Whiteness in Racial Dialogue:
A Discourse Analysis

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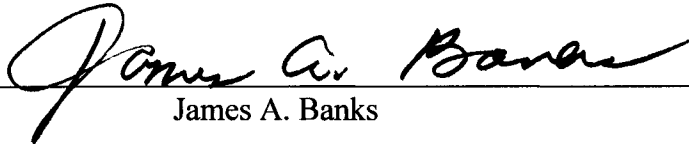
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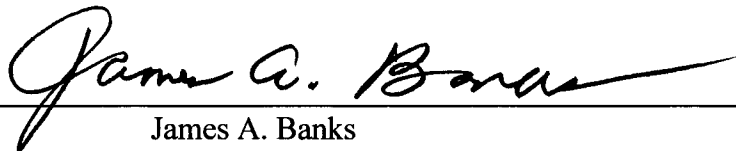This is to certify that I have examined this copy of a doctoral dissertation by
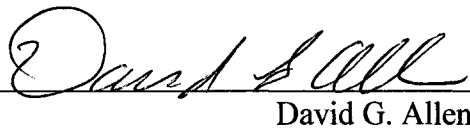
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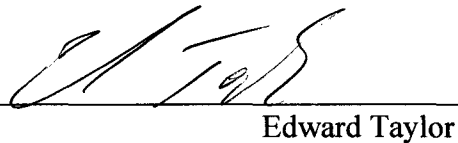examining committee have been made.

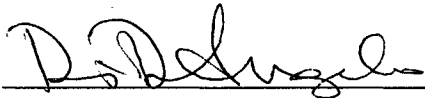Chair of Supervisory Committee:

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Abstract

Whiteness in Racial Dialogue:
A Discourse Analysis

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The purpose of this study was to describe and analyize the discourses used by

White preservice teachers in a dialogue about race with people of color. I used

Whiteness theory to frame my observations, which defines Whiteness as a set of

racialized relations that are historically, socially, politically and culturally produced.

These relations result in White domination of people of color. Whiteness is a function

of racism, and refers to the dimensions of racism that serve to elevate Whites.

From the framework of Whiteness, I observed a series of facilitated interracial

dialogues. Participants were seven White preservice teachers and five students of color.

They participated in a series of four, two-hour sessions facilitated by an interracial team

trained to lead dialogues on race. My analysis focused on describing the production of

Whiteness in this context and the ways in which White preservice teachers discursively

produced their racial positions in these conversations.

I used discourse analysis to analyze my observations. Discourse analysis is the

study of language use in social contexts, and is concerned with how ideologies are

communicated (Evans, 2002;Gee, 1999). Discourse analysis allows for a nuanced

explication of the socially and historically informed discourses that are available for

negotiating racial positions, and can reveal processes of racism that would likely be formally denied by participants (Van Dijk, 1993).

I document and analyze two master discourses of Whiteness in practice: individualism and universalism. Individualism posits that Whites are first and foremost individuals who have earned their place in society on their own merit. It works to deny that Whites benefit from their racial group memberships. Universalism posits that White interests and perspectives are objective and representative of all groups. An additional discourse that has not been highly visible in the Whiteness literature also surfaced: personal experience. This discourse represents racial perspectives as internal and private rather than as social or interrelational. All of these discourses serve to obscure White power and privilege and to reproduce Whiteness. I discuss the implications of these findings for teacher education, classroom teaching, and for White researchers conducting race related research.

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I thank my chair, Dr. James A. Banks, for the immeasurable contributions he has made to multicultural education; Dr. Edward Taylor, for his support and commitment to building a community of educators who understand education as a moral endeavor; and Dr. David Allen, for being the most inspiring, intellectually stimulating, and caring teacher I have ever known. David was my mentor in the truest sense of the word, and I thank him for the hours of support and attention he generously gave me.

I want to thank those who challenged and supported me in thinking and writing about these issues: Cheryl Cooke, Robin Boehler, Yih-Sheue Lin, Jason Toews, Amie Thurber and Christopher Knaus. I extend a special thank you to Özlem Sensoy for her steadfast encouragement, intelligence, and friendship; to Jason Toews, for his patience and the hours of editing he donated; to Dr. Ratnesh Nagda for the honor of teaching and learning together; and to Deborah Terry Hays, for showing me so much about racism and not giving up on me as a White woman struggling to become an ally.

And to the participants who volunteered for this study, I extend my deep appreciation for the contribution you made to anti-racist education.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Maryanne Jeanne DiAngelo, 1929 – 1967, whose life taught me the relationship between silence and suffering. To my sisters, Ardyth Yvonne DiAngelo and Dona Lynn Taylor. And to my daughter, Simone Rose Woolery, whose birth compelled me to take my life seriously, and showed me what I was capable of.

Chapter 1: Framing the Problem

I am a White woman. I am standing beside a Black woman. We are facing a group of White people who are seated in front of us. We are in their workplace, and have been hired by their employer to lead them in a dialogue about race. The room is filled with tension and charged with hostility. I have just presented a definition of racism that includes the acknowledgment that Whites hold social and institutional power over people of color. A White man is pounding his fist on the table. His face is red and he is furious. As he pounds he yells, "White people have been discriminated against for 25 years! A White person can't get a job anymore!" I look around the room and see 40 employed people, all White. There are no people of color in this workplace. Something is happening here, and it isn't based in the reality of this room. I am feeling unnerved by this man's disconnection with that reality. Why is this White man so angry? Why are all the other White people sitting in silent agreement with him? We have, after all, only articulated a definition of racism.

The Problem of Whiteness

Racism is an institutionalized system of power. It encompasses economic, political, social, and cultural structures, actions, and beliefs that systematize and perpetuate an unequal hierarchy of privileges, resources and power distributed between White people and people of color (Hilliard, 1992). Whiteness refers to dimensions of racism that serve to elevate White people over people of color. By using Whiteness as

the frame, this study focuses on the White end of the hierarchy of racism. Recognizing that the terms I am using are not "theory neutral 'descriptors' but theory-laden constructs inseparable from systems of injustice" (Allen, 1996, p.95), I use the terms *White* and *Whiteness* to describe a social process operating in U.S. society at large. This process not only denies students of color equality in U.S. schools, but most pointedly, elevates White students over students of color. Frankenberg (1993) defines Whiteness as multi-dimensional:

> Whiteness is a location of structural advantage, of race privilege.
> Second, it is a 'standpoint,' a place from which White people look at ourselves, at others, and at society. Third, 'Whiteness' refers to a set of cultural practices that are usually unmarked and unnamed. (p.1)

Frankenberg and other theorists (Fine, 1997; Dyer, 1997; Sleeter, 1993; Van Dijk, 1993) use Whiteness to signify a set of locations that are historically, socially, politically and culturally produced, and which are intrinsically linked to dynamic relations of domination. Scholars conceptualize race as a constellation of processes and practices rather than as a discrete entity (Brodkin, 1998; Jacobson, 1998; Omi & Winant, 1989).

Whiteness is both "empty," in that it is normalized and thus typically unmarked, and content laden or "full," in that it generates norms and reference points, ways of conceptualizing the world, and ways of thinking about oneself and others, regardless of where one is positioned relationally within it (Dyer, 1997; Frankenberg, 2001).

However, because Whiteness operates relationally, the interpretation and consequences of Whiteness vary depending on who is interacting and in what context. Based on this definition, Whiteness can be conceptualized as the context that creates, authorizes, and maintains racist relations, and that is a socially constructed and interactive process (Frankenberg, 2001; Dyer, 1997; Roediger, 1997). This definition counters the representation of racism as isolated in discrete incidents in which some individuals may or may not perpetuate, and goes deeper than naming specific privileges (McIntosh, 1988). Whiteness theory posits that Whites are actively shaped through their racialization, and their individual and collective consciousness are racially informed (Frankenberg,1997; Morrison, 1992; Tatum, 1997).

Concepts such as *White* and *people of color* are socially constructed (Omi & Winant, 1989). These concepts and the relations they signify are highly interrelated. We come to know who we are racially, in large part, through understanding who we are not (Dyer, 1997; Morrison, 1993). Whiteness is about the relationship of dominance between Whites and people of color. This domination is enacted moment by moment on individual, interpersonal, cultural, and institutional levels (Frankenberg, 2001). By using a relational definition of Whiteness and racism, students and teachers can explore their own relationship to racism and are less likely to focus on specific incidences, a focus that makes a personal, interpersonal, cultural, historical, and structural analysis difficult (Macedo & Bartolome, 1999).

The ideology of Whiteness becomes actualized and normalized for White people to the point of invisibility by way of language, media, and schooling (Patterson, 1998). Explicating the operation of Whiteness is an essential strategy for interrupting it. Macedo and Bartolome (1999) challenge educators to attend to this task when they state that Whiteness employs sophisticated pedagogical practices that serve to construct dehumanized cultural subjects. These practices are then obscured through the veil of Whiteness and therefore educators, they believe, should become "cultural brokers," fluent in recognizing and articulating the active dynamics of Whiteness in order to "help create psychologically beneficial pedagogical space for all students." (p. 20)

Sleeter (1993), when discussing how White teachers construct race, states that White people need to learn about and understand racism and that "This means beginning their reeducation by forcing them to examine White privilege and planning long-term learning experiences that anticipate the various strategies White people use to avoid and reinterpret education about race" (p.169). In order to plan long-term learning experiences that accomplish Sleeter's goal, teacher educators must be able to recognize these avoidance strategies. These strategies and the racial interests they protect can be seen as a function of White privilege. Vodde (2001) states, "If privilege is defined as a legitimization of one's entitlement to resources, it can also be defined as permission to escape or avoid any challenges to this entitlement" (p. 3). The more clarity we have about strategies that White student teachers use when their racial privilege is challenged and how and when these strategies manifest, the more effective teacher educators might be in challenging White patterns of domination.

Goldberg (1993) argues that the questions surrounding racial discourse should not focus so much on how true stereotypes are, but how the truth claims they offer are a part of a larger worldview that authorizes and normalizes forms of domination and control. Further, it is relevant to ask: Under what conditions are those truth-claims clung to most tenaciously? Under what conditions are these truth-claims resisted or altered? Roman (1993) argues that simplistic explanations of racist relations need to be abandoned and that this means focusing attention on the variability of racist discourses and the contextual nuances in which they are articulated. She states:

> To ask how race operates in daily practice as a set of complex and changeable meanings is to take one modest step away from the essentialist discourse of race and toward a focus on the *unequal effects of racism* between groups of people. It means drawing attention to the dynamic interconnections between representational practices and discourses of 'race' and the power (or lack thereof) of various groups to voice *oppositional difference from or solidarity with* the racialized hegemonic centers of White power. (italics in original, p. 73)

It isn't enough for educators to be aware that Whiteness *does* operate inter-relationally. We need to understand *how* it operates in ways that are familiar and recognizable. This is what I describe in this study. My overarching research question was: What are the social processes by which White preservice teachers produce and maintain their racial positions in a contested situation? In seeking answers to this

question, I hope to contribute to Sleeter's (1993) task of designing race education programs that anticipate White student teacher resistance, and which can thereby be made more effective. In many of the courses I teach in multicultural education, White student teachers struggle with the question of how to apply theory to practice. Further, they want to understand what they are personally doing, albeit unintentionally, to perpetuate racism. By describing these processes, I believe my research can contribute to White teachers' ability to bridge theory and practice by providing concrete and familiar examples of the ways that Whiteness is enacted in social interaction.

An Explanation of Terms Used

Contest: In this analysis, contest refers to naming, marking, or otherwise attempting to make an aspect of Whiteness visible.

Discourse: The integration of language and non-language (ideology, beliefs, thinking, feeling, behaving, etc.) to produce meaning.

Discourse analysis: the study of language and the way that meaning is made through language in action and in social contexts.

Discursive: Discourse (language) in action.

Feeling-states: Someone's emotions at a given moment. In the context of this analysis, using one's emotions to describe, explain, or justify a social phenomenon is to invoke a feeling-state.

Move: a discursive (linguistic) strategy used to support or challenge current power relations (moves can range from eye-rolling and interrupting a speaker, to silence, debate or invoking dominant ideologies).

Countermove: an alternative discursive strategy used in response to a previous move.

Narrative: A story that explains social reality, usually in support of dominant ideologies.

Counter-narrative: An alternative story that explains social reality in ways that challenge dominant ideologies.

Performance(ative): The use of discourse to achieve an effect – "performing" or enacting discourse (performances do not have to be conscious or intentional).

Racism: an institutionalized system of White power, encompassing economic, political, social, and cultural structures, actions, and beliefs that systematize and ensure an unequal distribution of privileges, resources and power between White people and people of color (Hilliard, 1992).

Race: a social construct by which groups of people are placed into categories that ensure that they will either be the beneficiaries or the victims of racism.

Racialized: ascribed racial classification or meaning.

A note about language use: the American Psychological Association guidelines (APA) require that I capitalize forms of the word White (as well as Black) but not the phrase "people of color."

Positioning Myself

Although I am using the researcher's voice when speaking about White people and Whiteness, I am White and also implicated in racist relations with people of color. I do not place myself outside of this analysis.

As a White researcher, naming the production of Whiteness has specific goals for me. First and foremost, in working to expose racism's mechanisms, I want to reduce its power. My racial location gives me several advantages here. My socialization as a White person, and my insider's position among other Whites, provides me a specific and critical entry point into understanding racism. I understand how Whiteness is internalized for Whites because I have been socialized to be White. Further, when I talk about racism with other Whites, there is a certain raced-based legitimacy I am granted. This legitimacy, although a function of White privilege, enables me to hold other Whites accountable for racism without being seen as having a personal investment. By utilizing my racial position in this way, I am attempting to use my unearned privilege in the service of undermining racism. By breaking silence about racism, I also seek to counter my socialization as a White person to collude with racism by remaining silent. Finally, by naming racism and Whiteness, and struggling to break complicity with it, I hope to encourage other Whites to do the same.

My White racial position is clearly an asset in the ways listed above. However, as much as my position provides me insight into racism, it also blinds me. I was raised as a White person, and I have been socialized within a White dominant culture. This socialization is thoroughly internalized and informs my interpretations and relations in the social world. Being a researcher on Whiteness is a comfortable racial position for me to take up; this position sits well with my internalized dominance. While I am resisting Whiteness by seeking to renegotiate racist relations, I am also participating in Whiteness via my position as an "expert" on Whiteness. At the same time, I have been immersed for the past ten years in the personal and professional work of taking up counter-narratives to my racist socialization. Through my involvement with anti-racist activities, I may also be capitalizing on a position as an exceptional or "good" White – good in that I may be seen as "less racist" than other Whites. All of these positions inform and complicate my engagement with, and analsis of, this data.

Review of the Literature on Whiteness

Race scholars argue that there are two interrelated components missing in most efforts that address inequity: The existence of privilege and how it shapes those who hold it, and the defining relationship *between* privileged and marginalized groups (Dyer, 1997; Frankenberg, 1997; McIntosh, 1988; Morrison, 1992; Powell, 1997; Tatum, 1997). Powell states, "What may be missing from this literature and from various interventions is a better understanding of the role that Whiteness plays in the knot of minority student failure" (p. 1). By focusing primarily on the academic performance of

students of color and ignoring the defining relationship between that performance and the production of Whiteness in the classroom, racism is externalized. This approach reinforces the "otherness" of difference and leaves the operation of power neutralized, unquestioned and intact. A primary example is when White teachers study youth of color without the critical and corollary study of themselves in relation to those youth (Sleeter, 1996). Levine-Rasky (2000) recommends a revised approach to Whiteness that "...shifts to the discourse, the culture, the structures, the mechanisms, and the social relations of Whiteness that produce racialized subjects including Whites" (p. 271).

Whiteness scholars strive to transform oppressive relations, focusing on those that are racialized (Fine, 1997; Flax, 1998; Sleeter, 1993). A discourse on Whiteness within the context of multicultural education fits well within the five dimensions of multicultural education conceptualized by Banks, (1995), particularly within the domains of knowledge construction and equity pedagogy. These dimensions are content integration; the knowledge construction process; prejudice reduction; equity pedagogy; and empowering school culture. In addressing knowledge construction, Banks (1996) states that "...the knowledge that people create is heavily influenced by their interpretations of their experiences and their positions within particular social, economic, and political systems and structures of a society" (p. 6). Further, these positions are constituted through relations of power (Banks, 1996; Dyer, 1997; Fiske, 1989; Frankenberg, 1997). In highlighting the power basis of knowledge construction, Fiske (1989) asserts that

Knowledge is never neutral. It never exists in an empiricist, objective

relationship to the real. Knowledge is power, and the circulation of knowledge

is part of the social distribution of power. The discursive power to construct a

commonsense reality that can be inserted into cultural and political life is central

in the social relationships of power. (pp. 149 - 150)

Whiteness scholars within the field of multicultural education seek to unravel the

racialized intersection between social position, knowledge construction, and power

(Apple, 1997; Macedo & Bartolome, 1999; Nieto, 2002; Sleeter, 1993; Tatum, 2002).

Most classes and texts that focus on race and racial identity formation in

education emphasize the impact of racism on students of color (Lee, 1996; Olsen, 1997;

Valenzuela, 2001). Teachers may be taught, for example, the ways in which racism is

internalized by students of color, and how this internalization influences these students

in multiple dimensions of their lives. Understanding that students of color are often

having very different experiences in the classroom than their White counterparts is

important for White teachers and an essential interruption of the dominant discourse

that serves to render their experiences invisible (Delpit, 1992; Lee, 1997; Liu, 2001;

Olsen, 1997). What this focus leaves unexamined, however, are the political and social

privileges and preferences that White teachers and students receive by virtue of their

racialized location (Delpit, 1992; McIntosh, 1988).

When multicultural educators study oppression only in terms of its effects on

those oppressed, they risk denying agency to students of color by implying that they are

solely victims of oppression. This emphasis renders the dynamic and co-constructed dimension of power relations invisible and keeps dominant norms in place (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997). To study cultural difference without a discourse that asks different *from what* is to suggest that dominant group members need only acquire cultural sensitivity and that with information and practice, can stand outside of these social power relations. Razack (1999) states "In sum, the cultural differences approach reinforces an important epistemological cornerstone of imperialism: the colonized possess a series of knowable characteristics that can be studied, known, and managed accordingly by the colonizers whose own complicity remains masked" (p. 10). Whiteness is thus the center through which racial others are relegated to the margins, and also the background against which those margins are set. To remain both center and background, Whiteness depends upon silence and invisibility. Lee (1997) states, "Within the racist discourse, there is silence surrounding Whiteness. This silence normalizes Whiteness and naturalizes White power and privilege" (p. 90). Dyer (1997) argues that:

> ... the point of seeing the racing of Whites is to dislodge them/us from the
> position of power, with all the inequities, oppressions, privileges and sufferings
> in its train, dislodging them by undercutting the authority by which they/we
> speak and act in and on the world (p. 2).

In other words, if our goal is to interrupt the production of racial inequity in the classroom, so that ultimately no one's race affords them more or less access, we must

first acknowledge the impact of race on White teachers and students, and their relationships to one another and people of color, because the un-naming of Whiteness serves to secure its privileged location. Frankenberg (1997) supports this goal when she says, "Naming Whiteness displaces it from the unmarked, unnamed status that is itself an effect of dominance" (pg 37). The lack of a discourse on Whiteness in most mainstream classrooms maintains a power differential that is manifested in interactions between students of color and White students and teachers (Macedo & Bartolome, 1999; Powell, 1997). Whiteness draws much of its power from the absence of this discourse. In order to interrupt the production of racial inequity in the classroom, it is necessary to first expose the racialized dimension of interactions among all students. Naming alone does not dislodge deeply embedded power positions but is a preliminary part of the process.

According to Whiteness scholars, power relations are not fixed or eternal, but are circuits of norms and practices that require maintenance (Fine, 1997; Flax, 1998; Frankenberg, 1997). A major goal of a discourse on Whiteness within multicultural education is to make apparent what is often transparent or obscured, which are the circuits of power in racialized intergroup dynamics (Fine, 1997). Identifying the production of Whiteness is an attempt to break open one of these circuits, exposing aspects of its operation. This allows an opportunity to track the flow of power, and potentially interrupt it, for Whiteness maintains its dominance in part through invisibility (Flax, 1998).

In exposing power dynamics, a discourse on Whiteness attempts to show not just how Whiteness oppresses people of color, but most pointedly, how Whiteness elevates White people (McIntosh, 1988). The more clarity there is about the production of Whiteness, the more ability there is to recognize and interrupt its manifestation in everyday classroom interactions and to create space for counter-narratives. Examples of the manifestation of Whiteness in multicultural classrooms include: the absence of a power analysis of racism (Banks, 1996; Macedo & Bartolome, 1999; Nieto, 2002); the domination of classroom resources by White students (Ellsworth, 1997; Powell, 1997); a discourse of "disadvantage" or "cultural deprivation" which indirectly blames racially oppressed groups for their marginalization when they are victims of racism (Ryan, 2001); and the insistence on comfort and minimal conflict from White students and teachers (Sleeter, 1993).

The literature suggests that a major first step in the elimination of inequality is the acknowledgment that those who are not directly losing are indeed benefiting, and therefore are invested, in inequality (Apple, 1997; Dyer, 1997; Fine, 1997; McIntosh, 1988; Powell, 1997; Rodriguez, 1998; Sleeter, 1993; Tatum, 1997; Winant, 1997). This inequality is constantly being contested by marginalized groups and must be actively maintained. Social subjects are produced in dynamic relationship with one another. Therefore, in being a White U.S. student, one is positioned *in relation to*, not separate from, immigrants and students of color. Fine (1998) states that "Whiteness, like all colors, is being manufactured, in part, through institutional arrangements. Schools and work, for example, do not merely manage race; they create and enforce racial

meanings" (pg. 58). But because race is negotiated, rather than fixed, it is also unstable and susceptible to acts of resistance and contestation (Flax, 1998; Frankenberg, 2001).

In summary, interrogating Whiteness has emerged from the frequent failure of multicultural education initiatives to adequately identify where change needs to occur. Many traditional solutions to inequitable educational outcomes for racialized groups of students have been directed towards the problems of racialized "others" and to the challenges of implementing culturally relevant pedagogy, rather than to the workings of the dominant culture itself. Levine-Rasky (2000) calls this misidentification "the focus on the space between 'us' and 'them'"(p. 272). To conceptualize Whiteness not as a fixed and unified variable, but rather as a set of practices including the practice of Whites racializing others but not themselves allows teachers to identify and begin to change those practices. This conceptualization reveals the relational dimension of racialization and indicates that an intellectual analysis alone cannot bring about transformation.

Students and teachers need to actively examine their own cultural knowledge, stereotypes and assumptions (Banks, 1996), renegotiate relationships across racialized difference (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997), engage in an ongoing critical analysis of themselves as socially located subjects (Banks, 1996, Weber, 2001), develop skills in conflict resolution (Derman-Sparks & Phillips 1997), and feel empowered to participate in change-oriented action (Giroux, 1999; McLaren, 2002). To meet these goals

educators need to recognize Whiteness in operation. I hope that my research will contribute to this recognition.

Interrupting Whiteness

In seeking to analyze Whiteness as a discursive process, I am attentive to the group dynamics involved in the production of Whiteness: the unspoken, unmarked, classroom norms and behavioral patterns that bolster the advantageous social position of White students at the expense of students of color. Dyer (1997) suggests that race is always operating and always a factor in social relations. To conceptualize race as an ever-present, unbounded process of domination rather than as isolated in discrete incidents necessitates an acknowledgment that race, and thus Whiteness, is necessarily being produced in classrooms, for this conceptualization prevents anyone from locating themselves outside these dynamic relations.

Levine-Rasky (2000), in writing about multicultural initiatives to address Whiteness, states that "My general criticism...involve their preoccupation with questions of 'who' is Whiteness rather than 'how' Whiteness is elaborated in the social order" (p. 274). She calls for a reconstruction of inquiry and asks, "How does one set of relations emerge in social and political contexts? What does Whiteness mean in relation to whom? What are the effects within those relationships?" (p. 285). Given the reluctance in White people to talk directly about race or racism (Sleeter, 1993), as well as the predominantly segregated environments in which many White students function, I was interested in the actual group dynamics of these dialogues in real time – what is occurring, when it occurs, and between whom. In my analysis, I describe how White power and privilege are maintained under conditions in which it is being challenged.

Specifically, my interest is in the strategies that White teacher education students use to counter attempts to disrupt the enactment of Whiteness. These were my secondary research questions:

- How is Whiteness enacted by Whites in an educational context that seeks to disrupt it?

- What techniques do White students use to keep their White perspectives and interests central?

- When faced with attempts to de-center White perspectives and interests, what emotional responses do White students have?

- What role do those emotional responses play in maintaining and protecting their social privilege?

- What do facilitators or other group members do to counter these responses?

Dialogue Process

I focused on the variability and contextual nuances of Whiteness in the context of racial interaction by observing the group dynamics of a series of intergroup racial dialogues. Intergroup is defined here as the presence of several members of key racialized groups, rather than a predominantly single race (or racially segregated) group (Nagda, Hardin, & Moise-Swanson, 2001; Schoem, et al, 2001). I was interested in these dynamics within the context of an intergroup dialogue. The presence of people of color in the dialogues allowed for the production of counter-narratives to Whiteness and a forum in which to observe how White preservice teachers respond to racialized

counter-narratives. The most recent data about U. S. teachers show that the majority of elementary and secondary school teachers are female and White. In 1999, the teacher population was 87 % White (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1999) and 74 % female (Snyder, 1999). Recent estimates indicate that the percentage of White teachers in public schools is increasing (Snyder, 1999). In contrast, approximately 35 percent of students in classrooms are of color: 16 % Black/African American, 14 % Hispanic, 3.8 % Asian/Pacific American, and 1 % American Indian/Alaskan Native teachers (Snyder, 1999). It may be hypothesized from these statistics that although many White preservice teachers do not interact with people of color in any direct or sustained way in their preparation programs and therefore racial counter-narratives are seldom available to them, they will likely be teaching students of color once they enter the public schools. It is important to describe their responses to counter-narratives in order to anticipate how best to introduce these narratives. The intergroup context itself is an interruption of the typical segregation that is embedded in many teacher education programs and thus an ideal site for observation.

Although this study borrowed from a methodology connected to the study of intergroup relations, that of intergroup dialogue, it is not an intergroup dialogue study because of the many limitations and variations that did not emphasize or allow for the realization of the goals of intergroup dialogue. To clarify these limitations, I will start with an overview of intergroup dialogue and describe which aspects of intergroup dialogue are incorporated into this study and which aspects are not.

Nagda and Derr (2002) define intergroup dialogues "…as facilitated, face-to-face encounters between two or more social identity groups that have a history of conflict or the potential thereof" (p. 16). Intergroup dialogue incorporates many of the goals articulated by Whiteness scholars: challenging misconceptions and stereotypes; developing increased personal and social awareness of social group membership, developing critical thinking skills; building skills for working with conflict across differences, especially those marked by power; and taking action for social justice oriented change (Ellsworth, 1997; Macedo & Bartolome, 1999; Nagda & Zúñiga, 2003; Nagda, Harding, Moise-Swanson, Balassone, Spearmon, & DeMello, 2001; Powell, 1997). Intergroup dialogues are also guided encounters that are sustained over time (Nagda et al 2001).

The principles of intergroup dialogue, which are reflected in its goals, are: (1) engaging across differences, especially those marked by social power; (2) educating and raising the critical consciousness about the impact of multiple levels of oppression and privilege in participant's lives; and (3) change oriented, social justice based action (Nagda, 2000; Nagda & Zúñiga, 2003). These principles and goals are achieved through a range of sustained dialogic encounters and unfold through four key stages of intergroup dialogue: (1) group beginnings; (2) learning about commonalities and differences in experiences; (3) working with controversial issues and intergroup conflicts; and (4) envisioning change and taking action (Nagda, 2001).

The process used in this study incorporated three of the four key stages of intergroup dialogue. Session one established group beginnings by clarifying ground rules and discussion norms and surfacing each participant's goals for the group. Session two used an exercise that was designed to surface commonalities and differences in the group's experience of racial socialization patterns and to use this exercise as a springboard for further discussion. Session three addressed conflict and controversial issues within the group by naming specific observed patterns and opening the discussion around participant's responses to these patterns. Session four did not focus on envisioning change or action, but rather continued the direction established in session three, dialoguing about patterns manifesting in the group itself. Not focusing on change or action was a significant departure from intergroup dialogue. Of the key goals of intergroup dialogue only the first goal was attempted: engaging across differences marked by social power.

The dialogues were not a sustained process and therefore even where the process did converge with the goals of intergroup dialogue, the short duration of the study did not enable the attainment of these goals. The over-arching goal of the study, to surface and describe the processes by which White participants negotiated their racial positions in the dialogue, was not consistent with many of the goals of intergroup dialogue and makes any significant connection impossible.

Summary

In summary, in this chapter I provided an introduction for the study. The purpose of this study was to describe and analyize the discourses used by White preservice teachers in a dialogue about race with people of color. I used Whiteness theory to frame my observations, and defined Whiteness as a set of racialized relations that are historically, socially, politically and culturally produced. These relations result in White domination of people of color. Whiteness is a function of racism, and refers to the dimensions of racism that serve to elevate Whites. I also defined other key terms used in the study, and provided a theoretical framework for conceptualizing Whiteness as a problem in education. I conducted a review of the literature on Whiteness, and the place of my research question within this literature. Finally, I overviewed how this data might contribute to teacher education.

In the next chapter, I provide an overview of my research methodology. I define discourse analysis and overview the study procedures, including choice of site, data collection methods, coding, validity, and limitations. I position myself as a White researcher analyzing Whiteness, and provide the racial demographics of the participants.

Chapter 2: Methodology

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis is the study of language and the making of meaning in action and in social contexts. It is a method of investigating the back-and-forth dialogues which constitute social action, along with patterns of signification and representation which constitute culture (Davies & Harre, 1990; Gee, 1999; Wetherell, Taylor & Yates, 2002). Gee (1999) states that "Meaning is not general and abstract, not something that resides in dictionaries, or even in general symbolic representations inside people's heads. Rather, it is situated in specific social and cultural practices, and it is continually transformed in those practices" (p. 63). Discourse analysis is attentive to the usages of language and how those usages position speakers in relation to others, both physically present others and larger categories of others (i.e. social groups). Language is not conceptualized as a transparent or neutral transmitter of one's core ideas or self. Rather, language is conceptualized as historically and socially situated, and discourse analysis is concerned with how ideologies are communicated and what the multiple effects might be (Evans, 2002). Discourse analysis is a useful tool in explicating Whiteness because it allows for a nuanced analysis of the socially and historically informed discourses that are available for negotiating racial positions. Discourse analysis can reveal processes of racism that otherwise would be difficult to establish, or that would be formally denied by the majority of participants (Van Dijk, 1993).

In differentiating discourse analysis from other forms, Van Dijk (1993) states

that "Although there are many directions in the study and critique of social inequality,

the way we approach these questions and dimensions is by focusing on *the role of*

discourse in the (re)production and challenge of dominance" (original emphasis, p.

300). I am interested in the social processes by which White people produce and

maintain their racial position and power in situations in which their position is being

challenged. Using Gee's definition of meaning as situated in specific social practices

and transformed (or reinstated) through those practices and focusing on the production

and interruption of Whiteness, my goal was to explicate how racialized meaning is

generated, contested, and/or transformed in the practice of a facilitated, intergroup racial

dialogue. Van Dijk, in describing critical discourse analysis, states:

> This does not mean that we see power and dominance merely as
>
> unilaterally 'imposed' on others. On the contrary, in many situations,
>
> and sometimes paradoxically, power and even power abuse may seem
>
> 'jointly produced', e.g. when dominated groups are persuaded, by
>
> whatever means, that dominance is 'natural' or otherwise legitimate.
>
> Thus, although an analysis of strategies of resistance and challenge is
>
> crucial for our understanding of actual power and dominance relations in
>
> society, and although such an analysis needs to be included in a broader
>
> theory of power, and counter-power and discourse, our critical approach
>
> prefers to focus on the elites and their discursive strategies for the
>
> maintenance of inequality (p. 300).

Because the majority of preservice teachers are White and thus the primary change-object, this analysis focused on elites and describes "top-down" relations of dominance rather than "bottom-up" relations of resistance, compliance, or acceptance. The potential for this 'top-down' analysis to reinscribe Whiteness is discussed in chapter 6.

Choice of Site

There are a number of key components in an interracial dialogue on race that are relevant to my study. The most important dimension of these dialogues (in contrast to a classroom setting) for the study of Whiteness is that the explicit agenda was to talk about race, and therefore race was not competing with other topics or processes. My goal was to observe the ways in which White participants perform racially in these dialogues; how the mechanisms of discourse get "...recruited, 'on-site,' to 'pull off' specific social activities and identities (membership in various social groups and institutions)" (Gee, 1999, p. 1).

In a racial dialogue, a number of key filters that can obscure the operation of resistance are removed: the White social taboo of talking directly about race; the power differential between students and teachers that can compel participants to attempt to perform "correctly;" pedagogical practices such as lectures that can thwart discussion; and physical logistics that make it easier for participants to "hide," for example behind tables and rows. Typically, in a dialogue session, participants are sitting in a circle, talking directly to one another, and guided by facilitators (Weiler, 1995).

I observed dialogues that were led by designated facilitators who guided the discussion, and led exercises designed to surface reactions and reflections about race. I was interested in a facilitated discussion because racial dialogues are complex social processes, and facilitators are trained in guiding participants towards specific explorations and analyses. Also, facilitators are not in a teacher role, which can inhibit responses due to power differentials (Nagda, Zuniga, & Sevig, 1995). I used an interracial team of facilitators, which allowed me to observe participant responses to the facilitators based on race. At the same time, the facilitators themselves were situated within racial discourse, and their performance under these conditions was also content laden and rich material for analysis. The ways in which an interracial team of facilitators perform racially with one another, and in relation to the group, were also relevant information for my study.

Participant Selection

The White participants in the dialogues were recruited from among teacher education students enrolled in a Masters in Teaching program. Observing student teachers was useful in that this is the population I want my research to influence. The area or discipline of the students was not important (i.e. elementary education students vs. secondary students, science vs social studies) because I am tying my analysis to a wider, macro-level analysis of how Whiteness functions overall in U.S. society (Dyer, 1997; Fine, 1997; Frankenberg, 2001; Roediger, 1997; Sleeter, 1993).

The participants were racially mixed. Observing an all-White, or primarily White group, although still utilitarian, would not surface the range of discourses I was interested in explicating. White participants were recruited from the College of Education Teacher Education Program (TEP) at a major research university located in the Northwest United States. I sent a third-party email to all TEP students in the program, inviting them to participate in the study. In recognition of the limited racial diversity in the TEP program, I recruited participants of color from other departments to which I have access, such as the School of Social Work.

The group was comprised of 13 participants. Less than 10 participants would not have provided a wide enough range of discourses. More than 18 would have allowed too many participants to be inactive in the dialogue (Schoem, Frankel, Zuniga, & Lewis, 1995).

Data Collection Methods

I observed four, two-hour sessions. By following one group, I observed a sustained activity, enabling me to record discourse variations over time (Sherman, Cunningham, Ramos, & Villarosa, 1998). I was present during these sessions, taking notes on my observations.

Each session was also videotaped. The videotapes allowed me to revisit sessions and to verify observation transcripts. Videotapes also allowed me to secure reliability via agreement from another content expert in Whiteness studies. Although the perspectives of all researchers are situated in and limited by their social locations, as a

White researcher studying Whiteness, I have very specific challenges regarding my analysis. These challenges range from the relative invisibility of Whiteness to me as a racialized member of U.S. culture, to my own socialized investment in and enactment of White privilege (Frankenberg, 1997). One way to interrupt the manifestation of my own role in the reinstatement of Whiteness was to ask for the perspectives of a content expert, as well as the perspectives of the facilitators themselves. Including these viewpoints served to ensure interrater reliability.

Coding

I was interested in discourses and practices taken up in racial dialogues that support White domination and privilege (resistance to de-centering Whiteness). Gee (1999) argues that the main functions of language are to "scaffold" relationships and social structures. Thus, language is a tool that people use to create, maintain and change relationships and to perform institutional practices that in turn create, maintain, reinforce or challenge social hierarchies (Allen, 2002). I analyzed the data that I gathered using Gee's (1999) model of discourse analysis.

As adapted from Gee (1999), the concepts of situated identities, social languages, and discourses will be used here. Situated identities refer to different identities or social positions enacted and recognized in different settings. Social languages refer to different styles of language that are used to enact and recognize different identities in various settings. Discourses are the ways that participants

integrate language with "non-language" to produce meaning. This integration was particularly relevant to my study, and is defined by Gee as

> ...different ways of thinking, acting, interacting, valuing, feeling, believing, and using symbols, tools, and objects, and in the right places and at the right times so as to enact and recognize different identities and activities, give the material world certain meanings, distribute social goods in a certain way, make certain sorts of meaningful connections in our experience, and privilege certain symbol systems and ways of knowing over others. (pp. 12-13)

These situational discourses were tied to wider, ongoing historical themes that have been the focus of different texts and interactions over time and across an array of institutions.

With these conceptual tools of inquiry in mind, the following coding questions, adapted from Gee (1999), guided my observations:

- What social languages are involved? Are different social languages mixed? If so, how?

- What socially situated identities and activities do these social languages enact? What kinds of social moves trigger their enactment?

- What discourses are involved? How are these discourses indicative of socially situated identities and activities?

- What negotiations and struggles are going on in interactions over this language? What are the actual or possible social, institutional, and political consequences of these struggles?

- What relationships among different discourses taken up here are involved (institutionally, in society, or historically)? How are different discourses aligned or in contention here?

- What links between these discourses are relevant here, and to what wider discourses do these links contribute (institutionally, in society, or historically)?

Specific examples of these questions applied to a study of Whiteness might include:

- Are discourses that position participants as "individuals" or as "group members" taken up? If so, who takes them up and under what circumstances?

- Are these discourses (individual vs. group member) contested? If so, by whom?

- Do individuals switch between discourses – i.e. at times positioning themselves as individuals and at other times as a group member? Are there racial patterns in this positioning?

- What are the institutional consequences of discourses in contention? For example, does a discourse of the individual support or contest larger institutional structures and racialized social arrangements? Does a discourse of group membership support or contest institutional structures and racialized social arrangements?

My initial category of coding was racial demographics, based on participant self-identification. I coded conversational patterns racially, and examined the literature to identify how the racialized location of the speaker gives particular social meaning to what is said. In other words, what someone says has different social significance based on his or her racial identification. How participants respond to speakers is also informed by the racialized identity of both the speaker and the respondents. I coded the self-identified race of all participants and facilitators. I also noted when they spoke, for how long, how often, under what circumstances, and with what perceived emotional valence (Powell, 1997).

I coded directional patterns for issues of domination and control, such as:

- Who controlled the flow of the conversation?

- What topics were under discussion when the conversational space was shared? When it was White dominated? When it was dominated by people of color?

- Were there particular moves that were more likely to elicit dominant discourses?

I observed the types of discourse strategies the participants of color used to center their interests and experiences, and/or to counter White strategies, and the responses of the White participants to these strategies. I was also interested in how agreement functioned because agreement is a significant strategy in discursive power negotiations (Ellsworth, 1997). I was attentive to non-verbal discursive practices, such as body positioning and eye contact. I recorded how silence was used, by whom, for how long, and under what conditions.

I was also interested in the types of discursive work being done in these dialogues: e.g. emotional vs. intellectual. Discourse analysis conceptualizes emotions as socially constructed and addresses how people talk about emotions, whether claiming or avowing their own or ascribing them to others, and how they use emotional categories in discourse. I was interested in emotion categories because they are used in assigning causes and motives, including blaming, excusing and accounting (Edwards, 1997). Further, emotional work, because it is often "assigned" to marginalized rather than privileged groups, is a site of struggle (Code, 1991; Collins, 2000).

I noted if and when the ideological discourses that underpin Whiteness such as "abstract individualism" and "racial innocence" appeared in the dialogues and what kinds of performances evoked them (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Flax, 1993). I asked how concepts of normalcy were negotiated, and what was deemed "correct" and "incorrect." I also asked: What do concepts such as these convey about the ways in which social goods are or should be distributed? How were these concepts contested?

In analyzing whether social processes enhanced, diminished, or were irrelevant to the production of Whiteness, I returned to the literature for key definitions and tenets of Whiteness. I used these tenets as a kind of template with which to compare and contrast my findings.

Gee (1999) states that "Studying the way in which situations produce and reproduce institutions, and are, in turn sustained by them, is an important part of discourse analysis" (pp. 83-84). I integrated my coding into a larger argument about

Whiteness by identifying patterns of language and related practices and showing how these patterns were historically situated. Gee's (1999) questions linking discourses enacted in social interactions with larger discourses are relevant here:

- What relationships among different discourses taken up here are involved (institutionally, in society, or historically)?

- How are different discourses aligned or in contention here?

I analyzed how participants deployed and contested various dominant racial narratives that have been in play over time and across a range of institutions. I analyzed how and when participants and facilitators used these racial narratives, and related these narratives with larger social and historical patterns of Whiteness identified in the research.

First, I asked what cultural models were at play in a particular interaction.

- Whose interests were served by the competing or conflicting models at play?

- Were there "master" models related to the models most at work here, and if so, what historical and institutional discourses gave rise to them?

- How were master models at play through local models helping to reproduce, transform or create social, cultural, institutional, and/or political relationships?

These questions provided linkages to the larger discourses and institutions that participants were using. Gates (1995) states that

People arrive at an understanding of themselves and the world through narratives - narratives purveyed by school teachers, newscasters,

'authorities,' and all the other authors of our common sense.
Counternarratives are, in turn, the means by which groups contest the
dominant reality and the fretwork of assumptions that supports it. (p. 57)

In linking my analysis of the dialogues to the context in which they were
situated, teacher education in the U.S., I addressed education as a normative institution
whose role within the wider society is to replicate stratified relations of race, class, and
gender (Adams, Bell & Griffith, 1997; Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997). As such,
education provides a very significant backdrop against which Whiteness was being
defended or contested.

Gee's (1999) model was particularly relevant for an analysis of the master
narratives of Whiteness in situations of contestation, for his theory recognizes the role
language plays in relations of domination, and like Whiteness scholarship, his tools of
analysis have an underlying social justice agenda. He states that "... language has
meaning only in and through practices, practices which often leave us morally complicit
with harm and injustice unless we attempt to transform them" (p. 8). It is Gee's
contention that any proper theory of language is thus a theory of practice, which
connects my proposed methodology to the wider body of post-structuralist research on
Whiteness (Dyer, 1997; Fine, 1997; Frankenberg, 1992; Nakayama & Krizek, 1995;
Van Dijk, 1999).

Positioning

The concept of positioning was essential for my analysis. Positioning refers to the discursive practices through which people place themselves or are placed by social others. Positioning is defined as a conversational phenomenon which produces social relations (Davies & Harre, 1990). An individual emerges through the processes of social interaction, not as a fixed personality but as one who is constituted and reconstituted through the various discursive practices in which they participate. This form of analysis views the subject as open and shifting depending on the positions made available through his or her own and others discursive practices.

Davies and Harre (1990) claim that the following processes are involved in generating one's world view and self-perception:

- learning of the categories that include some people and exclude others (e.g. Black/White, racist/non-racist);

- participating in the discursive practices through which meaning is accorded to those categories (for example, one must have a concept of "non-racist" in order to participate in the discursive practices that generate meaning related to it);

- positioning oneself in relation to the categories being generated, e.g. as a non-racist rather than as a racist;

- viewing oneself as having the characteristics that locate oneself in the various categories and not in others,

- seeing oneself as belonging to, and viewing the world from the perspective of, one's position. (pp. 263-5)

Because an important characteristic of Whiteness is a centered, universal, and neutral subject position (Dyer, 1997: Frankenberg, 1997), the positioning process was a key focus in my analysis. I tried to describe the ways in which White participants deployed and contested various strategies of positioning.

Validity and Reliability

The notion of validity is inextricably linked to the epistemological assumptions of the paradigm from which it is drawn, and criteria developed in one tradition can not be simply applied to another. In this section, I will compare and contrast two traditions relevant to my claims of validity. These traditions are scientific empiricism and discourse analysis. According to Kerlinger (1964), who writes within a largely empiricist tradition, there is no single type of validity. In fact, four types are commonly discussed in traditional educational research: predictive, concurrent, content, and construct.

Predictive and concurrent validity are concerned with what comes before, during, or as a result of the research study. While predictive and concurrent validity both measure outcome in terms of time, they are distinguished by which period of time they measure (Kerlinger, 1964). As my study did not measure the effects of an intervention, predictive and concurrent validity will not be discussed. Content validity asks whether the sample of the property being measured is adequately representative of

the universe of the property being measured. Construct validity is concerned with

whether or not the researcher is measuring what they think they are measuring

(Campbell & Stanley, 1963; Kerlinger, 1964). Construct validity is considered the most

significant form of validity for behavioral research within the empiricist tradition

because it unites psychometric notions with scientific theoretical notions. Reliability

functions closely with validity and addresses the ability to obtain similar results in

repeated trials (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). In fact, reliability (correlation) measures

are most often offered as evidence of validity in the traditions in which researchers such

as Kerlinger, Stanley, and Campbell work. This form of evidence provides a link to the

less positivist notions used in discourse analysis because Gee's (1999) notion of

"convergence," although not quantified, is conceptually similar to notions of reliability-

as-correlation.

    Content Validity. If Whiteness and the discourses which participate in

constructing it (e.g. individualism) are seen as the "content" of this dissertation, then the

question can be posed about whether the "types" of Whiteness performed here were

typical of broader representations of Whiteness. One can address this at the level of the

participants as well as at the level of their language. The participants in my study were

volunteers. My sample included White preservice teachers from both elementary and

secondary cohorts. It included first and second year students. The preservice teachers

in my sample had either completed or were enrolled in a multicultural education course.

Three different professors provided instruction for these courses. The sample included

both males and females who ranged in age from 21 to 43. These variables indicate that

these volunteers were representative of a diverse range of White preservice teachers and could be said to provide content validity in terms of representation of this population at large. That is, they have demographic characteristics and educational histories similar to most White preservice teachers (AACTE, 1994). However, this cannot be claimed definitively. One would need to know the relevant characteristics of all preservice teachers (either at the institution in which this sample was taken or nationally) as well as which of these characteristics are most relevant to their performance of Whiteness to establish their representativeness (this is also linked to my discussion of generalizability below). Aside from their volunteering for the study, nothing about the demographics or reported histories of these participants marked them as particularly unusual with respect to other students in their program.

Kerlinger (1964) states that when content validity cannot be satisfied, it can be based on judgment. He writes, "If it is not possible to satisfy the definition of content validity, how can a reasonable degree of content validity be achieved? Content validity consists essentially of *judgment*. Alone or with others, one judges the representativeness of the items" (original emphasis, p. 446). In this context, Kerlinger is addressing the interpretation of items. For discourse analysis, the focus is on the interpretation of language produced by the participants. Although I cannot claim that these teachers were representative of White preservice teachers in general, the language they used to negotiate racial dialogues were consistent with how language has been documented to be used in the production of Whiteness (Flax, 1998; Morrison, 1992; Sleeter, 1996; Van Dijk, 1992. While there is no single standard for interpreting

Whiteness, I and other content experts found their racial discourses familiar and judged it reasonable to consider these discourses adequately representative of discourses circulating in the preservice teacher population at large.

The teachers in my study were volunteering to participate in a series of dialogues about race with people of color. Race relations in the United States may be considered contentious and are often avoided by Whites (hooks, 1995; Macedo and Bartolome, 1999; Sleeter, 1993). Because of this avoidance, the teachers in this sample may not be representative of White preservice teachers in the general population, as this was not a random sample. But with respect to the focus of this study and the assumptions of its theoretical framework, one would predict this possible lack of representativeness to function to *reduce* or *make more complex* the ways participants performed Whiteness. Variations in representation would not lead to an expectation that Whiteness was not functioning.

Construct Validity. Construct validity addresses human behavior in both individual and group terms, and is therefore the most relevant form of validity in psychometric research in general and for my study in particular. The construct validity of my study is determined by whether I adequately measured or interpreted the production of Whiteness in this sample. Construct validity and empirical scientific inquiry are closely aligned because construct validity ties research findings to the theory framing outcomes (Kerlinger, 1964). Construct validity in psychometric research diverges, however, from traditional empiric research by recognizing the dynamic and

subjective nature of human behavior. Construct validity is thus tied to theory rather than solely to outcome. Kerlinger (1964) writes:

> The significant point about construct validity, that which sets it apart
> from other types of validity, is its preoccupation with theory, theoretical
> constructs, and scientific empirical inquiry involving the testing of
> hypothesized relations. Construct validity in measurement contrasts
> sharply with empiric approaches that define validity of a measure purely
> by its success at predicting a criterion. (p.449)

Kerlinger (1964) argues that there should be a strong relationship between findings and theory. Researchers should be able to show that their claims are consistent with research and theory that have been done previously. Establishing a relationship between findings and theory allows for the nuances of human behavior and recognizes the challenge of measuring it empirically. By connecting findings to theory, researchers are able to navigate traditional notions of "proof" by finding support for their claims in the larger body of research.

Reliance on the relationship of findings to theory is in keeping with the work of philosophers such as Lorraine Code (1992) and Sandra Harding (1998). Code bridges the discursive gap between the traditional practice of emphasizing universality and a complete deconstruction that emphasizes relativity. She avoids this dichotomy between complete objectivity and complete relativity by defining knowledge as inextricably subjective and objective, the two supposed opposites being in dynamic interplay in the

"creation of all knowledge worthy of the label" (p. 27). She argues that time, place, class, ideology and other factors are driving forces in the construction of knowledge. In contrast, what counts as knowledge in mainstream philosophy is derived from the sciences, where the focus is on what can be known about "controllable, manipulable, predictable objects" in the physical world (p.175). Thus the challenge of establishing validity for research that recognizes the social and subjective nature of human interaction is how to satisfy both empirical and knowledge construction epistemologies.

Because Whiteness is defined as normalized, often amorphous, and unrelated to conscious intention (Frankenberg, 1993), construct validity is difficult to claim in terms of clear and identifiable measures. However, I addressed this limitation by tying my observations tightly to theory about ways in which Whiteness functions. This study did not set out to predict outcomes for the future, but to test an already established hypothesis: *that Whiteness does manifest in this type of setting and to describe how it manifests.* My findings were consistent with both theoretical discussions of whiteness and findings in other studies on Whiteness (see Ellsworth, 1997; Sleeter, 1993).

Validity in Discourse Analysis. Although Kerlinger (1964) recognized the challenges in establishing validity and reliability in psychometric research, his criteria of reliability and validity are primarily based in traditional notions of a positivist or realist research model. In discourse analysis, reliability is reconceived as a convincing demonstration of intertextuality, or the repetition of discourses across various forms of related yet distinctively produced texts (Gee, 1999). These criteria are established by

tracing the connections between different culturally produced texts, including historical, institutional, and legal texts, and individual accounts (Cloyes, 2004).

Discourse analysts, "... move between broad social formations and micro-textual analytic work...[and they have a] common commitment...to a critical and socially motivated, rather than merely descriptive, analysis" (Kamler, 1999, p. 326). Thus validity functions differently within discourse analysis than in research methodologies that assume correspondence with an external reality as the primary standard. Within discourse traditions, validity is largely a function of convergence: How well the semiotic, relational, political and institutional dimensions of the analysis relate to each other and are supported by the details of language use. Gee (1999) uses the notion of "agreement" – asking if native speakers using this language similarly agree with its function, and if other scholars from a similar tradition agree. In discourse analysis the whole is tested in terms of how much data it covers, how much agreement can be gathered from others, and whether or not there are competing analyses that work better in any or all respects (Gee, 1999, p. 7).

An analysis is considered more valid the more tightly it is tied to details of linguistic structure. Gee states:

All human languages have evolved, biologically and culturally, to serve an array of different communicative functions. For this reason, the grammar of any social language is composed of specific forms that are 'designed' to carry out specific functions. Part of what makes a discourse analysis valid, then, is that

the analyst is able to argue that the communicative functions being uncovered in

the analysis are linked to grammatical devices that manifestly can and do serve

these functions, according to the judgments of "native speakers" of the social

languages involved and the analyses of the linguists. (p. 95)

Gee (1999) provides a consideration of validity within discourse analysis that includes

four elements: 1) Convergence, or whether an analysis offers a more or less convincing

and compatible interpretation based on the correspondence of cultural, professional and

institutional discourses and everyday speech-acts. Further, the analysis is more valid the

more it addresses key questions concerning social position, power, identity, distribution

of social resources, invokement of cultural models and paradigms. Verification of

convergence would be obtained from other discourse analysts and scholars in the field;

2) Agreement, or whether members of a practice community agree that the analysis

reflects how language and discourse work in that community; 3) Coverage, or whether

this analysis makes sense when applied to similar data or situations; 4) Linguistic

details, or grounding analysis in the concrete structures and functions of particular,

situated texts and speech-acts, e.g. language is used in a way that communicates

meaning to other speakers. These criteria constitute validity in discourse analysis

because it is highly improbable that all of these factors will converge if the analysis is

not valid.

I addressed standards of convergence, agreement and coverage by noting

discursive patterns among participants and tying these patterns to larger discourses on

the functions of Whiteness. The major discourses documented here are amply

evidenced in the literature on Whiteness and largely recognizable to other language

users in similar conversations. In particular I addressed questions concerning social

position, power, identity, distribution of social resources, invokement of cultural models

and paradigms. In so doing, I met Gee's criteria for high validity.

Another criteria for validity in discourse anlysis is the grounding of the analysis

in the concrete structures and functions of particular, situated texts and speech-acts. I

met this criteria by tying the analysis to the larger body of research in both Whiteness

scholarship and discourse analyses of racial speech-acts. My analysis makes a

compatible interpretation based on the correspondence of cultural, professional and

institutional discourses and everyday speech-acts.

As for the notion of practice community agreement, I made a case in terms of

recognizability, both in everyday speech-acts in conversations about race and what has

been documented in conversations about race in multicultural education courses (see

Sleeter, 1993; Ellsworh, 1997). In terms of coverage, or whether this analysis makes

sense when applied to similar data or situations, I am less able to claim validity. Further

studies are needed to document the presence and function of these discourses across

wider samples.

Reliability. Reliaibilty is closley tied to both validity and generalizability.

Reliability is concerned with whether repeated trials of the same kind would produce

the same results (Campell & Stanley, 1963). Reliability in discourse analysis is

established using the same criteria discussed earlier: intertexuality, convergence and linguistic detail. The body of scholarship on Whiteness, and its conceptualization as a set of unbounded and ever-present relationships that are historically, socially, and institutionally produced indicates reliaibility. Dennis (1993) states that the body of studies in race relations indicate reliaibility, particulary in the broad area of racial domination, power inequality, and divergent group interests (p. 70). He writes, "This is so despite variations in race relations that might be attributed to the peculiarities of local or regional history or to differences in social class" (p. 70). Previous studies show great consistency in race relations findings (Dennis, 1993). While indication is strong that similar dialogues would produce similar discourses, ultimately more trials are needed to establish reliability.

If these definitions of reliability and validity are taken to be reasonable criteria for judging the rhetorical effectiveness of research, then this study meets the expectations of a rigorous demonstration of intertextuality, convergence, and linguistic detail. While it is more difficult to assess whether it meets the standards of agreement and coverage without more comment from other members of related orders of discourse analysis, it is reasonable to assume that the substantive interpretations of this study are not idiosyncratic. I have largely satisfied the requirements of validity and reliability in discourse analysis. However, because I have not obtained feedback from other scholars in the field, I cannot claim to have fully met the range of criteria for validity within discourse analysis.

Generalizability

Campbell and Stanley (1963) define generalizability as a function of validity. Internal validity addresses whether the experimental treatments make a difference in the case in question. Because my study was not a treatment and I conducted no pre- or post-assessment, I cannot address internal validity. External validity addresses the question of generalizability to populations, settings and treatments of a study's findings. As Campbell and Stanley (1963) state, "... since there are valid designs avoiding the pretest, and since in many settings it is to unpretested groups that one wants to generalize, such designs are preferred on grounds of external validity or generalizability" (p. 17). In this section external validity in terms of generalizability will be addressed.

Campbell and Stanley (1963) recognize that generalizability is never completely answerable and accept the truism that generalization is never fully justified logically (p. 17). However, they do not advocate an abandonment of external validity and state that "...while the question of external validity, like the question of inductive inference, is never completely answerable, the selection of designs strong in both types of validity is obviously our ideal" (p.5). The sources of generalizability are speculations as to the general laws of that which is being studied. This speculation assumes the lawfulness of nature which in turn assumes that the closer two events are in time, space, and measured value, the more they will tend to follow the same laws (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). These ways of conceptualizing generalizability are in keeping with discourse analysis

although similarity in performance across different settings is not seen as a function of the "lawfulness of nature" but the reiterative aspects of social life. However, both can be seen as emphasizing probability in establishing generalizability.

Generalizability is not constituted in discourse analysis by arguing that an analysis reflects reality and therefore can be generalized (Mishler, 1990). Discourse analysts recognize that humans construct their social reality, although this construction interacts with and is constrained by physical reality. Discourse analysts also recognize that language is related to the situations that provide it with meaning. Similarly, discourse analysis is about the exploration of the interaction of "language-plus-situation" (Gee, 1999, p. 94). These points about language and meaning do not imply that discourse analysis is subjective or simply a function of opinion. Generalizability is important in discourse anlysis. However generalizability functions differently within discourse analysis than in research methodologies that assume correspondence with an external reality as the primary standard.

Returning to Gee's (1999) criteria, generalizability is largely a function of convergence and agreement. Generalizability is measured by how well the semiotic, relational, political and institutional dimensions of the analysis relate to each other and are supported by the details of language use and if other native speakers and other scholars from a similar tradition agree with its function (Gee, 1999). In discourse analysis the whole analysis is tested in terms of how much data it covers, how much

agreement can be gathered from others, and whether or not there are competing analyses that work better in any or all respects.

I supported the generalizability of my study by using the considerable literature on what constitutes White privilege across a range of settings (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Dyer, 1997; Ellsworth, 1997; Fine, 1997; Frankenberg, 1997; hooks, 1992; Macedo & Bartolome, 1999; Roedigar, 1998; Sleeter, 1996). I used that literature to develop a set of coding criteria. I had others review these criteria. I was also open to emergent strategies that I had not included in my coding. By starting with the Whiteness literature, and moving into a discourse analysis of a specific example, I tied the results of this study to the larger body of research on how Whiteness functions discursively. According to this literature, Whiteness is a discourse that is structurally, not individually, produced.

An analysis is more generalizable the more it can be applied to related data, including the ability to make sense of what has come before and after the situation being analyzed and to predict what might happen in other related situations (Gee, 1999). My primary measure of generalizability was my ability to tie the discourses documented in this study to the larger body of research in the Whiteness literature. The ways in which the discourses here fit within the literature of Whiteness indicates that this group was not idiosyncratic. The hegemony of these discourses is recognizable in multicultural education (Schofield, 2003; Sleeter, 1993; Tatum, 2001). While on one level this was a "local" study, the documentation of these discourses in the literature

indicates generalizability and this study meets the primary criteria of generalizability in discourse analysis. Still, future research is needed to document these patterns in other settings to meet a wider range of standards of generalizability.

Limitations

My observations did not capture the scope of all that is known about Whiteness. Further, participants did not always hold constant representations or exhibit practices or behaviors that are coded as Whiteness, because language is always shifting and unstable (Gee, 1999; Wetherall, 2001). Because I was in a position that is new for me in terms of my experience facilitating racial dialogues, that of observer rather than as participant or facilitator, I likely observed patterns, dynamics, and counter-performances that were unfamiliar to me and that have not yet been described or explained in this or other possible discussions of Whiteness. I may not have coded these patterns.

Given that the White participants volunteered for a study on the group dynamics of racial dialogues, and that they were recruited from a College of Education TEP program, it is possible that they manifested behaviors that were either more sensitive to, or less sensitive to, racialized group dynamics than volunteers without such an association.

Limitations of this study also include the manifestation of patterns that may be attributable to other dimensions of social identity such as socio-economic class and gender. My own racialized social location as a White researcher is also a limitation,

which I to addressed through the shared videotape observations and the inclusion of the facilitators' perspectives.

Study Procedures

Thirteen respondents agreed to participate in the study. Eight were White. Of the eight White participants, two were male, six were female. Their ages ranged from 21 to 43. Seven identified as middle class, and one as working class. Five respondents of color agreed to participate. Two were male, three were female. Their ages ranged from 21 to 30. Two identified as middle class, two as working class, and one as mixed middle class and poor. The facilitators were one Native American female, aged 23, raised mixed class, and one White female, aged 23, raised middle class. All of the participants have been given pseudonyms. The facilitators' real names are used as they were not recruited as study subjects. A consent form was signed by participants, along with a brief demographics form (see appendix).

Participant Key

- Malena: Facilitator. Woman of color (Biracial: Native American/White - FOC – facilitator of color)

- Becca: Facilitator. White Woman (WF –White facilitator)

- Jessica: White Woman (W)

- Rich: Man of color (Chicano - POC)

- Laura: Woman of color (Chinese American - POC)

- Barb: White Woman (W)

- Ruth: White Woman (W)

- Matthew: White Man (W)

- Jerome: Man of color (African - POC)

- Tiffany: White Woman (W)

- Courtney: White Woman (W)

- Jason: White Man (W)

- Caroline: Woman of color (African American - POC)

- Marie: Woman of color (Bi-racial: Native American/White - POC)

- Amy: White Woman (W)

A note on categories: Two people in the study were biracial and identified as bi-racial: Malena, a facilitator, and Marie, a participant. Malena and Marie also identify as people of color, and use "person of color" as their primary identification. Because person of color was their primary identity, for the purposes of this analysis, I identify them as people of color rather than as biracial people.

Summary

This study explained the rationale for the use of discourse analysis, the identification and selection process of the participants, and my data collection and analysis procedures. Discourse analysis is the study of language use in social contexts, and is concerned with how ideologies are communicated (Evans, 2002;Gee, 1999). Discourse analysis allows for a nuanced explication of the socially and historically informed discourses that are available for negotiating racial positions, and can reveal

processes of racism that might be denied by participants (Van Dijk, 1993). Positionality was defined and discussed.

Participants were recruited from a teacher education program, and volunteered to participate in a series of interracial dialogues on race. These dialogues were observed and transcribed. Limitations of the study were addressed, as were issues of validity and generalizabilty. In the following chapters, I present the data and provide analysis at both the textual and scholarship levels.

Chapter 3: Data Analysis I

The Moves of Whiteness: Overview

In this chapter I describe key discourses obtained from the data and discuss the meaning and implications of these discourses within the context of interrupting Whiteness. My explication of the data is not linear. As I identify various discourses, I move in and out of the material, following threads and corollaries that don't begin and end in discrete and ordered sequence. My analysis is organized into two main levels: textual and scholarship. At the textual level I analyzed specific discursive moves used by participants in the dialogue and their impact in that immediate context. These "moves" are acts of conversational performance that include the use of silence, statements of confusion, rebuttal, nodding in agreement, emotional affect, and invocation of rules (Gee, 1999; Wetherall, 2001). At the linguistic level these moves draw from major discourses such as meritocracy, the universal human, and official knowledge, which are addressed in the larger body of research on Whiteness (Apple, 1999; Dyer, 1997; Fine, 1997; Frankenberg, 1992; Razack, 1998).

The inferences I make about the effects of these moves are supported in two ways. One is the thread of the conversation itself and what happens next in the discussion, i.e. the effects of various moves on the direction of the dialogue. The other source of support is scholarly. I link the discourses surfaced in the data to larger scholarly discussions of how Whiteness functions. My goals in doing so are to take the

abstract concepts discussed in the literature and describe them in action and to reflect back on the scholarly literature in ways that I hope expand it.

In this chapter I will start at the textual level and identify and analyze discursive moves that closed the dialogue and served to protect White participants from challenges to their White privilege and status. The overall range of these moves was limited, but their use was highly efficient in terms of the number of moves made, often in rapid succession, within a single exchange. I will describe how these moves served to close the dialogue, rather than open it, and how they also served to protect and maintain the social status of the White participants. I will shift between the textual and scholarly levels as I identify the moves and connect them to larger discourses.

It will be important to read the analysis with group-as-a-whole theory in mind (Wells, 1985). This theory posits that group behavior is organic, with individual members taking up roles on behalf of the whole group. A group can be conceptualized as a complex "holding environment" in which individuals perform in microcosm the dynamics that operate in the macrocosm or larger society. Although a few participants are very visible in the transcripts and in the analysis, I theorize their performances as representative of common White enactments. I am not analyzing them as unique or individual personalities, but as composite representatives of Whiteness who are simply amplifying and making visible many common White moves. Other participants, who may seem less visible in the transcripts or analysis, are conceptualized as simply acting out more submerged, but equally critical, performances of Whiteness. I attempt to

explicate both types of White representations, although the more dominant group members will necessarily be more visible.

I Am Not White

Whiteness scholars have identified Whiteness as a cultural space that is unmarked for Whites, which is amorphous and indescribable. Dyer (1997) states that "There is a specificity to White representations, but it does not reside in a set of stereotypes so much as in narrative structural positions, rhetorical tropes and habits of perception" (p. 12). One of these narrative structural positions is evidenced through an unracialized identity or location. This functions as a kind of blindness; an inability to think about Whiteness as an identity or as a "state" of being that would or could have an impact on one's life. In this position, Whiteness is not recognized or named by White people, and a universal reference point is assumed. A corollary to this unracialized identity is the ability to recognize Whiteness as something that is significant and that operates in society, but to not see how it relates to one's own life. In this form, a White person recognizes Whiteness as real, but as the individual problem of other "bad" White people. The following statement illustrates this point:

> TIFFANY (W): It feels- I don't feel White. I- I don't feel like what White has
>
> come to mean. You know, in my eyes I think of someone like George Bush as a
>
> White, you know, bastard, and so I don't think of myself as being anything like
>
> him, you know, like that sort of thing.

This latter type of an unracialized identity – one that recognized the existence of Whiteness but did not connect it to his or her self – consistently emerged in the dialogues, in various forms. It first surfaced in the opening exercise, in which participants were asked to name their key social identities. As can be seen in the following excerpt, this was an open-ended question in which no examples were provided:

> BECCA (WF): We wanted to have a go-around just to get started with, sort of like we did with the names and just have people talk about what their key social identities are. And so whatever that means to you at this point, that's whatever it means to you. We're not going to do a time or anything like that, but we do want to keep it sort of brief so then we can respond to what people felt about that and things like that…. You can talk about multiple ones or whatever. It's really open for you.

All of the people of color identified themselves racially in some form. In most cases, it was the first identity named:

> RICH (POC): I have to say, uh, Chicano, working class, 26, non-practicing Catholic, able-bodied, heterosexual. Uh, let's see. I've been educated since shortly coming out of the womb.

> CAROLINE (POC): Um, African-American woman, 22, growing up working class. They had kind of jumped- I guess jumped a class. I don't know. Um, I'm a nondenominational Christian. That's it.

MARIE (POC): I identify as a biracial person but, uh, primarily as a Native American woman. Um, because I'm a biracial person, I grew up leading two separate lives, one with my White father, who was middle-class, educated, um, experiencing all the privileges of a White family and, uh, then half the time living with my Native mother and my Native sisters, living a very, very poor life. And, um, I'm also heterosexual. I am able-bodied. I'm young. And, I guess now I'm- I'm still middle-class.

MALENA (FOC): Oh, I am Native American, and I'm also biracial, but I was thinking I don't know why I don't identify with that. Um, I'm sort of in transition with a few of my identities, which is very odd.

LAURA (POC): Um, let's see. Key identities for me. I identify as an Asian-heritage woman. I also identify as Asian-American, and I also identify as Chinese-American. Um, let's see. Raised middle class, upwardly mobile, um, but I identify strongly as being a child of immigrants.

JEROME (POC): I'm black; it's quite obvious. And I'm almost hitting 30s; I'm 29. And an immigrant in America, trying to get educated and taking advantage of the great things America has to offer.

Only about half of the White participants identified themselves racially, although the ensuing discussion indicates that this was a cursory acknowledgment, understood as contextually expected, but not indicative of an internalized sense of racial identity:

JESSICA (W): I'll tell you something interesting, is that it's not often a White person has to answer those questions to make up your identity, so if that's what you're saying coming to me. So I guess I identify as being- I don't identify as being White, but I am. Um, female, middle class, educated, thin, and, um-

COURTNEY (W): I would say middle class. I think I'll say urban too.

TIFFANY (W): I identify with being a European-American woman, um, of Jewish ancestry and I also identify with being raised Buddhist and- and Jewish, and having both those influences really powerfully orchestrated in my life. And I spent much of my childhood in France, so I feel French and kind of that life and sometimes out of place here because I am connected with that - that place so deeply. And vegetarian and environmentalist, um, and older - older sister. And there's something else I was going to say. Educated, um, and a writer.

During the debrief, this lack of identification was made explicit:

LAURA (POC): I did notice that some White people identify themselves with their class before they said they were White. Not everybody, but I did notice that with some.

TIFFANY (W): As a White person, I find it difficult to say that I'm White. I have- I don't feel White. I think it's a really strange blanket term that doesn't really encompass anything about myself that I really relate to. And I think it's really arbitrary and strange, so I- I definitely have a hard time even articulating that word sometimes. I guess I have a hard time coughing that up. So I don't- I-

I say European-American because I feel more European than I do American; that's for sure.

LAURA (POC): Well, one thing I was thinking was that you don't necessarily- or you may not necessarily connect the word "White" with your experience, but people of color definitely think you're White.

TIFFANY (W): Right.

LAURA (POC): And I think notice your Whiteness.

TIFFANY (W): Mm-hmm. Right. Right. I-

LAURA (POC): And so that's part of, like, taking ownership.

TIFFANY (W): I'm uncomfortable with the label "White" based on what I have learned that people of color perceive "White" to mean and represent. That's what makes me uncomfortable with it. I don't want to be classified as White when I know that with that comes a whole lot of, uh, angry history toward, you know, White people and- or, you know, crummy, um- crummy stereotypes that I don't believe I fit into. And then this comes up, the whole conversation about being fish in water we can't even see our own-like Robin always talks about we can't even see our own racial identity because it's so much a part of everything. So I'm uncomfortable being associated with what I perceive to be the common perception of what "White" is.

RICH (POC): But European-Americans are White.

TIFFANY (W): Yeah. I mean, I guess I feel like-

RICH (POC): Well, she said that she felt comfortable identifying herself as a European-American. European-Americans are White. Columbus, Pizarro, all these guys that came from Italy and Spain and all over, um, they're all White. They're all European-American. Um, I don't know. When I- when I look at you, I see a White person.

TIFFANY (W): But the term "White" conjures up different feelings, I think, in people who are European-American, from my perspective.

Here Tiffany works hard to distance herself from the term White, even in the face of direct information that she is perceived as White. She isn't only explaining that she doesn't identify with White, she is also working to show people of color that she is different from other White people. Although participants of color repeatedly tell her that they see her as White, and imply that they do not differentiate her Whiteness from say, George Bush's, she maintains her position that she is different and therefore not "officially" White. Her repeated appeal to not feeling White, and her use of signifiers such as "but," negate their descriptions of her.

Tiffany's identity as European is an enactment of "symbolic ethnicity" (Gans, 1979). Symbolic ethnicity allows individuals to identify their European heritage while giving a specificity to Whiteness that it does not hold alone. In this way, White gains particular meaning and positive marking that can be self-chosen – "White means I am descended from Europeans." While this discourse recognizes in part an historical

constitution, this does not necessarily indicate that there is a recognition of the power relations embedded in that history. In fact, the pride that Tiffany derives from this identity indicates that she does not associate it with historical domination, but rather with "high" culture. Tiffany states that she feels "…more European than I do American," because she spent a portion of her childhood in France. Her insistence on the label European-American over that of White indicates that this label allows her a more positive self-representation. Notably, Tiffany simultaneously rejects two identities – "American" and "White" - indicating the conflation of these two categories.

Waters (1990) found that many Whites selected their ethnicity according to interest and convenience (i.e. identifying as Irish on St. Patrick's day), and that it was not a sustained part of their daily lives. Waters argues that symbolic ethnicity persists because it meets a need of White Americans for community without individual cost. A potential societal cost of this symbolic ethnicity however, is its subtle reinforcement of racism through its obfuscation of historical lines of power. Race is a political category that plays a key role in how people are treated in society (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Feagin, 2001; Omi & Winant, 1989). Ethnicity refers to one's geographic origins and can provide an historical framework for an individual's cultural perspective. However, blurring the distinctions between the two reflects a profound misunderstanding and denial of racism as an institutional system of power and domination (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997). Writes Derman-Sparks and Phillips, "When educators … use 'race' and 'ethnicity' interchangeably, they confuse the

positive role of culture in human development and daily life with the negative impact of racism" (p. 12).

Sometimes the discourse of an unracialized identity surfaced explicitly, as in the previous exchange. At other times it operated indirectly. In the following excerpt, Whiteness serves as the unmarked norm or reference point against which others are known and measured:

> TIFFANY (W): I felt like it was good to be able to explain myself in terms of my experience that is very much so diverse, and my family is full of people of color, and it's a very diverse life I've had.

Here, the emphasis on people of color qualifying a White person's life as diverse reveals a view in which people of color embody difference and Whites stand for sameness (Frankenberg, 1992). Tiffany's family becomes diverse through its contact with different others. These people of color elevate Tiffany from what she will refer to later as "just some White girl" to someone who knows and understands diversity through those who bring it to her. This interpretation of diversity expresses a valorizing of cultural difference in a way that leaves racial and cultural hierarchies unmarked and intact. Her move also invokes colonialist relations, in which people of color transfer value to White people (Smith, 1999). Tiffany proudly mentions her family in terms of people of color several times throughout the sessions, evoking a sense of ownership reminiscent of these traditional relations (she does not however, mention or mark any White members of her family).

In the following excerpts, Tiffany takes up a common White discourse - White is simply a matter of skin color:

TIFFANY (W): So, my skin looks this way, but –

TIFFANY (W): I am comfortable admitting that I am raci... I'm not comfortable with it, but it's something that I accept. But I believe everyone is, no matter what their skin color.

TIFFANY (W): ... of course, there are certain perceptions of what my experience is, based on my skin color ...but...

The skin color discourse, by conceptualizing Whiteness as natural rather than social, evades acknowledgment of the multi-dimensional power relations embedded in racial categories. These relations are decontextualized and reduced to an essentialized matter of skin. Responsibility for these relations can then be dismissed, for how can anyone be held accountable for an accident of genetics? Each time Tiffany uses the skin color discourse, she also qualifies it, emphasizing that although she does indeed have "this skin color," it holds no racialized significance; her skin color is simply a biological fluke with no consequence or benefit. According to this discourse, racism and its effects are equal between all people, regardless of what their skin color happens to be. Race relations are thereby drained of history and status, depoliticized, and rendered meaningless (Nakayama & Krizek, 1995). Through the use of the skin color discourse, the onus of responsibility is shifted onto the person making unfounded

assumptions that the color of Tiffany's skin provides any salient information. Whiteness is once again invisible and its operations hidden.

In the following interchange, a participant rejects his White identity when it is associated with power. After several attempts to counter the facilitator of color's assertions that a White position is a position of power *over*, he shifts discourses by appealing to a spiritual dimension of identity. Earlier, in his introduction, Matthew claimed his alignment with power:

> MATTHEW (W): Okay. Um, I have to say White, middle class, married, male, um, middle-aged, educated, uh, privileged.

However, when pressed to conceptualize group relations from a framework of White power, he resists and appeals to the more abstract discourse of a universal humanity rooted in the spiritual dimension. The following exchange illustrates this move:

> MALENA (FOC): Becca and I, in reflecting on the group last week and what we talked about, something we noticed was that there was a lot of energy that was kind of expended when we introduced the idea or definition of racism. And so, we wanted to bring this back to the group and ask people if they had noticed anything about which group it was that seemed to be spending all of its energy around the definition of racism. So, when we put the definition up there last week, there was a lot of - they were like - people were like - oh, whoa, what's going on. And it seemed to be - the people that responded were -

BARB (W): Were White.

MALENA (FOC): Exactly. And so, we were wondering if you guys had picked up on that. And what does the group make of that, or what do people think about that? And why do you think maybe people of color weren't responding? Or people of color can speak for themselves.

MATTHEW (W): I think I responded to it because I found it - I found the idea of it to be divisive to us as a group, and I - I preferred -

MALENA (FOC): "Divisive" meaning like -

MATTHEW (W): That it was dividing us. That it would divide us into those with power and those without. And I would prefer not to go - you know, I would prefer to remain as a whole group.

MALENA (FOC): What would it mean, though, that, if that definition is true and if it did do that? What would that mean to you?

MATTHEW (W): Well, if it comes down - well, if it comes down - it would mean that half the group were racist, and half were not, by definition. Well, the people with power would be racist, and the people without power would not. I didn't want that line to be drawn, I guess.

LAURA (POC): So, what - I'm just not - I'm not understanding how we could have a conversation about racism that wouldn't be - I -

MATTHEW (W): That wouldn't be divisive?

LAURA (POC): Yeah. I mean, because -

MATTHEW (W): I -

LAURA (POC): I guess I'm not quite clear on -

MALENA (FOC): Well, one question I would have is: Do you think that that line was there before the definition went up, or the definition created that line?

MATTHEW (W): There were - the definition created that line in the discussion.

MALENA (FOC): For you it did?

MATTHEW (W): Yeah.

BECCA (WF): Are there other people that want to respond to that, that already you are seen as someone who has power?

MATTHEW (W): But - okay; I can accept that. But I guess my expectation of the group is that it sort of operated as a - as a whole, not as two parts; that it was sort of working towards a similar end, instead of at cross purposes. I don't *not* accept it. And I have heard it before. But I don't know; I guess I was less - I don't want to say "comfortable," but less happy hearing - having that be the discussion.

BECCA (WF): Why?

MALENA (FOC): Why?

MATTHEW (W): I guess because of - because of, like I say, because it's a

divisive nature; it creates an "us" and a "them." And, you know, I had

preferred -

MALENA (FOC): To you.

MATTHEW (W): Well -

MALENA (FOC): Because we already heard some people - feeling -

commenting that they already felt that that existed before. And so -

MATTHEW (W): Okay.

MALENA (FOC): I just wanted to be sure that we were clear about that. But -

I'm sorry. What was the last thing you said, though? It creates -

MATTHEW (W): I don't know. I started, but it went. Oh, it - right. It creates

an "us" and a "them." I felt that it automatically set that up.

Here Matthew protests that it is the *naming* of power that causes racial divisions,

and implies that as long as power remains invisible to him as a White person, it can't

divide him from people of color. The problem for Matthew is not the existence of

power itself, but the recognition of it. His main concern in naming power is that the

naming breaks a unity that he assumes is shared – even though this assumption is

contrary to the repeated claims of participants of color. Although they are in the

dialogue specifically to discuss differences in *racial* perspectives, for Matthew, this is

an unracialized group, and his primary concern is that they don't move from a united

group to a divided group. He claims to not see the group as racially different, and in so doing claims they are all having the same experience – his White experience. By conceptualizing them as a whole, he erases (and denies) alternate racial experiences and locations.

Matthew's claims are rooted in his White experience, which he extends to the participants of color, even in the face of hours of dialogue in which they say that they do not share his experience. An example of this extension occurs in the following exchange when the facilitator of color tells him that she sees the power difference, and that in fact for her and the people of color present, it is *not* naming power that divides the group. Matthew counters her claim by insisting that naming power is what will divide them, thereby invalidating her knowledge and maintaining his knowledge position. His move reinscribes the universalism of Whiteness: the White experience as the universal human experience. These are tightly wound together in this exchange, as evidenced in his final appeal to define himself as a spiritual person, moving himself outside of the body and into a "shared" place:

> MATTHEW (W): There's another level, though, that's below that, below the level of groups too, that's human, I think. And I think that it goes beyond that too. I'm sort of a spiritual person, and I - in looking at that - (pauses briefly) - I don't - I've had the realization before that I wasn't an individual. But I guess I don't identify with being part of a group, you know. So, that's probably something I need to look at. But I also think that there are ways to transcend

that - or [I don't know if] it's above or below - but to be more in tune with what's human instead of what's only White.

MALENA (FOC): So, I want to stick with that for a second. I think that there are a lot of different things that play into how White people encounter and deal with racism. And I'm just thinking in terms of myself: As a person of color, like I don't have the luxury of considering how racism works or my race plays into like a spiritual level, because it's sort of like a survival obstacle course every day. And I don't really have the option a lot of times to be quiet, you know, and sit back and not speak up or share. And so, for both of you, I guess, I am wondering how you see race playing into the ways that you have just responded to us, in terms of wanting to transcend that and go to a spiritual level and then just thinking about it for the first time. And I'm wondering if you see your race playing into that at all.

MATTHEW (W): (No audible response)

MALENA (FOC): And if not, why not?

MATTHEW (W): Do I - you're asking, Do I think whether - Do I think the fact that I'm White allows me the luxury of seeing the world in that way?

BECCA (WF): (Nods head)

MATTHEW (W): How could I possibly know? I don't know; right - or know what the world would look like from another perspective.

BECCA (WF): What about when she just told you that every day for her is a survival obstacle course.

MATTHEW (W): Well, I know that that's what it looks like to her, but how can I know what that would look like?

MALENA (FOC): Would you have to know what that looked like, though?

MATTHEW (W): (Pauses) I would have to know more. I would have to know more what you were talking about. I would have to have more information. I - for you to say that without any sort of, I guess, tie to anything that is any more substantial, doesn't give me a whole lot of information.

CAROLINE (POC): (Nods head) You were talking about how you were a spiritual person, and like, I guess I definitely want to know, in keeping spiritual how does that . . . in terms of how you . . . understand this idea of racism or - I guess it's not clear - I'm just putting out a question because I didn't understand, so I just wanted to ask you to clarify if you can.

MATTHEW (W): No. I think I was more referring to how it affects my status as an individual.

CAROLINE (POC): All right. I guess you said it affects your status as an individual person.

MATTHEW (W): Because I don't think of myself as separate from everyone else in the world.

MALENA (FOC): How is that helpful in terms of dealing with racism right now?

MATTHEW (W): (*long pause*) - It's not.

MALENA (FOC): That's what I was thinking.

Matthew's resort to the more abstract discourse of spirituality occurs when pressed to acknowledge the awareness of power that the participants of color have. With this move he invokes the discourse of a universal humanity outside of racialized effects. Matthew's insistence that he does not see the group in raced or powered terms also implies that he is racially innocent, another hallmark of Whiteness (Dyer, 1997). Further, if we are all at our base spiritual beings, then Matthew has no more control (or responsibility) than people of color have in regards to the here and now. As Matthew explicitly states, the spiritual level is a means to transcend earthly concerns. This kind of discursive move is discussed by Dyer as embodiment (1997).

Embodiment is the notion that Whiteness is something that resides in, but is not of, the body. Whiteness is representative of universalities that include both humanity but also spirituality. By invoking a discourse of spirituality, Matthew positions himself as a universal human, without any ultimate commitments to the body. This move sets up people of color as the ones who are dividing the group. He positions their claims that there are power differences between them based on the racialization of the body as polluting the group. In contrast, Matthew positions himself as working to keep it pure, thus his appeal to himself as spiritual. At the spiritual or universal level, he is divested

of the trappings of the physical world. In this dimension, we are all the same – pure and ethereal. Further, the discourse of universal humanity, when taken up by Whites, is predicated on a shared (White) experience (Dyer, 1997; Frankenberg, 1993). Whiteness thus becomes the reference point for both the human and the spirit worlds.

In addition to Whiteness as an unracialized universalism, there are a number of other discourses invoked in this exchange. One is knowledge construction: whose knowledge is legitimate for Matthew? Although he says that he would need more information, his resistance to considering this information indicates that it is only White people's knowledge that counts. This knowledge claim protects White power; if we don't "know" about power, we aren't obligated to change it. This move protects his position, for if power isn't visible (to him) it cannot be contested. It doesn't appear to be a problem for Matthew that people of color see power, as long as he doesn't. Ironically, this implies people of color's lack of power, for Matthew's concern is not whether people of color can see lines of power, but only if and when White people see them.

In the earlier exchange with Tiffany, she works to keep herself from being identified with Whiteness. In the exchange with Matthew, the discourse of Whiteness as an unracialized location surfaced through his verbal acceptance of a White identity, without any accompanying change in performance. Discursively, this manifests as an acknowledgment that the White person is aware of their White privilege (McIntosh, 1998), and that their forebears benefited from institutional racism and therefore most of

these privileges have not been fairly earned. This discourse, while on a superficial level breaking with Whiteness by acknowledging privilege and race advantage, is often not accompanied by any change in performance. While White people may acknowledge their privileges, if they don't attempt to divest themselves of them or use them to create more equity for others, the point is moot; the acknowledgment alone becomes empty and does not work to shift relations of inequity. In practice it is simply a neo-liberal form of maintaining White alignment (Macedo & Bartolome, 1999). As such, it functions as an attempt to pacify people of color's appeals to divest of White privilege.

A particularly clear example of this discursive move of naming White privilege but not changing its performance is illustrated in the film that is commonly shown in anti-racism trainings, "The Color of Fear" (Lee, 1993). The film portrays a group of 10 men from a range of racial locations (Asian heritage, Latino heritage, African heritage, and White) taking part in a weekend-long dialogue about race. David and Gordon, the two White men in the group, each perform a classic version of Whiteness. While David is the "resistant" participant who continually debates and invalidates the experiences of the men of color while denying any awareness of the impact of racism in his life or community, Gordon is the "liberal" participant who introduces himself as "a racist." Although Gordon's move would be atypical in mainstream contexts, in the film's context of anti-racist work, this move is somewhat common. By claiming his racism at the start, he is working to interrupt Whiteness by acknowledging an awareness of his racial location and its power. In so doing, he is also seeking to align himself with the men of color. This move conveys an awareness of his White privilege and position and

the way his racial location has shaped his life, and is a signal to the men of color that he is "different" from other White people. However, as the dialogue unfolds, his primary performance is silence.

Although David consistently invalidates the men of color, and Gordon has enough awareness to recognize this, he does not, on his own, speak to or counter David's moves. In the end, he has maintained his privileged White position through his silence and passivity. Although an internal awareness of Whiteness is a necessary start, if it isn't accompanied by a change in performance, alliance with Whiteness remains intact. In practice, to break normative silence by stating "I am White," but not accompany this naming with attention to positionality in terms of behavioral changes, is to reenact Whiteness (Dyer, 1997).

In this study, most White participants who did not resist a White classification were also primarily silent in the dialogue. Following his opening statement, the participant discussed above (Matthew), spoke twice over the course of two hours of dialogue time. Both were brief comments or responses to direct questions that all members were asked to address. In two of the four sessions, Matthew spoke only in the opening or closing rounds, when each participant was asked to share. The most lengthy exchange in which he participated occurred in resistance to naming Whiteness as a power position. In the following examples, these White participants indicate that they are aware of their White privilege:

AMY (W): I think what was valuable was hearing a lot more about people's personal experiences, especially people who aren't White, because I am realizing it's true that I grew up with a White perspective on - I grew up with a White perspective on everything, so.

RUTH (W): I'm probably a typical American (inaudible) power structures and White, female, heterosexual, Protestant.

JESSICA (W): I think racism has been playing out in a way that some White people can disassociate themselves from racism, like as a self-protection mechanism effect of 'That's racism, and this is me.' And so, it's been a process of maybe at first it's shock and then a little denial, and then slowly maybe recognizing it, so that I see it's been playing out in peaks and valleys.

Yet despite these acknowledgments that racism had effects both in their lives and in the group, these comments were not voluntarily offered. They were made only in response to being asked a direct question. Although they don't deny privilege, these White participants seldom spoke up without a prompt, did not take up a position that actively explicated or contested Whiteness or racism, nor supported the claims and interpretations of the participants of color. Silence is a performative move and has a range of effects, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

A third way this discourse manifested was by naming Whiteness but denying any power inequities associated with it. In the following exchange, the participants have just completed a group exercise in which they rotated through pairs and discussed,

one-on-one, their racial experiences while growing up. When they returned to the large group, the facilitators posted on the wall a definition of racism, and asked the participants to frame their debrief responses with this definition in mind:

"Racial prejudice + social power equals racism"

When the definition is stated, there is an exchange which lasted approximately ten minutes, in which every White participant in the group participated, even those who were generally silent. Despite the facilitators' repeated attempts to move the group forward, the White participants continued. In striking contrast, not one person of color questioned the definition.

> BECCA (WF): Okay. So, we kind of wanted to provide a little bit more structure for the dialogue that's going to happen after this. And so, what we wanted to introduce to the group was the definition of racism that I think both myself and Malena are operating out of. And that definition of racism that we are working with: racial prejudice plus social power. And Malena is applying it to the board. And so, what we want to do is, the dialogue that we have about this exercise - we want to have it in terms of this definition of racism, and we want to discuss how this experience was for people with - keeping that as kind of framework... Is there anything that you want to say about that?

> MALENA (FOC): First of all, does anyone have any questions about the definition?

> PARTICIPANTS: (No audible response)

MALENA (FOC): Are you familiar with the definition?

JASON (W): Does "prejudice" imply like distaste for, versus just difference from?

MALENA (FOC): No; prejudice, I mean, in itself, doesn't necessarily have a negative connotation; it just is presumptions, you know.

JASON (W): Okay.

BARB (W): So, how does discrimination fit into that? Does it?

MALENA (FOC): In terms of racism, or just prejudice?

BARB (W): Racism.

MALENA (FOC): Well, I think this part - it says "racial prejudice plus social power." So, I mean, even if it's - you're treating someone - like a person of color or a White person better or different or in any way stereotypical to what you think it is, that can be a form of racism. And it may be perceived as positive, but it's not necessarily, obviously, because people are individuals, so.

TIFFANY (W): What does the "plus" mean in this case? In other words, can racism be just racial prejudice or just social power, or does it have to be the combination? And if so, someone with less social power can't be racist then?

BECCA (WF): Yes.

MALENA (FOC): Yeah; they need to be a combination of both.

TIFFANY (W): Cannot be racist.

MALENA (FOC): Mm-hmm.

BECCA (WF): No. Not-

MALENA (FOC): Not excusing like that people without social power can't be bigots or can't be jerks-

TIFFANY (W): But not considered racist?

MALENA (FOC): - but if you don't have social power - yeah. This operates within the United States.

BECCA (WF): Yeah.

AMY (W): I'm just wondering how we're - what we're saying about social power, then. Like - because you can be - are we saying all White people have social power?

MALENA (FOC): Yeah.

BECCA (WF): Essentially, yeah. And it's by looking at the institutions that form our country-

AMY (W): Okay.

BECCA (WF): -and all of that. So, looking at institutional-

MALENA (FOC): Social power is very different from power in general.

BECCA (WF): Yeah.

MALENA (FOC): Were you going to say something?

JESSICA (W): Yeah. Is it the same as - I had heard the whole "race plus power equals racism"? Is that the same thing? Because the racial prejudice threw me off. Is that the same thing?

MALENA (FOC): I don't know what "race plus power" would be.

JESSICA (W): Your race, like being White - your social status, basically; plus power - your social standpoint, I guess - then can equal racism?

MALENA (FOC): I would probably disagree, but that's like a question that could really get us off on a tangent.

JESSICA (W): Okay. Uh-huh.

MATTHEW (W): I was going to ask about the idea of a racial hierarchy. Does that enter into it? Can a person who's - I mean, let's assume that everybody has power over somebody. Is only the bottom free of that tag of racism, or any - and then every step above that could be racist towards them?

MALENA (FOC): It's sort of the same - let me take this one question - sort of the same as Jessica: That's a conversation that we could have separately, that may not in some ways relate to what we're talking about today. But let's just assume that, for our sake, that racism is very systematic in this country, and so there's privilege, and then there's not privilege. And in many situations, it doesn't matter if you're, you know, Chinese, Japanese, African American, Native

American - there's just not privilege. So, it's really the absence of privilege versus the type of oppression that you would experience, or a hierarchy of oppression. But again, let's - I think that's a conversation we can save for afterwards. I know you were going to say something.

COURTNEY (W): I just wondered if what - what was your thinking when you decided to use this definition versus - I mean, what was the purpose of using this definition of racism as opposed to another within the context of this conversation?

MALENA (FOC): This definition is probably the most widely used by organizations all over our community that do anti-racism work. And so, it's not necessarily my definition, but it's the definition that's sort of a consensus among academics and community organizers that this is the most accurate definition, so.

COURTNEY (W): Okay. I was just curious how I am supposed to interpret this definition, in light of - because many people here are in the elementary program. And my purpose for coming here was to talk about race because I didn't feel like I got very much out of the multicultural ed program. And when I think about racism in the context of children under the age of ten, no child under the age of ten has power outside the power of their parents. And because they don't have social power, because they are children, it's - I can look at racism exists in a classroom within a greater social context, but I can't - you know, the active

racial prejudice exists among all the kids in my class, and none of them have social power.

BECCA (WF): So-

COURTNEY (W): They only have social power in the context of who their parents are, but they are kids, and they don't really have power.

BECCA (WF): So, maybe I can answer this, and then I'm thinking we should maybe try to move it into a dialogue about the activity that we did, because I don't want to spend - or, I don't think it would be best to spend discussing the definition. I think that even children living in this society are sent messages about race and about who has power in our society. I think it is sent through the media and through messages they are getting from their families and significant people in their lives and many people. And pretty much everyone - everyone is sending messages about race constantly. So, kids, when they see, you know, White families portrayed as the norm on TV, they are getting messages. And I think that - so, even in an elementary school setting, racism is very much something that is a pertinent topic.

MALENA (FOC): And I think the last thing I want to say before-

COURTNEY (W): So, the messages they're getting about -

MALENA (FOC): Hold on; I'm not finished. The last thing I would say before we close this out is that the racism we're looking at is a social institution - well,

not a social institution by itself, but how it affects social institutions. And so, those things act out in small ways every day in individual interactions. So, there's not anyplace we could go where we could see like the social power. And so, this very much - I mean, we could talk about sexism and how that plays out among children and how people get messages about that. So, I think that we can talk about the specifics of how this applies in each and every situation, but I think every institution in this country has been affected by racism. And so, we are going to launch that part of the conversation into reflecting on the concentric circles. So, did people notice any patterns?

Several things stand out about this exchange. First, it is the only time in the dialogue in which every White person voluntarily participates. The exchange is very rapid and there are no long pauses, indicating heightened interest. Although the definition is fairly short and simple, every aspect of it is questioned, including the plus sign. The main issue appears to be power, and the implication that all White people, by virtue of their position, hold power over people of color. Another key issue concerns knowledge and whose is legitimate. These questions also function as a diversion. A fair amount of time is spent on the definition, in the face of repeated attempts by the facilitators to move on and explore the implications the definition has for the exercise they have just completed. The White participants' interest in deconstructing the definition, in contrast to the acceptance of the definition by the participants of color, indicates that the definition is counter to White interests, and supportive of the interests of the participants of color.

In the final part of this exchange, Courtney questions the facilitator's choice of definition, in general and in the context of a dialogue on race. In contrast, whenever people of color have challenged her interpretations in the dialogue, she has claimed that the issue is not that she doesn't understand, the issue is that she is inexperienced at talking about racism. This move allows her to explain away or deflect the challenges raised by the participants of color:

> COURTNEY (W): One thing that I kind of felt while I was talking is that, um, not having experience at dialogues and being schooled in the- uh, just the experience of, - I mean, I can think what I'm thinking, and it's going to come out in a certain way. I'm not picking my words to express things directly. And I know that a lot of people in here are experienced, and it makes me feel a little bit uncomfortable too because I know I may be saying things that people are going to take in a different way than what I'm trying to say because I haven't had the experience of articulating it exactly the way I want.

Courtney is aware that in contrast to her stated position as "inexperienced" in talking about race, the facilitators are very experienced in leading racial dialogues. Yet in the exchange regarding the definition of racism she assumes a position of authority in questioning the facilitators. Courtney conveys an evaluation of the facilitators' choice of definition as arbitrary, divisive, useless (to her), and incorrect. She also questions the facilitators' purpose in choosing the definition, implying that their motives are suspect. In these ways she claims that the definition is not legitimate. Further, these moves

suggest that she is trying to block this definition in exchange for one that is more favorable to her.

When the facilitator of color, Malena, counters these moves with a claim meant to establish the definition's legitimacy, Courtney makes three countermoves. First, she enacts an emotional performance by affecting irritation. Second, she questions the usefulness of the dialogue, and finally, she counters that the definition is wrong because children don't have power:

MALENA (FOC): This definition is probably the most widely used by organizations all over our community that do anti-racism work. And so, it's not necessarily my definition, but it's the definition that's sort of a consensus among academics and community organizers that this is the most accurate definition, so.

COURTNEY (W): Okay. I was just curious how I am supposed to interpret this definition, in light of - because many people here are in the elementary program. And my purpose for coming here was to talk about race because I didn't feel like I got very much out of the multicultural ed program. And when I think about racism in the context of children under the age of ten, no child under the age of ten has power outside the power of their parents. And because they don't have social power, because they are children, it's - I can look at racism exists in a classroom within a greater social context, but I can't - you know, the active

racial prejudice exists among all the kids in my class, and none of them have social power.

BECCA (WF): So-

COURTNEY (W): They only have social power in the context of who their parents are, but they are kids, and they don't really have power.

McGuire (1985) states that when people are expressing attitudes, they are giving responses which place ideas on dimensions of judgment. Though not captured in the written transcript, the tone of voice Courtney uses during this exchange conveys as much as her words. She conveys this tone through the vocal lifting of her sentence endings and through the use of the phrases "just curious" and "how I am supposed to interpret that?" Together these signal both a sense of superiority and insult, implying that her sense of entitlement to define the terms of the discussion has been breached (VanDijk, 2001; Wetherall, 2001). She is not being given a say in the facilitator's definition of racism, and thus her ability to define what knowledge will circulate in the dialogues is blocked (Tannen, 2001). From this stance, she communicates a judgment of the facilitators as unqualified. This move works as an attempt to diminish their authority and establish her own.

Meritocracy: They Worked Hard

Above, I discuss a number of discourses which the White participants are drawing from in this exchange. When people of color claim that Whites have power over them and White participants protest that this claim divides the group, Whites are

also invoking the larger discourse of meritocracy. Many of the moves of resistance that White participants employed were rooted in this larger discourse. The discourse of meritocracy posits that opportunity is equal in the United States, and that people achieve based solely on their own merit (Weber, 2001). When Whites are drawing from a discourse of meritocracy, claims that they have more power than someone else *simply by virtue of their social position* are perceived as unfair. Although the White participants in this group occasionally made cursory acknowledgment that Whites were socially dominant, this was not acknowledged as inequitable, indicating an underlying belief that their positions had been earned fairly. The following exchange between the facilitator of color and a White participant illustrates this:

> MALENA (FOC): Well, I think too that - I don't know why but a lot of times it's easier for us to look at people of color and like, 'How are we going to pull them up to where we are?' But what would it mean - and this is mostly directed to the White people - that most of the things you have you don't deserve and you didn't earn? And what does that really mean, you know, in terms of your family? I mean, most - Cassie and I, most of our relatives aren't here, because they're dead, you know. So, why, you know, deserving to live versus not deserving to live.

> JASON (W): You're saying we didn't earn it because this isn't our continent or - because, I mean, you know, my grandparents busted their ass, and my parents busted their ass. What do you mean, we didn't earn it? I mean, now, I will say

that the privilege and the power they may not have earned. But - but I mean, what they have, they earned.

MALENA (FOC): I'm saying that even could be not true.

BECCA (WF): Mm-hmm.

JASON (W): Right. But how?

MALENA (FOC): Well, it's a very complicated answer. And so, I would ask you how - how do you think - in terms of all the things we talked about today, why do you think that might be so?

JASON (W): My - what might be so?

MALENA (FOC): That they -

JASON (W): That they didn't earn it?

MALENA (FOC): Mm-hmm.

JASON (W): When you're talking about my family, it's hard, because, you know, they busted their ass - and they earned it. So, I mean, from the point of view that, yes, they were on land that was stolen, but no, they didn't earn what they got from that land, but - so, if you're going back to the very, very, very core, then no White person here has earned anything at all.

MALENA (FOC): (Nods head) I think that there - it's even more complicated than there being one core. I think that originally, yeah, White people don't belong here.

JASON (W): Right.

MALENA (FOC) (POC): But even every day after that, up until today, it still - I don't think it was earned.

JASON (W): Because - because they didn't allow anyone else -

MALENA (FOC): I think that, when your grandparents worked hard, a different outcome came than when Rich's grandparents worked hard.

JASON (W): Right.

MALENA (FOC): Cause I think his -

JASON (W): Right.

MALENA (FOC): - grandparents worked just as hard, maybe harder.

JASON (W): Right. And I -

MALENA (FOC): And so, I'm saying that you and your -

JASON (W): - cannot argue that.

MALENA (FOC): - grandparents did not deserve that outcome, regardless of how hard they worked.

JASON (W): Because they locked other people out? Because they locked other people out from their opportunity, they didn't even earn what they got?

MALENA (FOC): Mm-hmm.

JASON (W): Right. So, then no person will ever have earned what they've got.

MALENA (FOC): Well, there are White people outside of the United States.

JASON (W): - exactly. Right. White people in the United States, right - [I apologize] - will never have earned what they've got.

MALENA (FOC): I don't know the answer; I'm -

JASON (W): Right.

MALENA (FOC): I'm wanting to know too.

JASON (W): No, but it's the only - but, I mean - or is it anybody only born after, say, a certain - you know, after 1966 when civil rights came through, or that's not even - I mean -

MALENA (FOC): Well, it probably doesn't matter. It's probably not relevant; like, just in general.

JASON (W): Right. See, again, here's - here's just I think kind of a, you know, my personal perception, individuals versus groups; I'm looking at the individuals rather than a group of people out there who did something.

MALENA (FOC): Or even you. What would it mean if you didn't deserve to be here? What if it's not that kind of reasoning anymore, though? What if it doesn't matter how hard you worked? That's maybe not the reason you're actually here.

JASON (W): I'm not understanding the question.

MALENA (FOC): Well, you said - I asked you about yourself, and then you were like, 'Oh, no; wait. I busted my ass; of course I deserve to be here."

JASON (W): Right.

MALENA (FOC): What if I'm saying that the reason you're here is not because you worked hard; it has nothing to do with that. And so, you could have not worked hard and still have been here. And so, I'm saying that, regardless, you don't deserve to be here. What does that feel like for you?

JASON (W): That yes, I do know people that have that level of privilege.

MALENA (FOC): Yeah, but I'm talking about you.

JASON (W): Right. Well, I didn't have that kind of privilege, so it's kind of a non-starter for me; I don't understand.

MALENA (FOC): How did you not have that kind of privilege?

JASON (W): Because I couldn't just drop my dad's name and be here, so.

MARIE (POC): It's not about your being from a family name; it's about, you know, the opportunity that your parents had you know to move into a certain neighborhood that clearly Rich's parents couldn't and my grandparents couldn't.

JASON (W): Right. Right.

MARIE (POC): And it doesn't matter, I mean, what you actually look like; it's the constant effects of opportunities that, at this point, yeah, you're totally based on merit, yeah - at this point, yeah. But your merit isn't - isn't fair. Your merit isn't what you really think it is.

JASON (W): Right. Right. Totally. I grew up with kids who were spending Saturday nights [unintelligible]; I grew up with kids who died with a needle in their arm. So, I mean, just because I grew up in a particular place with privilege doesn't mean I was given necessarily [unintelligible]. Was it easier for me than other people? Yes, absolutely.

MARIE (POC): (Nods head)

JASON (W): I cannot argue that.

Jason makes a number of moves to counter the challenge people of color have made to the concept of meritocracy. At some points, he acknowledges that he has more privilege than people of color do, yet he does this by separating the past from the present in order to maintain the claim that *in the present* he and his family have earned what they have. Jason even goes so far as to suggest a date, "...or is it anybody only born after, say, a certain - you know, after 1966 when civil rights..." At other times he says he does not understand the question. This move may be an attempt to allow him some "breathing space" in the face of Malena's direct challenges. This kind of direct challenge from a person of color, and in particular from a woman of color to a White man, to what he is claiming in terms of race privilege, is a rare experience for White people (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Sleeter, 1993). Jason may be attempting to slow things down so he can collect himself and organize his response. He may also be signaling that the confusion belongs to Malena, rather than to himself, allowing him to claim the rational space in the dialogue (Dyer, 1997).

At the end of the exchange he disavows any significant access to privilege. "Well, I didn't have that kind of privilege." *That kind* signals a ranking in privilege and enables Jason to disavow his place in that ranking. Although Jason has previously stated that he grew up in the Palisades – an exclusive Southern California neighborhood – and had a "Black maid," he aligns himself with "people who died with needles in their arms." Here he separates privilege out into levels and then places himself on the lowest rungs. With this move he claims the ability to determine for people of color what his level of privilege is, and the right to then discount it. He is, in effect, claiming that his privilege is minor and doesn't count in terms of racial disparity. It is significant to note that he makes this move in response to repeated claims of Malena's that he indeed has privilege, and that she and other people of color do not see him as having earned it.

When Marie counters his claim that he didn't have "that kind of privilege," he responds by agreeing: "Right. Right." In signaling agreement with Marie, he closes the dialogue by taking away any specific resistance to her claims. There is nowhere else for her to go, and Jason has effectively ended the exchange.

In Rich's closing remarks below, he affirms Jason's resistance to the questioning of meritocracy, at the same time that he counters Jason's use of it:

> RICH (POC): I just like that - I kind of - I actually heard life in your voice in this last two minutes, because I have heard you speak the last few sessions, but it's been just - it's been very surface for me, nothing very - with much depth. And it's - I don't know if it's strange or whatever it is, but it's interesting that,

when the merit and when what you felt that you deserved or what has come your way, when that was questioned, and it went back a few generations, that that's kind of what - that's what initiated that; life came to your voice. And I think of the blood, sweat and tears that, you know, were shed by my grandfather particularly, who came over from Mexico and started his life here, it's just - I mean, you know, it's just crazy. You know, I mean, it's just nothing was never, ever, ever handed to him, you know, in any way, shape or form. He really had to work for everything, for every ounce of respect, every dollar, from sharecropping in the South to, you know, working in the apple orchards in Washington state. So, I just - I liked that, and I mean and I - yeah - wish we had more time to explore that, but we don't.

Here, Rich encourages Jason to take a less intellectual approach. Until Jason talks directly about his own life, there is no way to counter his abstract claims about whether he did or did not benefit from privilege. Rich encourages Jason to defend his privilege externally rather than keep it hidden or implicit, because when that defense of privilege is made public (no longer protected through silence or generalities), Rich has something "concrete" to relate to or push against. Using his own grandfather as a counter example, Rich then takes up Jason's language of "busting his ass" to counter Jason's claim that his grandparent's earned what they have. Thus in this context, the discourse of personal experience served to 'open up' the conversation. However, the same discourse of experience can also work to close the dialogue, as demonstrated in the next section.

That's Just My Personal Experience

The discourse of personal experience was often used by White participants to protect their positions and preclude attempts to problemitize or deconstruct their claims. This discourse posits the participant's interpretations as the product of a discrete individual, outside of socialization factors, rather than as the product of multidimensional social interaction. The individual is then responded to as a "private mind" in the Cartesian sense (Allen & Cloyes, 2004). The discourse of personal experience has particularly significant consequences for a dialogue in which the stated goal is to gain understanding of alternative racialized perspectives. When the discourse is shifted to one of individual experience, particularly by White members, these "experiences" are decontexualized. The individual is thereby positioned as a unique entity, rather than as a social, cultural and historical subject. Removing these political dimensions mitigates against social change and preserves conventional arrangements (Levine-Rasky, 2000).

One significant form of the discourse of personal experience surfaced through the use of ground rules. One of the stated ground rules at the opening session was "personalized knowledge," whereby participants were asked to speak for themselves rather than make general statements for the entire group. This ground rule was intended to help open the dialogue by allowing for alternative interpretations and perspectives to emerge. However, it was often invoked by White participants in a way that functioned to protect their interpretations rather than expand them. Several times in

the dialogue, White participants ended a rebuttal statement with the disclaimer, "That is just my personal experience." When used at the end of a statement, this served to close off any question of the statement by claiming it as personal and therefore uncontestable. These statements are part of a rhetorical or discursive practice wherein they work as claims of individual positions rather than as a bridge or interplay (Billig, 2001; Tannen, 2001).

Returning to an earlier exchange, when Tiffany is told by a number of participants of color that Europeans and European Americans are seen as White, she responds with a personal feeling statement:

TIFFANY (W): I'm uncomfortable with the label "White" based on what I have learned that people of color perceive "White" to mean and represent. That's what makes me uncomfortable with it. So I'm uncomfortable being associated with what I perceive to be the common perception of what "White" is.

RICH (POC) : But European-Americans are White.

TIFFANY (W): Yeah. I mean, I guess I feel like-

RICH (POC): Well, she said that she felt comfortable identifying herself as a European-American. European-Americans are White. Columbus, Pizarro, all these guys that came from Italy and Spain and all over, um, they're all White. They're all European-American. Um, I don't know. When I- when I look at you, I see a White person.

TIFFANY (W): But the term "White" conjures up different feelings, I think, in people who are European-American, from my perspective.

When Rich tells Tiffany that he sees her as White, she responds with a feeling statement in order to reclaim her position as an individual outside of a racialized group position. She rejects Rich's interpretation of her as White based on the simple assertion that she doesn't feel White. This lack of feeling is posited as enough to sustain her rebuttal. She finalizes her move by stating that she is speaking "from my perspective."

Rich and others have offered Tiffany an interpretation of herself that is different than her own. From a turn-taking perspective, she could respond with a gesture that would open both herself and the dialogue up to further insight and explication, such as asking why they see her the way they do. Instead, she employs a personal psychological reality assertion, making this a classic Cartesian move (Allen & Cloyes, 2004). Tiffany's perspective is conceptualized as internal, private, and individual rather than as social or interrelational. This individual basis alone provides her claim its validity, and thereby positions her as the only "expert" on her interpretation. This move depoliticizes experience and says, in effect, "since nobody else has access to my personal experience, it is therefore incontestable."

Along with her assertion of her experience, Tiffany employs a number of feeling statements. In the above excerpt, she uses the word "uncomfortable" three times. She also repeatedly states that she doesn't "feel" White. Her discomfort with the label, as well as her not feeling White, are enough for her to sustain a rebuttal in the face of

counter statements by participants of color. Although they repeatedly try to engage her in reflecting on herself as White, signaling that it is important to them for her to do so, she holds her position by repeating that she just doesn't feel White and that it is not her experience. These psychologizing statements reduce racial privilege to a feeling-state, something that she either feels or doesn't feel. If she doesn't feel it, then it isn't important and doesn't "count."

Tiffany positions herself first and foremost as an individual, and her own internal reality as the only legitimate source of knowledge for her. Positioning oneself as an individual is a classic signal of Whiteness, and works to de-contextualize and de-politicize race (Ellsworth, 1997; Fine, 1997; Morrison, 1992; Tatum, 2001). The previous exchange occurred in session one. The following exchange occurred in session two:

> TIFFANY (W): I was raised in a diverse neighborhood, and I went to diverse schools, and my family is very diverse, and that's my experience. If you have any questions about it, I'm happy to tell you more. I don't know - I don't - this didn't hit a whole bunch of nerves, because I had never been - I never felt terribly White; I felt very un-White, really. I feel very fortunate for that. But my experience may be different from a different White person's experience, so - and I think it was, given what I heard. And I'm really proud to say that I've had a wonderfully diverse, you know, experience growing up, and I think I'm better for it. I think it's really been a gift, so.

BECCA (WF): Tiffany, what do you mean, you don't feel White?

TIFFANY (W): What I mean by that is that I think the stereotype of - I think that often a label and a stereotype associated with being White. And because my family is not a hundred percent White, by any stretch, and because my experience in this world has been of exposure to all sorts of different ethnic and racial groups, I feel like that has contributed to my - a broadening of my experience. I mean, I don't know what to say besides that. So, my skin looks this way, but I have Jewish ancestry, so somehow that's - I mean, that qualifies me, right? I mean - anyway.

MALENA (FOC): Qualifies you for what?

TIFFANY (W): As being a member of a group that has been racially discriminated against. I mean, "qualify" is the wrong word; I'm sorry if that offends anybody, but - I'm done talking for a while.

In the above excerpt, Tiffany attempts three countermoves to the challenge to see herself as White. She begins by psychologizing racism in terms of feeling and experience. When her feeling statement is challenged by Becca, she tries to discount her Whiteness by appealing to her Jewish ancestry. When Malena challenges that move, Tiffany abruptly ends the discussion. Although this excerpt is a particularly clear example of the use of personal experience to protect a White position, Tiffany wasn't the only White participant who employed this move when her self-perception was questioned. The following excerpts also illustrate this move in use. Courtney's

responses occur in an exchange in which the White facilitator, supported by several

participants of color, has challenged some of the White participants for positing racism

as a phenomenon that existed in the past but is not present in the "younger generation."

> BECCA (WF): Uh, there've been a couple of things that people have been
>
> talking about that have been really frustrating for me but have been things, I
>
> think, that I've felt at- at various times in my consciousness as well. Um, and
>
> one of the things that I've noticed is that people keep talking about racism as
>
> first of all being a generational thing. The White people continuously have been
>
> referring to racism as a generational thing, and I think that, for me when I do
>
> that, and when I look at my experience on that- when I do that, that's when I'm
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> keeping that separate from myself, and by doing that I'm not owning my own
>
> racism. And the fact is I've been socialized in a society where racism is
>
> prevalent, and for me to, as a White person, put it out there that it's a
>
> generational thing, I think is very unfair. And I don't know how it affects other
>
> people, but-

Like Tiffany, Courtney draws on both her feelings and her personal experience

in her responses to the facilitators' challenge:

> COURTNEY (W): I think, um, speaking for myself, but I think- from my
>
> experiences with, you know, older neighbors or people, um-and there aren't
>
> many because I do live in Seattle and I have all my life-and often you don't hear
>
> a lot of White people in Seattle, openly, you know, speaking, in a way that, that

sounds racist or, that's openly talking about stereotypes. There has to be an interplay there and to put it all on- you know, someone coming from the outside and telling another White person, Well, you really- you shouldn't feel that way, you know, it's like what does that mean. Because my feelings are not about you.

COURTNEY (W): I think it- I think it depends on the individual experience. And since we're all speaking from personal experience, um, I know that I was - I got a little upset to hear people say that they don't think it's fair that someone would say it's generational, because it's a personal thing if we all know our own families and our own communities and we know what we have perceived in our own families and communities. And so I think it's a valid point - if that's what you want to say, then that's what you should be able to say. I just want to put that out there.

In Courtney's statement that her feelings "...are not about you," she presents her feelings as standing alone, or outside, social processes, rather than as the function of social processes. Her feelings are thus independent of the social, political or historical context in which she is embedded. Here she draws not only on a Cartesian discourse, but also a deeply individual one. By positioning herself as an individual, with its collection of rights, she closes her position off from others, for Courtney, as an individual, has the right to think and feel whatever she wants. Conversationally, this is a blocking move that ends any challenge to her perceptions. Courtney has the

opportunity to learn, for example, why Becca, as a White facilitator with experience in dialogues about race, feels frustrated that racism has been relegated to the past. Instead, Courtney defends her position, negates Becca's, and closes off further exploration.

Through her language, Courtney has also shifted the emphasis from her views or her perceptions to her feelings. Courtney says that she *feels* that racism is generational, she doesn't say she *thinks* it is. Had she kept her language in the realm of thinking, she would have been more susceptible to challenge. Thinking, by drawing from the rational realm, is a more public space and thus more open to contestation. Feelings, however, are considered to be in the realm of the personal or private space, and thus not available for contestation. To attack feelings is to break two "rules" of the discourse of individualism: she has the right to feel the way she does, and challenging her feelings risks hurting her (you can hurt someone's feelings but not their thinking), making a challenge to feelings inherently unfair. By shifting the discourse from perceptions to feelings, Courtney has protected her interpretations from challenge and simultaneously assumed the higher moral ground in the dialogue.

It is also worthy to note that at the end of the first excerpt, above, Courtney has positioned people of color as "coming from the outside" in the challenge of White racism as being generational. She says: "…you know, someone coming from the outside and telling another White person, Well, you really- you shouldn't feel that way, you know, it's like what does that mean. Because my feelings are not about you." She shifts here from the common discourse that racism is only about people of color and not

a White concern (Tatum, 2001), to claim that she knows more about racism than people

of color do. Further, in a dialogue about racism, she has just stated that her feelings are

not about people of color. On one level, she is invoking the Cartesian discourse

discussed above, but she is also positioning people of color outside of racism, as if they

are not a part of it, and thereby claiming authority in racial knowledge as the domain of

White people. This move is by no means consistent for Courtney. In previous

exchanges she has positioned herself as inexperienced about racism and located racial

experiences with people of color. This inconsistency indicates that she invokes the

discourse of experience at times and in ways that best serve her interest in maintaining

her White position (Marty, 1999).

The Rules

The discourse of experience is rooted in the larger discourse of individualism.

In turn, individualism is a corollary of meritocracy – since White people are positioned

as individuals rather than group members, their elevated positions are purely the result

of their individual efforts and hard work. At stake in all of these discourses –

experience, individualism, meritocracy - are questions about the kind of difference race

makes in the formation both of subjects and of social structures (Frankenberg, 1992).

White obfuscation of racial group differences, as well as the consequences of those

differences, occurred throughout the sessions, but was particularly visible in the

contention over "rules." This struggle over rules not only embodied questions of the

role that race plays in one's relation to particular institutional structures and interpretive frameworks, but also questions of authority and position in the group.

During the break in the first session, Malena poured herself a cup of water from a bottle on a back table. Two White participants were standing at the end of the table, engaged in conversation. Malena made a comment about the small size of the cups, joking that it was a good thing she wasn't very thirsty. The two participants did not respond to her joke and continued talking. Malena then turned towards the group and joked to Becca, "That's just like White people to ignore a person of color." One of the participants, who hadn't responded to her first comment, upon hearing this comment, choked slightly and spit some water out of her mouth. Malena followed with another joke to the effect of, "Now the White people are spitting on me!" A number of people then laughed along with her. When the break ended and the group resumed, Tiffany was upset about Malena's joking about White people and she issued a heated statement:

> TIFFANY (W): I felt- I'm just going to say this because I can't- I can't not. I feel like it's not fair that you're allowed to joke about people- White people having, uh, you know, spitting on you or being silly with the water, or that's them asserting their White power again. That's not funny to me, and it's not a joke, and it's not a joke in this setting at all, and it's not a joke anywhere. But it pisses me off that that's what came out of your mouth and that you can treat that so lightly and then, talking in this professional context, have this elevated, elitist conversation about race issues, but you just took it really unseriously a couple of

minutes ago. And I- I'm- I can't joke about people of color doing anything or I'd be, you know, sent out of here in a heartbeat. And I would never do it because I don't believe it. But that- that bothers me. That's- to me that's a racist, um, play. And it really hurts me that that's okay and that nobody else- I'm really affected by that.

Tiffany posits a number of claims in this statement, none of which account for differences in social power. First, she feels that it is unfair that people of color can joke about racism but she cannot. It is the lack of reciprocity that she is concerned with, and she mentions this in terms of fairness both at the beginning and at the end of her statement. In so doing she invokes the "fair = same" discourse, in which to be fair everyone has to do and have the same thing. This discourse does not account for social power differentials between groups and the unequal impact that results from the same act across groups. Her reference to a "racist play" invokes unfairness again, here through the discourse of "playing the race card." The "race card" discourse is a White claim that people of color will resort to accusations of racism as an excuse for their own incompetence and when they have run out of other options. It invokes concepts of trickery and unfairness, implying that people of color are dishonest about racism and that their racial perspectives are not to be trusted. At its base this discourse is a claim that racism is an unfounded accusation that people of color "pull out of their back pockets" to take unfair advantage of Whites.

Tiffany also claims that she would be "sent out of here in a heartbeat," although there has been no indication that anyone would be dismissed from the group. Her implication is that the rules are not being applied fairly to Whites, giving the people of color in the group an unfair advantage over her. This part of her claim invokes the discourse of "reverse discrimination," by which Whites claim that due to programs intended to redress institutional racism, Whites are now the victims of racism. Reverse discrimination is part of the anti-affirmative action movement that equates "fair" with "identical" or "same" (Hahnel & Pai, 1995; Tatum, 1997; Wise, 2003). This move ahistoricizes institutional, structural and cultural racism and posits that to treat people fairly you must treat everyone exactly the same. In so doing, the "fair = same" discourse is rooted in individualism and guarantees that macro-level dimensions of racism will not be addressed because each individual is posited as competing equally with every other individual. Dimensions of historical, cultural, and structural advantage and their effects on outcome are thus ignored (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997). By claiming that Malena has access to something she does not (the ability to joke about another racial group) Tiffany implies that she has been subjected to a form of reverse discrimination. The discourses that Tiffany takes up remove power from the analysis and function to keep Whiteness hidden and denied.

For Tiffany and many White people, racism is defined as individual acts rather than as social, historical, institutional and cultural systems and social processes that work together to grant Whites as a group more advantage than people of color (McIntosh, 1988; Weber, 2001). Her charge of unfairness rests on a lack of

acknowledgment of the differential in power between groups and the difference in a joke's impact that results from that power imbalance. Sleeter (1996) refers to this as a strategy of White racism: "One strategy is to equate racism with individual prejudice and personal ignorance, which allows us to assume that every group is racist, and to avoid acknowledging the differences in power and privileges between Whites and groups of color" (p. 257). Tiffany's assumption that Whites and people of color operate on an equal playing field makes the claim that there is a difference in access incomprehensible to her. As long as her interpretation remains on the individual level, she will not be able to gain insight from the perspectives of people of color, who continually challenge her individualization of race and attempt to move her to a group interpretation.

Caroline counters Tiffany by articulating her own sense of unfairness and challenges the use of the fair = same discourse:

> CAROLINE (POC): My feeling when- when that comes up, that almost bothers me because I feel like as a White person you already have institutional power to back up whatever you want to say. As any person of color in this room we don't have institutional power, so technically, it's not racism. And so when you make that comment I get real frustrated real quick. And you'll- you'll find that. And so that bothers me. Because all of our lives as people of color we've been joked about and taunted and people have said things about us. And for you -- I feel like for you to get mad because somebody joked about- about your race, that's

just like, okay, after all these years of- And not even as a Black person-I don't even want to get stuck on the Black-White dichotomy-but as a Native American, you know what I mean, as a Chinese American, all the things that we've had to go through, and then for a comment to come out, "Oh, well, I'm just really hurt," that bothers the heck out of me; it really does. And I don't want to be focusing on one person, and I don't want to be rude, so I really apologize; I'm not a rude person. But I'm just speaking- I'm trying to be honest, and that really bothers me.

Becca, explicitly positioning herself as speaking from a White racial location, moves in from that position to support what Caroline has said:

BECCA (WF): I think that one of the things that White people have the luxury of doing is forgetting about the power differential. And I think that's what- what sets us in a place where we can say stuff like that, where we can be offended and not look at the hundreds of years of oppression and horrible maltreatment that has gone on towards other people. And it's very hard for me to hear that. And, I want to thank those who shared about how that makes them feel because I know that it's very frustrating for me.

Courtney counters Caroline and Becca by supporting Tiffany:

COURTNEY (W): I just wanted to mention that during this dialogue the main focus has been that we can own our own feelings, and I think Tiffany was just putting her feelings out there. And that's- that's, you know, her job as a part of

this dialogue to do that. Um, and I think that my feelings, when I heard that happen, is that I didn't- I wasn't offended by it, but I did think that it was a little bit odd within this context because here we are in a hypersensitive situation. We're talking about race and to make a joke about that when everyone's kind of acting professional just seemed a little out of place and, um, not offensive to me, but it did seem, within the context, that this is a situation where people can feel uncomfortable and to, you know, have it be so serious and then kind of joke and then come back just- it seemed real odd.

Courtney, like Tiffany, characterizes the setting as one in which people are "kind of acting professional," and positions Malena's behavior within this context as "odd." This is a normative move, in which she works to reestablish White dominance of the proceedings. By twice describing the facilitator's behavior as "odd," she places Malena outside of the norms. These unmarked White norms function as universal rules that only become marked when violated (Frankenberg, 1992). In a setting in which Whiteness is being contested, maintaining control of these norms works to keep the White participants in the position of authority in the group. "Within the context," she and other Whites are behaving correctly and know and follow the rules. In the above statement, Courtney aligns with Tiffany to regain control of the norms and reinforce the earlier accusation that those who provide a counter-narrative to White norms are not playing fair. Counter-narratives can be interpreted as a form of unfairness because they contest the "rightful" social hierarchy (Van Dijk, 1993).

Courtney also depicts the dialogue as a hypersensitive situation. In doing so, she is positioning Malena's joking at break as inappropriate (again working to set norms) and supporting Tiffany's claim that the facilitator, most notably a person of color, is behaving unprofessionally. A number of noteworthy claims are being made in this exchange. The space has been positioned as academic and hypersensitive. Racialized interpretations have been positioned as personal and not social or public. The goal has been defined as the equal sharing of personal experiences and feelings. Yet, in direct contradiction to this goal, these White participants repeatedly criticize and correct the behavior of the facilitator of color and make universal pronouncements on the group's progress. The impact would have been very different had they said that Malena's joke scared them, or that they felt confused or angered by it. Here an emphasis on the personal in terms of one's own responses would have made an opening in the group for alternative interpretations. Perhaps the difference in interpretations could have been a source of insight into how racialized groups interpret social interaction differently and the consequences of those interpretations. Instead, these White participants claim a universal interpretation and move outside of their previously individualized positions to explicitly evaluate the participation of others. This is a way to establish the communication patterns of Whites as the norm from which others are marked (Nakayama & Krizek, 1999).

Although at times these participants have positioned their own White interpretations as universal and uncontestable, and at other times as personal and uncontestable, they are directly contesting the interpretations of the participants of

color. The following statement is another example of the move to establish White normative dominance while also indirectly criticizing the facilitators:

> COURTNEY (W): I just wanted to ask a question about norms. I was wondering, from now on, if we are expected to speak from our personal experience or if we are going to have the facilitators put generalizations out there. And I was just wondering if, as facilitators, you guys were running by different norms - which is fine, but I just wanted to clarify that.

Although Courtney frames her statement as a question, she is actually making a claim - that the behavior of the facilitators is unfair or dismissive of the participants' individual interpretations. Her claim that they are "running by different norms" is a move to delegitimize the facilitators and reestablish White normative dominance. In addition to working to reestablish norms that are useful to her as a White person, she is also taking issue with the facilitators' response to the White participants as socially situated group members rather than discrete individuals. She interprets this as "putting generalizations out there." Because Whites, operating from the discourse of individualism, do not conceptualize themselves as group members, references that imply a collective or group experience are seen as unfair generalizations. As generalizations run counter to the discourse of individualism, they are marked as illegitimate.

Becca consistently positions her interpretations as a function of her White racial position and aligns with Malena and the participants of color. In so doing, she is

breaking White racial solidarity and is penalized along with Malena. Struggles over power in this context serve to define racial lines and invite individuals to either declare their solidarity or mark themselves as deviant. Becca, in breaking with Whiteness, has risked losing approval and other privileges of White acceptance that Whites confer on each other. This loss of acceptance usually occurs in the form of Whites feeling "uncomfortable" around the deviant White person (Sleeter, 1996). Although Becca is not being as directly criticized as Malena, the charges that "the facilitators" are behaving inappropriately includes her because she has broken with the other Whites and aligned with Malena.

Marie counters Courtney by supporting Caroline (POC) in her attempt to contextualize this incident within the larger context of race relations and White privilege:

> MARIE (POC): As a person of color, I'm not going to leave this room and never talk about race until the next time. Some of you might leave this room and not talk about race until the next time. When I leave this room, I'm going to joke about race until the next time I see you, and I'm going to joke about White people, and I'm going to, you know- and it's because it's a way for me to constantly remind people that racism is there, racism is in the hearts and minds of all. Doesn't mean you're a bad person; just means that you were socialized in America. And, I have to bring it up and joke with my people because they, like, (inaudible). And it's easy to ignore it, and it's painful to recognize it; it's very

painful. It's painful to see it. But it's painful for all of you to not see it. And so I don't feel, you know- even if it- even if this is the only time you will talk about race, because it's not going to be my only time.

Here Marie provides Courtney with more information, again returning to the larger context in which to think about race. Courtney has an opportunity to understand Marie's racial experience as different from her own, and draw meaning that could be helpful to her in negotiating race in her classroom, a goal in which she has stated interest. Yet, rather than seek to understand Marie's experience and compare and contrast it with her own, Courtney makes a position-protecting move by countering Marie and pulling the discussion back to the micro or personal level:

COURTNEY (W): I think this is the only time that I'll talk about race with a group of people that are using very- language that's very, you know, everyone in here has a degree in teaching or social work, and there is a dialogue language that people are using. If I'm talking about race, it's going to be at a more personal level, and so this is a- for me this is a unique situation.

Courtney refers here to a particular language that is being used. She states that when she talks about race, it is on a personal level. Earlier, she positioned the language used in this setting as professional, while here she names it "dialogue language" and positions it as academic by associating it with the degrees the participants hold. By depicting the language being used as professional, she attempts to sequester the dialogue and position it as something unique and belonging only in academic (public)

space.   She makes it clear that she uses a different ("more personal") language when she talks about race. In contrast, Marie and other people of color state that they will use the same language later that they use now; race is a social construct for them and they do not differentiate between the public or private space.

Courtney ignores Marie's point that the people of color in the group will continue to think and talk about racism when they leave. She states that *if* she talks about race, this is the only time she'll talk about race with this language. Her implication is that when she talks about race, she uses the language of personal experience. At the same time, she validates (albeit inadvertently) Marie's point that this is a unique situation for her and in so doing, verifies that she occupies a different social location than Marie. Although Marie and other participants of color, as well as the facilitators, have been pressing the White participants to interpret their responses to the dialogue as a function of their social location as Whites (rather than as individuals), many of the White participants have been unable or unwilling to do so, returning again and again to the discourse of individual experience (or, in the case of Matthew, the discourse of spirituality). This demonstrates a resistance to interpreting their responses as a function of their White social location. Another example of this resistance occurs a short time later when Becca, as a White person, and Malena, as a person of color, challenge Courtney to see her earlier statement of the situation as hypersensitive as coming from a White perspective:

BECCA (WF): I just want to echo what Caroline has to say, where I think as a White person coming and saying- having this hypersensitive talk where we're all hypersensitive to race, really that's as a White person being hypersensitive to race, recognizing that for other people their experience may not be the same as that.

COURTNEY (W): Well, I just said I was hypersensitive. I didn't say anyone else was.

MALENA (FOC): I think you described it as a hypersensitive setting.

COURTNEY (W): I said, It feels to me like a hypersensitive setting.

In fact, Courtney did not say that it *felt* to her like a hypersensitive setting, she stated that it *was* a hypersensitive situation: "…but I did think that it was a little bit odd within this context because here we are in a hypersensitive situation." What is significant in this exchange is not who was right about what was said, but that Courtney consistently defends her position rather than seek new understanding. This defense of her position includes engaging in rhetorical and semantic debates. Although here she changes what she has said to serve her interests, she will later accuse the facilitators of twisting her words. The consistency of her defensive position indicates that she is working to regain control of the dialogue and close off further challenges to her position (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). At the end of this exchange, being unable to regain control of the norms, she withdraws and refuses to participate further:

COURTNEY (W): I am going to pass.

Her withdrawal is a final attempt to mark the proceedings as unfair to White participants, and functions as a penalty to the facilitators for not conceding control of the norms (Billig, 2001).

In the closing circle, each participant is asked to share one highlight from the dialogue. This is Tiffany's closing statement, in which she returns again to Malena's break-time joke:

> TIFFANY (W): I feel like, uh, what started out being an interesting, um, introspection and kind of exposition of our feelings and everyone expressing their thoughts has turned into something where I'm feeling judged and, um, misunderstood and, um, angry that everything I say somehow gets twisted around. Um, and maybe that's institutional racism coming up right there, but I just feel like I don't want to (inaudible). Much of what I said has been misunderstood. And I want to- maybe to echo Courtney, who has understood a lot of what I said, because I'm feeling pretty bad right now, just pretty- pretty, um, misunderstood, and I think I just need to go cry about this and think about, you know, my own racism in all this, but, um, I'm upset.

Tiffany opens by restating her expectation that a dialogue on race would be an opportunity to share her feelings. Again, she draws on the discourse of individual rights and experiences rather than an institutional or group membership framework. Although Tiffany makes cursory reference in her closing statement to both her "own racism" and "institutional racism," each time she follows these references with a "but," negating the

previous point and shifting emphasis to what follows. What follows in both cases is a

declaration of personal upset and hurt feelings. In the context of maintaining

Whiteness, this serves to keep the conversation on the individual level and pull the

focus and the resources of the group towards her and her needs.

By insisting that the problem is that she has been misunderstood, Tiffany again

depoliticizes race and places the responsibility for the "miscommunication" onto those

who have misunderstood her - the participants of color. She also aligns with another

White woman by positioning her as having understood, invoking White solidarity and

"proving" that the problem lies not with her but with the people of color and those who

align with them (Becca). There is no opening in Tiffany's position for the possibility

that the lack of understanding could be hers. If Tiffany is unable or unwilling to

consider this possibility, or the corollary possibility that people of color might have

information that she does not, she cannot gain new insight into how racism functions.

The participants of color and the White facilitator are offering her this insight, but

Tiffany holds a tightly defended position which ensures that her White view and the

privileges that come with it will remain intact (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). Tiffany's

closing statement that she is upset is countered by Caroline's closing statement:

> CAROLINE (POC): I'm upset too. I'm still kind of- I'm still- yeah, I'm a little
>
> upset. I feel like some people aren't really thinking as deep as they really should
>
> and could about some of the comments that they're making and what- where
>
> those comments are coming from when we're talking about social identity. And

they're not really thinking about what social identity your comments are coming out of. And so, I'm thinking that maybe that it'll- they'll come out some more as the sessions go on.

Here, Caroline again pushes Tiffany to view her responses from the lens of social position, rather than from the lens of individual experience. The next week, Tiffany expresses continued upset about the break-time joke, indicating that her viewpoint has not shifted. At the opening check-in, participants are asked to share a new awareness or recognition of a pattern related to race:

> BECCA (WF): So, our question is: What is something - some sort - some thing or some pattern that you have noticed that was new since our discussion last week, or if you are someone who spends a fair amount of time thinking about race, maybe something that was a pattern or thing that was reinforced for you since our meeting last week?

> TIFFANY (W): A pattern that I noticed this week is that, every single day this whole week since this past experience, I felt the same degree of anger that I had last week from the experience of being here.

Tiffany clearly states her anger but does not attempt to make any meaning of it or offer an explanation. By not providing an explanation, she arouses curiosity and perhaps even concern within the group. Her statement can be read as an accusation, for she locates the source of this anger in the experience "…of being here." This is a strong statement and it allows Tiffany to affect the group while remaining in control of the

issue – only she knows why she is so angry. She makes this statement in the opening check-in, a time in which each participant responds to an opening question and these responses are not open to comment by others until everyone has finished. By making her statement at this point in the session, Tiffany immediately shapes the direction of the entire session, while also keeping herself protected from any question or counter.

This could be a profound opportunity for self reflection, and there are many questions that could potentially provide Tiffany with greater awareness about her racial socialization. These questions might include: Why am I so affected by this? What expectations did I have for a dialogue about race with people of color? Where do those expectations come from? Who do those expectations serve? What would it mean if what the participants of color were saying was true? How is my own social position informing my reactions and behaviors? Rather than taking this opportunity for self reflection, however, Tiffany locates the problem outside of herself and places responsibility for her discomfort firmly with others. Later in the session, this exchange occurs:

> TIFFANY (W): It's not fair that - I feel like I have to be on the defense because I feel like, whenever I start speaking, someone cuts me off - mainly the facilitators - and I feel like last week there was a precedent that was set that was totally, totally atrocious; that we can joke about White people, but we can't joke about anybody else. And that to me was a bottom line offense, that I - I can't get over. To me it's a cardinal rule; you just can't get over that. So, I've been

pissed off ever since last week. And I feel like I can't be honest in this group. I feel like only with one-on-one do I have some sense of safety, like I'm not going to be cut off or I'm not going to be told that I'm a White girl with no sense of anybody else's experience. And so, I'm not going to sit here and defend my race; I can only defend myself. And I'm sorry; I'm - not sorry for being White; that's not something I'm sorry about. But I'm - I don't want to feel so - so shut up in this group. I feel like I cannot say what I feel. So, I'm glad-

CAROLINE (POC): That's something I've felt my whole frickin' life.

TIFFANY (W): -you can. I feel completely silenced in here and talking, so-

BECCA (WF): Tiffany, did you hear Caroline's comment?

TIFFANY (W): I did hear her comment, and I'm responding to her comment.

BECCA (WF): No. Did you hear the comment that she just made?

TIFFANY (W): Yeah; that she felt - has felt that way her whole life. I did hear that.

MALENA (FOC): What does that mean to you?

TIFFANY (W): I'm listening.

MALENA (FOC): Well, I know; I would just like your opinion on her comment. Like, what do you - what do you think about the fact that maybe you're experiencing something for this period and this conversation that she's been feeling her whole life, and how frustrating it feels for you, obviously, and maybe

carry that over to what it feels like for her- its more difficult when she wants to finally talk about something, other people are shutting down and finding reasons not to say anything and aren't meeting her at the table.

TIFFANY (W): I would love to listen with my whole heart to you, and I would love for you to talk at length, even outside of this two hour- Oh, wow. I'd love for you to be able to share from your heart with me for hours and days. And I don't care how long you want to talk; I want to hear. I would love to hear your experience. But in this group I have been feeling tremendously defensive, because I feel like I've been critiqued and not understood. So, I honor your experience, whatever your experience has been. I would love to hear more about it. And I can't take away my race, but I can take away, you know, my defensiveness, potentially. And so, I - I'm sorry that you feel upset. And I'd like to hear more. That's all I have to say.

MALENA (FOC): Is there anything in particular that you've been wanting to share that you - whether implied or expressed, that you have not-

TIFFANY (W): - I said, just a few minutes ago that I felt like the precedent that was set last week was an outrageous - outrageous problem for - in terms of my communication in this group and in terms of what norms a group that's talking about race should be exercising. But in terms of my racial - my experience with racism in general, I just feel plain cut off all the time. So, I don't - I just don't - every time I want to say something I feel like the conversation is redirected yet

again, and I can't really respond. I had about ten million things I could have said in response to your thoughts, which were so powerful, and I'm grateful that you said them, because I think they are hard to say, maybe. And you gave us so much. So, maybe we can talk after class, you know.

MALENA (FOC): What are other White people feeling about that?

In the above exchange, Tiffany invokes a set of "cardinal rules" in regards to dialogues about race. Whatever these rules may be, they aren't universally understood here, for several participants of color have told Tiffany that joking about White people is a common way for people of color to relieve the stress of racism:

LAURA (POC): And what I think as people of color White people need to know that we do talk about White people, and we joke about White people, and we say it all the time. And, you know, especially among ourselves we talk about White people all the time. So, I mean, hearing a joke about it didn't bother me, and it's just kind of like putting it out there, like that's- this is real; this is what we talk about; this is what we say. And- and also like, we need to find humor and lightness in this too. Because I think we can just get so, like, oh, my God, we're talking about racism and, you know- But, I mean, I can value that that wasn't your experience of it. But, as a person of color just saying, yeah, we talk about White people all the time, and it's not foreign for us to say, you know, White people this, White people that. It's just, you know, commonplace.

These explanations could be moments of cross-cultural learning for Tiffany. In addition, when Marie shares that she finds it painful that White people (Tiffany) don't see racism, she offers Tiffany a potential parallel point of connection – they both express pain, albeit from different social positions. Tiffany, however, does not take this opportunity, and instead maintains her claim that these rules are universal. According to Tiffany, in joking about White people during break, Malena has broken one of the cardinal rules, and once they are broken, there is no repair. Tiffany's insistence on the existence of these rules, and her attempts to apply them universally, are forms of knowledge and normative dominance. Tiffany has asserted that the dialogue process, regardless of the background of the leaders, should be run by these rules, and implied that anyone who violates the rules should be penalized. In so doing, she has claimed ultimate knowledge of the correct procedures and positioned herself as judge. She also moves to punish a violator (and those who support her) by denouncing her and refusing to participate in the dialogue. This joking incident occurred in the first week, and despite numerous attempts to explain to Tiffany the difference between people of color joking about race and White people joking about race, as well as the reasons why people of color joke about race, Tiffany states that one week later, she is unwilling to fully participate in the dialogue because of the perceived infraction.

The concern with correct behavior in a dialogue on race, as well as the depiction of this dialogue as a unique situation, illustrates that race is a compartmentalized concept for White people. Race is a "special occasion" enactment, performed in discrete and clearly delineated ways. Whiteness functions to elevate Whites to the

status of universal human, outside of a racialized location. Marie's closing comment is a cogent demarcation of the social realities of Whites and people of color:

> MARIE (POC): I kind of wanted to expand on that too, because I heard Tiffany say that, you know, "when we come here to talk about race - when we come here to talk about race." And I didn't come here to talk about race; I came here to talk about my life and about my experiences. And I knew that coming in, that I wasn't going to get into race mode; I was just going to come and share my real thoughts and my real feelings. So, it's - it's completely different for people of color, I think, to come here and - you know. We're not getting in race mode; we're just being real.

Although a common-sense interpretation of this dichotomous social reality would put Whites and people of color in different social worlds, in practice the social locations of Whites and people of color are thoroughly intertwined. Whites are dependent on people of color for their identity, for it is through a racial Other that Whites define themselves (Morrison, 1992; Said, 1979). As a social construct, Whiteness gains its meaning from its encounters with that which is constructed as non-Whiteness. The negotiations and definitions of Whiteness and non-Whiteness are part of the work of this social phenomenon (Nakayama & Martin, 1999). The ability of dominant culture to know, define, place and categorize itself is dependent on its ability to know, define, place and categorize the Other; the subordination of the one is a prerequisite for the normalization and exaltation of the other. As Morrison (1992) so

eloquently states, "Freedom (to move, to earn, to learn, to be allied with a powerful

center, to narrate the world) can be relished more deeply in a cheek-by-jowl existence

with the bound and unfree, the economically oppressed, the marginalized, the silenced"

(p. 64).

As long as Whites avoid noticing the impact of race in everyday interaction,

People of color must carry the weight of awareness of racial inequities. The burden for

shifting these inequitable dynamics then falls to people of color, who are the least

viably located in terms of social and institutional power. As the participants of color

repeatedly tell the White participants, constantly attending to and navigating racial

dynamics is a source of inordinate stress. Whites don't function under this pressure

except in unique situations, such as this dialogue. This ability to function without

attending to racial dynamics is one of the ways that Whiteness insulates White people

and protects them from racial stress. Leaving people of color responsible for racial

dynamics, while invalidating and delegitimizing their claims about these dynamics, is a

key way that White dominance is enacted. Exploring these dynamics could potentially

help shift relations of inequity and domination, a goal in which the White participants

have claimed an interest.

Through the break-time joking incident, these White participants have come

face-to-face with a profound difference in interpretation between themselves and the

participants of color. There are many possible ways of responding to this difference,

including utilizing it as a source of meaning and insight that could contribute to their

effectiveness in future relations with students, parents and co-workers of color. However, the most consistent White responses are defensiveness and anger, or silence. These responses block any interruption of the practices and processes of Whiteness and, in effect, guarantee that White dominance will remain intact.

A deep denial is necessary for Whites to maintain the façade of equal opportunity and meritocracy (Morrison, 1992). The defensiveness and anger may be a response to the attempts that are being made to break through this denial. Viewing the interpretations offered by the participants of color as worthy of consideration would require these White participants to change the way they interpret themselves, because White identity is deeply rooted in a discourse of individualism and equality (Dyer, 1997; Macedo & Bartolome, 1999; Powell, 1997). Considering the interpretations of the participants of color, although challenging, would also provide more opportunity for learning and enable more genuine relationships.

Summary

In this chapter I described key discourses that surfaced in the first half of the dialogue sessions. These discourses included an unracialized identity, the myth of meritocracy, personal experience, and White rules for racial dialogue. I provided an analysis of these discourses at both the textual and scholarship levels. In the following chapter I will describe and analyze key discourses and themes that emerged in the latter part of the sessions.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis II

Knowledge Validation

One of the primary ways of establishing validity in critical discourse analysis is by documenting the occurrence of negative categorizations of participants, in order to delegitimate or marginalize their perspectives and actions (Van Dijk, 1993). These negative categorizations are a semantic property of argumentation, but also moves of positive self-representation. White invalidation of the knowledge held by people of color can be seen in the White resistance to viewing the dialogues as sources of learning One example is Tiffany's insistence that she is not a White person who doesn't understand race. She makes this claim at two separate points:

> So, it was nice to be able to tell people that and have them know that I'm not just some White girl who doesn't have any knowledge of other racial experiences.

> I'm not going to be told that I'm a White girl with no sense of anybody else's experience.

What is problematic for Tiffany is that the participants of color clearly do see her as "just some White girl," and this interpretation is what triggers her defensiveness. Unfortunately, her insistence that she is not unaware of or insensitive to racism is not convincing to others, and in fact only reinforces their view of her. As long as Tiffany focuses her attention on deflecting this view, rather than seeking to understand why others hold it, she limits her ability to gain new knowledge about how she is manifesting Whiteness. Tiffany's insistence that she is not manifesting Whiteness is a

form of knowledge domination; she will define not only the parameters of the dialogue,

but also the parameters of others' interpretations of her. In practice, her attempts to

impose her interpretation of herself over that of the participants of color works to

invalidate their knowledge. She has positioned herself as the judge of racial awareness,

and although this is a common White position to take, it is deeply problematic in terms

of interrupting Whiteness. Because of White social, economic and political power

within a White supremacist culture, Whites are in the position to legitimize people of

color's assertions of racism. Yet Whites are the least likely to recognize, understand, or

be invested in validating those assertions, and the least likely to be honest about their

consequences.

Tiffany, like many White people, is defining racism as something that only bad,

ignorant, older, or segregated people enact in specific moments. These moments

typically consist of "saying something" racist. Because Tiffany's family "is full of

people of color," she believes that she cannot be complicit in racism. This is a common

White understanding of racism, which posits racism as discrete actions taken by specific

individuals and occurring in specific incidents. As long as a White person does not

intentionally enact these incidents and knows some people of color, they are outside of

racist relations and cannot have a racist viewpoint or benefit from structural, cultural,

social, political, economic, and institutional racism (McIntosh, 1988; Sleeter, 1997). A

corollary of this White definition is that unintentional racism does not "count" as

racism. Thus racism is constructed as specific and visible acts that Whites can observe

and deem as racist or not racist, based on factors which include, in large part, intentions.

When Tiffany states that she is "not just some White girl" but is in fact different from other Whites, she is operating from an individualist discourse. She positions herself as first and foremost an individual, functioning outside of her White social location or group history. She views herself as an individual, and expects others to share this view. However, Tiffany isn't only insisting that an interpretation of her as "a White girl" is misinformed. She directly states "I'm *not going to be told* that I'm a White girl with no sense of anybody else's experience." This is a very explicit blocking move that contains significant claims. She makes it clear that she is not open to anyone else's interpretation of her or her actions, ensuring that her viewpoint will not be expanded. She also conveys that the people of color who offer her alternative interpretations have nothing to teach her. This second point is particularly significant because if she conceded that she could learn something from people of color, she would have to validate their knowledge and many of the discourses upon which she relies would be undermined. In protecting her interpretations, Tiffany takes a highly defended position. She cannot make sense of these alternative interpretations within her current framework, and therefore, they are rejected.

For the participants of color, these declarations don't shift their views of her, but actually reinforce them. For the White participants, her declarations work as normative reinforcements of common White discourses that already circulate. Social interaction does not become unracialized by assertion, and the act of attempting to enforce racelessness is itself a racial act (Morrison, 1992). As Caroline will tell her:

The fact that you can't reorganize your privilege - the fact that you feel like you're okay as a White person, is just kind of part of privilege, and to be unaware that it is everything - not just in this group but everywhere.

Under the definition that Caroline is using, any White person in U.S. society who feels she is "okay as a White person" is deluded. Whites could not understand what racism is or how it functions and still view themselves as "okay." Caroline names Tiffany's comfort with herself as "part of privilege" because White people are not required to acknowledge racism with any complexity, and in fact it benefits them to not do so. This White obliviousness is not benign or innocent; it has material consequences for Caroline's life because it delegitimizes her perspective and allows Whites to ignore the impact of racism on people of color while enjoying its benefits at their expense. Indeed, Whiteness may be characterized by a contradictory consciousness in which an insistent innocence is contingent upon involvement in racial oppression (Schick, 1998).

The following examples further demonstrate the limited racial discourses commonly employed by Whites:

COURTNEY (W): But I think- from my experiences with you know, older neighbors or people, and there aren't many because I do live in Seattle and I have all my life-and often you don't hear a lot of White people in Seattle, openly, you know, speaking in a way that sounds racist or that's openly talking about stereotypes. I've been in situations like that, you know, that are usually

older, and it's generational, if- it's a matter of not being around anyone who isn't White. White people in Seattle don't hear other White people saying racist things.

RUTH (W): I see it personally in my family as being a generational thing, but I think it is also exposure to a multicultural atmosphere that changes the generations. So although I see it changing in my family as my family is exposed to more multiculturalism around the community, um, it's also- it's generational for each family in a different format. But I think it is- there is generational change, but it's also about community and exposure to those things.

JESSICA (W): I do. I think it's generational. I think every generation isn't as educated, but if they can have this open dialogue that we can have right now -- I think this is a foreign discussion to them. I think there is hope, and I think you just have to help educate them little by little. I mean, you don't want to attack them. I think they'll probably see it as confrontational and not want to listen to you. But I think that they would be curious. I think that they feel kind of left out when it comes to pop culture and current issues that are going on with becoming more, you know, inclusive.

As is evidenced in the previous excerpt, another common White move is to externalize racism and locate it anywhere but within one's own interpretations and relations. Although Whites occasionally make reference to their own racism, these references are usually cursory and on the limited level of isolated actions (most

commonly "saying or doing something"). When Whites do acknowledge saying or doing something racist, it is generally posited as an accident or mistake, again occurring in discrete moments.

Although many of these White participants make reference to having privilege, that privilege was not conceptualized as integrated into every aspect of their daily lives, including the very paradigms from which they interpreted and responded to social life. Privilege is more often conceptualized as a list of discrete moments or acts, such as walking into a store and not being followed, or buying bandages that match their skin color (McIntosh, 1988). The cumulative effect of these moments (among myriad other dimensions of privilege) are not conceptualized as embedded in the formation of the subject herself. As is made explicit in the following exchange, patterns of interactions which people of color often interpret as the result of racism (Powell, 1997; Tatum, 2001), Whites often interpret as the result of personality or style differences:

> JASON (W): Apparently I'm just pretty darned clueless here, because I haven't - I mean, racism; I don't know. I guess I'm just still out of touch. I mean, prejudice with like group statements, kind of, you know, 'All people of color as I see them are X-Y-Z', those kind of blanket statements maybe, but to me that's more kind of prejudice, if you will, kind of painting with a wide brush, than racism. I don't know. I mean, I've seen differences in style, like where we were talking about, I think, two weeks ago, where, you know, I'm more comfortable

talking one on one, where I think Marie is more comfortable talking to the group. But I'm - I wouldn't call that racism, so I don't know. I'm clueless.

CAROLINE (POC): I think it was interesting as I was listening to Jason's comments about how - about just the style and about - and attributing like Marie's kind of - like the need for a kind of support, as opposed to you needing to - it being okay to - you know, to be one on one, and attributing that to style, as opposed to racism kind of thing. I started smiling, because it to me, it's a clear example of racism and just how it's working in terms of you being - the fact that you can attribute it to just style and not because of racism.

JASON (W): Well, but it's culture, but it's not racism, right. But racism - I mean, cause racism is as well as people's -

CAROLINE (POC): Power.

JASON (W): Yeah - privilege, power, and prejudice, right. And that's not power and prejudice; it's just, you know, me as a White person has a style that's different from you or from Marie as a - you know, as a young black woman or as a native American woman, right?

CAROLINE (POC): But why is our style different, though? Like where -

JASON (W): Well, it's a cultural issue - I don't know. You guys - I - I'm assuming it was culturally we were raised differently, you know. I was raised in a family where I am expected to do it myself, and you - you know, Rich was

talking about how this is something you and your mom talked about, you know - how you were expected to stand up for yourself, and this was something you and your family talked about, and it's sort of a family dynamic, right. I mean, just - hey, call me out here. If I'm wrong, I'm wrong. Let me know; call me out. But that's just how I see it. And while it may be racially defined, I don't see it as a racist act.

CAROLINE (POC): Well, I'm not saying that it's a racist act, but I'm -

JASON (W): Right.

CAROLINE (POC): - just saying that racism plays into the way you kind of answered that question, because, as a White person with privilege, you are able to stand on your own, just strictly as a White person, and the way that you stand is just your style. But as people of color, we - like we were kind of mentioning before, it's - it's almost like we need that support, because when we're on our own, we don't always feel like the White person that we're going to talk to is really going to listen to us.

JASON (W): Right.

CAROLINE (POC): And so, that's kind of the reason why we feel that way, because that's how society has made it to be. And that's kind of what I'm talking about. So, I'm not saying that that's racist at all. I'm not saying that. But I just say, I think racism plays a really big part in just kind of the way you answered the question and attributed it to cultural style.

MARIE (POC): I just want to address the style as if it was a learned cultural thing. I was raised in a White family, so I don't know how you explain that, other than it's something that I feel imposed on me. It's not something that I learned myself growing up in my family; it's something that I feel when I walk into a room. I feel the power differences; I feel the dynamics between White people and people of color, White people and White people and people of color and people of color. They're all different. And it's not something that we were brought up with. It's not our style that we learned culturally. It's something that's imposed on us.

BECCA (WF): And I was just going to essentially echo a lot of what you just said, Marie, in that I think saying something is cultural, like that really neglects the fact that we have all in this group been raised in the same society and are all coming from that same socialization process. And I think that there's a lot of differences in, one, looking at how as a White person you are allowed to have that individual voice and say that it is just style and not look at maybe the risks that people of color take on a daily basis when they speak up by themselves - you know, say 'I'm here on my own, speaking up.' And maybe you having the privilege, that that just seems normal to you, is how race plays into this and how racism plays into that.

MARIE (POC): I keep hearing the word "culture" brought up. And I don't know what culture you were brought up in, but I'm assuming it was American

culture, and we all know American culture is founded on racism. And so, if you're going to say "culture," you might as well just say "a culture of racism."

The participants of color in the dialogue, as well as the facilitators, are operating from a very different conceptualization of racism than the White participants:

MARIE (POC): I think we have all come to think that the word "racism" means this big, huge, scary monster; it's like - it's like the worst thing in the world. It's like being called Satan or something. And to say that I - you know, as a White person I have that or - you know, it's like accusing you of being a devil-worshiper or something, you know. But I think we have such a misconception of it and we think of it as so separate from everybody. And so, that's just what I - I think people - well, obviously, are extremely offended if they're called racism - racist. So, I think it's just a misconception of what it really is, so.

LAURA (POC): Building on that, it's just I think people have the idea that, when you have that racism, it's like an incident, like something that happened or something that you can point to and say, 'Oh, see; see that; that was racist,' but - rather than a system or an atmosphere or it being everywhere, or in every interaction or dynamic. You know, that misconception can be difficult to break through.

MALENA (FOC): And so, the difficulty I always run into working with anti-racist White people is that they stop seeing some things as racist, you know, its not necessarily someone hanging from a tree or being beaten out in the street,

but, a comment or all the White people going first or all the White people talking, or these things that are still pretty obvious in my eyes. But they don't see all the subtle things, like challenging how people identify themselves or challenging history, or the ways that they interact in groups and how they discuss things, or all these other things that to me are more powerful because they affect the situation that I'm in versus like these big obvious things, you know.

BECCA (WF): So, I'm wondering how - how the idea of internalized racial dominance - how does that hit people?

RICH (POC): I just think for any person - for any White person - they can't look me in the eye and then tell me they're not racist – that's crazy. And I think that a lot of this what we're talking about here is that maybe when you are trying to say that, no, I'm not racist, but I think when you accept the fact that you are racist, that you're - that, hell, yeah, I'm racist - I mean, then that's somewhat of a starting point.

CAROLINE (POC): I kind of wanted you to talk about this idea - if White people could really accept that racism exists. I notice with White activists is that sometimes you get to a point where they are just so - I'm active; I'm active. I'm so active that I could never be racist. But to me it feels like sometimes they are the hardest people to target, because they feel like they're not racist, because I do not believe in racism, so I am not racist. And so, I think it's really important for

even White activists to really recognize it, because even though you're an activist, you still have social power, and you are still going to benefit and there is still going to be racism.

MALENA (FOC): Well, I think White people have talked to him about racism, I think, his whole life. White people have talked to all of you about racism, about your privilege, about teaching you how to act, what to think, what to think about people of color. I don't know about this building in particular, but I know a bunch of people of color built a lot things that you were in, and I think that said something to you about racism. I think growing up on a continent and singing, "This Land Is Our Land, This Land Is My Land," or whatever that stupid song is, told you something about racism.

These participants are defining racism as a network of processes and practices rooted in relations of White domination and privilege. This definition recognizes that every person socialized into society has a racist view of the world because racism is infused into every aspect of the culture (Dyer, 1997; Morrison, 1992). Racism is reinforced everyday in countless, sometimes blatant and sometimes subliminal ways and cannot be pulled out into specific moments. Whites, as the beneficiaries of these inequitable relations, are the most invested and the least prepared to think complexly about them. Intentions are not relevant and do not override this complex network of relations and its benefits to Whites. This general difference in the conceptualization of

racism between the two groups has profound and concrete consequences in terms of

maintaining relations of inequality, and it surfaced repeatedly in the sessions.

Another example of White participants not viewing themselves as having

something to learn from an interracial dialogue which is facilitated by a trained

interracial team can be seen in the following statement. In Courtney's opening

comment in session two, she encapsulates in a single move many of the issues that had

surfaced. In response to a question on what insight participants gained from the

previous week's dialogue, Courtney states:

> COURTNEY (W): I guess this week I thought about why I didn't really feel like
>
> last week was at all useful to me and that if anything it was - a waste of my time,
>
> just because I didn't feel like I gained anything from it, and I just was thinking
>
> about why. And I realized I've never engaged in conversations about race with a
>
> group of people for that purpose, and it was odd talking about a common
>
> purpose and with everyone coming from different - you know, here - with a
>
> different purpose. And so, there is no - we're talking about a set of norms or set
>
> of goals or some sort of common theme. And I think that's why I felt angry last
>
> week.

Courtney states that she has "never engaged in conversations about race before

with a group of people for that purpose." She is also clear that there were many

different perspectives shared. But rather than finding value in this situation, one she has

chosen to participate in, she evaluates it as a "waste of my time." This is a powerful

statement to the people of color in the room who participated in the dialogue and shared their perspectives. Although she is aware that there are different "purposes" or agendas operating, she does not reflect on what these might be, why they might be different, or what role her own agenda plays in her reaction. Nor does she convey any concern for the impact her statement might have on others, particularly the participants of color.

Courtney's statement does not convey a desire to learn from those who hold a different social location, but rather a desire for them to affirm her perspective. She refers to this as a "common purpose." One can assume that this common purpose is, in practice, her own needs as a White participant. This move illustrates a number of key strategies of Whiteness, including positioning White interests and forms of knowledge as universal, protecting White positions rather than opening them for exploration, and invalidating the interpretations of people of color.

By the last session, Courtney's position has not shifted; she still does not see the sessions as useful and her reasons remain unracialized:

> COURTNEY (W): I think in a larger context, to tie - you know, things like whether you feel comfortable talking - I mean, that's the kind of temperament that you're born with too, and you have things imposed on you but that's not the only thing that influences whether you feel comfortable talking one-on-one or in a large group and to have to sit here, you know, for two hours on Tuesday nights when I've got better things to do, quite frankly, and look at something out of

context just - I wonder where it's going, and I feel like - tonight I feel like I'm ready to disengage, because I don't really feel connected.

MALENA (FOC): What would it mean to you, though, if we could set aside the question of usefulness? Because even though we don't need to give our resumes, like Becca and I have done this a number of times, and many people think we're quite good at it. So, we think it's useful. And so, whether you understand that or not, if we could put that aside, what would it mean if everything, regardless of temperament, was about race, and you are still uncomfortable with what this group is doing?

COURTNEY (W): I'm not quite sure what you mean, because I don't feel that being the case in the world.

MALENA (FOC): Well, what would it mean, though if it was? I know what your opinion is. But what would it mean if it was?

COURTNEY (W): I'm just saying, you know, because I know that, when people start to disengage and that members of the group wonder why, and they're saying, 'Well, why aren't people engaging?' and I am just saying that now I feel disengaged already. And -

MALENA (FOC): And you don't think that has to do with your race?

In addition to her continual inability to racialize her responses, or to perceive anything of value to her in the dialogue, Courtney also maintains that a dialogue that

focuses on race is "out of context." This consistent White compartmentalization of race illustrates that Whites function in a social context that is interpreted as unracialized for them. From a White standpoint, which posits Whites as universal humans, race only appears to operate for people of color, although unless they testify otherwise, people of color are presumed to share White perspectives and interests (Morrison, 1992). Thus race is generally only an issue for Whites if people of color are close or numerous enough to intrude into White awareness, or "force" their interpretations on Whites by articulating them. When people of color do register in White people's minds, in this case by testifying that they have different interpretations and interests, this information is deemed invalid and without worth. In practice, unless people of color are agreeing with White interpretations and working towards a White definition of unity, their perspectives are dismissed. As evidenced here, unity consists of protecting White people in a number of ways: by not acknowledging that their race is significant to their degree of social, economic, or institutional access, by granting White entitlement to control norms and legitimate knowledge, by affirming that Whites are each individuals who earned their positions, and myriad other forms of keeping Whites racially comfortable and White privilege uncontested.

Not only are the interpretations of people of color marked as not valuable, but even *hearing* these perspectives is deemed a waste of time. The White preservice teachers in this study are members of a cohort that is predominantly White. It follows that the opportunity to be in a more racially integrated environment, in and of itself, might be seen as valuable. However, the categorical dismissal of the sessions as a

complete waste of time indicates not only that there is no perceived value in hearing

their stories and perspectives, but that at the most minimum level, there is no value in

being in the *presence of* people of color. In fact, in her opening statement, Courtney

says that she is *angry* that her time was "wasted." Her statement of anger, and the

freedom with which she expresses it in this context, indicate that Courtney places

herself very highly on a hierarchy of social value. Consequently, she has taken offense

to being subjected to a conversation that holds no value for her (Van Dijk, 1993). She

does not consider that an inability to find value in the situation may be a shortcoming of

hers or a function of her racial position.

Public Versus Private Space

In this racial dialogue, many discourses surfaced. In the exchanges explored

here, White participants consistently demarcated these discourses as either correct or

incorrect. One of the ways these claims of correctness were marked off was via the

distinction that a dialogue about race should focus on "personal feelings." I have stated

that a discourse on personal feelings is a way to de-politicize race relations, reduce

responses to individual feeling-states, and protect interpretations from challenge.

Another way that discourses were marked off was through the distinction between

public versus private space. This discourse surfaced earlier through White claims that

the facilitator of color's behavior was not appropriate to the space and language context

of the dialogue. In this section, I will explicate an additional way in which this public /

private tension surfaced as a White preference for one-on-one communication over group communication.

In session two, the facilitators led the group through an exercise in which participants rotated through various pairs to explore a series of questions. These questions were designed to surface early racial socialization and to be a springboard for further dialogue. The exercise consisted of answering the following questions in pairs, followed by the debrief questions which were discussed in the larger group:

Questions for pairs:

- How diverse was your neighborhood(s) growing up?

- What messages did you get about race from living in that neighborhood(s)?

- When/How did you first recognize that there were people of races different from your own? How did the people in your life guide you in interpreting that difference (what it meant)?

- How did you see members of other racial groups treated differently from members of your own racial group?

- How have you come to make sense of this difference in treatment?
Large group debrief questions:

- What were some of the feelings you had while thinking and talking about these questions?

- How was it for White people to think and talk about these questions?

- How was it for people of color to think and talk about them?

- What insights did you gain about race and racism from the exercise?

In the debrief, a noteworthy pattern emerged. The White participants preferred the pairs to the large group, some even expressing a sense of relief to have moved from the large group to the pairs:

> JASON (W): I don't know; it's nice to get a little rhythm going and also kind of move around a little bit and have a chance to, I don't know, maybe make a mistake and then be able to move on and not have to kind of, I don't know, wallow in that mistake but have a chance to say, "Okay; now, wait a minute: What was I trying to say?" and get a minute.

> JESSICA (W): I thought it was a good exercise as well; I got a chance to speak to different people, and it wasn't confrontational; we each had time to just say what we thought real quick, and it was, it was good.

> TIFFANY (W): I felt like it was good to be able to explain myself in terms of my experience that is very much so diverse, and my family is full of people of color, and it's a very diverse life I've had. So, it was nice to be able to tell people that and have them know that I'm not just some White girl who doesn't have any knowledge of other racial experiences.

> MATTHEW (W): I liked two things about it. One, that I was able to speak without having to answer, and then one that I was able to listen without having to ask. And I also like the one-on-one or one on two, but the smaller contact, I felt, was more direct, connected more to me.

BARB (W): I really liked the questions because, like Courtney said, they were pointed questions; you answered them, and you were done. And I liked that. I had two minutes, and I didn't have to go on and on; it was done.

COURTNEY (W): I liked answering all of them when we were doing it one-on-one with people. I didn't like answering them in this group.

The general White preference for one-on-one interaction was stated repeatedly. The explanations given for this preference included the following: it minimized being questioned by others; it enabled them to avoid responding to or asking questions of others; they could answer the questions quickly and "to the point"; they could explain themselves without being challenged; and they could "move on" from their "mistakes." These reasons indicate a desire for control of their enactment of Whiteness and its consequences and a sense of control that more closely recalls the daily context within which most Whites function. In the larger group, their sense of control was diminished because the dialogue group was set up purposefully to interrupt Whiteness in the following ways: close to fifty percent of the members were people of color, the topic of discussion was racial perspectives, and the discussion was facilitated by an interracial team that had been trained in dialogue techniques designed to interrupt Whiteness. These factors set up a context that was unique for many of these White participants because it placed them in an integrated environment in which the agenda was explicitly to talk about race, and Whites were not in control of the proceedings. I hypothesize that under more traditional conditions in which Whites were in control of the proceedings,

these White participants might have preferred the large group setting. Within these sessions, however, they were interacting with people of color who weren't isolated, they were talking about racism, and they were guided by an interracial team who challenged them. These factors interrupted the usual insular dominance Whiteness provides, making the large group setting less preferable for Whites.

Conversely, in the one-on-one format, the White participants had a degree of racial "privacy" restored; they could not be "seen" racially (hooks, 1992). With people of color sequestered and unable to support each other, key aspects of Whiteness were momentarily reestablished. As the participants of color state in the following section, they would be much less likely to challenge Whiteness in a one-on-one setting than they would in a group that offered them support. Whites were thus more able to enact patterns of domination in the one-on-one format without challenge. These patterns of domination include the ability to "explain" to people of color that they are not racist (and for that explanation to go uncontested), not having to address racial "mistakes," not having their racial interpretations questioned or challenged, not having to explore the interpretations of people of color, and having the ability to dominate the discussion without interruption. In the large group setting there was solidarity among people of color and facilitators who named and challenged these patterns, making that setting less favorable for the White participants in terms of protecting Whiteness.

Although the large group setting was less conducive to its processes and practices, Whiteness was still active, as evidenced by the White participants'

unracialized explanations of their preference for the one-on-one format. While these explanations were quite specific, they did not make any connections between this preference and their racial location. This inability or unwillingness to examine racial location in a conversation about race is a particularly vivid example of the manifestation of Whiteness. When Malena asks one of the White participants to frame her response specifically in the context of an exploration of racism, she is abruptly blocked:

> COURTNEY (W): I liked answering all of them when we were doing it one-on-one with people. I didn't like answering them in this group

> MALENA (FOC): Do you want to explain a little bit more about that, or-?

> COURTNEY (W): I think it's - they are personal questions, and not everyone, you know, heard each question from every person. And I was being as honest as I could; I was trying to recall things that immediately popped into my head. I didn't - I wasn't prepped for these questions, so obviously I can only recall the strong emotional things that immediately come up. I don't - I just - I felt - you know, I liked answering them with someone when I was going to hear - you know, their own experience and that I knew I could listen to them without having to respond or question them or that I wasn't going to be questioned by them. I think the "Was I going to be questioned by them?" thing really got me there.

> MALENA (FOC): Well, in terms of racism, though, like how does it make it easier one-on-one versus in a group to talk about racism?

COURTNEY (W): I don't know if I should answer that, because I feel like I'm going to say something that's against the norm that's established here, and I don't want to get into that, and I don't want to say something that is going to - that there is going to be a conflict or a - I want to dialogue, not debate, so I am going to pass.

This is a remarkable move in a setting in which racial perspectives are the explicit topic of exploration. Further, Courtney's move is in response to a direct request by a facilitator of color to re-frame her interpretations in racial terms. In her first statement, Courtney emphasizes that not "being questioned by them" was the most salient feature of the one-on-one format. Here, Courtney demonstrates an investment in keeping her racial interpretations intact, and does not want these interpretations opened up for either exploration or challenge. Her refusal to racialize her interpretations, even in the face of a direct request to do so, is a move to protect a White social location by keeping it unmarked, uncontested, and depoliticized. Her claim that she wants to "dialogue, not debate" is noteworthy given the role she has played in rebutting alternative racial interpretations.

In stark contrast, the participants of color overwhelmingly preferred the group setting:

MARIE (POC): -my experience is like - it's so much easier for me to talk in this group about my - being honest - about this than it is one-on-one, especially with me on one-on-one with a White person. I'm not going to tell them what I really

think; I'm not going to tell them what - how I really feel one-on-one. I'll tell the

group, because I feel safer in the group, but I don't feel safer one-on-one, so -

because I feel supported by other people here, too.

RICH (POC): I have to agree.

CAROLINE (POC): I will agree too.

RICH (POC): I definitely have to agree. When - yeah. I felt really comfortable

talking with Jerome, actually (*note: Jerome is a man of color*). You know, it's

just - yeah; I feel very - sometimes I just - I don't know; because it was, right

now, when we were talking, I find it very much easier to speak like this, as

opposed to one-on-one.

MALENA (FOC): I wanted to actually - before we segue into something else - I

think that, Rich, because I know you a little bit outside of this group, I think you

actually had some other thoughts maybe about why it's easier to share in the big

group that I really would like you to push through and offer to us.

RICH (POC): Oh, man (laughs). Shoot. Man, sometimes - sometimes White

people, from my perspective-

TIFFANY (W): Just say it.

RICH (POC): Like they are just so uptight, so defensive. It's just - it's just,

man, you're White; just realize it and recognize it; acknowledge it. Just adore it;

inhale it; smoke it, whatever you want to do. You're White; it's who you are. Man, nothing to be ashamed about, you know.

TIFFANY (W): Really? I feel ashamed about it in this group.

RICH (POC): No. It seems-

MALENA (FOC): Let's let Rich finish.

RICH (POC): I mean, that's - to me, it's just like - that's been my biggest problem with White people, period, is just like - I mean, I have White friends, and I have the rainbow, you know, the rainbow coalition, straight up. But, I mean, it's like - it's just, man, White - it's just defensive; just you don't want to let that wall down. You're just - man, just drop the sensitivity factor. If you don't want to talk about it, then we're not going to get anywhere. If you feel you're going to say something that is going to offend somebody, then, man, I don't know what you're doing in a group like this. That's how I feel. You're going to get nowhere keeping your mouth shut. I've always had to voice my opinion, man, from day one, you know what I'm saying. I mean, that's just how it's been. My mom taught me that; you know, she instilled that in me. And I'm my best advocate, and I think that's - that's what anybody can hope for is to be their own advocate. Other people have it easier.

CAROLINE (POC): I'm just thinking about, as a couple people mentioned, I feel a lot more comfortable talking like this, and especially having other people of color in the room, because of the support, because I feel like, if I'm talking to

you one-on-one, I feel isolated. And I - often - there's plenty of times when I feel isolated. And even as Rich was talking about how he walked by the pub and there was a bunch of White people: Where I work I'm the only Black person. I'm probably the only person of color, period, on the whole staff roster. And it bothers the heck out of me, because I feel like I'm just being looked at like I'm crazy. And I honestly really do believe that people look at me like I'm crazy. And I - I don't know; I feel like, if I'm trying to have a conversation with a White person one-on-one, that they - they just really don't care, because they can just go back out into the world and, whatever, little black Caroline, whatever she said, that's fine and dandy, so, that's why I'm getting kind of, I don't know, rowdy, because I guess the main thing I want to say is, the reason why I do feel more comfortable in a group is because I do not feel isolated here, and I really feel comfortable enough to say exactly what I feel. And at this point I'm feeling like, if you don't like what the heck I got to say, that's too bad; you're going to have to listen to it anyway, because you have had the opportunity as White people to not listen to what I have to say and to not listen to what other people of color have had to say all your life. And so, now it's time for you to listen, whether you want to or not. You're never, ever probably have this conversation outside of - that's what I really feel like - outside of this group. Let's do it now; let's get down and dirty and stop just - I don't know; I guess I feel like some people are just punkin' out, and it just bothers the heck out of me, because I don't have a choice to punk out. I have to do this every single day.

TIFFANY (W): But it's not fair that -

MALENA (FOC): Were you finished, Caroline?

CAROLINE (POC): Yeah.

MALENA (FOC): Okay. Go ahead.

The participants of color state that they prefer the large group format because they are not isolated from each other, they have the support they need to challenge White people, and they can be honest about their racial interpretations. They see the large group context as an opportunity to challenge White people to explore their racial locations. It is significant that the very dynamics that make the group context preferable to the participants of color are the same dynamics that make it less desirable for the White participants. It is also significant that when this difference is pointed out and offered as a possible source of meaning or insight, the reaction from some White participants is defensiveness and withdrawal. This indicates a White investment in their elevated racial location and an unwillingness to explore the impact of that racial location in their own lives and on the lives of people of color.

There is another manifestation of Whiteness occurring in the sessions but not visible in the transcripts, signals of body language such as eye contact, smiles, and crossed arms. It occured when Caroline stateed that she felt that some White participants were holding back and not challenging themselves as much as they could ("punking out"). While Caroline is speaking, Courtney glances at Tiffany across the room and rolls her eyes. This gesture is generally understood to convey dismissal,

impatience, and condescension (Gee, 1999). Communication strategies such as these are what Sleeter (1994) refers to as "White bonding." She explains White bonding as everyday communication patterns shared between Whites that relate to race. These patterns include racial inserts into conversations, race-related asides, strategic eye-contact, and jokes. They are often quick and subtle, but wield considerable power to demarcate racial lines and communicate solidarity. These strategies are relatively hidden in everyday interaction but become more visible when Whites are confronted with race (Nakayama & Krizek, 1995). Courtney's lack of inhibition in giving Tiffany this signal in the context of a racial dialogue in which participants are being observed and videotaped indicates both an underlying sense of racial superiority and a perceived threat to that position (Van Dijk, 1993). This interpretation of Courtney's eye rolling is confirmed later when Courtney explicitly responds to Caroline's statement.

A Shared Purpose

All participants received written information about the purpose of the study (see appendices) and signed a consent form related to that purpose. In addition, the goals of the study were verbally articulated at the introduction of the first session. The following is from the opening of session one:

> BECCA (WF): Some of the goals that we came up with was to provide an opportunity for people to talk in a mixed group about race, which is an opportunity that for a lot of people doesn't come up very often, where you have an environment that is set up for you to talk about race.

MALENA (FOC): Another one was just to have an opportunity to deepen our understanding about how different groups have different experiences. So I guess a simpler way of saying that is, based on our different identities, how does that play into how we have the conversation…does that make sense to most people?

BECCA (WF): We wanted to provide people an opportunity to practice talking about sensitive issues.

MALENA (FOC): And then just to notice some patterns that come up, some patterns we see when we talk about these issues.

The facilitators are explicit about the dialogue goals, and articulate them at the start of session one. However, a number of White participants raised questions about the purpose of the dialogues during the session. In response, the facilitators rearticulated the dialogue's goals at the opening of session two:

> BECCA (WF): So, we're going to read the goals, and then we are going to talk about the role of facilitator too, because I think that there's some concern and confusion. So, the goals for the group, again, were, one, to provide an opportunity for people to talk about - to talk in a mixed group about race; a chance to deepen our understanding of the ways that different groups have different experiences - and maybe we should be more explicit and say different racial groups have different experiences; an opportunity to practice talking about sensitive issues around race and becoming more aware of the way that our social

identities inform our perspectives on race; and to notice themes and patterns within the group.

MALENA (FOC): So, we've developed these goals in our experience as facilitators, and then also with Robin, so clearly this is what she is looking for in her study. And we see our role as facilitators really as to facilitate our group to that process. And sometimes that requires individual things; most of the time that requires group work. So, a lot of times, in order to get the discussion maybe to a deeper level or to a less popular understanding, Becca and I will propose questions or our view or our experience or maintain ground rules, all of these things sort of guide - to guide the conversation forward.

By session three some participants were still raising questions about the dialogue's purpose:

MATTHEW (W): But - okay; I can accept that. But I guess my expectation of the group is that it sort of operated as a - as a whole, not as two parts; that it was sort of working towards a similar end, instead of at cross purposes.

TIFFANY (W): What is the purpose of the racial dialogue? You know, ultimately, what are we trying to reveal or prove or pursue? And what is my role as a White person in this world? I would like for anyone to give me some clarity about how to proceed - people of color - how White people - I want to know what the purpose of this group is, because I feel like it's really evolved from what I understood to be the purpose, of how to teach and bring people

together and understanding more about race issues or whatever. But it feels like it's becoming a strange debate that isn't productive, that makes people - instead, it's a divisive forum; it's not unifying. So, I want to know what as a collective or as you all define it to be, what is our purpose here? I would just like some direction.

At the opening of session four, the facilitators restate the dialogue's purpose:

BECCA (WF): So, I have a little bit of a prepared statement that - Malena and I talked between sessions. And one of the things that we've noticed that's been happening in the group is that repeatedly people in the group have made comments about the purpose of the group and that sort of thing. So, what I wanted to do was read the purpose of the study directly from the study announcement that everyone read and signed up for. So, this is a quote: "This research will provide valuable information about how White student teachers engage in racial dialogue. This information is intended to help design multicultural education courses that are more effective in preparing White teachers to teach students from racial groups different from their own. You may benefit from taking part in this study by gaining increased understanding of a range of viewpoints on race," end quote. And we have just found it to be very interesting that, like, in every session so far, there have been generally a couple of people making comments that 'This is not what I expected this group to be,' and things like that. And so, we were looking at the fact that, one, it's been,

every single time, a White person who has talked about what their expectations

for the group were. And I mean, I could provide examples. There was talk

about cardinal rules about dialogue; there was talk about feeling like people

were getting nothing out of this; that this was pointless because it wasn't what

they had expected, stuff like that that we've talked about. So, we're just going to

put this out there - not necessarily dialogue about it now, but put it out there for

the group to reflect upon - how your racial identity might play into these

attitudes and - and where you are kind of drawing ideas about what dialogue

about race should be. So, like I said, we don't want to really comment on that at

this time, but just kind of use it to inform and kind of think of it as a way to have

some insight into maybe some of the behavior that people have been displaying.

In addition to restating the goals by reading directly from the consent form the

participants signed, Becca also directly connected questions about purpose to the racial

locations of those who raise them. Later in the session, while addressing a comment

about hierarchies between groups of color, Marie also attempted to connect White

concerns about the group's purpose to racial location. She did so by positioning herself

specifically as a person of color in her response:

MARIE (POC): Just - you know, that clearly somebody gets to choose who gets

to be on what scale on the hierarchy. And I think it's more important to look at

those who choose than to look at where people individually are and where

groups are, because, I mean, really that's not much of their control; it's basically

their skin color. And, you know, it's those who get to choose that are teaching our kids. Those that get to choose are going to teach my kids. You know, there really are very, very few teachers that are minorities. They're not teaching our kids. And I think that's what the whole purpose of this is, is White people teach our kids, and what are they teaching them? What do they recognize about themselves before they go into the classroom and try and teach these kids that they don't know anything about. They've never lived in their shoes; they have no idea what they think about every day, you know. That's the point of this.

Laura also addresses the question of purpose, from her position as a person of color. She refers to White assertions that the group isn't talking about anything "real" or "useful," and that the dialogue is not a positive experience for them:

> LAURA (POC): I'm kind of just struck by a couple things. One is the whole idea of like what - - for some of the White people, what would be a positive experience that would come out of this or what - since I've heard the phrases like "what's real and tangible"; "what's really useful." Because I feel like this is real and tangible. I mean, the dynamics are real and tangible, and this is a microcosm of everything that goes on out there. So, it's not like we're looking at it in a vacuum. It's everything about this conversation. So, kind of like what Caroline was saying, you get diverted into talking about 'Well, what would be useful?' I'm kind of curious about something that Courtney said about, you know, a negative versus a positive experience. And I'm curious to know for a

White person what would be a positive experience of, you know, talking about racism, and what that would look like. And that's kind of coming to mind. Yeah, I mean, I do think we're getting kind of like diverted into talking about, you know, all this stuff when - when the conversation itself is what's real.

Courtney responds, but as has been consistent for the White participants throughout the sessions, she still does not connect her response to her racial location:

COURTNEY (W): And - but it's - you know, usefulness - it doesn't matter if I think it's useful; I mean, that's not the purpose of this study. But it matters to me, because I'm here, and this is my precious time. So, that's where I'm coming from. I came in here thinking this would be a useful experience for me. In many ways it has been, and in other ways it has inspired me to get back into dialoguing about race with a group that I used to do that I felt was more purpose-driven and - I don't know.

There are a number of discourses at play under the umbrella of purpose. One is that of racial comfort. A racial comfort discourse also emerges through calls for unity or racial harmony. White culture is comfort dependent (Jenson, 2000). This is seen through advertising and other consumer messages that convey that we have the right to feel comfortable and that we should seek comfort, whether through the purchase of products or the use of medications (Kilbourne, 1999). Racially, Whites are almost always comfortable because they function in a segregated context, one in which Whites are centered, people of color are rendered invisible, and Whites are in charge. As a

result, they have come to feel entitled to racial comfort because only in very rare

settings are they denied it. Further, Whites generally have the choice of whether to put

themselves into racially uncomfortable situations, and most of their lives have been

advised not to do so because it is "dangerous." Thus racial comfort becomes not only

an expectation, but something to which Whites feel entitled. I hypothesize that the

reason that questions of purpose and expectations surfaced so frequently in the sessions

was because Whites were not expecting the dialogues to be uncomfortable. In keeping

with what is racially familiar, I believe that they expected to have White norms

operating, and to have their perspectives centered and affirmed, not challenged.

White participants expected to be not only positionally uncontested, but as we

have seen, to receive validation that they were "different" from other White people.

This again invokes the discourse of individualism, but also the discourse of

colorblindness (Schofield, 2003). The discourse of colorblindness posits that it is

crucial to racial harmony that we not notice or talk about racial differences. What

differences are noticed are defined in terms of cultural traits that should be tolerated and

occasionally even celebrated through gatherings such as pot-luck dinners with "ethnic"

food, and a curricular focus on "heroes and holidays" (Banks, 2003). This White liberal

discourse does not address power inequities, for as we have seen here, a power analysis

is considered by many Whites to be divisive. I have stated that it is seen as divisive

because acknowledging power contests White privilege. What isn't seen as divisive to

White interests is to posit us as all operating in the same racial location and sharing the

same interpretations, those that maintain rather than challenge White dominance. Rather

than acknowledge disparities in power and privilege, colorblindness posits that we are all "in this together," which means agreeing with White interests and perspectives that have been represented as universal. Because colorblindness aligns with White interests, it is a highly valued ideal by many Whites.

No White participant expressed concern that White challenges to the perspectives of the participants of color might be dividing the group. On the contrary, it was the contestation of *their own* perspectives that was upsetting to Whites. This demonstrates that Whites expect that movements towards unity will be made in their direction and support their interests; they do not usually reach out to people of color, people of color are expected to reach out to them. This expectation is indicative of a position of power. Further, if people of color do not reach out to Whites "correctly," the problem of racial instability is then located with them. Of course, it cannot be assumed that even if people of color do reach out, they will be received. As Lewis (1993) cogently expresses:

> When I hear White folks say why can't we all just be human beings what I hear is, 'Keep me comfortable. Come over here and connect where I am ready to connect.' That's what I hear every day and you know that I can't come over there, that this hair, and this skin, and this way that I talk and I feel will never, ever get included because I am unpalatable to you.

Lewis articulates the White universalism inherent in White discourses of unity and shared purpose - we're all human beings, after all - and their service to White racial

comfort. At the same time, he exposes the dichotomy people of color live with in a White dominant culture; they must keep White people comfortable in order to be included within a context that has never actually included people of color.

Belonging is important to Whites because we interact in a context of White dominance and have been socialized with a sense of racial belonging. Belonging is also critical because we are allowed racial belonging while being fully aware that others are not (Frankenberg, 1993). To not belong racially is thus a frightening place, for it is to be racially ostracized. In the context of this study, although Whites were still dictating the focus and direction, other forms of Whiteness were interrupted. The sense of racial belonging for Whites, which includes being in the center while at the same time not being racialized, was thus temporarily lost. This is the loss that is being protested through questions of purpose, usefulness and unmet expectations. The White participants who push for a shared purpose did not receive agreement or validation of their interests and in fact, were confronted with a view of themselves that was somewhat shocking, given the narcissism of Whiteness. Whites have historically done the gazing and do not expect to be "seen" racially (Dyer, 1997; Morrison, 1992; Roediger, 1998).

Earlier, Laura asked the White particiapnts how they might define a "positive experience" in a dialogue about different racial interpretations. The White participants were not able to articulate an answer to her question. The White expectation that a discussion about racism with people who hold different racial locations would be a

positive experience is telling, as it speaks to the expectation that White interpretations will always be centered and affirmed. The pull toward a shared purpose and sense of unity is a response to the challenges to White authority. Calls for shared purpose are also a response to White inadequacy in the face of the more complex analysis of racism being put forward by the participants of color (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997). This elevated analysis, characterized by Whites as both academic and hypersensitive, has placed the White participants in the rare situation of being less knowledgeable and less competent to navigate socially; White authority leads Whites to expect to understand the proceedings. The umbrage taken at not understanding the analysis indicates that the White participants are on unfamiliar racial ground.

The goal to explore how "different racial groups have different experiences" was stated explicitly in the written materials and reiterated verbally throughout the sessions, yet many White participants still demonstrated an expectation of agreement in racial perspectives. Perhaps, operating from the discourse of individualism, they interpreted this goal to mean that individuals would share different stories and anecdotes. They did not, however, expect to be seen as group members or to be challenged by claims that differences in racial interpretations are due to group memberships, as evidenced by the continual unwillingness to racialize their responses, as well as the emphasis on "personal experience" discussed earlier. The calls for a "shared" purpose and understanding are calls to return to interpretations that they know and depend upon to affirm their positions. Overall, the White participants who raised these questions worked to regain White authority and centrality.

Notably, the participants of color never questioned the group's purpose. They were not interpreting from a short-term, solutions-based framework. They enter into the dialogue with an understanding that ending racism is a long-term commitment and are not expecting to "solve" racism in this setting. They also see worth in the process and articulate a deep investment in the task, despite inevitable discomfort. People of color function in a social world in which race is rarely comfortable, and so do not share White expectations of comfort. Not only do they expect that the dialogues will be uncomfortable, they see discomfort as necessary to progress (hooks, 1995). In fact, the participants of color have stated that they view racial comfort, particulary White racial comfort, as problematic, for it indicates maintenance of the status quo. Because they are expecting discomfort, and perhaps even hoping for it as a sign of movement, they do not express dissonance between their previous expectations and what is happening in the sessions.

White Silence

When Whites, from their position of social, economic and institutional power, employ silence, it functions as a reinscription of White dominance. Given that race is a constructed discourse rooted in relations of domination, there is no neutral racial space. In this context, silence performs racially, and has a range of effects. In the following section, I will explicate and contextualize some of the effects that White silence had on the dialogue and the interactions between Whites and participants of color.

Although White participants frequently stated that they were "advocates" for racial equality, there was only one occasion in four sessions in which a White participant attempted to challenge another White participant's interpretation, unsolicited. This almost complete lack of White intervention left people of color solely responsible for contesting Whiteness. Whereas some of the White participants played the role of "resistant Whites" (Tiffany and Courtney) and others played the role of "oblivious Whites" (Jason and Matthew), the other White participants played roles that were no less racially salient. Although less visible in the transcripts, these roles were critical to protecting Whiteness, for White dominance depends, in part, on the silence of other Whites (Mura, 1999). White silence served to embolden the actively resistant participants because it implied agreement. Even if Whites who were silent found the behavior of their cohorts problematic, their silence allowed these vocal participants to dictate the agenda of virtually every discussion. At the minimum, the resistant participants received no social penalty from other Whites, and the silence of their cohorts effectively maintained White solidarity.

Although the silent White participants might have recognized and been troubled by the behavior of some of their White cohorts, they ultimately maintained their White privilege by not contesting it. An internal awareness of Whiteness is a necessary start, but if it isn't accompanied by a change in performance, alliance with Whiteness remains intact. Although it may be socially uncomfortable to challenge White hegemony, the people of color in the group were compelled to so because, as they expressed, their sense of survival depends in large part on Whites shifting their racial interpretations.

For Whites, this same impetus does not exist and there are powerful multidimensional investments in not interrupting Whiteness. One may have an intellectual grasp of the dynamics, but awareness of racial inequity alone is not enough to trump these investments; Whites have to make an unambiguous decision to take an anti-racist stand. White people are in a prime position to interrupt patterns of inequity, but although Becca provides a concrete example for taking such a stand, the White participants rarely utilized their positions in an anti-racist way.

The people of color in the dialogue repeatedly expressed their belief that racism informs all social interactions. In other words, people of color assume that all Whites have a racist interpretation unless demonstrated otherwise. To not explicitly take up an anti-racist stance in such a context can only reinforce the perception that one is actively choosing to align with Whiteness.

Silence had different effects depending on what move it followed. For example, if White silence followed a story shared by a person of color about the impact of racism on their lives, that silence served to invalidate the story. People of color who take the social risk of revealing the impact of racism only to be met by White silence are left with their vulnerability unreciprocated. Whites could offer validation, for example, by sharing how the story impacted them, what insight they gained from hearing it, or what questions it raised for them. Conversely, when White silence followed a particularly problematic move made by a White participant, that silence supported the move by offering no interruption. In essence, White silence operated as a normative mechanism

for these tactics. When White silence followed a White anti-racist stand, (such as Becca challenging Whites to racialize their interpretations), it served to isolate the person who took that stand. This isolation is a powerful social penalty and an enticement to return to the comfort of White solidarity. In this context, White silence denies the support that is critical to taking a White anti-racist stand.

There is also a gendered component to White silence and the effect of male silence can be markedly different than the effect of female silence, depending on the context (Tannen, 2001). When White men use silence, it most often functions as a power move because it keeps their interpretations hidden and makes them invulnerable. One is left to guess their perspectives, and as knowledge is a form of power, the guesser is placed in a one-down position. When White women employ silence, its effects can range from placing them in a more powerful position to one of subordination, depending on the context and the intersection of other positions, such as race. However, because gender positions were not being contested in the dialogue the way that racial positions were, gender positions were not threatened. In the context of this dialogue, silence, whether coming from White men or women, worked to maintain White racial solidarity.

In the dialogue, silence functioned overall to protect the White participants by keeping their interpretations hidden and thus protected from exploration or challenge. Not contributing served to ensure that those interpretations could not be expanded, and thereby functioned as a form of White resistance. In the following exchange, the

facilitators try to draw out the most silent participants and also press them to see their lack of participation as a function of their privileged social location:

BECCA (WF): Let me check in with Matthew and Amy; I don't know if I've heard from you. I don't know if you have a reaction to anything that's gone on.

AMY (W): Well, for me, I'm just kind of thinking about how - how in the past I've worked really hard to be an individual and not part of a group and that I'm this one person who, you know, I can be separate from everybody else. And thinking of myself as always falling into like - pooling in with White people and being part of being White. I'm just thinking about that, you know.

BECCA (WF): What does it feel like?

AMY (W): It feels like that should be something to keep in mind because when I think about other people, how they think - I think I look back at myself. So, it's scary but ...

A short time later:

MALENA (FOC): Amy, did I see you take an I'm-about-to-speak breath?

AMY (W):   No, actually. But I think you were asking me a question, and I'm not sure. I mean, were you asking about like the luxury that I have to be able to sit and be quiet about race and not to make comments about everything.

MALENA (FOC): And also I'm hoping that you will see the similarity with that and society, how White people can just move along and not comment on racism.

AMY (W): Right. Right. I think that I've definitely - definitely done that in

the past. You know, here, I guess I feel a little more like I don't have anything

new or different to share, whereas some of you that are doing more talking. And

I'm having a lot of thoughts of racism go through my head you know I'm

thinking about it and - . But other than that I don't have much to say.

Amy positions her silence as something she did in the past, yet her key

performance in all four sessions was silence. By not addressing her silence here and

now, she makes a common White move of externalizing racial patterns and locating

them outside of the present environment. She also positions herself as having less to

contribute than others in the group. This may be rooted in a White conceptualization

that knowledge should be a form of "correct" information. Sharing what she is thinking

is not seen as a performance in terms of affect, conveying empathy, or validating a story

or perspective. Although Amy is having "a lot of thoughts of racism" she doesn't see

that sharing these thoughts, whether "right" or "wrong," is important. The participants

of color, however, want to know her thoughts because they might potentially validate

their stories and demonstrate that telling these stories makes a difference in terms of

helping increase White's understanding. Further, if Amy participated more actively,

she would not be leaving the weight of the dialogue on either the people of color or

other, more dominant Whites.

In a previous excerpt, Rich directly challenges this silence and the way it

protects Whites from moving forward in race relations, telling the White participants,

" Man, just drop the sensitivity factor. If you don't want to talk about it, then we're not going to get anywhere. You're going to get nowhere keeping your mouth shut." Yet even with the continual and direct pressure from the facilitators and participants of color, the most silent participants did not change their performances, indicating that the desire to protect themselves was stronger than their desire to open, and potentially expand, their interpretations. In the following statement, Jason articulates that Whites are taught to not talk explicitly about racism as a way to ensure that discourses such as individualism and meritocracy stay in place:

> JASON (W): You're talking about the luxury of not saying anything proves that you have privilege. And that's kind of what I was saying earlier; that the message I've gotten is that, hey, there's nothing to talk about, you know, as long as you think everybody is equal and everybody has the same chance, everything is fine.

A key requirement for shifting unequal power relations is for people in the dominant group to be willing to give up, or at least share, privilege. Whites who were unwilling to open their interpretations up for challenge or make themselves emotionally vulnerable conveyed a lack of concern for shifting inequality. White withdrawal from the dialogue, whether it was explicitly announced or simply performed, was very frustrating to the participants of color, which they express here:

> RICH (POC): Well, in terms of putting ourselves out there, I think I put myself out there too. Other people have put themselves out there. But if I was to come

into this group and not put myself out there, everybody would look at me kind of strange, because I'm a person of color. So, oh, my god, this person of color is not putting himself out there, or herself out there. What's up with that? This is a dialogue about race; you're supposed to put yourself out there. So, I mean, Tiffany has put herself out there, but I don't know if you want me to applaud or just to go ahead and listen, because I think everybody is supposed to be putting themselves out there, so I don't know how much - I mean, how much Tiffany should be commended, that - well, I guess she should be commended in the sense that she is like probably the only White person that put herself out there. But I think everybody should be putting themselves out there. And that's just one observation I've made in the last couple of minutes. Another one is, I guess I'm - I can be kind of mean sometimes, but I just think people whine too much. That's just plain and simple. I mean, I think people just need to like stop whining. Just plain and simple, just quit whining.

LAURA (POC): I feel frustrated. But everything we talk about in this discussion brings up really strong emotions for me, it's impossible for it not to, and I feel like the fact that people can just choose to disengage, where I really kind of like what Rich was saying, like I'm supposed to say something, and also to contradict, like if I don't say something, then I'm the quiet Asian one or something like that. And so, I feel like I need to put myself out there even more just to contradict that. And that gets really tiring to me. So, that's some of the stuff that's going on for me; to constantly feel like I have to display something,

when - even if I don't feel like saying anything; I might want to step back, but I'm conscious all the time of what that looks like to people.

CAROLINE (POC): I clearly remember that a couple sessions ago - that I made the punk-out statement. And I'll continue to stick with that punk-out statement, because I still feel like some people in this group punk out. And I'm talking about White people. I feel like the fact that some people aren't speaking up, that has a lot to do with your race. Whether you want to admit it, recognize it or not, it has a lot to do with your race. And I feel like a lot of people in here really need to sit back and really think about why and how it doesn't have to do with just culture and my personal style, because then we're getting back to the whole, you know, White people are always seen as individuals. Well, of course, it's your individual style, because that's the way you're seen; it's your individual - of course. But I feel like, yeah; I feel racism is really playing out even stronger right now. And that's the reason why, because of what White people aren't really recognizing - aren't looking at what we're talking about. Like our actual conversations in this group and where they're going and why they're going there, and who's taking it there.

The participants of color do not view themselves as having the option to disengage or withdraw from the dialogue. They understand that dominant culture does not position them as individuals and has a different set of stereotypical expectations for them. If they hold back, they reinforce these expectations, a concern that puts constant

pressure on them, as Laura and Rich expressed. This pressure compels them to be constantly representing their race. Not putting themselves "out there" also makes them complicit in their own oppression, as Caroline and Rich express. It doesn't benefit people of color to remain silent, as it does White people. If people of color are not self-advocating and pushing back against Whiteness, they can't depend on White people to do it for them, as has been amply demonstrated here. As Rich expresses earlier, he had to learn at an early age to advocate for himself as a Chicano, because he did not have the luxury of being seen (or seeing himself) as an individual. Again and again the participants of color demonstrate that they interpret from a group framework, rather than an individual one.

Getting Slammed

Whites born in the United States inherit a moral predicament. They live in a White dominant society, yet they are told that opportunity is equal and raised to feel that their race-based advantages are fair and normal. White children receive little if any instruction in how to think complexly about this predicament, much less guidance in how to resolve it (McIntosh, 1988; Thandeka, 2000). They become aware of racial tension while understanding very little about White historical responsibility for it and virtually nothing about their current roles in perpetuating it. If they become adults who explicitly oppose racism, as do all of the White participants in this sample, they often organize their antiracist efforts around a denial of the racially based privileges they hold that reinforce racist disadvantage for others (Marty, 1999). What is particularly

problematic about this contradiction is that White moral objection to racism increases White resistance to acknowledging complicity with it.

Whites who position themselves as liberal often opt to protect their moral reputations rather than recognize or change their own participation in systems of inequity and domination. In so doing, they invoke the power to chose when, how, and how much to "help" challenge racism. When confronted with this contradiction, many White liberals use the speech of self-defense (Van Dijk, 1992). This speech genre enables defenders to protect their moral character against accusation and attack as they deflect any recognition of culpability or need of accountability. Focusing on restoring their moral standing through these tactics, Whites are able to avoid the question of White privilege (Marty, 1999, Van Dijk, 1992).

In the following section, I explicate a few examples of a discourse of self-defense. In these excerpts, Whites position themselves as victimized, slammed, blamed, having their words "strategically pulled apart," and being used as a "punching bag." As can be seen, they are responding to the articulation of counter narratives; nothing physically out of the ordinary occurs in the session. These self-defense claims work to position the speakers as morally superior while obscuring the true power of their social locations and blaming others with less social power for their discomfort.

From week 2:

TIFFANY (W): And so, you know - I'm not talking to this even because I feel angry from last week and because I don't want to say a bunch of shit and have it all slammed back in my face. And so, I'm trying to share.

From Week 4:

TIFFANY (W): It seems like this has been a study in my development, and I don't like that. And I feel like everything I've said, especially the past session and a half, has been kind of strategically pulled apart, syllable by syllable. I would love to explore all of this more if you have more questions. I don't know how else to - I feel like everything I say is thrown at me as, 'Well, you're saying that because you're White,' and –Okay. I accept that. And I'm willing to learn and look at it. That's just - this feels as though - in this group it feels like White people are being slammed and blamed and that we have - I as a White person feel like I have to defend myself or just be a punching bag or something. And so, it's totally a repressive environment for me. I don't want to speak more about it, because I - I don't want to be - I feel like - I just don't want - I already feel upset enough in being here and talking. It's already hard enough. So, I don't want to keep going. I'd really be happy to talk about it later, but if you want to move on to a different topic, it's okay with me.

COURTNEY (W): I don't know; I just feel – yeah, the same thing -- and that's what I think has happened in this group, is that you're trying to say something, and when it is facilitated, and we keep moving on, it's hard to really explain

yourself and really get an understanding between individuals in the group. And I think personally - I mean, that's my cultural standpoint; that's where I get the most out of things. But I think Tiffany has really put herself out there. And there were comments made a couple weeks ago about how the White people weren't really saying things and they were holding back. And number one, I think that was a really stupid comment, because how are you going to know who's holding back?

Tiffany consistently positions herself as a victim of abuse through the use of provocative terms of physical aggression. When she is challenged by people of color and the facilitators to analyze her responses as informed by a White frame of reference, Tiffany alleges abuse. If she doesn't defend herself against these challenges, the only possible outcome is to submit to further abuse via serving as a "punching bag." The challenge to consider her White location has become so unbearable that she feels unable to continue in this direction. Tiffany does not attempt to rise to the challenge and explore the question.

This discourse of victimization also enables Tiffany to avoid responsibility for the White power and privilege she wields. By positioning herself as the victim of oppression, Tiffany cannot be the oppressor. In claiming that it is she who has been unfairly treated, she is able to demand that more social resources (such as time and attention) be channeled in her direction to help her cope with this mistreatment.

The language of violence that Tiffany uses is not without significance in this context, as it is another example of the way that Whiteness distorts and perverts reality. By employing terms that connote physical abuse, she taps into the classic discourse of people of color (particularly African Americans) as dangerous and violent. This discourse perverts the actual direction of danger that exists between Whites and people of color. The history of extensive and brutal violence perpetrated by Whites against people of color; slavery, genocide, lynching, whipping, forced sterilization and medical experimentation to mention a few, becomes profoundly trivialized when Whites claim they don't feel safe or are under attack when in the rare situation of merely *talking* about race with people of color. Her use of this discourse illustrates how fragile and ill equipped most White people are to confront racial tensions, and their subsequent projection of this tension onto people of color (Morrison, 1992).

The comment about holding back that Courtney refers to was made by an African American woman, Caroline. Courtney, who earlier characterized the dialogues as hypersensitive and academic, labels this comment as "stupid." The criticism leveled by these White participants towards the facilitators and participants of color is remarkable, yet these same participants consistently position themselves as being victimized by the facilitators and participants of color. Courtney's unabashedly negative evaluation and dismissal of Caroline's comment indicates a deeply internalized sense of racial entitlement; an entitlement to indulge in her immediate reactions without fear of censure or reprisal. White solidarity protects Whites from public penalties resulting from their racial attitudes and behaviors, and unlike people of color, they are

not accustomed to monitoring their behaviors when under stress (Yamato, 1992). These criticizing statements may also be attributed to the degree of defensiveness these participants feel because of their perceived insecurity in this context, as well as their inability to engage on a more complex level.

More significant, however, is the discourse from which this comment draws. Calling a Black woman's contribution "stupid" invokes a deeply embedded racial discourse which positions Black people in particular as less intelligent than Whites. This discourse has deep historical roots and has been well documented (Collins, 2000; Razack, 1988). Scientific, as well as medical, social, Biblical, and other forms of "proof" have been used for centuries to support the claim of Black intellectual inferiority. This discourse currently circulates in more coded forms such as the discourse of cultural deprivation (Ryan, 2001), the discourse of deficit (Powell, 1997) and the gap between Black and White scores on intelligence tests (Hernstein & Murray, 1994). At this historical moment, for a White person to characterize a Black person's comment in this way is surprising at the same time that it is familiar.

Critical discourse analysis posits that "impolite" forms of speech, when generalized, occurring in talk directed at or about dominated racial groups, and without contextual justifications other than such group membership, are a form of racism (Van Dijk, 2001). Given that Courtney is categorizing the suggestion as stupid, and that this suggestion has been collectively posited by people of color, she is collectively referring to the interpretations of people of color as stupid. According to critical discourse

analysis, a speaker is enacting racial group dominance when the discourse models she uses link a favorable representation of herself (as White) and an unfavorable representation of the addressee (as an African American woman). This linkage is dome by perceiving, interpreting and representing the present communicative situation through a racialized mental context model. To do this, general attitudes circulating about African Americans will be activated. This racist context model will then monitor production. The socio-cognitive processes underlying racist discourse production may be largely automatic. That is, there is no need to assume impoliteness is intentional, and intentionality is irrelevant in establishing whether discourses may be interpreted as being racist (Van Dijk, 2001).

Once again, Tiffany and Courtney articulate for the group commonly circulated White discourses. Here, they both draw from racist context models to address and evaluate the contributions and interpretations of participants of color. In taking up these specific discourses in this specific context, they sustain ideologies that serve to reproduce racism and White dominance. The social cognition of the White participants about people of color was actively developed and confirmed through this talk, which worksedto maintain the overall social cognitive framework that supports racism. As Van Dijk (2001) states, "Influencing the social minds of White group members is mainly discursive: majority group members often speak and write about minorities, and thus persuasively formulate and communicate personal and socially shared opinions, attitudes and ideologies" (p. 97). Courtney and Tiffany keep racist discourses

circulating in the dialogue and in so doing, keep these discourses active for the other White participants, while requiring the participants of color to continually contest them.

The following exchange is another example of repeated attempts by participants of color to contest these discourses and offer a more useful framework from which to respond:

MARIE (POC): I think the first step is realizing you are not an individual. I think you feel - what I'm hearing you saying, you're feeling we're talking directly to you. We're not talking to you specifically as an individual -

TIFFANY (W): I know you're not talking to me.

MARIE (POC): Well, listen. So, we're talking about White people. You have to recognize you're a member of a group. I'm a member of a group; she's a member of a group; he's a member of a group. We're all members of groups; we're not individuals, you know, free-will, all this stuff. I mean, we're members of groups. And I feel like you're feeling like you are really being attacked because you are an individual. And that's part of being White; you feel like you are an individual. But really you have to recognize that you're not an individual. Your actions don't come from yourself; they don't come from your brain; you didn't think them up. They came from you being White and being raised in the environment that you were, the ideologies you were taught. And you know, I feel like you're feeling really offended and personally attacked, but I don't think any of us are speaking to you as an individual; I think we're speaking to - I think

we're speaking to White people, you know. And sometimes you just have to accept that you're a member of that group.

TIFFANY (W): Well, one of the things that bothers me is that some people are allowed to make statements and some people aren't allowed to make those statements. And why is it - why is that okay?

MARIE (POC): But then again you thought I was talking to you. I'm talking to White people. You know, White people everywhere think they are individuals. I'm not attacking you. I want you to be -

TIFFANY (W): And you keep speaking to me as if you know what I'm thinking. You know, why are we talking like this? Why aren't we talking about the -

LAURA (POC): I'm noticing that you're - you know, you keep on asking the question, 'Where are we going with this?' and, you know, 'I need some concrete stuff,' and it's as if you're waiting for us to tell you: 'This is what - this is the action you must do, or, you know, take in order to move forward on this.' But, I mean, a huge part of change is listening to other people's perspective, and I feel like -

TIFFANY (W): I'm not listening?

LAURA (POC): I'm not saying that you're not listening. I'm saying that, you know, getting hung up on, well, you know, 'I always get cut off at every

sentence' or just what I feel is defensiveness is basically - I don't see openness to listening to different perspectives, which I think is essential for moving forward, as being part of what needs to be done. And I think a huge part of being an ally and learning about that is listening to other people's perspective. And I - maybe I'm not articulating it well. But I mean, I'm feeling that I just can't -

TIFFANY (W): Yeah, me too.

Throughout this exchange Tiffany's defensiveness remains high. She continually cuts off others, blocks their interpretations, and positions herself as having the same feelings as Laura. By the last session, after 6 hours of intergroup dialogue, Tiffany still does not convey recognition of disparate social power between groups. In response to the last session's opening question:

MALENA (FOC): So, this question will be an attempt at exploring how racism might have been playing out in this group. And so, our question is: How have you noticed racism being acted out in this group over the last few weeks?

Tiffany responds:

TIFFANY (W): I feel as though there has been an imbalance in freedom of expression. I think I have felt like I could not express myself from my depth.

This statement illustrates a classic White move. Tiffany was arguably the most vocal White participant in the group, as evidenced by her presence in the transcripts. Her needs and concerns also had the most impact on the direction of the group. Yet she

continued to feel silenced and limited in her "depth" of sharing. I hypothesize that

Tiffany's domination of the dialogues, while simultaneously claiming that she is being

silenced, is not unique to her but an example of White centeredness. Any limitation on

Tiffany's access to airspace is perceived as an infringement on her entitlement to

occupy the center.

Further, Tiffany and many of the other White participants have made it clear that

this is an unfamiliar context for them. They are not used to sharing airspace with

people of color, or having their perspectives challenged. Even though Tiffany still

directed much of the agenda, she felt silenced because her interpretations were not left

uncontested or allowed to stand fully, as is usually the case for White people (Dyer,

1997). The challenges to her interpretations diminished her centered position and were

interpreted as repression. Complaining about not being able to share "from my depth"

is a way of saying, "I couldn't say whatever I wanted without being challenged,

therefore my expression was limited." Being central is so normalized for Whites that

even controlling the majority of the airtime feels "unbalanced" if it doesn't also include

full validation. This form of "silencing" is unfamiliar to many Whites, and Tiffany

positions herself as oppressed by it. This is an example of the distortions of reality that

are necessary to hold Whiteness in place.

Another indicator of White centeredness can be seen in the narcissism of

Tiffany's response. Malena's question is: How have you noticed racism being enacted

in this group over the last few weeks? Tiffany's response is fully focused on herself, as

she claims that racism was perpetrated against her as a White person because there was an "imbalance of freedom of expression" and she couldn't "express myself from my depth." The actual group dynamics are distorted and racism is trivialized and perverted into a force that limited one White person's expression. Tiffany has no compunction about stating this in the presence of people of color who have shared for hours the historical, institutional, and personal impact of racism in their lives, families, and communities.

White Fragility: I'm Leaving

White people in the U.S. live in a social environment which protects and insulates them from race-based stress. They are rarely without this protection, and when they are, it is usually temporary and by choice. Because Whiteness is a dynamic constellation of processes, practices, and relations that operates at all times and on myriad levels (Frankenberg, 1993), it is constantly propped up and protected. Whites are thus racially insulated daily and on multiple levels, resulting in the phenomenon of White fragility (Allen, 1994). White fragility is a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. Racial stress results from an interruption to what is racially familiar. These interruptions can take a variety of forms, including:

- Suggesting that a White person's viewpoint comes from a racialized frame of reference (challenge to objectivity);

- People of color talking directly about their racial interpretations (challenge to White racial codes);

- People of color choosing not to protect the feelings of White people (challenge to White norms and need for comfort);

- People of color not being willing to tell their stories or answer White's questions about their racial experiences (challenge to colonialist relations);

- A fellow White not providing agreement with one's interpretations (challenge to White solidarity);

- Receiving feedback that one's behavior had a racist impact (challenge to White liberalism);

- Suggesting that group membership is significant (challenge to individualism);

- Anyone acknowledging that access is unequal between groups (challenge to meritocracy);

- Being presented with a person of color in a position of leadership (challenge to White authority);

- Being presented with information about other racial groups, through classes, movies in which people of color drive the action but are not in stereotypical roles, or multicultural education (challenge to White centrality).

In the following section, I will explore some of these dynamics and then describe them manifesting in the final exchange of the dialogue.

The first factor leading to White fragility is the segregated lives which most

Whites live. Even if Whites live in physical proximity to people of color, segregation

is occurring on multiple levels, including representational and informational levels.

Growing up in segregated environments (schools, workplaces, neighborhoods, media

images and historical perspectives), White interests and perspectives are almost always

central. Further, White people are taught not to feel any loss over the absence of people

of color in their lives (Thandeka, 2000). In fact, this absence is what defines their

schools and neighborhoods as "good." Whites come to understand that a "good school"

or "good neighborhood" is coded language for "White." Because Whites live primarily

segregated lives in a White dominated society, they receive little or no authentic

information about racism and are thus unprepared to think about it critically or with

complexity.

Whites are taught to see their perspectives as objective and representative of

reality (Banks, 1996). The belief in objectivity, coupled with positioning White people

as outside of culture (and thus the norm for humanity), allows Whites to view

themselves as universal humans who can represent all of human experience. Within

this construction, people of color can only represent their own racialized experience

(Dyer, 1992).

At the same time that Whites are taught to see their interests and perspectives as

universal, they are also taught to value the individual and to see themselves as

individuals rather than as part of a socialized group. Individualism erases history and

hides the ways in which wealth has been distributed and accumulated over generations

to benefit Whites today. It allows Whites to view themselves as unique and original,

outside of socialization and unaffected by the relentless racial messages in the culture.

Individualism also allows Whites to distance themselves from the actions of their racial

group and demand to be granted the benefit of the doubt, as individuals, in all cases.

Given the ideology of individualism, Whites often respond defensively when associated

with other Whites as a group or "accused" of collectively benefiting from racism,

because as individuals, each White person is "different" from any other White person

and expects to be seen as such. Whites invoke these seemingly contradictory discourses

– universalism and individualism - as needed. Both discourses work to deny the

significance of their racial positions.

In the dominant position, Whites are almost always racially comfortable and

expect to remain so. When racial discomfort arises, Whites typically respond as if

something is "wrong," and blame the person or event who triggered the discomfort

(usually a person of color). Since racism is necessarily uncomfortable in that it is

oppressive, White insistence on racial comfort guarantees it will not be faced except in

the most superficial of ways.

Whites often confuse not understanding with not agreeing. Because most

Whites have not been trained to think complexly about racism, and because it benefits

White privilege not to do so, they have a very limited understanding of racism. Yet

dominance leads to racial arrogance, and in this racial arrogance, Whites have no

compunction about debating the knowledge of people who have thought complexly about race. Whites generally feel free to dismiss these informed perspectives rather than have the humility to acknowledge that they are unfamiliar, reflect on them further, or seek more information. This intelligence and expertise are trivialized and countered with simplistic platitudes that often begin with, "People just need to…"

Because of White social, economic and political power within a White dominant culture, Whites are in the position to legitimize people of color's assertions of racism. Yet Whites are the least likely to see, understand, or be invested in validating those assertions and being honest about their consequences. This position, coupled with the need for racial comfort, has Whites insisting that people of color explain White racism in the "right" way. The right way is generally politely and rationally, without any show of emotional upset. When racism is explained in a way that White people can see and understand, then its validity may be granted. However, Whites are usually more receptive to validating White racism if that racism is constructed as residing in a White person other than themselves.

When any of these dynamics are interrupted, White fragility makes the resulting disequilibrium intolerable. However, as can also be seen, White fragility finds its support through White privilege. Generally, fragility coupled with privilege will result in a response of resistance, indulgence in emotional incapacitation, exiting, or a combination of these. White fragility supported by White privilege makes it exceptional for Whites to respond with racial humility to any of the above challenges, as was clearly

evidenced in the latter half of the final session (hooks, 1992; Lorde, 2001; Yamamoto, 2001). The following exchange is a cogent example of White fragility propped up by White privilege. Courtney initiates the interchange by asking Malena a rhetorical question:

COURTNEY (W): Can I ask you something? Do you want White people to progress in their ideas about how they are racist?

MALENA (FOC): What do you think?

COURTNEY (W): I think so, but I hear contradicting things.

MALENA (FOC): How am I contradicting that?

COURTNEY (W): You know, I don't want to get into a personal argument, because it would still be between you and me, and I don't want to -

MALENA (FOC): Well, we still have forty minutes and nothing else to do, so go ahead.

COURTNEY (W): I'm going to pass. I'm really ready to leave too, quite frankly.

BECCA (WF): So, how do you think that - I mean, just to tie this back into social identity: How do you think your social identity ties into the fact that, when things are getting really hot right here and you're faced with the stuff you don't want to look at, you want to leave?

COURTNEY (W): Well, I had something really important to go to tonight that I missed to be here. And so, that's part of what's going through my head too, is that, when I feel like -

MALENA (FOC): So, this isn't important?

COURTNEY (W): Not as important as what I - you know, it's important because I committed to it. And I missed last week, and I felt bad about that, so I, you know, missed the thing tonight to come here. So, that's where I'm coming from right now. But -

MALENA (FOC): Well, because you didn't say you felt like leaving earlier when you weren't having this difficult conversation?

COURTNEY (W): No. I did; I felt like leaving - or, like I kind of wished I could and I felt like I had a - I had committed to be here, so I'm here. So, that's part of why I feel like my threshold is lowered. So, I don't want - I don't want it to be a conversation between you and me. There are other people in this room.

MALENA (FOC): I realize that. But what you're implying is that, because I don't trust you or any White people, I am also not for this change in White people about racism.

COURTNEY (W): No; I just asked you a question.

MALENA (FOC): And I'm also asking you a question right now if that's what you said. This dialogue we're having right now is me clarifying with you and

asking you questions. And you continually refer to it as like me doing this difficult thing...

COURTNEY (W): I'm leaving. I'm sorry that I'm - I'm the only one who is leaving, but really, I would rather not be here *(Courtney stands up and walks over to the exit)*.

BECCA (WF): One of the things we talked about earlier was White people not calling other White people out, and I'm wondering if any White people in the group...

COURTNEY (W): Yeah. Call me out. Anyone - before I leave, call me out.

RUTH (W): Sure. I will.

CAROLINE (POC): So...

RUTH (W): Do you want to stay? I mean, I'm - I'm confused as to why you're angry. And I understand - like, I don't know what this other important thing is. But I don't really understand, if you were committed to this - I mean, I have a problem with you - I have a problem with a lot of people in this room not understanding why - what the point of this is, you know. I can't -

COURTNEY (W): I understand what the point is, but right now, it's - what I was saying before. Like I'm not - you know, I'm - I can be a fiery person, and right now I'm going to say a lot of things that aren't going to lead to really good discussions in this group. And I have something really important that I wanted

to go to. So, I'm just going to leave, because I don't want it to be between you and me. I want other people in here to be talking. So, I'm just going to leave.

MALENA (FOC): Courtney, I think you should stay. And I think that these things that – Ruth is trying to say something to you. And I know that you have goals for this group, and it's sort of what we talked about before. But we also have goals for this group. So, if it becomes this - if we spend the next half-hour between you and I, Becca and I have determined that that's okay. So, don't worry about what the purpose of the group is; like, we're handling that.

COURTNEY (W): It's not okay with me. It's not okay with me. So, I'm leaving *(Courtney walks out)*.

Courtney's opening question in the above exchange: "Do you want White people to progress in their ideas about how they are racist?" is rhetorical and posed as a challenge. Malena takes the challenge and asks Courtney to be specific about her claim that Malena is contradicting herself. Courtney does not do this, and instead states that she wants to pass, adding the threat of leaving. This indicates that a state of White fragility has been reached and Courtney is retreating.

Courtney has a range of options. Malena, Becca, and Ruth have all expressed a desire for her to stay. If she doesn't want the exchange to be about "you and me" in relation to Malena, she could refrain from comment and listen. She could try to follow Malena's line of questioning and see where it led. She could consider Becca's request to explore how her Whiteness plays into her desire to leave. However, she chooses

none of these options, perhaps because any one of them would require her to remain and face a racial challenge. When Becca appeals to the White participants to call her out, Courtney agrees and asks to be called out. Ruth rises to this challenge, but unfortunately, Ruth's White social position has ill prepared her to articulate a coherent counter argument, and her attempt is futile (it is significant to note that Ruth's is the only counter-move made by a White participant in any of the sessions, the implications of which will be addressed in chapter four). In Malena's final exchange with Courtney, she directly pleas with her to stay and to trust the facilitators' decision that it is acceptable for them to work through this moment. Courtney overrules the facilitators by stating, "It's not OK with me," and leaves.

Courtney's actions demonstrate both White privilege and White fragility. White privilege is demonstrated in her domination of the discussion, her direct challenge to the credibility of a woman of color in a leadership position, and her threat to leave if things don't go her way. She also demonstrates White privilege through her lack of racial humility. By refusing to reflect upon her interpretations or consider that she may not have full understanding, she ensures that her viewpoint will remain intact rather than be expanded. Courtney's refusal to take direction from a woman of color who holds leadership in the group and her very literal exit in the face of racial discomfort is also an indicator of White privilege and a powerful message to the people of color in the group; Courtney positions herself to decide if, when, and how to engage in a discussion of race, and ultimately removes herself from the situation when she can't dictate its direction. Although Courtney will make cursory acknowledgment of racism in the abstract, she

cannot acknowledge it in the particular. This is evidenced in her inability to explore her racial location, which has been requested many times. Her inability to acknowledge racism in the particular is also evidenced in her response to the opening question of how participants saw racism playing out in the group. Courtney's response to this question was to pass.

Courtney demonstrates White fragility in this final move, most dramatically in her inability to move through her initial responses of anger and defensiveness. She has been resistant and critical towards the facilitators from the opening session, and the facilitators have consistently responded with patience. Yet, in the final session, when the facilitators push back against her resistance, she literally walks out. She does this despite a commitment she has made to attend the sessions, a plea from the facilitators not to leave, and with full awareness that she is being videotaped.

Courtney displays both an inability to sustain even a minimal challenge to her racial position (White fragility), and the prerogative to remove herself from that challenge while locating the problem with others (White privilege). There is no indication that Courtney can provide even the most elementary analysis of racism, or that she is willing or able to take responsibility for her role in the now polarized racial dynamics. Although no other White participants walked out, Courtney's actions are not atypical and demonstrate a common form of White resistance in the face of challenges to their racial views (Macedo & Bartolome, 1999; Sleeter, 1993). Returning to the

concept of group-as-a-whole theory, Courtney can be seen as playing out a White desire

on behalf of the other Whites in the group. As Malena will state later:

> MALENA (FOC): I'm not surprised, and I think that, if I had pushed any of the
>
> White people in this group, they would have left. I don't think that Courtney did
>
> anything that's really that unique. And I think that a couple of you have been
>
> close already.

Malena's statement is met by nods of agreement from both White participants

and those of color. This agreement indicates recognition that Courtney represented the

hostility and ambivalence that other Whites felt but could not display. The agreement

also indicates a familiarity with the move; while Courtney's departure may have been

dramatic, it was not unusual or unexpected. She simply acted out a more explicit and

composite representation of the White withdrawal that commonly occurs in the larger

society.

We Each Stand Alone

Aside from Ruth, no other White participants speak to Courtney's departure.

The facilitators check in to see how these participants are responding. The ensuing

discussion reveals a form of White narcissism coupled with a deeply internalized sense

of individualism. These participants view Courtney's exit as a function of her right to

choose; any interference would have been an infringement of her individual choice.

After hours of dialogue, they do not understand that Courtney is seen by the people of

color to represent them as a fellow White person, nor do they comprehend the impact

her departure has on the people of color. This narcissism is not necessarily the result of the consciously held belief that Whites are superior to others (although that may play a role), but a general White inability to see non-White perspectives as significant, except in sporadic and impotent reflexes, which have little or no long-term momentum or political usefulness (Rich, 1979). This inability to see or consider significance in the interpretations of people of color results from the White-centralism that is embedded throughout the culture (Collins, 2000). In the following exchange, Malena and other participants of color struggle to lead Barb to an expanded interpretation of the racial dynamics operating in the incident, one that includes recognizing the impact Courtney's leaving had on the participants of color.

> MALENA (FOC): We're checking in with you too about what happened with Courtney.

> BARB (W): Oh, I wanted to say, 'Sit down, you little chicken shit White girl.' I was so mad. I'm like, 'I'm not saying anything. Let her little White ass leave; I don't care.'

> MALENA (FOC): How come you chose not to say anything?

> BARB (W): Because I don't care about her; I don't know.

> MALENA (FOC): What if you don't care about her, but in terms of racism, we care about her?

BARB (W): She's - it's her choice. And I'm like - I was thinking, 'You should sit down and be in pain with the rest of us.'

MALENA (FOC): But you decided not to call after her?

BARB (W): Because I didn't think she'd listen. She had already decided; she had her coat, and I'm like, 'Why are you still here?'

MALENA (FOC): But she did stop, though and ask to be called out.

BARB (W): And I'm thinking, 'Why are you still here? Just leave if you don't like it. Fine; go run away. Fine."

MALENA (FOC): But did you hear what I said, though; that she did stop and ask to be called out, and then started to come back?

BARB (W): She did stop.

MALENA (FOC): But you had already decided that she was going to leave, and so you decided...

BARB (W): I had already decided that I didn't care what she did.

MALENA (FOC): And what does it mean to you that I'm telling you that it matters to me that she stayed?

BARB (W): I think that's really interesting. I didn't know that you cared if she stayed. Because why do you care if she stayed?

LAURA (POC): What if we cared that White people - what if I cared that White people shouldn't give up on other White people because I think I kind of see this as, like, 'Oh, well; who cares? Who cares if she leaves the room?; But it matters to me that White people give other White people a hand and -

BARB (W): So, you would have preferred if we all had said, 'Sit down'?

LAURA (POC): (Nods head)

MALENA (FOC): I think that the only person who could have reached her was a White person, and she asked for that explicitly, and nobody said anything but Ruth. And Ruth said something, and you chose not to.

BARB (W): Yeah.

MALENA (FOC): And we're telling you that it mattered, to us at least, that she stayed.

BARB (W): And I - had you not told me that it mattered to you, I wouldn't know that it mattered to you.

MALENA (FOC): So, but you kind of assumed for us that it didn't matter to us, because it didn't matter to you?

BARB (W): I didn't . . . I didn't assume. I don't assume. I just -

MALENA (FOC): You just didn't know? So, let me just be direct. I wish that you would have said something to her. I feel like you had the power to make her stay.

BARB (W): Why?

MALENA (FOC): Why?

BARB (W): Why?

MALENA (FOC): What do you mean, why?

BARB (W): Why do you wish I had said something; because I'm White?

MALENA (FOC): I just said, I think you had the power to make her stay, and she should have stayed. And so, I'm a little hurt and disappointed that you didn't say something.

BARB (W): And I obviously think I have no power to make her stay. I don't -

MALENA (FOC): But I think it doesn't matter how powerful you feel.

BARB (W): You were disappointed -

MALENA (FOC): I know that you had the power to make her stay.

BARB (W): You know I had the power to make her stay, and I didn't know I had the power to make her stay. You wish that the White people had said, 'Please stay,' because we had the power to make her stay. Had all the White people said, 'Please sit. Sit. Sit down, Courtney, please,' and you're disappointed that we as White people did not say that.

MALENA (FOC): And you in particular.

BARB (W): And me in particular. And how do I feel about me in particular; is that what your question is?

MALENA (FOC): Well, it wasn't really a question; I just telling you I felt that way.

BARB (W): I - I'm sorry you feel that way. I don't know - I don't know - I don't have any big feelings about it. I don't feel compelled to go, 'I'm so sorry.'

MALENA (FOC): I've never - but I've never really seen, though, you be like this. It seems like you do have some big feelings right now.

BARB (W): I have big feelings - yeah. But I don't know whether you want to hear them.

MALENA (FOC): I want to hear what you have -

BARB (W): What do you want to hear?

MALENA (FOC): I'm not trying to guide you anywhere.

BARB (W): Yes, you are; you're a facilitator.

MALENA (FOC): But I'm not. Right now I want to know -

BARB (W): You're asking pointed questions.

MALENA (FOC): I don't want you to guess what I'm trying to get at. I want - I am asking you a question because I want to know what you actually think. Let me do the behind-the-scenes stuff -

BARB (W): About me or about her?

MALENA (FOC): - like you answer my question.

BARB (W): About -

MALENA (FOC): You.

BARB (W): About - think about what? About the power I have and the power you don't to make her stay? I don't know. What do I feel about that? What do I think about that? It's new - it's a new thing for me to know that you even care about a person of White or color or anything.

MALENA (FOC): It's new for -

BARB (W): It's new for me to go, huh, people of color wish that White people had said something. That's new.

LAURA (POC): I think - I was just going to say kind of the same thing you said. It's not debating about whether she would have stayed if the White people said something; it's more that the White people needed to say something, and what happens when the White people give up on each other.

BARB (W): Oh.

CAROLINE (POC): Mm-hmm - regardless of how you feel about it, that's how we perceive it as people of color when you don't say anything to her when she punked out - cause that's what she did.

BARB (W): Okay.

CAROLINE (POC): And I'm real - I was pissed off.

BARB (W): Okay.

Throughout this exchange Barb distances herself from Courtney and her actions. Because Barb does not have a group framework, she does not see herself as implicated in Courtney's behavior as a fellow White person in a dialogue about race that is racially polarized. In fact, she depicts Courtney as just some "chicken White girl" whose actions have nothing to do with her. Although Barb refers to Courtney as White here, her positioning indicates that she ultimately sees Courtney as a separate individual. It did not occur to Barb to intervene because she didn't view herself or Courtney as part of the White group, and therefore, given that Courtney wasn't acting on Barb's behalf, Barb "didn't care" what she did.

Although Barb does view Courtney's behavior as problematic, she does not see it as representative of any other White person. She uses "I" statements in her phrasing, positioning herself as a distinct individual standing on her own and responsible only for herself. In contrast, much of what the participants of color tell Barb is phrased in the collective voice of "we." This voice aligns people of color and positions them as a cohesive group, while Barb's language positions herself and the other Whites as individuals. Barb expresses astonishment that the participants of color wanted Courtney to stay and that they think she, as a White person, should have intervened. This astonishment is another indicator that even in the context of an interracial dialogue, she does not interpret from a framework of racial location. She does not see that White

people, their behaviors, or the impact of those behaviors on people of color should be her concern. Nor does Barb see herself as accountable to the participants of color for the impact her lack of intervention had on them. In fact, these interpretations are so unfamiliar to Barb that she seems to have difficulty even following the conversation.

The impact of White silence on people of color in the face of Courtney's move is expressed in the following responses:

MARIE (POC): Okay. I want to say that I think it was a really big value judgment that White people had to make when she left. They chose to appease one White woman and in turn let down at least five people of color. And her walking out and nobody saying anything, other than Ruth, was - it really said a very big thing to me, and maybe to other people of color: that 'We value what this other - what this White woman thinks rather than what we value what - how you feel.' And I felt devalued, so.

CAROLINE (POC): I would echo what Marie said, in terms of feeling devalued and kind of feeling, regardless of what - how you feel individually, the way it looked from the outside, and you really need to look at that in everyday life. And that to me was a huge example of a punk-out. And - yeah; she punked out big-time, and I really wanted to say something to her as she was walking out. But I didn't feel like it was going to come out like that, so I said, 'I'm just going to - I'm going to hold back and see what anybody else is going to say.' Nobody else spoke up, so - she's gone.

LAURA (POC): I think it's funny that, in the beginning go-around I said

something about, you know, choosing when to engage and disengage. I think

that was a perfect illustration of that and also a perfect illustration of response -

what it means or what it looks like when White people don't take responsibility

where they should.

These participants clearly see Courtney's departure and White inaction in

response as representative of larger societal relations. However, after the discussion

that followed Courtney's departure, and the direct feedback participants of color give to

the White participants about how they interpreted that departure and the lack of White

intervention, White participants still demonstrate that their initial interpretations remain

largely intact. After the exchange with Barb, the facilitators pull other White

participants into the discussion:

MALENA (FOC): Yes; Amy needs to say something.

AMY (W): Am I answering a specific question, or just -

MALENA (FOC): No. Why have you not talked?

AMY (W): Well, I feel like I should also say that I'm a really shy person. All

my whole life I'm a person that doesn't - I know - I know that's how people

might take that but that really - I'm a lot more comfortable than going around

with the group and there's like a specific thing that I'm answering. I don't know

if that's, you know, motivated by the racial dialogue. I'm sure it's a little bit,

because it is uncomfortable to just interject [in the middle and be] talking directly with people.

MALENA (FOC): So, at this very moment, because of what Courtney did - because of the conversation I had with Barb, What was that like for you?

AMY (W): I did not feel like I - should have said something to her at the time that she was leaving, but now, after the conversation we just had, I can see, you know, that it would have been an appropriate time for people to say, you know, 'Please' - just for support too, I mean, you know, 'we want you here.' Because I did; you know, I wanted to hear more of what she had to say and stuff too. But I can relate to Barb's feelings of, 'Well, goodbye, you know. Forget it.'

MALENA (FOC): So, do you feel like you let us down a little bit?

AMY (W): Yeah, but more because I don't talk more, not because I didn't say anything to Courtney then.

As with most of the White participants, to the end Amy is unable to racialize her responses. Although the issue of individual versus group identity has been raised in every session, Amy explains her silence in terms of her personality, positioning herself as a "shy person." She has also heard the exchange between Malena, Laura, Caroline and Barb, in which they explain how they were hurt by Courtney's leaving and the lack of intervention from Whites. Still, Amy locates the person in need of support as Courtney. In so doing, she indicates a White allegiance and focus. Amy doesn't

understand what the participants of color are trying to tell her - that asking Courtney to stay wasn't to support Courtney, but to support them.

Jason articulates a somewhat broader understanding of the dynamics based on the feedback he has heard:

JASON (W): Clearly, I mean - you know, that learning curve: I'm still way at the beginning, because what I saw was purely on the surface. I saw a woman at the threshold of pain, and she couldn't take it anymore. And if - I mean, if she really was hurting that badly, she had to go. And was I letting her off the hook and letting everybody down? Yes. But, hell, if I was hurting that badly, man, you know. I just - I just saw a woman in pain, and she had to go. And the argument is, you've got to work through that pain and move on. I think she was - she was at white heat; I mean, she was done - sorry; bad analogy. She was at that point of pain and had to go. But again, I looked at it at the surface. And I didn't say, 'How is this affecting the group? Where does it go from here?' So I've got a way to go.

Jason now recognizes that he was viewing the situation on a surface level. Still, like Amy, he focuses on the individual White woman, not on the dynamics of the group as a whole or in racial terms. He does not focus on the impact of Courtney's departure and the lack of White intervention on the participants of color, either as a group or as individuals. He also does not indicate a sense of his own position as a White person in the group and what role he might have played in supporting the participants of color.

By the close of the exchange, Barb's interpretation has not been shifted enough to cause her to do anything differently if she was in the same situation again:

BARB (W): It honestly never occurred to me to tell her - to ask her to sit down and stay. Had I known everyone else wanted me to, or it was going to hurt anyone's feelings or form this idea that, wow, White people aren't allies, I probably would have said something, because it would have been an expectation, and I would have fulfilled that expectation, just to say the right thing. But I still, had - if it happened again, I probably still wouldn't say anything.

Barb holds a limited, single-incident understanding of what the participants of color are telling her. Her statement that if she had known that not asking Courtney to stay would "form this idea that White people aren't allies" indicates that she doesn't understand that this idea is already formed for people of color, and that this latest enactment of White inaction only verified it. For the participants of color, these are common and familiar White patterns, although when they have pointed out these patterns to Whites they have been blocked through accusations of "putting generalizations out there."

Even though Barb expresses some cursory understanding of the feedback she has received, she states that any future intervention she might make in a similar situation would be disingenuous, and in fact she "probably still wouldn't say anything." As a White person, she doesn't demonstrate an investment in or sense of responsibility

for interrupting racism. Her claim that she would intervene to protect the feelings of people of color is a form of White paternalism – she would help those in need but does not see her own role in the creation of that need, or that intervening could be for her advancement, not theirs. In the end, Barb confesses that her interpretation has not shifted; she has not been rationally convinced that she has any role or responsibility in addressing the behavior of other Whites.

This final discussion illustrates another way that Whiteness stays in place - through White separatism. The White participants in this study do not hold a group framework and do not see themselves as responsible for each other. The White participants consistently position Courtney as one individual White woman. Interpreting from the discourse of individualism, the White participants saw this individual White woman's decision to exit as "her choice":

> TIFFANY (W): I think you said, "We'd like you to stay, and why are you leaving? Please don't leave." ... and I thought, you know, this is her choice.

These participants seem unable to consider group dynamics, even in unracialized terms. Instead, they have an interpretive framework that positions each group member as a unique individual, each sharing their thoughts, feelings and opinions equally, and each with the right to engage however they choose. Although White participants earlier called repeatedly for a shared purpose, that purpose apparently did not include either hearing or gaining an understanding of the alternative racial

interpretations of people of color. This is notable given the limited exposure to these interpretations, both in the teacher education cohort and the culture at large.

At the same time that White participants do not have a sense of responsibility for one another in the goal of interrupting racism, they do not demonstrate a focus on or concern with people of color, enacting White narcissism. Whiteness is thereby protected, as people of color are left to deal with individual Whites, each of whom are operating from an individual framework and self-focus. This results in an unbridgeable gap between interpretive racial frameworks, for repeatedly the White participants demonstrate a White focus and an inability to move beyond individual White interest, needs, and interpretations. Positioning herself as an ally to the participants of color, Becca expresses great disappointment in the White participants:

> BECCA (WF): I am really disappointed right now. One of the things that we talked about earlier in this group was looking at how White people sat back in this group and about how that was a way that racism manifests itself. And I think that this was another example of that. And very specifically, both myself and Malena asked the group - asked the White people in the group to go there. And with a couple of exceptions, no one went there. I'm not entirely surprised, but it's frustrating and disappointing.

Becca's disappointment was inevitable, for one of the major discursive strategies in either the contestation or reinscription of racist relations occurs through the interpretation of race itself. For Becca (who has practice in anti-racist discourse),

Malena, and the participants of color, talking about race means talking about racism;
race and racism are inextricably linked because they work from an interpretive
framework of race as a socially constructed category based in relations of domination
and inequality. Race for these participants is not simply a signifier for differences in
culture, place of origin, or skin color, and does not operate only at special times and
places. Race is understood to shape every dimension of their lives and interactions.
Talking about race is thus assumed to mean addressing and attempting to rectify these
inequitable racist relations. Guided by this goal, these participants expect that attention
will be paid to the way the conversation itself is held, and to the actions that will be
taken within and beyond it. One's racial group position is understood as critical to these
issues of attention, engagement and action.

For the White participants, however, talking about race means something
entirely different. Based on the evidence here, we can conclude that talking about race
means little more than the equal sharing of opinions and past experiences. These
opinions and experiences apparently don't need to be connected to race at all, as
evidenced by the consistent inability of the White participants to connect their
interpretations to their racial location. Their racial positions were viewed as non-
operative or irrelevant to issues of attention, engagement or action; each person is seen
as ahistorical individuals, standing only for themselves. Given this fundamental
interpretative gap between the groups, it is not surprising that Becca feels disappointed.

Summary

In summary, I have described key discourses that surfaced in the data and discussed the meaning and implications of these discourses within the context of interrupting Whiteness. I have described the differences between discourses taken up by White participants and those taken up by participants of color. These differences created polarity between the groups, and were at the base of struggles over the power to construct knowledge about key concepts. These contested concepts included racism, culture, spirituality, universal humanity, fairness, rules, power, personal experience, and purpose. These struggles were about power because the ability to determine which narratives are authorized and which are suppressed is the foundation of cultural domination (Banks, 1996; Said, 1994; Spivak, 1990).

I have also described how White participants responded to challenges to their racial knowledge, and the range of moves they made in attempting to retain authority over racial knowledge circulating in the sessions. These moves included norm building, positioning, leadership attacks, silence, defensiveness, anger, and exiting. I have described how White racial positions were enacted, and how Whites fought to maintain these positions. I described how passivity, silence, and withdrawal were forms of resistance as much as were defensiveness, anger and rebuttal because these moves all worked towards the same goal: to maintain interpretations and positions and thwart pressure to shift performance. In the next chapter I will discuss the implications of this analysis for teacher education and the K-12 classroom.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Master Discourses Used by White Preservice Teachers

> MARIE (POC): … my heart is very heavy, and I have a bad stomachache, and
> it's because I'm worried, and I'm nervous. I know you're going to be teachers,
> and I know you've got a long ways to go, and that makes me scared.

In the previous chapter I identified how Whiteness was discursively produced and reproduced by White preservice teachers in a dialogue about race. I used the Whiteness literature to frame my study and theorize my interpretation of the data. I argued that it is important to understand the ways in which power relations are discursively produced and reproduced, for if we can identity these productions, perhaps we can rearticulate them in more transformative ways. In this chapter, I explore common themes that have emerged from these data, showing how this analysis clarifies, supports, and expands the literature.

Foucault (1972) is particularly useful in analyzing the strategies of Whiteness because he does not theorize power as exercised transparently or centrally. He conceptualizes power relations as operating in much more complex, relationally situated ways. Power relations constitute a discursive set of strategies, as power is negotiated and re-negotiated, and dominant discourses adapt to and absorb resistance (Nakayama & Kkrizek, 1995). The White preservice teachers in this study did not command control in the traditional sense. Power was negotiated in sometimes overt and sometimes subtle, multidimensional ways. The everyday discourses in which power

was negotiated in these dialogues offer insight into the ways in which power relations are constituted and meaning is made, because the everyday is the primary site of the signification of Whiteness (Blanchot, 1987). The everyday is a site at which we can develop a more critical and comprehensive view of the ideological constructs that determine and shape racial realities.

The Cardinal Rules

In this section, I will return to the "cardinal rules" referenced in the dialogues as a way to clarify these ideological constructs and ground them in common usage. From the frame of White domination, I will explicate a list of rules implied by the data, and tie these rules into larger discourses identified in the literature. Informed by Foucault's concept of power, Flax (1998) refers to power relations as circuits of norms and practices that require maintenance. Normally implicit, the norms and practices informing these rules operate "beneath the surface" of power negotiations. However, the direct confrontation with counter-narratives will often stimulate their articulation, as happened in the dialogues (Flax, 1998). The rules listed here are posited from a White perspective – "I" and "we" means White; "You" means not White.

White Cardinal Rules for Race

- I know what the rules are.
- All rules apply to all people equally. No exceptions.
- To treat everyone the same is to treat them equally.
- Everyone starts life on level ground and has the same chance as everybody else.

- Different outcomes are the result of effort and talent.

- I deserve everything I have.

- History has no bearing on this moment in time.

- Your past is not relevant. You must get over the past.

- My past is relevant. I cannot get over the past.

- You may not indulge in your feelings. Indulging in your feelings causes your racial problems.

- I have the right to feel the way I do.

- My feelings should be important to you.

- I am an individual. To suggest that being White has any bearing on my life or perspective is to make generalizations about me. Generalizations are bad.

- People of color are representatives of their group.

- You cannot question my interpretation, for I am the only one who can know or understand my experience.

- Group status doesn't matter and cannot be acknowledged.

- I will determine what racism is and when it occurs.

- I am never racist.

- I have the right to be racially comfortable unless I choose not to be.

- Racism has occurred if someone makes me uncomfortable regarding some aspect of race.

- Acknowledging power divides us. Power must not be acknowledged.

- Any misunderstanding between us is yours. If you point out a flaw in my argument, you have twisted my words.

These rules support White domination, making them, as this data shows, a highly contested site. As Dyer (1997) states, "...White people set the standards for humanity by which they are bound to succeed and others are bound to fail" (p. 9). I will use these rules to guide my discussion by connecting them to the larger discourses they support. The larger discourses (or master narratives) that surfaced most consistently were individualism and universalism. For clarity, I will address these narratives as if they are separate, although this division is arbitrary and artificial. In practice, these discourses are tightly intertwined and function together.

Individualism

As the literature and my analysis suggests, the master narrative of individualism operated in these dialogues. Flax (1998) notes that there is an irreconcilable tension within U.S. life. The legitimacy of our institutions depends upon the concept that all citizens are equal. At the same time, we each occupy distinct raced positions that profoundly shape our life chances in ways that are not voluntary or random. In order to manage this tension, we use the master narrative of what Flax refers to as the "abstract individual" (p. 15). This narrative posits that there are no intrinsic barriers to individual success, and that failure is not a consequence of systematic structure but of individual character. It also teaches that success is independent of privilege, that one succeeds

through individual effort and that there are no favored starting positions that provide competitive advantage (Flax, 1998).

The narrative of individualism teaches that we all act independently from one another and that we all have the same possibility of achievement. However, this narrative also teaches that as individuals rise to success, they must divest themselves of their particular histories and social positions and become abstract individuals, unmarked by social positions such as race. These positions are irrelevant and limit one's ability to stand on his or her own. Standing on one's own is both the assumption and the goal of individualism.

The discourse of the individual is also dependent on a denial of history as relevant to the contemporary. This is evidenced by the ahistoricizing discourses that were present in the data. In Flax's (1998) study of the Clarence Thomas hearings, she found that history and its contemporary effects were discursively located in an external other. Racism was represented as an "alien illness" that "plagues" the nation (p. 33). This externalization allows the dominant group to deny the results of race dominance for itself: privilege, excessive power and resources. Mainstream accounts of U.S. history can incorporate tales of suffering by and discrimination against African Americans, for example, as long as the agents and beneficiaries of that suffering are rendered as non-existent. This is accomplished by not naming the agents of this suffering, allowing the history of slavery, for example, to be posited as Black history, as if slavery could have existed outside the presence and agency of Whites. Even more

centrally, this denial is accomplished by not tracing the consequences of that history into the present.

The narrative of the individual as abstract and ahistorical is further developed and refined through modern-day advertising and consumerism which depends on this conceptualization. Individualism helps us maintain the illusion that we are unaffected by media, and that our consumer choices reflect our unique tastes and preferences (Giroux, 1999; Kilbourne, 1999). At the same time, we believe that the brands we use represent us and make us special. Advertisers need us to see ourselves as individuals who are unaffected by the culture around us in order to maintain the illusion of free choice. The irony of advertising, of course, is that this sense of individualism is necessary precisely in order to manipulate group behavior (Kilbourne, 1999). A White denial of ourselves as socialized subjects, deeply affected by images and discourses that circulate in the culture, is also necessary to hold domination in place, for it ensures that these discourses will affect our relations while remaining unexamined (Apple, 2004). The White resistance to examining dominant discourses, and the way this resistance worked to hold dominant positions in place, was evidenced throughout the data I described.

The disavowal of race as an organizing factor is necessary to support current structures of capitalism and domination, for without it, the correlation between the distribution of social resources and unearned White privilege would be evident (Flax, 1998). The existence of structural inequality destabilizes the claim that privilege is

simply a reflection of hard work and virtue. Therefore, inequality must be hidden or justified as resulting from lack of effort (McIntosh, 1988; Ryan, 2001). Individualism accomplishes both of these tasks. At the same time, the individual presented as outside these relations cannot exist without its disavowed other. Thus, an essential dichotomy is formed between specifically raced others and the unracialized individual (Morrison, 1992). Subjects in dominant and subordinate positions both have deep investments in race, for the abstract depends on the particular (Flax, 1998). Whites need raced others as the backdrop against which they may rise (Morrison, 1992). People of color need Whites to recognize themselves as raced subjects in order to shift racial inequality (Fine, 1997; Frankenberg, 1997). These dynamics, tensions, and struggles were abundantly clear in the dialogues.

Sleeter (1993) found that teachers steadfastly insisted that their students were unique individuals who needed to be viewed outside of any group memberships. She found that even after sustained efforts at raising the racial awareness of White preservice teachers, very few of them shifted their interpretations. The data here supports her findings. Razack (1999) argues that many White teachers depend on the model of individualism to inscribe their racial innocence and to position themselves as standing outside of hierarchical social relations. These ways of seeing are deeply connected to White identity. In a society that celebrates the individual, yet offers that status to only one unracialized group of people, power struggles are inevitable. At stake are very real resources that have concrete effects on people's lives. Also at stake in these power negotiations are White preservice teachers' sense of identity as fair and

equal minded. Returning to Marty's (1995) concept of the tension between a moral objection to racism and White complicity with it, it was evident in the data that these White preservice teachers had to deny the more comprehensive interpretations posited by the facilitators and the participants of color in order to maintain their identity as moral and fair. The discourse of individualism allows them a way out of this contradiction. If they can sustain a denial of themselves as members of groups, social stratification becomes moot.

Allport's (1954) work on the nature of prejudice indicates that intergroup contact alone does not reduce prejudice and antagonistic intergroup relations. Schofield's (2003) work is relevant to this earlier research because it supports the finding that desegregation alone does not interrupt inequitable relations. In her research, Schofield found that the colorblind perspective, which has at its base the assumption that we are all individuals and that race is not relevant to that status, contributed to a taboo against talking about race and a refusal to recognize or address the existence of racial inequality. Evidence shows that this approach is widespread in schools, in practices and social norms (Gillborn, 1992; Jervis, 1996; Rist, 1978; Sleeter, 1993). As we have seen from the data described in chapters 3 and 4, for the White preservice teachers, the norm of not racializing their perspectives was ubiquitous. This data also support the earlier research findings (Sleeter, 1993) that when White people are in dialogue with people of color, dominant discourses are not often interrupted. The discourse of individualism is a major barrier to the ability to explore and expand White racial interpretations or reduce tension.

Returning to the cardinal rules, the following set was put into play in support of the master narrative of individualism:

- Everyone starts life on level ground and has the same chance as everybody else. Different outcomes are the result of differences in effort and talent.

- I am an individual. To suggest that being White has any bearing on my life or perspective is to make generalizations about me. Generalizations are bad.

- Group status doesn't matter and cannot be acknowledged.

- People of color are representatives of their group.

- History has no bearing on this moment in time.

- Your past is not relevant. You must get over the past.

- My past is relevant. I cannot get over the past.

Making these rules explicit reveals how the larger discourse of individualism is manifested on the micro level and affects interrelations. Flax (1997) argues that when the individual is considered the basic unit of society, the problem of race is understood within the rubric of inclusion or exclusion. Inclusion is made possible by demonstrating individual worth. Worth is displayed through such virtues as decency, discipline, and hard work. This approach allows no possibility for questioning the reference point from which that worth is judged. The dominant narrative, supporting by these normative rules, stipulates that the social context is representative, objective, and fair.

The discourse of individualism was very marked in the White preservice teachers in my sample. Although I am familiar with this discourse both personally as a

White person raised in U.S. society and through my experiences and observations, I was most surprised by this finding. I did not realize how deep this discourse runs, or how tenaciously it is clung to when challenged. It appeared that the White preservice teachers in my sample were either unwilling or unable to hold a concept of group identity, or if held, sustain it for any length of time.

Universalism

My analysis shows that, as the literature suggests, the master narrative of universalism was circulating in the dialogues. Although universalism was not as explicit as that of individualism, it was consistently present and is intimately connected to individualism. Dyer (1997) explains universalism as the concept of representing the human norm. The human norm is represented as belonging to White people. As with the concept of abstract individualism, universalism places Whites outside of raced positions. And as with individualism, this subject position is only available to Whites. Within this discourse, people of color can only represent their own raced perspectives. Dyer explains the power of universalism to inscribe domination:

> The claim to power is the claim to speak for the commonality of humanity. Raced people can't do that – they can only speak for their race. But non-raced people can, for they do not represent the interests of a race. (p. 2)

The relative absence of reference to Whiteness in the habitual speech of the West is evidence of White's sense as non-raced (Dyer, 1997; Frankenberg, 1993). Positioning Whites as "just people" is endemic to White culture. If Whites are just

people, the implication is that non-White people are something else. Perhaps this explains the resistance many of the White participants had to being raced; a resistence to being seen as other.

hooks (1992) has noted that White people who conceptualize themselves as the least racist often become the most angry when confronted with people of color viewing them as White. She states:

> Often their rage erupts because they believe that all ways of looking that highlight difference subvert the liberal belief in a universal subjectivity that they think will make racism disappear. They have a deep emotional investment in the myth of 'sameness,' even as their actions reflect the primacy of Whiteness as a sign informing who they are and how they think. (p. 167)

Perhaps hooks' analysis can help frame the anger and defensiveness that surfaced in the dialogues when the White preservice teachers were pressed to racialize their persepctives. McIntosh (1988) writes, "Whites are taught to think of their lives as morally neutral, normative, average, and also ideal" (p. 73). It follows that pressure to racialize their responses would be interpreted as questioning this moral neutrality.

Dyer's (1997) scholarship helps explain several of the phenomena documented in this study: the White preservice teachers' unwillingness or inability to racialize their perspectives, the struggle over norms, the resistance to naming power or acknowledging that being White means something specific, the appeal to oneself as a spiritual human,

and the "rules" that surfaced when attempts were made to interrupt the above

phenomena. Dyer says:

> As long as Whiteness is felt to be the human condition, then it alone both
>
> defines normality and fully inhabits it. The equation of being White with being
>
> human secures a position of power. White people have power and believe that
>
> they think, feel and act like and for all people; White people, unable to see their
>
> particularity, cannot take account of other people's; White people create the
>
> dominant images in the world and don't quite see that they thus create the world
>
> in their own image. White people set standards for humanity by which they are
>
> bound to succeed and others bound to fail. (p. 9)

These White preservice teachers were unable to see themselves as raced

subjects. This inability has several several implications for the classroom. If teachers

choose to ignore racial location, they can only reinscribe White perspectives as

universal, for they can only teach what they understand. However, a conviction that

this approach is possible is somewhat misleading. White people do notice the racial

locations of others and their refusal to acknowledge this results in a kind of split

consciousness (Thandeka, 2000) that limits their ability to authentically connect to all of

their students (Feagin, 2000; Flax, 1998; hooks, 1992; Morrison, 1992). This denial

also guarantees that the racial misinformation that circulates in the culture and frames

their perspectives will be left unexamined (Kilbourne, 1999). On the other hand, if

White teachers only notice "raced others," they will also continue to reinscribe

Whiteness by continuing to posit Whiteness as universal and non-Whiteness as other

(Ryan, 2001; Tatum, 1997).

Returning to the cardinal rules, those that work to support the discourse of

universalism are:

- I know what the rules are.

- All rules apply to all people equally. No exceptions.

- To treat everyone equally is to treat them the same.

- Everyone starts life on level ground and has the same opportunity as everybody

  else.

- Different outcomes are the result of differences in effort and talent.

- Group status doesn't matter and cannot be acknowledged.

- People of color are representatives of their group.

- Acknowledging power divides us. Power must not be acknowledged.

This set of rules reinforces the dominant discourse that Whites are just people

and people of color are raced (Dyer, 1997). They fit tightly, and are somewhat

interchangeable, with the rules that support individualism. All of these rules were

circulating in the dialogues and undergird the discourse of universalism that holds

Whiteness in place.

We are each implicated in systems of oppression that profoundly structure our

understanding of each other (hooks, 1995; Lorde, 2001; Weber, 2001). That is, we

come to know and perform our positions in ways that reproduce social hierarchies

(Razack, 1999). Tracing our complicity in these systems requires that Whites shed notions of universalism, for we cannot dismantle hierarchical systems if we cannot or will not see them, or if we place ourselves outside of them.

Personal Experience

A prominent discourse in these dialogues that has not been very visible in Whiteness literature was that of personal experience. My analysis contributes to the literature by expanding an analysis of personal experience as a way to inscribe and protect Whiteness. Drawing from Allen and Cloyes' (2004) work on the term "experience" as a signifier, I will explore how this term was taken up by White participants in the dialogues to support Whiteness.

In their deconstruction of the use of experience in nursing research, Allen and Cloyes (2004) focus on the politics of language. They question the use of experience as evidence in qualitative research, and problemitize experience from the framework that language is socially produced. They note that researchers who rely on their subjects' accounts of experience as evidence often do this in two contradictory ways. Sometimes they use experience in terms of the research subject's interpretations of experiences. They write, "This approach to experience suggests that experience is both antecedent to and separate from the interpretation of it" (Allen & Cloyes, p. 5). At other times, experience is discussed as pointing to something beyond itself – to some "original" event or subject that is outside of language. When experience is used in this way, subjects are positioned as "witnesses" to experience. One of the problems with these

approaches is that they move back and forth between positing experience as the internal perceptions of an individual and positing experience as rooted in an external event. This variance in the conceptualization of experience is not noted or questioned, but it is not without political significance. Allen and Cloyes state, "So the use of experience as evidence, and the relationship between that evidence and the researcher's conclusions, reproduces the same unmarked shift between individuals and events. This shift, we argue, reflects a deeply-seated and largely unexamined Cartesianism" (p. 5).

Based on the work of 17th century philosopher Rene Descartes, Cartesianism refers to the separation of the mind from the world it views. Using experience as evidence shifts the analysis from a social phenomena to the individual. This individual is then taken to be "private," that is, an individual's claims of experience are taken as a report of what is occurring in their minds – sometimes talked about as "personal reality." In terms of this study, a significant component of Allen and Cloyes' analysis is their identification of the assumptions underpinning the use of experience. These assumptions are: only the individual herself has access to her own mind, and she cannot be mistaken about what is going on in her own mind (or, at least, there is no way to verify what occurs in someone else's mind). These assumptions function to make experience a kind of "sacred text" in qualitative analysis and to close claims of experience off from interrogation, for how can one question the "personal" experience of others?

If we follow Allen and Cloyes' suggestion to regard experience as a specific discourse with political consequences, we can ask how White participants used experience in the dialogues. Hopefully, raising questions about claims to experience can illuminate new ways of understanding meaning-making in social interaction. However, it is important for me to clarify that, in so doing, I am not seeking to deny the claims White participants made about their experiences. I am not questioning whether their experiences were "true" or valid. I am not in the position to determine what the participants thought or felt at any given time. I am simply proposing a shift in the way we think about these claims. In terms of social co-production, problemitizing the concept of experience might shed light on how discourses function in this context, and most particularly, how they function to protect Whiteness.

The discourse of personal experience has particularly significant consequences for a dialogue in which the stated goal is to gain understanding of alternative racialized perspectives. When White participants, in particular, shifted the discourse to one of individual experience, these experiences were posited as if they occurred in a socio-historical vacuum. The individual was thereby positioned as a unique entity, rather than as a social, cultural and historical subject. Removing these political dimensions from the claim to experience within the context of racial interpretations prevents a structural or macro understanding of racism (Van Dijk, 1993). Without this understanding, claims of racism can easily be rejected.

If Whites use personal experience as the reference point for understanding racism, then Whites are limited in their ability to validate racism's damaging effects on people of color. Whites are not at the receiving end of racism's oppressive dimensions. Therefore, relying on the discourse of experience enables Whites to reject claims that racism is real and has tangible effects on the lives of people of color, because they don't experience these effects. If the evidential warrant is simply whether or not any one particular individual personally experiences racism, the result can only be one of denial. Conversely, if personal experience is the evidential warrant for power and privilege, then this too will be denied. Power and privilege are so normalized for Whites that their affects are frequently not noticed or felt (McIntosh, 1988). As Jason, the White, heterosexual, able-bodied, upper-class male in this study states:

> JASON: Can I ask a question? Well, you don't have to answer it, but -- Power versus privilege versus opportunity: I feel like I've had a ton of opportunity, but I don't -- but, you know, an often-unemployed, leftist-leaning resident of Bellevue, I've got no power; nobody listens to me where I live.

> Jason's personal experience of not having power is not necessarily aligned with how others perceive or respond to him, or his relationship to social and institutional power. Further, as McIntosh (1988) argues, he may not feel much of his power because it is so normalized as to be taken for granted.

> Personal experience also functions with the discourse of feeling-states. Given the ways in which the dominant society socializes Whites not to see, feel, or think about

racism, as well as the socialization we receive not to perceive loss in the absence of people of color in our lives (McIntosh, 1988; Morison, 1992; Tatum, 1997; Thandeka, 2000), depending on feelings or experiences to guide one's racial interpretations is highly problematic. If Whites rely on our own experiences (or feelings) as evidence for the existence of racism and our benefit from it, we will often not see it.

Another way in which the discourse of personal experience functions to protect Whiteness is in the absolution it offers Whites from responsibility for racism. A subtext of this discourse, with its roots in Cartesianism, is that we each have the right to our own experience: you cannot question my experience, and I cannot question yours. In this way, we each become responsible for our own experiences, and are absolved from any communal responsibility. The subtext implies that "If you have a problem with racism, it is your problem. It is not my problem because it is not my experience."

There is a final problem with the discourse of personal experience that I want to explore here; that is the relationship of this discourse to the social distortions that are necessary to hold the ideology of White dominance in place. In Chapter 3 I described these distortions in my discussion of the language of violence used by some White participants. I argued that White narratives about people of color and African American males in particular as dangerous are a profound perversion of the actual historical and current direction of violence between Whites and African Americans (Collins, 2002; Lorde, 2001; Morrison, 1992).

To hold racism in place, dominant ideologies depend upon turning social reality on its head (Code, 1991). I will take the phrase "male bashing" as an example of dominant interests co-opting and perverting social realities. When making this point in classes, I routinely ask students to define male bashing, asking, "What is occurring when males are being bashed?" Responses commonly include the following: they are being ridiculed, joked about, put down, unfairly accused, and blamed. Next I ask them to consider the term "gay-bashing," and ask, "What is occurring when gays are being bashed?" "Women?" It quickly becomes evident that these incidents of bashing include literal beatings, lynching, and murder. Yet the same language of bashing that was originally used to signify these acts has now been extended to signify the act of simply *talking* about men. The point of this exercise is to demonstrate that dominant ideologies routinely co-opt, pervert, and trivialize power relations and the language used to express it. Media critics have also documented this practice in advertising (Kilbourne, 1999).

Keeping the use of language to trivialize power in mind, I want to return to the discourse of personal experience as used in the dialogues. If we contend that the dominant culture distorts social realties in order to hide and maintain power, then using the discourse of personal experience is especially problematic. Through this discourse, social and political phenomena such as racial discomfort become confused for Whites with questions of safety. Without an explication of what personal experience means in this context, there is no way to challenge this confusion. Given these distortions,

personal experience is not a particularly solid reference point from which to make sense of racial interpretations.

For Whites, the following cardinal rules work to support this discourse and its relationship to individualism:

- History has no bearing on this moment in time.

- Your past is not relevant. You must get over the past.

- My past is relevant. I cannot get over the past.

- I have the right to my feelings. My feelings should be important to you.

- You cannot question my interpretation, for I am the only who can know or understand my experience.

- I will determine what racism is and when it occurs.

- I have the right to be racially comfortable unless I choose not to be.

- I have the right to feel the way I do.

- Racism has occurred if someone makes me uncomfortable regarding some aspect of race.

- Any misunderstanding between us is yours. If you point out a flaw in my argument, you have twisted my words.

As Allen and Cloyes (2004) argue, the discourse of personal experience does both too much and too little. In the dialogue described in this study it carried assumptions that perverted and trivialized power dynamics, refuted alternative perspectives, and was used as a reference point to deny power and privilege. It also

closed off questions or challenges to White perspectives and decontexualized social,

historical and political commitments. The discourse of personal experience is closely

tied to the "cardinal rules." Recognizing this relationship may help provide alternative

and more libratory reference points. and direct our attention to the conditions of

communication and knowledge production that prevail. Perhaps we may learn to see

not only who can speak and how they are likely to be heard, but also how we know

what we know and the interest we protect through our knowing. Education for social

change is not so much about new information as it is about disrupting the hegemonic

ways of seeing through which subjects make themselves dominant (Razack, 1998).

Summary

In this chapter I identified master discourses of Whiteness that circulated in the

dialgues. I document and analyze these discourses in practice: individualism and

universalism. Individualism posits that Whites are first and foremost individuals who

have earned their place in society on their own merit. It works to deny that Whites

benefit from their racial group memberships. Universalism posits that White interests

and perspectives are objective and representative of all groups. An additional discourse

that has not been highly visible in the Whiteness literature also surfaced and was

explicated: personal experience. This discourse represents racial perspectives as

internal and private rather than as social or interrelational. All of these discourses serve

to obscure White power and privilege and to reproduce and perpetuate Whiteness. I

tied the data to larger scholarly conversations of how Whiteness functions. I identified

and explore a discourse that has not been highly visible in the literature: personal

experience. In the enxt chapter I discuss the implications of these findings for teacher

education, classroom teaching, and for White researchers conducting race related

research.

Chapter 6: Implications For Future Research

What does it mean to educate children in such a way as to fashion them for the demands of an increasingly diverse society, one that is in Toni Morrison's terms "wholly racialized," and that is organized under and struggling, on and off, to realize the democratic ideal? (Parker, 1996, pp. 1 - 2)

Future Studies

In an area where there has been limited research grounded in case studies (see Ellsworh, 1997; Sleeter, 1993), this study contributes to the understanding of how White preservice teachers negotiate race in contested situations. This study also surfaced a previously undocumented discourse within the Whiteness literature, the discourse of personal experience. Future research might explore White fragility and the discourse of personal experience in greater depth in order to deepen our understanding of the range of processes and practices that have become normalized, and to explore how they function to hold unequal relations in place.

This was a short-term study. Future studies should observe more conversations over a longer period of time. Questions that might guide a longer-term study could include: Do dominant discourses give way to more transformational discourses over time when alternative discourses are made available? Is so, what processes are most effective in attaining this shift? What is a more effective amount of time to engage in an interracial dialogue to attain this goal?

Future studies might also conduct pre-and-post interviews to measure the perspectives on race of White participants going into the study, and any shifts in these interpretations based on study participation. Questions could include: How did White participants make meaning of the dialogues six months to one year later? Did participation affect pedagogy once these teachers were in the field? Did White participants continue to seek out opportunities to discuss race, or did they tend to avoid these conversations after the sessions? How do White educators address the phenomena of White fragility?

For the purposes of this study, I deliberately avoided interviews with any of the participants because I was interested in the *group* dynamics and functions as they occurred in co-production. However, in a more comprehensive study, interviews before, during, and/or after the sessions could yield richer data and provide more multidimensional perspectives.

I deliberately did not make the participation of the people of color in the study a focus of analysis because I was specifically interested in the problem of preparing White preservice teachers for multicultural practice. This does not mean however that the discourses used by participants of color are not a point of analysis. I compare and contrast the discourses used by White participants with those used by participants of color throughout the study. I also show the challenges posed by participants of color and how White participants respond to these challenges. Still, the primary focus of the

analysis is on White preservice teachers due to the question that drove my study: How do White preservice teachers talk about race with people of color?

Future studies might explore how preserve teachers of color talk about race with White people. Studies may also explore the impact of interracial dialogues on participants of color. We might ask: How do we support students of color in the face of these discourses? What are more optimal dialogue conditions and demographics that specifically support participants of color?

Supporting Participants

Given that this was clearly an emotionally charged discussion, future research should put supports in place for the participants based on their racial locations. Guided time away from intergroup interaction could provide some relief for participants and a forum from which to make sense of their reactions, without pressure from the presence of another racial group. Perhaps race-based caucus groups following each session, or in the interim between sessions, could achieve this goal. Guided by facilitators of one's own race, participants could work through and release some of these emotional responses. These caucus groups could provide a temporary "haven" from the stress of interracial dialogues for all groups, and further participants' ability to integrate the content of the dialogues.

It should be noted, however, that participants of color function daily in an environment that is hostile to their racial interpretations. While they may have more highly developed skills in coping with racial stress, it would not be fair to suggest that

the stress on White participants and participants of color is the same. Although White participants appeared to have stronger emotional reactions, they were also in a unique and temporary situation. They could (and in one case did) leave when they chose, and return to a culture that provides them myriad levels of insulation against racial discomfort. The participants of color do not have this option. People of color must navigate in a larger cultural context that is largely hostile to them (hooks, 1992; Lorde, 1982; Razack, 1998). While the participants of color were subjected to a particular and concentrated experience with Whiteness, negotiating racial stress was not unfamiliar territory for them. When considering ways to support participants from all racial groups, this difference between groups should be taken into account and should guide considerations of how to accommodate different group needs.

Because my goal was to identify the ways in which racial dominance is produced, this study deliberately focused on the actions and reactions of the White participants. For future research, it would be important to investigate how participants of color made sense of the sessions. I also believe that research conducted by an inter-racial team would be particularly effective for future research on Whiteness. Race-related research is rife with dilemmas, which are increased when researchers work alone, regardless of their racial position. In the next section, I will explore some of the dilemmas of conducting race related research and making the types of claims I make here within the parameters of mainstream scientific research.

Dilemmas of Race Related Research

Non-traditional forms of race related research, such as discourse analysis, are challenging within the academy. The dominance of mainstream academic knowledge and its dependence upon traditional forms of scientific methodology has been the foundation of academic inquiry in a broad range of disciplines within the social sciences and education. Given this, the challenge is to produce scientifically rigorous scholarship that operates from the epistemic position that knowledge is socially constructed and context dependent, and that intersects with mainstream research in education.

Knowledge is dependent upon a complex web of cultural values, beliefs, experiences, and ascribed positions. Knowledge reveals the social, cultural, and power positions of people within a society, and is valid only when the knower and his/her position and context are identified and articulated (Banks, 2003). Knowledge defined in this way is an ideological position, embedded within a given culture. Thus knowledge is not a collection of discovered "truths." Knowledge is constructed by, and expresses the interests of, the culture that legitimizes it (Code, 1991; Collins, 2000; Harding, 1998).

One of the foundations of multicultural education is the necessity of making explicit the position and interests of the knower. This strategy is an attempt to move away from a framework of competing canons, and left/right dichotomies, and toward alternative modes of knowing (Code, 1991; Gordon, 2001). The goal of multicultural education research is not to replace the Western canon but to transform our conception

of research and knowledge so that we understand both as contextual and as dependent upon the knower and his/her social position, interests, and values (Code, 1991).

Because power is at stake, the generation of knowledge is a highly contested cultural site. Banks' (1996) conceptualization of the types of knowledge can be a useful framework for examining the role of race related research in mainstream social science and educational research. Mainstream academic knowledge is described as the concepts, paradigms, theories and explanations that are institutionalized in Eurocentric behavioral and social sciences (Banks, 1996). This type of knowledge is based on the ideology that there is an objective truth, it is humanly possible to attain this objective truth, and that Western culture has come the closest to attaining it. Thus mainstream academic knowledge, and the subjects on which it is based, are seen as universal and applicable to all cultures (Smith, 1999).

Transformative knowledge has developed from concepts, paradigms, theories and explanations that challenge mainstream academic knowledge (Banks, 1996). It is based in post-modernism and challenges the idea that knowledge can ever be totally objective and outside of human interests, perspectives, and values (Code, 1991; Foucault, 1972, Rorty; 1989; Rosenau, 1992). Scholarship in African American studies, critical theory, and feminism has also been central to the development and generation of transformative academic knowledge. This scholarship assumes that knowledge is not objective or value-neutral, but reflects the power and social hierarchy that exists in society, and that it is always a contested site (Banks, 1996; Code, 1991; Fine, 1997;

Frankenberg, 1997; Harding, 1991; Sleeter, 1993). Transformative knowledge conceptualizes human relations not as a linear development toward progress and enlightenment but rather as a continual and cyclical quest for democracy in the face of domination and oppression.

Mainstream academic knowledge's dominance of the identification, conceptualization, and actualization of research content and methodologies has been a stable and powerful element of social science and educational research (Code, 1991; Collins, 2000; Stanfield, 1993a, 1993b). Despite compelling criticism from scholars on the margins of mainstream academic discourse, the mainstream's ability to control and legitimize certain knowledge claims while at the same time dismissing others as anecdotal and subjective serves as a significant barrier to race-related research (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2003). This is the fundamental dilemma of research on Whiteness, finding ways to contest the very paradigm that holds the power to validate your research (Lorde, 1982).

In spite of these challenges, I am hopeful that the findings of this study can contribute to the ways race related research is conceptualized, as well as to the design of multicultural education programs. The discourses used by the White preservice teachers in this study are familiar to many educators. I hope that my analysis provids a different lens from which to view these discourses. With this insight, perhaps teacher education programs may be enhanced by anticipating these discourses and addressing them in ways that loosen rather than entrench them.

Implications for Teacher Education

Based on my observations, I submit that the White preservice teachers in this study were unprepared to engage, even on a preliminary level, in an exploration of differences in racial interpretations that could lead to an observable shift in their understanding of race. Further, they were unprepared to respond constructively to alternative racial interpretations. These are critical issues for teacher educators committed to multicultural practice.

While preservice teachers often believe that multicultural education is only necessary for working with "minority" youth or in "diverse" schools, the data reported in this study suggests that it is critical to teach all children, particularly White-middle class children, to engage in a complex way with race. These White middle-class children grow up to be White middle class teachers. The ability to engage critically about race is all the more urgent in primarily White schools, for if students are not prepared to interrupt Whiteness, they will reproduce it. If White teachers posit race as non-operative because there are few if any students of color present, Whiteness is reinscribed ever more deeply. Unprepared teachers cannot guide White students through racial dilemmas. In order to serve as guides, White teachers need to have the skills to engage students in productive interracial dialogues.

Although the White preservice teachers in this study did volunteer for a study in which they would be discussing race, their lack of proficiency in such a discussion is evidenced in the data. Further, they used an array of techniques to avoid challenges to

their previously held views. If these preservice teachers can be construed to be those "willing" to have this conversation, there may be much greater resistance in the general teacher education population. McIntosh (1988) writes that her schooling gave her no training in seeing herself as the beneficiary of oppression: "I was taught to see myself as an individual whose moral state depended on her individual moral will" (p. 72). The teachers who participated in this study urgently need counter-narratives to the dominant discourses of race. Counternarratives are essential because they offer a wider range of possible interpretations and can lead to transformative understandings. As Flax (1998) writes:

> Changing the story about a practice alters its meaning. For example, consider the issue of forced sex in marriage. Is forced sex rape or a marital right? We can tell very different stories about the same act. Which story will dominate depends on race/gender arrangements, but the dominant story also strengthens certain power relations. As alternate stories become available, more subjects are likely to resist. In gaining power to create stories, we also generate new 'facts.' While sexual coercion has long existed, 'sexual harassment' only emerged from a particular narrative that gained force through feminist struggle. (p. 10)

Identifying dominant narratives and their functions can help teacher educators construct alternate stories for their students.

While anti-racist efforts ultimately seek to transform institutionalized racism, anti-racist education requires an immediate focus on the micro level. The goal is to

generate the development of interpretations and skills that enable all people, regardless of racial location, to be active initiators of change. Since all individuals who live within a racist system are enmeshed in its relations, this means that all are responsible for either perpetuating or transforming that system. However, although all individuals play a role in keeping the system active, the responsibility for change is not equally shared. White racism in the U.S. is ultimately a White problem and the burden for interrupting it must be carried by White people (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; hooks, 1995; Wise, 2003). Teacher education programs should begin to have direct conversations about race with preservice teachers. If preservice teachers are prepared to engage in critical reflection on the implications of race for their practice, they may be better able to guide their students in the same reflection and practice.

Implications for Classroom Teaching

I have argued that the White preservice teachers in this study were unprepared to engage critically in an interracial dialogue on race. If they cannot engage in this reflection, they cannot guide their future students in it. This results in a perpetual cycle that works to hold racism in place. Students need to be prepared at a very early age to engage in reflections on race and the implications of their racial location on their lives and social relations. In the following section, I offer suggestions for how teachers might more effectively support their students in interracial dialogues and conversations. All of these suggestions can be adapted for the full range of grade levels.

Conversations about Whiteness might best happen within the context of a larger conversation about racism. It is useful to start at the micro level of analysis, and move to the macro; from the individual out to the interpersonal, societal and institutional. Starting with the individual and moving outward to the ultimate framework for racism – Whiteness – allows for the pacing that is necessary for many students in approaching the challenging study of race. In this way, a discourse on Whiteness becomes part of a process rather than an event (Zúñiga, Nagda, & Sevig, 2002). This wider conversation needs to include an analysis of identities and interests, the issues and forces working for and against social change, and planning for action (Arnold, Burke, James & Martin 1991; Zúñiga, Nagda & Sevig, 2002). Teachers should also locate themselves within the analysis, including their social identities and interests, as well as their pedagogical practices.

Teachers should encourage and support students to make their social interactions a point of analysis. Data in this study show that when and how students participate is not neutral. Who speaks, when, for how long, and with what emotional valence are all keys to understanding the relational patterns that hold oppression in place (Gee, 1999; Powell, 1997). The ability to think critically about patterns of interracial interaction enables us to interrupt them.

Because there is so much White silence about racism in U.S. society, the ability of White students to think critically about it is limited. Many White people have never been given direct or complex information about racism before, and often cannot

explicitly see, feel, or understand it (McIntosh, 1988; Weber, 2001). People of color are generally much more aware of racism on a personal level, but due to the wider society's silence and denial of it, often do not have a macro-level framework from which to analyze their experiences (McIntosh, 1988). Further, dominant society "assigns" different roles to different groups of color, and a critical consciousness about racism varies not only between individuals within groups, but also between groups (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Lee, 1996; Weber, 2001). For example, many African American students relate having been "prepared" by parents to live in a racist society, while many Asian heritage students say that racism was never directly discussed in their homes (hooks, 1989; Lee, 1996). A macro-level analysis may offer a framework to understand different interpretations and performances across and between racial groups. In this way, all students benefit and efforts are not solely focused on White students.

Talking directly about White power and privilege, in addition to providing much needed information and shared definitions, is also in itself a powerful interruption of common (and oppressive) discursive patterns around race (Sleeter, 1993). At the same time, students need to reflect upon racial information and be allowed to make connections between the information and their own lives. The data in this study show that White resistance is high and it doesn't always manifest in overt ways. Silence and withdrawal can also function as covert forms of resistance. Hopefully, viewing silence and withdrawal through the framework of social production can help teachers negotiate their manifestation in their classrooms.

Finally, the cardinal rules that I inferred from my data might help teachers identify the discourses they will need to challenge in their classrooms. When writing curricula, teachers might consider how dominant knowledge is constructed and the discourses that are embedded in this knowledge. With this in mind, they can teach students to deconstruct dominant knowledge and explore the interests that lie beneath it (Banks, 1996). When teachers recognize these discourses surfacing in texts, curricular materials, and everyday conversations and norms, they will be more prepared to challenge them. For example, curriculum activities in which media representations are analyzed and deconstructed are a powerful way to begin to uncover dominate discourses and "the rules" embedded in them. Popular as well as historical knowledge are also salient sites for discourse exploration.

It is my hope that this research will contribute to the ability of multicultural educators to bridge the gap between theory about racism and recognition of it in practice by providing concrete, specific and familiar examples of the discourses White preservice teachers use that function to maintain their racial dominance. While Whiteness is ever-present, and I have discussed the challenges of explicating it given this, racial dialogues are may be useful in that they put race directly on the table. In doing so, they surface a range of performances that may lie below the surface in other contexts, such as classroom lectures and discussions of readings. By surfacing these performances and highlighting them, I hope to have helped make Whiteness clear and recognizable. The more clarity we have about what Whiteness looks like when challenged, the more prepared we might be to address it.

At What Cost? Racism Reproduced

The framework of Whiteness that frames this study necessarily includes an effort to understand my own socialization, collusion, and benefit from racism and White privilege as a White person. Recognizing the socio-political dimensions of research, (Stanfield, 1993), I expected to reproduce racism in this study because I am not outside any of the discourses of Whiteness I explicate here. Initially, however, I conceptualized my reproduction primarily in terms of my analysis. I expected that there would be racist moves and discourses circulating that I would miss because they were so normalized for me as a White person. I was less reflexive about my role before, during and after the sessions, or how the study design itself was reproducing racist relations. In this chapter, I will explicate these dynamics. It is my hope that in so doing, I may contribute to the ability of other White researchers on race to anticipate and be prepared for ways in which Whiteness can manifest in the study design itself. First I must first acknowledge the invaluable feedback I received from Malena Pinkham at the end of the study. Virtually all of the analysis that follows here was made possible because of Malena's contributions during our final study-team debrief. This chapter is based upon the notes I took during that conversation, which occurred one week following completion of the study and included David Allen and Rebecca Parish.

In addressing the ways in which my own racism manifested in the study, I will use the concept of a parallel process. The very discourses I was observing during the sessions were being enacted by me during breaks, debrief meetings, and planning

meetings. The first way in which I paralleled the group process was through a form of the "I am not White" discourse.

Although I expected all along to reflect upon and write about my own racialized participation in the study, I expected that my racist shortcomings would be most evident in my inability to catalogue other White people's racism. I was placing myself in the position to judge other White people's moves, but not paying attention to how I was making them myself. Further, I set up a format in which other researchers from different racial locations would view the tapes and provide a critique *for* me, but not *of* me. In so doing, I essentially placed myself outside of the active manifestation of racism.

Observing the sessions was an emotional process for me. I was very much affected by the degree of hostility that several White participants expressed. At the end of each session the team debriefed. As the lead, I initiated these debriefs, and as soon as they began, I vented my frustration about what I had observed. By venting my frustrations about the enactment of White dominance that was going on in the sessions, I again placed myself outside of Whiteness, as if I was either not White at all, or somehow different from these White participants. In so doing, I enacted the "I am not White" discourse of an unracialized location.

As a White woman who was also Malena's former teacher, my position of authority was always salient as I set the agenda and established procedural norms. I did not set up a process for Malena, as a facilitator of color, to define how and what she

needed from the debrief sessions. I also did not consider her emotional need to express how difficult and often painful the sessions were for her as a woman of color. To not pay attention to the saliency of my authority and its affect on Malena's ability to express her needs was an enactment of my normalized position of power.

The study team was set up in a way that isolated Malena as a woman of color. The team consisted of myself, Becca, and another White content expert, David Allen. David was present at the debrief sessions but I did not clearly explain his role to the facilitators. Having an additional White person present without a sense of his role only added to the level of Whiteness Malena was facing, and these dynamics increased her vulnerability during the debriefs. I did not think about these relationships when I set up the debrief sessions, nor did I ever ask Malena what she needed from the team as the only woman of color. Further, by not exploring issues of racism manifesting through the process with Becca and David, I contributed to the reinforcement of Whiteness for them as well. We were the three White people on the team, yet none of us raised any concerns, talked to each other about the potential for any of these dynamics, or intervened with one another. In this way, we enacted our own form of White solidarity.

Although the authority of my position and the lack of space created for Malena were issues, the White solidarity of the team was the most silencing barrier. Her feedback about this provides key insight into aspects of Whiteness, as it was the everyday White silence about these norms, and the lack of intervention in them on the part of any of the White team members, that she experienced as most limiting. This

parallels the actions of the White participants in the study, in terms of their silence and lack of intervention with Courtney.

When Malena and Becca and I viewed the tapes later in order to share our perspectives on the dynamics, I again set the agenda and the norms for viewing. My primary focus during the viewing was on highlighting and analyzing the enactments of Whiteness I saw. My White gaze may have been atypically turned upon other Whites, yet it still functioned to place me outside of a racialized location and into a position of intellectual authority. It is important to clarify here that although these dynamics served to minimize my racial location for me, the effect they had on Malena was very different. For her, they served to highlight both her race and mine, and didn't position me as an authority as much as they positioned us as operating in an intellectual world; creating a context in which to analyze the group's emotions while denying our own.

By designing the debrief sessions to focus on content rather than process, I limited Malena's options for engagement as well as her ability to counter my racism. Once again, insufficient space was made for Malena's emotions, needs and interests. She was left to cope not only with the stress of the sessions themselves unsupported by me, but also with the racism that was structuring our time together outside of the sessions. I put my agenda to surface Whiteness before all else, including being thoughtful about or attentive to her as a person of color. In this way I enacted a form of White narcissism – I was not seeing her reality as a person of color as precious or significant enough to override my own immediate needs.

The research project itself set up Malena and the participants of color as a platform for White performers. The dialogue groups functioned like an arena in which Whiteness was drawn out through counter-narratives, and people of color's every-day subjection to Whiteness was intensified. The agenda to document Whiteness itself was painful for Malena and perhaps other participants of color because it magnified the dynamics they must negotiate daily. In addition, the short-term design of the study took a form of protection away from Malena, in that it did not allow for an exploration of how to take social justice action.

I did not consider designing the study in a way that took into consideration this stress on participants of color, nor did I explore ways that I might provide support for them. Returning to group-as-a-whole theory, my relations with Malena may be seen as parallel to my relations with the participants of color. Given that my enactment of racism through this study was not atypical of ways in which Whiteness is enacted (Fine, 1997; Ellsworth, 1997), Malena's feedback might serve as a composite representation of how other people of color in the study were impacted. Perhaps the dialogues also functioned as an opportunity for the participants of color to tell their stories or speak their truths, but the *purpose* of those stories and truths was to benefit White people in terms of the study's intended audience (White teachers and teacher educators).

I have explored key ways that the White members of the team perpetuated racism in the study. But the issue is not solely how we enacted racism with Malena or other participants of color. I also need to remember that the dynamics of racism are

active and co-relational. The forces of White privilege that manifested in ways such as agenda and norm setting, an unracialized location, and White solidarity work upon White people as actively as they work upon people of color. That three of the four people approving the process were White reinscribes our positions and the normalcy of our control. Enacting these behaviors is one way in which the forces of Whiteness operate. But not being held accountable by other white people or having these patterned behaviors interrupted also has an affect. Becca and David and I could, and did, ignore these dynamics until a person of color brought them to our attention. In these ways we paralleled the "We Each Stand Alone" discourse discussed in chapter 4, none of us seeing ourselves in group terms or seeing that we were responsible for holding one another accountable.

What was so deeply challenging for me in receiving this feedback was that I was able to recognize all of the aspects of my racism that Malena shared with me. My analysis demonstrates that I recognize many common manifestations of Whiteness and that I know at least a few counter-performances that can potentially interrupt them. Although I cannot (and should not) pretend to be able to anticipate or prevent these dynamics given my own racial socialization, there were a few simple safeguards that I knew to put in place but didn't, such as allowing room for the emotional dimension of the process. That I didn't attend to these safeguards points to the gap between my theory of how racism functions and my actions in regards to this theory.

Although I knew that focusing my analysis on the White participants would be done to some degree by centering them and back-grounding the participants of color, I justified this for the "greater good" of contributing to the future interruption of Whiteness. I also rationalized that participants of color were having the opportunity to "talk back" to White people. Yet by doing so, I positioned myself as the one to decide what the greater good was or what "opportunities" to provide. In the end, my agenda overrode my concern for the ways in which I might reinforce racism and I used the end to justify the means, a common colonialist discourse (Said, 1979; Spivak, 1990).

In retrospect, I would have discussed some of these potential challenges with Malena before the start of the study. Checking in along the way might have also helped to ameliorate some of the racism she had to face. Still, even these suggestions are not without their challenges, for I could be imposing an expectation on Malena to know or anticipate what she might need, or putting more undue pressure on her to be my guide in addition to her other roles. Perhaps talking to others throughout the process, both White allies and people of color, could have helped. As for the study design, I would have discussed the challenges raised here with the participants of color before the sessions started and listened to their needs. This would have required a willingness to let go somewhat of my own interests. I may have considered setting up a forum for participants of color to debrief together at the end of the session.

Levine-Rasky (2002) cautions against a pretentious anti-racism which presents Whiteness as a "righteous discourse transmitted top-down" (pp. 273). A professed

commitment to critical Whiteness studies can open a chasm between an elitist theoretical position and the researcher's racist patterns, and I ran head-long into this chasm. The question which many Whiteness scholars before me have wrestled with is how to focus on Whiteness without reisncribing it (Dyer, 1997; Ellsworth, 1997; Fine, 1997; Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1998; Powell, 1997). My hope is that the marking here was counter-hegemonic, but the question remains. As a White researcher deeply embedded in the same racist discourses explicated here, I don't think there is a definitive solution to this dilemma, but accountability must be taken as fully as possible and every step of the way.

Conclusion

Despite the challenges I have addressed in this chapter, this research is important because there are very few data based case studies on Whiteness. My goal in this study was to bridge the gap between theory about how Whiteness functions and recognition of it in practice by describing and analyzing the active discourses used by White preservice teachers in an interracial dialogue about race. I accomplished this goal by explicating the ways in which master narratives such as Individualism and Universalism circulate in every day usage and function to protect Whiteness. In addition, I documented a discourse not highly visible in the Whiteness literature: Personal Experience. I also explicated a list of implicit White cardinal rules for race as they were implied in the data. I discussed the implications of these findings for teacher education and classroom teaching.

It is my hope that this research will contribute to the ability of multicultural educators to bridge the gap between theory about racism and recognition of it in practice by providing concrete, specific and familiar examples of Whiteness manifested when White preservice teachers talk about race. By surfacing and highlighting these practices under conditions of contestation, I hope to have made key aspects of Whiteness clear and recognizable. The more clarity we have about what Whiteness looks like when challenged, the more prepared we will be to address White resistance to multicultural education. My data shows that even though they were willing volunteers, the White participants in this study fought vigorously and consistently to keep their positions and perspectives intact. These examples may assist educators in designing multicultural curricula and pedagogy that anticipate the enactment of Whiteness in classroom discussions, and are designed to address it.

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Appendix A: Consent Form

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON CONSENT FORM

Whiteness in Racial Dialogues: A Discourse Analysis
Investigator: Robin DiAngelo, Doctoral Candidate, College of Education.
tel: 206 221 4689/ 206 517 5848 (HS#03-7679-E 01)

Name	Student	College of Education
Telephone:	e-mail:	

Investigator's statement

I am asking you to be in a research study. The purpose of this consent form is to give
you the information you will need to help you decide whether or not to participate in the
study. Please read the form carefully. You may ask questions about the purpose of the
research, what I will ask you to do, the possible risks and benefits, your rights as a
volunteer, and anything else about the research or this form that is not clear. When I
have answered all your questions, you can decide if you want to be in the study. This
process is called 'informed consent.' I will give you a copy of this form for your
records.

PURPOSE AND BENEFITS

This study is an opportunity to engage in a series of racial dialogues with people from a
range of different racial groups. I hope that the results of this study will help me
understand how White student-teachers make meaning in racial dialogues, so that I can
design multicultural education courses that are more effective in preparing White
teachers to teach students from a range of racial groups. You may benefit from this
study by participating in the structured activities and discussions. The study
information may be used in published articles about racial dialogues.

PROCEDURES

If you choose to be in this study, I would like you to participate in 4 dialogue sessions
about race. The sessions will occur once a week for 4 weeks (for a total of 4 times).
Each session will last up to 2 hours, and be facilitated by an inter-racial team of
facilitators who have been trained to lead dialogues on race. There will be
approximately 12 participants in all, including the facilitators. Through a series of group
exercises and questions (such as sharing your cultural background and experiences), the
facilitators will lead you in a dialogue about your experiences and viewpoints about
race. I will be present at each session, but I will not be participating in the dialogues. I
will sit away from the group and simply observe and take notes.

I would like to audiotape and videotape the dialogues so that I can have an accurate record to review. I would also like to show the videotapes to a few other researchers in multicultural education from different racial groups than my own so that I can have a multicultural perspective on my observations (no more than 4 other people will see the tapes). The audio and videotapes will be destroyed upon completion of the study (by December 31st, 2003).

RISKS, STRESS, OR DISCOMFORT

Some people feel that providing information for research is an invasion of privacy. I have addressed concerns for your privacy in the section below. Some people feel self-conscious when they are audio or videotaped. Some people may feel social discomfort when talking about race, and may reveal information that may seem prejudicial or biased.

OTHER INFORMATION

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You can stop at any time. Whether you choose to be in this study or not to be in this study will have no effect on your University of Washington academic standing. If you participate in this study, you may choose to view the videotapes upon completion of the study. If you request that your participation in segments of the recordings be edited, I will edit your participation.

When I transcribe the recordings, I will code the transcripts. I will keep a masterlist of codes and identities. I will keep the link between your name and the study information until December 31st, 2003 and then I will destroy the link.

Information about you is confidential, although the videotapes will make you identifiable to the other researchers who will view the videotapes. Your name will not be used in the analysis. If the results of this study are published or presented, I will not use your name. If I decide that I would like to use a segment from the videotape in my dissertation presentation, I will obtain your permission first. Data from the sessions may be used in articles published about the manifestation of Whiteness in racial dialogues, however, participant's names will not be used.

If you have any questions about this research study, please contact the researcher at the telephone number or e-mail listed above. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact the University of Washington Human Subjects Division: 206-543-0098.

_____

Signature of investigator   Printed Name   Date

Subject's statement

This study has been explained to me. I volunteer to take part in this research. I have had a chance to ask questions. If I have questions later on about the research I can ask one of the investigators listed above. If I have questions about my rights as a research subject, I can call the University of Washington Human Subjects Division at (206) 543-0098. I give my permission for the researcher to audiotape and videotape my participation as described above in this consent form. I will receive a copy of this consent form.

_____

Signature of subject   Printed name   Date

Copies to: Investigator's file   Subject

Appendix B: Participant Demographics

Name:
Email:

The demographics of the participant group is a critical component of the study. Please take a moment to answer the following questions:

1. What is your primary racial identification?

2. What is your primary gender identification?

3. What is your age?

4. What is your religious background?

5. What was your primary socio-economic class growing up? (i.e. poor, working class, middle class, upper class)

Thank you for your time.

Robin DiAngelo

Appendix C: Study Announcement

Whiteness in Racial Dialogues: A Discourse Analysis
Principal Investigator: Robin DiAngelo

A researcher in the University of Washington, College of Education, Curriculum and Instruction department is conducting research on how White preservice teachers engage in dialogues about race. The principal investigator is Robin DiAngelo, a C&I doctoral candidate.

The study will be a series of 4 dialogues on race with approximately 14 participants from a range of racial backgrounds. The dialogues will begin on Tuesday, October 21st and take place once a week for four weeks, ending on November 11th. Each Tuesday session will be from 6 – 8 PM. The dialogues will be led by a trained team of facilitators. Through a series of group exercises (such as sharing your cultural background and experiences), the facilitators will lead you in a dialogue about your perspectives on race.

This research will provide valuable information about how White student-teachers engage in racial dialogues. This information is intended to help design multicultural education courses that are more effective in preparing White teachers to teach students from racial groups different from their own. You may benefit from taking part in this study by gaining increased understanding of a range of viewpoints on race. Participants from all racial groups are encouraged to participate.

At the end of the study, you will be offered a teaching packet of helpful resources and information for expanding your knowledge of multicultural education.

Please contact the researcher directly if you would like to participate, or if you'd like further information. Participating in this study is purely voluntary. Contacting the researcher does not in any way obligate you to participate.
Contact information:
Robin DiAngelo
rjd@u.washington.edu
206-517-5848

Robin DiAngelo, PhC
Multicultural Education
Miller Hall 122
University of Washington

Robin DiAngelo

2108 N. 87th St., Seattle, WA 98103

email: rjd@u.washington.edu   (206) 517-5848

Education

PhD. Candidate (to be granted June 12, 2004). Curriculum & Instruction
University of Washington. 2000-current

Cognates in Multicultural Education
Whiteness Studies
Intergroup Dialogue
Certificate in Women's Studies

Masters in Education: Curriculum & Instruction: Social Studies.
University of Washington. 1995

Bachelor of Arts: History/Sociology.

Seattle University, Seattle, Washington. 1991

Professional Experience

Teaching Assistant. Center for Multicultural Education. University of Washington. 2002-2004
Teaching Assistantship, working with Dr. James Banks and Dr. Geneva Gay in the Center for Multicultural Education. Duties include teaching of required course, EDTEP551: Multicultural Teaching, leading Reflective and Portfolio Seminars in the Teacher Education Program, and supporting Dr. Gay in the teaching of the Elementary Methods course.

Part-time Lecturer. School of Social Work, University of Washington. 1998 – present
Co-teach a two-quarter sequence, SW442-3: Intergroup Dialogue Facilitation. This course provides BASW students with foundation knowledge and skills for working with diverse teams and small groups in educational settings. Students are trained to be peer facilitators of intergroup dialogues, which focus specifically on issues related to racialized group memberships.

Teach multiple sections of the required course SocW 504, "Cultural Diversity & Social Justice." The overall aims of SocW504 are to have master level students: (a) explore the interplay of social and cultural identities, societal power relations, and other societal forces and (b) develop perspectives and approaches to working with and across differences, especially those based on social group memberships.

Associate Faculty. Shoreline Community College. Seattle Washington. 1998 – 2000
Multicultural Studies Instructor. Taught multiple sections of the required course, IASTU/SPCMU 102, "Multicultural Issues: Culture, Communication, Change." These courses use the concepts of Race/Class/Gender as tools of analysis to explore social stratification, positionality, and social change.

Associate Faculty. North Seattle Community College. Seattle, Washington. 1999 - 2001
Women Studies Instructor. Taught interdisciplinary, multicultural introduction to Women Studies focusing on the way gender, race, class, sexuality and culture have shaped women's lives. The course examines why women occupy similar and different locations in the United States and international cultures. Course readings include both narrative and analytical approaches.

Senior Education & Training Coordinator. City of Seattle. 2000-2002
Design, develop and deliver specialized employee training programs utilizing Adult Learning principles. Provide work-group mediation services. Courses include: Creating A Respectful WorkPlace, Train the Trainer, Preventing Harassment, Leadership Skills, Team Building.

DiAngelo, Boehler & Associates. Washington. Certified MWBE. 1994-1998
DBA provided consultation and training services in human resource development, with a special emphasis in diversity training. Projects included designing, implementing, and evaluating specialized programs. DBA provided mediation services, group facilitation, presentations, and national satellite trainings. Recent clients have included: Seattle Police Department, Seattle Public Schools, Seattle Commission on Civil Rights, Department of Social and Health Services

Trainer. National Coalition Building Institute. Seattle Chapter. 1995 – present
Provide leadership, training and mediation services for this non-profit organization dedicated to social justice, activism and prejudice reduction. Lead "Whites Eliminating Racism" work.

Contract Trainer/Consultant, Center for Public Service Development and Training, Western Washington University. 1992- 1998
Served as lead trainer for 16 hour, state-wide, federally mandated training on cultural diversity in the workplace for the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) staff and management. Served as member of the curriculum design and development team.

Area Advisor, Center for Public Service Development and Training (CPSDT) Western Washington University. 1993- 1998
Served as regional advisor to DSHS administration in regards to issues of diversity and barriers to equity. Maintained communication and contact between CPSDT and DSHS.
Advised and assisted administration in cross-cultural conflict resolution. Provided consultation regarding recruitment and retention of members of under-represented groups.

Program Coordinator, Readiness To Learn, Edmonds School District. 1996 - 1998
Coordinate multiple-site program linking immigrant families with available services to ensure every child comes to school "ready to learn." Serve as facilitator in a family support framework, ensuring collaboration between schools, community resources, and families. Provide immigrant parents with support and education for raising children in a new culture. Managed budget and ensured grant compliance.

Program Coordinator, Pregnant & Parenting Teen Project, Everett Community College. 1991-1993
Designed, developed and delivered course curriculum for grant funded project. Prepared teen parents for the workplace in a vocational training setting at the community college. Conducted weekly seminars on life skills, healthy sexuality, and career planning and development. Facilitated weekly support groups. Served as a liaison and advocate for teen parents in the social service system. Built community networks and collaboration. Managed budget and ensured grant compliance.

Honors & Awards

Diversity Leadership Award. Office of Minority Recruitment & Retention.
College of Education, University of Washington. 2003
Awarded to a student who: recognizes the importance of being a lifelong learner in relation to issues of equity and inclusion; demonstrates inclusive behavior in the COE community; supports the leadership of members of marginalized groups in a variety of ways and at various levels; advocates for underrepresented students from a range of marginalized groups; takes personal and social risks in order to ensure a more inclusive and equitable COE community.

Golden Feather Award. University of Washington School of Social Work. 1999
Awarded to faculty who demonstrate, through their teaching, a commitment to and advocacy for people with disabilities.

Valedictorian. Seattle University. 1991
Competed for and was chosen, by a committee of students and faculty, to deliver the 1991 commencement address. Speech was published by Seattle University and distributed to graduates and alumni.

Alpha Sigma Nu. Seattle University. 1989 - 1991
A member of the Jesuit Honor Society.

Herstory Award. Seattle University. 1990
Awarded to women who are inspirational role-models to other women in education. First student recipient.

Ackerly Writing Fellow. Seattle University. 1990
Served as a consultant in the Seattle University Writing Center.

Classes Taught in Institutions of Higher Education

Multicultural Teaching
College of Education, University of Washington. Seattle, WA. 1998 – present
Teach required course in both the elementary and secondary cohort on theory, practice, and research in multicultural education in the Teacher Education Program.

Cultural Diversity & Social Justice
Graduate School of Social Work, University of Washington. Seattle, WA. 1998 – present
Teach multiple sections of this required course. The overall aims of SocW504 are to have students: (a) explore the interplay of social and cultural identities, societal power relations, and other societal forces and (b) develop perspectives and approaches to working with and across differences, especially those based on social group memberships.

Facilitating Intergroup Dialogue
School of Social Work, University of Washington, Seattle, WA. 2000-2003
Co-teach a two-quarter sequence, SW442-3: Intergroup Dialogue Facilitation. This course provides BASW students with foundation knowledge and skills for working with diverse teams and small groups in educational settings. Students are trained to be peer facilitators of intergroup dialogues, which focus specifically on issues related to racialized group memberships.

Multicultural Issues: Culture, Communication, Change
Shoreline Community College. Seattle, WA. 1998 – 2000
Taught multiple sections of this required course. IASTU102 uses the concepts of Race/Class/Gender as tools of analysis to explore social stratification, positionality, and social change.

Issues of Gender, Race & Class in Women's Lives
North Seattle Community College. Seattle, WA. Summer Quarter – 1999 - present
Teach this course through the Women's Studies Department. WMN200 uses the concepts of Race/Class/Gender as tools of analysis to explore social stratification, positionality, and social change and how they relate specifically to women's lives.

Professional Colloquia

"Introduction to multicultural sensitivity."
Graduate Program of Clinical Psychology, University of Washington. March 31, 1999.

"How graduate programs are addressing cultural diversity." Evans School of Public Affairs, University of Washington. February, 1999.

Memberships

American Educational Research Association

National Association for Multicultural Education

Certifications

Certified Trainer/Mediator. University of Washington School of Law. 2000

Publications

DiAngelo, R. (under review). Why is this so hard to see?: Challenges to white people in engaging in authentic dialogue about racism. Multicultural Perspectives.

DiAngelo, R. & Sensoy, O. (in preparation). "I wouldn't want to be a woman in the Middle East": How White preservice teachers use narratives of Muslim women.

DiAngelo, R. (1997). Heterosexism: Addressing internalized dominance.
Journal of Progressive Human Services, Vol. 8(1) 1997

Professional Conference Presentations

AERA Annual Conference – San Diego 2004
Enhancing the Visibility and Credibility of Educational Research on Race.

National Association for Multicultural Education Conference – Seattle Nov. 2003
Power at Play: Multicultural Pedagogy in the Classroom

National Association for Multicultural Education Conference – Seattle Nov. 2003
NAME Panel & Round Table Forum Participant
Multicultural Teacher Education Pedagogy: Transforming Student Resistance to Diversity in Preservice Teacher Education Programs

Seattle Race Conference. Seattle, WA 2003
Member of lead training team for conference on race relations in Seattle.

Summit on Women in Seattle. Seattle Women's Commission. Seattle, WA 2003
Lead conference facilitator. Provided facilitation training for commission members.

Shoreline Public Schools Community Partnership Conference - Shoreline, WA 2002
"Building Multicultural Teams"

National Coalition Building Institute – Washington D.C. – 1999
"Using Race, Class & Gender as Tools of Analysis in the Mediation Process."

National Coalition Building Institute – Vancouver BC - 1998
"White Racism: Addressing Internalized Dominance."

Gay Lesbian Straight Teachers Educational Network (GLISTEN) International Conference Seattle - 1997
"Heterosexism: Addressing Internalized Dominance."

Women's American ORT (Organization for Rehabilitation through Training) - 1995
"Building Coalitions in the Gay/Lesbian and Jewish Communities."

Bertha Cappan Reynolds Society Annual Conference - Seattle – 1994
"Anti-Semitism and Jewish American Experience."

National Association of Women's Centers - University of Oregon - 1994
"Women's Centers: Are We Inclusive?"

A Selection of Contracts & Projects

The Intergroup Dialogue Project. School of Social Work, University of Washington. 1998 – 2004
Member of curriculum design team for grant-funded project integrating Intergroup Dialogue process into the School of Social Work curriculum.

Anti-Racism Project. 2001- current
Office of Economic Development, City of Seattle
Provide consultation, mediation, and training services in issues of racism and anti-racism.
Conduct bi-monthly on-going educational series and design and deliver quarterly mandatory
training. Conduct on-going leadership development for the Anti-Racism leadership team within
the organization.

**The Reconciliation Education Action Leadership (REAL) Project, Department of Justice –
1999 – 2001**
Serve as a lead curriculum designer and trainer for this pilot project funded by the Department
of Justice to build bridges between the Seattle Police Department and Seattle's Communities of
Color. The REAL Project recruits and trains members from both groups in leadership and
coalition building skills.

Seattle Police Department – 1997 - 2000
On-going contract providing a variety of training and development services for administration,
officers, and staff including: Diversity Training, Gender Inclusive Language, Creating a Climate
of Respect in the Workplace, Supervisory Skills, Mediation, Team Development, Train the
Trainer, Facilitator Training.

Seattle Public Schools – 1996 - 1999
Sex Equity Project, providing training and development to counselors, teachers, and career
guidance staff to support gender equity in education.
Workplace Connections, providing anti-bias/harassment training for career guidance counselors
to support non-traditional students and prepare them for workplace success. Issues
addressed: sexual harassment, assessing and addressing the classroom climate for girls and
minority students, diversity in the workplace.

Court Appointed Special Advocates / Guardians ad Litem – 1996 - 2000
Design and deliver an on-going continuing education series of nationally televised satellite
trainings, broadcast live to over twenty states. Programs have included: "Understanding the
Language of Children." "Assessing Domestic Violence." "Red Flags in Child Development:
Cultural Misunderstanding." "What is a Family?"

Department of Housing and Urban Development - 1996
Assessed, developed and delivered a mandated diversity training to administration and staff.

Community Service

**Board Member. Seattle Office of Civil Rights. CityTalks! Dialogues on Race. 2002 -
present**
Coordinate monthly dialogues on race for employees of the City of Seattle. Train dialogue
facilitators.

Board Member. National Coalition Building Institute, Seattle Chapter. 1997 – present
Provide leadership, training and mediation services for this non-profit organization dedicated to
social justice, activism and prejudice reduction.

Bailey-Boushay House. Seattle, Washington. 1995 – 1999
Four hour per week commitment to provide companionship and related services to clients of
residential housing facility living with late-stage A.I.D.S.

Professional References for Robin DiAngelo

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