial identity developmental journeys and how these teachers believe their antiracist ideological commitments inform their meaning-making process around curriculum, pedagogy, and interactions with White students.

Research Questions

1. How do elementary educators who are racialized as White and committed to racial justice, teaching in schools with predominantly White students, characterize their racial identity development and antiracist ideological commitments?
2. What role do these antiracist ideological commitments play in their approaches to racial justice teaching with White students?
3. What policy, programmatic, and institutional influences do these teachers identify as meaningful and supportive as they continue to develop their antiracist ideological commitments?

Chapter 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

Introduction

As White elementary teachers, committed to racial justice and who work in schools with a predominantly White student population, develop their antiracist ideological commitments, their identity and their ideology- whatever it may be- is embedded in the way that they think about and approach their teaching (Helms, 2020; Leonardo & Manning, 2017). White racial identity growth and development on an antiracist journey can be explored through the frame of Janet Helms's model of White racial identity (2020). Helms' model will be used at the theoretical frame through which to explore Research Question 1 in particular: How do elementary educators who are racialized as White and committed to racial justice, teaching in schools with predominantly White students, characterize their racial identity development and antiracist ideological commitments?

White teachers' understandings of race and power then show up in their social interactions with their elementary students—in their thinking, their language, and in the way they select and then frame K-12 curriculum. While originally developed to critically examine and build upon Vygotsky's concept of zones of proximal development, Leonardo and Manning's (2017) (Antiracist) White zones of proximal development (WZPD) forms the basis for the conceptual framework used to explore the interactions between White teacher thought and the White students in their care. White zones of proximal development will be used as a framework through which to explore teaching as antiracist praxis, particularly to address Research Question 2: What role do these antiracist ideological commitments play in their approaches to racial justice teaching with White students? The framework will also be used, along with Helms' White

racial identity model to explore Research Question 3: What policy, programmatic, and institutional influences do these teachers identify as meaningful and supportive as they continue to develop their antiracist ideological commitments?

Terms and definitions related to teacher development and antiracism; antiracist thoughts, policies, and commitments throughout this study are drawn from Kendi's (2019) works that explore antiracism and are defined for the purpose of this study in the Terminology section. To avoid confusion, the term "antiracist" will replace Helms's (1990) term "nonracist" when not directly citing Helms, as "antiracist" is the current term to speak to the kind of awareness and direct action against racism explored in this study, of which both Helms and Kendi speak. In Kendi's vernacular "nonracist" holds a different meaning, the passive racism of bystanders who claim innocence while perpetuating racism through complicity, which is not Helms' original use of the term (Helms, 1990; Kendi, 2019).

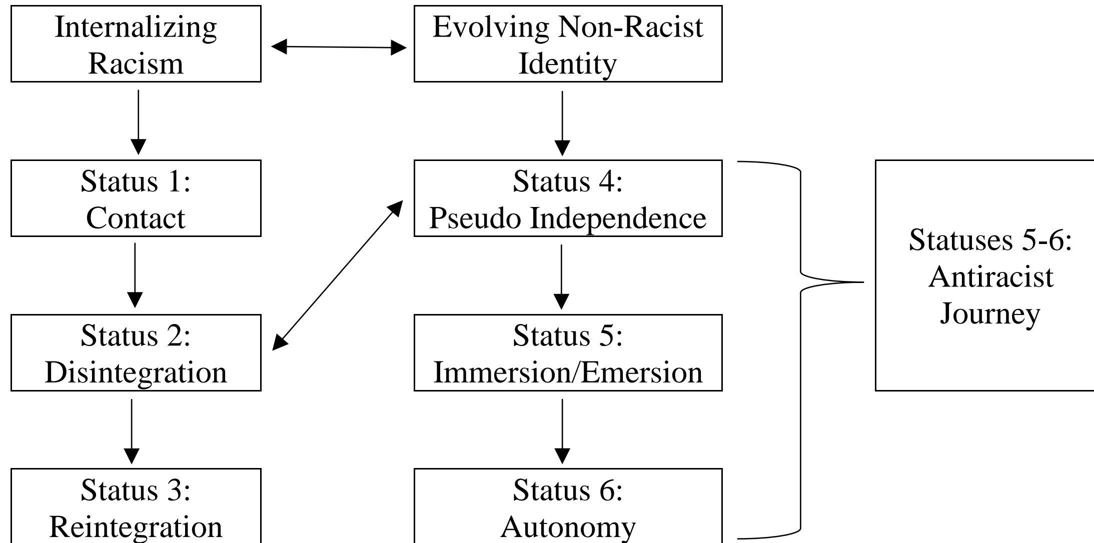
White Racial Identity Model

Helms (2020) described racial identity in general as the "thoughts, feelings, and behaviors influenced by how one identifies with respect to racial matters" (p.26). Racial identity, like cognition, can be conceptualized as developmental (Helms, 1990). The White racial identity model specifically details the ways in which racial development differs for White people from Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) in the United States as the dominant culture and serves to explicitly prompt White people to develop awareness of their role in upholding White supremacy, as well as remind of the White responsibility in using power and privilege to dismantle it (Helms, 1990, 2020). The model provides a framework that maps how White racial attitudes change and develop over time for people who have been racialized as White in terms of their sense of personal identity (Helms, 1990). The model consists of six non-fixed statuses of

which the first three move a person from naturally internalized racism towards abandoning racism. It should be noted that Helms uses the term "non-racist" in her model to approximate what is termed "antiracist" in this study.

Figure 1

Helms' (Adapted) White Racial Identity Model



Note. Adapted and modified from *A Race is a Nice Thing to Have: A Guide to Being a White Person or Understanding the White Persons in Your Life,* by J. E. Helms, 2020, Cognella.

"A healthy White identity potentially develops via a two-phase process, internalization of racism and evolution of a non-racist White identity" (Helms, 2020, p.25). Statuses 1-3 describe the process of moving away from epistemologies of ignorance and ontological expansiveness (not recognizing that to be White is also a racialized experience in itself and claiming racial innocence while having the expectation that what is normed and centered is one's own White culture by default), to developing critical racial consciousness (of racism and racial privilege), to experiencing disequilibrium (unsettling guilt and shame) when finding the new racial understandings too difficult or threatening to integrate (Helms, 2020). White people have the

privilege to retreat to more comfortable statuses when unwilling or unable to address the shame of viewing their lives through a racial lens.

Statuses 4-6 are associated with the way one develops an antiracist identity and generally develop after they have established what Helms described as a non-racist (antiracist) White identity. When experiencing status four through six, a White person starts to abandon their belief in White superiority while holding an intellectual understanding of the unfairness of White privilege. There is a recognition of personal responsibility for dismantling racism, but one may continue to harbor a sense of internalized superiority. As one moves through the statuses, White people actively seek to redefine Whiteness, abandon "White saviorhood" and experiences reduced feelings of guilt. There is an acceptance of one's own role in perpetuating racism, coupled with a renewed determination to abandon White entitlement. When experiencing status six, Autonomy, a White person is knowledgeable about racial, ethnic, and cultural differences, values diversity and is no longer fearful, intimidated, or uncomfortable with the experiential reality of race. Development of an antiracist ideological commitment is coupled with an internalized positive White racial identity.

However, the statuses of the White racial identity model are contextual, not fixed, and non-linear (Helms, 2020). Depending on context, a White person can be in one status during an in-person conversation, and then for example, take a phone call with another person and change statuses during that call due to the context and content of that call. Helms' model provides mobility between statuses in order to retreat "back" from disequilibrium in order to avoid discomfort from issues related to the understanding of race and racism at any time. Furthermore, a White person never achieves a fixed status as "an antiracist," rather, each status should be

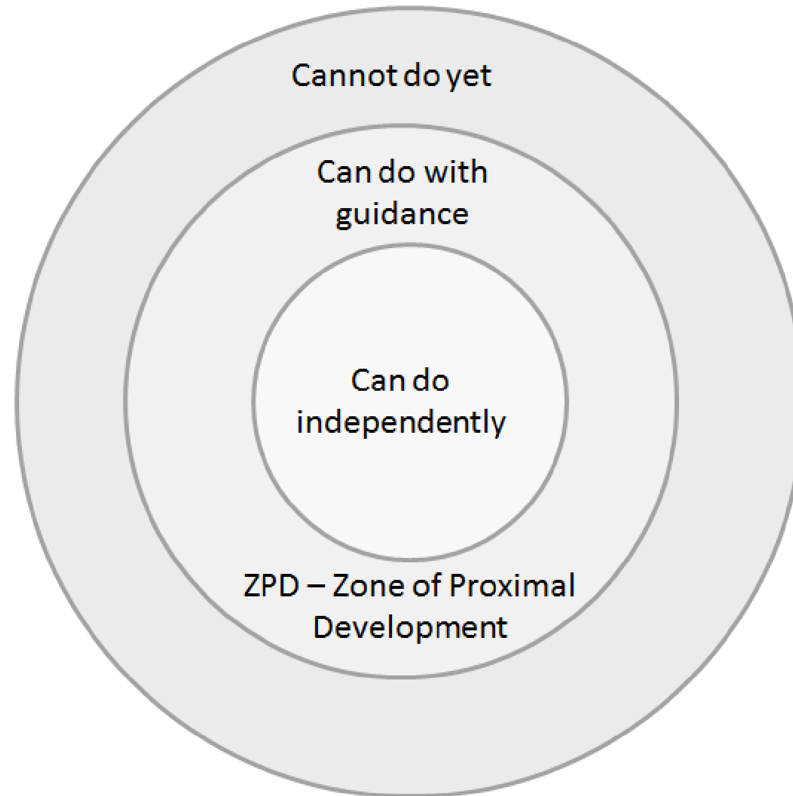
thought of as eyeglasses that are removed and replaced according to context, experience, and will to think, be, and act in antiracist ways (Helms, 2020).

(Antiracist) White Zones of Proximal Development

Leonardo and Manning (2017) described White zones of proximal development as a much-needed critical race extension of Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (ZPD). Vygotsky's original work, well-known in the field of education, addresses how culture and history interact to encourage the development of learning (Vygotsky, 1978). Desirable developmental outcomes come from meeting a child's needs within the parameters of their culture, mediated by language. Vygotsky's developmental theory emphasizes the social elements of learning, in particular within the ZPD, which is illustrated through the importance of the role of the more knowledgeable others (MKOs are, for example, teachers) to help guide learning. The facilitation of learning done through "scaffolding," or the building up of the role the child takes in a process over time, until they no longer need guidance and can do it independently. As children internalize the language and processes associated with a new task or skill, they become more competent. Children learn, not only through the explicit facilitation of the MKO towards the intended learning outcome, but also myriad implicit cultural signs that are embedded in the language and the social interactions that occurred during scaffolding process. The child learns how to "do" the language and the culture in the signs in which they are embedded. The MKO (ex. a teacher) participates deeply in this process through the social mediation of the learning experience and transmission of both intended and unintended signs that make up the cultural context of the child (Vygotsky, 1978).

Figure 2

Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)



Leonardo and Manning (2017) identified that Vygotsky's original theory calls for the ZPD to be appropriated within the concrete and historical context of the application, meaning that, in the United States, must include the powerful, if not dominant, social relation of race (Leonardo & Manning, 2017) as the center of gravity for analyzing education interactions. Leonardo and Manning expanded on the necessity to frame the ZPD in Whiteness:

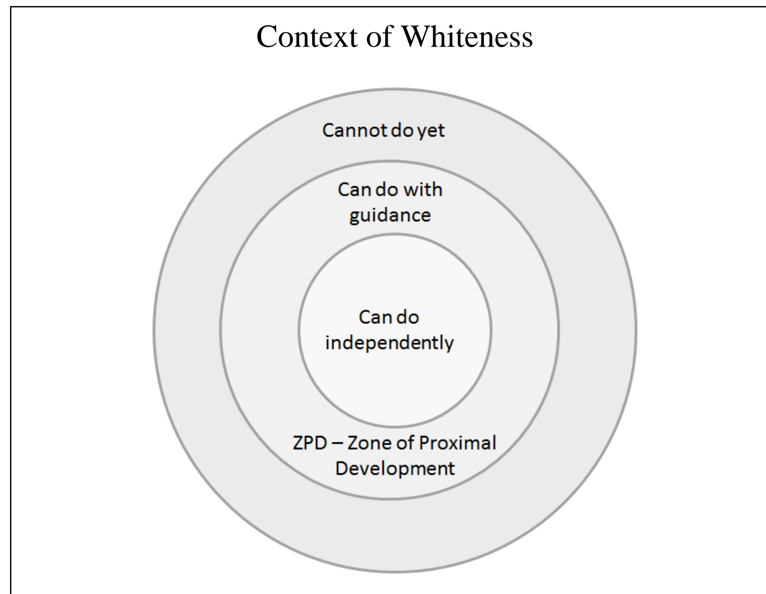
> If the ZPD centers on socially mediated activities and children develop as a "result of enculturation into the practices of society" (Moll, 1990), we must take as a given that global White supremacy has structurally shaped history, politics, and economics, but using Vygotsky's insights, we also analyze how Whiteness functions as a sign system

> (Vygotsky 1986; Wertsch 2007) that organizes our experiences of the world. As a meaning system, Whiteness acts as a socially reinforced intermediary between stimulus and response, on any event and one's experience of it, thereby affecting the relationship between individuals and their environment (Vygotsky 1978). Whiteness is a sign system, perpetuated through schooling and often presented as the only sign system appropriate for mediating social interactions in a White-dominated context (Gillborn 2008; Howard 1999; Leonardo 2009; McIntyre 1997; Sheets 2000; Sleeter 1993, 2011, 2015; Vaught 2011; Wise 2007). (p. 16)

Leonardo and Manning (2017) described the limitations of the original Vygotskian ZPD in that, although it addresses cultural historical activity in a general way, the theory had not been synthesized with a critique of the ideology of Whiteness for application within the context of the United States. By extending Vygotsky's zone of proximal development to make visible the context of Whiteness in the US educational system, Leonardo and Manning called for using WZPD as a framework for building White capacity and better understanding the ways that race permeates the education context and mediates interactions between teachers and students (Leonardo & Manning, 2017). Leonardo and Manning further asserted that for antiracist learning to occur for White people, teachers, the more knowledgeable others (MKO) must unlearn the implicit mediators of White social development that they, as children, inherited, internalized, and now perpetuate through their roles as teachers of children (Leonardo & Manning, 2017).

Figure 3

White Zones of Proximal Development



The WZPD framework lends itself to providing a critical framework for understanding the ways that race and school culture currently converge in a teacher's thinking, for better or for worse, and also the aspirational examination of the work that White teachers are currently doing and can continue to do within themselves moving forward to decenter Whiteness in their thinking about their work in the classroom.

While Leonardo and Manning's (2017) WZPD theory provides a basis for critical understanding of the need for the development of a critical racial consciousness and antiracist ideological commitments in teachers in a White-normed meaning system in general, what is not discussed is how White elementary teachers and students in particular experience this frame. I further focus the framework of WZPD to create a targeted lens through which to view White elementary teachers who function in White learning environments with White elementary students. The WZPD frames the impacts of critical teacher reflection on the ways in which curriculum is delivered by these White teachers to these White students, and, through the act of

modeling, could eventually foster the development of a critical racial consciousness in these teacher's White students as well (Bandura & Walters, 1977; Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Rogoff, 2003; Winkler, 2009).

When White teachers model a more actively antiracist racial positioning within their curriculum and pedagogy, it mediates all interactions within the classroom, enabling the antiracist development of their White students, insomuch as they may shift their own interpretations of cultural capital rooted in White supremacy and draw upon the knowledges and strengths that students of color bring with them from their lives into the classrooms (Bandura & Walters, 1977; Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Bonilla-Silva & Embrik, 2008; Duncan-Andrade, 2008; Gillborn, 2008a, 2008b; Helms, 2020; Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Pollock, 2008a; Rogoff, 2003; Nieto, 2008; Noguera, 2008; Sleeter, 2015; Winkler, 2009; Yosso, 2005). This is the process of changing the hearts and minds of the dominant culture. The WZPD frame can be applied to view White educational contexts in order to see the decentering of Whiteness and widening of the White normative operational definitions of cultural capital that occur in the antiracist disposition development of both White teachers and students (Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Yosso, 2005).

Building upon the understanding of how the more knowledgeable other (MKO) participates in the cultural transmission of Whiteness in educational contexts through the frame of WZPD, my study purposefully concentrated on how White elementary teachers develop and sustain their White antiracist ideology and their sense-making about the role their critical racial consciousness development plays in the learning processes of White students, in what Leonardo and Manning (2017) called the (Antiracist) White zone of proximal development.

Kendi's Antiracism Framework

The terminology and ideas in Ibram Kendi's (2019) work on antiracism are representative of a major voice around race and racism in the field of education. Kendi's (2019) work in particular provides useful terminology to frame racism systemically and in terms of policy. Additionally, Kendi describes nuances around race and racism that are used throughout this study.

Kendi (2019) defines racism as "the marriage of racist policies and racist ideas that produces and normalizes racial inequities". Kendi (2019, p. 17,18) defined racist and antiracist in terms of policy as well, specifically "a person who is supporting a racist/antiracist policy through their actions or inaction or expressing a racist/antiracist idea" (2019, p.13). He detailed, "Racist ideas are those that suggest that one racial group is inferior or superior to another racial group in any way" (2019, p. 20) and that racist ideas explain racial inequities in society. Within the construct of racism, Kendi specifically highlighted assimilationists, whose thought he describes as those who are "expressing the racist idea that a racial group is culturally or behaviorally inferior and is supporting cultural or behavioral enrichment programs to develop that racial group" (p. 24). Assimilationist thinking is prevalent in the field of education, which by design, is based on targeted policies and programs meant to support growth and development.

Kendi (2019, p. 9) made an important distinction in that there is no such thing as "non-racist" action or policy. He argued that there is no such thing as race-neutrality and that the concept of race-neutrality supports the notion of White victimhood because "it positions the notion that any policy protecting or advancing non-White Americans towards equity is "reverse-racism." These definitions are used throughout this study and can be found in the Terminology section. Note that Helms' term "non-racist" has been changed hereafter to "antiracist" when

possible, as her definition closely matches Kendi's, but is not to be confused with Kendi's definition of "non-racist."

Chapter 3

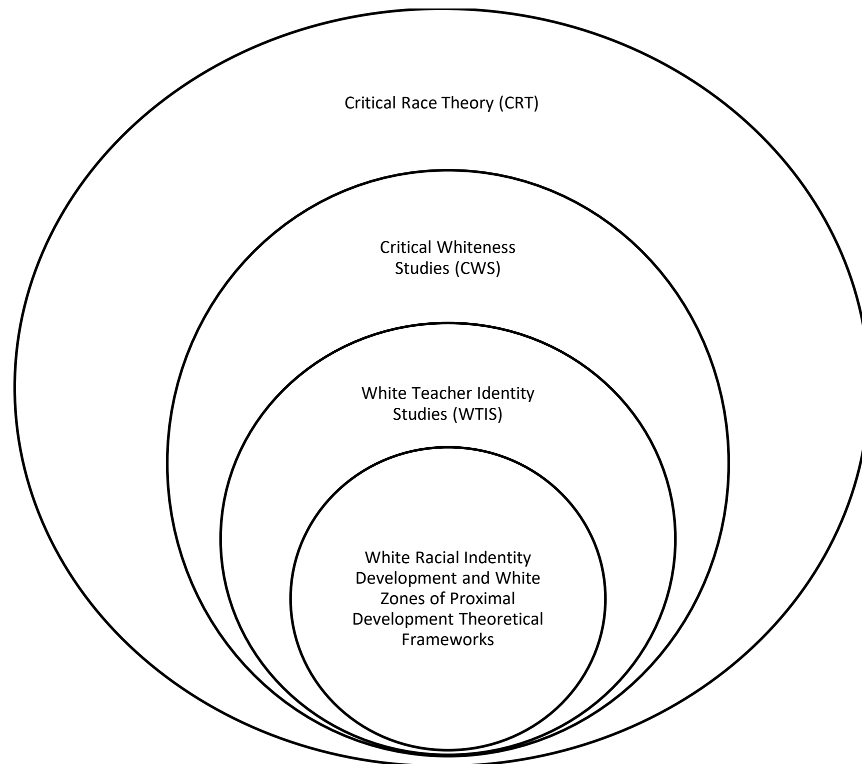
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

I begin by providing historical and contextualized racial demographic data in public education, ultimately narrowing to the location of Davis, California, in order to describe a specific setting for reproduction of compounded Whiteness in education. This setting of compounded Whiteness is one in which the six White elementary teacher-participants of this study teach and are actively working on their own antiracism journeys. I then draw from literature from White teacher identity studies (WTIS), particularly how this literature speaks to antiracist ideological commitment development relating to White elementary teachers and their teaching in schools with a predominantly White student population. Although there are K-12 studies about White teacher racial identity, there are far fewer recent studies that address the development of antiracist ideological commitments within White elementary settings. WTIS research is ultimately nested within critical white studies (CWS) and critical race theory (CRT), the intentional centering of Whiteness in order to better understand it and disrupt its predominance (Marx, 2003). The theoretical frameworks of White racial identity development (Helms, 1990, 2020) and of WZPD are used throughout to frame the relevance of the reviewed literature.

Figure 4

The Nesting of White Zones of Proximal Development Within WTIS and CWS



Contextualizing Racial Demographics and Public Education

The United States population as a whole is racially diverse, with a projected increase in racial diversity in the coming decades. Nationally, students of color comprise over 50% of the elementary and secondary school-age population (NCES, 2017). However, this increasingly racially diverse student population is not reflected in the public-school teacher workforce. Over 80% of U.S. public school teachers are White and evidence suggests an overwhelmingly White teacher population will continue for the foreseeable future despite extensive research that supports diversifying the teacher workforce and targeted and sustained institutional and policy efforts to increase teacher diversity (Rothstein, 2017; U.S. Department of Education, 2016b).

These national student and teacher demographics are disproportionate, but closer examination reveals even greater segregation insomuch as schools with less racial/ethnic diversity in their student populations also tend to have less racial/ethnic diversity among their teacher population, meaning that schools with a Whiter student population are left with an even Whiter teacher population than the holistic national statistics (NCES, 2017). Elementary and secondary schools that are comprised of roughly 50% or more White students, have closer to a 90% White teacher population (NCES, 2017). This means that Whiter student populations reflect a pattern of increasingly White teachers serving this population, a sort of compounded Whiteness.

Additional factors, such as school classification and setting also shape the distribution of teachers by race/ethnicity. For example, the percentage of teachers who are White is higher at traditional public schools (81%) than at public charter schools (71%; NCES, 2017). This compounded Whiteness can also be viewed through the setting of the school, as the distribution of teachers by race/ethnicity also differs by school location. The percentage of White teachers is higher in rural schools (89%) than in suburban schools (82%) or city schools (69%). In addition, the percentage of White teachers is higher in schools in towns (88%) and suburban areas than in city schools (NCES, 2017).

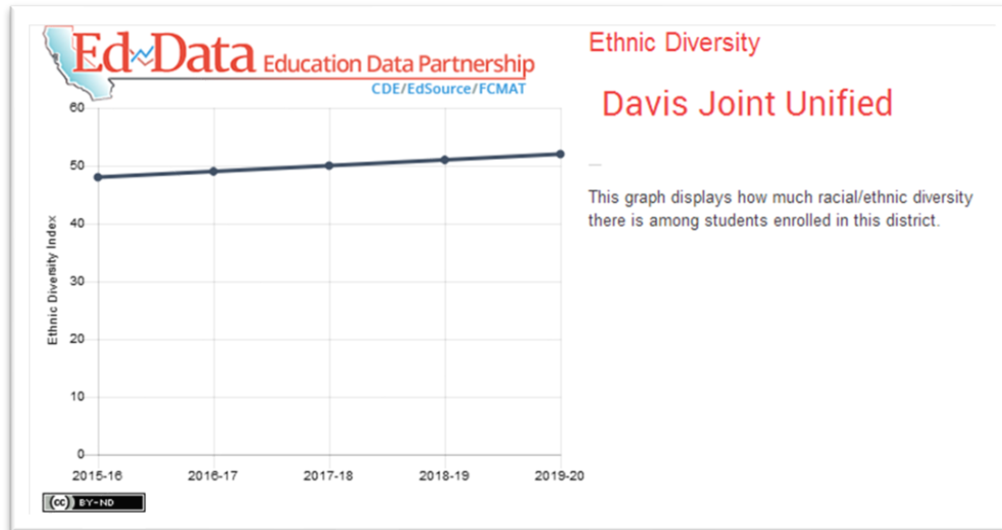
Whereas the United States school student population continues to experience significant increases in its racial and ethnic diversity (51% of all public elementary and secondary school students consist of students of BIPOC racial and ethnic identities), the teacher population tends to remain more homogenous, with White teachers comprising at least 80% of the teaching population in suburban, town, and rural traditional public school settings that have roughly 50% or more White student populations (NCES, 2017; Rudnick, 2019).

History and Development of Predominantly White Schools in Davis, California

Davis, California is no exception to the national and state-level data trends. In data collected by the California Department of Education (CDE) through the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) and the California School Dashboard (2020), all but one elementary school in DJUSD have between 46.9%-77.3% White student populations. According to EdData, the Ethnic Diversity Index (EDI) of DJUSD as a whole in 2019-2020 is 52. In the EDI, the more evenly distributed the student body, the higher the number. A school where all of the students are the same ethnicity would have an index of 0. A school with even distributions of the measured races would be 100. The EDI, developed by Ed-Data, is intended to measure how much variety a school or district has among the ethnic groups in its student population. More specifically, the index reflects how evenly distributed these students are among the race/ethnicity categories reported to the California Department of Education. The EDI measures a school's or district's student population (taking into account, for example, how many ethnic groups are part of the campus and community) that is not easily evident without the index. It can be a useful piece of information for understanding a school or district (EdData, 2020).

Figure 5

Racial/Ethnic Diversity Among Students in DJUSD



Note. From "Davis Joint Unified," by EdData, n.d., https://www.ed-data.org/district/Yolo/Davis-Joint-Unified

The 2019, DJUSD enrollment demographics indicate that, districtwide, 50.1% of the student population identify as White (EdData, n.d.). At the elementary level, student populations range between 46.9%-77.3% White, with the exception of one Spanish-English dual immersion elementary school, Marguerite Montgomery Elementary School, which attracts Spanish heritage speakers as part of the specialized bilingual program.

Table 1

DJUSD Racial Enrollment Data 2019

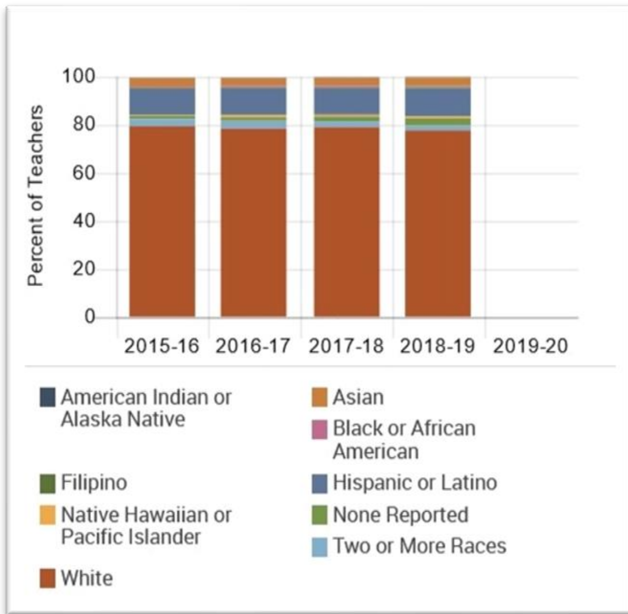
DJUSD Elementary School Site	Percentage of White Students in 2019
Birch Lane Elementary	58.8
Cesar Chavez Elementary	51.5
Fairfield Elementary	77.3
Korematsu Elementary	50.1
Montgomery (Spanish Two-Way Bilingual)	26.9
Patwin Elementary	57.5
Pioneer Elementary	50.3
North Davis	46.9
Willett	49.6
DJUSD Total Enrollment (K-12)	50.1

Note. From *District Performance Overview: Davis Joint Unified,* by California School Dashboard, 2019, (https://www.caschooldashboard.org/reports/57726780000000/2020)

Like national student racial/ethnic student demographic trends, the reported racial/ethnic teacher data for DJUSD also align with national trends. As of 2017-2018, approximately 80% of DJUSD teachers identified their race as White (EdData, 2020). It is important to note that many Hispanic teachers also racially identify as White.

Figure 6

DJUSD Teachers by Ethnicity



Teachers By Ethnicity	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.2 %	0.2 %	0.4 %	0.4 %	N/A
Asian	3.5 %	3 %	3.1 %	3.5 %	N/A
Black or African American	0.6 %	0.8 %	0.8 %	0.4 %	N/A
Filipino	0.4 %	0.6 %	0.6 %	0.6 %	N/A
Hispanic or Latino	10.8 %	11 %	10.8 %	11.6 %	N/A
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.4 %	1 %	0.8 %	0.8 %	N/A
None Reported	1.4 %	1.4 %	2 %	3.1 %	N/A
Two or More Races	2.9 %	3.2 %	2.4 %	2 %	N/A
White	79.4 %	78.4 %	79 %	77.6 %	N/A

Note. From Davis Joint Unified, by Ed Data, 2020, (http://www.ed-data.org/ShareData/Html/45837)

The above graph and accompanying table displays teachers in DJUSD by race/ethnicity. Teachers are certificated staff, meaning they must hold a teaching credential or other certificate,

which may include an emergency permit or a waiver of the credential requirement (EdData, 2020).

These district and national teacher and student racial data reflect historical legacies of race-based stratification which result from a national history of slavery, followed by de jure and a pattern of de facto racial segregation, including redlining and other restrictive housing policies, examined in the case of Davis, California in the Literature Review and Methods sections of this study (Rothstein, 2017). The resulting racial and ethnic makeup of predominantly White elementary schools and districts decrease the likelihood of sustained interracial interaction inside of school for both White teachers and White students (Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Gilliam et al., 2002; Harris & Hodge, 2016; Goldsmith, 2010; Pollock, 2008b; Richardson & Johanningmeir, 2003). Details specific to Davis, California are found under the heading Predominantly White Schools later in this chapter.

Statistically speaking, enrollment data for individual racial and ethnic groups can provide a more detailed look at the school enrollment patterns around student and teacher populations. These data show the extent to which students who attend public schools interact with peers of the same racial/ethnic group and can predict the amount of interracial exposure White teachers and students in schools comprised of predominantly White people will have. In fall 2015, around 51 percent of White students were enrolled in public schools that were predominantly composed of students of their own race (NCES, 2017). Data from the California School Dashboard in 2019 shows that DJUSD teacher and student demographic reflect this national trend. The data show that, in Davis, California, it is possible to be a White student and move through the public K-6 educational system with most, if not only, White teachers and be surrounded by a majority of White peers (DiAngelo, 2018; Keller, 2018; West, 2020).

The literature reviewed points to the impact of these national and local racial demographics (Rothstein, 2017). Lack of exposure to racial differences, and the racial and ethnic makeup of the student population coupled with the predominantly White teaching population indicates that White teachers—of whom the many went through the same educational system themselves when they were children—may be ill-prepared to face and understand the complex ways in which race and racism shape the schooling experiences of many of their White students in predominantly White schools, much less teach these understandings to the White students in their own classrooms (Anonymous, 2016; Cochran-Smith et al., 2004; Feistritzer, 2011; Gay & Howard, 2000; Larke, 1992; Rudnick, 2019; Sleeter, 2012; Tatum, 1997). For this reason, better understanding White elementary teachers who are committed to racial justice and embed their philosophy in their thinking about their work in elementary schools consisting of a predominantly White student population is of continued intertest.

Compounded Whiteness

Social anthropologists Smedley and Smedley (2012) described race "[as a] a worldview, . . . a cosmological ordering system structured out of the political, economic, and social realities of peoples who had emerged as expansionist, conquering, dominating nations on a worldwide quest for wealth and power," and for this reason, racial demographic statistics of teacher and student populations begin to have impactful meanings in educational institutions (Hill, 1998, as cited in Smedley & Smedley, 2012, p. 680). The reviewed literature suggests that the Whiteness of school sites comprised of predominantly White students and teachers, predominantly White schools, is problematic from a racial consciousness perspective because these elementary schools can be seen as "White educational spaces." White educational spaces serve as a type of "racialscape" where the normative culture, that which is universalized, normalized, standardized,

centered, and frequently invisible, comes from White cultural norms (Appadurai, 1990; Cabrera et al., 2017; DiAngelo, 2018; Harrison, 1995; Heuschkel, 2013; Hill, 1998; Matias, 2014; Pennington, 2007; Smedley, 2012; Sullivan, 2006).

Those who belong to the dominant culture are least likely to be aware of the ways in which an ideology supports their dominant group in society and creates a White educational space, so that could be said that those who enjoy the fruits of belonging to a dominant group of society are filled with a "false consciousness" (Cabrera et al., 2017; DiAngelo, 2018; Helms, 2020; Heuschkel, 2013; Matias, 2014; Pennington, 2007; Sharp, 2017; Sullivan, 2006).

What is racially and culturally invisible is challenging to be conscious of, particularly if one moves through a White space when also identifying as White. It is not in the dominant groups' interest to notice the ways in which a societal structure marginalizes other, as this marginalization is a factor contributing to the dominant group's power (Cabrera et al., 2017; DiAngelo, 2018; Helms, 2020; Heuschkel, 2013; Matias, 2014; Pennington, 2007; Sharp, 2017; Sullivan, 2006). For this reason, better understanding the experiences of racial conscientization of White elementary teachers who are committed to racial justice while working in predominantly White schools is of particular interest as these teachers have found a way to continue to make White supremacy visible to themselves and have commitment to the dismantling of a system from which they directly and indirectly benefit.

How Davis became so White is in many ways a typical American history. Like many places in the United States, Davis, California created its Whiteness as a community in part through a long history of racial housing discrimination (Keller, 2018). According to Dr. Jesus Hernandez, a professor in the Department of Sociology at UC Davis, the city of Davis has a history of redlining and restrictive covenants that were actually harsher than typical practices of

the time, in that they were the only ones in his nationwide study that had financial penalties attached beyond the forfeiture of aggrieved property (Keller, 2018). The violators of housing racialized covenants were to pay a $25,000 fine in addition to the loss of the property, which was more than expensive than the price of the actual property at the time (Keller, 2018).

The bulk of the racially restrictive covenants reserved for White people were for properties just north of the University and the residential areas just to the east near 5th Street. A 2015 study commissioned by the City of Davis entitled *Davis, California: Citywide Survey and Historic Context Update,* details how restrictive covenants were especially prevalent in properties built before the 1950s, though there were some in properties developed even after 1948 (a Supreme Court case deemed them illegal in this year) whose deeds still contained these restrictive covenants with clauses that were meant to prevent non-Whites and Jews from owning or residing in the neighborhood (City of Davis, 2015, pp. 9-10, as cited in Keller, 2018). For example, the original documents for the 1924 "College Park" development in Davis, California, included racially restrictive language in the deeds for the properties that were sold by the College Park Association (Yolo County Clerk-Recorder Archives, 2015, as cited in Keller, 2018). If these restrictions were violated, property was subject to immediate forfeiture, as described in the legal property deed for the College Park subdivision: "nor during such time shall said property or any part thereof or any building or buildings erected thereon be occupied by any person or persons other than those of Caucasian race" (Keller, 2018, p.1). This racially restrictive language can also be seen in the Sierra Vista Oaks subdivision legal property deed as well:

> No persons except those of the white Caucasian race shall use, occupy or reside upon any residential property in the tract of land hereinabove described, or any future subdivision thereof, except when employed as a servant or domestic in the household of a white

> Caucasian tenant or owner. . . for the sole reason that they [the owner] believe possession and occupancy by such persons would have a prejudicial effect upon the value of other property to said subdivision and in future units thereof. (Yolo County Clerk-Recorder Archives, 2015, as cited in Keller, 2018, p. 1)

Historical practices of racial discrimination in housing such as these have direct impacts on the composition of public schools that serve those same neighborhoods. The racial composition of the students in DJUSD and the larger community it serves still reflect these restrictive covenants to some degree insomuch as the generational legacy of these housing policies persist. That is, the original property owners and their children, and children's children still remain in the community and attend the school in Davis' K-12 educational system.

However, racial discrimination is not just an historical legacy for a preference for a predominantly White Davis community. Contemporary policies that point to the structural racism inherent in housing discrimination are still being written in Davis, California, and beyond. These policies further strengthen the segregation seen in predominantly White schools. One such policy can be seen in the voter-approved proposal for the Bretton Woods development on West Covell that contains the "preference for buyers with a connection to Davis" (West, 2020, p.1). Given the history of preference for Whiteness in the Davis housing market, this language is problematic and can serve as what Vygotsky called a cultural "sign system" (Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Vygotsky, 1978). Many more White people have connections to Davis than people of color, thus the policy serves to perpetuate the Whiteness of the community. According to UC Davis Discrimination Law Professor Emerita, Dr. Martha West, the "Davis connection" preference would have a clearly disparate impact on buyers who are not White (West, 2020). In 2019, the population of Davis was 13% Latino, 2.3% Black, 56% White and 22% Asian (West,

2020). Another such example that is problematized by the maintenance of the historical racial preferences in the community are Davis's "no growth" policies, which are "egregious examples" of structural racism (West, 2020). These housing policies directly point to contemporary practices created, intentionally and/or unintentionally, within structural racism and can be a contributor to the predominance of a White student population currently attending schools in DJUSD at the present time.

White Teacher Identity Studies

White teacher identity studies, nested within the larger field of CWS and CRT, is concerned with Whiteness, culture, power, and privilege and connecting them to racist social structures (Applebaum, 2016). The process of explicitly centering Whiteness in order to then decenter or dismantle it involves efforts to get beyond (the White) race that is normalized as universal and ask basic questions about race, power, and society (Delgado & Stefanic, 1997).

WTIS is research centered on the context for how teachers make meaning of their Whiteness and Whiteness in their work as a step in the move towards the ultimate dismantling of Whiteness. WTIS broadly seeks to advance and support critically conscientized, race-visible teaching and learning in public schools and other educational settings but does not exclusively focus on teaching interactions with White students (Jupp, 2019). The scholarship associated with WTIS has explored the phenomena of what is means to be White and/or move through schools with predominantly White student populations, but not specifically with the goal of better understanding White teachers who work in these schools and also are committed to racial justice while teaching White elementary students. WTIS research does, however, point to the normative culture of most predominantly White schools, and how these environments protect an avoidance of deep examination of the role of racism and Whiteness in school spaces (Allen, 1999; Cabrera,

2017; Case & Hemmings, 2005; DiAngelo, 2018; Gorski, 2016; Heuschkel, 2013; Jupp, 2017; Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Pennington, 2007; Picower, 2009; Ullucci, 2011).

In part motivated by the taboo against speaking about subjects perceived as controversial as race and racism, research on White teachers who work in predominantly White environments has been found to often avoid directly addressing race through the development colorblind dispositions (not "seeing" or explicitly addressing race), epistemologies of ignorance (not recognizing Whiteness as a race in itself and claiming racial "innocence" while having the expectation that what is "normal" and "universal" is one's own White culture by default), ontological expansiveness (the unconscious habits of racial privilege based on White norms), and assumed racial comfort (the expectation that one should feel comfortable and safe when thinking and speaking about race) (Cabrera et al., 2017; DiAngelo, 2018; Heuschkel, 2013; Matias, 2014; Pennington, 2007; Sullivan, 2006). These avoidant ways of thinking and understanding the ways that race mediates interactions between people schools are supported by the context of White educational spaces though policy, curricular tools, and teacher ideology (Picower, 2021). Helms's (2020) White racial identity model would place the above behaviors in schemas one through three.

These extensively researched White racial social responses to race are in part enabled by the context of predominantly White school populations and the absence of a large presence of students of color (Cabrera et al., 2017; DiAngelo, 2018; Helms, 2020; Heuschkel, 2013; Matias, 2014; Pennington, 2007; Sullivan, 2006). A large presence of student of color can provide a signal to teachers of a diverse juxtaposition of identities in the classroom, and facilitate the interruption of White normative thought, indicating that students would benefit from a White teacher's critical racial consciousness development that could then be enacted through critical

multicultural curriculum and pedagogy (Cabrera et al., 2017; DiAngelo, 2018; Heuschkel, 2013; Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Pennington, 2007; Sullivan, 2006). In schools with predominantly White student populations, there may be no such signal, or the signal may be perceived as invisible (Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Picower, 2021).

Although there are K-12 studies about the operationalization of White teacher dispositions toward racial justice, there are far fewer recent studies that address antiracist ideological commitment development coupled with White elementary settings. This study of White elementary school teachers actively engaging in their own development contributes to the growing body of White teacher identity studies and in an important foundational way, in part due to what is known about the impactful nature of teacher-student interactions (Aboud, 2008; Bronfenbrenner, 1992; Hagerman, 2016; Hirschfeld, 2008; Hurtado et al., 2012; Rogoff, 2003; Super & Harkness, 1986; John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996; Picower, 2021; Winkler, 2009). That is, that teachers demonstrate racial understandings through their racial dispositions in relation to curriculum and pedagogy as the children in their care are actively constructing their own understandings of race in their classrooms (Hagerman, 2016; Leonardo & Manning, 2017). This study illuminates the experiences of the development of antiracist identity of White teachers who work in schools with predominantly White student and teacher populations (with few related exceptions such as Derman-Sparks & Ramsey, 2011; Heuschkel, 2013; Rogers & Mosley, 2006).

Much of the existing WTIS research about teachers' perspectives on everyday antiracism in elementary schools is conducted in urban, multicultural settings, which is usually related to a large presence of marginalized identities in the classroom (Hagerman, 2016). Yet over 80% of K-12 teachers in the United States are White, and the communities in which they teach are largely self-segregated, creating large swaths of de facto White racialscapes, or compounded

Whiteness (Smedley, 2012; U.S. Department of Education, 2016a). This study contributes data that departs from this trend by examining the development, perspectives, and (anti)racial interactions of White teachers in the context of White elementary schools.

(Anti)racism and the Education of White Elementary Educators

Ibram X. Kendi (2019) charged that "the only way to undo racism is to consistently identify and describe it- and then dismantle it" (p. 1). In order to learn to work against racism, White people must first recognize its everyday existence as well as come to grips with their own position as ongoing participants and beneficiaries of racist systems (Helms, 2020; Nieto, 2015). White people cannot escape participation in a racist system and so must learn to become "antiracist racists" (Helms, 2020; Katz, 2003). In order for White teachers to decenter and dismantle White narratives in elementary curriculum and the White normative thought embedded in their teaching in an antiracist way, they must explicitly make the dismantling of White supremacy for themselves and their White students a priority in their practice (Picower, 2021; Sleeter & Zavala, 2020; Tatum, 2007). They must see it, name it, and own it in all their decision-making around their teaching in elementary schools.

Even so, White teachers may not be adequately supported in this endeavor as they do not have substantial experience in the practice of developing their own White racial identity development and antiracist ideology from their own schooling (Gardiner, 2001; Hagerman, 2016; Helms, 2020; Nieto, 2015; Noguera, 2008; Rogoff, 2003; Selman, 1971; Winkler, 2009). This not only includes their K-12 education, but their teacher preparation programs and professional development once in the field (CTC, 2009).

For decades, elementary teachers have used race-evasive and race-neutral (colorblind) social-emotional learning (SEL) language and curriculum as proxy for explicit antiracism curriculum

and pedagogy, choosing the safety of focusing on the foundational social emotional development of empathy and kindness through social-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum that defines racism as unkind interpersonal acts between individuals rather than to directly address systemic racism in their work (Barnes, 2019; Gillen-O'Neel et al., 2021; Simmons, 2020). This interpersonal SEL focus can serve as a kind of racial bypassing within contexts of compounded Whiteness and can be exemplified by the prevalence and energy devoted to "kindness campaigns" and "antibullying" programs (Barnes, 2019; Gillen-O'Neel et al., 2021; Simmons, 2020). Racial bypassing SEL curriculum only serves to perpetuate systemic racism by effectively ignoring it (Gorski, 2019). Beverly Tatum (2010) provided a concrete visual of the ongoing cycle of active, passive, and anti-racism by comparing systemic racism (and an individual's response to it) to a moving walkway at the airport:

> Active racist behavior is equivalent to walking fast on the conveyor belt. The person engaged in active racist behavior has identified with the ideology of White supremacy and is moving with it. Passive racist behavior is equivalent to standing still on the walkway. No overt effort is being made, but the conveyor belt moves the bystanders along to the same destination as those who are actively walking. Some of the bystanders may feel the motion of the conveyor belt, see the active racists ahead of them, and choose to turn around, unwilling to go to the same destination as the White supremacists. But unless they are walking actively in the opposite direction at a speed faster than the conveyor belt-unless they are actively antiracist- they will find themselves carried along with the others. (p. 68)

A basic racial literacy for all teachers is needed, but how to approach this? Guinier (2004) defined the term "racial literacy" within the context of *Brown* v. *Board of Education* and its

aftermath, stating that educators must make racism visible via racial literacy in classroom practice, in both elementary school and teacher education levels, and describe it as the ability to "discuss the social construction of race, probe the existence of racism and examine the harmful effects of racial stereotyping" (Guinier, 2004 as cited in Seltzer & de los Rios, 2018, p.46). Developing White teacher antiracist ideological commitments demand ongoing, challenging inquiry when moving through daily interactions in schools with a predominantly White teacher and student population. Pollock (2008a, p. xiv) asked teachers to consider the following questions: "Am I seeing, understanding, and addressing the ways the world treats me and my students as race group members? Am I seeing, understanding, and addressing communities and individuals in their full complexity? Am I seeing, understanding, and addressing the ways opportunities to learn or thrive are unequally distributed to racial groups?" This ongoing critical racial consciousness development is not, nor the priority of antiracist disposition development, comprehensively represented in the current preservice preparation of California's White elementary teacher workforce or the professional development of its current in-service teachers.

Policy and programmatic language that exists in California's Teacher Performance Expectations and California Standards for the Teaching Profession points to cultural competence for White teachers who teach students of color, without an explicit connection in the learning outcomes for developing teachers that can continually address their own racial consciousness development about Whiteness and the antiracist work that White teachers need to be also doing within White populations (Brown, 2011; CTC, 2009). With large segments of society self-segregated by race, developing critical racial consciousness and antiracist lens to view curriculum and pedagogy can feel optional.

That said, literature from the field of child development suggests that the race-related work that White elementary school teachers do or do not do, consciously and/or unconsciously, in their classrooms is incredibly impactful. Although many elementary educators and parents are unaware, children have already been organizing cultural messages about race from a variety of modalities for years by the time they enter elementary school (Aboud, 2008; Feagin &Van Ausdale, 2001; Hagerman, 2016; Katz, 2003; Katz & Koftkin, 1997; Patterson & Bigler, 2006; Winkler, 2009). Elementary education provides an early opportunity to actively guide developing children in antiracist sense-making as they continue their organization of broad cultural messages about race (Hagerman, 2016). Research on race, (anti)racism, and the developing child indicates that schools play an important role in socialization around race, a role particularly shaped by teachers, who exercise great control over the learning environment in elementary classrooms (Hagerman, 2016; Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Lewis, 2003; Tatum, 1997; Feagin & Van Ausdale, 2001; Winkler, 2009). Teachers have power to embed their antiracist dispositions as they participate in complex relational intersections between their own identities, their students' identities, the curriculum, pedagogy, and context in which racial and cultural identity development occurs (Aboud, 2008; Bronfenbrenner, 1992; Hagerman, 2016; Hirschfeld, 2008; Hurtado et al., 2012; Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Rogoff, 2003; Super & Harkness, 1986; John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996; Winkler, 2009).

Because schools and classrooms can be seen as reflections of society and as primary sites of knowledge construction and production the relationships between teachers and students that happen within the context of a school are key determinants of the ways in which race and (anti)racism are reproduced and maintained, as teachers are the primary authority figures and facilitate and guide these processes in the classroom setting, both consciously and unconsciously

(Anonymous, 2016; Banks, 2004; Cochran-Smith et al., 2004; Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Milner et al., 2013; Richardson & Johanningmeir, 2003; Rogoff, 2003; Rudnick, 2019; Sleeter, 2012, 2017; Tatum, 2007 ;Vygotsky, 1978).

Racial Identity in Teacher Education

Using in-service teaching as praxis in cultivating White teacher antiracist ideologies is promising, impactful, and understudied, particularly for K-6 White teachers working in schools with a predominantly White student and teacher population (Rogers & Mosley, 2006; Ullucci, 2011). The current literature suggests the need for continual, embedded, sustained engagement with critical racial consciousness development and racial literacy development for White teachers, regardless of the racial demographics of the students in their school communities (Amos, 2011). Additionally, the experiences of teachers should be *guided* learning specifically, in order to move White teachers from a more passive stance to a relatively more active antiracist stance and a key to this shift may be explicitly linking perspective-taking, empathy development and a moral imperative to racial justice orientations (Amos, 2011; Gorski, 2009; Helms, 2020; Picower, 2021; Winans, 2010). Guided experiences in the development of critical racial consciousness can help White teachers to make the connection between thought and action in their classrooms by creating a sense of moral urgency and articulating a rationale to do so (Amos, 2011).

Research shows that many White teachers are not actively working to dismantle their White normative thought in their classrooms, yet there are there are some White teachers who are aware of and are motivated to develop their own antiracist ideology as they teach within predominantly White elementary classrooms at this time. The literature does not yet reflect the stories of White elementary teachers specifically working in predominantly White schools. In

general, the reviewed literature supports guided long-term, continued, embedded engagement around perspective-taking, empathy, and the framing of systemic racism in terms of an antiracist, personal moral responsibility for White adults working with children in educational settings (Amos, 2011; Gorski, 2009; Helms, 2020; Kendi, 2019; Picower, 2021; Winans, 2010). This guided development of antiracist dispositions can take the form of undergraduate and graduate courses and also may continue as professional development opportunity for those in the field (Mosley, 2010; Rogers & Mosley, 2006; Ullucci, 2011).

Conclusion

This study contributes to the literature by providing complex and nuanced portraits of the journeys of White elementary teachers who already see themselves on an antiracist development journey, and who purportedly teach through a racial justice lens in schools with a predominantly White student and teacher population. These teachers are choosing to decenter Whiteness in their work specifically with White elementary students after (and concurrently) doing much personal learning themselves. Educational leaders can benefit by better understanding these teachers' developmental journeys and know more about the needed supports required to sustain antiracist development in what is now a predominantly White elementary teaching force. The reviewed literature calls for more data on the experiences and perceived needs of White teachers who are working to disrupt racism through decentering White normativity in their thinking about their work, detailing what a complex commitment to an antiracist teaching looks like for White elementary teachers who work in elementary schools with predominantly White teacher and student populations.

Chapter 4

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In this era of rapidly changing understandings about the responsibility to address White supremacy and the history of systemic racism within educational institutions, we must learn from the experiences of White elementary teachers who are deepening their understanding of antiracist education for themselves and in their thinking about interactions with students.

This chapter begins with the qualitative methodology used to explore the research questions. Subsequently, I detail why a qualitative approach to answer the research questions in this study was chosen. Lastly, I detail the level of analysis employed in the study and I concluded by addressing various threats to trustworthiness through the credibility, transferability, and dependability of this study.

Research Questions

1. How do elementary educators who are racialized as White and committed to racial justice, teaching in schools with predominantly White students, characterize their racial identity development and antiracist ideological commitments?
2. What role do these antiracist ideological commitments play in their approaches to racial justice teaching with White students?
3. What policy, programmatic, and institutional influences do these teachers identify as meaningful and supportive as they continue to develop their antiracist ideological commitments?

Research Design

Qualitative Methodology

To explore the experiences of White elementary teachers, working in schools with predominantly White student and teacher populations, committed to racial justice in a complex and nuanced way, I conducted a qualitative study. Qualitative research has grown from the perspective that the human understanding of what is "real" to the individual is constructed through the interaction of the individual within their social world (Merriam, 1998; Vygotsky, 1978). Instead of attempting to quantify lived human experiences into numerical data, the qualitative methodology is designed to capture rich data with words and stories. This study captured a snapshot of how teachers believe that they have developed their antiracist ideological commitments over time, life experiences, and subsequent educational experiences that they have constructed in their own work as teachers from the meaning-making that has occurred from their own realities (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Hatch, 2002; Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Maxwell, 1996; Merriam, 1998). In order to truly explore the personal stories of White racial ideological commitment development that these teachers experienced and the ways that their identities and beliefs are embedded in their teaching in schools with predominantly White student and teacher populations, qualitative methods were selected as the most appropriate for this study. Qualitative methods allow for a complex description of the teachers' experiences in their own words.

Research Setting and Participants

This study employed a convenience and purposive sampling to ensure that teachers who could speak about the issues in the research question. All six elementary educators were self-identified as White, committed to teaching in elementary schools in Davis, California through an antiracist lens, in elementary schools with a predominantly White student and teacher population

while actively working on their own antiracist development. The review of the literature and theoretical frameworks supported the idea that most elementary schools in Davis, California could be considered to be predominantly White from a critical Whiteness perspective. Additionally, technically, as of 2018, all but two elementary schools in this public-school district were comprised of at least 50% White students and the percentage of White elementary school teachers was consistently much higher, currently above 80% (California School Dashboard, 2018).

The six educators for this study were selected from a pool of Davis elementary classroom teachers (past or present) or site-wide teachers who worked directly with groups of students, such as resource teachers, librarians with teaching credentials, math specialist, and science teachers using purposive sampling (Patton 2005). Purposive sampling is a technique commonly used in qualitative research in cases that involve a scarcity of participants to secure rich data of a given phenomenon, of which I anticipated in this study (Patton 2002). In these cases, individuals were selected who had been self-identified to have experience with, or great knowledge of, the phenomena of interest (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The individuals identified for participation in this study expressed the availability, ability, and willingness to participate in this study by expressing in an articulate and reflective manner about the phenomena (Bernard, 2017; Spradley, 2016). All six participants were willing and able to speak to the ways in which they have perpetuated racism in their thinking around their teaching and the sense-making process about what they perceived as their racist ideas rooted in Whiteness and sought to grow beyond them. Being White and able to identify one's own racist ideas is a hallmark of the immersion-emersion and autonomy status of the White racial identity model (Helms, 1995). In the immersion-emersion status, the person is reinforced to continue, rather than avoid and retreat

from, personal exploration after noticing the ways in which they participate in racism. The person thinks of themselves as a racial being (recognizes that they are White) and begins to focus on what it means to be White. There is increased willingness to search for the ways in which they benefit from White privilege and to confront their own biases, redefine Whiteness, and to become active in directly combatting racism and oppression (Helms, 1995). The autonomy status is marked by an increased awareness of one's Whiteness, acceptance in one's own role in perpetuating racism, and deepened determination to develop one's own antiracist ideology. The person is knowledgeable about racial, ethnic, and cultural differences, values diversity, and is no longer intimidated with the experiential reality of race and has developed a positive White identity (Helms, 1995). By the participant's self-identification as White, and elementary teacher, teaching (or had taught) in Davis while actively committed to developing one's own antiracist ideology, and also willing to articulate ways in which they had perpetuated racism in their thinking about their teaching through an antiracist lens, they qualified to participate in an interview for this study.

I solicited participation in the study through personally established contacts. In addition to interviews with the teachers, context-rich, holistic materials that provided background meaning to support data analysis and interpretations were gathered (Erlandson et al., 1993). These included curricular documents, photographs, publicly available data, books, and ephemera that was used in the triangulation of data and to confirm emerging findings (Bradley, 2005; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

Before beginning the study, I contacted two teachers to serve as pilot participants to test the effectiveness of the interview protocol. Having a small number of pilot participants nearly always results in methodological improvements in ways that a developer's scrutiny cannot

uncover (Suter, 2011). These test participants met the participation requirements of the study in what I expected to be most, but not all the criteria. This small-scale tryout uncovered some vague, but correctible rhetoric in my questions, as well as the need to add specific language around the criteria for participation (Suter, 2011). I aimed to uncover problems with the participant selection process during the pilot study and subsequently chose to add interview protocol questions to confirm that participants were willing and able to speak to the ways in which they have perpetuated racism in their thinking around their teaching and the sense-making process about what they perceived as their racist ideas and sought to grow beyond them. I also added the criteria that participants would be actively learning about antiracism in tangible ways (reading books, taking class, getting therapy, etc.).

I initially set up dates and times for recorded Zoom interviews over the telephone or via email. Prior to participation, participants completed a demographic form, found in Appendix A, and received an IRB exempt consent form, found in Appendix B. During the data collection process, I continued to identify additional teachers of interest that potentially would be mentioned in the interviews. I contacted these potential additional teachers and conducted a second round of interviews. I identified eight participant elementary teachers in total (including the two pilot interviews) to take part in interviews about their White racial identity development and how their antiracist ideological commitments were embedded in their teaching.

These teachers, chosen based on their availability and their ability to meet the antiracist ideology and racial criteria embedded in the research questions, all were teaching or had taught in the town of Davis, California, and consisted of those who worked directly with elementary-aged students directly in the classroom settings and specialists who provided direct instruction to elementary students (math specialists, etc.). Participants included one retrospective interview of a

teacher who had have moved into a coaching position within the district after having provided direct instruction with elementary-aged students for many years. Additionally, I solicited participants from a broad range of elementary grade levels and schools in order to gather diverse teacher experiences as well as hear stories of thinking about developmentally geared curriculum and pedagogy employed across a wider span of child development.

The open invitation sampling through email and or social media were contacted when they replied to the invitation. In the event of a low initial response rate, I planned to use the snowball sampling strategy and to ask prospective participants interested to recommend or nominate other teachers for the study (Merriam, 2009). Utilizing purposive sampling, such as snowball sampling, when a researcher wants to gain insight from a specific target population can be efficient (Merriam, 2009). Snowball sampling generally allows for the efficient identification of study participants but can be limiting in that the participants are connected to each other and may share very similar views (Merriam, 2009). As a result, this study sought to diversify the sample population where possible on other demographics, such as grade level(s) taught, educational roles past and present, and personal K-12 educational experiences.

After a response indication willingness to participate in the study, I emailed or texted the participant teachers who express interest to establish the date, time, and location. Participants committed to a 90-minute individual interview. A subsequent focus group would be considered if the individual interviews were insufficient to answer Research Question 3, and, if implemented, would comprise of mixed grade levels and mixed campuses, with as much representation as possible. In addition, I expected teaching experience levels to vary widely, diverse teacher training experiences, and diverse childhood K-12 racial identity developmental experiences between the participants that will be representative of the diversity within the actual White

teaching population in Davis, California. In order to capture the experiences of these teachers, I utilized a qualitative study design to present the data.

Access

In order to collect the data necessary for this study, I made personal connections with elementary teachers facilitated by my former role as an elementary teacher and also as a current (at the time) parent of a student in the district by having both general and personal knowledge of the sites and the participants' experiences within the district. Because I had been a teacher at two of the campuses in the district for a total of 11 years, I had multiple personal connections with teachers and administrators within the district, including the initial teachers who were solicited to participate in this study. This relationship with the elementary teacher population in the district allowed me the access and opportunity to use the snowball strategy to recruit eight prospective participants, six of whom participated in this study.

In addition to having been a teacher, I was also a parent of an elementary-school aged student in the district for three years. Although I had not been teaching in the district in three years immediately preceding this study, I continued to participate as a parent in a variety of volunteer capacities at my child's elementary school site and volunteered at the district level on a committee. Being a former teacher and parent allowed me continued access to district word of mouth and documents with information relevant to the experience of the participants of this study and my research questions. Establishing trust and rapport with teacher participants on topics that can be seen as controversial as race and racism can be in part initiated by having personal knowledge of the participants and research sites. Identifying willing participants was a vital component to accomplishing the procedures in this study. To begin the research, I

explained the basis of my study to each participant. The research was conducted outside the parameters of school sites and outside of teachers' workdays on personal time.

Methods of Data Collection

The researcher's role in qualitative data collection is to gain a holistic (systemic, encompassing, and integrated) overview of the context, participants, and subject of study (Huberman et al., 2020). As the researcher is essentially the main instrument in qualitative data collection, deep attentiveness, empathetic understanding, and bracketing of preconception are employed to describe the ways people in particular settings come to understand, account for and take action in their lives (Huberman et al., 2020). In order to create a more multifaceted, complex picture of the experiences of the teachers in this study, I triangulated interviews with document analysis and peer review with my committee. I obtained IRB approval.

Interviews

Semi-structured qualitative interviews are purposeful conversations designed to gather information from carefully selected participants (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Interviews provide information on past events and give participants space for retrospective sense-making. Interviews are considered the best technique to gather information directly from a source (Merriam, 1998).

I collected one and/or multiple semi-structured interviews (in the case of time constraints and/or for member checks) with each elementary educator, beginning with the initial two pilot interviews with TK-6-grade educators who taught in Davis, California, as part of coursework for a class prior to IRB approval. The six educators for the actual study were selected from a pool of classroom teachers (past or present) or site-wide teachers who work directly with groups of students, such as resource teachers, librarians with teaching credentials, math specialist, and science teachers using purposeful sampling (Patton, 2005). Purposive sampling is a technique

commonly used in qualitative research in cases that involve a scarcity of participants in order to secure rich data of a given phenomenon, of which I anticipated in this study (Patton, 2002). Individuals were selected to have been self-identified to have experience with, or great knowledge of, the phenomena of interest (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The individuals identified for participation in this study expressed the availability, ability, and willingness to participate in this study by expressing in an articulate and reflective manner about the phenomena (Bernard, 2017; Spradley, 2016). Because it is typical for teachers to sometimes change grade levels, schools, districts, and roles within institutions and the field of education, I solicited a retrospective interview from an educator who had extensive personal knowledge on the topic of study and had worked directly with students in the district in the past for many years. I solicited initial participation in the study through personally established contacts (sent via email or social media). In addition to interviews with the teachers, context-rich, holistic materials that provide background meaning to support data analysis and interpretations were gathered (Erlandson et al., 1993). These included curricular documents, photographs, publicly available data, and ephemera will be used in the triangulation of data and to confirm emerging finding (Bradley, 1993; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). I used a semi-structured interview protocol with several open-ended questions and also responsively created new probing questions during the Zoom interview based on the verbal cues given by participants in the interview. The interview protocol was initially created with questions that start broadly around the topic of antiracist ideological development and Whiteness in schools to elicit relevant information from the study participants (Lichtman, 2006; Merriam, 2009). There are different initial broad questions depending on the role the participant currently plays/has played in education. The broad individual interview questions can be found in Appendix C. The interview protocol was

informed by the literature on WTIS, with a careful ear and watchful eye to follow-up with probes about how to prompt participants to make sense of their experiences aloud (Hatch, 2002). The interview protocol questions consisted of sections that corresponded to the three research questions: reflections on participant White racial identity development, including prior K-12 and teacher racialized education experiences; teaching context for antiracist ideological commitment development; and expressed policy and programmatic support needed for continuing self-development and racial justice teaching. One participant likened the series of question sets to "past, present, and future." The semi-structured interview questions were targeted, yet flexible enough to make space for probing questions based on emerging themes from the participants (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Merriam, 1998).

All study participants were interviewed personally via Zoom. Prior to the interview, participants were reminded that their anonymity would be preserved by using a pseudonym to refer to the participant throughout data collection and for presentation of results, that all data would be preserved in a password-protected laptop, that the interview would be recorded via Zoom as well as the record application on my iPhone and transcriptions of the interview would make no mention of information that would be used to directly identify the participant, and that they may decline to answer any questions during the interview and/or discontinue participation in the study at any time. I confirmed their willingness to participate and answer any new questions at that time.

They had previously received the interview participation form via email. During the interview process I remained as attentive and responsive as possible, yet still collected essential field notes to capture significant non-verbal details, such as body language or other cues or environmental details, bracketed responses, and jotted possible probing questions. Following

each interview, I immediately wrote detailed analytical memos combining the field notes collected during the interviews with my immediate thoughts and reflections on conversation. Analytical memos serve to capture immediate thoughts and reflect about the interview experiences and data collection (Saldaña, 2016). All interviews were then transcribed verbatim and included conversational pause points and other environmental noises captured by the voice recorder as these might have served as significant details for participant reflections.

All participant data, including audio recordings, transcriptions, and any submitted trace evidence were stored on a password-protected laptop computer. Any data collected via paper including written field notes and demographic profile sheets were immediately scanned and saved to the same password-protected laptop computer, apart from curricular materials that might have been shared by participants in which case they were returned to the owner after photographing and or scanning. All paper copies retained by me were destroyed by paper shredder within one week. Study participants were referred to by pseudonyms in notes and formal write ups and on recording devices whenever possible. The code sheet for pseudonyms was stored in a password protected computer.

Member Checks

After conducting individual, interviews averaging 90 minutes each, range 80-102 minutes-and several rounds of coding to generate initial themes, I employed the method of using member checks, both as a means of data collection as well as data analysis. Member checks, also called respondent validation, consist of interviews in which the researcher solicits feedback on the meaning generated from the initial interview with the participant (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). By conducting member checks, the researcher is given an opportunity to reengage in conversation with the participant and collectively make meaning of the conversation. The

preliminary analysis is taken back to the participant in order to assure internal validity (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). In this study, I was able to engage in member checks throughout the study by checking in with some participants several times, taking tentative interpretations back to participants and asking if they were plausible.

Documents and Visual Data

Because the research questions ask about how teachers embed their antiracist ideological commitments into their thinking around their teaching, it was important to find other sources that tell their stories about their antiracist ideology development and thinking within the context of their teaching. Documents are ready-made sources of data that can also be defined as artifacts or trace evidence (Merriam, 1998). Within a teacher's world, particularly a classroom setting, there are many such documents or visual data that can serve to represent the thinking of the teacher, their educational philosophy, and their antiracist commitment within that space. For instance, teacher and class-generated anchor charts, posted classroom rules and management systems, classroom library book selections, supplemental curriculum designed by the teacher, as well as environmental details such as the desk arrangement in the classroom, the design of how students are seated and move about the classroom, and much more. Therefore, having access to important indicators to describe the current and previous experiences teachers in the development and embodiment of their antiracist ideology could include such documents. All the documents in this study were voluntarily identified and provided by the participants as the school year took place online due to the COVID19 pandemic. The setting for teacher-student interactions became virtual and teacher-participants were able to share documents and artifacts via Zoom while I, the researcher, took a picture with a cellphone. By locating the documents in collaboration with the teacher participants online, I ensured that they offered authentic and accurate representations of

their conscious thinking about the study topic. In addition, utilizing documents that are publicly shared by the schools and districts, such as statements by the superintendent after the 2020 election and the insurrection at the United States Capitol in January of 2021, union statements, and administrative policies regarding antiracist ideology and professional development opportunities, etc. will offer authentic and accurate representations of the district public positioning regarding racial justice policy, values, and teacher expectations (Merriam, 1998).

Methods of Data Analysis

Flick (2014) described the process of data analysis as "the classification and interpretation of linguistic (or visual) material to make a statement about implicit and explicit dimensions and structures of meaning-making in the material and what is represented in it" (Flick, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Qualitative research uses the researcher as the primary instrument of data collection and analysis, and as such, simultaneous data collection and analysis occurs both within and after an interview (Merriam, 1998).

Doing rudimentary analysis while in the process of collection of data, as well as between and after data collection activities through field notes and analytic memos is part of the iterative process (Bogdan & Biklen, 2011). Qualitative data analysis is an ongoing, iterative process of taking apart and segmenting data, as well as putting it back together (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

For this study, after conducting six semi-structured interviews in which iterative rudimentary analysis was used to generate rich and thick descriptions, I used inductive analysis to generate themes from the larger collection of data (Hatch, 2002). After seeking as many additional interviews as needed for code saturation and performing initial member-checks to

ensure accuracy, as these types of interviews often involve much interpretation on the part of the researcher, I began to generate the initial themes.

Inductive triangulation was ensured by gathering data from initial individual interviews, subsequent member check interviews. Through the inductive method, themes emerge about the experience of the interviewees (Creswell, 2009). Inductive analysis is a process that starts from the gathering of specific elements and then finds patterns and connections to make general statements about a given phenomenon (Hatch, 2002). These emerging themes were unique to the study but may be useful beyond the setting and case in terms of the phenomena explored (Merriam, 1998). All interviews were relayed at least twice prior to transcription. The first time just to listen to the interview while walking my dog, and then again at my desk while note-taking to identify possible codes, questions, and/or themes. After transcription, the interview transcriptions were read for themes and were open coded through the reading of field notes and transcripts to identify salient themes, identified through words and phrases used by the teacher participants (Saldaña, 2016). These coded themes were then compared and triangulated by cross-checking data, including member checks, documents, visual data, and peer review (Bradley, 1993; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

The iterative, cyclical process of qualitative data analysis consisted of continuing to review relevant literature, reviewing, and organizing the transcript data, and a subsequent open coding process. Open coding provided an opportunity to see patterns in the responses that correspond with relevant literature. Coded data fell into broad categories that were expected based on my understanding of the literature and my lived experiences as an teacher-researcher, as well as unanticipated codes that emerge from the interview participants. Once open codes had been established, I used analytical coding procedures to organize the open codes into patterns

focused on building interpretation and meaning. At this point I also looked for patterns in the coded responses (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Criteria of Trustworthiness

The most important criterion for judging a qualitative study is its credibility or trustworthiness (Suter, 2011). A defining characteristic of qualitative research is that the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). As such, the human instrument has shortcomings and biases, but rather than try and eliminate these, in qualitative analysis, the researcher makes them visible (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). In order to address potential issues related to trustworthiness of data analysis, ensuring reliability and consistency, this study made use of member checks, peer review through a dissertation committee, and a statement of researcher positionality and reflexivity later in this chapter. Through member checks, the teacher participants had an opportunity to provide feedback on emerging findings as part of the preliminary analysis. My advisor and dissertation committee provided on-going feedback and peer review, while my positionality and reflexivity statement outlined my role as a researcher. Being able to trust research results is especially important to professionals in applied fields because practitioners (such as educational administrators and teachers) intervene in people's lives (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

Credibility

Internal validity deals with the issue of how the interpretation of data matches reality and because human beings are the primary instrument of qualitative data collection and analysis, interpretations of reality are a direct experience through interviews. So, in qualitative research, the researcher is closer to reality than if data were collected through a more distant and -purportedly- objective instrument (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). In this study, credibility was

determined through internal validity, and the construction of reality as a complex and multi-faceted experience (Merriam, 1998). The criteria for internal validity were enhanced and assured specifically through rudimentary, iterative data analysis, triangulation, member checks, and peer review in the form of a dissertation committee (Hatch, 2002; Merriam, 1998).

Triangulation

A researcher can use several strategies to increase the credibility of finding, the best-known strategy may be triangulation (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Triangulation is a process of using multiple methods, sources of data, multiple investigators, or multiple theories to confirm the findings in a study (Merriam & Tisdell, 1998). In this study, I used multiple sources of data, all qualitative and all personally collected to compare, and cross-check data collected from different participants at different times and locations, including their virtual classrooms, photos and images of their physical classrooms, their book collections, anchor charts, district communication, and curriculum. The multiple sources allowed for triangulation, providing a more complete understanding of the reality experienced by the participants (see Figure 7).

Member Checks

Member checks entail taking tentative interpretations/findings back to the people from whom they were derived and asking it they are plausible (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). When interviewing teachers about subjects that can be perceived as controversial as race and racism, particularly when interviewing a participant about an ongoing, nonlinear process, such as White racial identity development, member checks can become an important tool in ensuring credibility in a study. Member checks give the participants of a study a chance to review data before they were fully analyzed (Hatch, 2002; Lincoln & Guba, 1986; Merriam, 1998). I conducted the individual interviews of teachers and, after transcription, emailed them their participant vignettes

along with segments of the interview transcript for review. I followed up with additional member check interviews via phone call, text, or email to confirm that they meant what they said and ask clarifying questions. In the member check interviews, participants were able to speak to the themes that emerged in the interviews. Through the process, participants were able to challenge themes that may not ring true or affirm ideas that support their understanding of their antiracist ideological commitment development. Member checks improved the credibility of the study through triangulation of the data and to verify emergent themes.

Transferability

External validity is concerned with the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to various situation (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Because qualitative methods are not experimental or correlational in design, the question of generalizability has been perceived to be a potential challenge in qualitative studies (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe transferability as sufficient descriptive data as the criteria for generalizability in a qualitative study. However, although generalizability in the statistical sense is not possible in a qualitative study, this does not mean that qualitative studies do not capture important data from which to learn (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Through the use of thick descriptions of teacher experiences and development, carefully selected direct quotes that communicate teacher realities, arranged by themes on the findings, consumers of this study can find a story of the White elementary teacher working to develop and embed their developing antiracist ideological commitments within their teaching in schools with predominantly White student and teacher populations. These findings have limitations of transferability outside the district setting of this study, but by explicitly addressing the areas that do and do not make it generalizable between

schools and outside of the immediate setting of the study, I intend to increase the credibility of this study and share findings from which educational leaders can learn.

Positionality and Reflexivity

Creswell and Poth (2018) described positionality as “the way that researchers position themselves in relation to the context and setting of the research” which include aspects of the researcher’s social position, gender age, race, and other elements that compose the nexus of identity of the researcher (p. 21). Researcher reflexivity is the process of grappling with these elements in organized analysis within the study while in the process of also conducting the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Because of the positionality of a researcher, there are inherent power relations that need to be considered in any critical qualitative study (Steinberg & Cannella, 2012). The researcher has an influence when conceiving of, designing, and analyzing a study (Maxwell, 1996). When the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis, addressing the notion of insider/outsider perspectives and how these affect the research process is critical (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

Positionality

This study examined the antiracist ideological commitment development of White elementary teachers within one predominantly White school district in Northern California and how teacher understandings of White racial identity are embedded in these educators’ approach to their thinking about their teaching. My positionality within this study included my current role as a state college faculty lecturer in a school of undergraduate education that prepares future K-6 teachers who may someday join this very educational community, a former elementary teacher within the district chosen for this study, a former parent of a White elementary-aged student from

the same district, a former White Latina student of public K-12 education herself, and as the current researcher.

As a qualitative researcher, it is essential to recognize that one's own positionality inherently affects how data is conceived, collected, analyzed, and interpreted throughout a study. As positionality itself is of interest in my research questions, understanding how prior experiences with, or how the personal beliefs held about a topic of research can influence a researcher's interpretation of the data collection and analysis process is a particularly important component of the process of establishing trustworthiness of the data in this particular study (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Merriam, 2009). My racial and ethnic identity, my own ongoing antiracist ideological commitment development journey that began in my youth and continues to this day, and my professional and academic connections and to the research topic, the setting, and research participants are important aspects to describe.

It is important to address my racial and ethnic identity, as it, in part, led to my motivation for inquiry. My paternal family came from Mexico to the U.S. and consciously and unconsciously set to work in assimilating as quickly and seamlessly into the culture of Whiteness in manner, language, and education. They did not actively maintain heritage Spanish with their children (my father) and anglicized their names for use in public settings, as was customary at that time. My maternal family was White, with some immigrants from France within two generations. Both sides of my family sought to assimilate into Whiteness in ways that they could. My French maternal grandmother "Marie" became "Mary," and my paternal Mexican grandfather "Alberto" was known as "Al" and so forth. That said, deep messages regarding the values of my grandparents' heritage cultures permeated many aspects of our family and despite

efforts towards racial and ethnic assimilation, none were able to escape the impact of how race is constructed and what race means in the U.S.

I grew up somewhat as an ethnic mystery to myself, a Spanish name coupled with White-body supremacy (Menakem, 2017). I moved through the world as a White Latina, punctuated by reminders that I was not “all the way” White, with macro and microaggressions from both my White friends and friends of color that stemmed from my mixed ethnic origins. I experience mixed racial messages with enough frequency and part of my earliest memories, so that I was consciously aware of the construct of race and ethnicity from a very young age. This consciousness would be something that would captivate me as a salient feature of my own White (Latina) racial and ethnic identity development, and I would continue to explore race and culture for my entire personal, academic, and professional life. It was a riddle that I could not solve in my youth and served to tease me as I attempted to make sense of, without guidance, during my K-12 education. I have experienced myself as being the kind of biethnic that has not neatly “fit,” and I feel that having this perspective has made me a natural, informal ethnographer as I have moved through my life.

My curiosity about racial identity development informed my choice of undergraduate studies. After majoring in bilingual education, with an emphasis in child development and minoring in Spanish, I became credentialed to teach bilingual and multicultural education in K-6 as well as the single subject of Spanish in grades 7-12. My master’s thesis explored bridging the cultural and linguistic gap between White teachers working with primary students of color in Oakland Unified School District, Oakland, California.

After earning my master’s degree, I began my teaching career abroad and taught several years through international teaching contracts in Thailand, Japan, and Costa Rica. It was this

moving and living outside the United States for nearly a decade and my subsequent homecoming to teach in an elementary school in Davis, California that created the conditions to spark a deep interest in the way that race mediates experiences within the context of U.S. educational settings that ultimately led me to this study. My homecoming made clear that whereas in the U.S. I am a seen as a White woman with a Spanish name, abroad I consistently became a plain old “White American woman.” Moving between cultures heightened my understanding of the complexities and the arbitrary construction of race and ethnicity as my racial experience shifted dramatically depending on my social and geolocation.

When I accepted that elementary teaching position at Marguerite Montgomery Elementary School (MME) in South Davis, California, it was one of the two elementary schools (MME and Pioneer Elementary) in South Davis I would work at during my 11 years in the district, 2007-2018. I chose to initially teach at MME for a variety of reasons. In 2007, MME was unique in the district. It was one of two elementary schools in South Davis, with Interstate 80 dividing the area from the rest of Davis. Of the two schools on the south side of town, one (Pioneer Elementary, the second school in which I worked) was one of the most affluent at the time and, in stark juxtaposition, MME (the first school) was the least affluent in the district, while also with the most students of color and English language learners. Pioneer Elementary was walking distance away and spoken about as the “rich, White school with the GATE program and PTA that raked in tens of thousands of dollars each year.” Montgomery was considered by many as the less desirable school, in program improvement (PI), with the highest concentration of English language learners, poverty, and students of color in the district. MME housed a small but growing Spanish Immersion program at that time in grades K-3, as well as what was called a “traditional program” in which the curriculum was taught in English.

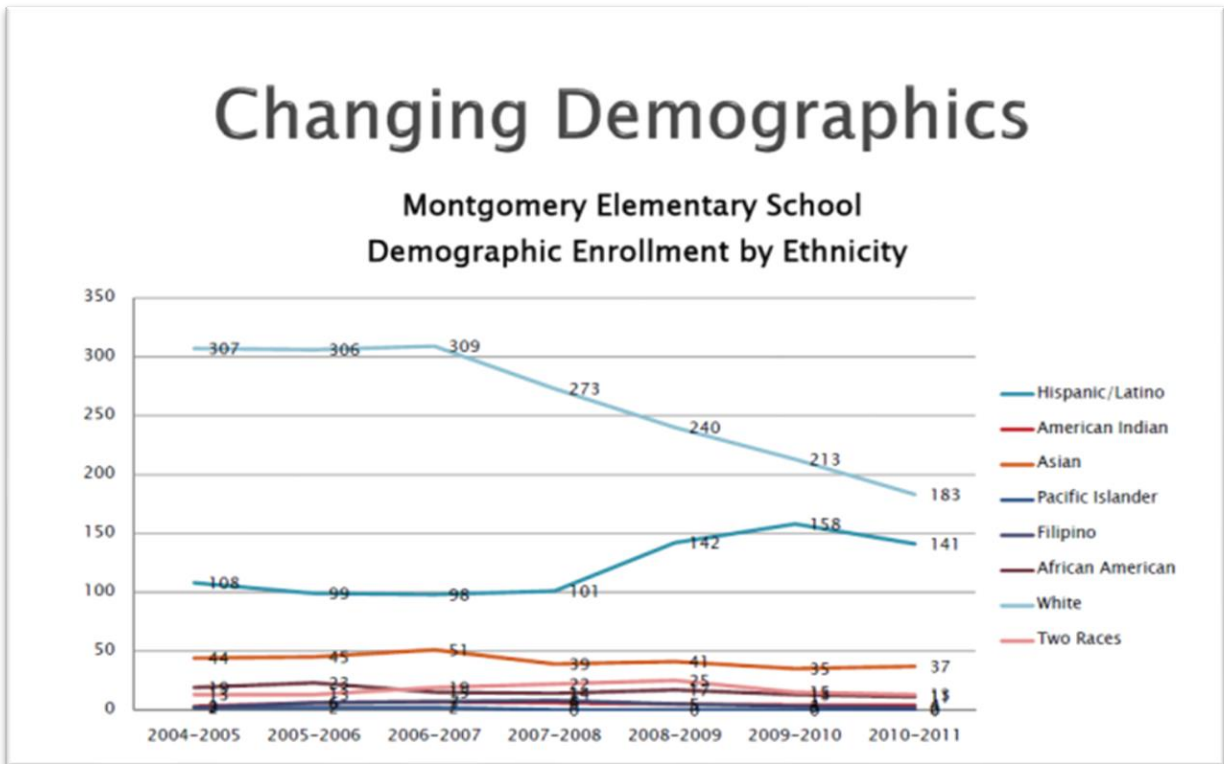
I taught at MME for the next seven years, during which time a mass exodus of White families moved from MME to other schools in the district (often nearby Pioneer Elementary). This movement made the demographic inequities between the two elementary schools in South Davis even more stark. So stark, that the traditional track at MME eventually became under enrolled overall and the district began to respond to public pressures to make moves to restructure the school. Because MME had fallen into PI during this time, parents had the right under No Child Left Behind to utilize the district's existing open enrollment process to transfer to another school that was not in PI. They needed no other reason besides the PI status to move, but when asked, reasons most often shared with teachers by departing MME families were "we want a better school" with "less stressed teachers and less behavioral problems" and "my child doesn't have enough students like them; they all speak Spanish. There is no peer group." All racially coded language for the phenomenon known as "White flight." Board Member Madhavi Sunder acknowledged at the time, "We have been failing these children [Hispanic/Latino] in the school district." She criticized:

> The structure that has left these classrooms segregated. It's because we had White flight out of this (school). We had people choosing to leave a (school) that was racially heterogeneous and socio-economically heterogeneous. They were all put together and we had people opting out.

Thirty-eight percent of the families zoned into that school opt to go to another school. However, on the other hand, "the two-way bilingual immersion (TWBI) attracts people to come to the school, 49% of the MME population come to the TWBI from other neighborhoods" (Hudson, 2018, p.1; see Figure 7).

Figure 7

Changing Demographics in Study School



Note. From "White Flight? Changing Demographics and Achievement Gap Highlights Critical Issues at Montgomery," by J. Hudson, March 17, 2018, para. 8, https://www.davisvanguard.org/2012/03/white-flight-changing-demographics-and-achievement-gap-highlights-critical-issues-at-montgomery/

Figure 7 demonstrates both the influx of what the district defines as Latino students and the flight of White students. What we see is that while White students' enrollment has declined, there has been a near 50% rise in the district-defined Latino enrollment at MME (Hudson, 2012).

During this time, the enrolment issue was contentiously explored by the Davis community through the DJUSD South Davis Enrollment Committee. Among the many options popular with the MME community, was merging the two South Davis school populations through the creation of one K-3 school and another 4-6 school, each housed at what would be (the former) Pioneer and MME schools, thereby mixing all of the students in South Davis.

Underscoring the racialized nature of the White flight problem, during a large, well-documented community town hall discussing the findings of the committee, the president of the Pioneer PTA suggested that a poll of Pioneer parents showed only 11% support of the idea of merging and splitting by grade, while 65% would consider leaving the school if that were the solution (Hudson, 2012). I personally attended this meeting and heard firsthand the resistance from both Pioneer staff and families about merging the two student populations in this way. One Pioneer community member came to the floor to publicly apologize for the agitation that they caused by passing out flyers in South Davis that stated that real estate prices near Pioneer would fall due to the mixing of the students in the two South Davis schools.

My time at MME coincided neatly with this period of White flight and transition to a TWBI schoolwide program as a solution. Overall, during my time at MME, the enrollment at has declined from a high of 508 in 2006-07, the year of my arrival to Davis and when I began to teach at MME (2017), to a low 407 in 2010-11, the last year I taught at MME before transferring to a position at Pioneer Elementary. MME's transformation to becoming a fully TWBI school in the hopes that it would heal and balance the community was hurtful to me, as it seemed like a clever transformation to mask a deeper problem- the districts inability or unwillingness to address White supremacy more directly. Traditional track teachers were transferred to other schools at this time, and I left in part because I was choosing to tandem teacher and share a classroom with a teacher who did not have bilingual certification.

I also chose to move to Pioneer at this time out of a gnawing sensation that my perspective on how to work for racial justice in the school system was missing something, some experience. I felt that I was participating in racial identity development bypassing by avoiding racial justice teaching with White students. Why did I feel so alone and lost when considering

doing racial justice teaching in a predominantly White school? I wanted to better integrate White people into my overall schema for racial justice, and what was the responsibility of White people, including myself as a White Latina, to work for a racially just world. This was punctuated my becoming a first-time parent. I had recently become the proud mother of a White son through adoption. My son's birth stirred the same nagging feelings. I looked into his green eyes and realized that I did not want to raise a White male who would be unaware, unmotivated, or unskilled in dismantling the ways he would perpetually benefit from White supremacy. Considering this, the choice to move to Pioneer felt like an opportunity to expand my thinking about how I understood and approached my work by using my training to work directly with people from more racially privileged groups. I wanted to be an informal ethnographer at Pioneer, and autoethnographer of my own racialized experience, to understand and grow through praxis, and take a good look at the "White side" of racial justice work within the school system.

I taught at Pioneer Elementary from 2014-2018. During this time, I experienced firsthand "the other side of the same coin" in that I realized how very racially connected the disparate communities of MME and Pioneer were, from a teacher's perspective. I heard countless staff members, parents, and students express their racialized values about Pioneer and MME. I expressed my own. I experienced the ways in which the curriculum particularly supported the centering of Whiteness for White students and how powerful the social pressure was to not speak up in the face of racialized school traditions, attitudes, and beliefs about students. I learned to appreciate in a personal way how racism is a very much a problem for White people to solve within the White community. I made mistakes. I felt the trauma associated with both my role of the oppressor as a White person and also of the oppressed as a Latina. In this school, I felt the social fear that keeps a White person complicit in perpetuating racism. At this point, I more

deeply understood what Janet Helms, racial identity scholar meant when she said, “For racism to disappear in the United States, White people must take the responsibility for ending it” (Helms, 2020, p. xiii). So, in teaching at Pioneer, I stayed, listened, watched, cried, and learned for four years about what is means to think and teach and reflect on Whiteness as a mediator for social interactions in school. And when my child was old enough to attend kindergarten, I enrolled him there, where he stayed, and I watched and continued to listen, watch, cry, and learn until I left to teach in higher education and begin my doctoral program. I have personal experience with many of the topics explored in this study.

I no longer teach in DJUSD, but my 11 years as an elementary school teacher in the district at both MME and Pioneer allowed me to move from an outsider to an insider perspective in a variety of settings (Hatch, 2002). I took on leadership roles within my school sites and participated in committees, attended public meetings, and eventually enrolled my own child at one of the schools where I was teaching. The intersection of my identity and my own beliefs about the purpose of public education gave life to my role as a researcher and how I approached this particular study. My positionality is not defined by one aspect of who I am personally or professionally, but rather by the lifelong connections that I make through the intersecting facets of my own identity as a student, teacher, parent, and researcher. My wish is to convey a similar complexity for the White participants in this study.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity is the process by which researchers position themselves by conveying (in a methods section, introduction, or in other places in a study) their background (work experiences, cultural experiences, history), how it informs their interpretation of the information in a study and what they have to gain from the study (Creswell & Poth 2018). This reflective process is

important in qualitative research as the researcher is human, with a positionality, and the primary instrument and cannot be objective (Hatch, 2002; Kleinsasser, 2000). Because I was a former participant in the community that I intend to study, I maintained comprehensive field notes and analytical memos that included researcher comments in brackets. My role as a former elementary teacher in the district had the potential to interfere with my ability to create a trustworthy study, yet I had practices in place that allowed me to reflect on my role as researcher and explicitly state my positionality as it interacts with my analysis.

Conclusion

By using a qualitative methodology, this study explored the experiences White elementary educators committed to racial justice and teaching in White educational spaces and the ongoing development their White antiracist ideological commitments. The consumer of this research will better understand the role that these ideological commitments play in White teachers' approaches to racial justice when teaching White students and have a better picture of the kinds of experiences and supports that will assist White teachers in their thinking about their work through an antiracist lens.

Chapter 5

PARTICIPANT VIGNETTES

Introduction

This chapter presents brief participant vignettes built from the data collection. The participant vignettes are descriptions illustrating each participant's K-12 and teacher education racialized developmental experiences, their approaches to racial justice teaching, as well as their views on their own ongoing antiracist ideological commitment development. These vignettes provide a snapshot of each teacher's lived experience and chronicle their complex and nuanced experiences with Whiteness. Vignettes have been through the member-check process with research participants and pseudonyms have been assigned to protect the identity of participants. In the following chapter, key findings with the findings from interviews are discussed within the context of my research questions and theoretical framework.

Yvonne

Yvonne is a veteran DJUSD elementary teacher who identifies as White, White-passing, and also is part Filipina. She is perceived by others as White, particularly due to her surname of European origin. Yvonne spent her K-12 years growing up in a predominantly White Californian community, in what she described as a "rural area on the outskirts of a small town, my parents were able to build a house on half an acre. I took the school bus to a predominantly white school." She had experiences of what she now understands as colorism (her mother would say that she is fair and "golden" to affirm Yvonne's proximity to Whiteness) due to her mixed racial ancestry within her family system but explains that she did not understand these experiences well until she herself was an adult. When Yvonne moved to San Francisco for her teacher education program and subsequently began her elementary teaching career, she described the experience as

a racial and social "exposure therapy" of sorts as she lived for nearly two decades in a San Francisco neighborhood in which she found herself in the racial and ethnic minority for the first time in her life. This is the setting in which she said she began her journey of personally understanding race, racism, and her Whiteness within the context of school and first entered what Helms (1995) described statuses four through six of White identity development: disintegration, immersion-emersion, and autonomy. Yvonne described the experience of eventually moving to a less diverse setting, Davis, with her school-aged child as a kind of "culture shock" as she had not yet taught in predominantly White schools. Helms (2020) compared White identity development to the of the Sojourner experience and how one adapts to a new culture and Yvonne's experience with Davis reflects this description. Yvonne's (now adult) child is biethnic (White/Latina), and between Yvonne's teaching experiences in Davis and empathizing with her child's racialized experience in the same Davis schools, has developed a keen sense of her own Whiteness as a teacher engaged on the path of her own antiracist development. Yvonne independently and actively seeks out professional development opportunities for accountability and growth, including multi-day webinars, book clubs, and affinity groups as she continues to teach in a Davis elementary school. She uses multicultural teaching as praxis for her continued racial learning and is an advocate and activist in the community at large.

Renee

Renee is a mid-career elementary teacher who identifies as White and "had a very, very White, liberal upbringing. I knew there was racial injustice, and I knew it was wrong. But in my head, it was more like it wasn't something that we were *all* doing." Renee had "always lived in a White bubble, raised in another White town and now lives in Davis." Renee considered herself a "history buff" but it was not until after the outcry for racial justice in the wake of the murder of

George Floyd in 2020 when she independently found and chose to attend a multi-day antiracism online seminar for educators that reframed what was what she thought was familiar history in terms of race and power that proved to be her access point for "transformational" White racial identity development. Since that time, Renee had engaged in extensive reading on racism, power, and continues to be deeply engaged in her own racial (re)education. She had critically examined the role Whiteness plays in her personal life and to diversify her social world and decenter Whiteness, for example by reading books by educational leaders of color, following BIPOC educators on social media, and finding way to advocate for racial representation within her school district through policy and programmatic changes. Her racial identity growth has changed the way that she approaches teaching all subjects, thinks about the meaning of her interactions with colleagues, and views her role as White teacher working in a classroom in Davis. Renee designs her curriculum and pedagogy to serve as an antiracist zone of proximal development in a variety of ways that she explains during her interview (Leonardo & Manning, 2017).

Djuna

Djuna had taught in Davis since 2015 at two elementary sites, after nearly a decade of previous teaching experience outside of the area. She works as an inclusion specialist, thus spends time teaching both outside and inside many general education classes at the elementary level each year. Djuna works with students and collaborates with educators and support staff that span the elementary grades. Djuna herself went to school "in predominantly white schools and spaces" She did not recall having had a teacher of color until college. Despite living in a predominantly White social world, Djuna's critical consciousness around her racialized identity began early, in part because her best friend during her formative years was a person of color and her empathy development as "her mother was like a second mother to me." An early memory of

the confrontations between Whiteness, racism, power, and privilege began in adolescence with a critical incident in which she witnessed her friend being called a racial slur, which was "a defining moment" for her. Djuna still thinks about this moment as a touchpoint today, as she "didn't say anything . . . didn't do anything" but watch her best friend cry. Djuna was confronted with overt racism multiple times in her K-12 experience in a variety of ways due to her friendships with people of color. Djuna earned her teaching credential and MA degree in a predominantly White town and reported that her teacher education around race was limited and superficial, despite coming from an institution that had a robust Ethnic Studies program. Djuna credits much of the organization of her thinking around race to her undergraduate higher education, through coursework in her Women's Studies major and her involvement in a student group called the Student Commission on Racial Equality. After nearly a decade of prior teaching experience, Djuna has worked at two elementary school sites in Davis over 6 years and finds that the collaborative nature of her work as an inclusion specialist provides many opportunities for reflection around educational programs and policies that center Whiteness, in addition to the ways in which teachers collaborate with one another in their thinking about students and the process of teaching itself.

Jamie

Jamie has been teaching for six years, the last three at two elementary school sites in Davis. Jamie "went to school with predominantly white students" and her earliest memory of learning about race was "in first grade, learning about Martin Luther King and it was such a bizarre experience" as she and a classmate tried to make sense of their Whiteness, with her friend ultimately "slapping her own White hand saying oh we are so bad and mean." Jamie credits her racial justice teaching philosophy to her experience at a justice-minded university, where she was

surprised to realize how her K-12 experience "did not teach her" well about race and racism. In her own work, Jamie has collaborated with a school site colleague in the creation of subject matter curriculum units designed through the lens of racial justice. In response to the 2020 racial justice uprisings in the wake of the murder of George Floyd, Jamie chose to "spend to last year trying to educate myself about how racism is systemic and how it affects everything all the time." Jamie is deeply engaged in developing her racial literacy through the reading of several books, by joining a district led book club on a text about racism, and independently working through a self-guided workbook designed to guide her to explore her complicity with White supremacy. Jamie reflects regularly on classroom and school climate through a racial lens, the ways Whiteness impacts disparate discipline outcomes with her students, and ways in which she can seek support as an early career teacher as she develops her antiracist thinking around her teaching in a predominantly White school.

Ellen

Ellen had taught for 7 years at two elementary sites in Davis. Ellen grew up in a predominantly White suburb outside Detroit, Michigan, and attended K-12, higher education, and completed her teacher education in the region. She also taught in Oakland, California, for 1 year before moving to Davis, which she stated was "the most diverse environment" in which she had yet to teach. Her prior educational and teaching experiences in Detroit "were like 90% Latino, a little bit of White, a little bit African-American, a little bit of Middle Eastern so not very diverse, either." Ellen describes Davis as a "bubble and people are in shock and awe when something bad happens in this safe, happy community that is mostly White." Ellen credits the combination of her life experiences and the influence of her father, who was involved with union work, to have instilled her ethic of community and care in her approach to teaching. Ellen framed

her current thinking about her curriculum as “culturally-relevant as opposed to what would be considered ethnic studies.” Ellen develops her own curriculum, as well, and reframes her pedagogy to challenge and disrupt White supremacy rather than perpetuate it. Ellen is an active collaborator on issue of justice at her site and participates and leads district-level professional development in order to examine the ideologies surrounding social justice and the ways in which teachers can develop a lens in order to critically analyze and support changes in their practice.

Ann

Ann is a veteran teacher of over 15 years in the district who has held several instructional positions at several elementary sites, including classroom teacher, reading specialist, and coach. Her various roles within the district gives her a broad perspective on the educational community. Ann provided retrospective details about the district and its history as both an educator and a parent of children who have passed through the district. Ann grew up in predominantly White rural town on the east coast where she attended the majority of her K-12 educational experience. The closest neighbors to her home were black and Ann first noticed racial similarities and differences at this time, though often her parents “explained most racial disparity through an economic lens.” In high school, her family moved to Japan, where she experienced racial identity development through culture shock that Helms (2021) would describe as similar to the “sojourner experience.” Various critical incidents in Japan sparked deep empathy for racial and ethnic marginalization for Ann as she experienced the feeling of being an outsider in a deep and sustained way in Japan. Ann earned her credential and master’s degree in northern California and describes the shifts in thinking she has made since beginning her teaching in Davis as moving from an initial understanding of her role as a teacher who focused the individual students to thinking more broadly about structural racism in that she was:

> White, middle class, educated, and I understood the power structure, that leads to people being successful. So, I kind of thought that my job was to help these kids that maybe didn't have access to that, how they could navigate that power structure and be successful. And I think over time, the biggest shift has been, no, we don't need to fit them into the power structure, we need to change the structure to be more inclusive.

Ann actively spends much engaging in culturally responsive pedagogy and critically analysis of her personal role and the role of education in order to work toward dismantling multiple forms of oppression. Ann participates in educational community engagement, including guiding book clubs for district educators on racial justice and leading professional development on curriculum, pedagogy and research that supports culturally responsive teaching.

Summary of Participant Vignettes

This qualitative study consisted of semi-structured interviews with six White elementary educators currently working in Davis, California to better understand the complex experiences of White teacher antiracist ideological commitment development that is currently occurring in predominantly White elementary schools. In addition to identifying as White, these teachers are also diverse members of the DJUSD teaching community representing multiple intersecting, nuanced, social identities. The vignettes provide a brief snapshot of each teacher's White racial identity development in the educational experience of their youth and the role these antiracist ideological commitments play in their approaches their work. From the interviews from which these vignettes are drawn, I identified four key themes which are explored through my research questions and the lenses of my theoretical frameworks in the following chapter.

Chapter 6

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

This chapter presents key findings and analysis discussed through my research questions and Helms' White racial identity development (1990, 2020), Leonardo and Manning's (2017) WZPD theoretical frameworks using antiracism terminology derived from Ibram Kendi (2019). The study used six 90-minute semi-structured individual interviews along with follow-up member check interviews to understand the antiracist ideological commitment development of White elementary teachers and the role that these commitments play in their approaches to teaching in settings with predominantly White students through the following research questions:

1. How do elementary educators who are racialized as White and committed to racial justice, teaching in schools with predominantly White students, characterize their racial identity development and antiracist ideological commitments?
2. What role do these antiracist ideological commitments play in their approaches to racial justice teaching with White students?
3. What policy, programmatic, and institutional influences do these teachers identify as meaningful and supportive as they continue to develop their antiracist ideological commitments?

This chapter describes four major themes that emerged from teacher participant interviews.

Overview of Emergent Themes

Analysis of the teacher-participant interviews revealed four emerging themes in the areas of how these teachers characterized their racial identity development, the role that their antiracist commitment development plays in their approaches to racial justice teaching with White

students, and the policy, programmatic, and institutional supports that they considered would be meaningful as they continue to develop their antiracist ideological commitments. The first theme, sense-making of White racial identity, describes the ways the White teacher participants experienced the process of coming to understand their racialized experience as a White person through their formative years in K-12 education and beyond that would eventually develop into an antiracist ideological commitment. The second theme, embodying a commitment to antiracism, illustrates the ways in which White teacher participants actively learn, model, and sustain antiracist practices. The third theme, teaching as antiracist praxis, details the role reflexivity around one's own racism plays as White teachers guide curriculum and facilitate antiracist thinking in the classroom. The fourth theme, addressing White racialized trauma, outlines the ways White teachers imagine possibilities in the areas of professional development, affinity groups, and therapy as supportive to their continued antiracist ideological commitment development as part of the educational community.

Theme 1: Sense-Making of White Racial Identity

During the semi-structured interviews, teacher-participants were asked to describe their lives with a focus on what they perceived as salient experiences in their White racial identity development that informed their antiracist journeys. The six interviews revealed that the participants framed their initial understandings of their own racialized understanding of being White in juxtaposition to contact experiences with friends or community members who were BIPOC. Their experiences associated with increased awareness or "discovery" of the existence of, and racialized meanings associated with, BIPOC triggered a racial disequilibrium that disrupted their current schema of White normativity. Interviewees detailed personal experiences, curricular experiences in K-12, higher education, and teacher education years that served to

either disrupt -or maintain- their sense of White normativity. Interviewees also described the ways in which their racialized experiences were informed by their ongoing development of perspective-taking and empathy, as either supportive or alternatively as a form or racial bypassing, what Helms (2020) would describe as the Reintegration status. Teacher-participants shared how their ability and willingness to have empathy and see the world through other perspectives contributed (or inhibited) their understanding of the racialized critical incidents in their lives through which they came to learn about racism itself. An example of an early contact experience was illustrated by Jamie.

> In my K-8 experience, I went to school with predominantly White students. I remember specifically the first time I learned about race in first grade [age six], learning about Martin Luther King Jr. and it was such a bizarre experience. I remember a friend of mine slapping her White hand and being like, "Oh, you know, it's so bad, we were so bad and so mean."

Interviewees had multiple racialized contact experiences that culminated in a disintegration (and sometimes) reintegration of their White-centric schemas around race in their lives (Helms, 2020). Sometimes a lack of understanding of systemic racism, coupled with a high social value placed on developing empathy and perspective-taking obscured interpersonal racism and caused confusion, articulated by Renee.

> I've always lived in a very White bubble. I was raised in Sunnyvale in the '70s and the '80s, and then I lived in a nice, affluent part of San Diego, and now I live in Davis. You know what I mean? So, I had a very White bubble, but being very kind, nice and polite. I thought I wasn't part of the problem . . . [and now to] all of a sudden, be 47 and be like, "Oh my God, I'm racist. Shit."

These stories of contact with BIPOC through everyday life, curriculum, and critical incidents exemplify how teacher-participants believe that contact with BIPOC can lead to the recognition that being White has definite social implications aligns with research on White racial identity development (Helms, 1990, 2020).

Experiences with BIPOC

Of the six White teacher participants, each described their experiences making contact, or not, with BIPOC at various ages and the variety of ways in which this contact informed their understanding of their own racialized experiences as a White person in a society that maintains Whiteness as the dominant culture. Djuna's comment exemplifies how all interviewees experienced as a lack of contact with BIPOC teachers in educational settings during their K-12 experience:

> I went to school in predominantly White schools and spaces. I don't think I even had a teacher of color until I went to college. Most of my memory around race stuff starts like junior high, high school, because I think my consciousness around it was starting to develop a lot more then.

All but one study participant also experienced a K-12 environment that consisted of a student body that was also predominantly White. This educational experience of compounded Whiteness was perceived by interviewees to make relationships and interactions with BIPOC as more unique and memorable as racialized experiences, rather than the experiences that fell within the racially invisible, everyday White norm, which they failed to recognize as a racialized experience as well. The exception was Ellen, who grew up in a suburb outside of Detroit and had the outlying experience, in that she moved from a K-8 setting that was initially a more diverse educational environment, to a less diverse high school later that highlighted her Whiteness:

> The Catholic school [in Detroit] that I was at was crazy diverse. You had African Americans, you had Latinos, kids that were mixed race, White kids. It was just everybody. And I just thought that is the way that all schools were...kindergarten through eighth grade. Then when I went to high school, I chose my local public high school and my public high school was 85% White, and I was like, “Woah, there's a whole lot of White people here." Blacks hung out with Blacks. Latinos hung out with Latinos… and if I tried to bridge that or hang out, I was met very a cold, "What are you trying to do?" And I didn't understand that because my experience for the last nine years was, if you don't like somebody, it's because you don't like that person. It wasn't because of how they looked. And so that was kind of my first experience with race being an issue between friends.

At various time in their lives, teacher-participants experienced contact and relationships with BIPOC and explained that though this exposure they began to slowly make sense of race. For Yvonne, it was eventually moving away from her K-12 environment and moving to a diverse city for her teacher education program and experiencing her first teaching job:

> I moved to San Francisco. I was there for 19 years. And that's where I think, other than growing up with my grandparents and all of that, being in San Francisco, I was surrounded by a diverse city. My daughter called it exposure therapy.

Contact and experiences with BIPOC were reported to lead to an increased understanding of race, and what began as an understanding of the “other” that eventually began to signal to study participants that they, also, were having a racialized experience as White.

White Identity Development as Culture Shock

Several participants spoke about part of their White identity development as culture shock. According to Helms (2020), the stories people tell about statuses one through three of the White racial identity development model can sound very much like how one adjusts to moving to another country where one is unfamiliar with the culture, and how one adapts to a new culture because the social schema that was understood as true has been upended. Moving from the state of not being consciously White and assuming that one is raceless as part of the dominant culture and then moving to a more nuanced understanding of Whiteness is described as putting on a new pair of eyeglasses, and so when one's eyeglasses work to see Whiteness along with the ability to understand the dynamics of race and how race intersex with Whiteness, previously mundane racial understandings can feel shocking (Helms, 2021). Ann experienced her Whiteness as an actual component of culture shock when her family moved to Japan during her adolescence:

> So, I had left my little town and I had gone to Japan, which was really weird because then I was in the minority, right? Suddenly, I had all these people looking at me and like kind of making judgments based on what I looked like. I did have that experience of being an outsider. It's not exactly the same [as being marginalized in the United States] . . . but I was then continually aware of being White.

This description of White racial culture shock aligns with what is called Sojourner's experience of culture shock (Helms, 2021). Various critical incidents in Japan sparked deeper empathy for the racial and ethnic marginalization that BIPOC experience in the United States as Ann she experienced the feeling of being an outsider in a sustained way in Japan. Yvonne also experienced Whiteness as culture shock, in another way, when she moved from a more diverse San Francisco school community to a less diverse school community in Davis:

> I was in culture shock for five straight up years. And I remember walking into the MPR [multipurpose room] and I had not seen that many White people in one place in twenty years. So, I was in culture shock.

Interviewees described their growing understanding of what it means to be racialized as White in the United States initially as confusion that led to noticing both positive and negative things about being White that they never noticed before (Helms, 2020). This confusion occurs when a White person consciously acknowledges that they are White and what it means to be a part of the dominant culture of White supremacy (Helms, 2020). Renee explained part of her journey:

> Not only is our society White-centered, but I identify with that, so I just never noticed it. And then, I ran into this seminar that I'd stumbled upon through Instagram that was called "Be About It", and it was about being an antiracist teacher. It was a three-day online seminar, and it was put together by two White teachers in Georgia, but all of the presenters were Black, and it just completely changed everything. Just every single thing. It was like being shattered down and having to build everything back up again.

For these teachers who would develop antiracist ideological commitments, this experience of White racial identity development as culture shock sometimes served to provide the critical incident that sparked their antiracist journeys.

Critical Incidents

Used in qualitative methods, the term "critical incident" refers to an event or situation that marks a significant turning point or change in a person's life (Miles & Huberman, 1984). These turning points can occur in one's childhood or adulthood, including the commonplace events that occur in the everyday life of a classroom (Tripp, 1993). For the purpose of this study,

critical incidents were further defined as experiences in which study participants' existing racial schemas were put into disequilibrium and necessitated growth and an expanding paradigm shift. Helms would describe these racialized moments as when the disintegration status moves into a moral consciousness awakening and into the higher statuses [four through six] (Helms, 2020). Djuna details a critical incident that marked a turning point in her White racial identity development in which she eventually came to realize how her inaction was an example of complicity with racism, specifically passive non-racism, and left her with a desire to better understand herself and do better (Kendi, 2019; Tatum, 2007).

> I witnessed one of my best childhood friends [biracial Vietnamese/European-American] be called a racial slur. To me, that was a very defining moment. I stood there and watched it. I didn't say anything, and she was crying. I didn't know what to do. I just think it was the first time I heard that word, but I knew what it meant right away, and I knew what was happening right away. And then she kinda wanted to move on from it and glossed over it, which is fair enough, it is survival skills for her, but that was a defining moment for me. I still think about it sometimes. I didn't say anything. I didn't do anything.

Race scholar Beverly Tatum defined this kind of inaction as passive racism and uses the metaphor of a moving walkway (people mover) at the airport to describe it as one type of reaction an individual can have to systemic racism (Tatum, 2007). Walking forward with the flow of traffic on an airport moving walkway could be compared to overt, active, personal-level racism. The walkway (systemic racism) moves forward, and the individual moves forward faster still, by walking in the same direction. Passive (or non-racist) racist behavior could be compared to standing still on the walkway and just letting it (systemic racism) roll and carry you along with

the flow. One may not be actively moving one's legs but is still being carried forward. Tatum (2007) equated racial silence and inaction, however innocent, while standing still on the moving walkway and is still racism. Antiracist behavior involves actually turning against the direction of the airport conveyor belt people-mover and walking against the flow (Kendi, 2019; Tatum, 2007). For several of the White teacher study participants, this new understanding of passive, non-racism, along with systemic racism, happened in the summer of 2020 as a result of the racial justice uprisings that followed the murder of George Floyd. Jamie explained:

> What happened for me, what happened for a lot of people, was when the Black Lives Matter movement blew up [in 2020], there were a lot of resources at the forefront, you know, things that my friends were posting on social media. And I like to read books, so I got some books and read some books. And I spent a lot of time reflecting on what I read in those books, in particular in relation to my teaching because I feel like that's my platform as a human.

Study participants reported that at a certain point in their antiracist journey they began to value the recognition of these naturally occurring racial critical incidents as a means to prompt their own reflexivity around their own racism, as explored later in this chapter. Working towards the elimination of racial oppression via one's own self and environmental examination is a strong characteristic of the Autonomy status (Helms, 2020).

Curriculum

Teacher-participants also chose to frame their White racial identity development that led them to making antiracist ideological commitments in terms of more formal learning, often in the form of curriculum. Direct, explicit curriculum rarely occurred for any of the six participants

within their K-12 experiences, so this formal learning about race and racism began for all in higher education settings and beyond, as Jamie described:

> I went to Mills [college] and it's a big social justice school, and then just hearing about all these issues that people are talking about and having a lot of women of color in my classes talking about their experiences sort of threw me a little bit because I had that narrative growing up of racism was a thing that happened in the '60s. And so that kind of hit me in college, and then this whole last year [post-racial justice uprising of 2020] of trying to educate myself about how racism is systemic and how it affects everything all the time.

In higher education, including teacher education, there has been a history of relying on “one-shot” diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) course that explicitly cover issues related to race in the span of one semester or quarter course (Amos, 2011; Winans, 2010). Despite an abundance of literature that supports guided long-term, continued, embedded engagement around perspective-taking, empathy, and the framing of racial literacy in terms of a moral responsibility for White adults working with children in educational settings, this “one shot” approach to DEI persists in many teacher education programs, and was in place when many current teachers in the field experienced their teacher training, including the teachers in this study (Amos, 2011; Winans, 2010). Djuna shared:

> We took one [diversity, equity, and inclusion] class early on… that involved some what I would consider watered-down experiential exercises around race, class, sexual orientation, and culture and ethnicity that did talk about White privilege. I remember that specifically because I had to take it with people in my credential program that were very confronted by that dynamic, and I felt like, "Oh, we're barely even starting a

conversation." And people would say things like, "I'm so tired of feeling bad for being White," in my credential program. I don't feel like it went very far. I do feel like it started conversations, but it was one class in a quarter system.

One study participant's comment reflects representative thinking around the absence of elementary-level guided learning experiences designed to address race and racism. Jamie described:

> I've been really reflecting a lot on how my K-12 experience did not teach me any of that. So, I think how I got here now is, isn't so much that anything happened, or what happened in my formative years is what *didn't* happen . . . What I didn't learn and then being twenty-eight years-old now and realizing that there's a lot more to this than I realized, I wish that I had learned more in school, and so that influenced where I'm coming from now as a teacher.

Most study participants recall an absence of direct, centered, and guided K-12 learning experiences that addressed race in any way outside of lessons experienced during extra Black History Month lessons. At the elementary level, there remains surprisingly little research that has led to adopted curriculum, for instance Ethnic Studies curriculum (Sleeter & Zavala, 2020). Because of this scarcity, White elementary teacher study participants spoke at length of the challenges of finding, creating, and delivering developmentally appropriate antiracist curriculum in their own elementary classrooms, discussed later in this chapter.

Empathy Development

All six study participants described the ways in which their racialized experiences were informed by their ongoing development of perspective-taking and empathy, as either supportive or alternatively as a form or racial bypassing, what Helms (2020) would describe as the

Reintegration status. Teacher-participants shared how their ability to have empathy and see the world through other perspectives contributed (or lack thereof inhibited) their understanding of the racialized critical incidents in their lives through which they came to learn about racism itself. Ann began by sharing an experience from her time in university:

> West Philadelphia had a pretty large homeless population at that time. I don't know how, but I kind of befriended this, this [homeless] gentleman. He was a very tall, Black guy, and I used to see him out and about. First, I just always started to talk to him, but then like we started to have lunch sometimes, so mostly because he was really hungry at times, but I would sit with him and talk to him. And people thought that was really weird. They didn't understand why I would do that. I don't know, I found him really interesting, and he had some like funny stories, and he was just so happy to have somebody I think just talk to him, because he was used to being kind of invisible on the street, and he'd obviously had a really rough time. I remember one time we had lunch and he had this gash on his finger. And, there were two things about it, one, there was no way for him to get care for this gash, and two, the skin that was exposed was very pink, it wasn't black at all. It was pink. And I remember being struck by that. I still remember that cut on his hand.

Teachers also reflected on the prominence and pervasiveness of social emotional learning (SEL) curriculum designed to promote kindness and reduce relational aggression in the district, such as colorblind anti-bullying campaigns within their predominantly elementary White schools. Study participants began to view this kind of guided SEL curriculum as important, but when lacking important connections to justice, in particular, racial justice, served as a way to avoid talking directly about racism. Renee shares a connection that she made about elementary-

level kindness curriculum as potentially serving a role in avoiding conversations about the impact of racism during an antiracist seminar in 2020, “Someone in that seminar was like, "Get rid of those posters in your room that says, 'Throw kindness around like confetti,' they're like, ‘Get that out of your room’ because you want to say, 'Throw justice around like confetti.’”

Renee continued to share how she hoped to begin to bridge the connection between kindness and racial justice for her elementary students in order to give them a foundational understanding upon which could be a scaffold for deeper understandings later in life:

> I also would hope that as they move through the school system and get older, and are able to have deeper conversations, you know, it'll just build and that, then they'll go out into the world and be advocates for social justice, instead of being the way I was, which was being just nice. I would never do anything mean. But I wasn't doing anything to help or change anything about racism.

All participants shared stories of how their ability to take the perspective of another person and acknowledge the humanity of themselves and others served to enhance their eventual antiracist ideological commitments. All teachers described this experience in developmental terms that were scaffolded as they grew, exemplified by Djuna, who describes her university experience:

> I became a student activist, and I also came out in college . . . I was part of a student group called Students Commission on Racial Equality. Almost everybody in that group was queer, even though the entire focus was on racial justice. A lot of the people in the Women's Studies classes I was taking were queer women of color and I have community with them, I was friends with them, and we were organizing together. From sophomore year in college through getting my credential, passed getting my credential, that is sort of

> predominantly who I had a community with, and was learning with, and doing things with and organizing with, which completely shaped my understanding of myself and of the world that I wanted to exist.

Theme 2: Embodying a Commitment to Antiracism

The second theme, embodying a commitment to antiracism, illustrates the ways in which White elementary teacher participants actively learn, model, and sustain antiracist practices. All teachers shared ways in which they associated antiracism with actively learning about Whiteness and their responsibility to understand ways to work towards ending racist policies and practices, particularly in their roles as teachers in predominantly White schools. Study participants expressed how the act of modeling their stance as they move through their work plays a role, both for teaching others and also strengthening their antiracist ideological commitment for themselves. Part of this strengthening serves as a means to manage fears of social retribution as they learn to not reify Whiteness while potentially facing negative consequences for their antiracist practices. All teachers spoke of ways that embodying a commitment to antiracist required a need to maintain energy for the examination of the work that they, as White teachers, are currently doing and can continue to do within themselves moving forward to decenter Whiteness in their thinking about their work in the classroom (Leonardo & Manning, 2017).

Active Learning

All six teacher-participants in this study detailed a variety of ways in which they have- and continue to- actively, often independently, learn about race and racism. For some, this learning began during university and teacher education years. All cited the ways in which they are motivated to read, participate in book clubs, and attend workshops and seminars to increase

their understanding of Whiteness, racism, and the ways race intersects with education. Renee explains:

> I had a very, very White upbringing. My family's very liberal. And so, I knew there was racial injustice, and I knew it was wrong. But in my head, it wasn't something that we were all doing. And then, I ran into this seminar was called "Be About It", and it was about being an antiracist teacher. It was like a three-day online seminar put together by two White teachers in Georgia, but all of the presenters were Black, and it just completely changed everything.

Renee continues to detail another way she actively learns:

> It's not all formal resources. One thing I did was when I watched the [antiracism for teachers] webinar, all the presenters are on Instagram as teachers. So, I started following them on Instagram and really changed my social media community. And so, I have found this wealth of... Not just in terms of being an antiracist teacher, but just being a teacher. You know, a lot of really great people that are out there that I never would have run into because they don't pop up on Teachers Pay Teachers first. When I started following Black educators on social media, they challenged me. And I'd sit there and ask myself, "Okay, why are you getting upset? This doesn't have anything to do with you. Don't center yourself." You know what I mean? So, it's like I'm making sure that I'm constantly exposed to that feeling.

Participants described how being active learners was an important part of moving towards developing their antiracist ideological commitments, in particular how they noticed their thinking change as they broadened their understanding of racism beyond interpersonal acts of racialized meanness towards BIPOC to include definitions of Whiteness, institutional, and

systemic racism. All participants in this study described racism to include the power that they wield as people who have been racialized as White, as well as the educational policies and practices with which they interact with as teachers. Ann outlined this development as an educator due to her active learning:

> I have shifted. When I first started out, I would say I was more like, "Okay, I, I am White, I'm middle class, I'm educated, I understand the power structure, that kind of like leads to people being successful." So, I kind of thought that my job was to help these kids [BIPOC] that maybe didn't have access to that, how they could navigate that power structure and be successful, right? And over time, the biggest shift has been, "No, we don't need to fit them into the power structure, we need to change the structure to be more inclusive."

The study participants cited that actively seeking out these learning opportunities have been an important part of their development.

Modeling

Study participants expressed how the act of modeling their antiracist ideology as they move through their work plays a role, both for teaching others and also strengthening their antiracist ideological commitment to themselves. The literature affirms that White teachers need to model where they are in their racial understandings for others and that this involves an internal dialogue around one's own antiracist beliefs and also what one wants to communicate in a given situation (Helms, 2021). Study participants expressed this need to model for themselves and also so their colleagues as well as so students can see their schemas around race. Yvonne shared:

> You have to be really careful with kids of color and check your subconscious... Is it true? Are they getting in trouble more than the other kids are? Who are you sending to the

office and why? It's multi-layered. As a White teacher, I will say sometimes the kids of color who come to me [from the previous grade] have been labeled, and so I have to make sure my class knows that everybody gets a second chance. "That was last year. This is this year, that was that teacher, this is our classroom now." And I often have to build up kids of color more in my room, so my White kids see me as a White teacher giving value to these children in my classroom. When I do groups, I try and mix them all up because otherwise what I will see in my classroom is White kids playing with White kids.

Helms (2021) described this process of modeling in terms of social interaction theory as the progressive relationship. A progressive relationship is one in which someone models how they use their racial identity statuses, and this modeling can help a student to gown and learn new ways of thinking and being. The progressive relationship can also be viewed as the act of scaffolding through zone of proximal development (Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Vygotsky, 1978). Modeling is a complex skill that involves both empathy and memory in that teachers need to remember their own thinking when they also thought like the student and then to scaffold across the zone of proximal development (Helms, 2021; Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Vygotsky, 1978). Teachers not only must remember the age-graded, social-emotional, cognitive, and physical development of their elementary students, but also the hallmarks of various White racial identity development statuses and communicate through the lenses of all of these in a manner that is developmentally appropriate (Helms, 2021).

Modeling was also reported as important for reinforcing one's own antiracist integrity in interactions with colleagues and came up in a variety of ways in the thinking of study

participants. Djuna describes one way modeling can be uncomfortable with colleagues in her role as a White inclusion specialist:

> I don't want to call it a power dynamic but there is certainly a dynamic, a racial dynamic around being a White inclusion teacher in a bilingual program where I am not bilingual. And I am asking people to do things, I'm asking paras to do things, who are bilingual, and I'm asking general ed teachers to do things that are bilingual, that I am not always able to do myself, and that has never been something I've had to do before, and I have always been really adamant that, like, anything I ask somebody to do, I have to be able to do it, too.

When White teachers model a more actively antiracist racial positioning within their teaching, it mediates all interactions within the classroom, enabling the antiracist ideological development of their White students, insomuch as they may shift their own interpretations of cultural capital rooted in White supremacy and draw upon the knowledges and strengths that students of color bring with them from their lives into the classrooms (Bandura & Walters 1977; Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Bonilla-Silva & Embrik, 2008; Duncan-Andrade, 2008; Gillborn, 2008a, 2008b; Helms, 2020; Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Pollock, 2008a; Rogoff, 2003; Nieto, 2008; Noguera, 2008; Sleeter, 2015; Winkler 2009; Yosso, 2005). White elementary teachers committed to racial justice can build upon the understanding of how the more racially knowledgeable other (themselves) participates in the cultural transmission of Whiteness in educational contexts through the frame of WZPD (Leonardo & Manning, 2017).

Managing Fears and Maintaining Energy

For study participants, part of this strengthening through modeling serves as a means to manage fears of social retribution as they learn to not reify Whiteness while potentially facing

negative consequences for their antiracist practices. One of the aspects of social interaction in Helms's (2021) White racial identity development model addresses how people tend to seek harmonious relationships. A desire for social conformity can intensify for White people in situations that involve unpacking race and racism. It can be challenging for a White person to break the White normative harmony of a situation through antiracist thought and action in the workplace out of fear of perceived – and real negative social consequences (Helms, 2021). Yvonne described:

> Davis is a pretty White place and because of the social construct of maintaining the status quo and not wanting to go out on a limb and not wanting to be seen as different and not wanting to, to ruffle the feathers, and teachers somehow being still afraid of their jobs or something, it's hard.

Motivated by the taboo against speaking about a subject perceived as controversial as race and racism, teachers who have been racialized as White and work in predominantly White environments have often avoided directly addressing race through the development colorblind dispositions (race invisibility, not "seeing" or explicitly addressing race), epistemologies of ignorance (not recognizing that to be "White" is also a racialized experience in itself and claiming racial innocence while having the expectation that what is normed and centered is one's own White culture by default), ontological expansiveness (the unconscious habits of racial expectations and privileges based on White normative standards), and assumed racial comfort (the expectation prioritization that one should feel comfortable and safe when thinking and speaking about race; Cabrera et al., 2017; DiAngelo, 2018; Heuschkel, 2013; Matias, 2014; Pennington, 2007; Sullivan, 2006). All six study participants discussed how they manage their

thoughts and fears around maintaining their antiracist ideological commitment despite external and internal pressures at school. Yvonne described:

> If you say social justice, people know what you're talking about. If I went into a staff room and said, "We need to check our White supremacy," I don't know how that would go over. When my colleagues are confused, it's silencing and it's shutting. It makes people stop talking because they're afraid they're going to get in trouble.

In addition to managing fears with colleagues, there were also fears about the educational community in general. Ann explained:

> There's a lot to maneuver, right? There's what you put in the classroom and how you handle the kids, but there's also how you handle the community. What do you do if you don't have a principal that is supportive?

All teachers spoke of ways that embodying a commitment to antiracist required a need to maintain energy for the examination of the work that they, as White teachers, are currently doing and can continue to do within themselves moving forward to decenter Whiteness in their thinking about their work in the classroom (Leonardo & Manning, 2017). Renee described:

> One thing that I learned which was very helpful to me was learning about Whiteness and White culture that I certainly was raised with [and have to unlearn] is that you don't get in trouble, and that you must be perfect all the time. I had to buy a bracelet that says, "DO IT ANYWAY," because I was too afraid . . . At the beginning, I was scared to do anything, even though I had had this enlightenment over this summer [2020], I was afraid because I didn't want to get in trouble. I didn't want to get pushback from parents. And I had to have a “come to Jesus moment,” which I got through the seminar. They asked, "Why are you a teacher? Are you a teacher for the parents' approval, or are you a teacher

> for the children in your room?" And so, I had to really push through that. And it... it was especially hard now [in the 2020-2021 academic year] because I knew that, since I am on Zoom [due to the pandemic], that they [parents] can hear me and see me.

Ignoring and avoiding the subject of race has been well-documented in White populations in U.S. schools (Cabrera et al., 2017; DiAngelo, 2018; Tatum, 2007). Whiteness has traditionally been centered as the universal, normative, dominant culture in the U.S. educational system and White teachers who work in predominantly White communities frequently turn their pedagogical dilemmas into pedagogical silences (Hayes & Juárez, 2012; Vaught & Castagno, 2008, Yosso, 2005). Yet, if White teachers do not actively develop antiracist ideological commitments and begin to address racial justice in their thinking about their work with their White students, the process of socialization in schools continues to support the replication of past social conditions, specifically White supremacy (Helms, 1995, 2020; Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Picower, 2021; Rogoff, 2003; Tatum, 2007). Djuna described:

> It [working in a predominantly White school] felt like a really hard thing to push against. There was nothing about that, that was like explicitly Whiteness, but it was so White. It was so White and upper class or upper-middle class, this idea that it has to be "convenient" for you. Whatever we're doing has to be convenient for you or has to be the same. You're not willing to put in the work, you're not willing to take risks. This has always worked for you before, so it's just going to continue to work this one way. And there's so little creativity and collaboration and ability to change anything in that. And I think teaching has to be always evolving and has to be always sort of responding to the needs that are happening in front of us. I feel like the social-emotional needs were not

> met and certainly the behavioral needs of students were not met because of that, and it got really hard to actually do what I thought needed to happen for my students.

When study participants were able to manage their fear and enact their antiracist ideological commitments in their teaching, many stated that positive feedback helped them to maintain their energy to move forward, as Yvonne described:

> I had a mom just email me recently . . . And she said, "You just need to know there's a whole group of parents that are supporting you and so grateful that everything that you're doing and how you're covering all these social justice topics." Because the year before the teacher before, didn't do any of it, sadly.

Managing fears and maintaining energy continue to be a concern for participants at all reported stages of racial identity development.

Theme 3: Teaching as Antiracist Praxis

The third theme, teaching as antiracist praxis, details the role reflexivity around one's own racism plays as White teachers guide curriculum and facilitate antiracist thinking in the classroom. This study employed a convenience and purposive sampling to ensure that teachers could speak about the issues in the research question. All six elementary educators were self-identified as White, committed to teaching in elementary schools in Davis, California through an antiracist lens, in elementary schools with a predominantly White student and teacher population while actively working on their own antiracist development. All six participants were willing and able to speak to the ways in which they have perpetuated racism in their thinking around their teaching and the sense-making process about what they perceived as their racist ideas rooted in Whiteness and sought to grow beyond them through the creation of antiracist zones of proximal development with their students which included the ways in which they guided curriculum.

Reflexivity and One's Own Racism

Ibram X. Kendi (2019) charged that "the only way to undo racism is to consistently identify and describe it- and then dismantle it" (p. 1). In order to learn to work against racism, White people must first recognize it as an everyday existence as well as come to grips with their own position as ongoing participants and beneficiaries of racist systems (Helms, 2020; Nieto, 2015). White people cannot escape participation in a racist system and so must learn to become "antiracist racists" (Helms, 2020; Katz, 2003). In order for White teachers to decenter and dismantle White narratives in elementary curriculum and the White normative thought embedded in their teaching in an antiracist way, they must explicitly make the dismantling of White supremacy for themselves and their White students a priority in their practice (Picower, 2021; Sleeter & Zavala, 2020; Tatum, 2007). They must see it, name it, and own it in all of their decision-making around their teaching in elementary schools.

Additionally, the statuses of the White racial identity model are contextual, not fixed, and non-linear (Helms, 2020). Depending on context, a White person can be in one status during an in-person conversation, and then for example, take a phone call with another person and change statuses during that call due to the context and content of that call. Helms' model provides mobility between statuses in order to retreat "back" from disequilibrium in order to avoid discomfort from issues related to the understanding of race and racism at any time. Furthermore, a White person never achieves a fixed status as "an antiracist," rather, each status should be thought of as eyeglasses that are removed and replaced according to context, experience, and will to think, be, and act in antiracist ways (Helms, 2020).

The study participant's self-identification as White elementary teachers, who are teaching (or had taught) in Davis while actively committed to developing one's own antiracist ideology, and

also willing to articulate ways in which they had perpetuated racism in their thinking about their teaching through an antiracist lens, qualified them to participate in an interview for this study. Being White and able to identify one's own racist ideas is a hallmark of the immersion-emersion and autonomy status of the White racial identity model (Helms, 1995). In the immersion-emersion status, the person is reinforced to continue, rather than avoid and retreat from, personal exploration after noticing the ways in which they participate in racism. The person thinks of themselves as a racial being (recognizes that they are White) and begins to focus on what it means to be White. There is increased willingness to search for the ways in which they benefit from White privilege and to confront their own biases, redefine Whiteness, and to become active in directly combatting racism and oppression (Helms, 1995). Jamie illustrated:

> When I was doing Me and White Supremacy [workbook designed to explore White supremacy], I had like a big "aha moment" that did not feel good. I realized about my students [Black girls], and how I responded to them and realized that I've had students I can think of off the top of my head who just had personalities that did not match with my idea of like what being disciplined in the classroom looked like to me. And I didn't take the time to think about how we were probably just different people, and that being my students, it was my responsibility to build the relationships with them and just meet them at their level, which I feel like for the most part, I do. And so that's why it sort of hit me that I feel like there was some racism involved where I just saw these girls and thought like, "Oh, they're being naughty for the sake of being naughty," but really, they're just energetic, exuberant kids who I haven't taken the time to kind of figure out better.

Ann describes the challenge of thinking antiracist thoughts, but then acting passively non-racist (complicit), in complex social interactions involving other White teachers in her role as an instructional coach:

> I actually sat in on an English learner group which was run by a wonderful woman, she was a reading para, just a lovely, lovely person. But we were with these little brown kids and she's teaching them all about Thanksgiving, complete with like, the Plymouth rock, and the cute feast, and I just remember sitting there thinking . . . Oh my gosh . . . she's indoctrinating them into some kind of story that's not even true.

Renee reflected back upon a prior teaching experience with an "angry Black boy" though a racial lens she did not have at that time in her development:

> What I have learned is that, and this was so upsetting to me is because my school was so White in terms of representation . . . it's like a Black boy is basically shown everywhere, not just at school, but in the world, that you're not welcome here, you know, by lack of representation and lack of external message of what they may need to feel successful, well . . . that that's where that anger was . . . it wasn't that he was an angry Black boy, he was a little boy, a Black boy, sitting in a racist classroom.

The White racial identity model's autonomy status is marked by an increased awareness of one's Whiteness, acceptance in one's own role in perpetuating racism, and deepened determination to develop one's own antiracist ideology. The person is knowledgeable about racial, ethnic, and cultural differences, values diversity, and is no longer intimidated with the experiential reality of race and has developed a positive White identity (Helms, 1995). Renee reflected back on her previous thinking through her current lens of antiracist ideological commitment development:

> I remember thinking, especially once I got to [school name], "Everybody here is White. The kids that are Black, they're like from Africa. Like, they're here for a year [through their parents' work in the university] or whatever, most of the kids." And so, I thought that I didn't have to talk about this stuff, that it wasn't an issue. I thought we didn't have racism in the classroom because we didn't have any [American] Black kids in the classroom.

Study participants described the process of purposefully and intentionally being receptive as their White normativity is pointed out by others in the workplace as a part of their antiracist practice. Ann described:

> One time in a staff meeting, somebody [Black] was looking for a seat and there was an empty one right next to us, and I was like, "Oh, come on. It's like sitting in the back of the bus." And, what I meant was when I was a kid and I rode the bus to school, all the rowdy . . . well, everybody was white on the bus, okay, so a lot of rowdy kids were in the back of the bus because they want to be far away from the bus driver. All the troublemakers were in the back of the bus, and all the goody-goodies were in the very front of the bus, and then people that weren't quite sure where they were sat in the middle. But [Black colleague] came to me and she had a totally different response to that because she's thinking about the back of the bus in racial terms and the fact that, that black people were forced to sit in the back of the bus, which never occurred to me. But I was so grateful that she came and talked to me about it.

Facilitating (Antiracist) White Zones of Proximal Development

The race-related work that White elementary school teachers do- or do not do- consciously or unconsciously-in their classrooms is incredibly impactful. Although many

elementary educators and parents are unaware, children have already been organizing cultural messages about race coming from a variety of modalities for years by the time they enter elementary school (Aboud, 2008; Feagin &Van Ausdale, 2001; Hagerman, 2016; Katz, 2003; Katz & Koftkin, 1997; Patterson & Bigler, 2006; Winkler, 2009). Elementary education provides an early opportunity to actively guide developing children in sense-making as they continue their organization of broad cultural messages about race (Hagerman, 2016). Research on race, racism, and the developing child indicates that schools play an important role in socialization around the construct of race, a role in part shaped by teachers' ideologies, who exercise great control over the learning environment in elementary classrooms (Feagin &Van Ausdale, 2001; Hagerman, 2016; Helms, 1995, 2020; Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Lewis, 2003; Picower, 2021; Tatum, 2007; Winkler, 2009). Teachers enact this power when they participate in complex relational intersections between their own identities, their students' identities, the curriculum, pedagogy, and context in which racial and cultural identity development occurs (Aboud, 2008; Bronfenbrenner, 1992; Hagerman, 2016; Helms, 1995, 2020; Hirschfeld, 2008; Hurtado et al., 2012; Picower, 2021; Rogoff, 2003; Super & Harkness, 1986; John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996; Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Winkler, 2009). Renee spoke to this power as she reflected on a former [Black] student she taught before she had a strong understanding of the institutional and systemic racism that she was complicit with at her predominantly White elementary school:

> So even if he was having the most successful day, he was still a human with black skin sitting in a White classroom that's not made for him. I never would have thought that I was perpetuating racism, but now I see that I was because I just didn't know. That school is kind of silently saying, "You don't belong here, and this isn't for you," and that made me really sick . . . and it's me, I did it, and I never would do that on purpose. I didn't

> think I was racist, and then I learned from readings like How to Be an Antiracist that we all can start with what is in us.

However, when White teachers model a more actively antiracist racial positioning within their curriculum and pedagogy, it also mediates all interactions within the classroom, enabling the antiracist development of their White students, insomuch as they may shift their own interpretations of cultural capital rooted in White supremacy and draw upon the knowledges and strengths that students of color bring with them from their lives into the classrooms (Bandura & Walters, 1977; Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Bonilla-Silva & Embrik, 2008; Duncan-Andrade, 2008; Gillborn, 2008a, 2008b; Helms, 2020; Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Pollock, 2008a; Rogoff, 2003; Nieto, 2008; Noguera, 2008; Sleeter, 2015; Winkler, 2009; Yosso, 2005). This is the process of changing the hearts and minds of the dominant culture. Ellen explained:

> I feel that I have a job to open their [White students] eyes, and their hearts and their brains to what is there. These kids in Davis have had very little experience. Now, maybe it's different coming off of summer [2020] and what the movement [racial justice] that was happening over the summer and what was in the news and how their families were participating in it and family conversations that may have been had, but historically, these kids in Davis are just very self-centered and don't know the world outside their little bubble and understanding about it. So I feel that it's my charge to pop that bubble a little bit and let them know that we have is built because of other people, and to understand this Black history piece of it, and that even if you don't see a lot of Black people in the community, you know, they are scientists, they're doctors, they're artists, they're musicians, they're poets, you know, and try to introduce and at least plant a seed in there as much as I can with it.

Ann described the issue at the district level:

> I have some feelings about the district's graduate profile. One of the tenets is civic involvement and awareness. And I said, "Look, why don't we work on fleshing out what that looks like for our Davis students in terms of equity." When students walk out of Davis Joint Unified, they would have a much clearer understanding of how to see things from different perspectives. They understand how to listen and learn from somebody else's experience, all of those things then become part of that. And what people were saying, because this is right after January 6th [2021], they were like, we don't want our students marching on the Capitol. And when you put it that way it becomes really focused and important work, not to only to make things better for kids of color, but to create White students with a greater depth of understanding that can then improve things for kids of color.

Study participants spoke of the challenges of teaching in White educational contexts in order to see the decentering of Whiteness and widening of the White normative operational definitions of cultural capital that occur in the antiracist disposition development of both White teachers and students when they did not have this educational experience themselves in their own K-6 educational backgrounds (Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Yosso, 2005). White teachers were once White children themselves and moved through the public school system themselves and may have not had a sustained, guided critical education about race when they were young themselves. Without actively engaging in antiracist ideological commitment development for themselves in their own young lives, the White elementary teachers spoke to the challenges of approaching the task of guiding the antiracist ideological commitment development of young children in their own classrooms. Jamie described:

> One of the things that I think is tricky is doing this in kindergarten and finding the balance is making sure that the kids who pass through my door don't necessarily have the same experience that I did, growing up. I think I think about this with the White kids the most, because I think in talking to kids and talking to families is that kids who do have a racial identity that's not White, tend to talk about race more at home. That's just part of who they are, and racial identity is something they can talk about and so I think for White students, just like when I was a White student, I don't want them to make it through their whole school career without ever having to think about what race means and how it affects them and the people around them. Just in the context of kindergarten, my goal as a teacher is to have open conversations about it and my whole upbringing makes me uncomfortable talking about race.

Study participants spoke about the formative role of elementary teachers in actively guiding developing children in sense-making as they continue their organization of broad cultural messages about race (Hagerman, 2016). Ellen shared:

> I want them to experience equity in my classroom and to understand that equity is you get what you need and it's not the same thing for everybody. And that's a big thing for kids to learn, because that will be something that will apply all through adult life. I want them to have a depth of understanding of different cultures and different races, I mean and it's not just like having the family potluck, you know, I want it to go deep, I want them to understand that the community and cultural life that we have today isn't the same for everybody, and then and that that's okay, and to understand that and to celebrate that. I really want them to go away knowing that there have been injustices, there are injustices that happen in the world even today still, that this hasn't been solved, that Martin Luther

> King Jr. did not solve it all, that they are empowered to go and do something and give them tools and words to be able to continue to be powerful in themselves. Now, again, I also recognize third, fourth graders, I'm planting a seed. Right? And so that seed's gotta take hold and grow, and that's what I kind of hope is that that seed, that when life presents those kids with something, that they will stand up, they will use their voice, they will help somebody who needs help, they will not perpetuate a stereotype.

Guiding Curriculum

Teachers' racial understandings and ideologies mediate their enactment of curriculum and pedagogy as the children in their care are actively constructing their own understandings of race in their classrooms (Hagerman, 2016; Helms, 1995, 2020; Picower, 2021). Without careful, critical guidance, ethnocentric orientations can occur when White people in the United States are not taught to imagine themselves as racialized actors in a multicultural society (Gardiner, 2001; Helms, 1995, 2020; Rogoff, 2003). Children who are racialized as White will eventually become adults, coming of age in a country in which they wield White immunity from the negative effects of living in a racist society, with the power and agency to establish many of the rules and regulations of public space that have very direct impacts on the lives of people of color (Cabrera, 2017; Bonilla-Silva, 2006; DiAngelo, 2018; Feagin, 2010; Tatum, 2007). Renee's words exemplify what the study participants perceive as their role as White elementary teachers committed to teaching through a racial justice lens:

> It's imperative that as a White teacher in a privileged White school that we talk about this stuff and we talk about it a lot. And that all of this comes out of the concept of power. It's not about inferior or superior [people or cultures]. It's about who has power and what do they do to keep it so, now I use that with everything. Everything's about, why do you

> think they did that? Why do you think they made that decision? They wanted to stay in power. If they did the nice, compassionate thing, they would lose their power. So now we look at everything through motivation and we bring in power and then we talk about compassion and empathy. And I'll say things like, "What character traits were missing from that person [or character] that did that?"

Renee described what all study participants spoke about as the arduous task of interpreting curriculum that centers Whiteness through an antiracist lens:

> I spent an entire summer, and I took the social studies book home, and I went through it . . . I just started tabbing everything that was White-washed and what was wrong with it, and just completely restructured my social studies curriculum. Because I'm about as White as can be, I realized then, "I have to counteract this just . . . Not just with social studies, but with everything." I started to also think two things was, one, that whatever I did in social studies, is that I needed to start the kids' exposure to Black Americans back in Africa, not starting with them as enslaved people, but them as, you know, the empires that they came from in West Africa.

Djuna explained the need to move beyond superficial multiculturalism and celebrating diversity and to explicitly teach about racial justice in honest, developmentally appropriate ways throughout the elementary years:

> Students need to be taught through a racial justice lens at all age groups, and there are age-appropriate ways to do that at every level of age and every level of understanding. I also believe that things should be explicitly taught and not just taught through a lens. I think that we sometimes umm hide behind diversity or representation instead of explicitly naming systems or explicitly naming history.

Ann retrospectively reflects on her former role as a classroom teacher in the district and details some essential guiding questions that run throughout study participants' antiracist curriculum adaptations:

> Basically, what it came down to are the questions that I asked my class. These were fourth-graders, so, it was something like, "Do you think race played a part? Do you think the color of the person played a part in how they were treated?" And all the kids of color in my class raised their hand and said, "Yes." And all the White kids were like . . . And I tried to have conversations like that, probably clunky, but that's okay. And when we started to study Indigenous people, I would also put up things that were happening in the present day. It looked like this, "Look at these two girls who graduated from college, look at this person that's doing this, look, this is what they're fighting for right now," to keep it more modern. We analyzed the textbook, so it wasn't just what's here, it's also what's *not* here. And in fact, there's this lovely [sarcasm] sheet of descriptions of Native people in textbooks from like 1920, up to the one that we were using because it's still so freaking old but we're still using it and we really try to look at that with like a critical eye. So, in this way, I felt like I could make a space where the kids were much more open.

Ellen spoke about embedding perspective-taking in order to facilitate conversations about racial justice into fourth-grade curriculum:

> I think of focusing on California Native Americans [curriculum], and which was really big for the students because so many of them don't even know when you talk about racism, like racism towards the native, that natives are the first peoples. We [taught] through an equity lens for Native Americans and the missions. We talked about the perspective of what the missions actually were to the natives, the California natives, and

> we had pictures and asked, "What was this picture... What would that be from the natives' perspective and what would that be from the priest's perspective, you know?" And just having that conversation and teaching students to look through other people's eyes and understanding that like you can both look at the same picture but think so differently about what is happening in that picture based on who it is and understanding that. Part of teaching them what racism is and understanding that our being here is we took away land from the first peoples of California. This was their land, and we're here, you know? So, the fact that we as a United States country are as successful as we are is because it was built on slavery. Understanding that the successes that we have today actually come from hurting other cultures and other people because of what the color of their skin was and us thinking that we [White settler colonialists] are better.

Theme 4: Addressing White Racialized Trauma

The fourth theme, addressing White racialized trauma, outlines the ways White teacher-participants detail past experiences and imagine possibilities in the areas of professional development, affinity groups, and therapy as supportive in their continued antiracist ideological commitment development as part of the educational community. White racialized trauma is described by Resmaa Menakem (2021):

> Trauma is not a flaw or weakness. It is a highly effective tool of safety and survival. Trauma is also not an event. Trauma is the body’s protective response to an event- or a series of events- that it perceives as potentially dangerous . . . White body supremacy harms. If you’re a White American, your body has probably inherited a legacy of trauma that affects White bodies- and, at times, may rekindle old flight, flee, or freeze responses. If America is to grow out of White-body supremacy, the transformation must largely be

> led by White Americans. Yet White Americans have not yet created any form of anti-White-body supremacy culture. White Americans who seek to undo White-body supremacy have…little sense of community-and no culture to build and support such community. This needs to change. (p. 7)

All White teacher-participants in this study spoke to the weaknesses and possibilities of professional development experiences in the district, as well as the perceived need for a means to process and heal through White antiracist affinity groups for both learning and healing, as well as the need for formal therapy through a racial lens.

Professional Development

Study participants spoke about the perceived and experienced resistance of other White colleagues and administration within the district. Study participants doubted the willingness of their White colleagues, voiced by Yvonne:

> I was just reading this book and it says, if you are going to confront your White supremacy, you are going to have feelings of guilt, and shame, and fear, and anxiety. And I know teachers who don't want to go there. They don't want to do it. They don't want to unpack it. Teachers will get mad and say, "You can't give me this curriculum without training," and they'll also say, "I don't wanna do the training." So, no matter how you look at it, it's going to be . . . I want training, I don't want training, you know I'm not gonna deal with this. Are you gonna pay me for this? Why do I have to do this? Unless the people [administration] just say that it has to be done and I don't care how, it's going be done, you have to have an inner drive to do it . . . And I think . . . George Floyd had to be murdered for some [White] people to get on the bandwagon, you know . . . And I too was part of that, not realizing this is really bad.

Renee remembered her former thinking:

> I had to understand what it meant to be White and what White fragility was, and how I did it every day and how I see it happening every day. It was, it was a big hurdle, and I think if you are someone who is stubborn, and I think a lot of teachers are stubborn and set in their ways. They're not going to acknowledge those things about themselves, and so I see this is a really difficult road.

Ann spoke from the perspective of an instructional coach who does work with willing White teachers in the district:

> I have been very active in trying to formalize make a more supportive network for teachers that are interested in anti-racism work and culturally responsive pedagogy. Just that in itself, is very empowering, I think, because you start to recognize who those people are. By knowing that there are other people that think like you do umm in the district, I think is really a positive. And I think has made, umm kind of emboldened people a little bit more. but it's a balance, right, because now we have so many teachers now that are showing interest, but they lack background. They lack learning, they lack listening. So, you know, as much as people are pushing, they want to zoom ahead, zoom ahead, zoom ahead and solve problems [and not examine themselves as the problem and the work itself].

Ellen shared about the experience of scaffolding for adult learners in a district-offered professional development opportunity:

> On the culturally responsive action team that I was on this summer, the biggest thing was giving teachers a takeaway. Like, "Here, watch our like 7-minute presentation or our 10-minute presentation, we're here to inspire you and to give you something that you can

take away and find useful and incorporate into your daily teaching." And, and so we did that throughout the entire presentations. We highlighted, like we put a little like multi-cultural hand, like this is a culturally-relevant teaching practice, this is culturally responsive pedagogy... so people could look at it and say, "Oh, I already do that. I do that, too. I do that as well." With that, like if we can already incorporate what's there and highlight it, but then build upon it and ask for more depth of it.

Djuna added:

> I think we have to be looking at all the subject areas we can uncover, because it's been hidden or hidden from people or were sort of neutralized, like white lensing. It's not neutral but, like white-lensing history, science, language, arts, etcetera. And we have to do the work to do that, I think. We have to do the work to do that also because that's not how we were taught, generally. People who are teachers had different curriculum. And I think there's tension in that. And so, one of my philosophies is also that we have to, as teachers, challenge ourselves and each other around our own understanding, teaching, and learning.

Study participants drew parallel between their leading their students in antiracist ideological commitment development lacking experience with the perceived lack of experience of district administration. Yvonne explained:

> They should start with the district office and the Board of Ed diving into this because I really don't think they have any [experience]. All of those people, all of the principals, I think they should just start at the top, you know, with all the administration, including the principals. I think if anything, that's where it should start so they understand, because

> otherwise we're just going to be fighting them the entire time and they are not going to get it until some happening happens at the leadership level.

Affinity Groups

Racial affinity group meetings, racially homogenous groups of people meeting to unpack race and racism, can be effective tools for organizations to address cultural responsiveness or shift their organizational paradigm toward antiracism (Blitz & Kohl, 2012). Because recognizing and addressing systemic racism within an organization involves deep equity work to identity and address racism at all levels, affinity groups can help White colleagues and BIPOC who have different conversations, wounds, and journeys towards antiracism (Blitz & Kohl, 2012). Several study participants expressed a desire for the creation of affinity groups. Ann detailed:

> You have to be willing to feel kind of cruddy, and what we saw in the summer with the book clubs was a real willingness by White teachers to feel cruddy, but they need a safe space to process that. The Black Lives Matter demonstrations in the spring last year [2020] definitely provided that catalyst for them. Suddenly people that were not interested were interested. So, we did run some book clubs . . . You know because White people join book clubs. So, we ran some antiracism-themed book clubs in the summer, and the best thing about those spaces was seeing people that have never been able to talk about race being able to talk about it. Then beyond that, we used that base of people that participated in those book groups as the place to ask, "Are you interested in continuing this work?" So, we got a good another 50, 60 people from that.

Ann also remembered, “After the Ethnic Studies meeting, I just cried, and I texted [name]. I'm like, ‘I'm going to need some affinity groups to make it through this.’ [laughter] This

is too much for me." Renee exemplified the sentiment among participants the kinds of specific discussion White teachers might need to have around race:

> I think I think it needs to start from the place that the responsibility is on White people. We created this nightmare, and we need to fix it, and we're the people that can do it, but before we do any of that, we need to acknowledge two things. We need to acknowledge what racism really is and what that really means. It's not you're a Ku Klux Klan member, because then everyone says, "I'm not racist" so, we need to acknowledge the reality of what is going on [systemically] and then how, how do we fit into that? Because I think a lot of us, as White people, are like, "This isn't my problem." You know what I mean, "I'm not Black, I'm not racist. It's not my problem." But you're perpetuating it everywhere. And I think once people learn . . . For example, teachers, once you learn what . . . How education is inherently racist . . . it would make you really look at it . . .because I'd like to think that most of us are very compassionate human beings.

Ann described an encounter she had with a White teacher in the district Ethnic Studies meeting unit planning breakout session:

> I remember this teacher said, "I'm White. I grew up in in pretty much all White area . . .I was a figure skater!" Which I thought was hysterical. And she's like, "And I want to do this right. I don't want to offend anyone, but this is a lot." And then we got zapped back to the main [Zoom] room. So, I reached out to her, and I said, you know, I'm here to help you with your unit, but I'm also here to help you know support you as another White woman trying to navigate this ethnic studies and equity path that we're on.

Renee concluded, "When you're talking White fragility, you gotta to hear that from a White person."

Therapy

A growing body of research explores what it might mean to address Whiteness, racism, and White-body trauma in institutional setting (Menakem, 2021). Study participants pondered the possibilities for therapy for White teachers and district employees. Yvonne:

> Maybe like how to be an anti-racist, or something online. It has to be like therapy. I kept saying "Okay is this going to be like talking to my therapist," because there are some things I'm still grappling with. I don't know yet. I haven't put them in words yet. I don't really know, and that's me having grown up with two brown grandparents and a brown mom, and having lived in San Francisco for 19 years, and having a daughter who's half Mexican in my ear all the time telling me what I should and shouldn't be doing, right? Uh, and that's me, and I'm still having a hard time. I think it needs to be like a therapy session.

Renee explained:

> While not adding work to overworked grumpy teachers, providing real- almost like a therapy- in the form of a PD [professional development]. Especially in education, which is predominantly White women. You know, the whole like, White women's tears thing? Like that's every staff meeting, right?

Summary of Major Findings

The findings presented in this chapter describe how elementary educators who are racialized as White and committed to racial justice, teaching in schools with predominantly White students, characterize their racial identity development and antiracist ideological commitments, the role these antiracist ideological commitments play in their approaches to racial justice teaching with White students, and the policy, programmatic, and institutional influences

they identify as meaningful and supportive as they continue to develop their antiracist ideological commitments. The first theme, sense-making of White racial identity, describes the ways the White teacher participants experienced the process of coming to understand their racialized experience as a White person through their formative years in K-12 education and beyond that would eventually develop into an antiracist ideological commitment. The second theme, embodying a commitment to antiracism, illustrates the ways in which White teacher participants actively learn, model, and sustain antiracist practices. The third theme, teaching as antiracist praxis, details the role reflexivity around one's own racism plays as White teachers guide curriculum and facilitate antiracist thinking in the classroom. The fourth theme, addressing White racialized trauma, outlines the ways White teachers imagine possibilities in the areas of professional development, affinity groups, and therapy as supportive to their continued antiracist ideological commitment development as part of the educational community.

Chapter 7

CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to understand the development and role of antiracist ideological commitments of White elementary teachers who teach in schools with predominantly White students through the stories of White elementary teachers. The current sociopolitical educational landscape is one of great change after the COVID-19 pandemic and racial justice uprisings of 2020. This, coupled with the limited availability of research on antiracist ideological development of White elementary teachers, particularly those who teach in predominantly White schools drove the need for this study. Through six semi-structured interviews with White elementary teachers, committed to racial justice teaching in Davis, California (a town with predominantly White elementary schools) four themes emerged: sense-making of White racial identity, embodying a commitment to antiracism, teaching as antiracist praxis, and addressing White racialized trauma. This chapter is organized into the following sections summary of the study, discussion of the findings, limitations, implications, recommendations, and conclusion.

Summary of the Study

This study described the experiences of teachers who have been racialized as White and who are working to disrupt racism through decentering White normativity in their thinking about their work, detailing what a complex commitment to an antiracism looks like for White elementary teachers who teach in schools with a predominantly White student population. The teachers in this study self-identified as White, were actively committed to their own antiracist development, and were committed to teaching through a racial justice lens in their classrooms. They all taught in DJUSD, a public school district with elementary schools comprised of a

predominantly White student population in a suburban university town in Northern California. The participants were diverse in ages, K-12 educational backgrounds, years teaching, grades and subjects taught, and teacher educational experiences. All teachers were willing to speak about their White racial identity development, including the ways in which they were complicit with White supremacy and racism, and how it led to making antiracist ideological commitments. In order to understand the antiracist ideological commitment development of White elementary teachers and the role it plays in working in schools with predominantly White students, this study focused on the following questions:

1. How do elementary educators who are racialized as White and committed to racial justice, teaching in schools with predominantly White students, characterize their racial identity development and antiracist ideological commitments?
2. What role do these antiracist ideological commitments play in their approaches to racial justice teaching with White students?
3. What policy, programmatic, and institutional influences do these teachers identify as meaningful and supportive as they continue to develop their antiracist ideological commitments?

Discussion of Findings

In order for White teachers to decenter White normative thought and dismantle racism embedded in their teaching and address the Whiteness in elementary curriculum and policy, they must explicitly make the dismantling of White supremacy for themselves and their White students a constant priority in their practice (Picower, 2021; Tatum, 2007). Even so, White teachers may not be adequately supported in this endeavor, in part because they do not have substantial experience in the practice of developing their own antiracist ideological commitments

from their own backgrounds, including their schooling. This not only includes their P-16 education, but their teacher preparation programs and professional development once in the field (CTC, 2009). The White elementary teachers in this study had K-12 education experiences in diverse geographic locations, yet all experienced predominantly White teachers. All participants also grew up in predominantly White neighborhoods and attended schools with predominantly White student populations as well. Through interviews, study participants detailed the ways in which they led segregated lives in their formative years, coupled with few guided learning experiences about Whiteness, race, and racism in school.

Ignoring and avoiding the subject of race has been well-documented in White populations in U.S. schools (Cabrera et al., 2017; DiAngelo, 2018; Tatum, 2007). Whiteness has traditionally been centered as the universal, normative, dominant culture in the U.S. educational system and White teachers who work in predominantly White communities frequently turn their pedagogical dilemmas into pedagogical silences (Hayes & Juárez, 2012; Vaught & Castagno, 2008; Yosso, 2005). Yet, if White teachers do not actively develop antiracist ideological commitments and begin to address racial justice in their thinking about their work with their White students, the process of socialization in schools continues to support the replication of past social conditions, specifically White supremacy (Helms, 1995, 2020; Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Picower, 2021; Rogoff, 2003; Tatum, 2007). It must be stressed that it was challenging to find study participants who met all of the criteria of this study; participants needed to be White elementary educators in the district, actively working on their antiracist identity development, be committed to racial justice in their teaching of White students, and willing to speak about their racial identity development, including their own racism, past and present.

The White racial identity development of the six participants in this study aligned with statuses four through six of Janet Helms's (2020) White racial identity development model much of the time. Statuses four through six are associated with the way one develops an antiracist identity and generally develop after they have established what Helms described as a non-racist (antiracist) White identity. When experiencing status four through six, the White elementary teachers in this study began to abandon their belief in White superiority while holding an intellectual understanding of the unfairness of White privilege. There was a recognition of personal responsibility for dismantling racism, particularly in their teaching. As they moved through the statuses, the White teachers in this study actively sought, and continue to seek, to redefine Whiteness, abandon the "White saviorhood" that can be pernicious in the ideology of a teacher, and experience reduced feelings of guilt. As the participants in this study gained increased understanding of their own role in perpetuating racism, coupled with a renewed determination to acknowledge, and abandon White entitlement, they began to rethink their curriculum and pedagogy designed for predominantly White students in ways that are still being developed in their classrooms.

The developmental research on the race-related work that White elementary school teachers do or do not do, consciously or unconsciously, in their classrooms support the idea that it is incredibly impactful. Although many elementary educational leaders are unaware, children have already been organizing cultural messages about race coming from a variety of modalities for years by the time they enter elementary school (Aboud, 2008; Feagin &Van Ausdale, 2001; Hagerman, 2016; Katz, 2003; Katz & Koftkin, 1997; Patterson & Bigler, 2006; Winkler, 2009). Elementary education provides an early opportunity to actively guide developing children in sense-making as they continue their organization of broad cultural messages about race

(Hagerman, 2016). Research on race, racism, and the developing child indicates that schools play an important role in socialization around the construct of race, a role in part shaped by teachers' ideologies, who exercise great control over the learning environment in elementary classrooms (Feagin &Van Ausdale, 2001; Hagerman, 2016; Helms, 1995, 2020; Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Lewis, 2003; Picower, 2021; Tatum, 2007; Winkler, 2009). Teachers enact this power when they participate in complex relational intersections between their own identities, their students' identities, the curriculum, pedagogy, and context in which racial and cultural identity development occurs (Aboud, 2008; Bronfenbrenner, 1992; Hagerman, 2016; Helms, 1995, 2020; Hirschfeld, 2008; Hurtado et al., 2012; John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996; Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Picower, 2021; Rogoff, 2003; Super & Harkness, 1986; Winkler, 2009). The teacher participants' stories of what was lacking in their own K-12 years as well as their current thinking about their roles in the classroom as a mediator for racial understandings aligned with the literature in the field. Study participants spoke about the need to both embody antiracist practices both to model for others and to reify their own positions as well as use their teaching as antiracist praxis.

Theme 1: Sense-making of White Racial Identity

All participants in this study experienced compounded Whiteness in their formative years. They lacked organized, sustained, direct instruction in their K-6, undergraduate years, teacher education, and professional development once in the field. The reviewed literature supports guided long-term, continued, embedded engagement around perspective-taking and empathy, specifically in terms of the framing of racial literacy as a moral responsibility for White adults working with children in educational settings (Amos, 2011; Winans, 2010). This guided racial literacy development can take the form of K-12, undergraduate, and graduate courses and

also may continue as professional development opportunity for those in the field (Mosley, 2010; Rogers & Mosley, 2006; Ullucci, 2011). Additionally, the racial literacy development experiences of teachers should be *guided* learning specifically, in order to move White teachers from a more passive stance to a relatively more active anti-racist stance and a key to this shift may be explicitly linking perspective-taking, empathy development and a moral imperative to racial justice orientations (Amos, 2011; Winans, 2010). Guided experiences to develop antiracist ideological commitments can help White teachers to make the connection between thought and action in their classrooms by creating a sense of moral urgency and articulating a rationale to do so (Amos, 2011).

Theme 2: Embodying a Commitment to Antiracism

Participants in this study emphasized the need to keep the focus on the White self as the "problem" to be fixed. Participants shared that it is a teacher's nature to want to quickly turn to the work that can be done for students in the classroom and that it required a paradigm shift in order to sit with the realization that their own self, their White mind and body is where this work needed to begin, occur, and continue indefinitely. The approach of maintaining reflexivity, actively learning, and seeing oneself through a racialized lens is supported by research on race, racism, and the developing child which indicate that schools play an important role in socialization around the construct of race, a role in part shaped by teachers' ideologies, who exercise great control over the learning environment in elementary classrooms (Feagin & Van Ausdale, 2001; Hagerman, 2016; Helms, 1995, 2020; Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Lewis, 2003; Picower, 2021; Tatum, 2007; Winkler, 2009). Teachers enact this power when they participate in complex relational intersections between their own identities, their students' identities, the curriculum, pedagogy, and context in which racial and cultural identity development occurs

(Aboud, 2008; Bronfenbrenner, 1992; Feagin & Van Ausdale, 2001; Hagerman, 2016; Helms, 1995, 2020; Hirschfeld, 2008; Hurtado et al., 2012; John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996; Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Picower, 2021; Rogoff, 2003; Super & Harkness, 1986; Winkler 2009).

Theme 3: Teaching as Antiracist Praxis

Using teaching as praxis to cultivate White teacher antiracist ideological commitments is promising, impactful, and understudied, particularly for K-6 White teachers working in White spaces (Rogers & Mosley, 2006; Ullucci, 2011). Previous studies suggest the need for continual, embedded, sustained engagement with antiracist praxis for White teachers, regardless of the racial demographics of the students in their school communities and our participants experiences aligned with this (Amos, 2011). Study participants spoke extensively about the ways in which they currently are unsupported in their endeavors, citing the purchase of classroom supplies, such as library books on antiracism and equity to accompany state approved subject matter curriculum, hours spent revamping lesson and curriculum to incorporate racial justice themes, and personal time spent in reflection about their interactions with students through a racial justice lens. Study participants reported multiple ways in which they were learning as they taught, hearing their voices speak to students and closely interrogating their own thinking and motivations. Study participants spoke of being critically conscious of the ways their teaching in White educational contexts decentered (or did not decenter) Whiteness and of consciously widening and diversifying the White normative operational definitions of cultural capital for the benefit of their students' antiracist development (Leonardo & Manning, 2017; Yosso, 2005).

Theme 4: Addressing White Racialized Trauma

Study participants spoke at length of the connection between their ability to continue their own development and the kinds of education and support that come from having accessible

curriculum for their students, professional development for themselves, and district and site-level support in the form of policy and programs. Participants highlighted the pain and confusion that came with unpacking their hegemonic understandings around their growth and White racial identity development, asking for support in the form of affinity group meetings or even therapy. Affinity groups are racially homogenous groups of people meeting to unpack race and racism and can be effective tools for organizations to address cultural responsiveness or shift their organizational paradigm toward antiracism (Blitz & Kohl, 2012). Because recognizing and addressing systemic racism within an organization involves deep equity work to identity and address racism at all levels, affinity groups can help White colleagues and BIPOC who have different conversations, wounds, and journeys towards antiracism (Blitz & Kohl, 2012). Study participants also highlighted that a school district and a community is one organism; administrators should take the first step on doing this work themselves and model the demonstrating of their growth to district employees.

Limitations

This study focused on the antiracist ideological commitment development of a particular set of White elementary teachers in DJUSD in Davis, California. The purpose of this study was to describe the experiences of teachers who have been racialized as White and who are working to disrupt racism through decentering White normativity in their thinking about their work, detailing what a complex commitment to an antiracism looks like for White elementary teachers who teach in highly challenging settings, that is, in schools with a predominantly White student population. A primary limitation of this study is that teachers were asked to describe complex lived experiences, sometimes in the distant past, through the lens of race, which is directly informed by their awareness of their own White racial identity development in both this moment

and also the past. In both the present and the past, participants were of diverse ages and backgrounds and were at various points in the development of their antiracist ideological commitments. Using the framework of White racial identity development supported the organization of themes around study participants as they discussed their current thinking and their pasts, as the statuses in the framework are the statuses of the White racial identity model are contextual, not fixed, and non-linear (Helms, 2020). Depending on context, a teacher participant can be in one status during an in-person conversation, and then for example, take a phone call with another person and change statuses during that call due to the context and content of that call. Helms' model provides mobility between statuses in order to retreat "back" from disequilibrium in order to avoid discomfort from issues related to the understanding of race and racism at any time. A White person never achieves a fixed status as "an antiracist" according to Helms, rather, each status should be thought of as eyeglasses that are removed and replaced according to context, experience, and will to think, be, and act in antiracist ways (Helms 2020). As study participants shared their experiences, the researcher (myself) considered the developmental status that was operationalized in both the experience being shared by the participant, as well as their current status as they relayed the story.

Study participants spoke about the ways in which their K-12 institutions and teacher education experiences did not prepare them for antiracist ideological commitment development and how this makes their present role as teachers committed to racial justice in their classrooms more challenging. All participants expressed the need for policy and programmatic support for their continued work. As these White teachers were once White children themselves who moved through the public school system themselves that did not have a sustained, guided critical education about race when they were young. Without independently choosing as adults to

actively engage in antiracist ideological commitment development for themselves in their own lives, the study participants could not imagine approaching the task of guiding the antiracist ideological commitment development of young children in their own classrooms. Study participants uniformly expressed the need for various forms of professional development, reform in teacher education and K-12 curriculum.

Another possible limitation to this particular study is the timeframe in which it took place. The study participants were teaching at home via internet due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Classrooms were closed for the 2020-2021 academic year and so live classroom observations and gathering of artifacts from school sites was not possible.

Implications for Policy and Practice

This study has implications for elementary teacher antiracism ideological commitment development through professional development at both site and district levels, as well as elementary teacher education programs. Having this access to portraits of elementary educators who have been racialized as White understand their own racial conscientization and subsequent development of antiracist ideological commitments gives a view of what so many educational leaders have espoused as essential in the wake of the 2020 racial justice uprisings. When working in contexts of compounded Whiteness, how do teachers develop their antiracist ideological commitments? How do they manifest in their educational settings? What do teachers perceive as needed policy supports in their paths going forward in their work? Educational leaders, particularly teacher educators, will have a better sense of where teachers have been, what racialized experiences these teachers perceive to be most impactful, and what institutional and policy supports they can enact to foster the antiracist ideological commitments of teachers in their institutions of learning and work.

This study provides data to inform concerted efforts at multiple levels of the educational ecosystem. Though it should be said that teachers alone cannot address a multifaced socio-cultural issue such as race and racism, teachers do have many touchpoints in this educational ecosystem. Their racialized understanding mediates their delivery of curriculum and inform pedagogical choices. Elementary teachers have their eyes on students and families currently experiencing the K-12 system as well as an applied sense of the demands from administrators and policymakers. Working with elementary teachers has the potential to bridge many interconnected parts of the educational ecosystem.

This study also could inform antiracist curriculum development for K-12, as well as policy implications for the fostering of an antiracist school climate in elementary settings. Better understanding the beliefs and experiences of White elementary teachers currently committed to racial justice while working in schools with a predominantly White teacher and student population will be useful to educational leaders who are creating the next generation of justice-oriented curriculum for use in K-12 educational settings and delivery by these very teachers. Those in educational leadership positions need more data like this on the specific antecedents to the development of antiracist teacher ideology, what motivates these teachers to continue to maintain an understanding of their racial dispositions in their classrooms, and what teachers perceive as successes and challenges in their critical racial work in (what are likely, unfortunately, to remain for some time) largely racially segregated spaces.

This research was conducted with a broad, long-term vision, not only for the direct immediate benefit of those who are most obviously and immediately oppressed within our schools, BIPOC, but also by and for White children's antiracist development to support a larger majority cultural shift in knowledge and values. The race-related work that happens between

teachers and students in positions of White racial immunity is important and currently under considered. Research continues to highlight that colorblind orientations occur when White people are not taught to imagine themselves as racialized actors in society (Cabrera et al., 2017; DiAngelo, 2018; Tatum, 2007). The racial prejudices of White people have effects on the lives of all because White people continue to establish rules and regulations as the dominant culture in educational spaces. White students will eventually become White adults in a world in which they wield power and influence, and so forth. Manifesting socio-cultural change through schools is a complex endeavor, with all levels of ecological systems interacting in ways that shift and influence patterns of thinking and being. In the wake of the social justice uprisings of 2020, better understanding how to actively guide the development of antiracist ideological commitment development in White populations is timely, necessary work in order to answer the calls to dismantle racism at all levels in our schools.

Recommendations for Policy and Practice

Finding six participants for this study in DJUSD that met all of the antiracist ideological commitment criteria for participation was challenging. It should not be challenging. The data in this study suggest that a multifaceted effort should be made at the state and local levels to realize detailing what a complex commitment to antiracism looks like for White elementary teachers who teach in schools with a predominantly White student population and what investment our educational institutions are willing to make to realize this ideology in the teaching force. The racial justice uprising of 2020 sparked calls from educational leaders for schools and communities to take action to address institutional racism and educational inequality at the national, state, and local levels and in a June 2020 California Department of Education news release, California State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond responded to the

death of George Floyd by calling on communities across the state and nation to take action to dismantle institutional racism and inequities in public schools. This must include schools of compounded Whiteness. Thurmond also invited students, educators, families, and partners to participate in honest, courageous conversations that can help inform the work ahead (CDE, 2020).

This study should serve as material for deep reflection within DJUSD. At the district level for DJUSD, the data from this study suggests a need for explicit, district-wide goals that can actualized through professional development at all levels: administrative, staff, and school communities, including parent education. The participants of this study emphasized the need for administration to lead in this work, if not first, then in tandem with teaching staff and to make these efforts personal and public.

Current efforts in the district focus on voluntary professional development opportunities, for example the recent summer book clubs. Other efforts at the district in 2020-2021 have centered around Ethnic Studies courses and curriculum and professional development in the area of culturally responsive teaching. A recent Light Grant Award for educators designing history curriculum through a global lens funded through Yolo County has been taken up by two Davis elementary sites in order for the teachers at these sites to "become globally competent educators through reflection, equity-based curriculum design, and culturally responsive teaching practices" (LIGHT Awards Program, n.d., para. 1). Participating teachers will become teacher leaders who will then disseminate information back to their respective elementary school sites through teacher-led site-professional development opportunities. This is not the deep, sustained, mandated, prioritized holistic work that teachers in this study perceive as needed.

This study's findings are aligned with the literature suggesting teacher education, including professional development for those who teach in elementary school. This education should employ systematic, guided, and sustained explicitly racial literacy education in order to provide developmentally appropriate models for use in their own delivery of instruction that is rooted in explicit Teacher Performance Expectations and also California K-6 standards for students in every subject matter. By grounding all subject matters in antiracism, educational institutions can create systems of accountability. Currently, the policy and programmatic language that exists in California's Teacher Performance Expectations and California Standards for the Teaching Profession still only point to cultural competence for [White] teachers who cross-culturally teach students of color, without an explicit connection in the learning outcomes for developing teachers that can continually address their own racial ideology development explicitly around *Whiteness* and the antiracist work that White teachers need to be also doing within White populations (Brown, 2011; CTC, 2009). In schools consisting of a predominantly White population, developing teacher antiracial ideology and racial justice-related curriculum and pedagogy not only lack a sense of urgency, but can feel optional and be perceived as supplemental. It is neither. It will take a multifaceted, brave approach to move the educational ecosystem towards antiracism.

Future Research

It is clear that the teachers in this study perceive that facing and addressing White supremacy causes disequilibrium for White educators and administrators. Study participants mentioned fear, emotional pain, guilt, frustration, and anger as components of their White racial identity development due to the dissonance between their racial understandings created in their formative years and their current way of knowing that align with current research in the field

(Helms, 2020). Developing policy and programs as ways to address racialized trauma within school districts should be explored, as should the promise of affinity groups as learning and therapeutic cohorts. Future explorations into racial literacy parent education, the processes around antiracist curriculum development designed for use in the elementary years, and the extension of teacher research to include a wider racial sampling of teachers should be developed.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates the complexity and also viability of making cultural shifts within educational systems of compounded Whiteness. The findings from this study can be used as a tool to start conversations about the ways Whiteness functions in schools of compounded Whiteness, particularly elementary schools, and what can be done to disrupt White supremacy in systems not currently designed to recognize White cultural signs. This critical, missing piece of common understanding is how to engage and challenge White normative thought within predominantly White educational communities in order to dismantle it (Helms, 1995, 2020; Leonardo & Manning, 2017). When those who identify as White in the field of education better understand how White students benefit from a White teacher's antiracist development, teachers' antiracist ideological commitments can be more widely reinforced in curriculum and pedagogy, even in settings where the majority of students and families are White (Cabrera et al., 2017; DiAngelo, 2018; Heuschkel, 2013; Pennington, 2007; Sullivan, 2006).

APPENDIX A

Demographics Form

Title of Study – Compounded Whiteness: White teacher antiracist ideological commitment development in predominantly White elementary schools

As part of the interview process, I am collecting some basic data to help with understanding patterns in the data. Please take a few minutes to complete the form below. All information you provide will be kept confidential.

Name	
Race	
Years Teaching	
Degrees (Credentials/Trainings)	
Current and Past Teaching Positions in District	
Prior K-12 Experience, District, Location	

APPENDIX B

Consent to Participate in Research

University of California at Davis

Title of study: Compounded Whiteness: White teacher antiracist ideological commitment development in predominantly White elementary schools
Principal Investigator: Alicia Herrera

Introduction and Purpose

You are being invited to join a research study. The purpose of this study is to better understand the developmental experiences of elementary teachers who have been racialized as White and are working to disrupt racism in their thinking about their work. In this study, I hope to learn more about what a complex commitment to an antiracist personal development looks like for White elementary educators who teach in schools with a predominantly White student population.

If you agree to participate in this research, you will be asked to complete the following activities:

> **Interview.** I would like to interview you one time about your racial identity development and elementary teaching experiences. The interview will take no more than 90 minutes.
> **Focus Group.** I may ask if you are willing to participate in a follow-up a Zoom video focus group of a meeting with selected participants from the individual interviews in order to guide a conversation about workplace setting-specific understandings. The Focus Group will take no longer than 60 minutes.

For the Interview:

- The interview will be via Zoom meeting, audiotaped and transcribed, but your name will not be included on the transcription. Therefore, there is a minimal risk of a loss of confidentiality.
- All records of the interview will be destroyed after the project is completed.
- The risks of this research are minimal. Some of the questions might make you feel uncomfortable or upset. You do not have to answer any of the questions you do not want to answer.

For the Focus Group:

- The focus group will be via Zoom meeting, audiotaped and transcribed, but your name will not be included on the transcription. There is a minimal risk of a loss of confidentiality in record storage and reporting. What is said in this group setting should not be shared outside the group in order to protect everyone's privacy, although privacy cannot be guaranteed. You may choose to participate in this follow-up focus group or not and, if you choose to participate, you are not required to turn on your video and may choose to be assigned an alias.
- All records of the observation will be destroyed after the project is completed.
- The risks of this research are minimal. After the focus group is complete, I will share initial findings with participants.

There is no direct benefit to you from taking part in this study. However, we hope that the research will help to understand how what a complex commitment to an antiracist personal development looks like for White elementary educators who teach in schools with a predominantly White student population and how policy and teacher education programs may continue to support this development.

Confidentiality

As with all research, there is a chance that confidentiality could be compromised; however, I will be taking precautions to minimize this risk. Your responses to the interview questions may include information that identifies you. This identifiable information will be handled as confidentially as possible. However, individuals from UC Davis who oversee research may access your data during audits or other monitoring activities.

To minimize the risks of breach of confidentiality, all identifiable electronic data will be maintained on an encrypted device requiring a password for access. Passwords will not be shared and will be protected from access. All paper records will be stored in a locked room/file-cabinet with access limited to only individuals who have a right and need for access.

Compensation

You will not be paid for taking part in this study. Participation is completely voluntary, and you may opt out at any point in the process.

Rights

Participation in research is completely voluntary. You are free to decline to take part in the project. You can decline to answer any questions and you can stop taking part in the project at any time. Whether or not you choose to participate, or answer any question, or stop participating in the project, there will be no penalty to you or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Questions

If you have any questions about this research, please feel free to contact the investigator: Alicia Herrera at (916) 955-0524 or aliherrera@ucdavis.edu. *You will also be asked for verbal consent prior to the beginning of the interview.*

If you have any questions about your rights or treatment as a research participant in this study, please contact the University of California Davis, Institutional Review Board at (916) 703-9158 or HS-IRBEducation@ucdavis.edu.

APPENDIX C

Individual Interview Protocol

Title of Study – Compounded Whiteness: White teacher antiracist ideological commitment development in predominantly White elementary schools

SECTION	CONTEXT & QUESTIONS
Research Questions (*for interviewer reference only)*	RQ1. How do White elementary educators committed to racial justice and teaching in White educational spaces develop their White anti-racist positionalities? RQ2. What role do those positionalities play in their approaches to racial justice teaching with White students? RQ3. What programmatic and institutional and supports do these teachers identify as meaningful as they continue to develop their antiracist dispositions?
Welcome and Introduction	Thank you in advance for your participation today. My name is Alicia Herrera. I am a doctoral student in the CANDEL Educational Leadership program at UC Davis. Thank you for taking the time to meet with me today to share your experiences. Before we begin, I have emailed you a consent form, which you have reviewed and signed. I would like to go over the form together and reaffirm your willing ness to participate today. As you know, I will be recording our interview for research purposes and need your informed consent before we begin. The main purpose of this interview is to better understand some of the experiences of White teachers who are committed to racial justice and teaching in predominantly White schools. To this end, I will ask you a series of open-ended questions about your history, experiences, thoughts, and perspectives on issues of education, race, and antiracism. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers. Your participation today is voluntary, and you should only discuss things you feel comfortable discussing with me. You may leave the interview at any time. I will keep all information you provide confidential. To protect your confidentiality, your comments will not be linked with personally identifying information. I will be audio taping our discussion so I can listen to our conversation later. These tapes and my notes will be destroyed at the end of the study. To protect your confidentiality, please use your first name only. In transcription you will be assigned an alias. Finally, your personal

	identifying information will not appear in the published the results of this study. To start, I'm going to record basic information about this interview to keep myself organized…today is ___ (date), it's __'o-clock (time), we are holding this interview via Zoom meeting, I am interviewing _______ (name of interviewee), who is a (role in elementary school teaching) at __________ (school site). This interview should take about 90 minutes, please let me know if you have any questions.
Part 1: Background and Life History	1. Consider your childhood: the neighborhoods you grew up in and the kind of K-12 schools you attended (ex: public/private/charter, urban/rural, large/small). Can you briefly describe the setting (ex: urban, rural, suburb, small town)? (RQ1) 2. Can you briefly describe the kinds of people that lived in your neighborhood (class, race, and other factors that you think are important to note here)? How do you think the neighborhood/region in which you grew up influence how you see the world? *Probe for responses that point to racial identity development.* (RQ1) 3. How did you first learn about racism and discrimination? When did you learn that you are "White"? How old were you? Who were the teachers or agents of the experience? Did anyone help you to understand (or cope) with this these experiences? *Probe for responses that point to the development of understanding Whiteness*. (RQ1) 4. Are there key experiences (critical incidents, a-ha moment, trauma, epiphany, etc.) you have had that shape how you now see race and teaching for racial justice? Describe. (RQ1, RQ2) *Probe: What changed about you or the world that made ________ an activating moment?*
Part 2: Racialized Educational Experiences	5. Briefly describe the racial makeup of the schools you attended? *Probe for concrete information.* (RQ1) a. Students in the K-12 schools you attended? (RQ1) b. Teachers and other administrators in the K-12 schools you attended? (RQ1) c. Your closest friends in the K-12 schools you attended? (RQ1)

	d. Students in the undergraduate schools you attended? (RQ1) e. Teachers and other administrators in the undergraduate schools you attended? (RQ1) f. Your closest friends in the undergraduate schools you attended? (RQ1) g. Students in your teacher education program? (RQ1, RQ2) h. Faculty in your current teacher education program? (RQ1, RQ2) i. Your closest friends in your teacher education program? (RQ1, RQ2)
Part 3: White Teacher Identity	6. What do you think led you to become a teacher? *Probe about (antiracist) teaching philosophy.* (RQ1, RQ2) 7. What subject do/have you taught? (RQ2) 8. What grade do/did you teach in DJUSD? (RQ2) 9. How long have you/did you teach in DJUSD? (RQ2) 10. How do you define race? Whiteness? (RQ1, RQ2) 11. How do you define racism? (RQ1, RQ2) 12. What does it mean to be White and how does being White show up for you at work (has Whiteness been socially constructed in your work)? (RQ1, RQ2) 13. Can you tell me about a time in your teaching when you perpetuated racism? Tell me more about your thinking around this story/incident. 13. To what degree and in what ways does race (Whiteness) impact you as a teacher? (RQ2)
Part 4: Critical (Anti)Racial Consciousness Development	14. In what ways do you think your racial background (White) influences how you see the world? (RQ1, RQ2) 15. Describe an experience in which you were aware of Whiteness in your interactions with students. (RQ1, RQ2) 16. In what everyday situations and circumstances do you believe yourself to me most racially aware in? (RQ1, RQ2)

	17. Describe the ways that you regularly experience your (White) race in the classroom/teaching experience with elementary students. *Probe for experiences related to White students/* schools with predominantly White student and teacher populations (RQ2)
Part 5: Approaches to Racial Justice Teaching and Antiracist with schools comprised of predominantly White students	18. Tell me about your beliefs and values re: teaching through the lens of racial justice. (RQ2) 19. Can you tell me about how you came to have these views? (RQ1) 20. Describe how your philosophy about racial justice plays into your thinking/planning/reflecting on about your teaching. (RQ2) 21. What aspects of your teaching would you classify as racial justice (antiracist) work? RQ2) 22. How do you communicate your antiracist teaching philosophy at school? (RQ2) 23. In what ways do you think your racial background (White) influences how you see/think about racial justice in your teaching in a predominantly White school? (RQ1, RQ2)
Part 6: Supports And Challenges	24. How does teaching in DJUSD support your agenda as an antiracist teacher? (RQ2) 25. What are the challenges you face in pursuit of racial justice (antiracist) education for yourself and your educational community (students, colleagues, parents, etc.)? (RQ2)
Closing	Thank you for taking the time to meet today and to share your perspectives as a White teacher committed to racial justice in your community. Your thoughts and participation are critical this research and I value your perspective, insight, and experience. *(Potential probe for some: Would you be open to participating in a follow-up focus group with other teachers from this study?)*

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