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Chapter 1

From Non-racism to Anti-racism in Social Studies Teacher Education: Social Studies and Racial Pedagogical Content Knowledge

LaGarrett J. King and Prentice T. Chandler

*George Bush doesn't care about Black people. –Kanye West
It was one of the most disgusting moments in my presidency. He called me a racist.” “And I didn't appreciate it then. I don't appreciate it now. It's one thing to say, 'I don't appreciate the way he's handled his business.' It's another thing to say, 'This man's a racist.' I resent it, it's not true. –George Bush*

On September 2, 2005 during a live broadcast of NBC Universal Television Group's *A Concert for Hurricane Relief*, hip-hop artist, Kanye West deviated from a prepared script to proclaim, “George Bush doesn't care about Black people” (NBC News, 2005). The television show, which was watched by 8.5 million people, was part of a benefit concert for the American Red Cross to help the Gulf coast victims of Hurricane Katrina. The Category 5 hurricane killed thousands of people, destroyed property, and displaced many American citizens throughout the United States—Katrina is considered one of the deadliest and destructive hurricanes in US history. Excluding West, the president was widely criticized for the government's response to Katrina. Five years later in promoting his memoir, *Decision Points* (Bush, 2010), the former president remarked that West's comments served as the worst moment in his presidency.

During Bush's two terms as President of the United States, other major controversies and tragedies took place. Events such as September 11th and the War on Terror, Iraq and (the lack of) weapons of mass destruction, Abu Ghraib and torture, and the Great Recession of 2008 were watershed moments during his tenure. Yet,

L.J. King (✉)

Department of Learning, Teaching, and Curriculum, University of Missouri-Columbia, 303 Townsend Hall, Columbia, MO 65211, USA

P.T. Chandler

Department of Curriculum and Instruction, School of Education, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH, USA

e-mail: prentice.chandler@uc.edu

none of the aforementioned occurrences or the federal government's response to Katrina, New Orleans, and other Gulf coast cities was mentioned but comments made by an entertainer implying that he was racist was his "personal nadir" (Logan, 1954). He explained that he could not be racist because of his record of appointing non-Whites to his presidential cabinet in Colin Powell, Condoleezza Rice, Rod Paige and Alphonzo Jackson; his No Child Left Behind Act, which was meant to curtail the "soft bigotry of low expectations" (Bush, 2010, p. 325) for African American students; and his 15 billion dollar HIV/AIDS program in Africa. While the scope of this chapter is not to extrapolate whether George Bush is or is not a racist, his comments about being called a racist and his response are appropriate in explaining the discourse on non-racist/anti-racist curriculum and pedagogical policy.

Stances: Non-racist and Anti-racist

We define non-racist curriculum and pedagogy as a racially liberal approach to race that favors passive behaviors, discourses, and ideologies and that rejects extreme forms of racism. These aspects reduce the definition of racism to a microanalysis of the individual and to immoral and prejudiced behaviors. An anti-racist stance, on the other hand, is an active rejection of the *institutional* and *structural* aspects of race and racism and explains how racism is manifested in various spaces, making the social construct of race visible. Bush interpreted West's comments as an individual attack on his morality. West's comments, however, were not simply a critique of Bush but an appraisal of the racial state in which Bush was the figurehead. The statement accentuated the legacy of structural racism and racist discourse against African Americans,¹ which helped cause some of the aftermath in New Orleans and other gulf coast locations. Therefore, Bush's accomplishment with African American representation in his administration, passing a reworded education law that heavily promoted testing as an evaluation tool, and sending money for HIV/AIDS to Africa may be commended in some circles but his comments were a superficial response to larger issues of race and racism. In his public comments and in his memoirs, the former president failed to consider the systemic actions (and

¹ West's preceding speech juxtaposed societal discourse between White and Black victims during Hurricane Katrina and the systemic way Blacks have been discriminated in the US He stated, "I hate the way they portray us in the media. You see a black family, it says, 'They're looting.' You see a white family, it says, 'They're looking for food.' And, you know, it's been 5 days [waiting for federal help] because most of the people are black. And even for me to complain about it, I would be a hypocrite because I've tried to turn away from the TV because it's too hard to watch. I've even been shopping before even giving a donation, so now I'm calling my business manager right now to see what is the biggest amount I can give, and just to imagine if I was down there, and those are my people down there. So anybody out there that wants to do anything that we can help—with the way America is set up to help the poor, the black people, the less well-off, as slow as possible. I mean, the Red Cross is doing everything they can. We already realize a lot of people that could help are at war right now, fighting another way—and they've given them permission to go down and shoot us!" see NBC News. (2005, September 2). *Kanye West off the script*. Retrieved from: <http://www.nbcnews.com/video/nbc-news/9172802#9172802>

their impacts) of his Presidency. In other words, he did not question how his policy actions influenced and/or changed structural racism in the United States and globally. President Bush's comments in his memoir vis-à-vis race are a classic case of non-racist rhetoric. In speaking about his actions as the President of the United States, his vision of "being a racist" is cast in individual actions that he, as president, performed. In this way, notions of the personal and the individual engulfed the collective and the structural. West's comments that night at the Katrina relief concert should be interpreted as a critique of the President's stance on race that favored piecemeal moves in his inner circle (i.e., naming a minority to a cabinet position) over attempting to dismantle structural racism in the US. In this way, Bush was offended for the wrong reason. Bush was offended because someone had called him a racist; in reality, it was an indictment of a system of racial thinking, in which the leader of the "free world" was upholding and maintaining.

Another example of non-racist thought has played out in the United States due to the recent spate of high profile cases of police killings of unarmed Black males. With the shooting death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO and the chokehold death of Eric Garner in New York City, we, again, see a stark contrast between non-racist and anti-racist thought. On the non-racist side, we see a framing of these two cases as occurring in isolation from the historical record and separate from the current surveillance (Alexander, 2011) regime against Black males in the United States. It is argued that these cases, although tragic and unfortunate are the result of a police officer "just doing his job" maintaining "law and order." Social media, which has played a factor in both of these episodes, is replete with defenders of Whiteness who point to examples of where unarmed white people are "also" killed by the police, without the protests and "rioting." In this non-racist move, there is an equivocation of Black bodies and White bodies (i.e. "It happens to us too"), and a refusal to allow White police terror against communities of color to be considered as a possibility. The non-racist stance allows, in fact requires, that you see these events through an social mindset that ignores historical and social science data that confirms the uneven experiences of people of color and white folks when it comes to encounters with law enforcement. In fact, non-racist thought requires that you be blinded by the power of Whiteness to interpret events as "not about race."

With the anti-racist's, arguments against the actions of Darren Wilson and the NYPD are cast against history, psychology, and politics. The anti-racist lens for analyzing what occurred in these events is not simply the actions of one person against another, but that of a hegemonic structure, powered by race, against the collective interests of people of color. Rather than take the news of a grand jury non-indictment as normal operating procedure, they took to the streets in protest, to point out the *structural nature* of race in America. Where non-racist are blinded by the white(ness) of their existence, anti-racist see these events through a historical prism that includes a legacy of dehumanization, slavery, genocide, lynching, and brutal treatment from institutions (i.e., schools) that have told these communities that, in fact, their lives don't matter.

We argue that the field of social studies has accepted and promoted a societal discourse of non-racism, which favors the conceptualism of racism that equals prejudice, serving to mask the power of institutional racism. This approach to

educational policy leads to a lack of “racial pedagogical content knowledge” (RPCK) (Chandler, 2015), social studies teachers’ racial knowledge and how it influences content and pedagogical choices, which hinders appropriate forms of racial teaching and learning in social studies spaces. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to clarify non-racist stances and promote more anti-racist frameworks for social studies teacher education.

This chapter lays out the foundation of social studies and non-racism as a de facto policy. To do this, we first provide our definition of race and racism. Next, we examine social studies policy statements/documents and their relationship to race, specifically detailing the ambiguousness of NCSS and the new C3 framework. We then describe racial pedagogical content knowledge (Chandler, 2015) and notions of non-racism and anti-racism. Next, we provide examples of how social studies teacher education can promote anti-racism in social studies methods classes by utilizing the construct of racial pedagogical content knowledge. Lastly, we conclude with some insights into moving past non-racism and further anti-racism in social studies teacher education.

Definition of Race and Racism

In order to reorient the focus in social studies teacher education regarding race and racism, a definition of the two terms are required to place our thoughts in proper context. Our conception of race is aligned with conventional scholarship that has identified the concept of race as biologically inaccurate. Race is an ideology that is historically and socially constructed to categorize humanity. Haney Lopez (2000) described race as “neither an essence nor an illusion, but rather an ongoing, contradictory, self-reinforcing, plastic process subject to the macro forces of social and political struggle and the micro effects of daily decisions” (p. 165). Omi and Winant (1994) noted “race is a concept which signifies and symbolizes social conflicts and interests by referring to different types of human bodies” (p. 55). Race, because of its social dynamics is not a fixed entity but is fluid within time and space abided by complex rules that are in constant transformation. The construct of race not only speaks to the ways in which people are defined by their perceived skin color, but rather the systems of thought, control, and oppressions/privilege that are associated with that skin color. Our notion of race is one that is highly flexible and malleable to the needs and desires of a White oriented world. In fact, the flexibility and malleability are enduring characteristics of race in modern times.

Historically, race has been used as a classification system to describe citizenship. The United States has and continues to allocate economic, political, social, and psychological advantages to those that are currently labeled as White. The Naturalization Act of 1790, the Indian removal Act (1830), the Mexican Repatriation program (1929), and Jim Crow legislation serve as examples of this orientation as a racialized society. While socially constructed notions of race were the catalyst for these *legalises*, it is the belief that White skin holds certain rights and privileges

(Harris, 1995) over other racialized groups that forms the crux of modern racism. Racism, therefore, is not a simple act of individual prejudice; it is a systematic belief in maintaining White supremacy through various social contexts (Essed & Goldberg, 2002). Tatum (1997) surmised that a good way to understand racism is to think of racism as “prejudice plus power” (p. 7). Prejudice plus power helps us to understand how Whites control the access to “social, cultural, and economic resources and decision-making, which leads to the institutionalization of racist policies and practices” (pp. 7–8). Viewed in this way, race is not a biologically occurring aspect of human existence and racism is not an individual act of one person towards another. Race is a socially constructed, hegemonic way of arranging a society to the benefit of some and the detriment of others (Leonardo, 2009); racism is a macro, overarching field of oppression that (over)determines people’s social lives.

Race and Social Studies Education

As the most inclusive (Ross, 2006) subject taught in schools, and the one explicitly charged with citizenship education, it seems logical that racial literacy would find its natural home within social studies curriculum, practice, and theory (Ladson-Billings, 2003). Yet, research on race and social studies practice and teacher education is marginalized and not heavily theorized (Brown, 2011; Chandler & McKnight, 2011; King, Busey, Smith, & Crowley, 2014). The treatment of race, racism, and oppression within the social studies curriculum is also limited, silenced and wrought with issues (Bigler, Shiller, & Willcox, 2013; Chandler, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 2003; Vasquez-Heilig, Brown, & Brown, 2012). Problems implementing racial knowledge in social studies come from many places— the official curriculum (Apple, 1999), lack of knowledge (Brown, 2011; King, 2014), teacher fear, adoption of a colorblind approach, liberal incrementalism, and conflation with multicultural education (Chandler & McKnight, 2011). Within the social studies curriculum, race teaching sends what Ladson-Billings (2003) termed a *discourse of invisibility* where powerful messages are displayed that center Whites as the apex of civilization and Non-Whites as “relatively insignificant to the growth and development of [humanity] and a drain on resources and values” (p. 4). Leonardo (2009) posits:

... there is no paucity of representation of whites as its creator. From civil society, to science, to art, whites represent the...best that a culture has produced. In other words, white imprint is everywhere. However, when it concerns domination, whites suddenly disappear, as if history were purely a positive sense of contribution. Their previous omnipresence becomes a position of nowhere, a certain politics of undetectability (p. 88)

Therefore, the *discourse of invisibility* and *politicsof undetectability* forces race and racism within social studies to be treated in a piecemeal, superficial fashion (Chandler & Branscombe, 2015). This approach fails to provide students with a *structural* understanding of race in the United States (Brown & Brown, 2010; Wills, 2001).

In addition, Whiteness is simultaneously visible and invisible, which helps race in general, and Whiteness in particular, from being interrogated in social studies spaces. This allows for a false consciousness vis-à-vis race, in which individual acts of racial transgression are perceived as constituting racism (proper) while allowing the more subtle forms of institutional racism to remain largely undetected. Thus, in social studies we can condemn “classic racism” in the “long ago past” (non-racist) while ignoring “new racism” that is hidden slightly below the surface of White people’s radars (anti-racist).

Non-racism

Due to the lack of RPCK, our current modes of thinking about race within teacher education programs do not serve our students’ racial awareness or their abilities to teach about race in meaningful, authentic ways. We believe that the major roadblock to this happening is the de facto “non-racist” stance related to teaching about race within the social studies. Again, non-racist or non-racism refers to a passive rejection, opposition and disassociation from behaviors, discourse, and ideology that are considered racist. Non-racist frameworks define racism as extreme, overt, highly visible behavior that consists of irrational and independent actions of individuals or as Brown and Brown (2010) has classified “bad men doing bad things” (p. 60).

Non-racism marginalizes the historical legacy and contemporary renderings of systemic racism in present society. Non-racism accepts colorblindness and racial neutrality, which centers on non-discriminatory *intentions* (Alexander, 2011) and assumes the possibility of racial innocence of people, policies, and ideas. Resisting racial permanence and personal prejudices may be admirable in many circles, but without recognizing or calling into question wider system of domination, non-racism is problematic (Brown, 1985). In other words, enacted non-racism unintentionally produces outcomes that can be profoundly and systemically racist.

We propose a social studies teacher education program that deals not with the development of a non-racist view (to which most people already adhere) but uses a more anti-racist approach that deals with understanding the historical/structural nature of race (West, 2002). Non-racism and anti-racism have fundamentally different goals and practices premised on radically different understandings of race and racism in social studies curriculum and practice. We define anti-racist as a critical awareness of race and racism that rejects *racial common sense*—the accepted racial liberal norms, values, and ideologies related to race and schooling in U.S. and global society (Brandt, 1986). Pollock (2008) proposes four basic principles for anti-racist education, “which involves rejecting false notions of human difference, acknowledging lived experiences shaped along racial lines, learning from diverse forms of knowledge and experiences, and challenging systems of racial inequality” (p. xx). In what follows, we briefly address “official” (Apple, 2004) NCSS statements on race, research in White Social Studies (Chandler & Branscombe, 2015), and racial pedagogical content knowledge.

NCSS and Non-racism

Impediments to teaching about race within social studies (Chandler & McKnight, 2011) are compounded by non-racist policy/position statements made (or not made) by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS). Throughout various iterations of NCSS standards, “No overt statement about race or racism is made in the standards that govern and organize the social studies...” (Chandler & McKnight, 2011). For example, the 1994 version of the NCSS *Curriculum Standards for Social Studies: Expectations of Excellence* considers race an important factor in helping students to construct a “pluralist perspective” and the achieving valuable civic ideas. However, the notion of race in this particular document is located among a constellation of other considerations—religion, gender, class, ethnicity—and as the document phrases it, “culture in general” (p. 7). Ironically, in this move, “inclusion” of race within this “list” serves to diminish its relevance (as well as other marginalized discourses) in social studies thought and pedagogy. In the next iteration of NCSS standards, the *National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies* (2010), we also find the obligatory nod to the notion of race, and we find it located, again, within an all encompassing discourse of “difference”—“race, ethnicity, language, religion, gender, sexual orientation, exceptional learning needs, and other educationally and personally significant characteristics of learners” (p. 9). In what is touted as an improvement over the 1994 version, the 2010 document provides nearly 100 pages of what the authors call “Snapshots of Practice.” Of the 60 “Snapshots of Practice” that are included in the most recent version of the standards, “only 6 deal with race, but only tangentially—even failing to use the word “race” in the lesson descriptions. Perhaps most importantly, the lessons fail to connect our racial past with the racial present” (Chandler & McKnight, 2011, p. 222).

The new NCSS C3 Framework (2013) is organized to build upon the improved NCSS Standards model by including “Dimensions of informed inquiry in social studies.” *This document reflects the same raceless perspective as previous NCSS sanctioned documents.* In the main document only one sentence gives attention to race: “Understand patterns of human physical variability and the evidence for arguing that humans cannot be sorted into distinct biological races” (p. 78). Not counting references, the entire 108-page document includes the word “race” a total of five times in appendices that detail sociological and anthropological knowledge. Four of these five uses are found in the appendix dealing with anthropology, a course offering that receives little attention in public schools and in social studies research (Levstik & Tyson, 2008). In short, this formal curricular-organization document contains *one full sentence* that could be construed as a nod towards the importance of race within social studies and citizenship education: “...categorization into socially defined races is a real phenomenon with real consequences in societies like the United States.” This one sentence, although important, is buried in the appendix of a subject that very few social studies teachers are qualified to teach or that many schools offer.

In this way, we have a braiding together of common sense conservative/neutral mindsets about race and a failure of leadership in NCSS on race that fills the void that could help teachers make sense of how to “do race” in their classrooms. Given the combination of these factors, it is not surprising that social studies fails (Chandler & McKnight, 2009) to prepare students for a racially based citizenship existence in the US.

White Social Studies

Research regarding race and social studies has been very diverse in terms of trying to explain the lack of racial discourse in social studies classrooms. Descriptors such as teacher fear, apathy and insufficient knowledge to explore racial topics are some of the reasons for this gap. Most of this research has been conducted with White teachers, who represent the largest demographics in the teaching profession, including social studies (Passe & Fitchett, 2013). So while non-White social studies teachers may hold these same dispositions towards the teaching of race, White social studies teachers are the most likely to be in classrooms around the United States. This section describes a non-racist approach to social studies teaching through research conducted by Chandler and Branscombe (2015). This research reinforces what Garrett and Segall (2013) have found—that it is not that teachers do not “know” about race, rather it is the active disengagement with a racial knowledge that dominates the teaching space. Chandler and Branscombe (2015) called this approach to non-racism, “White Social Studies” (WSS).

In this construct, social studies, whether in history, geography, government, economics, or any of the other social sciences, maintains the racial status quo protecting White dominant narratives. White Social Studies, as a pedagogical mindset:

1. Employs common sense, essentialized understandings of race to reify the historical status quo,
2. Has enacted (pedagogical) and personal (philosophical) traits that impact classroom pedagogy,
3. Assumes that dominant narratives and paradigms of thinking (Kincheloe, 2008) in the social sciences, particularly historical investigation, are unproblematic,
4. Has a deep, personal, and racial investment in the symbolic, fictive imaginary of the United States as a polity,
5. Is inherently contradictory and self-reinforcing,
6. Is “raceproof” (i.e., historical/social phenomena can be explained without race),
7. Ignores contemporary, current events that cast into question historical narratives’ legitimacy and, more importantly, their meaning,
8. Utilizes selective use of aspects of historical thinking to support prior claims (i.e., The selective use of chronology: Declaration of Independence is important, Slavery is not),

9. Rest squarely in the transmission camp of social studies theory,
10. Protects dominant, European/White narratives from criticism (pp. 63–64).

The three teachers highlighted in their study taught in a world of racial-pedagogical paradox—there existed a tension between realizing the power of race and Whiteness and its impact on U.S. history and a refusal to allow these realizations to enter the pedagogical space in their classrooms. By engaging in a pedagogy of silence and denial on race, they served to protect the White racial code prevalent in social studies education. In social studies teacher education, we see this same sort of reaction—social studies teacher candidates who “realize” or “know” about race, but who find reasons to not “do race” either in their student teaching or when they become full time teachers. A corollary of WSS is that this sort of pedagogy represents a form of curricular White supremacy.

...it can be argued that these teachers are unconsciously engaging in teaching about dominant narratives because this is the way they see their jobs as teachers and as White folk—to reinforce and uphold traditional narratives about US history and the role of race. Or, it can be argued that these teachers, fully aware of their Whiteness, have purposefully decided to leave out racial explanations of how and why events in early American history occurred. We believe that both of these are operating, simultaneously, in the thinking of our teachers, but not in their enacted teaching. In this way, they are upholding, through their negotiations of race and history, the idea of White superiority within their history classes. (Chandler & Branscombe, 2015, p. 80)

The White teachers’ pedagogy examined in Chandler and Branscombe’s work points to the ways in which White teachers navigate their personal notions about race and the ways in which this plays itself out in their enacted pedagogy. There seemed to be, within this study, a recognition on the part of these teachers that race “mattered,” but this sentiment rarely was disallowed from their enacted teaching. The personal/philosophical stances of these teachers notwithstanding, their students endured and experienced a social studies curriculum that was untroubled by the specter of race in US history. It was a narrative “given” to these students that served to uphold racial common sense and to seal up the cracks that may have emerged in the metanarrative of American exceptionalism. In fact, “we see the *dualistic recognition of a problematic inherent in the traditional stories we tell school children, and a refusal to allow this problematic to enter the White teaching space*. The result of this recognition is a sort of schizophrenic teaching existence that is internally contradictory for our teachers, but that serve to reinforce dominant racial thinking and protect White historical narratives” (Chandler & Branscombe, 2015, p. 71).

The pedagogical moves employed by these teachers represent an attempt to teach US history without a racial lens. That is, they seek to pass down a version of “our story” that, due to our *specialness* as a nation, cannot be tainted by the sin of institutional racism. Therefore, they explained the behavior(s) of historical actors and institutions as if they had nothing to do with race.

Racial Pedagogical Content Knowledge: towards a Anti-racist Approach to Social Studies Teacher Education Programs

We will focus on illustrating how social studies teacher education programs (particularly methods classes) can construct a curriculum that explores anti-racism through using *racial pedagogical content knowledge* (RPCK) (Chandler, 2015). According to several scholars (Cheng & Soudak, 1994; Husband, 2012; Kalin, 2002), anti-racist curriculum and pedagogy encompasses several principles: (1) interrogates power structures and inequalities through critical thinking, (2) makes the experiences of historically racialized people and communities central to the curriculum and instruction, (3) examines intersectionality, (4) helps identify the invisibility of race through teaching about stereotypes and microaggressions against Non-Whites, (5) affirms diversity throughout the entire curriculum, and (6) teaches empowerment and resistance of racial bias through both social and intellectual action. Anti-racism is an active process against racism that seeks to understand how race ideology is manufactured and how it impacts the lived, daily experiences of people. Race and racism are both micro and macro phenomena and the only way to relieve society of its racist past and continued transgressions are to confront race and racism in more pedagogically direct ways.

At its heart, the construct of RPCK attempts to synthesize the already established idea of pedagogical content knowledge with the tenets of critical race theory (CRT) (Chandler, 2015). This conceptual move can be done with any of the social sciences that comprise the social studies. This calls on teachers to have content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1986), and a *working racial knowledge* of how race operates within the structures of social science (and education), from a CRT (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995) perspective. The term “working racial knowledge” denotes that ones thinking about teaching the social sciences and the resulting pedagogy, should take the structural nature of race/racism into account. We also recognize that teachers are at different levels of racial awareness, and that there is not “one way” to teach about race. The pedagogical construct of RPCK allows teachers, at different stages in their teaching careers and racial understanding, a starting point to teach about race. As our sample “essential questions” listed below reveal, RPCK starts with the notion that all of the social sciences that comprise social studies have a racial component and that this racial component is central to understanding life in the US and across the globe (Chandler, 2015). As the teachers studied in Chandler and Branscombe’s (2015) work reveal, to ignore or downplay the impact of race in social studies is to *partially* understand how these racially situated bodies of knowledge play out in the “real world.”

To do this, social studies teacher education needs to move past conceptualizing social studies as objective and pure disciplines and view each area as possessing its own racialized histories that influence the ways in which we understand them. In addition, this position allows the nature of each of the subject areas to be understood, not only in the traditional sense, but with a racial lens as well. For example, pedagogical content thinking (e.g., Neumann, 2012; Schmidt, 2011; VanSledright,

2004; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004) would be examined but so would pedagogical content thinking from a *racial standpoint*. In fact, each of the social science disciplines would be treated in this way to answer large, essential questions in social studies. We believe that with the new C3 Framework's call for disciplinary inquiry and its emphasis on "Developing Questions and Planning Inquiries," can serve as a springboard for asking important social studies questions to drive our instruction. In fact, combining the idea of RPCK and the disciplinary tools of the C3 Framework would allow for inquiries addressing not only essential questions in social studies, but it would allow for essential questions that address race and racism among and between groups in our nation and across the world.

US History:

- How did race/racism/racial theories impact the founding of the United States?
- How did ideas about race impact the different racial groups during the "Age of Contact"?
- How is racial conflict portrayed in the media? In textbooks?

Geography:

- How does location impact our ideas about race?
- Why do racial groups live where they do?
- What role does race play in our ongoing debates about immigration?

Government:

- Whose racial interests does the US government serve?
- How has the idea of "We the People" changed over time?
- How do you explain racial voting patterns?

Economics:

- Why are there disparities in hiring rates for people of different races?
- How do you explain disparity in income among and between racial groups?
- How is wealth distributed in the US by race?

Sociology:

- How were/are "races" created?
- What is White privilege?
- What does it mean to "act White"?

Psychology:

- How have "intelligence" tests been used to support racism?
- What is racial profiling?
- Can we profile unconsciously?

Current Events:

- What is the role of police in a democracy?
- What accounts for the racial makeup of Ferguson's police force?

Why does the killing of unarmed, Black males elicit such emotion in people of all races?

Anthropology:

What is ethnocentrism?

What are your cultural assumptions and how are they rooted in race?

The concept of RPCK builds upon the solid theoretical base in CRT to help teachers and teacher educators *apply* the tenets of CRT in social studies classrooms, regardless of the content focus. At its heart, RPCK is a recognition that race is inherently present in the disciplines that comprise the social studies and more importantly, questions can be asked within these disciplines that point to the power of race in our world—past, present, and future.

Anti-racist Teaching: High Schools, Race, and America’s Future

One of the complaints from educators interested in exploring the possibility of anti-racist practice in their classroom is the lack of empirical work (Levstik & Tyson, 2008) around these issues. In response to that call, we highlight Lawrence Blum’s (2012) book, *High Schools, Race, and America’s Future: What Students Can Teach Us About Morality, Diversity, and Community*. Blum is a professor at University of Massachusetts-Boston and wrote a book chronicling his 4-year journey into teaching a high school course titled, *Race and Racism*. Blum, who developed the class based on the uniqueness of the racial diversity in the city of Cambridge and its public schools, created a “college level,” race-centric course that included topics related to “science, history, current events, and student’s reflections on their own lives” (p. 8). Classifying the course as a building block for racial literacy, the class explored notions around stereotypes, historical genealogy and contemporary manifestation of race, racial identity, morality, Black inferiority, economics, and civic responsibility. What makes *High Schools, Race, and America’s Future* an appropriate exemplar of anti-racist teaching are the classroom dialogues that reveal honest and humanizing “race” talk. In other words, the book describes not only how successful the curriculum was in helping explore racial topics, it also helps teachers understand the complexities and sometimes uncomfortable moments related to race discourse. This is important considering teachers’ fear of the uncontrollable classroom that may occur based on students’ (read Black students) anger based on these sensitive topics (Epstein, 2009). To illustrate Blum’s anti-racist pedagogy and curriculum, we briefly discuss 3 of the 12 major assignments required for the course. The focus activities are the *racial empathy essay*, *racial incident description*, and the *final group project*.

The racial empathy essay was a 500–800 word, 6-week writing assignment that required students to interview a person of a different race. Through whole class and

self-generated questions, the objective was to interview this person in two stages. The first stage was the initial interview complete with transcription. The students had to organize and analyze the narrative and create follow-up questions for a second interview. After the second interview, the students had to devise an essay in the interviewee's voice, adding their own reflections on what they learned about the interviewee's racial group, race and racism, and themselves.

The *racial incident description* is an assignment that was issued during the second or third week of the class. In class, the students individually wrote about a single racial incident that they observed or happen to an acquaintance. The incident had to involve a peer or both an adult and peer. The assignment asked the students to focus on the messiness of the racial situation and how bystanders could have intervened in constructive ways. Blum noted that the assignment was part of moral and civic education and wanted students to see race not as an issue only for Non-Whites but to see race and racism as a personal responsibility and moral prerogative for society. In another Blum piece, *Racial Incidents as Teachable Moment*, (Blum, 2008) he described some of the questions accompanying the racial incidents activity:

1. You are a Black teenager vacationing in a beach town with very few Blacks. Drinking a Fresca, you and a friend, who is Black, enter a convenience store looking for something to eat, but you do not find anything to your liking there. As you and your friend look around the store you feel people looking at you in a hostile manner. The clerk asks if you have paid for the Fresca; you say you bought it from another store. You add that you have not taken anything from the store, but the clerk will not let you leave until he has ascertained that the store does not carry the item that you have on you.
2. You are a White teenager in a store. You consider your White manager racist. One day you make an "attitude" remark to the manger and she snaps back at you to "leave the nigger attitude with the niggers." (p. 237)

What the assignments accomplished was to center the experiences of historically marginalized groups as the analysis, interrogate power structures, and provide students with modes of critical racial thinking that moves them from being ethno-centric and towards being more racially aware. The *racial incident description* and *racial empathy essay* assignments had a strict focus to explain Non-White experiences towards race and racism. Too many times, dominant cultures serve as the gatekeepers of what can be classified as racial or racist. The marginalized, many times, do not have a strong voice to explicate the wrongs that are done to them. If they do, then sometimes they are characterized as someone who complains or wants special privileges. These assignments place Non-Whites as the purveyors of knowledge to help students understand race and racism from their point of view.

The final group project consisted of students participating in interracial groups created by Blum and the Teaching Assistant. The activity spanned two and half months. The student groups had to select a topic on race within their local context. The list was compiled both by the class and the instructors and included topics such as the use of stereotypes by classmates, racial achievement gap at the school, race,

ethnicity, and the social world of the school, mixed race identity and race and racism in two different countries (Blum, 2012, p. 216).

The final group project has elements that helped students understand racial power structures. For example, a few of the topics centered on racial issues from the school they attended. The topics of stereotypes, racial achievement gap, and race, ethnicity, and the social world of the school, provide a deeper analysis to their local contexts. While these topics are separate, they are still interconnected and have important implications for racial minorities' material realities. By understanding how racial stereotypes, achievement issues, and the school's sociology are results of microaggressions and hidden power structures, this can provide students with a sophisticated racial knowledge to begin to challenge systems of power through their privilege positioning.

All the assignments provided the students with a critical mode of racial thinking. It forced them to look beyond their racial selves and understand race issues through various lenses. Blum's objective was to explore anti-racism through morality and civic responsibility. By helping students critically think about racial issues, the students began to become more aware of microaggressions towards Non-Whites and how race manifests itself in different spaces. They began to question their responsibilities as citizens and their role in protecting rights of all people.

Discussion: Theorizing and Creating RPCK in Social Studies Teacher Programs

Questions may still remain on the ways social studies teacher educators can promote anti-racist curriculum and seamlessly engage with ideas of race throughout a program's sequence. This section provides some suggestions for social studies teacher educators to consider. We will describe both pedagogical and curricular considerations of anti-racist social studies teacher education. Through our descriptions, we will use Pollock's (2008) four principles of anti-racist education and racial pedagogical content knowledge (Chandler, 2015). Pollock's principles—(1) rejecting false notions of human difference, (2) acknowledging lived experiences shaped along racial lines, (3) learning from diverse forms of knowledge and experiences, and (4) challenging systems of racial inequality (Pollock, 2008, p. xx)—provide a foundation for social studies teacher educators to consider when developing method courses. In addition to providing a basic framework for methods courses, these principles also allow space for RPCK (i.e., pedagogical content knowledge combined with critical race theory) to be utilized for curricular and pedagogical reimagining.

First, teachers have a responsibility to reject false notions of "scientific" human difference. This is done through arranging activities and discussions that rejects biological (i.e., "natural") explanations of race. As anti-racist social studies educators we dispute essentialized constructs of racial-ethnic identities and group behaviors; instead, we focus on the sociology of race and how racial categories are complex

and ever changing. Critical race theory “holds that race and races are products of social thought and relations. Not objective, inherent, or fixed, they correspond to no biological or genetic reality; rather races are categories that society invents, manipulates, or retires when convenient” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012, p. 7). Due to the hegemonic function (Apple, 2004) of race, candidates in social studies teacher education have difficulties thinking of race as a “construction.” This is largely due to the ways in which we use imprecise terms to describe our racial relatedness. These terms and labels (e.g., Chicano, Latino/a, Mexican, Black, African-American, White, Caucasian, Chinese-American) do suggest that race is, in fact, a “real” thing. Our social worlds tell us that race is not a construction, but a normal, natural part of everyday living. The constructedness of race can be highlighted in our methods classes with data/sources from the social sciences that make up social studies. The shifting and impermanent nature of race (and its meaning) is perhaps the defining feature of how race operates. The ability of race to change and mutate to serve political, military, and economic ends is one of its enduring qualities. History is full of examples that bear this out: in Hispanic-American colonies, royal certificates of “Whiteness” could be purchased to buy your way in to the dominant race. Throughout American history, some groups have been able to claim Whiteness (and therefore its benefits), and this oftentimes has defined the history of immigration in the U.S. Immigrants arriving from Portugal were considered White in the US, but not in other territories, late in the 1800s Chinese and Mexican “Indians” were classified as “White” in Cuba, but not in the United States. Even pseudo-scientific notions of “blood purity” and “hypodescent” cast into relief the fact that race, and the meaning associated with it, are human inventions (Allen, 1994).

The second and third principles noted above (acknowledgement of differential racial experience and learning from diverse forms of knowledge) are similar to the first principle in that they call on social studies educators to challenge racial categories that are based on “physical difference.” For example, racialized categories such as “Hispanic,” “Asian,” “Native American,” and “Arab” are concepts that marginalize cultural difference. When these groups are aggregated as one, we do not see the diversity of people who bring divergent historical experiences, live in various regions, talk in various language dialects, and commemorate different socio-cultural traditions.

Storytelling, in the CRT tradition, serves to “demonstrate that racial and ethnic phenomena are interpreted differently based on the positionality of your particular group in the social hierarchy” and this reveals that “racism and racial discrimination are deep and enduring parts of the everyday existences of people of color” (Brown & Jackson, 2013, p. 18). In many contexts, storytelling and counter-storytelling are acts of pedagogical transgression in which voices (Takaki, 1998; Zinn, 2004) omitted from the official (Apple, 1999) version of the truth are allowed into the social studies space. In allowing these voices to penetrate the fortress of White knowledge, teachers and students of social studies are able to understand that we all see the world through racial lenses, and that not all lenses are the same. Pedagogically, allowing students access to stories and counter-stories in U.S. history is perhaps a familiar approach due to the popularity of primary document use in social studies.

Lastly, anti-racist education challenges systems of racial inequality. Students come to learn that racism is an institutional practice and come to reject the normalcy of racial disparities.

To take civics education as an example, RCPK would require social studies teachers to not only teach “procedural democracy” (i.e., three branches of government, rights of citizens, how a bill becomes a law), but also how our democracy plays out in terms of race. This would require social studies teachers to make connections between civics content, skills, and dispositions (NCSS, 2010), and the racial reality (Bell, 1995) of American democracy. Borrowing tenets of CRT to infuse into civics/government lessons allows students and teachers to see that civics is not a neutral, inherently good part of American life, but that it, too, is infused with racial thinking. Within a civics class, the CRT idea that “racism is normal” could be used to explain racial disparities in incarceration rates in the US (Alexander, 2011) and the Supreme Court’s litmus test for “proving” racial bias. Similarly, in an economics class, teachers could use the study from the University of Chicago (Betrand & Mullainathan, 2003) that points to dysconscious racism in the labor market or historical examples of loan and housing discrimination to help students understand “why” the world, from an economic and racial perspective, looks the way it does. Employing RCPK to add the layer of race to the teaching of concepts like “democracy” and “government” allows teachers and students to see beyond the neutral language of institutions to uncover the lived realities that these macrostructures inflict on people of color.

Conclusion

It is clear that the issue of race for many social studies educators is a struggle to enact with students. While scholarship typically focuses on pre- and in-service teachers, we know little about how race is performed in social studies methods classrooms in university and alternative settings. Do teacher educators hold the same fear active disengaging dispositions about race as our K-12 counterparts? In other words, do the pedagogical and curricular habits of social studies teachers in the country (as evidenced Chandler & Branscombe’s work) simply mirror the people who make-up the field? If the lack of research on this topic is any indication, we fear that not enough is being done to help new social studies teachers become anti-racist educators, thus leaving the default position of non-racism to remain unchallenged.

Being a social studies teacher and anti-racist is the correct step in promoting social studies’ civic goals. As Blum (2012) states, “If civic engagement aims [is] to create a more just society, understanding racial issues and being able to discuss them intelligently and productively with fellow citizens is an absolute necessity” (p. 186). While on the surface, being non-racist seems to be positive. For many social studies pre-service and inservice teachers as well as teacher educators, not actively seeing race and promoting racism is a good thing. Non-racist stances

effectively do little to transform our thinking about race. In fact, it reinforces racial structures and accepts terms of racism by being passive and silence about racial knowledge. If social studies teacher education is about helping our students teach humanity—Who is human and how to treat human beings—then anti-racism is needed to actualize the basic philosophical questions of ontology/being (Who am I?), epistemology/knowing (What do I know to be true?) and axiology/doing (What should I do?).

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