SMOKE IN A BOTTLE: ADOLESCENT LITERACIES AND

CULTURALLY SUSTAINING PEDAGOGIES IN AN

URBAN CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

Increased standardization within adolescent literacy education leads to dehumanization of students who become a demographic label, statistic, or problem to fix (Blackburn, 2013; Freire, 1996; Gordon, 2009; Paris & Alim, 2017; Paris & Winn, 2013). This is particularly true in urban contexts where cultural and linguistic diversities are essentialized, viewed as neutral, or erased from the curriculum (Alim & Paris, 2017; Alvermann, 2011b; Christenbury, Bomer, & Smagorinsky, 2011; Gadsden & Dixon-Roman, 2016; Gutiérrez & Penuel, 2014), responses that neglect the impact of culture on learning (Hollins, 2015). This study uses a humanizing, critical ethnographic perspective (Paris & Winn, 2013; Street, 1984) and participant observer methods (Spradley, 1980) to investigate the adolescent literacy instructional practices at an urban Catholic high school. Catholic schools have historically been sites of academic achievement for students from marginalized groups, demonstrating opportunity and potential for highly effective adolescent literacy practices (Gabert, 1973; Greeley, 1982; Horning, 2013). Using a critical sociocultural theoretical orientation (Moje, Lewis, Encisco, 2007) and culturally sustaining pedagogies (Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim 2014, 2017) as a framework, this research asked the questions: How does the framework of culturally sustaining pedagogies inform teachers' understandings

of effective literacy instruction in a religious high school? and What practices are highly effective urban religious school teachers using to support adolescent students' literacy achievement? Findings provide localized information to support adolescent literacies instruction and leadership at the urban Catholic school site, expand the body of literature surrounding culturally sustaining pedagogies, and complicate understandings of highly effective literacy instruction in an era of increasingly standardized schooling.

APPROVAL PAGE

The faculty listed below, appointed by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, have examined a dissertation titled, "Smoke in a Bottle: Adolescent Literacies and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies in an Urban Catholic High School" presented by Leah M. Panther, candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy degree, and certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Even when you try to capture it, it's like capturing y'know smoke. You might get a little bit of it in a bottle but there's still parts of it that just kind of wisp away...The bottle is yea, trying to capture a glimpse of where they're at, so the Lexile that would be the bottle. But it's not capturing everything. There is part of what would make a student a good reader that are just hard to get on a multiple-choice test. (Jerome, January 25, 2018)

The teacher is of course an artist, but being an artist does not mean that he or she can make the profile, can shape the students. What an educator does in teaching is to make it possible for the students to become themselves. (Freire, 1996, p. 8)

Dehumanizing refers to reducing people of their humanity by turning a person into a statistic or demographic label (Blackburn, 2013; Freire, 1996). In American schools, the predominance of statistics and intertwined demographic labels reduces students to numbers and categories that deny students' cultural and linguistic diversities—what makes them human (Freire, 1996; Paris & Alim, 2017; Paris & Winn, 2013). Dehumanization within education claims instructional pedagogies teach neutral cognitive processes, free from ideologies and reproduceable across students, classrooms, and regions (Street, 1984). Viewing instruction as neutral strips urban contexts, defined below, of their complexities (Gadsden & Dixon-Roman, 2016; Gutiérrez & Penuel, 2014), essentializes achievement differences as cognitive failures (Alvermann, 2011a; Christenbury, Bomer, & Smagorinsky, 2011), and denies the impact of culture on learning (Hollins, 2015).

The predominance of dehumanizing curriculum and instruction within American schools is actualized in scripted and prescriptive instructional strategies that are increasingly tied to accreditation and funding requirements (Learned, Stockdill, & Moje, 2011; Pearson, 2004). Such strategies are drawn from meta-analyses of quasi-experimental studies (e.g.,

Fisher, Frey, & Hattie, 2016; Hattie, 2012) where the context of urban communities is essentialized by pejorative terms such as, "life conditions" and "lack of exposure" (Gordon, 2009, p. ix). The essentialization encourages the teacher, researcher, and policy maker to "draw over-deterministic links between languages, literacies, cultural practices, and race/ethnicity" perpetuating deficit views of students, families, and communities (Alim & Paris, 2017, p. 7). Thus, the predominant U.S. educational discourse is focused on standardization, efficiency, and effectiveness. Literacy instruction that critically centers students whose cultures are erased by standardization, whose identities are viewed as waste that must be controlled in an efficient system, and macrosystems that are effective at maintaining white supremacy are left unquestioned and uninterrogated (Coffee, Stutelberg, Clemets, & Lensmire, 2017; Delpit, 2006; Irvine, 2002; Leonardo, 2000, 2004; Milner, 2010; Sleeter, 2018).

Urban Catholic high schools have long-positioned themselves outside of the traditional American school system, emerging as places of refuge to a hostile Protestant wave of nativism in the late 1700s and early 1800s (Gabert, 1973; Grant & Hunt, 1992; Lazerson, 1977). The localized schools have historically been focused on sustaining students' home languages, ethnic, and religious identities (Sanders, 1977). Additionally, Catholic schools, primarily located in dense, populous areas, were racially integrated long before Brown vs. the Board of Education decision (Earl, 2008; Genovese, 2015). Modern urban Catholic schools are largely studied because of a fifty-year history of reducing or eliminating the "achievement gap" for urban students, particularly students of Color who live below the poverty line (Jeynes, 2012; White House Summir, 2008). However, the demand for research surrounding effective literacy instruction within urban Catholic schools should not have to

justify itself through disparities that dehumanize and essentialize students into demographic labels—a student's right to literacy should not have be justified at all. Rather than frame educational equity around deficits such as achievement gaps, I agree with Alim and Paris (2017) "that equity and access can best be achieved by centering the dynamic practices and selves of students and communities of color in a critical, additive, and expansive vision of schooling" (p. 3).

In the opening quote, Alexandria "Alex" Jerome, a teacher at Juan Diego High School, the urban Catholic high school where this dissertation study occurred, described the power of a standardized literacy assessment's results, the Lexile, within her English classroom. Alex Jerome calls the Lexile assessment a "bottle" with impermeable sides and one small opening that captures glimpses of smoke, or small snapshots students' reading and literacy skills, but not the whole of the student. However, the bottle is central to her prescribed work as a teacher within the school setting even as it reflects the "assimilate-or-fail" ideologies that rely on narrow definitions for success common in American schools (Domínguez, 2017, p. 230). Capturing literacy growth within urban Catholic schools has long relied on statistics and demographic labels to capture smoke in a bottle that justifies its existence rather than focusing on the humanizing potential that "make[s] it possible for the students to become themselves" (Freire, 1996, p. 8).

Statement of the Problem

Despite decades of research demonstrating that students' social, cultural, and valued community knowledge are central to learning (e.g., Au, 1993; Banks & Banks, 2009; Gay, 2002; Hollins, 2015; Irvine, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1992; Nieto, 2004; Sleeter, 1996) and can be central to literacy instruction without sacrificing rigor and academic growth

(Domínguez, 2017), standardization of instructional practices has become a norm in literacy education through national legislation (Pearson, 2004), regulations embedded in funding requirements (McGuinn, 2012; U.S. Department of Education, 2015), and the prevalence of scripted instructional resources such as prescriptive course curriculum (Botzakis, Burns, & Hall, 2014; Mahiri, 2005; Pearson, 2004). In contrast, asset pedagogies provide a framework for literacy instruction that rejects standardized approaches to instruction and instructional goal setting. As Alim and Paris (2017) clarify, culturally sustaining pedagogies are not interested in "pedagogical quick fixes or 'best practices' that teachers can drop into the same old tired curriculum that deadens the souls of vast numbers of children of color in U.S. schools" (Alim & Paris, 2017, p. 12). Their framework of culturally sustaining pedagogies, building on the rich legacy of asset pedagogies, places instructional practices within layers of people, communities, and ecological systems (Gutiérrez & Johnson, 2017; Lee, 2017; Nash, Hollins & Panther, 2016). Effective instructional interventions within these frameworks are grounded in community practices, a design that is more likely to be "embraced, sustained, and leveraged" (Gutiérrez & Johnson, 2017, p. 254). Utilizing this framework builds an understanding of what works and for whom in adolescent literacy instruction but must be studied and contextualized at the local level.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative study from an action-oriented, humanizing, and critical ethnographic perspective was to investigate the instruction teachers used to support adolescent students' literacy practices in one urban Catholic high school in a Midwestern city.

Research Questions

To contribute to the body of work that addresses effective adolescent literacy instruction in urban Catholic schools, this study used a humanizing, critical ethnographic perspective to ask:

1. How does the framework of culturally sustaining pedagogies inform teachers' understandings of effective literacy instruction in an urban religious high school?

2. What practices are highly effective urban religious school teachers using to support adolescent students' literacy achievement?

Significance of the Study

This study examines the literacy instruction layered within people, communities, and systems teachers at a culturally and linguistically diverse urban Catholic high school used in order to consider how culturally sustaining pedagogies (CSP) can inform and deepen understandings of these practices (Au, 1979; Delpit, 2012; Gay, 2010; Hollins, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 2014; Paris, 2012; Portes & Salas, 2009). This study challenges the predominant U.S. educational discourse focused on standardization, efficiency, and effectiveness by examining instruction through a culturally sustaining pedagogies (CSP) framework that critically centers students whose cultures are erased in standardization, identities are viewed as waste that must be controlled in an efficient system, and questions macrosystems that are effective at maintaining white supremacy (Coffee et al., 2017; Delpit, 2006; Irvine, 2002; Milner, 2010; Leonardo, 2000, 2004; Sleeter, 2018).

This study provides localized information as a resource to inform school and community-based decisions within educators' pedagogies, the school's literacy leadership, and the school's position within a national network of similar schools. More specifically, the

findings support restoration and hope for literacy professional development, collaboration, and leadership that draws from existing strengths, strengths that are challenged in an era of standardization (Thomas, 2015; Vasudevan & Campano, 2009; Winn, 2013). Keeping with the action-oriented goals of humanizing, critical ethnographic research, recommendations include strategies for revising professional development materials, teacher-initiated literacy leadership teams, and revision of school structures for culturally sustaining adolescent literacy instruction (Allen & Kinloch, 2013; Au, 2013; Madison, 2011; Paris & Winn, 2013).

Additionally, previous work focused on CSP has centered on early literacy instruction (Nash, Polson, & Glover, forthcoming), urban education (Lee & Walsh, 2017), adolescent literacies (Irizarry, 2017; Kinloch, 2017; Machado, Vaughn, Coppola, & Woodard, 2017; Woodard, Vaughan, & Machado, 2017), and the intersection of language, literacy, and Indigenous spiritual traditions (Lee & McCarty, 2017; San Pedro, 2017), but limited research has considered the context of an urban Catholic high school for asset pedagogies broadly (e.g., Dallavis, 2011a, 2011b; Rackley, 2014) and none within the context of the emerging design of culturally sustaining pedagogies. This study offers local recommendations with the potential for broader implications for educators, administrators, and teacher education programs seeking to understand the intersection of adolescent literacies, urban Catholic schooling, and culturally sustaining pedagogies.

Definitions of Key Terms

Given that qualitative research is interpretive, several selected terms are interpreted and defined below to provide shared understandings of these words' conceptualizations throughout the study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

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Adolescent

Adolescent refers to a group historically defined by age categories, physical and cognitive developmental phases (Alexander & Fox, 2011; Alvermann, 2008), in this study narrowed to refer to students enrolled in 9th through 12th grade ranging in ages from 14 to 18. I reject narratives of adolescents as hormonal, a bridge to adulthood, or inherently risky (Moje, 2002b; Vasudevan & Campano, 2009) and focus on adolescents' agency (Alvermann, 2008), hybridity of identities (Hall, 2009, 2012) and literacy resources (Hinchman & Sheridan-Thomas, 2008; Moje & Lewis, 2007).

Adolescent literacy. I use the term adolescent literacy to distance this work from secondary reading, content area reading, and terms that have historically been associated with remediation (Moje, Young, Readence, & Moore, 2000), and place adolescent literacy instruction in conversation with work around youth culture (Moje, 2000; Moje, Oberby, Tysvaer, & Morris, 2008).

Agency

Adolescents and educators who have agency or are agentive are positioning themselves for the "strategic making and remaking of selves, identities, activities, relationships, cultural tools and resources, and histories" (Moje & Lewis, 2007, p. 18).

Black, Color, Latinx and White

Throughout my writing, I will use the terms Black and Latinx to refer to a self-identified racial designation unless the original author or participant uses an alternative term. I will capitalize all references to racial and ethnical identifications (e.g., persons of Color, North African) except white as a conscious counter to white supremacy (Gillborn, 2005; hooks, 1989).

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Context

      Context is, "an event, a place, a social group, a realm of knowledge or a moment in

time" (Moje, Dillon, & O'Brien, 2000, p. 167) that can be linked to multiple locations and

modalities (Leander & McKim, 2003; Vasudevan & Campano, 2009).

Culture

      I refer to culture with the definition provided by Ladson-Billings (2017a):

> Culture involves every aspect of human endeavor, including thought, perceptions,
> feelings, and attitudes. It is not merely the visible and tangible components of a
> community such as artifacts, foods, and customs, although those things are indeed a
> part of culture. However, it is important to emphasize the dynamic and fluid nature of
> culture ...from an anthropological perspective, culture encompasses worldview,
> thought patterns, epistemological stances, ethics, and ways of being along with the
> tangible and readily identifiable components of human groups (Ladson-Billings,
> 2017a, p. 143).

Discipline

      Discipline refers to a discourse community with specialized habits of practice used to

construct and understand knowledge (Gee, 2014; Moje, 2010; Wickens, Maderino, Parker, &

Jung, 2015). These specialized habits of practices are referred to as the discipline's Discourse

with a capital D (Gee, 2014).

Highly Effective

      Highly effective educators have knowledge of culturally sustaining pedagogies and

their discipline enabling them to apprentice learners into a discipline's knowledge production

and specialized literacy practices (Moje, 2007, 2008, 2010; Pressley, 2006), develop

knowledge of students' hybrid identities in order to critically center students' languages and

literacy practices within the curriculum (Au, 1993; Domínguez, 2017; Hollins, 2015; Gay,

2002; Ladson-Billings, 1992, 2017a; Lewis, Encisco, & Moje, 2007; McCarthy & Moje,

2002), modify, extend, and/or challenge prescriptive curricula, standards, or instructional practices, prioritizing the learner, context, and text (Irvine, 2002; Moje et al., 2000), and maintain high standards for student achievement beyond test results including student growth in agency and community accountability (Alim & Paris, 2017; Domínguez, 2017; Lee & McCarty, 2017; Morrell, 2010).

Literacy

Literacy is the production and interpretation of texts embedded within social, cultural, and historical systems and contexts (Alvermann, 2002; Greenleaf, Schoenbach, Cziko, & Mueller, 2001; Gregory, Long, & Volk, 2004). All literacies are rooted in ideologies since no systems and contexts are neutral or apolitical (New London Group, 1996; Street, 1984).

Disciplinary literacy Disciplinary literacy is a pedagogical approach that makes invisible norms, beliefs, and practices within a discipline's Discourse visible, equipping learners to understand what knowledge counts, when, and for what purposes (Gee, 2014; Moje, 2008; Moje, 2010).

Literacy events. Literacy events are instances of interactions with texts that have specific purposes related the specific social, cultural, or institutional context where the events occur (Hull & Schultz, 2001; Moje et al., 2000; Scribner & Cole, 1981).

Literacy practices. Literacy practices are recurrent literacy events (Scriber & Cole, 1981). The practice's social organization and underlying ideological implications "describe ways of acting and behaving that reflect power positions and structures" (Hull & Schultz, 2001, p. 585).

Multiliteracies. The term refers to textual designs and redesigns that include linguistic, visual, aural, gestural, and spatial patterns of meaning making (New London

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Group, 1996). This includes multimodal textual designs such as online and digital content (Alvermann, 2017).

Religious literacy. Religious literacy is defined as, "the ability to understand and use in one's day-to-day life the basic building blocks of religious traditions—their key terms, symbols, doctrines, practices, saying, characters, metaphors, and narratives" (Prothero, 2007, p. 12).

Religious literacies. Religious literacies are defined as a cultural manifestation of religious literacy as practices are developed within social contexts (Skerrett, 2016; Rackley, 2014). This includes the purposeful activities, multimodal tools, texts, systematic theologies, experiences, practices, and values that can create a collective religious community (Eakle, 2007; Rackley, 2014; Skerrett, 2016).

Text

A text is any artifact of production with a multiliteracies design (New London Group, 1996). This includes body-as-text and text-over-time designs of text that challenge a print text-centric approach to literacy instruction and research (Leander & Boldt, 2012; Thibaut & Scott Curwood, 2018).

Urban

I use the term urban, rather than city, to emphasize a populous geographic areas' human resiliency, agency, and racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity (Hollins, 2011; Nash et al., 2016).

<div style="text-align:center">Theoretical Framework</div>

This research is informed by (a) a critical sociocultural theory of literacy and (b) culturally sustaining pedagogies (CSP). This study's theoretical framework considers how

these two theories inform my understanding of adolescent literacies and conception of highly effective literacy instructional practices.

Critical Sociocultural Theory of Literacy

Critical sociocultural theory accounts for, "larger systems of power as they shape and are shaped by individuals in particular cultural contexts" (Lewis et al., 2007, p. 9). The larger systems, macrostructures, are examined through discourse and interaction, or micropractices, that maintain, resist, or challenge the macrostructures of hegemonic power (Lewis et al., 2007; Moje & Lewis, 2007). In this section, I briefly historicize critical sociocultural theories of literacy by highlighting relevant aspects and critiques of a critical paradigm and sociocultural theory (Gregory et al., 2004; Scribner & Cole, 1981; Vygotskiĭ, 2012) and multiliteracies (New London Group, 1996; Street, 1984).

Critical theory. Grbich (2012) describes a critical theory paradigm as focusing attention on "class, power and the location and amelioration of oppression" (p. 5). A critical paradigm also rejects universal truth claims and asks how the participants interpret the world, rather than relying on the subject-object dualism of positivist and post-positivist paradigms (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). In this study, critical paradigms filtered understandings of how highly effective teachers' in the research site understand, make sense of, and describe their practices; and garnered the assumption that the research participants or the researcher are neutral. Within educational research from this stance, teachers are not viewed as neutral in their choices as they, "all unwittingly service interest groups" within their pedagogies; whether political, religious, or other ideology (Trelstad, 2008, p. 193).

A critical paradigm is also appropriate given the research focus on urban schools. The critical foundation acknowledges the long-term impact of prejudice, poverty, and historical

conditions on urban communities, education, and literacy practices (Grbich, 2012; Portes & Salas, 2009). Given the urban Catholic school setting of this study, a critical paradigm challenges the "taken for granted assumptions" within the school site, such as vestiges of white and Christian privileges, and focused on "bringing to light underlying and obscure operations of power and control" wherever they may be located (Madison, 2011, p. 5).

 Critical sociocultural theory. My understanding of critical sociocultural theories of literacy is embedded in the history of sociocultural theory. Russian researcher Lev Vygotskiĭ (2012) posited social learning precedes cognitive development. Since social interaction occurs within and across differing cultures, he argued the environment and interactions a child has will support cognitive development in various ways across contexts. This is the foundation of sociocultural theories of development which study, "how cultural practices relate to the development of ways of thinking, remembering, reasoning, and solving problems" recognizing people as "cultural participants, living in a particular community at a specific time in history" (Rogoff, 2003, p. 10). Hull and Schultz (2001) critique the efficacy of Vygotskiĭ's work for modern sociocultural scholars because literacy became reduced to unidirectional cognitive development without a greater acknowledgement of the different forms and modes literacy can take across non-Western cultures. Concerned the research focused too narrowly on literacy within schools, Scribner and Cole (1981) studied the specialized and distinctive literacy practices of Liberian Vai community where their written language was not taught in English-only schools, but within social interactions within the local cultural community. Drawing from anthropology and psychology, their work added to the foundational ideas of sociocultural theories to prove literacies are learned and developed across contexts (Cole, 1985; Scribner & Cole, 1981).

Literacy has traditionally referred to the skills and strategies needed to decode print and write. Within an autonomous view, decoding and encoding functions are universal and can be explicitly taught (Alvermann, 2011a, 2011b). Historically, reading and writing alone have been positioned as what constitutes literacy. Yet reading and writing were historically only possessed by social elites, marginalizing other forms of literacy such as orality. For example, oral based cultures and societies could be intentionally wiped out in a single generation by victors who banned oral performances (Nocon & Cole, 2009). Literacy has historically been a "personal freedom" to the elite and a means of social control for everyone else (Banks, 1996; Nocon & Cole, 2009, p. 17). Keeping people groups from accessing literacy is a means of control—and acts of resistance seen as threats. Martin Luther's translation of the Judeo-Christian Bible from Hebrew and Greek to German resulted in an excommunication from the Roman Catholic Church (Prothero, 2007). Anti-literacy laws banned enslaved persons from learning to read in the Antebellum south (Morrell, 2008). Native speakers were banned by state legislation from speaking in Spanish in Arizona public schools (Baron, 2013) while non-native Spanish speakers are viewed as progressive and innovative for learning Spanish (Rosa & Flores, 2017).

Critical sociocultural theories of literacy clearly position human beings as active, agentive meaning makers (Dyson & Genishi, 2011; Moje & Lewis, 2007). As meaning is constructed and mediated through tools such as language, literacy, and texts, the critical lens focuses on the macrosystems of hegemonic conflicts, power, and ideology that are embedded in each tool (Compton-Lilly & Green, 2010; Enciso, 2007). Thus, the micropractices of literacy instruction and literacy events are deeply intertwined within macrostructures that can be reproduced or challenged in agentive practices (Lewis et al., 2007; Moje & Lewis, 2007).

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In a critical sociocultural framework, studying literacy is a study of sets of practices connected to local knowledge, macrostructures of hegemonic power, and human agency (Compton-Lilly & Green, 2010; Moje & Lewis, 2007).

Autonomous definitions of literacy. Differences in outcomes caused by the context, social, cultural, motivational, and other factors are not included in autonomous definitions of literacy (Christenbury et al., 2011), therefore differences in literacy development and usage are positioned as cognitive failures (Alvermann, 2011a). An autonomous model of literacy claims to be neutral, but when differences in literacy development and usage occur across cultural groups and social contexts, they appear without appropriate attribution to the real cause of literacy differences. Within this autonomous model of literacy (Street, 1993), decoding and encoding functions are universal and can be explicitly taught (Alvermann, 2011a). Yet an autonomous definition of literacy is not value or culture neutral, it instead perpetuates a western standard of knowing (Morrell, 2008; Street & Martin-Jones, 2000). As such, autonomous definitions of literacy lead to "a more less authoritarian kind of pedagogy" (New London Group, 1996, p. 64). A pedagogy rooted in autonomous definitions of literacy

> can alienate and exclude members of culturally marginalized groups. Even though these students may acquire literacy, they do so at a great cost of losing the opportunity to learn about their own culture or the cultures of other marginalized groups. This lack of representation can decrease motivation and achievement while leading to resistance, apathy, and dropping out. (Morrell, 2008, p. 3)

Autonomous definitions of literacy claim neutrality while maintaining western, dominant cultures. Pushing against this autonomous view, a critical sociocultural stance connects culture and cognition, positing anything that is known, is known through cultural experiences.

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Ideological definitions of literacies. An ideological literacy perspective, by contrast to autonomous definitions, positions literacy as a social practice embedded in "conceptions of knowledge, identity, and being" therefore "always rooted in a particular worldview" (Street & Martin-Jones, 2006, p. 3). Therefore, literacy is a contested space where ideologies, whether implicit or explicit, battle for dominance (Street & Martin-Jones, 2000).

Multiliteracies pedagogies. An ideological definition of literacy is actualized by what the New London Group (1996) names a pedagogy of multiliteracies:

> A pedagogy of multiliteracies, by contrast, focuses on modes of representation much broader than language alone. These differ according to culture and context, and have specific cognitive, cultural, and social effects...multiliteracies also creates a different kind of pedagogy, one in which language and other modes of meaning are dynamic representational resources, constantly being remade by their users as they work to achieve their various cultural purposes (p. 64).

A critical sociocultural theory of literacy and an ideological definition of literacy demand an expansive understanding of literacy and literacy instruction. The New London Group provide multiliteracies as "dynamic representational resources" that are made and remade across cultures and purposes. The content of literacy refers to linguistic, visual, audio, gestural, and spatial meanings and their multimodal patterns when they are designed and redesigned through semiotic processes such as seeing, reading, writing, and listening (New London Group, 1996). This expansive definition recognizes available designs, or resources for meaning, that challenge traditionally print-centric, western understanding of literacy (Alvermann, 2005; Alvermann & Wilson, 2011; Moje et al., 2000).

A multiliteracies conception of literacies supports the turn to critical sociocultural theory because it names additional tools and agentive practices for making meaning; individuals are not viewed as passive consumers but rather innovators designing and

redesigning literacies and texts (Lewis & Moje, 2003; Mirra, Morrell, & Filipiak, 2018). Critical sociocultural (CSC) theories of literacy ask, "who is in power and what are they doing to maintain power?" Multiliteracies names "new literacies for new times," (Alim, 2005, p. 28) where individuals have the agency to transform their literacy practices to, "become designers of social futures" (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, p. 7). CSC names the hegemonic structures of power, multiliteracies redesign the structures of power.

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies

This study is also informed by culturally sustaining pedagogies (Paris, 2012, Paris & Alim, 2014, 2017). Culturally sustaining pedagogies (CSP) build on the foundation of asset-based pedagogies of multicultural education, cultural congruence, culturally relevant, and culturally responsive pedagogies that will be discussed later in this section (Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2014, 2017). CSPs "seek to perpetuate and foster—to sustain—linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as a part of the democratic project of schooling and as a needed response to demographic and social change" (Paris & Alim, 2014, p. 88). As Domínguez (2017) explains, the theoretical shift prompted by CSP entails a challenging pedagogical movement,

> That is the challenge, and paradigm shift in teacher education, that CSRP [culturally sustaining and revitalizing pedagogy] calls us to: a pedagogy that helps educators learn to contest the ways coloniality lives in and through schooling. This does not mean failing to develop skill sets or practices, neglecting rigor, or ignoring demographic realities. (p. 233)

Rather than offering prescriptive practices, CSP offers a nuanced, contextualized model for culture-centered education that combats colonialism to sustain and fight for the survival of communities that are otherwise damaged and erased through schooling without lowered expectations (Alim & Paris, 2017, p. 1). While this looks different in each

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community, there are five key features: "[1] critical centering on dynamic community languages, valued practices and knowledges, [2] student and community agency and input, [3] historicized content and instruction, [4] a capacity to contend with internalized oppressions, and [5] an ability to circularize all of this in learning settings" (Alim & Paris, 2017, p. 14).

Critical centering. Alim and Paris (2017) begin their description of the CSP framework with an intentional stripping away of the white gaze (Morrison, 1998) or the "patriarchal, cisheteronormative, English-monolingual, ableist, classist, xenophobic, Judeo-Christian gazes" from dominance within all aspects of education (Alim & Paris, 2017, pp. 2-3). This gaze can be seen in education in a number of ways including color blindness, the myth of meritocracy, deficit notions of students, low expectations, and the myth of a culture of poverty. Whiteness refers not to white people, but to a socially constructed and maintained ideology of beliefs, values, and characteristics that sustain white supremacy within society (Leonardo, 2013). Common characteristics of whiteness include "[a] an unwillingness to name the contours of racism [b] the avoidance of identifying with a racial experience or group...and [c] the minimization of racist legacy" (Leonardo, 2013, p. 32). Within colorblind, deficit, and difference ideologies of culture, whiteness is able to point to racism as individual actions or name it as wrong, but leaves the racist structures of whiteness untouched. This is buoyed by a history of dominant worldviews and research that aims to solidify a myth of white intellectual superiority, or the belief that racial identifications are related to cognitive achievement with white being the ultimate winner. The argument is not new, it was used to evoke the need for continued enslavement of Black persons and segregation of schools (Delpit, 2012).

Milner provides common rationales and arguments from educators that reveal the myth of white intellectual superiority:

- I am being sensitive to culturally diverse students when I feel sorry for them. If I expect too much, then I am setting the students up for failure
- Students need teachers who try to make up for what students are lacking and not necessarily those who build on what students have because some students bring so little
- I am actually helping to build self-esteem among my students when I give them 'easy' work that they complete without difficulty
- The students work better with lower level expectations such as completing worksheets independently
- When they pass the standardized test, my job is done because not much more can be required of or accomplished with certain students. (Milner, 2010, pp. 224-225).

Within the selected rationales, the common thread is viewing students an incapable because "students are lacking" and "not much more can be required" therefore leading to "lower level expectations" and "work that they complete without difficulty" in the same of building "self-esteem" and "being sensitive to culturally diverse students." Delpit (2006) sees lowered expectations as a natural result of the myth of white intellectual superiority:

> Because teachers do not want to tax what they believe to be these students' lower abilities, they end up teaching less when, in actuality, these students need more of what school has to offer...Children who may be gifted in real-life settings are often at a loss when asked to exhibit knowledge solely through decontextualized paper-and-pencil exercises. I have often pondered that if we taught African-American children how to dance in school, by the time they had finished the first give workbooks on the topic, we would have a generation of remedial dancers! (p. 173)

In stripping away the white gaze (Morrison, 1998), CSP also seeks to move away from colorblind notions of race. Color blindness is the belief that a person does not see Color, or racialized bodies, and instead treats all persons the same (Irvine, 2002). Irvine (2002) explains in reality color blindness leads to, "all students are treated as if they are, or should be, both White and middle class" (Irvine, 2002, p. xvii). Often out of fear of being seen as a racist, politically incorrect or offensive, or a belief that racism has ended, teacher who claim

to be color blind create a classroom grounded in the "White norm" and "students of color just have to deal with it" (Milner, 2010, p. 122). Delpit (2006) asks, "Is there something wrong with being black or brown that it should not be noticed?" (p. 177). She encourages educators to see students as they wholly are, as they see themselves, and as they are seen by society. Claiming to not see color means, "teachers are attempting to address incomplete students who do not have a race, and student performance can suffer" (Milner, 2010, p. 121). Additionally, by making intellectualism white property, it potentially creates a stigma around academic achievement for students of Color. Irvine explains when intellectual activity is the domain of whiteness, "they [students of Color] must repudiate their social identity and cultural frame of reference because their peer-group values are at odds with an academic achievement orientation" (Irvine, 2002, p. 5). Behaviors perceived or interpreted as negative, resistant, or defiant within schools may in fact be

> a form of political resistance and are rational behaviors in the context of their limited occupational and economic opportunities...[students] are perceptively aware that schools are a mechanism of economic and cultural reproduction, and therefore, they believe that they are doomed to fail. (Irvine, 2002, p. 5)

This begins by refusing to frame equity around deficits such as "achievement gaps" but instead viewing the cultures and students themselves as inherently valuable (Alim & Paris, 2017).

Furthermore, a CSP framework critically centers marginalized students voices by moving away from meritocratic narratives of academic success. The misconception of meritocracy is revealed in an educator's speech or beliefs, "that their own, their parents, and their students' success, status, and position in life have been earned" (Milner, 2010, p. 123). This neglects privilege, socialization into status, and personal unearned benefits as well as

systemic barriers and institutional structures that impact status within society instead

"believ[ing] that failure emanates solely from choice, ability, and effort of individuals"

(Milner, 2010, p. 123). Ignoring the sociopolitical, historical, and cultural factors that impact

success perpetuates deficit ideologies because it assumes those who are unsuccessful, "just

do not have the aptitude, ability, or skill for success" (Milner, 2010, p. 210).

Lee (2014) explains the way adolescents' literacy practices have been decentered

within traditional secondary schools:

> Now and historically we have dismissed as irrelevant or disruptive knowledge
> accrued through participation in everyday practices of youth from non- dominant
> communities (e.g., African- American English or other so- called non- standard
> American English dialects; native languages other than English; life scripts that might
> inform interpretations of literature or historical questions; an assumed irrelevance to
> comprehension in the sciences and mathematics)...The resistance is not based on an
> examination of what we know scientifically about the role of prior knowledge in
> reading comprehension either. The resistance is largely ideological and reified
> through institutional practices along all ladders of the system of education in the U.S.
> (e.g., curriculum, text book publishing, standards, assessments, teacher preparation
> and licensing, to the on the ground organization of schools). (p. 10)

Lee contends reading research does not support discounting students' prior

knowledge, instead it is the persistence of deficit ideologies that position non-western, non-

English, and non-dominant literacy practices as irrelevant or disruptive; the ideological

resistance reified through curriculum, textbooks, standards, and assessments that erase non-

dominant communities across the disciplines. Critical centering through the culturally

sustaining pedagogies (CSP) framework is the latest in a long line of responses to deficit

views of culture. The deficit perspective or deficit model essentializes a diverse people group

in order to assign "specific negative traits" that need "remediation" (Bomer, Dworin, May &

Semingson, 2008, p. 205). Rather than raising the level of instruction and expectations for

students, the deficit ideology results in lower expectations, simplistic and decontextualized

work, and a self-fulfilling prophecy that continues to blame the students for not making

academic gains based on the mediocre instruction. It can also work on an individual level,

such as attributing a person's success or failure to cultural traits as a stereotype or excuse for

their performance (Gorski, 2015). Within education, a deficit perspective:

> locates school failure in the endogenous deficiencies of children and families of color who live in poverty...to explain the apparent inability of children from certain cultural groups to achieve academically and is code for their lack of motivation, cognitive abilities, and 'culture.' (Nocon & Cole, 2009, p. 21)

Deficit perspectives equate aspects of culture with students' inability to achieve rather than

identifying other potential explanations. Milner (2010) connects deficit ideologies to their

root thinking:

> At the heart of deficit thinking is teachers' questioning of what students actually possess cognitively, what they can do, and what other resources they bring into the learning context. A dominant and oppressive perspective is that White people, their beliefs, experiences, outcomes, performance, and epistemologies, are viewed as the norm to which others are compared, measured, assessed, and evaluated. (p. 124)

The ideological construction of whiteness, Milner (2010) contends, is the root of deficit

ideologies within education. Any time a student does not align with the "beliefs, experiences,

outcomes, performance, and epistemologies" that define whiteness, the problem is named

within the child and whiteness is left interrogated.

CSP also turns away from deficit framings of social class. The deficit ideology

surrounding poverty frames social class a culture and students need to be explicitly taught

"and subscribe to, middle-class norms to overcome their subordination" (Ladson-Billings,

2017b, p. 82). Such ideologies position poverty as a "moral failing" that must be "overcome"

(Gorski, 2015). Poverty is positioned as the cause of students' disinterest in a course or lack

of academic success—taking the blame off other potential reasons such as the curriculum,

instruction, or systematic school processes while simultaneously naming it culture. Delpit (2012) writes what so-called poverty scholars are, "labeling culture is actually the response to oppression. True culture supports its people; it doesn't destroy them" (p. 7).

The culture of poverty myth is prevalent within teacher education and professional development due to the popularity of Ruby Payne's (2005) book *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*. Payne writes in her opening introduction, "Poverty occurs in all races and in all countries" (2005, p. 2). She also includes a table depicting poverty by racial demographics and the aside, "While the number of Caucasian children in poverty is the largest group, the percentage of children in poverty in most minority groups is higher" (Payne, 2006, p. 6). From there, Payne declines to address issues related to white supremacy, whiteness, race, or racism to place poverty within a context. Redeaux (2011) summarizes Payne's central message:

> For Payne, the key to transcending poverty is two-fold: students must first make a personal decision about which [social] class they wish to live in and then they must change their behavior in order to fit into that class. By locating poverty as a choice...overemphasizes the role of individual behavior as the reason for poverty and virtually ignores the role of structures and institutions in the process. (p. 182)

Framing poverty as a choice evokes the myth of meritocracy and signals the myth of white intellectual superiority by intoning those living in poverty are, by contrast, lazy, unintelligent, or unmotivated. Redeaux (2011) explains the book's popularity is due in large part to reifying the deficit beliefs about marginalized communities that most white and middle class Americans already have:

> She [Payne] has made millions by situating poverty within the dominant narrative of cultural deficiency and individual choice. She is successful, not because her work has proven effective, but because it reconfirms the 'reality' that is indeed poor people of color who are the problem. Their situation, being poor and of color, makes them inherently 'at risk.' (Redeaux, 2011, p. 195)

Framing culture as a deficit occurs in coded terms through discourse such as color blindness, meritocracy, the myth of white superiority, lowered expectations, and the culture of poverty; each upholding white supremacy and denying opportunities for students' cultures to be centered and valued within literacy instructional practices. A CSP framework rejects oppression at all of its levels recognizing each deficit belief is part of a larger sociopolitical context that results in systematic marginalization of youth; challenging individuals to recognize how comments, ideologies, and practices become tools to uphold systemic macrostructures of power (Irizarry, 2017).

Another conception of culture views it as a difference. Difference approaches view, "the languages, literacies, and cultural ways of being of students and communities of color as equal to, but different from, the ways demanded and legitimated in school teaching and learning" (Paris, 2012, p. 94). A CSP framework moves away from notions of culture as difference and towards "dynamic cultural dexterity as a necessary good" (Alim & Paris, 2017, p. 1). In contrast, difference approaches posit when cultural differences between people or people groups arise, culture can be a starting point to build a bridge to unite the groups, garner understanding, or move one cultural group to a new set of languages, literacies, and ways of being (Paris, 2012). Culture, in this sense, is a resource to the extent that it can move one cultural group towards assimilation into the dominant culture.

Concepts of culture as a difference are commonly explained through cultural conflict, the conception that deviations from the culture of power create confusion or miscommunication (Delpit, 2006). This connects to the CSP framework because of its implicit results: students from nondominant groups are expected to assimilate to the culture

of power (Milner, 2010). While students of Color make up over half of the public school population, white female educators make up approximately 80% of the teaching population (Cochran-Smith, Davis, & Fries, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2004). White educators who are likely to grow up in geographically segregated cities (Squires & Kubrin, 2005), attend racially resegregated schools (Frankenberg & Lee, 2002; Orfield, 2001; Reardon, Grewal, Kalogrides, & Greenberg, 2012), and not be confronted on deficit views. This means many white teachers are unaware of their whiteness and membership in the middle class.

Such social segregation within schooling means information about other cultures is from secondhand sources such as news reports that focus on deficit laden statistics of Black incarceration rates, crimes, and deviancies from the culture of power with more humanizing coverage reserved for white criminals—the resulting information proves both limited and biased (Delpit, 2006, 2012). This leaves room for "stereotypes, omissions, and distortions" to become a foundation for white supremacist ideologies about students (Tatum, 1997, p. 5). In their privilege, white teachers are unaware that they have culture, and that that culture is the norm against which they judge students of color or students who speak languages other than English, and students from low socioeconomic states backgrounds. These students are the "others"; they have a culture while the teacher remains culture neutral (Nocon & Cole, 2009, p. 22). Milner (2010) gives several examples of educators' comments or behaviors that reflect an ideology that the teacher is "culture neutral": teachers' instruction often reflects how the teacher was taught, students' joking around is understood as a misbehavior, or a discipline system that demands students assimilate to the culture of "my" classroom or face consequences. CSP rejects assimilate-or-fail ideologies which, "assume the existence of a societal consensus of values, a social system reflecting meritocratic principles" neglecting the

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historic and present day impact of oppression (Anderson & Irvine, 1993, pp. 81-82; Domínguez, 2017).

Negative stereotypes and attitudes towards students' experiences, identities, and cultures are part of the larger structures of white supremacy that never give the educators an opportunity to learn from and about other groups, and therefore make educators unable to draw from students' strengths (Delpit, 2006). As a result, "when cultural conflict exists between the student and the school, the inevitable occurs: miscommunication and confrontation between the student, the teacher, and the home; hostility; alienation; diminished self-esteem; and eventually school failure" (Irvine, 2002, pp. 6-7). Within CSP, negative stereotypes and attitudes towards marginalized people groups are challenged by humanizing the impartial stories often depicted in the media; providing opportunities for students from marginalized groups to tell their own, more complete stories of joy (Wong & Peña, 2017).

Thus, CSP names the critical centering of students' languages and literacy practices as effective at meeting, "the goal of teaching and learning with youth of color...not ultimately to see how closely students could perform White middle-class norms but to explore, honor, and extend, and, at times, problematize their heritage and community practices" (Paris & Alim, 2014, p. 86). Equity, within this view, is achieved through centering the dynamic practices and selves of students and communities of color in a critical, additive, and expansive vision of schooling" (Alim & Paris, 2017, p. 3). In other words, starting education with the students' cultural knowledge as the foundation and center of the curriculum and working towards a critique of dominant power structures that devalue students' dynamic linguistic and cultural dexterity (Alim & Paris, 2017; Rosa & Flores, 2017). Students' and

communities' languages, valued practices, and knowledge, "aren't a bridge to get somewhere better...but centered in the teaching and learning" (personal communication, D. Paris, 2017). This recentering "does not mean failing to develop skill sets or practices, neglecting rigor, or ignoring demographic realities" but it foregrounds and situates the work with the colonized, not the colonizer (Domínguez, 2017, p. 233).

Community accountability. In order to critically center the community languages, valued practices, and knowledge, schools need to be accountable to and in partnership with localized communities. The concept of community accountability with CSP is drawn from Brayboy, Gough, Leonard, Roehl, and Solyom's (2012) four r's of Indigenous community-based accountability: respect, reciprocity, responsibility, and caring relationships. Community accountability shifts and adapts across contexts and time but is focused on the needs and goals as they are locally defined and draw from localized resources—students are being prepared for active participation and agency in their own communities (Lee & McCarty, 2017). As a result, a goal of CSP is building learners' and communities' agency, or positioning themselves for the "strategic making and remaking of selves, identities, activities, relationships, cultural tools and resources, and histories" (Moje & Lewis, 2007, p. 18). Building their own goals and futures. Morrell (2010) argues educators must insist literacy instruction is, "about developing voice, agency, and the power of production...or else what is the point of demanding it?" (p. 148).

A critical sociocultural theory describes literacy practices within the context of people, communities, and ecological systems where they are developed and located and tied to agentive identities (Gutiérrez & Johnson, 2017; Lee, 2017). Within the frameworks of culturally sustaining pedagogies and critical sociocultural theory, I understand community

accountability as demonstrating respectful, caring collaboration with communities' literacy practices. This means valuing both the literacy practices students have developed within social and cultural communities and considering the literacy goals the community has for its learners as well as the goals learners have for themselves and their future selves (Lewis & del Valle, 2009; Moje & McCarthy, 2002; Moje et al., 2000).

Historicized. Given the dynamic ways a community changes over time, the CSP framework integrates a historicized view of culture. A historicized view of culture places the past in conversation with the present and recognizes its interconnectedness to "disrupt static framings of identity and bring the past into conversation with the present" (Domínguez, 2017, p. 236; Paris & Alim, 2014). In an interview, Paris and Alim explain

> Culturally sustaining educators connect present learning to the histories of racial, ethnic, and linguistic communities, to the histories of neighborhoods and cities, and the histories of the larger states and nation-states that they are part of. It is crucial when we are seeking to sustain valuable practices that we link those practices up with the past and present of communities (as cited in Ferlazzo, 2017).

> Gutiérrez and Johnson (2017) explain the pedagogical implications of historicizing

curriculum within a CSP framework: practices are

> imbued with histories, local influences, and future orientations...syncretic approaches to disciplinary school-based practices in ways that neither romanticize everyday knowledge nor privilege school-based skills and dominant forms of knowledge; instead, from a learning perspective, a syncretic approach recognizes that expansive forms of learning involve the renegotiation and productive hybridization of value cultural forms with the new. (p. 254)

They explain the routine sites of participation for both students and their teachers include multifaceted identities developed from historic patterned practices across sites of membership, perceptions of self-imposed by others, and hybrid crossing between these different identity markers. As these different facets of identity cross and interact, the historic

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patterns also cross and interact (Lewis et al., 2007; Moje & McCarthy, 2002). Lee uses the

myth of a dominant academic English as an example of how identities and knowledge within

cultural groups change over time:

> There is no academic domain that we teach in schools that is not influenced by
> contributions and practices from across historical and diverse cultural ethnic
> communities. And the new knowledge that evolves is hybrid. Understanding the
> hybridity of the undergirdings of disciplinary knowledge understanding such
> knowledge as social constructions whose explanatory power evolves with time,
> should be a goal of CSP for all students. (Lee, 2017, p. 268).

Within this example, Lee demonstrates how the larger ecological systems

surrounding individual identities and academic domains, interact and evolve over time. To

understand the present means an understanding of the past that developed it. Considering the

alignment of critical sociocultural theory and CSP, historicized content views academic

knowledge as rooted in hybrid histories that cross, interact, and explain present day

conceptions of academic disciplines, culture, and self (Lee, 2017; Lewis et al., 2007).

Capacity to contend with internalized oppression. Oppression is, "any unjust

situation where, systematically and over a long period of time, one group denies another

group access to the resources of society" (Collins, 2000, p. 4). Placing the experiences of

students of Color in American schools within a historicized context recognizes modern day

inequities are symptoms of a history of oppression: Black males are overrepresented in grade

retention, school suspension, dropout rates, lower academic achievement, and special

education referrals (Lee & Slaughter-Defoe, 2004). English language learners are

overrepresented in dropout rates and special education referrals (Fernandez & Inserra, 2013).

Multilingual students are told to leave their home languages at the door (Baron, 2013).

Inequities are apparent in programs such as tracking, which claim to benefit all students by

providing them with suitable instruction, but in reality deny ethnically and linguistically diverse students access to high quality materials and challenging curriculum (Darling-Hammond, 2004). Each of these symptoms are part of a larger history of oppression that maintains white supremacy. CSP is a social justice framework for students, "whose sense of self is constantly under attack from schooling practices and policies that racialize and thereby devalue, distort, and erase their language, culture, and identity" (Bucholtz, Inés Casillas, & Sook Lee, 2017, p. 45). A central tenet of the framework is building student capacity to contend with internalized and historic oppression.

In rebuilding and sustaining students' language, literacies, and identities, CSP also "strives to ensure that students gain full access to the practices associated with larger institutional and structural power as well as the tools to critique the processes of power" (Bucholtz et al., 2017, p. 45). Similarly, critical sociocultural theory, "accounts for these larger systems of power" considering how the macrosystems, "shape and are shaped by individuals in particular cultural contexts" (Lewis et al., 2007, p. 9). Ultimately the attention to power is with the aim to resist its dominance through disruption and reconceptualization of the ways power is upheld (Moje & Lewis, 2007). The two frameworks demand an approach to instruction that names oppression and the ways it manifests dominance in order to build the capacity to contend, critique, and challenge unjust power structures (Bucholtz et al., 2017; Lewis et al., 2007; Moje & Lewis, 2007).

Curricularize. The previous four tenets of CSP are conceptual, they act as lenses or filters; however, the final tenet is the ability to actualize the four features within learning settings (Ferzallo, 2017). Students' and communities' languages and literacy practices are centered in the curriculum and the curriculum is viewed as one piece within students'

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ecological systems, histories, and resources for identity. Curricularizing is, "grounded in

students' lived experiences, buil[t] on their systems of meaning-making, and provide[s]

students with the skills and confidence to advocate for themselves—indeed to sustain

themselves and their communities" (Irizarry, 2017, p. 97). Giroux (1987) explained what a

critical, emancipatory classroom might look like if it rejected colonial values and centered

students' voices:

> [R]adical teachers must develop pedagogical conditions in their classrooms that allow
> different student voices to be heard and legitimated...it takes problems and needs of
> the students themselves as its starting point. This suggests both confirming and
> legitimating the knowledge and experience through which students give meaning to
> their lives. Most obviously, this means replacing the authoritative discourse of
> imposition and recitation with a voice capable of speaking in one's own terms, a
> voice capable of listening, retelling, and challenging the very grounds of knowledge.
> and power (p. 20)

Giroux's (1987) description centers' students' voices, problems, and needs. It

envisions a new history of voices and experiences included within the curriculum that

decenters authoritative and oppressive histories. It also points to a larger goal: equipping

students with voices capable of speaking in their own languages and with their own literacy

practices to challenge the very grounds of knowledge and power.

Lee (2017) contends students' "diverse funds of knowledge and culturally inherited

ways of navigating the world needs to be sustained as goods unto themselves" (Lee, 2017,

p. 261). This view of culture as a resource positions "the linguistic, cultural, and literate

practices of poor communities...as a resource to honor, explore, and extend in accessing

language and literacy skills" (Paris, 2012, p. 94). It is the foundation for asset pedagogies, or

instructional practices that position students as active, fluid agents of cultures and literacies;

teachers find "strength in the diverse funds of knowledge of families and communities that

can be tapped to enrich curriculum and making learning meaningful for all children" (Nocon & Cole, 2009, p. 23). The CSP framework's lineage within asset pedagogies (e.g., funds of knowledge, multiculturalism, cultural congruence, culturally relevant and responsive instruction, third space) informs how I conceptualize culture and instruction in order to define highly effective instruction within a culturally and linguistically diverse urban Catholic high school.

   Culture. I refer to culture with the definition provided by Ladson-Billings (2017a):

> Culture involves every aspect of human endeavor, including thought, perceptions, feelings, and attitudes. It is not merely the visible and tangible components of a community such as artifacts, foods, and customs, although those things are indeed a part of culture. However, it is important to emphasize the dynamic and fluid nature of culture ...from an anthropological perspective, culture encompasses worldview, thought patterns, epistemological stances, ethics, and ways of being along with the tangible and readily identifiable components of human groups. (Ladson-Billings, 2017a, p. 143)

This definition aligns with critical sociocultural cultural theory by defining culture as developed within communities through social interaction over time and across generations (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003). Additionally, the inclusion of "thought, perceptions, feelings, and attitudes...worldview, thought patterns, epistemological stances, ethics, and ways of being" echo ideological definitions of literacy with the tangible implications—"artifacts, foods, and customs"—pointing to designs of multiliteracies. Culture and literacy are inexorable. Several pedagogical lineages inform culturally sustaining pedagogies, an emergent turn in asset-based pedagogies including multicultural education, culturally congruent, relevant, and responsive pedagogies.

   Multicultural education. Multiculturalism is a framework rooted in freedom, justice, equality, and human dignity manifested as a political process of educational reform at all

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levels and for all students in order to combat racism, affirm pluralism, and promote social

justice (Banks & Banks, 2009; Figueroa, 2004; Gay, 2004; Hollins, 2015). It emerged as a

direct response to desegregation in America as multiple marginalized groups came into

contact and conversation; by the 1970s historically marginalized groups demanded changes

to the curriculum, pedagogy, and school structures (Sleeter, 2018). James A. Banks' (1989)

article *Approaches to Multicultural Curriculum Reform* presents a theoretical framework

defining levels of multicultural content integration: the contributions approach, additive

approach, transformational approach, and social action or justice approach. It brought social

justice and curricular reform into educational conversations providing an entry point for

researchers, educators, and communities to dialogue around cultural diversity and insist

change (Paris, 2014).

  Cultural congruence. Cultural congruence or cultural mismatch is rooted in the

theory of culture as difference; the framework recognizes that cultures have different

traditions, values, use of language, and literacies that cause cross cultural communication to

be ripe ground for miscommunication, offense, or marginalization (Au, 1993 Hollins, 2015;

Zeichner, 1995). The difference between a student's culture and the school culture is

especially pronounced for students from diverse linguistic and ethnic backgrounds who go to

monolinguistic and monoethnic schools (Au & Kawakami, 1994). In order to find

connections and similarities between a student and the content within the classroom, the

teacher must have knowledge of other cultures and engage in teacher-student social

interactions (McKinley, 2010; Zeichner, 1995). As the cultural congruence grows, the

educator is able to scaffold instruction that begins with a learner's culture and literacies in

order to build knowledge (Delpit, 2006; Gay, 2000). Hollins (2015) summarizes the

requirements of cultural congruence as the following:

1. Legitimizing the knowledge the children bring to school
2. Making meaningful connections between school learning and cultural knowledge of knowledge acquired outside of school
3. Creating a hybrid culture in school that is congruent with many of the values and practices children bring from the home and peer culture
4. Creating a community of learners where collaboration is the norm rather than competition
5. Balancing the rights of students and teachers. (Hollins, 2015, p. 121)

Cultural congruence provided a body of research and practical application points for

educators to consider culture, laying the foundation for culturally relevant and responsive

pedagogies (Paris, 2014).

    Funds of knowledge. Moll and his research team (Moll, Amante, Neff, & Gonzalez,

1992) conducted an ethnography of literacy and knowledge practices in a Latino community

and compared them to traditional "skill and drill" instructional methods in the local schools.

The results focused on how teachers intentionally centered or ignored the socially and

culturally developed "funds of knowledge" that students brought with them into learning

spaces, or "historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and

skills" (Moll et al., 2001, p. 133). The team determined educators that viewed culture as

funds of knowledge often delivered student centered and effective instruction. CSP adds to

funds of knowledge, positioning them not as deficits to be overcome or an addition to the

curriculum, but rather, "students' cultures and cultural practices have value in and of

themselves" (Irizarry, 2017, p. 85).

Culturally relevant pedagogies. Ladson-Billings (1992) studied the characteristics of effective teachers of African American children in her book *The Dreamkeepers*. She describes culturally relevant pedagogies that

> empower students to the point where they will be able to examine critically educational content and process and ask what its role is in creating a truly democratic and multicultural society. It uses the students' culture to help them create meaning and understand the world. Thus, not only academic success, but also social and cultural success is emphasized (Ladson-Billings, 1992, p. 110).

Breaking down her description, culturally relevant pedagogies use knowledge of students' cultures to create a curriculum where students can critically examine, question, and critique educational content. The end result focuses on maintaining the student's culture in order to, "transcend the negative effects of the dominant culture" (Ladson-Billings, 1994, p. 17). This is achieved through three separate actions: (1) academic achievement (2) cultural competence and (3) sociopolitical consciousness or "develop students who can both understand and critique the existing social order" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 474).

The first tenant of culturally relevant teaching has evolved since her original conception (Ladson-Billings, 2006). Ladson-Billings clarified that the outcomes of culturally relevant teaching do not define achievement narrowly with student test scores, but instead look to the pedagogy's ability to empower students, incorporate and maintain students' cultures, and create a high-quality learning environment (Ladson-Billings, 2014, 2017b).

Third space pedagogies. Third space refers to the hybrid moments or spaces that exist between the official space of teacher instruction and the curriculum and the unofficial spaces of unrecognized knowledge, literacies, and language (Baker & Gutiérrez, 2008; Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, & Tejada, 1999). Third spaces exist as a way for nondominant student groups to navigate learning spaces where their voices are marginalized, ignored, or resisted

(Gutiérrez et al., 1999; Lee, 1993) or to make sense of new modes of discourse that may be

unfamiliar, such as an academic discipline at the secondary level (New London Group, 1996;

Moje, Ciechanowski, Karmer, Ellis, Carillo, & Collazo, 2004) and complex multimodalities

(Skerrett, 2010). Gutiérrez and colleagues described the conversations within third space as

counterscripts (Gutiérrez, Rymes, & Larson, 1995). She describes counterscripts in a literacy

podcast:

> We often privilege the space where the teacher is, the official space...[and] pay very
> little attention to what goes on instructionally, curricularly, at the same time in any of
> those other spaces...Those spaces were not just kids resisting, they were really
> interesting ...We started studying those to find out how kids were making meaning of
> learning and why certain environments were not working and that led us to these
> moments where they were interacting differently. The language changed. (Baker &
> Gutiérrez, 2008)

Within counterscripts, youth are agentive meaning makers designing and redesigning

literacies and texts that were responsive to their own needs as learners. Gutiérrez and

Johnson (2017) pen an argument for a syncretic system of pedagogies that draw from critical

sociocultural theory and culturally sustaining pedagogies for the common goal of justice by

drawing on third spaces as literacy tools youth develop. They write:

> Culturally sustaining pedagogy is one such tributary in a family of pedagogies
> advanced as a means of foregrounding the plural and dynamic nature of youths'
> identity and cultural practices, while recognizing the agentic, linguistic, sociocultural,
> and sociopolitical moves and practices that youth develop and leverage. (Gutiérrez &
> Johnson, 2017, p. 247)

They continue, arguing third spaces are where youth develop and leverage their agentive

literacy practices; thus these practices hold the greatest potential to be, "embraced, sustained,

and leveraged" within CSP (Gutiérrez & Johnson, 2017, p. 254). This is also qualified with a

caution that agentive youth literacy practices within third space are not romanticized, but can

also be problematic and complicated, echoing other researchers in the field (Alim & Paris, 2017; Gutiérrez & Johnson, 2017; Wong & Peña, 2017).

Culturally responsive pedagogies. Culturally responsive pedagogies emerged parallel to culturally relevant pedagogies. The pedagogies use, "the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively" (Gay, 2002, p. 106). Culturally responsive pedagogies note students who struggle the most in schools are those whose discursive styles are outside the dominant culture (Rueda, 2011). Rather than expect students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to assimilate or approximate dominant culture, Gay (2000) argues for a "a very different pedagogical paradigm...one that teaches to and through their personal and cultural strengths" (p. 24).

Like culturally relevant pedagogies, culturally responsive pedagogies begin with cultural congruence and turn to action: situating the experiences of students within the curriculum and instruction to increase motivation, engagement, and appeal (Gay, 2002). There are six principles that undergird culturally responsive pedagogies:

1. Teachers are socially and academically empowering, holding high expectations for students
2. Teaching and learning is multidimensional by including "cultural knowledge, experiences, contributions, and perspectives"
3. Teachers validate every student's culture, "bridging gaps between school and home"
4. Teachers are socially, emotionally, and politically comprehensive, "as they seek to educate the whole child"
5. Curriculum transforms school and societies "by using students' existing strengths to drive instruction, assessment, and curriculum design"
6. Curriculum is emancipatory and liberating from oppressive educational practices and ideologies. (Gay, 2010, p. 38)

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These principles are the foundation where teachers build pedagogy. There are four actions related to enacting pedagogy. First, teachers reject deficit perspectives and replace them with knowledge of ethnic and cultural groups' heritages and detailed factual information about these groups (Gay, 2002). Next, teachers need to understand the ideologies associated with culture and difference in order to, thirdly, contend with resistance and challenges to culturally responsive instruction. Fourth, culturally responsive teachers make pedagogical connections within the teaching context to realize the six principles. Gay (2002) explains this is, "not simply technical processes of applying 'best practices' to underachieving students of color" and requires cultural scaffolding or using students', "own cultures and experiences to expand their intellectual horizons and academic achievement" (Gay, 2002, p. 108). Such an approach is action oriented, requiring high expectations and increased, creative levels of support to take responsibility for all students' learning (Hollins, 2015). My research of highly effective teachers' literacy instructional practices for adolescents in an urban Catholic school build on these important examinations of culture in schooling that frame current thinking about CSP (Hollins, 2015; Nocon & Cole, 2009; Paris & Alim, 2017).

Highly Effective Adolescent Literacy Instruction

My research sought to describe the literacy instructional practices of highly effective adolescent literacy educators at an urban Catholic high school. I conceptualized highly effective through the complementary critical sociocultural and culturally sustaining pedagogies framework. CSP critiques popular pedagogical approaches in American schools focused on "'achievement' and 'opportunity' 'gaps,' and on cultivating discrete, 'high-leverage' practices and teacher skill sets that will lead to remarkable academic growth" (Domínguez, 2017, p. 230). These solutions see the achievement gap as the problem and

raising achievement rates as the solution that equates to equity and justice. However, such

conceptions of highly effective instruction leave white supremacy and the colonial aims of

schooling untouched. Alim and Paris (2017) write, "We are not interested in offering

pedagogical quick fixes or 'best practices' that teachers can drop into the same old tired

curriculum that deadens the souls of vast numbers of children of color in U.S. schools"

(p. 12). Instead, CSP offers a nuanced, contextualized model for education that combats

colonialism to sustain and fight for the survival of communities that are otherwise damaged

and erased through schooling (Alim & Paris, 2017).

While assessments have long been critiqued for their white, middle class,

monolingual standards (Al Otaiba & Fuchs, 2006; Perry, Steele, & Hilliard, 2003; Teale,

2008), it is also important to note that teachers who enact asset based pedagogies, "are

interested in differences in students' reasoning ability, problem-solving skills, and moral

development—things that are not so easily measured by standardized tests" (Ladson-Billings,

2017b, p. 143). To attach teacher and school effectiveness to narrow standardized measures

alone promotes the preparation and retention of educators with a limited set of skills that are

oriented to teaching a colonized curriculum. The belief that such teaching pedagogies

> are the only skills that can lead us to suitable, high-impact academic growth ...is a
> masterful colonial falsehood that has construed rigorous teaching practice as
> somehow mutually exclusive or antithetical to sustaining the cultural practices and
> humanity of youth of color. (Domínguez, 2017, p. 230)

In other words, not only should CSP be valued for its ability to produce outcomes that are not

traditionally measured by standardized tests and traditional achievement models, but also its

imperative to disrupt narrow considerations of what counts as high performing, effective, or

high achieving within schooling. While schools nearly always privilege the languages and

literacies of white, English-speaking families, the same is not true of the literacies of

working-class Latinx and Black families, like the majority of students at Juan Diego High

School, whose communities are often disparaged because their literacies do not transpose

directly to fit a whitified (Kinloch, 2011) norm of "good literacy practices." A raciolinguistic

perspective (Rosa & Flores, 2017) helps us understand how "heritage language learners'

linguistic practices are devalued not because they fail to meet a particular linguistic standard,

but because they are spoken by racialized bodies and thus heard as illegitimate by the White

listening subject" (p. 184). Broadening definitions of highly effective adolescent literacy

instruction to include raciolinguistic and culturally sustaining frameworks is imperative

because if every aspect of the colonial curriculum remains intact, then "teachers we have

produced will merely be equipped to more efficiently demand assimilation of youth of color"

(Domínguez, 2017, p. 230). These notions of highly effective must be contextualized within

my understanding of adolescent literacies and instruction.

Considering CSP and critical sociocultural holistically, the central tenets of each

theory that inform my work are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

Theoretical Framework Central Tenets

Critical Sociocultural Theory	Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies (Paris & Alim, 2017)
Focus on human agency within social, cultural, political, and historical contexts (Dyson & Genishi, 2011; Moje & Lewis, 2007)	Critical centering on dynamic community languages, valued literacy practices, and knowledge
Microstructures and macrostructures that reify or resist power (Enciso, 2007; Compton-Lilly & Green, 2010)	Student and community agency and accountability
	Historicized content and instruction
	Capacity to contend with internalized oppression
	Curricularize the four features

The theoretical framework guides my understanding of highly effective adolescent literacy instruction.

Adolescent literacy instruction. The framework of critical sociocultural theory and culturally sustaining pedagogies inform my understandings of adolescent literacy instruction; in particular how I define highly effective adolescent literacy instruction. As such, it is important to discuss the historical context of my definition of highly effective adolescent literacy instruction.

Access to formal schooling in early American history was limited to those with access to power. The few students, predominantly white, land-owning males, who were taught decoding and fluency skills focused on reading and writing in elementary school and were expected to naturally develop more complex skills for sophisticated middle school and

high school instruction (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). This was the inoculation fallacy: an assumption that an early vaccination of decoding and fluency skills would inoculate a child against reading failure into secondary schooling and adulthood without further maintenance (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008; Snow & Moje, 2010).

Over the 19th and 20th century, a series of laws increased school enrollment. This included Massachusetts' mandatory attendance law passed in 1852 with all states passing their own by 1918 (Lloyd, 2005). The opening of specialized schools significantly increased the number of opportunities for marginalized groups to attend schools, as well. This included pioneering schools such as the Connecticut Asylum at Hartford for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb Persons (1817), New England Asylum for the Blind (1829), The Young Ladies Academy (1787), Mount Holyoke Female Seminary (1837), and the African Institute (1837), each the first of their kind (Lloyd, 2005; Rippa, 1971; Thelin, 2011). In particular, schools for students of Color proliferated, starting a long history of effective schooling for Black students with high standards and community agency (Foster, 1990; Irvine & Foster, 1997).

Despite the increasing number of students enrolled and types of schools available for students, the dominant literacy education model based on the inoculation fallacy did not change throughout the time period (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). Throughout the 19th century, adolescent literacy education continued to be shaped by discrete, autonomous definitions of literacy reserved for white, male persons. These historic patterns of inclusion and exclusion led to literacy practices being "patterned by social institutions and power relationships," making some "more dominant, visible, and influential than others" and marginalizing the rest (Majors, Kim, & Ansari, 2011, pp. 346-347). For example, anti-

literacy laws banned slaves from learning to read or write in some southern states until 1847, but state governments then used literacy tests to deny the right to vote shortly after the Fifteenth Amendment granted Black male citizens the right to vote in 1870 (Keyssar, 2009; Morrell, 2008). In more recent years, literacy has been subject to increased standardization and policy surrounding adolescent literacy instruction.

One of the first government reports that directly addressed adolescent literacy was *Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading* (BNR) (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985). It found that after emergent literacy skills were mastered, adolescent learners needed content area reading instruction with (a) high quality textbooks (b) explicit instruction and (c) opportunities for learners to practice reading and writing (Anderson et al., 1985). It also launched the motto, "learning to read versus reading to learn," to describe the shift from early elementary school to upper level literacy instruction. The motto created a "false dichotomy...so readily accepted because content-area reading...failed to acknowledge the sociocultural nature of disciplines they sought to infuse with literacy instruction" (Moje & Lewis Ellison, 2016, p. 29).

Content area reading (CAR) is a pedagogical approach where content area educators support the acquisition of literacy practices through routine literacy practices such as learning vocabulary, making connections to print text, facilitating comprehension of a passage, and notetaking during lectures (Herber, 1970, 1978; Irvine, 1990). As Moje and Lewis Ellison (2016) allude, CAR is resisted by many middle school and high school educators. First, because an academic discipline is a socializing influence tied to an educator's professional identity; the implication that a disciplinary expert is also a reading teacher is an identity mismatch (Alsup, 2006; Johnston & Wetherill, 2002). Additionally, "subject areas become

subcultures of the secondary school with their own ways of knowing, doing, and believing...and how knowledge gets constructed within them" (Moje, 2008, p. 99). As such, a discipline does not just divide knowledge, it also constructs knowledge, creates a base of power, and in turn excludes outsiders (Moje, 2008; Moje, Ciechanowski, Kramer, Ellis, Carillo, & Collazo, 2004; Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). There are commonalities between how disciplines construct knowledge, most notably the use of academic language (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). However, since each discipline has different means to "produce, communicate, and evaluate knowledge," this extends to include different uses of language (Fang & Schleppegrell, 2010, p. 591), disciplinary vocabulary (Schleppegrell, 2006), purposes for reading (Goldman et al., 2016; Lee & Spratley, 2006), ways of writing (Gabriel & Dostal, 2015), uses of common literacy strategies (Gillis, 2014), assessment practices (Gillis & Van Wig, 2015), and conceptions of text (Tatum, 2014). A focus on CAR "one-size-fits-all reading strategies may help struggling readers...[but] general reading skills can only take a student so far" (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2014, p. 364). CAR strategies are applied inappropriately and ineffectively when applied universally across content areas (Alvermann & Swafford, 1989; Holt-Reynolds, 1990; Stewart & O'Brien, 1989), particularly for diverse learners (Alvermann, Gillis, & Phelps, 2012; Griffin, Simmons, & Kameenui, 1991; Vaughn, Bos, & Schumm, 1997).

From a critical sociocultural perspective, learning in a content area is an act of identity work; students are not seeking static knowledge of content, but seeking community membership within its discipline (Kleve & Penne, 2016; Moje, 2015). Disciplinary literacy acknowledges each discipline's distinct Discourse, or an "identity kit" of beliefs, norms, practices, and behaviors that reflect membership within a cultural group (Gee, 2014).

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Disciplinary literacy makes these practices explicit while encouraging agency to engage, engineer, examine, and evaluate the Discourse of the discipline (Moje, 2015).

Additional government funded reading committees and reports addressing adolescent literacy included the National Academy of the Sciences Committee on Preventing Reading Difficulties (Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998), the National Reading Panel (2000), *Reading Next* (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006), *What Content Area Teachers Should Know About Adolescent Literacy* (Baxter & Reddy, 2007), and *Improving Adolescent Literacy* (Kamil et al., 2008). Each successive report:

> inadvertently reproduce[d] the myth that literacy learning ceases in elementary school and may denote reading instruction as a set of 'best practices' that can be implemented across contexts with minimal regard to the particular identities, knowledge, and experiences of students, teachers, or communities. (Vasudevan & Campano, 2009, p. 318)

The reports reified beliefs that reading can be taught through generic literacy practices that are routinely applied to literacy events spanning texts, disciplinary contexts, and learners without adaptation. These assumptions have become increasingly embedded in standards, such as the Common Core State Standards (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2010). The reauthorization report for the CCSS, "calls for higher standards, better assessments, teacher training, and more accountability" which Morrell (2010) explains contains implicit assumptions:

> The (implicit) problem, according to the U.S. Department of Education, lies with uninformed teachers, unskilled and unmotivated students, and school districts that hold students to low standards. Such assumptions only lead to increased standardization and increased assessment without increased investment in the human capital of teachers and students and communities. (p. 147)

Morrell (2010) points out the primary dilemma of standardization: standardization reifies adolescent literacy instruction focused on generic, context free literacy practices and then

assumes lagging student achievement is the result of uninformed teachers, unskilled and unmotivated students, and low standards.

Disciplinary literacy is a pedagogy rooted in critical sociocultural theory and aligned with tenets of culturally sustaining pedagogies. The premise is that each discipline as a subculture has its own rules, norms, and ways of constructing knowledge; therefore, by apprenticing adolescents into the discipline's production of knowledge, they are better able to critically question and challenge the knowledge (Moje, 2007, 2008, 2010, 2015). Moje (2008) argues that disciplinary literacy approaches to adolescent literacy instruction, "build an understanding of how knowledge is produced in the disciplines, rather than just building knowledge in the disciplines" (p. 97). This aligns disciplinary literacy with other asset pedagogies because it positions the adolescent as an expert—able to use and center their socially and culturally constructed literacies within the curriculum to question and create knowledge within the discipline rather than upholding the dominant canons of each discipline. Learners are not passively learning knowledge, they are apprentices learning the discipline itself with full access to question and create knowledge within it (Moje, 2008, 2010; Nocon & Cole, 2009).

I use the term adolescent literacies to distance adolescent literacy from content area reading and foreground, "how youth use literacy and text to navigate, synthesize, and hybridize multiple spaces...in a globalized, technologized, and hybridized world" (Moje, 2002a, p. 116). Disciplinary literacies support a conception of adolescent literacies rooted in multiliteracies pedagogies because, "When technologies of meaning are changing so rapidly, there cannot be one set of standards or skills that constitute the ends of literacy learning, however taught" (Mirra et al., 2018, p. 64). Multiliteracies point to the shifting modes youth

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use to make meaning across context, and each of these contexts has its own specialized

Discourse. Disciplinary literacy recognizes, "the interaction of text, context, and learner

cannot be considered independent of each other" and makes the ideologies and Discourse

embedded within multimodal texts and disciplinary contexts explicit for learners (Moje et al.,

2000, p. 176).

Highly Effective

My research sought to describe the literacy instructional practices of highly effective

educators at an urban Catholic high school. Warner's (2016) review of the extant literature

on teaching and teacher education identified there is little consensus as to what characterizes

excellent or effective teaching; resulting in the recommendation that use of the term is clearly

defined. Thus, I define highly effective instruction with the characteristics listed in Table 2.

Table 2

Characteristics of Highly Effective Instruction

Highly effective educators have knowledge of pedagogy and their discipline enabling them to apprentice learners into a discipline's knowledge construction and specialized literacy practices (Moje, 2007, 2008, 2010; Pressley, 2006)
Highly effective educators develop knowledge of students' hybrid identities in order to critically center students' languages and literacy practices within the curriculum (Au, 1992; Domínguez, 2017; Hollins, 2015; Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1992, 2017a; Lewis, Encisco, & Moje, 2007; Moje & McCarthy, 2002).
Highly effective educators modify, extend, and/or challenge prescriptive curricula, standards, or instructional practices, prioritizing the learner, context, and text (Irvine, 2002; Moje, Dillon, & O'Brien, 2000).
Highly effective educators maintain high standards for student achievement beyond test results including student growth in agency and community accountability (Alim & Paris, 2017; Domínguez, 2017; Lee & McCarty, 2017; Morrell, 2010).

This is not an exhaustive or complete list, but these characteristics of a highly effective educator, informed by my theoretical frameworks, supported my ability to identity and describe the literacy instructional practices within this study.

Conclusion

In the opening vignette, Alex Jerome, a teacher at Juan Diego, the urban Catholic school where I conducted my study, is concerned that capturing students' reading and literacy abilities through inflexible standardized assessments is akin to catching smoke in a bottle. Within standardized assessments, what counts as literacy becomes an impermeable glass barrier, accessible to students through a narrow opening that can only capture wisps of the fuller picture of who they are and who they could be. Critical sociocultural theory helps me understand that within Miss Jerome's metaphor, the glass bottle naming what is captured and counted as valid knowledge is socially and culturally constructed and rooted in colonial histories that constructed American education. Culturally sustaining pedagogies garners the knowledge that the bottle was created as a wall to restrict access and maintain power for dominant groups. The very presence and power of the bottle must be critiqued, challenged, or destroyed for education to be part of a humanizing endeavor that conceptualizes students as whole persons—not as wisps of smoke to be captured. As complementary frameworks for this study, critical sociocultural theory and CSP challenged me to enter the schooling spaces of adolescents in urban Catholic schools to learn their histories, their present, and potential futures; to seek out the dynamic nature of Juan Diego's linguistically and racially diverse students' language and literacy practices; to learn alongside highly effective teachers that daily negotiated the pressures of standardization within adolescent literacy instruction.

In Chapter 2, I will provide a review of the related literature to consider the historicized context of adolescent literacy instruction within urban Catholic high schools and research that offers hope and possibility for humanizing adolescent literacy instruction. Chapter 3 will include a rationale for the selection of methodologies, the design of the study, and analytic techniques for data analysis. Chapters 4 and 5 will include findings and discussion and Chapter 6 contains conclusion, implications, and recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH

In this chapter I will review the bodies of literature central to the research (a) urban

Catholic education in a historicized American schooling context, (b) asset pedagogies, and

(c) adolescent literacy instruction. Culturally sustaining pedagogies (CSP)'s aim is to

reconceptualize and revitalize schooling "as a site for sustaining the cultural ways of being of

communities of color rather than eradicating them" as a response "to the many ways that

schools continue to function as part of the colonial project" (Alim & Paris, 2017, p. 2). Given

that purpose, I begin the review of literature examining the ways American literacy education

was built to marginalize and oppress cultural groups from colonial times to today, how urban

Catholic schools have both resisted and maintained dominant culture, and current research

studying adolescent literacy practices in urban faith based schools. Next, I consider

adolescent literacies focusing on the interconnection of multidimensional, fluid youth

identities and hybrid multiliteracies across contexts (Alvermann, Hagood, Heron-Hruby,

Hughes, Williams, & Yoon, 2007; Kinloch, 2009; Kirkland, 2009; Kirkland & Hull, 2011;

Moje et al., 2008). Additionally, how educators' agency centers students' identities and

literacies even with increasingly standardized educational systems (Coffee et al., 2017;

Mahiri, 2005; Vasudevan, 2007). Finally, I examine traditional disciplinary literacy

instruction and asset pedagogies instruction considering the potential for culturally sustaining

pedagogies and disciplinary literacy practices to work in tandem (Machado et al., 2017;

Watanabe Kganetso, 2017; Woodard et al.,2017).

American Literacy Education

Giroux (1987) describes the literacies of a colonizer as an:

ideological vehicle through which to legitimate schooling as a site of character development; in this case, literacy is associated with the transmission and mastery of a unitary Western tradition based on the virtues of hard work, industry, respect for family, institutional authority, and an unquestioning respect for the nation. In short, literacy becomes a pedagogy of chauvinism dressed up in the lingo of the Great Books. (p.3)

Grioux's (1987) point is that schooling and literacy have historically been used as tools of oppression that replace culturally diverse languages and literacies with a Western tradition that has different inherent values. These values may be disguised behind meritocratic terms such as "hard work" or "respect for family," but schooling was never neutral (Freire, 1996; Street, 1984). Instead, schooling has been a vehicle for political ideologies that uphold western traditions and values rooted in patriarchy and white supremacy (Giroux, 1987).

Colonial School Systems

From the beginning of the American education system, schools have been sites of physical, cultural, and linguistic exclusion (Smitherman, 2000). Those cultural groups without power within society were either excluded from formal education altogether, or, once allowed access, only at the expense of damage or erasure of students' heritage language, literacies, and community knowledge (Freire, 1996; Giroux, 1987; Nocon & Cole, 2009). Early American schools of the colonial era were designed to perpetuate and assimilate students into a desired civic attitude or worldview that reflected white, male, monolingual dominance; a political system created by those in power to maintain power which hooks (1996) conceptualizes as white supremacy. The demanded assimilation maintained the power dynamics within the colonial society by systematic exclusion of all other cultural groups

from formal sites of schooling. Schools, as an extension of the surrounding society, acted as a gatekeeper to either restrict access or assimilate the population into these values (Nocon & Cole, 2009).

Nocon and Cole (2009) describe how literacy was used as a gatekeeper within colonial America:

> As part and parcel of increasing social complexity, the cultural legacies of literacy...were kept under the control of social elites, who arranged for selected groups of people under their control to acquire and to use literacy in the interests of the state...[to] facilitate the enslavement of other humans. (p. 16)

First, as Nocon and Cole (2009) articulated, through denying access to schooling and literacy to particular groups. In particular, policies and laws made it illegal to teach persons of Color to read or write. In 1740 the first anti-literacy law was passed in South Carolina making it a criminal offense to teach Black, mixed race, or enslaved persons to read or write (Monaghan, 1998). Missouri's Act of 1847 made it illegal to teach persons of Color to read or write or to gather for religious worship without a "sheriff, constable, marshal, police officer or justice of the peace" present. The expressed intent was to prevent an enslaved person from forging documents that would cause them to escape or form a rebellion, but the larger implication was to deny access to education and literacies to limit access to social, economic, and political freedoms (Monaghan, 1998). Denying access to literacy maintained white supremacy by denying other racialized groups access to the tools or power (Morrell, 2008; Nocon & Cole, 2009).

Second, when legal access to schooling and literacy was granted for selective gendered or racialized groups, education was used a tool of oppression for the interest of the government (Nocon & Cole, 2009). For example, during the colonial era Indigenous children

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were forcibly removed from their families and communities and placed in American run, English only schools (Cajete, 1994; Deloria & Wildcat, 2001). After the Civilization Act of 1819, isolation of Indigenous children within missionary schools was legalized making the American government an active agent in the erasure of language, literacies, and cultures of the native students in favor of a Western standard of literacy (Smitherman & Smitherman-Donaldson, 1977). Du Bois (1903/1989) described double consciousness, or the implication of a split consciousness for Black persons operating within American society that must adopt the dominant culture but at the same time try to cling to their own cultural identities. Within colonial school the same etic was established and persists, "students of color have to become 'White' on some level, at least culturally, in order to achieve" (Leonardo, 2013, p. 96).

As access to schooling increased throughout the colonial and postcolonial periods of American history for females and varying social classes, schooling and literacy remained tools of cultural oppression through the privileging of certain types of literacy over others. For example, during the 1800s there was a shift from teaching reading orally to teaching reading and writing—eventually replacing the written word as valid knowledge and devaluing oral literacies within literate society (Monaghan, 1998; Street, 1984). The valuing of "written language over the spoken word was a retreat from valuing oral communication as an equally valid indicator of human intellect and creativity" (Alvermann, 2011a, p. 15). The standard of literacy was effectively redefined, making access to the valued literacies more limited. The limitations of writing over orality are explained by Delpit (2006):

> [writing] communicates a message solely through a text, through the word. Orality, by contrast, has available to it other vehicles for communication: not only the message transmitted through words...but by factors such as the relationship of the individuals talking, where the interaction is taking place, what prior knowledge and/or understanding the participants bring to the communication encounter, the

gestures used, the speaker's ability to adjust the message if the audience doesn't understand, intonation, facial expressions, and so forth—the con, (meaning "with,") in context. (p. 96)

An increasing focus on writing over orality strips meaningful context from literacy practice. Delpit (2006) contends that the context that is left is the assumed context of the dominant culture. Leonardo (2004) explains this as white educational supremacy or, "a process of domination" that secures privilege, control and white racial hegemony within educational policies and leadership structures (p. 137). Whiteness is presumed the standard, and students receive capital and rewards the most closely they approximate whiteness across ways of knowing, speaking, looking, and being (Bonilla-Silva, 2003).

Urban Catholic Schools

Throughout the 17th and 18th century, attempts were made to challenge the colonizing and white educational supremacist roots of public schools to better account for religious freedom (Grant & Hunt, 1992), racial and ethnic diversities (Earl, 2008; Genovese, 2015), and linguistic diversity (Gabert, 1973). However, challenges to religious diversity within public school systems were slow given the dominance of a Protestant ethos (Adams & Joshi, 2016; Jeynes, 2007; Prothero, 2007; Segall & Burke, 2013).

Local Catholic parishes and dioceses began to create alternative schools and school systems "to protect the flock from an alien Protestant environment" (Lazerson, 1977, p. 298) which manifested in the burning of Catholic owned businesses (Grant & Hunt, 1992) and churches (Gabert, 1973). Catholic schools were initially founded as a response to the dominant Protestant ethic found in the curriculum and instruction of many public schools at the time, but also as a place to escape from and heal from externalized religious persecution and oppression (Adams & Joshi, 2015; Jeynes, 2007, Prothero, 2007).

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The earliest Catholic schools were founded in the 1720s by orders of nuns and

Catholic parishes in populous areas where Catholic immigrants were more likely to reside

such as Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, and New Orleans where the population of

Catholic immigrants was concentrated (Jeynes, 2007). Originally, all Catholic schools were

under the control of a local church parish, local diocese, or holy order and remained small in

size, availability, and enrollment (Horning, 2013).

Spanish and Mexican Catholic missions in what is currently the Southwestern states

of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona were first established in the 1600s. After Mexico's

independence in 1821, the largely Spanish Franciscans who oversaw the missions withdrew

from the missions and Folk Catholicism took its place. During the 1800s Folk Catholicism,

"assumed an increasing importance and included local religious art, hymns and prayers,

religious dramas or plays...and pious associations" (Butler, Engh, & Spalding, 1999, p. 179).

When Catholic missionaries moves to the current American southwest in the late 1800s to

reestablish the missions under Roman Catholic leadership and establish schools, tensions

emerged. Reid (1901), an early teacher at a mission school in Santa Clara College in

California explains one incident early in the school's transition from Folk Catholicism

leadership to Roman Catholic:

> Mounted on a common wagon, and lashed to an upright pole attached to the wagon
> bed, stood a stuffed Judas [follower of Jesus believed to have betrayed him], and
> native Californians, with tasseled sombreros and gay calizineros were engaged in the
> religious duty of thrusting at him with swords and smiting him with clubs as they
> rode up on their dashing chargers...Father Nobili was indignant and went out to order
> the removal of the effigy, but no one seemed willing to obey his orders...The
> Californians were bent on having their ancient customs observed, and in equally
> vigorous Castilian, with equally expressive gesticulation, they responded –"Es
> nuestro costumbre! Es nuestro costumbre!" [It's our custom!]...he commanded the
> actors to remove the wagon and its contents at once, or the church would be closed
> and would not be open for Easter Sunday! This threat bought the hidalgos to their

sense and they proceeded to wheel the effigy away...That I believe, was the last time they undertook to practice their Holy Saturday 'Costumbre' at Santa Clara.(Reid, 1901, pp. 194-195)

At the beginning of the 1800s, Catholics made up only 1% of the American population and were designated "missionary status" by the Roman Catholic Church (Grant & Hunt, 1992). As the excerpt from Reid (1901) illustrates, the establishment of Catholic schools had varied purposes in colonial American through the late 1800s: on one hand, to escape the marginalization within American society, and on the other hand to intentionally spread a unified vision of Catholicism.

Catholic immigration began to increase during the first industrial revolution which peaked between 1820 and 1840 (Grant & Hunt, 1992). It was the second industrial revolution in the late 1800s and early 1900s, that saw a dramatic increase in Catholics. This was largely due to immigration laws such as the Page Act of 1875 which limited immigrants from Asia, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which specifically prevented Chinese immigration, and the Geary Act of 1892 which strengthened the previously mentioned laws (Daniels, 2005). The persistent exclusion of Asian immigrants led to a majority of immigrants coming from European countries such as Ireland, Germany, and Poland—countries with Catholic histories (Daniels, 2005).

Newly arrived immigrants largely settled in urban metropolises. In Chicago, the rise of parish Catholic elementary schools was as ethnically divided as the city in the early 1900s; schools included the title Celtic, Germanic, Slavic, or Latin in their names to distinguish their ethnic identities (Sanders, 1977). The practice created a fierce loyalty to Catholicism in the area with one scholar writing:

those who saw Americanization as a fusion of diverse cultural strangers into a new social whole had to admit that the Catholic school in Chicago eased the immigrant's transition from the old world to the new and, in the process, enriched the City's life.... [the Church's] ethnic policy clearly helped cement the immigrant's loyalty. (Sanders, 1977, p. 55)

Within these ethnic centered religious schools, the heritage language was taught alongside English and cultural traditions were honored while new traditions were introduced (Sanders, 1977). However, this vision of schooling was repudiated by public school adherents at the time. Ella Flagg Young was a teacher, principal, and later superintendent of Chicago Public Schools during the second industrial revolution. She wrote of the new immigrants:

It is the free public school that has made the child of foreign parentage strive to take on habits of thought that would identify him with the people whose ancestors were merged into this social and political society at an earlier date that were his...the differences growing out of the social customs of the many nations into which long ago the races had divided have been brought into the public school to be minimized, obliterated, homogenized in the process of unification. (Sanders, 1977, p. 41)

Ella Flagg Young's views were shared by many who sought legal action to require compulsory public school education. When a 1925 a Supreme Court ruling clarified that compulsory education laws did not require a public school education, the ruling was celebrated by Pope Pious XI and American Catholics because it solidified the existence of Catholic and parochial schools within the American school system, protecting them from Protestant challenges and colonial aims (Gabert, 1973).

A pattern of ethnic and racial segregation in Catholic churches was systematically and structurally instituted throughout the late 1800s. Continuing the focus on Chicago, 3% of the population identified as Black in 1888. Twenty-three Black families petitioned for the exclusive use of St. Mary's basement for Black Catholics. As the congregation grew, they established St. Monica's parish in 1895 as the first Black Catholic parish with a Black priest.

In 1912, a parish school was opened for Black Catholic families—some praising the move and some Catholics in the dioceses calling it "that Jim Crow school" (Sanders, 1977, p. 206). By 1917 an increase in the Black population meant many were attending not St. Monica's, but the parish closest to their home. The Archbishop responded by making St. Monica's exclusively Black and asked no other races to attend. He allowed participation, but not membership, at other parishes for Black Catholics in Chicago. This meant a Black Catholic could attend any church on Sunday, but must be baptized, married, or host funerals at St. Monica's (Sanders, 1977).

Another upswell in Catholic school enrollment occurred during the baby boom era of post-World War II in the 1950s through the 1960s (Horning, 2013; Lazerson, 1977). There was a period of economic prosperity following the war that made Catholic schools financially accessible to a growing middle class (Gabert, 1973). It also was a reaction to the 1954 Brown versus the Board of Education of Topeka in which the Supreme Court ruled racial segregation of public schools was unconstitutional; Catholic schools saw an increase in enrollment as white families sought private schools that were predominantly white (Clotfelter, 1976). During the growing enrollment, hundreds of Catholic schools sprung up to meet the increased demand in populous areas. However, the growth from the white families avoiding racially segregated schools and the boon of new Catholic schools occurred largely in suburban areas, less so in urban neighborhoods (Clotfelter, 1976; Freedman, 2008).

It was in the mid-1960s that Catholic schools had their highest enrollment in American history with over six million students. However, only a decade later these same schools had declining enrollment. Partially this was due to a falling birthrate. In 1957 there were 123 births per 1,000 women whereas a decade later the number was in the mid-80s and

continued to fall (NCES, 1993). Another reason was The Second Vatican Council, a series of

sweeping changes to the Catholic church enacted by Pope John XXIII in 1959. One of the

major church changes was the opening of lay leadership positions, or the ability to serve

various church functions as a church member without taking Holy Orders to become clergy.

As one scholar writes, this, "produced a dramatic change in the cost/benefit ration of

religious life and drained Catholic schools of critical capital" as the number of Catholic nuns

dropped over 30% over the next two decades (Gihleb & Giuntella, 2017, p. 192). Since

Catholic nuns were paid one third or less of the salary of a lay teacher, the skyrocketing cost

of personnel caused many Catholic schools to close even as demand remained high,

particularly in suburban areas (Gihleb & Giuntella, 2017).

The late 1960s through the 1970s marked a transitional time in urban Catholic school

enrollment and demographics. Various means were used to recruit and retain students to

prevent closure in urban Catholic schools that were feeling the impact of changing urban

demographics and the financial challenges of a declining number of nuns and other clergy

working in schools. Many urban Catholic schools began actively recruiting non-Catholic

families who lived in the geographic area of the school (Grant & Hunt, 1992). Freedman

(2008) describes the historical context of the 1970s:

> By the early 1970's, the years I recall, the civil rights movement had decisively
> turned its attention from South to North and from the de jure segregation of Jim Crow
> to the de facto segregation of economically separate communities and schools. As bit
> of African American wisdom puts it, 'In the South, the white man will let you get
> close but not high, and in the North, the white man will let you get high but not
> close.' Working-class whites, more often than not Catholics, formed the tense border
> between inner-city black poverty and suburban Protestant and Jewish affluence. (p. x)

Freedman's experiences in urban Catholic schools was during a period marked by growing

racial, ethnic, and religious diversity that was reflective of the local geographic region (Grant

& Hunt, 1992). While the geographic neighborhoods, and therefore the public schools, were racially and ethnically segregated, urban Catholic schools did not have district lines or boundaries for attendance (Freedman, 2008). As a result, urban Catholic schools had greater diversity compared to public school counterparts in similar areas (McClosky, 2008). Additionally, scholarships were used to attract more families leading to greater socioeconomic diversity, as well (Sanders, 1977).

Academic achievement in urban Catholic schools. As various forms of diversity slowly increased in urban Catholic schools throughout the later part of the 20th century, the academic achievement remained higher for all enrolled students than public school counterparts on multiple standardized measures (Jeynes, 2003, 2004, 2008, 2009, 2012). This high achievement was first noted in 1982 using a twenty-year longitudinal statistical analysis of Catholic school students' academic achievement on standardized measures, high school graduation rates, and entry into post-secondary education compared to public school counterparts in urban and suburban areas (Greeley, 1982). Greeley (1982) found as much as a 25% difference between urban Catholic school students' achievement across variables within certain subgroups. The analysis has been repeated multiple times since with more recent data, making the academic advantage at urban Catholic schools a statistically significant fifty year trend (Jeynes, 2004, 2012).

High academic achievement in urban Catholic schools has remained true across demographic subgroups, a phenomenon described in the literature as the Catholic effect (e.g., Greeley, 1982; Hallinan & Kubitschek, 2010; Hoffer et al., 1985; Morgan & Sørensen, 1999). Greeley's (1982) original statistical analysis of student achievement data found that when all other variables were controlled for, the academic inequities between students of

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Color from low socioeconomic households and their white, middle class peers was

significantly lower or nonexistent in urban Catholic schools. Jeynes (2012) explains:

> faith-based schools reduce the achievement gap by approximately 25%, or more even
> when one adjusts for socioeconomic status. And indeed, via the examination of
> nationwide data sets and meta-analysis, it is now apparent that African American and
> Latino children in private religious schools perform higher academically than their
> counterparts in public schools ...religious private schools benefit the lowest
> socioeconomic status (SES) quartile of students the most. (pp. 166-167)

The standardized measures of achievement used to create these statistics vary but include the

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), National Educational Longitudinal

Study (NELS), and data points such as "diligence [retention] and taking harder courses ...the

two categories most strongly related to performing well on achievement tests" (Jeynes, 2003,

p. 145). The trend has remained steady since 1982, but the gains have increased since the

early 2000s leading Jeynes to wonder, "Why has the religious school advantage become

greater, in recent years, at the secondary school level?" (2004, p. 212).

While striking academic achievement statistics such as these are used to purport the

efficacy of urban Catholic schools, the research is fractured in the explanation of *how*

achievement is obtained or should be defined. Greeley (1982) offered that his report had

controlled for "the most obvious selectivity phenomena—parental and student aspiration,

parental education, and student's previous academic performance" and in the results,

narrowed the difference between urban Catholic education and other forms of schooling to

"quality of classroom instruction and the disciplinary atmosphere of the school" (Greeley,

1982, p. 111). In other words, selectivity in admissions, socioeconomic status, and career

goals did not account for the academic variance between Catholic and public-school

achievement—it was entirely dependent on quality instruction and discipline.

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Traditional teaching methods. Morgan (2001) argues in a theoretical piece drawn from a literature review of the extant literature that Catholic schools are, "common schools that distribute opportunities for learning more equitably than do public schools" (p. 361). However, the instructional practices within urban Catholic schools are often critiqued and there is little evidence that effective instructional practices are consistent across schools. Fifty years ago, Lee (1967) wrote:

> Despite the empirical researchers which have shown that the lecture is the weakest instructional method of all, it remains the principal pedagogical device in both government and Catholic schools at all levels. Catholic school teachers appear to make wider use of the lecture than the teachers in the government schools. Quite possibly the three most important reasons for this are the greater traditionalism, the greater authoritarianism, and the generally weaker pedagogical preparation of Catholic school teachers. (p. 286)

Indeed, ethnographies of urban Catholic schools demonstrate a reliance on traditional lecture methods. McCloskey (2008) spent one year in an urban Catholic school and closely noted the instructional practices used by educators were predominantly lecture. Students were predominantly sitting in rows, listening to a teacher, and using worksheets or taking notes to track what the speaker was saying. The exception was a dynamic science teacher who structure collaborative learning assignments, interactive labs, and engaged students in whole class discussions. McCloskey (2008) noted with regret that the science educator eventually left the school for a more lucrative opportunity at a public school. His work confirms other ethnographies exploring the instructional practices at urban Catholic and other urban faith-based schools (Burgess, 1983).

High expectations. Greeley (1982) also made the claim in his seminal piece that discipline, or high expectations for students' behavior were another causal factor predicting student academic success in urban Catholic schools. High expectations behaviorally and

academically have been a distinguishing mark of American Catholic schools for over a

century. In 1920, the Catholic school sponsored by the Cathedral of the Immaculate

Conception included the following rules among its regulations for high school students:

> Repeated instances of absence from school, or tardiness in arriving, except for grave
> causes, will not be tolerated.
> Any boldness or extreme fashions in dress, or 'dolling up' either in or out of school,
> will not be tolerated.
> The first offense of profane or indecent language by any pupil will be followed by
> dismissal. (McMenamin, 1920, n.p.)

The content of the rules is notable for their consistency over time. In a content analysis of

discipline policies from 35 urban Catholic high schools within two dioceses of a larger

metropolitan area, several findings support Greeley's original assertion (Philippe et al., 2017)

and mirror the same regulations from a Catholic school handbook written nearly 100 years

prior. Largely, the researchers found, "Catholic school discipline policies vary greatly across

school settings," however there was some internal consistency on policies

> characterized as tied to the academic rigor, personal character, discipline, and order
> espoused by many Catholic schools. For example, truancy, tardies, cheating, dress
> code, internet misuse, and failure to serve consequences...Taken together, these
> behaviors reflect a focus on being present for instruction, maintaining academic
> integrity, and properly presenting oneself through dress. (Philippe et al., 2017, p. 19)

The study is limited by its localized focus, but as the first of its kind to systematically analyze

discipline policies across urban Catholic high schools, its findings point to discipline policies

that "relate to preparation for post-secondary college experiences and Catholic high schools'

focus on academic rigor" (Philippe et al., 2017, p. 19). However, the authors are concerned

that the schools use punitive and exclusionary disciplinary practices that more closely

resemble public school policies rather than reflecting the moral development and social

justice ethos that reflect Catholic church teachings. Additionally, the focus on punitive and

exclusionary discipline practices within public schools have been proven to disproportionately impact students of Color (Lee & Slaughter-Defoe, 2004). Therefore, while understudied, the authors caution that disciplinary policies may encourage academic rigor and college preparedness, but at the expense of students already marginalized within traditional school settings (Philippe et al., 2017).

Greeley's (1982) claims about effective instructional practices and high expectations within urban Catholic schools have been critiqued and nuanced with claims the Catholic effect is better explained by community support, culturally responsive instruction, and religiosity.

Community support. Community support was initially suggested as a cause of the Catholic effect by Coleman and Hoffer (1987). The authors studied 1,015 public and private schools over four years using surveys and achievement data to claim Catholic schools are more likely to be value communities, or intentionally created spaces where values are shared by home and school. The shared values lead to families support of teachers, exemplified in attendance rates and supporting students' homework completion and study habits which, in turn, lead to academic growth. Further, the authors argue that public schools do not share the same uniform value communities and are unlikely to see academic growth (Coleman & Hoffer, 1987).

Neal (1997) also suggested the local community was the cause of the Catholic effect, noting the low quality of urban competition in schooling. Neal's argument is summarized by Morgan (2001), "Catholic schooling is particularly beneficial to students who have poor public schooling alternatives, especially students from families who are not able to afford to live in public school districts with the best public schools" (p. 361). In a follow up statistical

analysis using a longitudinal data set of Catholic school graduates' outcomes ten years after graduation, Neal and his colleague confirmed his original claim noting that students who graduated were more likely to have access to college and higher earning careers than geographical peers who had attended public schools (Grogger & Neal, 2000). The Catholic school effect was due to access to better educational resources than public school contemporaries.

A similar line of research also considers the community to be the impetus for the Catholic effect. There is evidence that urban Catholic schools connected to an active church community are more likely to view students' religious literacies as a community resource (Green, 2011; Grogger & Neal, 2000; Holland, 2014; Neal, 1997; Openjuru & Lyster, 2007). Openjuru and Lyster (2007) examined the syncretism of literacy and worship in Uganda, noting how the discourse of the church or religious practices can lead to literacy learning in other spaces. They concluded that literacy is not an individual skill, but part of a community resource that benefits its members (Openjuru & Lyster, 2007). Catholic schools, therefore, are more likely to draw on these literacies to leverage students learning since they are often connected to a church parish.

Similarly, Green (2011) traced the lineage of African Americans in urban Catholic schools since 1727 looking for the source of high academic achievement. He found African American Catholics created sites of socioculturally constructed literacies by integrating their own cultural and social experiences into Catholic schools (Green, 2011). Green (2011) argues the literacies of African Americans were acknowledged and integrated into the curriculum validating their cultural membership; within this iterative process, strong literacies were developed that acknowledged and valued students' identities.

In a series of interviews with Black church leaders in one urban church about the

systems and programs they use to support local faith-based schools, Holland (2014) found

church and school partnerships "send consistent messages throughout neighborhoods

regarding the importance of education and demonstrate community support for youth and

young adults (2014, p. 317). This echoes the common theme of scholars who argue

community support explains urban Catholic school students' success: Catholic schools

provide a community supported alternative to comparatively ineffective schooling options

and draw from literacy resources of the church community to provide rigorous instruction

(Green, 2011; Grogger & Neal, 2000; Holland, 2014; Neal, 1997; Openjuru & Lyster, 2007).

Culturally responsive instruction. Another common explanation for the Catholic

effect argues communities, families, and religious identities are drawn into the curriculum at

urban Catholic schools in a way public schools cannot legally and ethically. Dallavis (2011a)

describes the historic ideology of Catholic schooling formally "acknowledge[es] the primacy

of the parent in education" (p. 142). Therefore, Catholic schools function

> as an extension of the home, and as a proxy for the parents—chosen by the parents—
> the Catholic school can achieve a depth of cultural competence that may not be
> possible for a state-sponsored school in the United States...[a Catholic school] holds a
> special privilege and responsibility, both as a cultural institution in the community...
> and as fundamentally theirs: the place where the culture, faith, and values of the home
> are transmitted to the next generation. (Dallavis, 2011a, p. 142)

Dallavis points to the agency of parents and families in selecting a Catholic school for their

students because the school will honor and reflect cultural practices and values of the home,

similar to Coleman and Hoffer's (1987) designation that Catholic schools are value

communities. However, Dallavis links the agency of families and cultural congruence

between home and school as catalysts for student achievement—not just values. The cultural

congruence, for example, means educators can leverage students' religious literacies to promote literacy achievement within schools. This is furthered in his later study of an urban Catholic middle school instructor who included sociopolitical consciousness, a tenet of culturally responsive pedagogy, as a meaningful piece of instruction (Dallavis, 2011b). The educator in the ethnographic study tried to center her predominantly Latinx and immigrant students' voices within the classroom but was met with resistance when students' interests and concerns conflicted with the school's Catholic mission and vision—such as a conversation surrounding abortion. However, the teacher was able to integrate critical conversations surrounding social justice, morals, and ethics when they were in line with Catholic doctrine. Dallavis concludes that a culturally relevant pedagogy can thrive in a Catholic school, though strict adherence to doctrine may lead to missed opportunities. However, in the sociopolitical consciousness raising, students experienced cultural congruence and increased engagement—predictive of student achievement (Dallavis, 2011b).

Eakle's (2007) qualitative study of space in an all-Black urban Christian school nuances Dallavis' argument: he similarly argues that religious based school can, "create collective thoughts and actions that bring communities together" but can also isolate the religious communities (Eakle, 2007, p. 504). Eakle (2007) found that the socially and culturally constructed literacies within one religious school site carried the power to position students against those outside the community. Given the predominance of white, female educators and church leaders who teach in urban Catholic schools historically and today (Earl, 2008; Sanders, 1977), this raises questions about whose cultures are valued within Catholic school sites and the implications for students' whose religious community is not copacetic to the schools. As such, academic growth and achievement are reflective of

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students' adaptation to the school's culture and values. Along this vein, LeBlanc (2015) found both Catholic and non-Catholic students at an urban Catholic school sacrificed identity, community affiliations, and histories in order, "to enact identities favorable to the school, to convert various forms of cultural capital associated with the Mass into an assemblage of rewards" (LeBlanc, 2015, p. 278). Both scholars highlight the role of religious culture and literacies within the schools.

Dallavis (2011a, 2011b) argues with other scholars that Catholic schools are poised to integrate students' and communities' values and knowledge into the classroom (Barrett, 2010; Green, 2011; Openjuru & Lyster, 2007) but recognizes the "fraught conversions" and tensions of a school space dominated by authoritarian control (Eakle, 2007; LeBlanc, 2015). This leaves an unresolved tension about the efficacy of attributing culturally responsive instruction within urban Catholic schools as an explanation of the Catholic effect.

Religiosity and biblical literacy. Religiosity refers to the behaviors, habits, or "habitus" that characterize a devout religious adherent (Barrett, 2010; Bourdieu, 1985). The influence of religiosity has been positively correlated with behaviors predictive of academic achievement (Holland, 2014; Jeynes, 2009, 2010), increased standardized test scores (Jeynes, 2003, 2010), and reduced stress (Krägeloh, Chai, Shepherd, & Billington, 2012) compared to peers who do not identify as religious. While not all students who attend Catholic schools identify as Catholic or as devoutly religious, a predominant claim in the body of literature is the social and cultural environment of a Catholic school constructs and rewards religiosity in students (e.g., LeBlanc, 2015), in turn creating higher academic outcomes (Barrett, 2010; Jeynes, 2009). Testing this construct, Barrett (2010) surveyed 306 seniors across an urban school district and completing 66 follow up interviews, Barrett (2010) found "[r]eligious

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involvement serves to shape students' habitus in ways that are conducive to successful educational outcomes" (p. 473). In other words, religiosity positively correlated with habits and behaviors that promote educational outcomes for both public school and religious private school students, confirming previous studies.

Another aspect of religiosity that is positively correlated with academic and literacy achievement is reading sacred texts. High levels of Biblical literacy, or regular reading and knowledge of the Bible, are associated with higher levels of achievement and better school behavior (Jeynes, 2009). Within Catholic schools, required Theology courses use the Bible, Catholic catechism, and other sacred texts within the curriculum.

Trying to better understand the correlation, Rackley (2014) observed two groups of youth, one Methodist and another Latter-day Saints, engaging with the Bible. She noted that the texts had "powerful influences on youths' literate practices" including the ways they extracted and constructed meaning from the sacred text (Rackley, 2014, p. 431). Later research with a colleague included in depth interviews with the same students over the course of two years and identified the students' interaction with the Bible increased their literacy skills and strategies when engaging with complex texts (Rackley & Kwok, 2016). Specifically, students increased their familiarity with diction, syntax, literary devices, and managing contradictions (Rackley & Kwok, 2016). This supported previous work describing religiosity and religious literacies as predictors of academic achievement (Holland, 2014; Jeynes, 2009, 2010), illuminating the literacy skills that engagement with sacred texts can develop.

Juzwik (2014) completed a content analysis of interdisciplinary scholarship to better understand how reading sacred texts impacts literacies. She identified Biblicism as a

"historically evolving set of sociocultural mediated practices" and notes "few studies have systematically studied how evangelical [devoutly religious] children and youth develop literacy practices surrounding the Bible" (Juzwik, 2014, p. 342). Religiosity, particularly engagement with sacred texts, is connected to positive academic and literacy outcomes and part of a mandated curriculum within Catholic high schools. Few studies have examined how religiosity and religious literacies are constructed (e.g., LeBlanc, 2015; Rackley, 2014; Skerrett, 2016) despite recommendations to study religious youth' literacy learning in order to understand how culturally responsive practices can draw on adolescents' socioculturally constructed knowledge (Dallavis, 2011a, Magaldi-Dopman & Park-Taylor, 2014; Rackley & Kwok, 2016; Ronald, 2012; Skerrett, 2016).

Conclusion

American education is historically marked by physical, cultural, and linguistic exclusion of any bodies or ideologies outside of a wealthy, white, Protestant, male, monolingual identity. The Catholic school system is one example of initial resistance, its creation marking a place to actively sustain and foster predominantly segregated Eurocentric cultural identities, and the schools continue to produce high levels of academic achievement across racial, socioeconomic, and linguistic groups.

Within urban Catholic schools, there is a history of academic achievement for students termed the Catholic effect (Greeley, 1982). While community support, culturally responsive instruction, and student religiosity, particularly engagement with sacred texts, are connected to positive academic and literacy outcomes, few studies have looked at how these literacy practices are constructed in urban Catholic high schools (e.g., LeBlanc, 2015; Rackley, 2014; Skerrett, 2016) despite calls for examination of religious youth cultures and

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literacies in order to understand how asset pedagogies can draw on adolescents' funds of knowledge (Dallavis, 2011a; Magaldi-Dopman & Park-Taylor, 2014; Rackley & Kwok, 2016; Ronald, 2012).

<div align="center">**Adolescent Literacies**</div>

The research on urban Catholic schooling has been applied to an exploration of youth literacy practices and their construction within the unique context of faith based schooling (Rackley, 2014; Sarroub, 2002; Skerrett, 2016). Extending this line of inquiry, my work examines the instructional practices that support adolescent literacy in an urban Catholic school. In this review of the literature I turn to adolescent literacy research aligned with my theoretical framing of adolescent literacies by critical sociocultural, culturally sustaining, and multiliteracies pedagogies as detailed in Chapter 1. Largely, the field demonstrates adolescent youth have socioculturally constructed language and literacy practices tied to multifaceted and hybrid identities that are both foreclosed and sustained across schooling sites.

Identities and Literacy Practices

Race, ethnicity, and religion shape identities and thus the language and literacy practices adolescents use. For example, Skerrett (2016) used a sociocultural theory of literacy in a case study of Nina, a fourteen-year-old negotiating her multiple identities within her freshman year at a public high school. Nina identified as a female Mexican American Christian and demonstrated her negotiation of these identities across religious and secular contexts; namely how her religious identity informed how she performed and developed literacies, such as daily engagement with a sacred text, prayer, and "reawakening her listening ear to God's voice" (Skerrett, 2016, p. 982). Nina "took up and practiced other

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identities and literacies," across different contexts (Skerrett, 2016, p. 982). For example, Nina cited her religious convictions made her uncomfortable with lyrics and content in songs selected in her Hip-Hop dance group; in the negotiation between her identity within the social group, as a dancer, and as a Christian, she decided to leave the Hip-Hop group and privileged her Christian identity. Nina approached the literacies of reading and listening to lyrics and performing dances through the negotiation of identities tied to social interaction and cultures.

Sarroub (2002) similarly used a sociocultural theory of literacy for her ethnographic study of six Yemeni adolescents as they navigated their religious and academic identities across cultural contexts that included school, volunteering at a community center, mosques, social gatherings, and home. Sarroub recognized that culture and cognition were co-created for the six adolescents as they navigated the different cultural and social spaces and their different literate demands. The findings focused on the use of tools to negotiate social and academic spaces for themselves across social settings and cultural norms that were expected in each setting (Sarroub, 2002). In this example, the adolescents used several tools to support and negotiate how they understand their racial and religious identities within these spaces including (a) religious sacred texts and (b) creating their own "inbetween" third spaces when such negotiations were restricted.

Together, Skerrett (2016) and Sarroub (2002) demonstrate race, ethnicity, and religion shape the identities and as such the languages adolescents use and the literacy practices they engage in. Nina and the six Yemini women use texts developed across settings to negotiate the different demands placed on their identities.

Youth have identities and literacy practices that are revealed in their engagement with multiliteracies and out of school literacy practices (Kirkland, 2009). Kirkland (2009) used critical theory to guide a three year study of a high school youth, Derrick, who was labeled by his 12th grade composition teacher as disinterested and struggling. Outside of the composition class, however, Derrick designed and produced popular multimodal texts on his personal MySpace social media page. Derrick describes the freedom of writing in a virtual world:

> You know I started using MySpace to keep in touch with my friends. Everybody I knew had a MySpace page, except for me. So I had to get one. When I got one, it was like a new world. There wasn't that many rules. There was no teacher telling you what to do, telling you what you could and could not do. You were free to be creative. I mean...you could do and even be anything you wanted. So MySpace changed the game for me. You know I'm a rapper. So MySpace gave me a place to showcase my talent. I am also a poet, and I was like...I can even post my poems on MySpace too. The more I played around with it, the more I wrote because I had somewhere to put my writing that made me feel good about it, you know. (as cited in Alvermann, 2008, p. 13)

Derrick was labeled by his teachers, but had his own names for himself: rapper, poet, writer. Expanding literacy practices to include multiliteracies and out of school spaces provided the opportunity for Derrick to name and perform his identities which were inexorably tied to literacy practices. The implications are adolescent youth have valuable identities and multiple literacy practices that are revealed in out of school literacy practices (Kirkland, 2009).

Additional research supports the implications put forth by Kirkland (2009) for social interaction between youth around texts of their choice and an expansive definition of texts that honors the literacy practices students regularly engage in. In one study, 60 self-identified reluctant readers, predominantly African Americans, in 7th-9th grades kept reading logs about their out of school reading with popular cultural texts such as magazines, comic books,

watching television, playing video games, listening to music, creating graffiti, and sending emails (Alvermann et al., 2007). Half of the group met one to two times a week at the local library for discussions about the texts they were engaging with. Both groups spent approximately 30 minutes a day between the time school let out until they went to bed reading. The youth in the discussion group were more likely to read texts for fun that others had recommended; leading to two significant findings. First:

> simply being around other youth who are actively engaged in a variety of literacy activities, such as those that were available to media club members, is sufficient motivation to read what others recommend. Second, it suggests that given choices in reading materials and access to literacy activities that adolescents find appealing, even students who struggle to read school-assigned texts will identify as readers outside of school. (Alvermann et al., 2007, p. 44)

Alvermann and her colleagues encourage educators to provide opportunities for social interaction between youth around texts of their choice, an expansive definition of texts that honors the literacy practices students regularly engage in.

A similar study was undertaken in a longitudinal ethnographic study of 79 youth in a predominantly Latinx community Moje, Oberby, Tysvaer, & Morris, 2008). The findings recognized the adolescents read and write outside of school, but not in ways adults and schools typically value. The texts youth most commonly engaged with were "situated in social networks they can identify with" such as Latinx characters, urban settings, and conflicts that are relevant to their own lives, leading the researchers to find, "offering youth high-quality adolescent literature, in addition to canonical texts of English language arts, does appear to make a difference in young people's reading lives" (Moje et al., 2008, p. 29). The study also found reading and writing outside of school was not significantly correlated with academic achievement across the disciplines—perhaps because the texts the youth most

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readily engaged with were most aligned with goals and purposes for reading and writing within the English language arts. This led the recommendation that educators can select audio, digital, video, and other non-print based texts that "offer social capital in the form of information, ideas for self-improvement, models for identities or ways to maintain existing relationships and build new ones" (Moje et al., 2008, p. 29). For example, video games could potentially link the opportunity for social networks and identity development while creating disciplinary knowledge.

Like Moje and her colleagues' research team, Kinloch (2009) used qualitative, ethnographic methods over three years as part of a larger study in an urban community, highlighting ways to engage students in literacies in sustaining ways. She worked with predominantly African American students in a Harlem high school. Phillip, the focal participant, was described as disinterested and disengaged within the school, yet outside of school he was engaged in sophisticated literacy practices. He was concerned about the gentrification and "white-ification" of his Harlem community and documented the systemic processes using photography, video recordings, interviews, and interactive spatial tours of the community, eventually drawing across modes of multiliteracies to create multimodal presentations. These literacy practices were born out of his concern for his neighborhood's loss of history and not recognized in school. He said to Kinloch (2009), "We see this happening right here. Nobody's doing anything about it. We're not talking about gentrification in school, as if it doesn't affect us. As if we can ignore it 'til school's out" (p. 318). Ultimately, the findings recommend making space in to engage students in similar projects of passion and community sustenance to engage learners, "in multiple academic

tasks: critical reading, textual analyses, collaborative work, and performances with and around standardized testing" (Kinloch, 2009, p. 327).

These studies point to common themes: youth regularly engage in literacy practices across multiliteracies for their own purposes ranging from identity formation to community sustenance (Alvermann et al., 2007; Kinloch, 2009; Kirkland, 2009; Moje et al., 2008). Understanding youth literacy practices and their purposes for engaging with a range of texts can be leveraged within schools to support learning. This echoes a review of the literature on out of school literacy practices and places by Kirkland and Hull (2011) who note such research, "can contribute substantively to learning, literacy practice, and the accumulation of literacy experience and expertise, including reading" because the literacy practices, texts, and contexts, "can become primary places for literate participation and action, agency, and identity work" (Kirkland & Hull, 2011, p. 711).

Hall (2012) provides a narrative of her work with a middle school English teacher. They collaboratively created opportunities for students to study and explore their reader identities. Early in the school year, students communicated reader identities were assigned by teacher (e.g., good, poor), teachers were responsible for selecting appropriate books, and teachers provided all necessary instruction to learn reading skills. Hall and the teacher designed conversations and lessons that challenged reading as a passive process through intentional instructional practices such as having students communicate their own interests, needs, and goals. Students were vocal by the end of the school year expressing differences in their reader identities, particularly their desire to not be labeled. One student said, "[at home] People just read. There are no labels." And another, "I read a lot of things [at home] that I don't get to read at school because it's not on my level. I don't care about my level at home.

Whatever that is" (Hall, 2012, p. 371). Hall found, "[i]ncorporating reading instruction, and helping students rewrite their reading identities, is not an additional thing to do. It is a way to reconfigure your instruction and step up what is already happening" (Hall, 2012, p. 373). Students' reading identities are being established and transformed within school spaces; the more educators listen to student input and include it in the curriculum, the more agency students will have to view their reading identities as their own—not a label passively applied to them by teachers.

In a similar line of inquiry, Hall (2009) used a descriptive case study in a 6th grade social studies classroom to narrate interactions between Sarah, labeled by her teacher as a struggling reader, and the teacher, Claire O'Reilly. Mrs. O'Reilly incorporated explicit reading instruction into her social studies content focusing on content area reading strategies to improve metacognition that she modeled with print texts, typically a textbook, and then expected students to use independently. She also reflected often on her teaching, considering how she could better support her students; within the reflections noting she preferred to focus her instructional time supporting students who appeared to want the help. Sarah was aware of her struggling reader label and had a personal goal to hide her status as a "poor reader" from her peers. Primarily, this meant electing to work alone and stay quiet in class; throughout observations never once raising her hand to ask or answer a question, participate in class, or seek out interaction with Mrs. O'Reilly. Ultimately, Sarah became marginalized within the classroom: she did not interact with others to hide her identity. While Sarah knowingly isolated herself, Hall found the marginalization was deepened through teacher instructional decisions:

Mrs. O'Reilly's transactions with Sarah were influenced by a cognitive, print-centric view of reading and the identity she created for Sarah based on that view of reading.....The findings presented here suggest that Sarah was marginalized as a reader because she would not take on the behaviors associated with Mrs. O'Reilly's view of a good reader. (Hall, 2009, p. 298)

Sarah was aware educators, including Mrs. O'Reilly, had prescribed an identity that she was a poor reader. Mrs. O'Reilly's centering of cognitive strategies and print bound reading deepened this identity because Sarah was able to remain silent. Educators had built an identity for Sarah that both Sarah and Mrs. O'Reilly maintained and entrenched.

Finders' (1996, 1997) study of youth in middle school furthers the conversation around identity. Her studies of two social groups, the Social Queens and the Tough Cookies, reveal how the groups used literacy to construct their identities. Similar to Sarroub's (2002) and Skerrett's (2016) work with adolescent females, the youth used literacy practices as tools to perform their identities differently across settings. For example, within school spaces, Finders (1996) noted youth across the two social groups carried books that would gain social capital among peers, even as they read other texts outside of school. Additionally, the girls would write course assignments meant to meet teachers' expectations while covertly passing notes or writing bathroom graffiti to demonstrate other identities including their genders, peer groups, and social status (Finders, 1996, 1997).

Sarroub (2002) and Skerrett's (2016) work established that youth have languages and literacy practices that are rooted within their identities. As Nina showed, her identity was hybrid across cultural groups and fluid and provided her with tools to make sense of her literacy practices. Similarly, works from scholars such as Kinloch (2009) and Kirkland (2009) introduce youth like Phillip and Derrick who demonstrated their identities, agency, and literacy resources through out of school literacy practices with multiliteracies. Hall's

(2009) narrative of Sarah demonstrate the way students' identities are not wholly their own and can be constructed for them if teachers' literacy practices rely only on cognitive strategies and literacy learning is only measured in standardized ways.

Agency and Literacy Practices

Other recent studies of adolescent literacies confirm that youth do not need instruction in the literacies they already have, they need to understand how to recognize and resist dominant and unproductive literacy practices. Moje (2000) conducted a longitudinal cultural study of five adolescents over three years, considering how the Latinx and Asian immigrant youth were, "devalued, dismissed, or vilified them on the basis of their color, culture, or class" and their languages and literacy practices (Moje, 2000, p. 680). Within the school settings, the youth were, "offered school literacy activities that appeared designed to control them" (Moje, 2000, p. 680). The students demonstrated agency by engaging in literacy practices such as writing notes, graffiti, and specialized coded oral and written language. These literacy practices were devalued in the school setting, but the youth used them to construct and represent their identities and build social and relational connections. By devaluing the languages and literacy practices, the school was devaluing and denigrating the students. Moje (2000) recommended a recognition of students' literacy practices, not valorizing or romanticizing dangerous practices, but for what the literacy practices represent and reveal about the students' identities, languages, and valued knowledge. Then, she argues, youth do not need instruction in the literacies they already have, they "need to learn the power of many different literacy and discourse practices so that...they know when particular practices are powerful and when they are reproductive" (Moje, 2000, p. 684).

Powell, McIntyre, and Rightmeyer (2006) took a more comprehensive approach to examine student resistance within schools arguing that resistance to negative and white gazes prevalent in autonomous literacy instruction often leads to a self-sabotage of their own learning. They completed case studies of 46 teachers from 13 schools representing 5th through 8th grades. The researchers used observations, field notes, interviews, and an observation instrument to track student motivation and behaviors. The data was then coded for choice, challenge, collaboration, control, constructing meaning, and consequences, drawn from Anyon's (1997) framework for understanding the influence of social class on schooling. They found a strong correlation between students' off-task behavior and instruction where, "all or most of the variables were absent" (Powell, McIntyre, & Rightmeyer, 2006, p. 38). The researchers offer a list of examples including students going to the bathroom, rolling on the floor, losing their place, coloring, talking to friends, or even crying. In contrast, on-task behavior was strongly correlated with the presence of most or all of the six variables. Ultimately the research team concludes:

> acts of resistance [respond] to instrumental literacy practices that demean and dehumanize. When students are subjected to instruction that is irrelevant and that devalues their language and cultural knowledge, they tend to resist in various ways, sometimes even by sabotaging their own learning. (Powell et al., 2006, p. 39)

The work confirms Moje's (2000) work with youth. Resistant behaviors are coded as deviant even as youth perceive them as logical responses to instruction that "devalues their language and cultural knowledge" (Powell et al., 2006, p. 39).

In an autoethnographic reexamination of her own classroom practices as high school English teacher, Kinloch (2017) uses the narratives to two students, Christina and Derek, to consider how they performed their identities. Sometimes resistance was overt, such as Derek

explaining, "I ain't into that writing" and Christina, "You ain't making me write. I don't

write" (Kinloch, 2017, p. 27). Other times it was less direct through behaviors such as, "eye

rolling, sharp verbal responses, silence, a seemingly disinterested disposition, [or] absence"

(Kinloch, 2017, p. 27). She found these behaviors were performances of resistance, a

> a mode of communication or a particular, directed way of responding to the negative
> gaze...as a way to protect and safeguard themselves from the harmful, potentially
> painful, damaging forms of interaction they often encounter from others who might
> misread, misunderstand, ridicule, and denigrate them. (p. 27)

Kinloch considered how the students' behaviors were read at resistant, problematic, or

defiant throughout the school, and at times even by her, when they are better understood as

an internalized response to the students' valued knowledge, histories, and agency being

denigrated by authority figures they are otherwise powerless to challenge. Kinloch viewed

Christina and Dereck's resistance as an invitation to learn how to "co-construct a classroom

spaces that support multiple literacy engagements and perspectives" in order to support "how

they see themselves—racially, ethnically, linguistically, intellectually, socially, politically,

and civically—in the world" (Kinloch, 2017, p. 38). Like the narrative of Sarah (Hall, 2009),

both Christina and Derek had identities prescribed to them by adults within the school as

angry, struggling, failing, and disruptive. However, having an educator read the identities

differently created an opportunity for the youth to see themselves differently and construct

different identities for themselves.

Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, and Tejada (1999) point to ways students engage in

agentive practices to build spaces for identity construction. In their work with Latinx high

school students from migrant families at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA),

the research team identified third spaces where students are able to negotiate different forms

of academic, social, cultural, and epistemological tension or conflict leading to positive

outcomes (Gutiérrez et al., 1999). Gutiérrez and other colleagues described the conversations

within third space as counterscripts (Gutiérrez et al., 1995), or places where students can

make meaning through their own agentive language and literacy practices. The counterscripts

within the program at UCLA included conversations and language practices such as:

- Students shared and negotiated understandings to resolve conflict
- Students drawing parallels between home and academic lexicon
- Hybrid language practices
- Hybrid genres including cultural humor
- Re-keying of either script as a resource for learning. (Gutiérrez et al., 1999, p. 301)

Importantly, counterscripts challenged an out of school versus in school dichotomy where

literacy practices are somehow separated by context, instead suggesting students' languages,

literacies, and knowledge are hybrid across contexts (Gutiérrez, 2008; Gutiérrez et al., 1999;

Gutiérrez et al., 1995).

Shifting the focus to a high school English classroom, Carter (2006) examines the

experiences of two African American youth, Pam and Natonya, in a British Literature course

for seniors. The students were described as disengaged and failing by their teacher. Through

extended observations and interviews with the students and teacher, Carter noticed the

curriculum and instructional practices did not affirm or recognize Pam and Natonya's

cultural and social knowledge. Rather, in order to be successful, the two women:

> creat[ed] a culturally affirming space within the classroom...[where they] engage[d], analyze[d], and critique[d] the academic content thrust at them, and they had to support and affirm each other using sophisticated strategies, including nonverbal communication, that were invisible to others. (Carter, 2006, p. 357)

Carter (2006) refers to the "sophisticated strategies" such as "nonverbal communication" as

multiliteracies within a "culturally affirming space" (p. 357). This echoes the construction of

counterscripts within third spaces observed by Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López and Tejada (1999). The teacher foreclosed the identities of Pam and Natonya, naming them disengaged and offering no physical space or curricular space to support and affirm their identities. Pam and Natonya, on the other hand, engaged in creating agentive practices to affirm their identities and space within the classroom, albeit an unrecognized third space read as resistant by their teacher (Carter, 2006).

Peterman (2016) offers another example nuancing youth agency. The study focused on eleven ninth grade Latinx students' reading practices in a weekly afterschool group. The group was a place to interact with and read across print, media, and other texts associated with branded young adult fiction. Several youth discussed not reading assigned texts in their formal coursework even as the same texts were read, reread, and interacted with across digital spaces outside of the classroom. Peterman (2016) argued the dissonance could potentially be read as resistance, precluding examination of the instructional practices surrounding the texts. For example, was instruction focused on close reading strategies, a linear reading of the complete text, and text dependent questions? Such practices would be at odds with how the youth in the study were using the texts: reading and rereading certain sections, discussing and analyzing the texts in conversations with peers, and transmediating the content, characters, and dialogue from the texts across digital media. The youth were not non-readers, but transacting with branded fiction in complicated ways that constructed readerly identities.

In school contexts, students' identities can be challenged or constructed for them (Hall, 2009; Kinloch, 2017). What may be read as resistant behaviors by students are often examples of student agency to resist curricula that excludes their identities, languages, and

literacy practices (Moje, 2000, Powell et al., 2006) and the ways they transact with texts (Peterman, 2015). Youth have proven they are capable of creating sustaining spaces for their own identities and literacy practices through resistance, out-of-school multiliteracies pedagogies, counterscripts, and in-school third spaces (Barrett, 2010; Gutiérrez et al., 1999), but Kinloch (2017) offers a model of potential: what a classroom can look like for students like Christina and Derek if teachers, "have the humility to learn from the theoretical and critical work of students who are historically excluded from the traditional curriculum" (Vasudevan & Campano, 2009, p. 313). This points to the power and the potential that teachers of adolescents and teachers of disciplinary literacy have to build identities and agency within literacy instruction. Framing adolescent literacies as inexorably connected to youth hybrid identities (Lewis et al., 2007; Moje & McCarthy, 2002) is important for this study because culturally sustaining pedagogies critically center students' languages and literacy practices within the curriculum. In doing so, CSP does not just center the literacies of youth, but the youth, themselves. Such framing stands in stark contrast to increasingly standardized adolescent literacy instruction which maintains and perpetuates white educational supremacy by decentering the hybrid identities and literacies of diverse youth.

Standardization

Gillborn (2005) claims that all education policy is an act of white supremacy. A recent chapter from a collection of essays on the intersection of teaching, identity, and race, *White Women's Work* featured the narrative of Erin Stutelberg, a young, white, middle-class high school English teacher. She named school competition, high-stakes testing, accountability testing, and scripted curricula as educational policies that systematically uphold white, middle-class, hetero-patriarchal values while positioning students' lives,

cultures, and communities as "waste," and acknowledges her role in upholding the system

(Coffee et al., 2017; Leonardo, 2013). Examining a memory of becoming physically ill

during class during her first year of teaching through collective memory work (CMW)

methodology, she began to understand the characteristics of white supremacy within the

story. Namely, that students in Erin's classroom were already perceived through deficit

lenses:

> a [school] system still entrenched in these narratives of scientific management and
> efficiency, now compounded by neoliberal, market-based reforms, competition, high-
> stakes testing, and accountability policies...in the service of colonial nation
> building...which include the "elimination of 'waste'...scripted curricula to teach that
> mimicked the industrial model of production. (Coffee et al., 2017, p. 55)

The school system was built in white supremacist ideals that turned students into bodies to be

managed for efficiency, evaluated by standardization, and marked for their future in a

colonial nation. Erin was upholding the supremacy through delivery of scripted curricula and

discipline that avoided waste. Even while she struggled in pain to stay conscious, she

checked in on students to ensure they were not wasting time. Even while she fell to the

ground unable to stand from the pain, she refused to allow two students to help her in order

to maintain authority. Erin, in retrospect, now understands the memory differently:

> the waste in Erin's classroom was a product of systemic racism and oppression.
> Erin's Black and brown-bodied students who lived in or near poverty and brought
> diverse linguistic and cultural funds of knowledge into her classroom were
> constructed as human waste when confronted with the 'common curriculum' that
> feigned neutrality while advancing White, middle-class, and hetero-patriarchal
> values. Ultimately, her students' lives, cultures, and communities were disconnected
> from school, not accidentally but purposefully as the public school system served to
> reinforce White supremacy. (Coffee et al., 2017, p. 58)

Gillborn (2005) claims that education policy is an act of white supremacy because each

policy reflects the characteristics of white supremacy that remain entrenched within the

educational system through "narratives of scientific management and efficiency, now compounded by neoliberal, market-based reforms, competition, high-stakes testing, and accountability policies" (Coffee et al., 2017, p. 55). Within this system, teachers are mere "waste managers" mimicking the industrial model of production where "the same input (lessons) will produce the same output (student learning)" (Coffee et al., 2017, p. 55). Dewey (1915), in contrast, discusses waste as a lack of school coherence where students are isolated from the world, from one another, and from their own minds. He argued that in such industrial school systems "the primary waste is that of human life, the life of the children while they are at school" (p. 64). Standardized instruction and curriculum make school a place for "other people's children" (Delpit, 2006) where efficient waste management is a control for deficient cultures and languages (Coffee et al., 2017, p. 55).

Vasudevan (2007) provides a similarly vulnerable autoethnographic accounting of her own experiences with standardization within a high school English program for youth involved with the justice system. She recalls her first meeting with Angel, an adolescent who was introduced as, "can't read, is an angry young man, and was kicked out of school" (Vasudevan, 2007, p. 253). After several days passed, Vasudevan noticed his jacket read "Kawasaki." After a few questions, she showed Angel how to look up pictures of motorcycles online. "Our relationship as colearners—about Kawasaki motorcycles and about Internet searching—provided a foundation for other literacy activities, including working explicitly on Angel's reading and writing" (Vasudevan, 2007, p. 254). Keeping notes, Vasudevan compiled a narrative of a youth with literacy practices ranging from graffiti to connecting with images and stories that mirrored his memories, experiences, and interests. As Angel prepared to leave the program, she took the narrative to her supervisor, Joe:

> I said all this to Joe, who was shaking his head even before I finished. He told me that Angel's PO [parole officer] wanted three pieces of information only: his attendance (above average at 70%); his most recent TABE [Test of Adult Basic Education] score (still a 3.5, unchanged from his initial score); and a note about his anger (I hadn't seen evidence of that and therefore couldn't respond). I was disheartened, but compliant. As Angel's teacher, I had valuable information that could have informed the teaching–learning relationships between Angel and the teachers in his new school context. (Vasudevan, 2007, p. 255)

Vasudevan echoes Erin's concerns: standardization dehumanizes students, reducing them to efficiency or a series of numbers with other information—students languages, literacy practices, identities, and cultures—deemed a waste (Coffee et al., 2017; Vasudevan, 2007).

McCarty and Zepeda (2014) offer another example from an ethnographic study of a tribal school's reading instruction and its prescriptive curricula and heritage language instruction. The researchers found

> the MOI [medium of instruction] policies that inform teachers' practices serve a racializing function...In each setting, language and literacy learning are stripped of context, content, and meaning ...[and] students are denied access to high-quality, academically empowering pedagogic practices and texts. (McCarty & Zepeda, 2014, p. 120)

McCarty and Zepeda contend educators in both classrooms are placed in untenable positions where policies remove their instructional decisions from the local context and either prescribe texts or offer no resources to develop texts. Teachers are essentially deskilled and deprofessionalized with students suffering the consequences of policies that, "resegregate academic empowerment along racial and social class lines...by dividing students into race and class based categories and then distributing access to content-rich, meaningful, transformational language and literacy pedagogies according to those categories" (McCarty & Zepeda, 2014, p. 124).

Taken together, Coffee, Stutelberg, Clemets, and Lensmire (2017), Vasudevan (2007), and McCarty and Zepeda (2014) point to real and ever present challenges facing educators in an era of standardization and within the political, dehumanizing, and racist structures of educational policy. However, there are spaces where teachers demonstrate agency to negotiate the dissonance between what they are asked to do and what they know is effective teaching. For example, Maniates and Mahiri (2011) present a case study of one such educator: Ms. Sanchez. A Latina teacher in a predominantly Latinx community, she teachers upper elementary school. The researchers focused on her literacy instruction as she "negotiated tensions between fidelity to the curriculum and adaptations to her local context" (Maniates & Mahiri, 2011, p. 11). The curriculum was a state mandated textbook aligned with state learning standards and an end of the year exam that all students were mandated to take. The textbook was required by her district and her administrators intended the textbook to be followed and used with fidelity. However, while Ms. Sanchez agreed with the general objectives of the lessons, she had disciplinary knowledge that made her question the sequencing and pacing of certain lessons. She also had pedagogical knowledge that made her consider alternatives to the lesson models provided within the textbook. And, perhaps most importantly, she had deep knowledge of her students' cultures, interests, and specialized needs. The researchers discuss three common instructional practices: first, Ms. Sanchez would adapt the mandated curriculum. As she described it, "access is taking it to them." She adapted lessons by connecting the lesson to students' interests, adding depth the curriculum did not provide by increasing content and expectations, and not assuming students' prior knowledge—instead informally assessing it through student talk. Second, Ms. Sanchez omitted parts of the curriculum that she viewed as inappropriate, repetitive, or ineffective.

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For example, she removed phonics lessons, instead offering English language learners small group targeted instruction. Finally, she added to the curriculum, such as providing guided interventions for students' specific needs, independent reading, and additional student choice in texts. Taken together, Ms. Sanchez provides a portrait of teacher who exercised agency and mediates the demands of standardization to provide literacy instruction to meet students' needs. Maniates and Mahiri (2011) conclude, "Instructional materials are one of many tools used to communicate and enforce policy initiatives," but teachers are a far more powerful tool to challenge them during everyday instructional decision making (p. 19).

Mahiri (2005) provides another narrative of an educator who brought the issue of a standardized curriculum into her classroom. Joan Cone, a veteran English teacher in California, was active in the fight against increased standardization and evaluation within the state. Cone took the topic to her Advanced Placement (AP) English students, asking them to analyze the standardized test used to make tracking and placement decisions for incoming freshmen to their school. The test was aligned with the scripted curriculum from a corporate publisher the state and school district were planning to adopt. The students determined the following:

> It [the test] decontextualizes literature. It is culturally biased. It relies on textbook definitions and not on a genuine understanding of terms. It does not value imagination. It does not ask questions that reflect authentic life tasks. It tests if you're test smart. It is full of stereotypes. It tests students' ability to think in a linear fashion only. It is a test about testing. (Mahiri, 2005, p. 79)

The students wrote letters to school district and state leaders to express their concerns. Ms. Sanchez and Cone both found ways to exert their agency to challenge standardization: through adapting, omitting, and adding to the curriculum (Maniates & Mahiri, 2011) or inviting themselves, and students, to engage in civic activism (Mahiri, 2005).

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Youth have languages and literacy practices that are rooted in their identities (Sarroub, 2002; Skerrett, 2016) and revealed in out of school literacy practices and multiliteracies (Alvermann et al., 2007; Kinloch, 2009; Kirkland, 2009; Kirkland & Hull, 2011; Moje et al., 2008). These literacy practices are not static and, like students' identities, are multidimensional and fluid. Youth leverage their identities and literacy practices as tools to make sense of school even when their identities and community memberships are marginalized (Finders, 1996, 1997; Hall, 2009, 2012; Kinloch, 2017; Moje, 2000; Powell et al., 2006) or contained to a third space (Carter, 2006; Gutiérrez, 2008; Gutiérrez et al., 1999; Gutiérrez et al., 1995). Even within increased standardization (Coffee et al., 2017; McCarty & Zepeda, 2014; Vasudevan, 2007), teachers have the agency to intentionally center students' identities and literacy practices within their instruction (Mahiri, 2005; Maniates & Mahiri, 2011).

Literacy Instruction

This study focuses on the instructional practices educators use to support adolescent literacy in an urban Catholic school; the teachers' instruction at the intersection between the students' literacy practices and school context is at the center. This study rejects an inoculation fallacy and an autonomous view of reading and literacy instruction (Street, 1984) reflected in increasing standardization that "reinforce[s] the idea that teaching is something done to students rather than with students" (Botzakis et al., 2014, p. 226). Within this section, I review literature that explores literacy instruction for disciplinary contexts and asset pedagogies that use students' cultural identities and literacy practices as strengths within the curriculum. I included these two fields to suggest the potential for culturally sustaining pedagogies to guide literacy instruction for disciplinary literacy practices.

Traditional Disciplinary Literacy Instruction

Disciplinary literacy is defined as the specialized strategies and norms, "for how knowledge should be created, shared, and evaluated" within discourse communities (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2014, p. 363) and has also come to refer to the pedagogical approach whereby an educator apprentices learners to understand the specialized strategies and norms in the discipline, positioning learners as disciplinary experts (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). This traditional approach is largely rooted in the work of Shanahan and Shanahan (2008) from their seminal article *Teaching Disciplinary Literacy to Adolescents: Rethinking Content-Area Literacy.* Within the study, the authors engaged disciplinary experts in math, chemistry, and history to orally narrate the different ways they constructed meaning, interpreted disciplinary specific texts, and used the texts to challenge or grow their existing knowledge base. These patterns of thinking, the researchers contend, should then be explicitly taught. Shanahan and Shanahan (2008) encouraged the field of disciplinary literacy research to focus on how educators apprentice adolescents into the habits of mind and the literacy practices experts in a discipline use to create, evaluate, and disseminate knowledge. For example, Carpenter, Earhard, and Achugar (2014) worked with students in a multilingual 9th grade history course to perform a linguistic analysis of *The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair to determine how lexical and grammatical choices, including use of tense, had historical consequences. By deconstructing the language of a primary document in the same way historians engage in the work, students were granted access to the ways of constructing knowledge within the discipline.

This approach, however, maintains the way disciplines construct knowledge and instead develops strategies to more quickly and efficiently assimilate youth into the

discipline's literacy practices. The efficiency of such approaches is demonstrated in academic growth on standardized measures. Greenleaf et al. (2011) used a group-randomized, experimental design to investigate the impact of an apprenticeship program for teachers and teacher educators to integrate disciplinary literacy instruction in science classes across 83 high schools. The students' whose teachers participated scored significantly higher on state standardized tests of English language arts, reading comprehension, and biology compared to a control group. Additionally, the intervention teachers demonstrated increased usage of metacognitive inquiry routines, reading comprehension instruction, and collaborative learning structures which was thought to account for the change in academic achievement (Greenleaf et al., 2011).

Similarly, a research team completed a quasi-experimental design explored the impact a year long professional development program on disciplinary literacy had on the literacy achievement for the culturally and academically diverse adolescents the history teachers worked with. Results demonstrated educators who used a cognitive apprenticeship model to teach integrated reading and writing strategies made links among general literacy, disciplinary literacy, and content learning. Additionally, the students of teachers within the intervention group demonstrated significant gains in historic and argumentative writing (De La Paz, Monte-Sano, Felton, Croninger, Jackson, & Worland Piantedosi, 2016).

A multiliteracies pedagogy is critical of traditional metacognitive approaches to reading comprehension that are print focused and disconnected from critical analysis (Alvermann, 2005; New London Group, 1996; Mirra et al., 2018). While both studies (De La Paz et al., 2016; Greenleaf et al., 2011) saw student achievement growth on standardized measures, it is unclear if the gains were from critical engagement with the discipline's

Discourse, or from students learning to assimilate and approximate the discipline's Discourse.

A second common approach to disciplinary literacy instruction is using experts to determine the disciplinary skills students need to provide targeted interventions. Wilson, Smith, and Householder (2014) studied disciplinary literacy instruction by inviting an engineer, literacy researcher, and classroom teacher to analyze where students struggle with disciplinary tasks rather than analyzing the practices of an expert and translating them to classroom instruction. Their descriptive, comparative case study tracked the progress of two separate groups of youth engineering solutions to authentic problems as part of an elective summer enrichment program. Wilson, Smith, and Householder sought to understand the literacy events and practices that occurred during the students' negotiation of the projects and anticipate where engineering literacy supports could positively impact progress. The literacy practices identified were:

- rereading, annotating and sharing/summarizing understandings of the problem statement;
- identifying gaps in information and addressing those gaps through strategies such as asking questions, making inferences, and recursively consulting different source types;
- prioritizing which aspects of the problem most need to be addressed;
- keeping track of ideas generated, including criteria and constraints; giving and responding to feedback on different aspects of the final design. (Wilson et al., 2014, p. 684)

The study generated literacy practices that are discipline specific; however, the disciplinary expert remained the gatekeeper by naming which literacy practices are valued within the discipline and which literacy practices students engaged in to solve the engineering problem were waste (Coffee et al., 2017; Nocon & Cole, 2009).

Early work within disciplinary literacy instruction demonstrated the potential for

academic growth (De La Paz et al., 2016; Greenleaf et al., 2011) but I question the meaning

of the growth if it is tied to assimilation into a disciplinary Discourse. Additionally, two

popular methods of research within the field investigate the literacy practices experts already

use or turn to disciplinary experts identify literacy practices students' lack (Carpenter et al.,

2014; Damico, Baildon, Exter, & Guo, 2009; Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008; Wilson et al.,

2014). This negates youth agency and as Wickens, Maderino, Parker, and Jung (2015) argue,

can limit disciplinary literacy within fields where experts are unclear or contested.

Moje (2007, 2008, 2010, 2015) offers a different conception of disciplinary literacy

that challenges traditional understandings. She argues for disciplinary literacy that is, "a form

of critical literacy because it builds an understanding of *how* knowledge is produced in the

disciplines rather than just building knowledge *in* the disciplines [emphasis added]" (Moje,

2008, p. 97). The argument calls for a balance of learner and context:

> The task of literacy education, relative to the goals of learning the discourses and
> practices of the discipline, then becomes one of teaching students what the privileged
> discourses are, when and why the discourses are useful, and how the discourses and
> practices came to be valued. (Moje, 2008, pp. 100-101)

Disciplinary literacy is revealing what is privileged within a disciplinary discourse, when it is

privileged, and why it is privileged. An understanding of how the discourses were formed

over time and came to be valued.

Sparse empirical research on disciplinary literacy drawing from critical or

sociocultural theoretical frames exist (e.g., Collin & Reich, 2015; Damico et al., 2010).

Largely, disciplinary literacy studies provide no theoretical framework or definition for

disciplinary literacy (e.g., Newman & Rosas, 2016), rely on cognitive apprenticeship models

(e.g., Park, 2016), or cite critical, sociocultural theory and theorists in their definitions of disciplinary literacy, yet reinforce disciplinary literacy as assimilation within their findings (e.g., Hotchkiss & Hougen, 2012). However, within these studies, there are tensions and potential. Dobbs, Ippolito and Charner-Laird (2016) studied a group of five urban high school history educators and a librarian to determine how professional development around disciplinary literacy practices translated into the classroom:

> We found that teachers were rarely able to solely focus on disciplinary literacy instruction. Instead, to respond to the diverse skill levels of students, teachers often layered both intermediate and disciplinary literacy skill instruction, making moment to moment decisions about their students' needs. (Dobbs et al., 2016, p. 133)

The educators scaffolded their literacy instructional support within disciplinary instruction while maintaining rigorous expectations—a hallmark of culturally responsive instruction (Gay, 2000; Hollins, 2015). Ultimately, the scholars found disciplinary literacy is not an end goal for educators, rather, "responsiveness to student needs, coupled with an awareness of the varied levels of literacy instruction, must coexist...to effectively support students and improve their learning" (Dobbs et al., 2016, p. 138). This points to potential for alignment with asset pedagogies, though no clear recommendations for future exploration of the intersection were provided.

Amidst the calls for increased research into disciplinary literacy (e.g., Fang & Coatoam, 2013; Fang & Schleppegrall, 2010; Gillis, 2014, Gillis & Van Wig, 2015; Goldman et al., 2016), Dobbs, Ippolito, and Charner-Laird's (2016) recommendations are notable for their call to place disciplinary literacy in balance with relevant, responsive, student centered instruction.

Asset Pedagogies

Asset based pedagogies focus on using students' languages, literacy practices, and cultures as resources, or funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992). While Chapter 1 outlined asset-based pedagogies' link to CSP, this section highlights how such pedagogies explicitly connect to adolescent literacy instruction in urban religious schooling contexts. Moll (1992) and his research team conducted an ethnography of literacy and knowledge practices in a Latinx community and compared them to traditional "skill and drill" instructional methods in the local schools. The results focused on how teachers intentionally centered or ignored the socially and culturally developed "funds of knowledge" that students brought with them into learning spaces (Moll et al., 1992).

Theorizing culture as a resource has practical implications in asset pedagogies. McMillon and Edwards (2000) conducted an ethnography of the experiences of Joshua, a Black five-year-old male who was active within his Baptist church and Sunday school, but expressed a "hate" for his public school (p. 111). Observations of the Sunday school noted the instructional purposes, "ensured the acquisition of four basic reading prerequisites: print awareness, concepts of book print, story sense, and oral language as a bridge to reading" following a set structure that allowed for natural turn taking in conversations and established an environment of trust. Students who were used to the structure, such as Joshua, were asked to be helpers, model Scripture memorization, and "read" posters to other students (McMillon & Edwards, 2000, p. 112). In Joshua's preschool, many of the students already knew each other and he was often left out from groups until he was able to make friends. Outside of free play time, he struggled to meet the class norms such as sitting quietly and raising his hand to speak. Joshua also struggled with the preferred discourse styles, such the teacher being the

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source for answers rather than peers, and unfamiliar discourse, such as singing new songs. This led the researchers to conclude,

> It had become clear: Joshua was receiving mixed message. He was disciplined for his behavior in one environment, but encouraged and rewarded for the same behaviour in another. We believe that those incongruences were the cause for Joshua's "hate" for school. (McMillon & Edwards, 2000, p. 117)

The recommendations were focused on reconceptualizing Joshua's religious and cultural experiences with literacy as a strength, not deficit, that could be a bridge to new literacy learning (McMillon & Edwards, 2000).

Recognizing Joshua's religious and cultural experiences depends on educators intentionally taking time to learn from their students. For example, Milner (2011) worked with a white educator in an urban school and noted that the teacher needed to lay a foundation of cultural congruence, or, "demonstrate to his students how similar they really were" in order to, "develop the kinds of relationships with his students that allowed the students to get to know him" (Milner, 2011, p. 87). Students slowly got to know the teacher and allowed him access to their cultural identities, knowledge, and literacy practices. This foundation of cultural congruence provided the opportunity to work towards an asset pedagogy.

Ladson-Billings' (1994, 2009) study of eight educators who were known within the community and school as being excellent educators of African American students provides multiple examples of how educators use students' literacy practices and cultural experiences within their instruction. One educator, Hilliard, was concerned her African American students did not know the Black National Anthem, *Lift Every Voice and Sing*, so she designed a lesson using a student selected rap song that they performed and then "translated"

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into standard English. She explained the lesson as an introduction to a style of teaching she

would use the entire school year:

> We'll continue doing this kind of thing all year long. I want the children to see that they have some valuable knowledge to contribute. I don't want them to be ashamed of what they don't know but I also want them to know and be comfortable with what school and the rest of society requires. When I put it in the context of 'translation' they get excited. They see it is possible to go from one to the other....They're bilingual! (Ladson-Billings, 1994, 2009, p. 91)

Hilliard viewed her students' experiences with rap music, use of African American Language

(AAL), adeptness at translating between AAL and standard English, and cultural history as

strengths and drew from them to create an engaging lesson that would build and transition

into other literacy practices while respecting students' cultures.

Hilliard's instruction matches Lee's (2001) conception of cultural modeling or to

"make explicit forms of knowledge that students use tacitly in their routine everyday

practices as well as the make explicit the links between these new explicitly articulated

strategies and the academic tasks at hand" (Lee, 2001, p. 119). Lee developed the model

while teaching an urban high school English class for the lowest academically achieving

students; nearly all of which identified as African American. Within her instruction, Lee took

aspects of her students' African American Language (AAL) and used them as meaningfully

parts of the instruction. It centered students' languages in meaningful ways and helped

students recognize the complexities of their own proficiencies with language and literacy.

For example, Lee (2001) described the dominance of Initiate, Respond, Evaluate (IRE)

discourse in many urban classrooms where teachers initiate a question or topic, one by one

students respond, and the teacher evaluates the responses. The turn taking pattern, teacher

centered authority, and implicit message that the teacher holds the knowledge are reflective

of a dominant, authoritarian teaching style preferred by white educators. In contrast, her students were proficient at "multiparty, overlapping classroom discourse," a discourse pattern common in AAL. In multiparty discourse, "students engage in clusters of talk, sharing their observations with students sitting physically close to them. Some of the loudness occurs when five or six groups of students all talk at the same time" (Lee, 2001, p. 131). Lee notes, "the challenge is for the teacher to hear the conversation, make sense of it, and understand when to enter and try to manage the discourse" (2001, p. 131). In fact, she notes repeated examples presenting audio and visual examples of her classroom to colleagues at the school and within professional presentations where such talk is often characterized as "rude and off task" by those outside of the cultural discourse pattern. During one such presentation, a white teacher said, "she was frightened by the demeanor of the students," which Lee explains is because such talk "may elicit fear of not being in control and a sense of powerlessness" (Lee, 2001, p. 131). By contrast, Lee recognizes multiparty discourse as a meaningful literacy practice and part of her students' languages. Within her classroom, she centered the practice and, in the process, critically centered her students.

Ladson-Billings (1994, 2009) and Lee (2001) provide examples of asset pedagogies; the instructional practices described critically center the languages and literacy practices of adolescent youth. Another example of critical centering takes place in an urban high school where Irizarry (2017) taught a participatory action research course with Latinx youth. Throughout the course, "students were positioned as experts of their own lives with invaluable insights into the education of Latinx youth" and the program "honor[ed] and leverage[ed] the experiential knowledge of students in the research collaborative and the communities of color with whom they interacted" (Irizarry, 2017, p. 96). Irizarry

intentionally centered the students' voices and experiences as collaborative researchers and educators within the course; the topics and teaching style often shifting based on student responses—the responses to "being ignored, neglected, and at times maligned" within their schooling histories (Irizarry, 2017, p. 97). For example, students discussed individual negative experiences within schooling that they attributed to individual teachers or administrators. Valuing those experiences, Irizarry drew from readings and stories that helped students place their individual experiences within a larger, sociopolitical context to explore "the systematic nature of their marginalization and the social reproductive function of schooling" (Irizarry, 2017, p. 92).

As Irizarry's classroom displays, critical centering of students' voices, knowledge, and experiences are a form of capital that inform locally based, sustaining instruction. Irizarry cautions that "the specific content and methods will likely vary across settings, as the experiences of students will like vary" but the characteristics of culturally sustaining pedagogies are, "grounded in students' lived experiences, build on their systems of meaning-making, and provide students with the skills and confidence to advocate for themselves— indeed to sustain themselves and their communities" (Irizarry, 2017, p. 97). Therefore, any study or understanding of CSP must be contextualized for the local community via a critical centering of the students' and communities' voices.

Another example of CSP comes from San Pedro's work developing and teaching a Native American Literature course for a public high school with the largest Native population outside of a reservation in the country. The course was born out of community accountability: parents asked for a place within the school's Eurocentric curriculum for

Native voices. Local scholars, educators, and community members convened to co-construct the curriculum. There was an intentional focus to build a course to:

- Sustain the ways our cultures and languages are alive, in movements, and flowing.
- Engage in reflexive practices that help us to question and problematize and sometimes change the way we live out culture and languages.
- Sustain opportunities to revitalize and reclaim that which has "been disrupted and displaced by colonization." (McCarty & Lee, 2014, p. 101; San Pedro, 2017, p. 102)

The course purposes highlight the historicized understanding of cultures, languages, and literacies of both students and communities. The course and its creators also valued the naming and challenging of oppression as it is revealed in identity, literacies, and structures. The lessons were also designed to center and react to students' voices and experiences, such as creating "a piece of art that reveals who they are, were they come from, and who their families and communities are" with an accompanying story based on "sometimes that emerges" from their art piece (San Pedro, 2017, p. 105). All types of stories were welcome from poetry to songs to traditional essays. These pieces of art and accompanying stories were shared in small groups with dialogue, tears, and laughter. San Pedro (2017) describes one student's story:

> Neena, who self-identifies as Pima, appears as if she will talk, but nothing emerges, not at this time. Just minutes prior, though, her story did emerge. She told her friends the significance of the three chicks symbolized her and her siblings and the mother duck in the back of the line symbolized her mother. The order was crucial to her story: Her mother (the duck) as being led by Neena and her siblings (the chicks) because of a painful situation that her mother had to endure and has not yet been able to overcome. Neena and her siblings have had to take the lead in her family until their mother is ready to lead again...She looks a little longer at the feather, then at her art. Without a word, she passes the feather to the next student. The group asks her to share. She shakes her head no. They don't press. (p. 109)

This one lesson led to learning about the fluid nature of culture, the multiplicities of identity, community accountability within cultural groups, the school, and classroom. It also laid a foundation "in which future discussions of race, colonization, and oppression can be discussed meaningfully and dialogically" (San Pedro, 2017, p. 112).

Aronson and Laughter (2016) recognizes the dominance of culturally relevant pedagogies within the educational landscape since Ladson-Billings published *The Dreamkeepers*. They undertook a synthesis of empirical research published since the book's release to identify the outcomes related to use of the instructional framework. The authors analyzed over 400 articles that met the following criteria to define culturally relevant pedagogies:

- [teachers] use constructivist methods to develop bridges connecting students' cultural references to academic skills and concepts...build on the knowledge and cultural assets students bring with them into the classroom
- [teachers] engage students in critical reflection about their own lives and societies...
- [teachers] facilitate students' cultural competence....students both learn about their own and others' cultures and also develop pride in their own and others' cultures...
- [teachers] explicitly unmask and unmake oppressive systems through the critique of discourses of power...active pursuit of social justice for all members of society. (Aronson & Laughter, 2016, p. 167)

The researchers determined the use of a culturally relevant pedagogy across content areas and grade levels led to increases in student motivation, interest in content, students' ability to engage in content area discussions, increases in students' perceptions of themselves as capable students, and increased confidence when taking standardized tests. Additionally, they gathered countless stories of students leveraging sociopolitical consciousness as tool for school and societal reform and increased family engagement within schools. When the

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framework was used in tandem with standardized testing preparation curriculum a different

trend emerged:

> The research reviewed demonstrated that an emphasis on test preparation may
> improve students' test scores, but this does not mean teachers are enhancing students'
> life-long learning...in fact, teaching to the test only serves to further invalidate results.
> (Aronson & Laughter, 2016, p. 196)

The researchers found yoking test preparation with culturally relevant pedagogies meant test

preparation curriculum often overshadowed or dominated the classroom discourse and

invalidated many of the positive outcomes identified in other studies.

A similar systematic review of the literature on culturally responsive instruction in

middle school educational research was undertaken by Kennedy, Brinegar, Hurd, and

Harrison (2016). The researchers noted the term culturally responsive is often applied across

a broad continuum of pedagogies. Most notably that studies advocating culturally responsive

instruction could be subdivided into those that forwarded, "practices to prepare students to

reproduce the current social order versus those that advocated the use of these practices in

order to challenge oppressive social structures" (Kennedy et al., 2016, p. 2). Within the

research reviewed that advocated the use of culturally responsive pedagogies for the latter

purpose, the research design frequently precluded the studies' ability to meaningfully capture

evidence of how—or even if—this occurred because of pre-structured questions and

questionnaires. This led the scholars to recommend future asset based pedagogy research for

adolescent instruction that clearly defines the pedagogy, its purpose, and provides flexibility

to capture the pedagogy in action and its implications (Kennedy et al., 2016).

Considering the body of asset pedagogy research, using students' languages, literacy

practices, and cultures as resources, or funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992), within the

curriculum is linked with positive academic achievement (Ladson-Billings, 1994, 2009; Lee, 2001) while honoring the identities and agency of students traditionally marginalized within school settings (Irizarry, 2017; Milner, 2011; San Pedro, 2017). Systematic literature reviews point to the need for clear definition of the pedagogy studied, flexibility of methods to accurately document instructional practices, and wariness that implementation of asset pedagogies within test preparation or standardized frameworks invalidates the gains (Aronson & Laughter, 2016; Kennedy et al., 2016). Given the dominance of asset pedagogies within the literature, the research is limited when considering how asset pedagogies guide instruction in multireligious, faith based, or Catholic schools.

Lopez (2011) provides an example of culturally relevant pedagogies in a multiethnic, multiracial, multilingual, and multireligious public school in Canada. Meriah, a high school English teacher, was a Black Canadian attuned to the "cross-racial tensions" within her classroom and intentionally designed a spoken word poetry unit as a vehicle to explore and challenge students' conceptions of race and ethnicity. As students engaged in reading, deconstructing, and creating their own poetry, culturally relevant pedagogies were actualized in, "challenging curricula, disrupting existing curricula, foregrounding student success, centring [*sic*] student voices and experiences, creating nurturing and cooperative learning environments, and raising students' critical consciousness" (Lopez, 2011, p. 21). The rigor of the English classroom was not sacrificed as students made academic gains, grew in critical consciousness, and critiqued the social order—effectively meeting the aims of culturally relevant pedagogies. However, no references to students' religious identities were centered within the larger article.

Dallavis (2014) offers an example of culturally responsive pedagogy and its unique instructional challenges within an urban Catholic school. As part of an ongoing ethnographic study of culturally responsive pedagogies in faith based schooling, she engaged in prolonged observations and interviews with an eighth grade educator. She noted that the educator desired to use students' cultural experiences to bridge new knowledge but was often thwarted by perceived or real restrictions in the Catholic environment. For example, the educator asked students to research candidates for an upcoming election and invited a democratic politician to speak to the class. He began to engage students on the relevant issues of their respective candidates. When students eagerly tried to turn the conversation to abortion, a topic that was a reality within the working class Latinx community due to recent policies and legislation limiting its access, the politician and the teacher redirected the conversation. Dallavis comments:

> In the context of a school community in which the Catholic Church maintains a certain authority, particularly in shaping moral beliefs that inform social values and political stances, Gay's encouragement to 'reconfigure' and 'push the boundaries' of authorities may only be taken so far. (2014, p. 277)

Dallavis contends the tension is potentially resolved by a "qualified form of sociopolitical consciousness" where the Church teaching is stated, but also questioned and open for discussion (2014, p. 279).

McMillon and Edwards (2000) called for educators to draw from Joshua's literacy practices developed within religious and cultural settings as a bridge for new learning. Lopez (2011) demonstrates asset pedagogies can do just that within multiethnic, multiracial, multilingual, and multireligious school settings. Dallavis (2014) considers urban Catholic schools unique contexts where aspects of an asset pedagogy, such as sociopolitical

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consciousness, are qualified by layers of accountability to school administration and church doctrine. Given the history of academic success within urban Catholic schools (Greeley, 1982), relatively little research considers how asset pedagogies can draw on adolescents' religious identities as assets (Lopez, 2011; Magaldi-Dopman & Park-Taylor, 2014; Rackley & Kwok, 2016; Ronald, 2012) or literacy practices within an urban Catholic high school (Dallavis, 2014a; LeBlanc, 2015).

Often within the literature, literacy instruction leverages asset pedagogies and discipline literacy practices. For example, Woodard, Vaughan, and Machado (2017) conducted semistructured interviews about writing with nine elementary and middle school educators as part of a larger multiple case study investing teachers' conceptualization of culturally sustaining pedagogies in literacy instruction. Teachers used multiple strategies to decenter standard English and recognize the writing process can equally value other modes of literacies such as talk and multimodal production (Woodard et al., 2017). However, there were also tensions based on the "disconnects in the linguistic ideologies of teachers, parents, and administrators" who expected the English classroom to uphold the dominant forms of standard English and styles of writing (Woodard et al., 2017, p. 228). The educators drew from a culturally sustaining framework to design their instruction, but also integrated disciplinary literacy instruction by making explicit the way the discipline has constructed and maintained standard English and print based texts as dominant. Additionally, the educators positioned students as experts by providing them with tools to center their own languages and multimodal texts. Ultimately, the educators attempt at "broadening notions of composing, attending to audience, [and] resisting prescriptive grammar instruction" were limited by accountability to school communities and leadership that viewed standard English and print-

centric texts as more effective literacy practices for students to master (Woodard et al., 2017, p. 229).

Watanabe Kganetso (2017) similarly demonstrated how the theoretical framework of culturally sustaining pedagogies can support disciplinary literacy instruction with the creation of community-based nonfiction texts. Through conversations with community members and family surveys on valued literacy practices and texts for children in Botswana, Watanabe Kganetso developed maps for her 7 and 8-year-old students that included photographs of local buildings and sites superimposed on a topography map of the local community. The multimodal maps were used as nonfiction texts to introduce map reading with the intention to transition to map making. She intentionally created links between students' existing knowledge and experiences to build new knowledge and literacy practices valued within the local community. CSP and disciplinary literacy similarly center the voices of adolescent learners within the discipline, giving them the power and tools to question and decenter dominant voices within the discipline (Alim & Paris, 2017; Moje, 2008).

A final example comes from Mr. Coppola, a 7th grade English teacher in an urban public school. He designed a poetry unit using culturally sustaining pedagogies as a framework (Machado et al., 2017). The authors argue that "because of its linguistic and structural flexibility poetry encourages alternative ways of communicating and offers students the opportunity to share stories in their own voices" (Machado et al., 2017, p. 369). Students did compose across languages and identities, such Isaac, a Jewish student who incorporated English, Hebrew, and Yiddish into a poem about the difficulties surrounding coming of age in his Jewish community. The researchers also found Mr. Coppola encouraged linguistic play which resulted in an increased comfort drawing from alternative modes of

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design. The final designs included visual performances and spoken-word poetry to critique, express concern, and communicate angst about their local community. Jess wrote and performed a poem that connected her experiences to the larger narrative of oppression, racism, and police violence within Chicago weaving between the past and the present. Her ability to name, critique, and contend with oppression was connected to a historicized understanding of oppression (Machado et al., 2017).

Across the three studies, youth are positioned as disciplinary experts able to design and redesign texts that challenge the literacy practices within disciplines (Machado et al., 2017; Watanabe Kganetso, 2017; Woodard et al., 2017). They point to potential for culturally sustaining pedagogies to use disciplinary literacy practices to produce academic outcomes while still remaining responsive to students. As Isaac's poem in Mr. Coppola's class demonstrates, giving students with diverse cultural experiences, voices, and valued knowledge access to the tools of a discipline can provide youth with agency to construct multimodal texts that express their multidimensional, fluid identities. As Dobbs, Ippolito, and Charner-Laird (2016) contend, "responsiveness to student needs, coupled with an awareness of the varied levels of literacy instruction, must coexist...to effectively support students and improve their learning" (p. 138). An understanding of literacy instruction drawing from asset pedagogies and disciplinary literacy instruction is underdeveloped within the literature (e.g., Machado et al., 2017; Watanabe Kganetso, 2017; Woodard et al., 2017), but demonstrates initial potential "to effectively support students and improve their learning" (Dobbs et al., 2016, p. 138).

Conclusion

This review of literature examined the ways American education has always acted as a colonizing, white supremacist system built to marginalize and oppress nondominant cultural groups. Urban Catholic schools are one example of initial resistance to colonial aims of schooling and demonstrate a consistent history of academic achievement for students (Hoffer, Greeley, & Coleman, 1985; Jeynes, 2009). However, few studies have researched asset pedagogies within any faith based schools (Dallavis, 2011a; Magaldi-Dopman & Park-Taylor, 2014; Rackley & Kwok, 2016; Ronald, 2012) or with religiously identifying youth (e.g., Skerrett, 2016), with relative scant research considering literacy practices of youth (e.g., LeBlanc, 2015) or literacy instructional practices of educators (e.g., Dallavis, 2014), including disciplinary literacy practices, in urban Catholic high schools. Urban Catholic schools have racial, ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic diversity that makes them ideal sites for educators to draw from students' funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 2001) in asset pedagogies. Initial research into culturally sustaining pedagogies (CSP) have include various school sites (e.g., Kinloch, 2015; Lee & McCarty, 2017; Machado et al., 2017) but no research has focused on urban faith based high schools. Additionally, an exploration of the curricularizing of adolescent literacy through disciplinary literacy instruction has the potential to align with CSP (Machado et al., 2017; Watanabe Kganetso, 2017; Woodard et al., 2017).

In the next chapter, I review the methodologies and research design of the study. In Chapters 4 and 5 the findings and interpretations are reviewed. The final chapter will include implications and recommendations.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

This study asked two questions: (1) How does the framework of culturally sustaining pedagogies inform teachers' understandings of effective literacy instruction in an urban religious high school? and (2) What practices are highly effective teachers using to support adolescent students' literacy achievement at one urban Catholic school? To answer these questions through a critical sociocultural lens and within the culturally sustaining pedagogies framework, qualitative traditions drawing from a humanizing, critical ethnographic perspective and participant observation methods were used to collect and analyze data from one urban Catholic high school.

Research Design

This study draws on Denzin and Lincoln's (2011) conceptions of qualitative research, explaining that while, "all research is interpretive: guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied" (p. 13), qualitative research embraces the complexity of interpreting the world through ideologies and identities, investigates human phenomena that do not lend themselves to quantitative methods, and pushes researchers go beyond their initial conceptions to discover the meaning that is waiting to be discovered (Carspecken, 1996; Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2013). Qualitative research begins with understanding the natural world through the eyes of participants and the meaning they ascribe to the world or events (Creswell, 2013). To best capture participants' perspectives, data is gathered in naturally occurring places and events over a sustained period of time to ensure the meanings discovered are accurate for the members, represent their perspectives, and contain enough information to make the invisible processes, individual

beliefs, and institutional values within the context visible (Creswell, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Patton, 2015). Specific tools used in qualitative inquiries may include observations, field notes, interviews, focus groups, document analysis, video and audio recordings, and additional data sources as they emerge or are demanded by the setting (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Patton, 2015). These multiple sources of data are key to qualitative research because they produce well grounded, "thick" descriptions (Denzin, 1989) that explain and illuminate human processes (Miles et al., 2014).

The study of teachers' literacy practices in an urban religious school requires a description of the events that take place in the classroom, but also the reasoning and meaning teachers ascribe to their practices and instructional decisions. This requires an understanding of the teacher, students, school, and community where the practices are enacted. Therefore, my choice of qualitative methods is appropriate for describing the practices in the religious school context, but also for developing interpretations embedded in layers of feedback (Grbich, 2012; Patton, 2015). The school site functions as a culture-sharing group with "shared and learned patterns of values, behaviors, beliefs, and language" (Creswell, 2013, p. 90). Qualitative research methods rely on multiple layers of data collections to construct a primary record, or description of the culture-sharing group's patterns of social organization and ideational systems (Creswell, 2013).

In order to build a holistic primary record, I had to be where the events occurred and interact routinely with the participants over a sustained period of time (Grbich, 2012). This embedded the research in the social and cultural context of schools and classrooms, and preventing knowledge gained about literacy practices from being decontextualized or viewed as separate from the context in which it was learned (Beach, Green, Kamil, & Shanahan,

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2005; Street, 1995). Within qualitative traditions, I drew my methods from critical

ethnography and participant observation.

Critical Ethnography

Critical theory rejects "methodological individualism and universal claims to truth"

and instead recognizes that the world is filled with feeling, thinking human beings whose

interpretations of the world must be studied (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 11). Critical

ethnography is critical theory in action: moving from noticing unequal power structures to

confronting them (Madison, 2011; Willis, Hall, Hunter, Burke & Herrera, 2008). In that

confrontation, the research challenges the dominant practices including the concept of

universally valid knowledge that denies the importance and value of local, context specific

cultural knowledge (Kincheloe, McLaren & Steinberg, 2011). Historically, American urban

schools have been under resourced and more likely to employ educators under prepared to

adequately address culture within school learning (Hollins, 2015; Matsko & Hammerness,

2014; Milner, 2012), and more likely to enact colonizing pedagogies and scripted curriculum

(Anyon, 1997; Delpit, 2006; Domínguez, 2017; Morrell, 2008). Given these histories and

modern realities, a critical lens within qualitative research is best suited to name the

inequities within an urban religious school site and challenge them.

While considering potential critical methods for inquiry, critical ethnography was an

immediate choice. Historically, ethnography emerged from anthropology, a method used "for

descriptive accounts of the lifeways of particular local sects of people who lived in colonial

situations around the world" (Erickson, 2011, p. 44). The Greek roots of ethnography mean

"writing the other" or "writing about other people"; a nod to the origins of anthropology that

focused on a cultural outsider describing the cultural traditions of bounded communities

(Erickson, 2011). This is deeply problematic, resulting in an othering of cultural groups—or defining them through the eyes of how they deviate from one's own identities. This difference is noted by the terms etic, or outsider, and emic, or insider to describe the position of the researcher to the cultural group being described (Schwandt, 2014).

Ethnography from an etic, or outsider, perspective can still be used for reform. For example, Du Bois (1899) wrote *The Philadelphia Negro* as a detailed, factual ethnographic account of life in a predominantly Black Philadelphia neighborhood. The account, while written by a neighborhood outsider, still made visible a population that was largely considered invisible and inconsequential within dominant society even as it elevated the researcher's voice and interpretations over the participants (Du Bois, 1899).

Ethnography predominantly foregrounded the etic voice over the emic, or insider voice, through the early to mid-1900s (Erickson, 2011), but later in the 20th century ethnography was more clearly defined as gaining understanding and descriptions of a cultural group's "beliefs, language, behavior, and issues facing the group" as participants understand them (Creswell, 2013, p. 94). Ethnographers began to more clearly focus on interpreting the meanings of actions and events as they are expressed through, "behavior, cultural knowledge, and cultural artifacts" (Spradley, 1980, p. 5). For example, Street's ethnographic work in Iranian village Cheshmeh investigated different literacy practices by focusing on smaller literacy events. In this excerpt he describes community member's common patterns engaging in commercial business:

> In the shops, flour mills etc. men reckoned their accounts in school exercise books. The layout of these was often precise and conventional: a page might be allotted to each separate deal; columns would be neatly lined down the page for sections of the account, with indications for weights, money, etc.; space would be designated for signatures. Similarly, as items were weighted into a store, the "tajers" would record

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the in the appropriate section in their notebooks in such a way that the specific price and quantities and the final totals and the way that they were arrived at were clear to both parties. They would then sign their agreement to the deal. (Street, 1984, p. 172)

This excerpt provides explicit descriptions of a literacy practice, carefully noting the texts, structures, and actions of participants. Ethnography does not critique or challenge the participants' understandings, only describes and presents them (Carspecken, 1996; Madison, 2005).

Critical ethnography challenges the researcher to critique the cultural context and the society in which it functions. Carspecken (1996) reminds ethnographers that a critical epistemology "find[s] contemporary society and culture wanting in many ways and believe[s] that research should support efforts for change" (p. 6). Therefore, critical researchers are challenged to critique the research methods and traditional models of data collection since they "not infrequently contribute to cultural oppression" (Carspecken, 1996, p. 7) and do not actively challenge inequities the research reveals (Madison, 2005; Paris & Winn, 2013).

Rather than take up ethnographic methods unquestioningly, I have made a conscious turn towards critical ethnography. Critical ethnography aims to understand the cultural knowledge of people by entering and becoming a part of the context; as Madison describes the process, "belonging preceded being" (Madison, 2011, p. 16). This questions the artificial division between emic and etic, instead recognizing the converging identities of a researcher that are not so easily named (Jones, Nasir, & Peele-Eady, 2011; Polleck, 2011; Scott & Blanchett, 2010). Within ethnographic traditions, belonging takes immersion within the context over a sustained period of time so the researcher can best understand how the community has evolved (Carspecken, 1996). Given the bounded time in the field, I use

Street's (1995, 2011) term ethnographic perspective to denote how even though my belongingness was bounded by time, I still drew from critical ethnographic methodologies.

Within the critical tradition, sustained, reciprocal interaction over time presents the opportunity to collaboratively "identify important issues, generate knowledge that belongs to everyone, and work towards tangible social change" (Williams & Brydon-Miller, 2004, p. 243). The process of feedback highlighted in critical ethnographic research design is important as it views the collaborative process of research and multivocality of participants as avenues to understand and challenge social structures, power, and dominant culture (Blackburn, 2013; Carspecken, 1996; Kinloch & San Pedro, 2013). To better understand the reciprocal interaction that characterizes a critical ethnographic perspective, I turned to literature on humanizing research and participant observation.

Humanizing Research and Participant Observation

Humanizing research is qualitative, ethnographic research on social language with marginalized youth and their historically oppressed communities (Paris, 2012). Paris and Winn (2013) "conceptualize humanizing approaches as those that involve the building of relationships of care and dignity and dialogic consciousness raising for both researchers and participants" (p. xvi). It is a conscious turn from ethnographic work that is "dehumanizing," that has historically pathologized cultural groups marginalized within society, turned people into numbers, and taken for personal benefit without giving back (Blackburn, 2013; Freire, 1996, Ladson-Billings 2012). Given my positionality as a white middle class female, described later, I am awash in whiteness that has been a colonizing force within society and education; my presence within an urban school serving marginalized youth intentionally takes a humanizing perspective to refocus the research *with* the school community rather than

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on the school. As Leonardo (2013) articulates, "From colonization to canonization, Whiteness appropriates land and knowledge, an unwelcome gesture almost always inappropriate to sensibilities of color" (p. 98). To resist the colonization and canonization of the school space and its knowledge, I drew from Projects in Humanizing (PiH) to develop an emergent, constant comparative design using dialogic spirals (Kinloch & San Pedro, 2013).

Emergent research designs mean the initial research plan is fluid, allowing for changes to the research questions and forms of data collection (Creswell, 2013). An emergent design provides greater flexibility to meet the goals of critical theory—namely, to question whose interests and needs are being served and what change, if any, is being made within the context. As Souto-Manning asks, "critical for whom?" because not asking, "would be equivalent to colonizing participants—or, at the very least, to ethnocentrically imposing our own understandings, assumptions and experiences upon them" (2013, p. 201).

Additionally, a constant comparative design creates a back and forth between data collection and data analysis so new information is consistently compared to theory, previously collected data, and informing the next steps of data collection (Glaser, 1965). This approach creates a spiral of interaction between the researcher and the members of the cultural group and provides ongoing information to change the research's direction and design, consistent with an emergent design (Creswell, 2013). While more commonly found in grounded theory studies (Charmaz, 2014), an emergent constant comparative design better supports the creation and sustenance of collaborative dialogue.

Irvine (2002) describes collaborative, dialogic research relationships in this way, "researchers who employ this strategy do not simply impose meaning through their own obstructed cultural lens; rather, meaning is negotiated through a reciprocal process of

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discussion on mutual respect" (p. 35). I initially used the dialogic models of Freire (Shor &

Freire, 1987) and hooks (1994) to develop an understanding of dialogue. For example, in this

excerpt Macedo is seeking clarification to resolve an internal ideological tension around

social and individual consciousness:

> Macedo: The fundamental question is how to deal with the individual
> consciousness as emphasized in an emancipatory literacy when this
> consciousness may be at odds with the collective social consciousness.
> Freire: If you study the various ways of living and being validated in society
> as complex as that of the United States, you find, for example, an
> undeniable taste for individualism. But the taste each person shows for
> individualism is that person's particular expression of a social
> consciousness.
> Macedo: This is part of the point I wanted to address: how can one develop
> critical consciousness without looking at the concept of the reality of
> social consciousness? That is, is it possible to avoid the permanent
> shock that exists between individual consciousness sand collective
> consciousness? (1987, p. 48)

Within the exchange, the two scholars are using questions to uncover challenges and

negotiate their understandings of the topic in a respectful, collaborative space that values

each voice. However, drawing from critical whiteness studies, Utt and Tuchluk (2016)

contend dialogue must include critical critique for white researchers. Additionally, critical

researchers of asset pedagogies such as Irvine (2002) push the sentiment further, challenging

white researchers to center the voices of participants of Color within research through

intentional methodological design, not just data analysis:

> African American teachers and their students do not wish to be simply objects or
> subjects of research. Rather, they want to be actively involved in studying their own
> lives and classrooms. (Irvine, 2002, p. 35)

I sought out tools within a humanizing perspective to foreground and humanize the voices

and critical feedback of participants within the space and intentional decenter my own biases.

I turned to dialogic spirals as an extension of collaborative dialogue.

A dialogic spiral is the "construction of a conversation by two or more people whereby the dialogic process of listening and speaking co-creates an area of trust between speakers—the space between" (Kinloch & San Pedro, 2013, p. 30). The spaces between represent feelings and reciprocation between the persons involved, drawing the lines that create the interwoven spiral, or storying. Each storying has the potential to create new worlds, becoming humanized selves, or the potential for extinction. If no one expands on the spoken words, they do not exist, an "invalidation and ignoring" that results in dehumanization (Kinloch & San Pedro, 2013, p. 30). Also, each of the lines of storying can be viewed through the layers of history, people, and previous stories that have meaningfully impacted the speaker (Bakhtin, 1981; Kinloch & San Pedro, 2013).

Humanizing research aligns with culturally sustaining pedagogies (CSP) by centering the dialogic spiral which, in turn, is a critical centering of the language, literacies, and knowledge of the participants (Baker-Bell, Paris, & Jackson, 2017). April Baker-Bell, Django Paris, and Davena Jackson (2017) reflect on their collaborative research on Black Language instruction in an urban English high school classroom. They note how storying through sustained, intentional conversations fostered new approaches to instruction and research that valued Black Language and Black lives. The dialogic spirals are represented in long, multi-page transcripts and demonstrate how the back and forth interactions validated their experiences while also challenging their understandings:

Davena: I mean April, I teach students to code-switch because I don't want them to experience what happened to me when my teachers corrected my writing. I want them to have access. [sic]
April: I understand! But, teaching them to code-switch will not address their negative attitudes toward their own language, culture, or identity. Plus, it oftentimes leads to Black students' feelings of linguistic and cultural shame.

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Davena: Wait a minute, I never put my students down. But I have a lot to consider when I am teaching them to write. At the end of day, standard English is what's expected on the ACT, college entrance exams, and academic writing.

April: I am not saying that you shouldn't teach them standard English, that would be irresponsible. But what I am suggesting is that you don't have to teach it to them at the expense of their own language. Code-switching pedagogies set up a linguistic hierarchy that teaches students that their language can never lead to success and that standard English will in every situation. For example, what if one of your students is applying for a position to be Jay Z's publicist? You don't think having access to both BL and DAE would benefit them in that situation?

Davena: You got me there, April. But what does this look like in practice? What strategies can I use to address and value my kids' language in the classroom?

April: To be honest, that's what I'm trying to figure out in my own research....(Baker-Bell, Paris, & Jackson, 2017, p. 365)

Within the example, the dialogic spiral acts as a method to critically center the voice and ways of knowing of the researcher, April, and the participant, Davena, placing them both as equally valued and valid contributors to the work and, therefore, equally able to challenge and critique the other. The questions and responses reframes and reworks the study in an emergent design, working towards an actionable outcome rooted in the communities' needs—in this example, how to support the language and literacies of Davena's students without dehumanizing their identities.

I sought out methods to actualize a humanizing, critical ethnographic perspective and determined participant observation held the most potential for supporting dialogic spirals and storying. Broadly, participant observation is direct engagement with the research site and its stakeholders through ongoing informal interviews, participation in group activities, and introspection (Denzin, 1978). It happens along a spectrum as the level of participation can be restricted by factors such as identity, cultural customs, and participant decision (Patton 2015). For example, Ben-Yosef (2011) had greater access to full participation in her study of

Chabad women's Shiyour because she self-identified as a Jewish woman. However, Peele-Eady had more tensions and skepticism to overcome when completing research in a Protestant Baptist Sunday school because she did not self-identify as Christian (Peele-Eady, 2011). Her identity, the culture of the setting, and her respect for the authority figures at the Sunday school prevented full participation.

Within participant observation, the researcher engages in activities and interactions that are appropriate to the situation gathering observations through field notes, audio recordings, and visuals such as photography (Spradley, 1980). Field notes are detailed observations that capture the activities, people, and physical aspects of the context free of interpretations (Patton 2015; Spradley, 1980). Critical ethnographers who use participant observation such as Madison (2005) have noted difficulty in keeping field notes free from interpretations and recommend systems to identify descriptions and interpretations clearly. Within humanizing research, there is an active acknowledgement of the emotions and "bad feelings" that arise from tensions within research and "publicly naming the complications when one is too close to the work is vital and potentially transformative" (Diaz-Strong, Luna-Duarte, Gómez, & Meiners, 2011, p. 17). Field notes are a clear space for detailed descriptions, and analytic memos create a distinct space for naming complications and tensions. Analytic memos are used throughout qualitative methods (Patton, 2015) as a place to keep reflexive notes, emerging hunches, chart connections, jot down ideas to investigate further, record gaps—in other words, to formally stop and think about the data (Charmaz, 2014). Burgess (1983) completed an ethnography of an urban Catholic high school in the pseudonym named city of Merston as a participant observer teaching part time in the school. His field notes were detailed descriptions capturing moments such as this one, where the

principal has sent a detailed memorandum to staff explaining the rules of an upcoming end of

semester field days:

> By the time we had read halfway down page two, Jean O'Rourke looked up. She was shocked. "It's absolutely unbelievable," she remarked, "It's just like the preparations for a battle." I agreed. We continued reading and found the plans for Friday were even more detailed than for Thursday and involved almost every member of the staff. When we finished reading, we sat and talked. We were amazed. Jean had taught in schools for many years but had never seen anything so detailed. She said that it almost made her think that the education which the school provided must be pointless if these were the lengths to which teachers had to go to enforce order. (Burgess, 1983, p. 108)

The field notes contained description, but it was a later analytic memo where Burgess made

sense of the observation and conversation with his colleague:

> In this respect, the social drama...helped to identify the social processes involved in the operation of the school. I was therefore able to consider the ways in which school activities were defined and redefined by different teachers and the ways in which pupils reconciled different conceptions of the school to which they were exposed. (Burgess, 1983, p. 118)

My study identified practices that support adolescent students' literacy achievement

in one urban, religious school. Within an understanding of literacy as socioculturally

constructed (Greenleaf et al., 2001; Gregory et al., 2004), a humanizing, critical ethnographic

perspective and participant observer methods provided flexibility to uncover the various

beliefs, languages, behaviors, and issues that participants use to describe the literacy

practices within the culture-sharing group. Also, these descriptions were socially constructed

and negotiated through sustained dialogic spirals, the emergent constant comparative design

providing a vehicle to generate collaborative solutions to local problems.

I used a humanizing, critical ethnographic perspective and participant observation

methods because I had a responsibility to the voices, experiences, and perspectives of the

participants, to see the world as they make meaning from it and, when possible, challenge

and negotiate those meanings when they damage or erase students' identities from schooling (Patton, 2015). Blanchett and Zion (2011) "question the exclusion or omission of the researcher's backgrounds beliefs, values, and lived experience when discussing research findings and implications" (p. 35). Both humanizing research and critical methods underline the researcher's responsibility to record and examine the identity of the researcher and the tensions it brings to the research.

Given the dominance of the researcher's voice in the history of ethnography, I am compelled to recognize the power the researcher holds. It is the researcher who uses descriptions to capture, describe, and interpret the phenomena in question; the researcher who names the moments, processes, and images; and the researcher who is responsible for every name and choice of inclusion or exclusion. These choices have consequences. Even if research is entered into "under the guise of reform" as the critical stances does, "often the only interests served are those of the researcher's personal advancement" (Seidman, 2013, p. 12). As a white, monolingual, Christian female researcher, I need to acknowledge my power, question it, and find ways to limit its oppressive force. I entered an urban school with extreme diversities of socioeconomic, racial, ethnic, religious, gender identities, and sexual orientations. Given the political and historical dominance of white supremacy in urban school sites, an examination of my power and privilege is essential within my role as a critical ethnographic researcher.

The Researcher

White supremacy has benefited me in more ways than I could list or recognize. White supremacist immigration laws allowed my great-great-grandfather to immigrate from Germany to America in the early 1900s with his brother at a time when Asian immigration

was illegal. As a new immigrant in Chicago, Illinois in 1912, he had access to jobs and housing on what was formally the land of twelve different Illiniwek tribes before American colonization. He took a job as a dishwasher despite only speaking German though laws protect employers from refusing to hire non-English speakers today (Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures, 2012). In the 1920s he purchased fertile farmland along the Mississippi River in a German dominated region of Iowa where farmsteads were only sold to other Catholic Germans. This created one of many ethnically, racially, linguistically, and religiously segregated rural farming communities throughout the Midwest.

I was raised in the Midwest, eventually returning to the same rural farming community in Iowa with my parents as an adolescent. Growing up, I cannot remember the first moment I realized I was white or ever considered what it meant to be white. I knew I was Catholic, because it was the reason I went to St. Agnes, wore a red and black plaid jumper, and attended mass every Sunday without fail. Race, however, was something other people had, but I did not have. Structural inequities in socioeconomics, housing, and employment kept my daily life segregated, thus all of my meaningful relationships into adulthood were with persons who shared a white, Judeo-Christian, middle-class identity. Not only did I not see myself as having a race, but neither did my family, my friends, my classmates, my teachers, my soccer team, my piano teacher, my show choir, my dance class, my Girl Scout troop, my co-workers at ShopKo, my high school graduating class, my cheerleading squad, my sorority, or my teacher education program at the small Midwestern college I attended. I did not notice race, at least not in its covert forms, because I drew benefits from not noticing it (Alim & Reyes, 2011).

In my early twenties, I matched the typical demographics of an American educator: white, able-bodied, female, and middle class (Picower, 2009; U.S. Department of Education, 2016). It was entering into a public school classroom as a student teacher where I began to consider what race meant because I was first faced with racial diversity. However, racial diversity was a commodity for me (Souto-Manning & Winn, 2017), and associating myself with urban education—where urban became coded for Black and brown bodies (Milner, 2012)—granted me access to job opportunities, non-profit leadership, consulting work, and social capital in my master's degree program.

As a white middle class teacher working with predominantly white middle class students for six years, I saw my classroom as a neutral space; culture was something held by the few racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse students in my class but not by me or a majority of my students. I adopted a colorblind approach to race that was reflected in my curriculum (Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Delpit, 2006). Feigning neutral, the topics, texts, and Discourse reflected my own white, middle class culture (Giroux, 1987). However, this colorblind approach became my "white intellectual alibi," *I was not racist because I treated all my students the same* (Leonardo & Zembylas, 2013).

Entering my doctoral studies at a large public Midwestern university was the first time I was taught by a teacher or professor of Color and sat in classes where white, female, Judeo-Christian identities were not the norm. It was the first time I was introduced to multicultural education, asset pedagogies, and white privilege. White privilege relieved the burden of discomfort I felt entering the unfamiliar terrain; I was able to name the ways I had been blind to race, receiving its unearned privileges (McIntosh, 1990). However, white privilege became a "synecdoche" that rewarded me for acknowledging my whiteness without

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challenging me to name and disrupt white supremacy (Lensmire et al., 2013). Intellectually, I checked race off on my list of interrogated identities and I turned to a more comfortable sphere: religious identity.

Though raised Catholic, I distanced myself from faith for over a decade before a conversion experience in my mid-20s; thus, I entered my doctoral studies as a relatively newly identified Protestant Christian. I distanced myself from conversations about race, choosing instead to recenter conversations about difference where I was most comfortable. However, my lived experiences would not let me. Scholars who studied religion and asset pedagogies made race a central part of youth performances and negotiations of religion (e.g., Sarroub, 2002; Skerrett, 2016). As a member of an Interfaith group, the fellow members regularly demonstrated the ways their religious identities and racial identities were inseparable and often created barriers and hostility in a Christian centered society. Several Pastors I listened to and read frequently—Anthony Bradley, John Piper, Tim Keller, Albert Mohler, Voddie Bauchman—began preaching and writing about issues of race within Protestantism with divergent views. The most popular was a focus on erasing racial divisions, drawing from the teaching "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28; ESV). A less popular teaching was a denouncing of white supremacist structures that Christianity had historically maintained. Drawing from verses such as, "and do not oppress the widow or the orphan, the stranger or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another" (Zechariah 7:10; ESV) and "Woe to those who enact evil statutes and to those who constantly record unjust decisions" (Isaiah 10:1-3, ESV), there were pleas from these Christian leaders to name the "evil statutes" challenge "unjust decisions" and structures

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that oppress the widow, orphan, stranger, and the poor. In other words, to challenge white supremacist structures that existed both inside and outside of Christianity. Rephrasing Freire (1996), I discovered that as a Christian I was aligning myself with a long history of being the oppressor and while it caused me anguish, it did not necessarily lead to solidarity with the oppressed.

Interrogating my religious identity led to an interrogation of my racial identity. I no longer ignore race or view my own race as neutral; rather I understand white as a race is socially constructed within society (Delgado, 1989; Delgado & Stegancic, 2001), but whiteness as a racial ideology, "has no cultural content other than the enforcement of racial hierarchies" (Leonardo, 2013, p. 85). Whiteness is located within the structural advantages and privileges of society that I enjoy; whiteness creates a standpoint from which I consciously and unconsciously view myself, others, and society (Frankenberg, 1993). Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS) pushes past white privilege and challenges colonial ideals that are sustained through white supremacy. CWS challenges white persons and all persons influenced by ideologies of whiteness to see the world through decolonized, antiracist lenses that notice inequities, reject oppression in its various forms, and work towards dismantling white supremacy (Gillborn, 2005; Lensmire et al., 2013; Leonardo, 2000, 2013). These are sentiments I agree with, but find difficult to translate to action. I recognize my constant failures to be antiracist. While I try to signal my racial consciousness by engaging in conversations about race, racism, and antiracism (Rogers & Fuller, 2007), I also stay silent when I hear colorblind and deficit discourse just as often

Stepping into Juan Diego High School for this study, my failures at reflexively interrogating my positionality were dangerous. Despite cautions that friendliness between

researcher and the researched can distort or obscure power imbalances (Sassi & Thomas, 2012), the dialogical performances between myself and two Black female teachers more closely resembled what Madison (2011) called the ethnographer's infatuation: a superficial belief that our similarities made us the same, trivializing the differences. Perceiving the educators' antiracist ideologies, I dissociated myself from white people, instead over-identifying with people of Color (Utt & Tochluk, 2016). Even as I sought to learn from educators of Color within this work, I was unaware my "listening is raced" as a white researcher and how my depictions of teachers of Color could be used to perpetuate stereotypes (Sassi & Thomas, 2012, p. 839). Only when pointed out by a critical friend did I notice my memos perpetuated stereotypes and intentionally aligned myself with educators of Color, trivializing differences in lines like, "I'm tall, younger, white as a lily next her shorter, brown skinned, and gray haired self" (Memo, October 6, 2017). Also, in early drafts the dissociation with white educators led to a "proselytizing" of the two educators' work through dehumanizing the work of other white educators in the building (Utt & Tochluk, 2016). I was reliant on research advisors to consider the research malpractice that results from, "researchers who pose as saviors" (Souto-Manning & Winn, 2017, p. xvi). In trying to highlight the work of some educators, I created a false dichotomy. Vasudevan and Campano (2009) describe my error:

> the caution for activist-oriented research is to retain a sense of humility and self-criticism, what realists refer to as a fallibalistic attention to precision and error, so as not to bend the stick too far back in the other direction of reifying certainty and standardizing new, albeit equally dogmatic, educational orthodoxies. (p. 335)

Indeed, I naturally bent too far in distancing myself from whiteness that in my attempts to challenge white supremacy I created equally dogmatic standards. I continue to interrogate my

race, power, and positionality, admitting it is imperfect, imprecise work. Part of that work in this research is building tools to cast, "a critical and 'othering' gaze" on myself through interweaving the reflexive process throughout my research (Fasching-Varner, 2014, pp. 165-166).

Juan Diego and Data Collection

The journey to Juan Diego High School was a six-month process undertaken with thoughtful care. I began the selection of a research site using criterion sampling to ensure a fit between the research questions and what was studied (Patton, 2015). Criterion sampling selects a site or case by creating a list of criteria that must be met for inclusion (Patton, 2015). Guided by my research question, schools considered for the study were selected based on the following criteria: the schools must contain a middle and/or high school, be located in an urban Midwestern city, demonstrate academic achievement as recorded by summative achievement data and other factors, and be affiliated with a religious tradition. The first criteria for sampling was to narrow the focus to adolescent literacy instruction to meet the criteria created by the research questions. The second was to ensure the schools were located within an urban community. Additionally, the city was an ideal choice because of my relationships with many area religious schools which allowed both access and a deeper knowledge of the school's context. The focus on academically high performing schools denotes instructional practices are being met with academic growth at or above other schools in a similar geographic location. However, standardized assessment data alone was not used to define high performing since, "culturally relevant teachers are interested in differences in students' reasoning ability, problem-solving skills, and moral development—things that are not so easily measured by standardized tests" (Ladson-Billings, 2017b, p. 143). Therefore,

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additional factors were used to define high performing schools including the teacher and administrator retention rate, student retention rate, and relationships with the local community. Finally, the schools were identified as religious based on institutional mission statements and founding histories.

Of the five schools initially identified that met the criteria, two were selected using purposive sampling, or a targeted focus on the unique features of a context (Creswell, 2013; Miles et al., 2013). The research questions exclude schools that do not meet the definition of urban. Urban denotes a populous geographic areas' human resiliency, agency, and racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity (Hollins, 2011; Nash et al., 2016). Therefore, the two research sites were selected due to their high enrollment numbers and greater racial and socioeconomic diversity reflective of urban schooling (Milner, 2012; Suri, 2011). After meetings with the administration at both sites, one was selected based on the administration's strong interest in collaboration: Juan Diego High School.

Juan Diego High School

The first time I entered Juan Diego High School, I described "walking into a castle" as I gazed up its layers of brick and aged stone lines, angles, and tall towers. The three story building peers over a busy system of streets in constant motion from the Midtown traffic. Within blocks of a large hospital, a community college, a career and technical college, national headquarter of a large nonprofit, offices, retail businesses, and restaurants there is a constant motion of traffic buzzing in front of the building. There is also a buzz of activity in the parking lot of Juan Diego behind the school since it is shared with a Catholic church and community resource center. The amount of foot traffic necessitated cameras and a buzzer system be built into the building's two public entrances and keyed entry available only to

staff for the remaining doors. Peering up at the façade of building, I was buzzed in on the first day and walked into a beehive of activity and history.

On a tour led by a tall, dark skinned, glasses wearing, anime loving Junior named Cameron, he told me that Juan Diego is a private, Catholic affiliated high school. It is located in an urban Midwestern city. Their mission, posted on the handbook and school website, is to, "provide a Catholic, college prep education enhanced by an innovative corporate work study program to culturally diverse students with economic need."

When Cameron left me with the Principal, Katherine Billiart, and two Assistant Principals, Lawrence Neumann and Teresa Clonard, I learned more. The school is in its twelfth year and during that time has seen dramatic changes in urban education within the city lines. The public school district that surrounds Juan Diego lost its accreditation and regained provisional accreditation three years later, several charter schools opened and closed nearly as quickly, and the leadership has seen the result: families who are left not knowing who to trust with their students' education. Juan Diego has strived to be a school the community can trust; it has been embedded in the goals of the three Presidents that have helmed the school over its twelve years. The founding President of the school focused on opening it and growing initial enrollment, the second President worked to sustain Juan Diego and make it a fiscally sound and consistent presence in the neighborhood. The third President, beginning his first year in the position, admits he is still figuring out his vision and goal as he learns from the community. The shifts in education surrounding Juan Diego mean they are currently the only co-ed, faith based high school within the urban city's public school district boundaries.

The school itself resembles a beehive on any given school day. The school enrolls approximately 350 students in 9th through 12th grade and employs 63 teachers, administrators, and staff, with nearly a dozen volunteers and community members supporting the school onsite throughout the day. Demographic data from the current school year reveals 62% of students identify as Latinx, 34% as African American or Black, 3% as white, 1% as Asian. Principal Billiart admits the statistics are misleading since there is no way for Middle Eastern, North African, or Multiracial students to record their preferred racial identification and estimates approximately 5 students, or 1.7% of the study body, are of Middle Eastern or North African descent. Throughout the school, racial diversity is on the walls of the school where art represents a variety of cultures, races, and ethnicities such as a mural of a young Latina surrounded by a field of flowers that was painted by a former art teacher and students (Figure 1).

Figure 1. A mural painted by a former teacher and students in a school bathroom.

The admissions process follows several guidelines that shape the student population at Juan Diego. First, the private school has limited staff and funding making it difficult to sustained specialized services. Families are told prior to applying that students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) signifying specialized needs or accommodations that

there is not special education program. Additionally, while the school offers a heritage language class for Spanish speakers, there are no services for English language learners. Families may still choose to apply and enroll at Juan Diego, but it is with knowledge that no specialized educational services will be provided by the school. Second, the school only accepts students from families demonstrating economic need, so 100% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch. This is reflective of two levels of leadership: the school sponsor and the national network. The school is sponsored by a religious community of Catholic nuns, not a local diocese. The charism, or ethics, of the sponsoring religious order are focused on themes of social justice with particular attention to serving the poor. Their chapter statement foregrounds this charism:

> In the spirit of our heritage, we continue to seek the path of charity and justice in our day....Mindful of the fragility of the earth and of the suffering of God's people, especially the exploited and marginalized, we commit ourselves to address these critical needs and their systemic causes.

Sister Therese, the Alumni Coordinator, explains the order's charism is lived out in a commitment to social justice. Historically, that has meant a focus on education for students who are traditionally underserved within public schooling. "We've had a history of high school education and college. We...sponsor a college. So that already, not every order has that emphasis on education" (Sr. Therese, October 18, 2017). Sister Therese is one of several members of the order that work within the school full time in staff roles. While a former teacher, she notes that the order is aging and none of the Sisters have the energy for the long hours of teaching anymore. Instead, they serve on as staff members to intentionally influence the school's Catholic identity through their presence, mentorship, and leadership.

Many of the school's teachers and staff have connections to the order, as well. Principal Billiart was a sister in training but did not take final vows. Both of the assistant principals, Lawrence Neumann and Teresa Clonard, attended Catholic schools and taught at schools associated with the order before coming to Juan Diego. The three full time theology teachers in the building all have direct connections to the order. The freshman teacher was educated in schools sponsored by the order from elementary school through her graduate degree, the sophomore and junior teacher taught in an order-sponsored school for nearly 30 years prior to transferring to Juan Diego, and the junior and senior theology teacher is a nun for another order of Sisters, but was educated in order-sponsored schools and maintains a close relationship to the order. Principal Billiart and Sister Therese both confirm this is an intentional choice to faithfully maintain the order's charism in the theology instruction and school leadership.

While not directly associated with the regional Roman Catholic diocese, Juan Diego does have a close relationship with the diocese. This is evidenced by the school's physical building which is rented to the school for only $1 a year plus utilities and is physically attached to a diocesan church.

Recruitment of students with demonstrated economic need is part of the Catholic order's charism, but it also is one of the marks of the school's larger network. Juan Diego is part of a larger, national network of 32 schools with the mission to:

> empower thousands of students from underserved, low-income communities to develop their minds and hearts to become lifelong contributors to society. By providing students an extraordinary college preparatory education and a unique four-year, integrated corporate work study experience, we seek to transform urban America one student at a time.

Begun in 1996, the network continues to grow as it finds success with the work study funding model. The program employs students one day a week at local businesses, filling entry level positions for local businesses that frequently experience high turnover, the students' salary funding most of the students' private school tuition. Local employers range from call centers to retail stores to hospitality to nonprofits to medical centers to higher education institutions.

The work study program funds 17% of Juan Diego's $4.3 million-dollar annual budget. 64% is funded by grants, donors, and gifts and 14% from scholarship funds and endowments. Large donors are typically individuals who support the school's vision, such a famous rapper who was raised in a nearby neighborhood. Others donate because of the school's mission: the only urban Catholic high school in the region that is financially accessible to families with low incomes. At Juan Diego, the families pay between $0-$30 a month in tuition, the lowest in the network. In fact, only 3% of the budget comes from tuition, a fiscal model that makes a private school education within reach for the families the school hopes to recruit.

Once students are recruited and enrolled, the goal begins in earnest. Sister Therese explains this school does not have a four-year goal focused on high school graduation or even college enrollment, but an eight-year goal focused on college graduation. Since the school opened in 2006, freshmen to senior graduation retention has fluctuated between 45 and 65%, though typically falling in the middle of the range. Additionally, every graduating class has boasted 100% college acceptance rate with 87% of students becoming the first in their families to attend college. Sister Therese is proud of the five-year college completion rate for Juan Diego graduates: it has ranged from 62 to 67% since the school opened

compared to a national average of 18%. Student retention is a prominent goal at Juan Diego.

Principal Billiart explains, "What would you think if an airline said they were only going to

shoot for landing 70 or 75% of their planes? Why should we plan to only graduate 60 or 65%

of our students?" (personal communication, K. Billiart, November 3, 2017).

The school is geographically within a bustling urban community of 450,000

residents, but it is also connected to the larger metropolitan area with a population of over

two million. The city has multiple national headquarters for large businesses. The families

attending the school are spread across the urban metropolis with students representing 36

different zip codes and 30 different middle schools. Families come to Juan Diego for a

variety of reasons. According to market research conducted as part of a strategic plan,

families cite the college preparatory curriculum as the number one reason for attending the

school. Assistant Principal Teresa Clonard is primarily responsible for curriculum and

instruction. In her first interview, she explains more than half of students at Juan Diego come

to school their freshman year an average of two or more grade levels behind in reading and

math according to ACT (American College Test) series of tests and the Scholastic Reading

Inventory (Table 3).

Table 3

Student Scores on Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI)

Grade	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
Freshman	19.7%	40.1%	30.3%	9.8%
Sophomores	17.8%	40%	40%	2.2%
Juniors	28.3%	38%	30.4%	3.3%
Seniors	22%	31.9%	36%	9.7%

During their time at Juan Diego, students grow an average of 2.8 points on the ACT, a point

of concern for the administrators because it is one of the lowest statistics in the network.

Also, students perform at a comparable rate to the four public high schools within the

geographic school district (Table 4) despite efforts to market Juan Diego as academically

comparable to the public magnet high school and charter high school.

Additionally, since the school cannot provide special education or supplemental

English language learner accommodations, families waive their right to these services should

they choose to enroll their students. Between families' economic need and students'

academic achievement records, multiple teachers and several students repeat a common

sentiment that Juan Diego is students' only hope to go to college (Figure 2). Neumann

describes students' academic achievement prior to Juan Diego saying, "it's not our fault, but

it's our problem and our opportunity" (personal communication, L. Neumann, November 20,

2017).
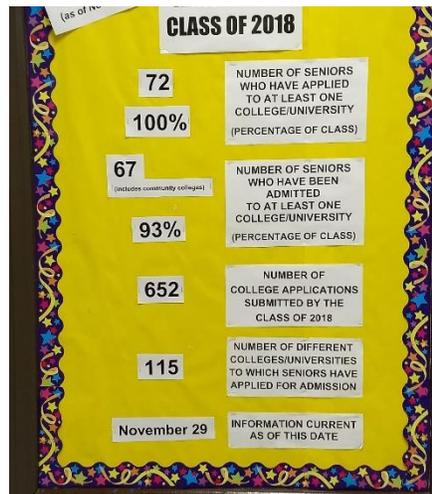
Figure 2. A bulletin board outside of the college counselors' office is updated regularly to
reflect college applications and admissions.

Table 4

Achievement and School Data* for Selected Local High Schools

High School	Composite ACT Score 2017	% of students tested	Graduation Rate 2017	Entering 4 year	Entering 2 year
Juan Diego High School	15.3	100%	100%	98% (Total)	
National Average	20.1	60%	84.1%	69.7% (Total)	
Public Magnet School	22.1	99.3%	100%	50.8%	40.2%
Charter School	19.9	100%	100%	84.2%	10.5%
Public School 1	15.2	69.6%	68.2%	15.7%	25.4%
Public School 2	16.6	89.4%	92.4%	30.1%	25.8%
Public School 3	15.1	71.3%	63.8%	16.7%	29.3%
Public School 4	15.6	77.3%	72.7%	30.8%	23.1%

 *Data from most recent National Center for Informational Statistics reports

For other families, the decision to attend Juan Diego is religious. On enrollment forms, families are encouraged to provide additional demographic information so the school can learn about its students. From those that choose to respond, the administrators estimate that 55% of families at the school identify as Catholic, 40% Protestant, predominantly Baptist and Pentecostal denominations, and the remaining 5% a mix of Muslim, Jewish, and secular identities. Within the same market research poll, Spanish speaking families were identified as being more likely to send their children to Juan Diego because of its Catholic identity. For all other families, the second most common reason was safety.

The school's mission to provide a college preparatory, faith-based education for adolescent students from rich culturally communities made it an ideal site to study literacy instructional practices and culturally sustaining pedagogies.

Data Collection

Data collection followed three phases using the emergent, constant comparative design (Grbich, 2012) between September 2017 and March 2018. The three phases of data collection totaled 375 hours in the field at the school over a period of seven months. The extended time within the field allowed for detailed descriptions of the context, its various influential factors, and repeated documentation of practices (Grbich, 2012). Following a constant comparative design, data collection occurred an average of 20 hours a week, or two to three full days for the first four months of data collection. This created a balanced approach between data collection and data analysis with the participants through dialogic spirals (Kinloch & San Pedro, 2013). Broadly, data collection included observations, field notes, interviews, photography, audio recordings, and document analysis across three phases. Additionally, data analysis included weekly analytic memos, transcription of audio files, and

coding using pattern analysis (Miles et al., 2013). A simplified timeline is provided in Table 5.

Phase one. The primary purpose of data collection during phase one was to understand the school and local community's history, individual stakeholder's histories, and analyze the school's academic achievement data in order to create a cultural portrait of the school and identify highly effective educators (Creswell, 2013). During phase one, I first entered the school site. After meeting with Principal Billiart and Assistant Principals Neumann and Clonard, I was introduced to the staff at an after-school faculty meeting by Principal Billiart:

> Her background is in literacy, like I said, so I'm hoping this will be mutually beneficial. She'll give us data and help us out, and she'll get to finish her doctoral project. So, she will be around the school and popping into classrooms, eventually she'll go to every classroom and stay for a while. She'll be taking notes, but that's just part of a dissertation data collection. Eventually, she'll need, what? 2 to 3? 4 to 5? About 5 or so teachers that want to work more with her. (Field Notes, September 28, 2017)

I spent 58 hours over three weeks in systematic data collection to construct a primary record of the school as a culture-sharing group. I relied on photographs of school building, informal interviews with stakeholders, gathering documents and artifacts, observations of teachers, and daily field notes (Carspecken, 1996; Patton, 2015). Critical ethnography is concerned with the meanings participants ascribe to cultural behaviors, knowledge, and artifacts. These meanings can be "directly expressed in language; [but] many are taken for granted and communicated only indirectly through word and action" (Spradley, 1980, p. 5). Having multiple sources of data collection was an intentional choice to build a description of the culture-sharing group, but also to capture the various ways meaning is expressed.

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Table 5

Data Collection and Analysis Timeline

Phase	Timeline	Data Collection	Data Analysis
Phase One	Weeks 1-3	Construction of primary record Photographs of school building Interview guide phenomenological interviews with stakeholders Collected documents and artifacts (e.g., achievement, map, bell schedule) Observations of all teachers Daily field notes	Weekly analytic memos Transcription of interviews Level one descriptive coding Member checking community definitions
Phase Two	Weeks 4-10	Focused Observations Photographs of classrooms Observations of selected teachers Collected documents and artifacts (e.g., curriculum guides, lesson plans, student work) Semi-structured interviews with stakeholders (e.g., administrators, staff, selected teachers) Daily field notes	Weekly analytic memos Transcription of interviews Level one descriptive coding Level two provisional coding Member checking of community definitions and cultural portraits
Winter Break	Weeks 11-12	Interview guide phenomenological interviews with stakeholders Collected documents and artifacts (e.g., school forms)	Level two provisional coding Member checking cultural portraits and emerging themes
Phase Three	Weeks 13-24	Focused Observations Participant observation with three focus teachers Collected documents and artifacts (e.g., curriculum guides, lesson plans, student work) Semi-structured and informal interviews with focus teachers	Weekly analytic memos Transcription of interviews Level one descriptive coding Level two provisional coding Member checking cultural portraits and emergent findings

Observation was my primary tool of inquiry (Madison, 2011; Patton, 2015). During phase one, I acted as a non-participant observer, recording the setting, activities, and interactions with depth, detail, and vivid descriptions during daily field notes (Creswell, 2013, 2014; Patton, 2015; Spradley, 1980). For example, this description of a setting comes from Spanish III, a heritage language Spanish class with Julia Álverez.

> The second floor classroom has the distinct buttery yellow walls and a creamy purple back wall that make it similar to other classrooms in the building. The front wall, punctured by the brown door in the front left corner, has a long uninterrupted expanse split nearly in half with a bulletin board on one side and white board on the other. The bulletin board features a building map and emergency folder. A small table in front of the board has a set of filing shelves for papers and loose supplies. Above the board are images of the school's three patron saints, a print out of the school's mission, a framed art piece of [Our Lady of Guadalupe], and a sign that says "Eschuche/Listen." The white board a complicated mix of -ir verb conjugation tables, formulas for "a + el = al" and "de + el = del." My eye goes above the whiteboard and past the projector screen to a row of flags representing Hispanic countries that wraps from the front of the room to the back along the top of the side wall. (Álverez, October 6, 2017)

Field notes were also used to capture activities and processes. This description is from Richard August's computer science class. Mr. August is a second-year teacher who came to Juan Diego after retiring from his long career in computer engineering. The first hour course is an elective for seniors and has one of the lowest class sizes in the building: ten students. In my notes, I created a map of the classroom and represented each of the students with a letter, A through J.

> Students take notes based on the review. They use blue notebooks provided by the teacher and kept in the wire basket by the front door. August poses questions throughout the review lecture with Student G answering many of the questions (4 of 5) and student F, who was absent on Friday, getting praised after correctly answering a direct question. "Excellent job, and [Student F] wasn't even here when I taught that!" Student D asked questions for further clarification during the lecture/review— the only whole class question posed during the ten minutes of review; the other nine students raise their hand and wait for one on one assistance from the teacher or do not pose questions. (August, October 2, 2017)

Finally, my field notes also described interactions. This interaction is between two students in Judy Carlow's second hour Algebra I course for freshman. Mrs. Carlow is an experienced educator that was in her first year at Juan Diego. This interaction was observed on the Friday before Homecoming. Students had been previously warned that if they were not at school on Friday, they would be unable to attend Homecoming the following day.

> A student comes in late and walks to a group of four girls seated in a grouping of four desks. The tardy student looks at one girl in particular, face twisted with eyebrows narrowed and a chiseled frown. 'Get up!' she motions to the student's chair, 'That's mine!' she whispers, but the girl is unmoving. 'I told her you were coming!' another tablemate intones. The original desk occupant turns her back, physically blocking the standing student from seeing her and not moving. The tardy student walks to the center table where a male student offers his seat so she can be physically closer to her friends. She does not respond to his comment, sitting across the table, putting her head down. Ms. Carlow waits approximately a minute before coming over to the tardy student and begins to explain what they're doing. [sic] during independent work time, the tardy student pulls her chair around to join the group and the girl who first refused to get up now smiles, teasing her for the reason she was late: her shirt was deemed inappropriate and had to be changed. The late student leans over, opening the collar of the large purple t-shirt to show the other student her original shirt. (Carlow, October 2, 2017)

Maintaining description within field notes is an intentional choice to dispel my bias, saving the interpretations and personal reactions for analytic memoing until clear patterns and themes were discovered (Patton, 2015). For example, in an analytic memo from phase one, I considered what was missing in my observations:

> It's easy to notice the cleanliness of the building, its new construction, and cheery yellow walls. It's hard to notice the missing student work on display—indeed, even places like bulletin boards that would allow displays. The lack of environmental print (Routman comes to mind, is there scholarship on this in high schools?), student work, and opportunities to celebrate student talents seems like a missed opportunity...Am I being unfair? I genuinely don't remember having a single student work piece displayed in my own high school, instead I am influenced by my middle school years as a teacher—my recent experiences in elementary schools. I am bringing those eyes with me. (Memo, October 3, 2017)

The analytic memos were a place to discuss my interpretations, reactions, potential emerging themes, related bodies of literature, and practice reflexivity.

During phase one, observations included a minimum of one class period with 26 of the 27 teachers in the building, one teacher having declined to participate. Observations also included daily morning assemblies attended by all students and faculty, school events such as Mass and assemblies, faculty events such as all staff meetings and professional development days, and liminal spaces such as passing periods, lunch, conversations in the teacher's lounge, and hallway supervision before and after school. Also, my phase one of data collection coincided with the start of a grant funded Literacy Leadership Team (LLT), or professional learning community of six teacher leaders, two administrators, and two literacy specialists from a neighboring community. This group met twice a month during the entirety of the study and were also observed using the same observational methods from phase one.

Many documents were used to capture different aspects of the greater context, as well. Documents are broadly considered any, "written materials and documents...captured in a way that records and preserves the context" (Patton, 2015, p. 15). Documents included in data collection were: school handbooks for faculty and students, all text on the school and network website, school level and program level yearly reports, a five year strategic plan, marketing and recruitment materials for prospective families, transcribed advertising videos, quarterly newsletters for donors and alumni, quarterly parent newsletters for current families, network curriculum and end of course exams for each discipline, and the school's reading and writing handbook. Also, the administrators provided school achievement data from the yearly Explore, Plan, and ACT series of assessments along with the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) administered once each quarter.

Additionally, my primary record initially included just over 300 photographs representing the building, its common areas accessible to students, outside structure, and immediate community surrounding the school. This included every posted piece of text such as paintings, signs, fliers, slideshows, school uniforms, graffiti, and bulletin boards on the walls of the school. Nearly 200 additional photographs were collected throughout the study to document changes in displays, bulletin boards, holiday decorations, and other changes to the school's space. During classroom observations, photographs of all assignments, handouts, worksheets, and models of student work were also collected for analysis.

Finally, during phase one I also relied on interviews with participants to build a primary record. Within phenomenological interviews, I can capture lived experience and the meaning participants ascribe to it (Seidman, 2013; Van Manen, 1990). These lived experiences are described through concrete terms such as "narratives, anecdotes, and stories" (Patton, 2015, p. 433). This can be approached through an informal and interactive process (Moustakas, 1994) or a more formal three-part interview (Seidman, 2013). I used an interview guide approach which is a combination of the two (Patton, 2015). Specifically, I specified topics and questions in advance (see Appendix A) for interviews with key stakeholders including the school's President, three administrators, three counselors, eleven staff members, and 16 of the 27 teachers. This ensured that the same topics are covered across interviews to create future opportunities for cross case analysis while still allowing fluidity to adapt to the participant and context (Patton, 2015). As interviews were conducted, the interview guide was continually refined and adapted following an emergent design (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015). For example, in the original interview guide I asked participants, "Describe the local community." Through interviews, it was revealed that the

school drew from so many local neighborhoods and communities that a better form of questioning would be "What communities is the school accountable to? How so?" because it better aligned with the theoretical orientation and allowed the participants to name the community(ies) (Paris & Alim, 2017). Since interviews are "part technique, part ethics, part theory, part method, part intuition, part collaboration, and part openness to deep vulnerability" the flexibility of the method allowed these adaptions based on the etiquette, customs, and individual nature of each interview (Madison, 2011, p. 43).

The primary purpose of the data collection during phase one was to understand the school and local community's history, individual stakeholder's histories, and analyze the school's academic achievement data. To those ends, the combination of observations, interviews, and documents provided a thick, rich description of the community, school, and classrooms to create a cultural portrait of the culture-sharing group (Creswell, 2013). A secondary purpose was to identify teachers that were described as highly effective based on how the culture-sharing group defines highly effective for phase two, described next.

Phase two. The goal of phase two was to create a fuller description of the primary record and support reconstructive analysis (Carspecken, 1996). A fuller description means determinations of power relations, roles, and intersubjective structures; those factors that are often unarticulated by participants but are nonetheless present (Carspecken, 1996). Within the reconstructive analysis, the initial cultural portrait of the culture-sharing group was tested and examined through longer, focused observations and interviews with nine focus teachers, gathering documents, and maintaining field notes over the course of six weeks.

At the beginning of phase two, nine focus teachers were identified via theoretical sampling, or intentionally selecting participants who are examples of a theoretical

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construction (Creswell, 2013). During stakeholder interviews with administration, staff, and

teachers and informal conversations with students, I elicited feedback about who they

recommended I go observe. Across recommendations, eleven teachers were consistently

identified across multiple interviews. Additionally, I completed level two coding, described

later, on field notes from all teacher observations to identify educators most likely to

curricularize culturally sustaining pedagogies using my previously supplied definition of

highly effective. From the coding, two additional teachers were identified. Of the thirteen

total teachers identified through theoretical sampling, nine were selected using maximum

variation. Maximum variation sampling is intentionally diversifying the sample to encompass

the most dissimilarity in selected characteristics (Patton, 2015). The nine teachers

represented a range of grade levels, academic disciplines, and types of professional

experiences, and all were interested in participating collaboratively in the research project.

The identified teachers also were a representative cross section of the self-identified

diversities within the teaching faculty as represented in Table 6.

Table 6

Phase Two Focus Teachers

Teacher	Discipline Taught	Grade Levels Taught	Years Taught/ Years at Current School	Teaching Certification	Education and/or Experience	Self-Identification
Cecilia Gregory	Music	9th	6/4	None	Master's in Music Therapy 30 years as licensed Music Therapist	"old Black Baptist woman"
Emily Mail*	Social Studies	10th and 12th	1/1	High School History	Master's in Education 10 years in broadcasting	White female raised Catholic, now agnostic
Sarah Cruise*	English	10th and 12th	9/9	High School English	Masters	White, able-bodied female. Raised Catholic now "cafeteria Catholic"
Alexandria "Alex" Jerome*	English	10th and 11th	5/4	Alternative certification High School English	Masters 3 years as journalist	Black, able-bodied female "A comic book nerd before it was cool" Protestant Christian
Grace de Salas	Science	11th and 12th	23/5	High School Science in Philippines	Taught middle and high school	Filipina Catholic

Teacher	Discipline Taught	Grade Levels Taught	Years Taught/ Years at Current School	Teaching Certification	Education and/or Experience	Self- Identification
Albert Younger	Science	9th	15/6	High School Science	Taught middle and high school	White, able-bodied male. Catholic
Kat Cimatti	Art	10th and 12th	10/1	K-12 art	Taught elementary and at local art museum	Asian American Female Secular
Richard August	STEM	11th and 12th	2/2	None	30 years as an engineer	White male Catholic
Judy Carlow*	Math	9th	8/1	None	Taught at local high school	N/A

*denotes membership in Literacy Leadership Team

All identified teachers agreed to collaborate in phase two, though Judy Carlow unexpectedly resigned her position limiting her collaboration to two observations and one interview.

Phase two's goal was first to create a fuller description of the primary record developed during phase one and support reconstructive analysis by evaluating the accuracy of the cultural portrait of the school (Carspecken, 1996). During this phase, I transitioned from a silent observer to a participant observer (Spradley, 1980) slowly building reciprocal relationships throughout the first two months. This took many forms based on the requests of the stakeholders. For example, I was a photographer during a school assembly, substitute taught two periods of American History, organized the school's professional development literature library, and was an informal instructional coach for two first-year teachers. In doing

so, I built a foundation for collaboration on trustworthiness and credibility as a participant within the school (Carspecken, 1996; Grbich, 2012).

Within phase two, observations were the primary mode of data collection and took place over the course of one to three full school days per teacher based on the focus teacher's availability, the school calendar, and extenuating circumstances such as teacher illness. The focus teachers dictated the terms of participation during observations. For example, Emily Mail invited me to co-design a lesson and co-teach in her World History class where I led small group instruction. We also emailed frequently throughout phase two: she asked clarifying questions and for resource ideas, and I shared numerous articles, lesson ideas, and interesting news articles. On the other hand, Grace de Salas and Albert Younger both asked me to silently observe. Other teachers enacted a more gradual process, such Cecilia Gregory. My first day in her classroom, I assisted in making copies for student work. Then the next day, she asked me to calculate grade level equivalencies for print texts she used in class. A week later, we co-designed literacy instruction to support her use of texts in class and collaborated on lesson design.

Throughout phase two the varied, teacher directed interactions created grounds for dialogical data generation—generating data *with* participants rather than *about* them (Carspecken, 1996). For example, early in phase two, I gathered information about educators as seen in the field notes from Grace de Salas' senior class Human Body Systems:

> Across the room, a student uses a resource outside of PLTW [Project Lead the Way] curriculum to answer a question by typing a query into Google on his iPad. Mrs. de Salas leans over him, her eyes squinting behind her oval glasses frames, and points to something on the screen. She tells the student she recognizes the author of the website. She compliments him for finding resources "a summary." As she crosses the room to another raised hand, she passes in front me, giving me a quick wink and a smile. (de Salas, November 3, 2017)

In this example, de Salas is nonverbally acknowledging my presence and does not invite me to participate within the classroom activities. There is no dialogue and I am a silent observer, recording information about her teaching. Two weeks later, and outside of the classroom, she begins to invite me to participate as a consultant. This excerpt is from a science team meeting that de Salas is leading. The entire science team including Arthur Younger, Richard August, a second year Biology teacher, and a community volunteer are present. They are discussing what their required science team goal will be for the academic year. They have been asked to select from three options by the administration and trying to make sense of what the options mean.

Younger:	So, our original one and now we've got [pause] um and the sec--, the first one [reading] "teacher demonstrates content knowledge through use of academic and discipline," that's vocabulary, right?
de Salas:	Right. Well, Leah is here. Leah can we ask you? When you say those two words does it mean it's vocab?
Panther:	Well, vocabulary is definitely part of the language, but defining those two separate ideas--academic refers to those general words that might mean something slightly different when moving from classroom to classroom but are generally used across all academic disciplines. So that'd be like compare, contrast, infer, summarize.
de Salas:	Those Bloom's Taxonomy words?
Panther:	Yes, great. And then the discipline language that would be words, phrases, or ways of speaking and writing that are specific to only your discipline. These are the terms all biologist use. This is the way all chemists write their lab reports. So that's the discipline specific, it's what people are using that are experts in the field.
de Salas:	That's really clear. I think the disciplinary literacy is very critical for us because we see that on their ACT scores, too, that sometimes they struggle because they cannot decipher science terminology, y'know. (Science Team, November 14, 2017)

de Salas has invited me into dialogue, though it is purposeful and meant to share information. Then, by the end of phase two, de Salas was negotiating understanding of literacy, instruction, and the school in conversation, as demonstrated by my field notes:

> Grace de Salas and I spoke at length before and during the morning assembly. She
> has decided not to accept the position at the school in [southeastern state] but is
> continuing to look for positions in the area. She also wanted feedback on an
> upcoming lesson. Since her team's professional development goal is to integrate
> disciplinary vocabulary she has been looking at several different websites she could
> use for vocabulary instruction. We discussed the pros and cons of Quizlet. I was able
> to question her on how she believed students learned new concepts. She talked about
> making connections to prior knowledge and visuals, especially in science. I asked
> what that meant in terms of selecting a website to use and she said it would have to be
> able to integrate clip art or drawings. (Field Notes, December 4, 2017)

In this example, de Salas and I have developed a relationship and she trusts me to discuss her
family's desire to move to another state and the ensuing job change. From that foundation,
we engaged in dialogue about effective instructional practices. In the conversation, we were
both valuing each other's expertise: she asked questions about literacy instruction and I asked
questions about science disciplinary instruction.

Participant observation with field notes was the primary form of data collection
during phase two. Field notes were kept before, during, and immediately after observations to
compile a thick description and primary record of what was occurring within the setting and
add appropriate context to the audio recordings (Carspecken, 1996). For example, a
transcribed audio recording of Cecilia Gregory's classroom reveals what sounds like a
student reading the assigned worksheet:

> Gregory: Are you reading?
> Student: Yea, I'm annotating. (Gregory, December 12, 2017)

My field notes, however, add appropriate context:

> Gregory sits in her desk to the side of the room, alternating between scrolling through
> YouTube Christmas songs and scanning the room. She notices a female student
> whose head has been down for approximately two minutes. 'Are you reading?' she
> asks. Her tone is loud in the quiet room, and the student jolts slightly. "Yea, I'm
> annotating" she replies, her head still down, resting on her arms. Gregory returns to
> the computer screen, selecting an Ariana Grande video. The student remains head
> down, worksheet empty, pencil untouched. (Panther, December 12, 2017)

Following an emergent design, the participants also directed where additional data sources emerged from (Creswell, 2013). For example, Cecilia Gregory provided multiple lesson plans and student work samples that she thought better represented her anthropological approach to musical literacy instruction than the initial observed lesson. Similarly, Alexandria "Alex" Jerome asked me to spend additional time with her students as a field trip supervisor and research tutor to normalize my presence with the students prior to entering her classroom; additionally, she communicated it would provide a fuller picture of the students' writing process within her unit. This resulted in the collection of photographs, student work samples, lesson plans, handouts, and informal interactions with students.

During phase two, the teachers and I engaged in a series of semi-structured and informal interviews (Patton, 2015) in order to record not only the instructional practices, but the layers of meaning teachers ascribed to them (Seidman, 2013). The semi-structured format included regularly occurring questions, such as asking teachers to engage in think alouds during instructional planning and while analyzing student assessments (Charters, 2003), immediate questions about student comments and actions throughout the lesson, and clarification questions. I often asked questions about teachers' conceptions of literacy, culture, and their discipline multiple times over the course of several weeks to check for consistency over time. Given the number of focus teachers in phase two, I was further able to, "connect their experiences and check the comments of one participant against those of others" (Seidman, 2013, p. 27).

During phase two I began a new data collection practice. Noting the growing amount of documents, audio files, and photographs, I began cataloging each document in the daily

field notes alongside additional descriptions to place the documents into a historical, social, and cultural context, as needed. The focus on context preservation is especially key as Bogdan and Biklen (2003) consider "culture documents"—those documents that serve a purpose ranging from entertainment, to persuasion, to enlightenment that is dependent on the context (p. 64). For example, in Richard August's computer sciences class, a photograph of the whiteboard revealed the seemingly nonsense word "BOKEH" and seemingly offensive word "GIMP". After asking Richard August to review my field notes and providing him with a photograph of the terms, he noted:

> These are both graphical manipulation programs that are used in one of the other classes that share that classroom. I was not sure if the other teacher still needed them on the board, so left them. It probably would have been OK to erase, but I did not really need the board space. (August, October 3, 2017)

At the end of phase two, the school had a two-week winter break. During this time, I completed all interviews for phase two and prepared for phase three.

Phase three. During phase three, the goal was to engage in collaborative, longer-term participant observations with a small number of focus teachers for validation of emerging findings (Dyson & Genishi, 2015; Spradley, 1980). In order to validate the findings, I worked with the participants to develop a cultural portrait of the school based on the primary record from phase one and my initial conceptualization in phase two. Additionally, we collaboratively created cultural portraits of each participant's classroom to describe how each participant fit into the larger culture sharing group to more effectively capture the nuances and subtleties of the site.

During phase three, data collection was long term, focused observations, interviews, and collection of documents over the course of twelve weeks. The three focus teachers were

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selected based on critical case sampling from the nine original focus teachers in phase two (Creswell, 2013). Critical case sampling, "permits logical generalization and maximum application of information to other cases" (Creswell, 2013, p. 158). I selected three educators that made compelling critical cases. Sarah Cruise was the unofficial chair of the English department, in her tenth year at Juan Diego, and viewed as a teacher leader within the building. Alex Jerome was in her fourth year as an English teacher and consistently demonstrated evidence of alignment with highly effective instruction. Cecilia Gregory was in her third year of teaching after retiring from a career as a music therapist making her an excellent classroom to explore disciplinary literacy practices in music. The three educators all expressed interest in continuing a collaborative research partnership (Patton, 2015).

Data collection during phase three was a continuation of methods from phase two. The three focus teachers had already established a relationship with me and invited me into their classrooms as a full participant observer. For example, a normal day of data collection with Alex Jerome would begin with both of us arriving before the bell. We would get coffee in the teacher's lounge and discuss the plans for the day. I would go to her morning assembly duty post and greet students with her. After assembly, we would return for first period. She would teach the lesson and I would support her instruction by either rotating through the room to respond to student questions, working with a small group of students, creating instructional materials (e.g., anchor charts), or evaluating student assessments using a model and teacher created rubrics. During her second hour plan time, we would engage in a semi-structured interview and discuss how the lesson went, changes she would make, individual student responses, and complete think alouds about instructional planning for the rest of the academic week. This would repeat for her four additional class periods. During advisory and

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"PLT" times, both the equivalent of study halls, I would occasionally excuse myself for interviews with administrators, to coach two first year teachers, or to complete other teacher-initiated projects for reciprocity with the school site. During her afternoon plan time, I would either attend her English team meeting, junior level Professional Learning Team meeting, or we would review transcripts from previous observations for accuracy. After school, when there were no meetings, I would review my field notes with her from the day to ensure I had accurately captured the day's events.

Data Analysis

Within qualitative studies, data analysis is "a continuous, iterative enterprise" that "needs to be well documented" Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2013, p. 14). It is the process of turning observation, interviews, and documents into codes, patterns, themes, and findings. It is the process of turning people, events, and realities into meaning. I filtered each decision I made through a critical paradigm, considering how the consequences each representation decision had on the way the school and its stakeholders are seen, named, and treated (Madison, 2011). As Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2013) recommend, having a plan and record of the process is imperative to maintain the integrity of the participants' voices throughout data analysis. Here, I will detail the process of data analysis during each of the three phases of data collection.

Phase one. The goal of phase one was to complete a primary record of the cultural sharing group, in this study, Juan Diego High School. During phase one data collection, that meant gathering observations, documents, and completing interviews, all of which were recorded and contextualized in daily field notes. For data analysis, during this phase, I

completed analytic memos and completed level one coding of all field notes, documents, and interview transcripts.

Analytic memos, as previously defined, refer to regular reflexive notes where I recorded emerging hunches, charted connections, jotted down ideas to investigate further, and recorded gaps (Charmaz, 2014). Carspecken (1996) recommends reflecting on the data apart from the site to construct a critically reflective primary record that broadly explains the culture and interactions within the setting. At the end of the first week of data collection during phase one, I wrote the follow excerpt in an analytic memo:

> I spent the morning roaming the hallways, photographing every hallway, stone, sign, and doorway. Making a mental and physical map of the school, its contents, its locations. Its bones. I saw whiffs of several things. First, 'a building not our own.' The building is situated in history with a large stone sign naming it 'Saint Vincent DePaul' and a smaller stone on a side of building 'Sacred Heart High School.' Signs marking parking for the next-door church—allowed only to priests and brothers. A sign in the cafeteria telling the church rules for cleanup and cleanliness. But this reality—the school is part of a history and belongs to a church—is in contrast to the modern construction: walls painted a creamy yellow and muted shade of eggplant, crosses with the distinctive school symbol etched in glass and inlayed in wood. The competing realities are side by side demonstrating a cohesive relationship, partnership, rather than a battle. (Memo, September 30, 2017)

The memo was a place to make sense of the hundreds of photographs of the school site and place the photographs in conversations with the school's documents that detail the history of the building. It was also a sense of a potential emerging theme: that this particular school site's effectiveness may be impacted by a collaborative relationship with an attached church.

Prior to coding, I completed verbatim transcription of all formal interviews. This included interviews with four administrators and fourteen staff and teachers. The transcriptions, documents, and field notes were coded using MaxQDA, a qualitative data analysis software program. During phase one, coding was only completed at the descriptive

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level (Miles et al., 2013). During the descriptive level coding, I used in vivo codes, or the

participants' own language, to allow the participants to use their own words to describe

meaning and events (Miles et al., 2013). This is appropriate for a critical ethnographic

perspective because it foregrounds the meaning participants assign and does not impose my

own language. For example, the February 2016 Parent Newsletter had the following excerpt:

> Juniors enjoyed their retreat on the campus of [local Catholic University]. They were
> encouraged to reflect on their lives as they have moved from their freshman
> experience of identifying the five core values of JDHS (integrity, respect,
> responsibility, partnership and spirituality), to the task of incorporating these
> principles in their lives during their junior year.

This was coded with seven in vivo codes: retreat, core values, integrity, respect,

responsibility, partnership, and spirituality.

When in vivo codes were not functional or appropriate to ascribe descriptive

meaning, process codes were used. Process codes describe the action that is occurring within

the data using gerunds (Patton, 2015). For example, in the yearly school report the section,

"Two full time college counselors also work with students to advise, teach, and advocate for

student scholarships, finding the right fit for their post-secondary dreams, and making

students succeed at the next level" a broader gerund code "Describing the faculty and staff"

was used to denote the description of the role of the school's college counselors. The use of

gerunds focuses on actions, interactions, and consequences rather than defaulting to labeling

of people (Charmaz, 2014). Given the potential for researcher bias within the colonial roots

of ethnographic research, this is a conscious decision to allow not just the data, but the

participants, to speak for themselves within the data analysis process and humanize their

voices (Paris & Winn, 2013). As an organizational strategy, I capitalized all gerund codes

(e.g., Describing faculty and staff) and used lower case to denote in vivo codes (e.g., core

values, retreat) in order to keep them distinguished within the MaxQDA codebook. Level one coding resulted in 1,128 codes.

At the close of phase one, the goals of data collection focused on developing a primary record of the school (Carspecken, 1996). This included how the school defined highly effective instruction. In order to complete these goals, I first began pattern coding, or condensing large amounts of data into smaller analytic units (Miles et al., 2014). I began by importing all of the first level codes into Creative Coding, an organizational program on MaxQDA that allowed me to electronically shift the codes into similar groups. First, I grouped codes by similar theme, topic, or concept. For example, the codes "vision to drive the school," "aspirational goal," "students will graduate from college," and "core values" were all grouped together because they all referenced the goals, reputation, and long-term vision and mission of the school. Next, I looked for synonyms and duplicate codes within each conceptual group and condensed them. For example, "academic," "academic goal," and "academic excellence" were combined into one code: "academic goal" which appears 25 times in the data. Next, I grouped the reduced number of codes into new gerund codes and sub-codes. In other words, I used an existing level one code and grouped additional in vivo codes below it. I organized this data into a spreadsheet that defined each code and its sub-codes, frequency within the data, and several examples. An excerpt is provided in Table 7.

Table 7

Excerpt from Level One Codebook

Code	Sub-Codes	Definition	#	Example(s)
Describing the admin and leadership		Descriptions of the titles, responsibilities, and demographic information about the administrators and leadership structures within the school and network.	6	The President is in her fourth year at Juan Diego High School and oversees a staff of 70. Principal Katherine Billiart (9th year) works closely with two assistant principals to supervise 25 full time and 2 part time faculty members who assist in differentiating instruction to meet the needs of learners (Juan Diego High School 2014-2015 Report)
	provide resources, tools, and facilities	Descriptions that include reference to the resources, tools, and facilities that are the responsibilities of the administration and network to provide	1	This definition and focus helps to meet the schools needs of: Improving the quality of education for students Expanding the student base to provide services to a broader population of those in need Growing community support to fund JDHS efforts Provide the resources, tools and facilities to provide for students and the community (JDHS Strategic Plan)

Table continues

| network and assessment | Descriptions of network and school assessments, not student assessments or teacher evaluations. | 1 | <table>

#	Standard	School Self-Assessment	Visiting Team Assessment
1	Catholic Mission	4	3
2	Enrollment	4	4
3	Community & Parent Involvement	4	3
4	Academic Program	3	2
5	Work Study Program	4	1
6	Integration of Academic and Work Study Programs	4	3
7	Administration Structure	4	2
8	Finance and Development	4	2
9	Academic Data and Postsecondary	4	3

(JDHS Strategic Plan) |
| enrollment growth | Description of changes in enrollment including demographic factors. | 4 | Demographically, the Hispanic student population has dropped from 58% (2012-2013) to 52% this school year. The African American student population has increased from 35% to 41% over the same time period. (JDHS 2014-2015 Report) |
| develop-ment or advancement department | References to the development office and the department of advancement | 1 | Linked to the CWSP is the Development or Advancement Department, an integral office responsible for fundraising, grant writing, and fostering relationships with donors in and outside the community. The Development Department accounts for nearly 50 percent of the school's revenue through donations, special events, and grants. The Development Department is also responsible for cultivating relationships with outstanding students and training them as student ambassadors for tours and special events. (JDHS 2014-2015 Report) |

Through the data condensation process at the close of phase one, data was organized by topics providing the opportunity to analyze and interpret the local definitions of key terms. For example, while I had a theoretical definition of highly effective, I sought to determine the local, school based definition of highly effective instruction. To do so, I gathered all coded portions of data where administrators and school stakeholders (a) explicitly defined highly effective instruction (b) named who they perceive as highly effective instructors and (c) descriptions of how or why these educators were highly effective. First, I analyzed the data create a bulleted list of criteria and terms used to describe or define highly effective instruction and educators. Then, I then removed all identifying information from the coded data including names, pronouns, and courses taught. I placed the data into a Word Cloud program that uses the frequency to visually represent the words and phrases from the data and their visual weight based on frequency (Grbich, 2012) (Figure 3).

Figure 3. *Word Cloud of data related to highly effective.*

I compared the list I had generated from the data to the Word Cloud to ensure I had accurate represented the language the community used to define highly effective. I added another layer of accountability to the culture-sharing group by sharing the definition with Principal Billiart and Assistant Principals Nuemann and Clonard. The iterative zig-zag between data collection and data analysis was an intentional piece of the study's constant comparative design because I recognized the primary record would otherwise be influenced by my own bias rather than informed by the voices of the participants (Gribich, 2012).

Phase two. During phase two, my data collection focused on using the primary record to create a cultural portrait of the culture-sharing group (Carspecken, 1996). Ethnography essentially asks the question "What's going on here?" and uses the varied, descriptive responses to build a cultural portrait (Madison, 2005; Patton, 2015). During phase two of data collection, I used focused observations (Spradley, 1980), additional interviews, documents, and increasing participation within the school site to construct a cultural portrait during phase two data analysis. Data analysis during phase two largely focused on provisional coding and member checking community definitions and cultural portraits (Table 5).

I continued to complete first level coding on new data as it was collected to ensure it was appropriately captured, described, and categorized (Miles et al., 2014). I used the condensed codes from level one to create categories of codes (Table 8). The categories were created during the end of phase one of data collection and analysis, but not used to code data until phases two and three of data collection and analysis.

Table 8

First Level Condensed Codes

Provisional Code	Definition	Examples from Data
assessment	References to school wide standardized assessments used for diagnostic, placement, or accreditation including their administration, evaluation, and interpretation and perceptions of student achievement.	Chatting with the teacher, I reemphasize that I am interested in adolescent literacy. "Or lack of literacy" she quips, her palms outstretched towards the students (Field Notes, 10/12/2017) Clonard: Um, Read 180 is the first one when we catch and we see initially a student is scoring well below reading level. Panther: And that's based on? Clonard: It's based on SRI. And sometimes, first and foremost the SRI score. Um, we start when we look at students after the interview we look at the file, we look at the grades, we look at teacher recommendations. If the student perhaps has low grades in English, low grades, we also look at standardized tests scores you might see that there's a problem there. (Interview, 10/20/2017)
Authority	References to discipline, classroom management, consequences for students, teachers, or school stakeholders decided by a person in a position of authority or power.	Two students not paying attention during closing prayer are waylaid by the teacher. She tells them they are going to pray before they leave. She gives several options: pray the JDHS prayer (should be on the back on their IDs or the poster), create their own prayer, or look one up online. After a long awkward minute she walks away reminding them they won't leave until they pray. The boy goes first, looking one up online and reciting/reading it. The girl quickly follows suite. (Field Notes, 10/12/2017) This naturally led to several reminders about counting tardies and a reminder that students with exceptions from administration—whether for tardies or for dress code—would have a note; it wouldn't be a verbal agreement. One teacher offered, "trust but verify" explaining he trusts student's verbal excuses for tardies but then follows up on their stories. (Field Notes, 9/28/2017)
curriculum	Specific content goals, texts, and curriculum scholars used to design the content taught within	Panther: Are you curriculum shopping? [pointing to textbook] Clonard: Shopping, no. Looking to improve? Always. Curriculum has just kind of developed over

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	the school, departments, and individual classes.	time and changed. We use the network curriculum (Interview, 10/20/2017)

Um, and also the school size you don't meet with other freshmen algebra teachers who plan together so that's just the nature of the beast. So, you have to be careful in those settings to be faithful to the curriculum because it's been written by a broader range of people rather than just me thinking this is what I think is important and then whoa, find out other people wanted them to know this, this, and this and I didn't realize that. So, I think that's the danger of small schools. So, I think it's nice that we have planned our curriculum together across network schools. (Billiart, 12/20/2017) |
| Defining literacy | Responses to either direct or indirect questions to define literacy or related terms (e.g., reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, comprehension) that all stakeholders provide. | There is a traditional sense of literacy where it is assumed that it is English classes only. Hey, what's happening in English classes and how does that effect the literacy of our students. And that obviously is not the case, literacy runs across all disciplines (Neumann, 10/20/2017)

I think we've won over some math teachers, to y'know literacy is not just about English and words. It's about chunking and comprehension and how do we make them understand that. (Clonard, 10/20/2017) |
| Describing the administration and leadership | Descriptions of the titles, responsibilities, and demographic information about the administrators and leadership structures within the school and network. | [The Network] provides much more autonomy than if the school were attached to the Diocese instead. Because of that, the President and the Administrators are at the top and have the freedom to change and adapt to meet the school's and family's needs. Because of this, [she] expresses her opinion that she is heard; if she has an idea she can bring it them and it is heard. (Interview, 10/3/2017)

I have been blessed to work now with three really outstanding presidents. And in this model the president is your top leader (Billiart, 12/20/2017). |
| Describing the community | Specific references and descriptions of the layers of community that surround the school including the region, connected schools | ...we have 36 different zip codes and the kids from anywhere from between less than one mile up to 20 miles away and we have students who come from [out of state]. There's like 69...39, 49, 59, 71 kids who come from [out of state] zip codes. (Gonzaga, 10/16/2017). |

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	and businesses, Diocese and church affiliations, and demographic data.	This afternoon I'm going to um, what's his name? In uh, going to his office in [suburb]. Our senator from [state]. On the immigration and on the DACA issue. (Sister Therese, 10/18/2017)
Describing the historical context	Data that provides the story of the school's history and its current implications for stakeholders.	there's a few interesting pieces that are connected to this community during that time period. At that time period the [Local Family] Foundation got involved with the Catholic urban schools to try to help them not have to close so many. And to offer support while they figured out the best plan. (Billiart, 12/20/2017)
		I've got, as you can tell in this school, they're not all Catholic. And even though they say they're, 60% of the freshman class say they are Catholic. They don't go to church half the time. They're, y'know, there's lots of different y'know, um, denominations in here. I've got four Muslim girls. And y'know, I can't I can't do the old fashioned Pre-Vatican II you're going to go to hell unless you're baptized in the Catholic church kind of thing, y'know (Marillac, 10/16/2017).
Describing the students and families	Descriptions of a student, broad student demographics, and of the families of students.	[She] explains that many students are coming from trauma filled lives. She tells the story of one student whose religiously legalistic parent quit his job so he could go to church more often and forces the student to work instead. She's not allowed to go out because of his legalism. Another student who works until 9 pm at night, does homework, and gets on the 5:30 am bus the next morning. (Field notes, 10/4/2017)
		He describes the difference in culture between Hispanic students who are shy to participate, speak out, and have to be invited to be leaders versus the louder, more boisterous African American students who come from different social traditions (Neumann, 10/20/2017)
Describing the teachers and staff	Descriptions of faculty, staff, and volunteers at the school and their roles.	And what my job is, 1384 on your reading inventory Lexile is college level. So, as long as you, if you can get to that point before you get out of high school, you can read college level texts. (Stanislaus, 10/28/2017) I think the ones [teachers] that stay here are the ones that come in really want to make a difference in these kids life and know, even though it's going to be difficult in the end it's going to be worth it. (Gonzaga, 10/16/2017)

| literacy leadership team | References to and mentions of the literacy leadership team, its work, and its professional development meetings. | ...ongoing support and coaching for all teachers, this is happening right now with the literacy [leadership team]. I know this is a group that I joined on Saturday to kinda ya know hear what was going on and what direction that they were moving in and if you are a part of the literacy [leadership team] could you raise your hand. Okay, so we have some teachers in different areas that are taking some time on Saturdays as well as some time on Thursday to sort of look specifically at literacy growth, how they can learn about it, and how they can bring that back to share with the level data teams that they have. (Professional Development, Billiart, 11/3/2017)

...the literacy has become a goal. And quite honestly a lot of it, which came first, the grant or the y'know? (Clonard, 10/20/2017) |
| Pedagogy | Specific practices, strategies, description of teaching and its enactment, and how the teachers describe and think about pedagogy. | She talks about an upcoming lesson using an "escape box" where students have to solve puzzles to escape the box (inspired by escape rooms). It's an idea that she learned at [local university] and adapted for her own classroom. (Field Notes, 10/12/2017)

we need to really focus on being more student centered, project based, give them the skills, give them the information, and stop leading through every skill and y'know not just lecture. We need to keep that in mind because that's more what's going to prepare them for the world. How they're going to approach these tasks. I think our kids get very dependent when they know the teachers will lead them through it and spell it out. [sic] Take more of a we're here to guide you role. (LLT, Clonard, 10/28/2017) |
| professional development | Descriptions and references to support and continuing education opportunities for faculty including teacher evaluation, school wide professional development, professional learning communities, and leveled teams. Does | The next packet reviewed professional development policies and forms. Principal Billiart pointed out a $150 a credit hour reimbursement for graduate coursework. (Field Notes, 9/28/2017)

[Principal Billiart] confesses they struggle to spend the Title II funds to get teachers out of the area for conferences because of child care concerns and difficulties finding and managing subs. (Field Notes, 12/6/2017) |

Table continues

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	not include literacy leadership team.	
Race	All explicit references to race, racial identities, racial stereotypes, and awareness of race from the primary record (e.g., not from focus teacher lessons or interviews).	We went through that um when the uprising in Ferguson Missouri happened, we went through some conversations, how do you prepare kids for [sigh] there was a something with the police, it wasn't a police officer, but a community liaison personnel came and did a workshop with parents and students about um what to do if you're stopped by the police. But why should you have to do anything different if you're a different color? And that's a naive thing, but it's, why should you? (Billiart, 12/20/2017)

we have had groups of African American students who think that mass is a Hispanic thing because most of our Hispanic students are Catholic and very few of our African American students are, although there are some. Um, but that has led some of our African American students to think that we celebrate Hispanics all year long because we go to mass every six weeks because, so many Hispanics are Catholic. (Billiart, 12/20/2017) |
| School | References to the school as a building and as an entity including the school's mission, values, departments, and daily routines. | We're pretty much landlocked, we don't have anything else...the president before me did a great job with resurrecting the building. So, there are a few things. The bathrooms are kind of gross. (Gonzaga, 10/16/2017)
So it, it's uh, it's it's uh, it's like a beehive of y'know activity but its, it pulls in, it touches a lot of churches that um, just anyone we can to connect with our mission. People love the mission. It's not hard to get people to love the mission. And it's, y'know, what's the next step for you? How can you help us? Because we can't do this alone. We don't get government money. (Sister Therese, 10/18/2017) |

The condensed codes were used to construct a cultural portrait of the culture-sharing group. I gathered all of the coded data related to a person or position (e.g., Principal, theology teachers), activity (e.g., Poetry Out Loud competitive, service learning day), or routine practices (e.g., new teacher induction, student literacy interventions). From there, I

would make a bulleted list of information related to the concept. For example, the initial

outline of school wide literacy interventions:

- School wide literacy interventions:
  - Admissions team will use application packets to determine if a student needs an SRI [Scholastic Reading Inventory] screening (see photo)
    - Marked as below grade level on standardized test
    - Low GPA in 7th and/or 8th grade
    - No achievement data profile
  - If the student will not be successful (e.g., IEP) they are not accepted
  - Students who are flagged as below grade level in reading are placed in Read 180 freshman year, writing support sophomore year, and pulled from foreign/heritage language their first two years
    - Read 180 taught by freshman English teacher
    - Writing Intervention taught by senior English teacher
    - Students are provided with tutors during PLT time (see photo schedule)
      - One on one or small group
      - Volunteers from the community
      - Not necessarily trained in literacy/have experience teaching
      - Sister pairs tutors and students and is point person for communicating about tutoring between tutors, students, and teachers
    - Students are provided with after school tutoring (see photo schedule)
      - Teachers required to stay one day a week after school
      - Buses do not leave until 4:20 or 4:30 each afternoon
      - Majority of students have one hour between end of school day and bus pick up to attend tutoring, go to local businesses/restaurants, or hang out with friends
    - Students are provided with student monitoring forms
      - Teachers sign daily (see photo)
  - I-Team creates plans:
    - Intervention team includes CWS, nurse, counselor, college counselor, administrators
    - Call in teachers, students, and occasionally parents
    - Counselor and Principal speak Spanish and can translate
  - Semester credit recovery
    - Over winter break students are given packets to complete if they are failing their fall semester course
    - First semester is not completed until the 7th day after students return from Christmas break
    - If students fail to complete the packet by the end of the semester, they fail the course and need to take credit recovery in the summer
  - Credit recovery

- Required for all students who failed one or more courses during the school year
- Computer adaptive program the school purchases
- A monitor and tutors are available to support students
- Required to register → some students elect to leave the school rather than take summer school (1-2 a summer)
- Required to complete → some students are not invited to return (100% completion rate last summer) (Memo, 12/29/2017)

This outline was then shared with Assistant Principal Clonard to ensure accuracy. Once it and other portions of data were reviewed, they were collected to create a cultural portrait. Some portions, like the school wide literacy interventions, remained in outline format. Other portions were written in a narrative format to create the level of detail and context appropriate in research using a humanizing, critical ethnographic perspective. For example, this is the beginning excerpt from the cultural portrait of Sister Bernice, the senior Theology teacher and director of campus ministries:

> Sister Bernice's round face is framed by salt and pepper curls that softly bounce as she leans back in her creaking chair. 'Let me start way at the beginning,' her voice and smile resolute. She was born to a large Irish Catholic family in a large Midwestern city only three hours north of our current location. She attended Catholic schools through high school and was involved in the church in the same way everyone around her was: joining youth groups, singing, participating in school mass. She went a Catholic university to pursue an education and ministry degree without a second thought. Catholic was a part of her identity and her place of comfort. She did not fit the stereotypical model of a Catholic: after all she drank, smoked, and had a tattoo. But she was Catholic, and it was 'as much a part of me as my right hand.' Sister Bernice took a year off college to join the Jesuit Volunteer Core where she spent a year at day care in an urban area. She describes her shock the first day watching four and five-year-old children miming selling rocks from the ground to each other and a colleague explaining they were pretending to sell rock cocaine, something they saw often within their homes. (Memo, December 29, 2017)

The cultural portraits created a database or foundation to draw from as I began to consider emergent descriptive findings (Gribich, 2013).

Phase two also introduced second level, or provisional coding (Miles et al., 2014). Grbich (2012) prefers the term thematic analysis to denote that the analytic process occurs while data is still being collected. I opted to use the phrase provisional coding because it better captured the impermanence of the designations; that codes were open for revision, rethinking, and restructuring as additional data emerged. Provisional coding began with a list of codes drawn from the theoretical framework that guides the research and provides the analytic lens for data analysis (Miles et al., 2014). I generated a list of provisional codes from critical sociocultural theories of literacy and the framework of culturally sustaining pedagogies and defined them as previously explicated in chapter 2 (Table 9).

I used the eight provisional codes drawn from my theoretical orientation to complete second level coding on all field notes, transcribed interviews, and documents related to focus teachers. For example, during a classroom observation with Alex Jerome, the following conversation took place surrounding the concept of a predator archetype:

Jerome:	You've said the victims are usually young females, but how about white?
Student 1:	I wasn't going to take it there, Miss Jerome!
Jerome:	Well, I took it there.
Student 1:	I saw it, like how come they all be white?
Student 2:	Dang Miss Jerome! Like Tiana and the Princess and the Frog!
Student 1:	They give us one princess and think that's good.

This conversation was coded "oppression" because the teacher and the students named an imbalance of power within media representation and coverage between white females and Black females.

After completing phase two provisional coding, I had eight "code clusters" or organizational structures of like-minded data (Madison, 2005). These code clusters,

Table 9

Second Level Provisional Codes

Provisional Code	Definition	Questions the Data Answers
Access	Entry to a space or Discourse (Gee, 2014; Lewis, Encisco, & Moje, 2007)	What is access to? How is access obtained? What is the stated goal of access? What are the unstated goals of access?
Accountability	References to the needs, goals, resources, and agency of the local community (Lee & McCarty, 2017)	Who/what is the school/teacher accountable to? What does being accountable mean? What does agency look like?
Critical Centering	References to students' and communities' voices demonstrated through cultural knowledge, valued literacy practices, and language (Alim & Paris, 2017).	Whose voice(s)/identities are centered/decentered in the classroom? Whose knowledge(s) are centered/decentered in the classroom? What literacies are centered/decentered in the classroom?
Culture	Worldviews, thought patterns, beliefs, ethics, and traditions of human groups that are dynamic and fluid, tangible and intangible (Ladson-Billings, 2017b).	How does the teacher/school define culture? What role does culture play in student learning? How are cultures/identities included or excluded in the classroom/school?
Curricularize	Ability to actualize instruction that critically centers students' agency, is historicized, accountable to the local community, and builds a capacity to contend with internalized oppression (Alim & Paris, 2017).	How do teachers enact literacy instruction? What literacy instructional practices do teachers use? What literacy practices are students expected to learn/use?
Historicized	Bringing the past of societies, people groups, and individual identities into conversation with the present (Domínguez, 2017)	What factors influence a teacher's decisions? How are decisions impacted by histories and the current context? How are students' identities positioned? Fluid/static?
Oppression	Unequal power that results in dehumanization of a person or group; actions to maintain	What forms does oppression take? How do students contend with oppression?

	unequal power structures for the benefit of the dominant group (Freire, 1996).	How are students equipped to contend with oppression?
		Table continues
Power	Micropractices within social networks that uphold and reproduce macrostructures (Lewis, Encisco, & Moje, 2007; Moje & Lewis, 2007).	Who/what holds power? How are students equipped to [maintain, name, challenge, deconstruct] power?

represented by the eight provisional codes, were what Carspecken (1996) names high level codes since they contain a variety of complex, abstract, and theoretical constructs. I attempted to find a meaningful way to made sense of the code clusters and attempted to use word clouds but found the diversity of terms used and contexts the data was drawn from to be too varied to create a useful visual representation. I turned to coding process described by Madison (2005):

a) You will examine each specific topic within that cluster.
b) You will then compare and contrast that particular topic within each cluster.
c) You will continue to examine and note the topics within each cluster.
   ...
d) After the topics within each cluster have been examined, you will then make adjustments for comparisons and constructs across clusters, thereby creating linkages and themes.
e) The evolution of your themes has now become more apparent. (p. 44)

Using this process as a starting point, I exported a table of data for each provisional code. Then, I began to examine the topic within each cluster of data asking the second research question: What practices are highly effective teachers using to support adolescent students' literacy achievement? Next to each code, I wrote the answer attending to disciplinary content, disciplinary literacy practices, and general instructional practices.

The same process was not as effective at answering the first research question: How does the framework of culturally sustaining pedagogies inform teachers' understandings of

effective literacy instruction in this context? While I had the same tables of codes referring to the provisional codes that make up the CSP framework, I found I needed another analytic layer within the coding. I returned to the work of other critical sociocultural scholars to develop an appropriate analytic framework to interpret the data. Moje and Lewis (2007) recommend using analytic questions to guide a cultural analysis such as these models:

- What social identities are enacted in this exchange (through language use, linguistic constructions, discourses, generic features, actions)?
- What identities are enacted in this exchange (in action, talk, or silences)?
- What relations of power are enacted and/or produced in this exchange? How are these power relations locally produced? tied to and reproductive of larger systems of power? (p. 25)

Using this framework as a guide, I created a list of analytic questions for each provisional code (Table 9). I then exported each code cluster, and next to each code wrote how the data answered the questions the provisional code raised. For example, an excerpt from my field notes was coded "oppression":

> We had a conversation about students' prioritizing of time and tasks: how they struggle to be present. Alex made the comment that students may have been trained that way, learned helplessness. But beyond the learned helplessness, trained to view whole class tasks (e.g., scripted notetaking and graphic organizers) as higher priority versus small group, differentiated, or individualized work that looks different from student to student. She muses, 'that's the ineffectiveness of the school system, they've been trained there's one right answer and it matches everyone else's. (Field Notes, January 18, 2018)

Rereading the data, I asked: What forms does oppression take? How do students contend with oppression? How are students equipped to contend with oppression? Responding to those prompts, I added the sub-codes, "learned helplessness is oppression," "oppression is training students to reject individualized and differentiated work," "contending with oppression is engaging in individualized work".

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Following the outline provided by Madison (2005), I then began to compare and contrast the data by completing the same process, but this time individually for each of the nine focal teachers from phase two of data collection rather than collectively. I began to compare the ways the educators aligned with each other, the definition of highly effective, and with the theoretical framework. I also began to notice places where the educators' responses contrasted with each other or the definition of highly effective. For example, when comparing how teachers define oppression and support students' capacity to content with internalized oppression, two educators stood in contrast to each other. First year social studies teacher Emily Mail discusses a historicized view of racism:

> Mail: ...people of Color had to use a different bathroom and drink out of a different water fountain than you did and many, many, many other, I'm like, how is that [the 1950's] the greatest era of the United States? ...My husband and I are very, very liberal and don't see color. (Mail, October 18, 2017)

Mrs. Mail's rejection of racism led to a colorblindness. By contrast, Alex Jerome, a fourth year English teacher, rejects a colorblindness as an ineffective tool to address racism.

> Panther: So, you say you reject the colorblind narrative. So, if there was someone who said I don't see color. What would be your response?
> Jerome: Well, everyone else does. Or, people around you do and that colors how they see the world. You don't live in a world unto yourself. I can be color blind, maybe I can, maybe that truly happens in the world, but then I'm in a class with you, you necessarily aren't going to be colorblind and you say something that has all of this history behind it. Negative, can be positive, I still need to be able to deal with that and I can't live in a world where that's just, I opt out like that's just not going to be an option for you. (Jerome, January 18, 2018)

I recorded these differences as emerging themes surrounding the idea of tension or conflict.

Throughout the provisional coding and further analysis of the code clusters, I maintained a running list of emerging themes based on the sub-codes from level two

provisional coding. The emerging themes guided the selection of the three focal teachers, discussed previously, and created the basis for data analysis during phase three.

Phase three. The third phase of data analysis was narrowly focused on validating emergent findings through long-term participant observation with emphasis on dialogic spirals. The corresponding phase three of data analysis was focused on validation, crystallization, and member and external checking.

Validation. Validation is a process where the "researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures" (Creswell, 2014, p. 201). I use the term validation, rather than validity to denote that validation is a process rather than an end point that can be reached or universally agreed upon (Creswell, 2013). The accuracy and credibility is determined by the researcher, participants, and readers. In order to support validation, several steps were taken.

First, I created clear protocols of the study's procedure that were shared with the school's leadership and staff prior to entry to the school site. This allowed for transparency regarding my purpose, what I would be doing, and what participants at the school could expect (Yin, 2009). During phase three I began to track how the original protocols had adapted following an emergent design. For example, during phase one I introduced myself as an observer. During phase two, I transitioned to a participant observer. Now in phase three, the participant observations became increasingly more collaborative. I shared the updated protocols with research participants and kept records to support the accuracy of data collection and analysis descriptions and my credibility as a researcher.

Next, I provided thick, rich descriptions of Juan Diego, data collection, and data analysis. This was possible because of the humanizing, critical ethnographic perspective and

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participant observer methods, which "places participants' comments in context" over the course of weeks and months, allowing for internal consistency (Seidman, 2013, p. 27). Eventually, as the amount and depth of interviews, observations, and documents were collected across the context, I connected "their experiences and check[ed] the comments of one participant against those of others" for accuracy (Seidman, 2013, p. 27). Then, additional data sources including observations, student work, and additional artifacts built the levels and layers of description in a process of crystallization. This depth of detailed information allows readers to evaluate for validation.

    Crystallization. Laurel Richardson (2000) describes the validation process not as triangulation of three static data points, but as a crystal. Richard and her colleague St. Pierre (2005) describe crystallization as a process:

> which combines symmetry and substance with an infinite variety of shapes, substances, transmutations, multidimensionalities, and angles of approach...Crystals are prisms that reflect externalities and refract within themselves, creating different colors, patterns, and arrays casting off in different directions. What we see depends on our angle or response. (p. 963)

The goal of validation is to allow each participant and reader to consider accuracy in light of multiple data sources presented with the nuances and subtleties of the site. Given the amount of data collected, I have made choices on what to include and exclude, shifting and reflecting the data through the ways I see it as a researcher. Therefore, transparency about crystallization also works towards the goal of validation.

    There are several strategies I employed to support crystallization. First, I had a prolonged engagement at Juan Diego over the course of six months with "persistent observation" in order to build trust, learn the culture, and engage in consistent checking of understandings and potential misunderstandings (Creswell, 2013, p. 250). However,

crystallization acknowledges that all qualitative inquiry is time bound and therefore "thoroughly partial...we know there is always more to know" (Richardson, 2000, p. 934). Therefore, I am explicit about each phase and step in data collection and analysis, and also transparent about potential for partial information. Or, as it was phrased during an external check by my research advisor, "You have to be clear about what your findings are but your findings don't have to be clear" (Memo, January 26, 2018). External and member checking also worked towards validation and crystallization.

   Member and external checking. The purpose of phase three of data collection and data analysis was to refine understandings of emergent themes. During phase three, the shift to dialogic spirals became the method for member checking. Member checking is soliciting participants' views on the emergent findings and interpretations (Creswell, 2013). Traditionally, this refers to reviewing transcripts, pieces of writing, or conflicting data sources with the participants in order to value and foreground their voices rather than the potential biases of the researcher (Ellingson, 2009). The purpose of the humanizing approach to research is to build relationships that, through care, dignity, and dialogue, challenge both the researcher and the participant (Paris & Winn, 2013). Working with Sarah Cruise, Cecilia Gregory, and Alex Jerome from a humanizing perspective meant engaging the women in member checking that took the form of sometimes difficult, sometimes joyful dialogic spirals. Throughout phase three, I engaged in consistent and persistent dialogue with each of them for a variety of purposes. At times, I sought to clarify areas of ambiguity from previous observations and interviews. This dominated most of member checking with Sarah Cruise as demonstrated by this excerpt:

Panther:	Okay, so for your childhood, I wrote 'Cruise was raised in Catholic home by her mother and aunt who are described as strong, independent, and liberal women.'
Cruise:	[laughing] Yep.
Panther:	'She attended a Catholic grade school in an urban city...'
Cruise:	...I wasn't in an urban city, I played urban basketball. I was north of the river at [Catholic elementary school].
Panther:	That makes sense since you went to [geographically proximal Catholic high school]. So, would call it suburban?
Cruise:	I would call it suburban hood.
Panther:	Suburban hood?
Cruise:	Yea.

Other times, the teachers brought up information they believed might be of relevance to the study, questions about pedagogy, requests, or challenges. For example, I had been engaging Sarah Cruise around issues of students' cultural identities. In particular, ways to incorporate more texts within her British Literature course that represented the diversities of her students. When we discussed her cultural portrait, she acknowledged her students' cultures were not positioned as a meaningful, central aspect of the curriculum. She sought me out to discuss a recent relevant example from her classroom that nuanced the cultural portrait we had reviewed previously:

Cruise:	For the campaign for *Animal Farm*, one of the students put on the persona of Trump and bullied. But they were Napoleon.
Panther:	Bullied during their speech? Or heckling in the audience?
Cruise:	During the debate, well, both.
Panther:	I can't let that go, I have to explore that. How as an educator do you react?
Cruise:	They told me they were going to do it ahead of time.
Panther:	Okay.
Cruise:	So, I was like, why? Because I really relate Trump to Napoleon. And I said okay, how so? Um, for false facts. For using other people to spread his message of lies. Like Squealer. I was like, okay, sure. Go for it. The other kids stood up and actually like corrected him a lot of the time which I kind of thought was very empowering.
Panther:	Corrected him how so?
Cruise:	Um, one of them said it's not your turn to speak. Let me finish and then you can speak. Like, okay. And then another said everything that

comes out of your mouth is a lie. So, we wouldn't have this election if you were a good leader.

Panther: So, it almost like, provided the students with tools to talk back to power. Do you think the rest of the students made the connection?

Cruise: Yea, it was very interesting though because he said we should just build a wall, I mean really. That's how we protect ourselves, we just build a wall around ourselves. (Cruise, January 25, 2018)

Mrs. Cruise had been resistant to conversations around culture, identity, power, and historicized oppression in past conversations, so this moment marked the first time she initiated a conversation on issues related to these topics. This vignette is an example of member checking, a way for her to demonstrate nuance within her classroom and add depth to my understanding of her instruction, but it also demonstrates the power of dialogic spirals. The conversation continued, eventually moving from a conversation that was initiated by Cruise to provide relevance, into a challenge.

Panther: So, politics is the problem, but also the solution?

Cruise: I think so, yea. You have to be involved in order to make a change. You can't just stand idle, they're going to step all over you.

Panther: That helps me kind of contextualize why leveraging, using, and thinking about political identities is such a powerful part of your classroom because yea. If you think it's part of the solution. But what about other parts of student identities? For example, religion?

Together we explored areas of dissonance in emergent themes. Other times we admitted partial, incomplete knowledge (Richardson, 2000; Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005). For example, while we discussed deficit views surrounding socioeconomic status Mrs. Cruise shared about an experience at a job interview:

Cruise: That was interesting. I'll tell you one thing, I knew I wasn't going to get the job at [suburban high school] last year after the interview because one of the questions was how I work with affluent students since I've never worked with a community of affluent students. I knew right after that.

Panther: They asked that?! What did you say?

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Cruise:	I said students are students no matter from their socioeconomics or not. Parents are just as involved in students' educations who come from lower income then from higher income, too. That was my answer. Students are students. Parents are parents.
Panther:	I'm truly shocked that they would ask that.
Cruise:	But I knew I wasn't going to get the job after that.
Panther:	Well, would you want the job after that? If that's the attitude they have?
Cruise:	No, but I knew I wasn't going to get the job. Automatically.
Panther:	That makes me so deeply uncomfortable.
Cruise:	Mhm, I was just like [shrug]

In this example, neither Mrs. Cruise nor I had an adequate response to the deficit laden views apparent in the interviewer's question. Within these examples, member checking using dialogic spirals provides layers of detailed context for validation, discusses multiple data sources, tensions, and potential interpretations for crystallization, and humanizes the voices and experiences of the participants.

I also engaged in external checks by meeting regularly with two research advisors who acted as critical friends (Costa & Kallick, 1993). Such debriefings increased the rigor of the methods and clarity of the data analysis as each advisor, "ask[ed] hard questions about methods, meanings, and interpretations" (Creswell, 2013, p. 251). It was also a place to manage tensions as they arose. For example, early in the research Principal Billiart asked me to not include information about the school's work study program to maintain anonymity for the school site. Concerned that it was an important part of the school's context and story, I met with a research advisor. She provided tools and language to approach the administration and respectfully revisit the issue resulting in a positive outcome.

Additionally, these regular meetings challenged me to include multiple perspectives and ways of knowing that were not immediately clear to myself or the participants (Ellingson, 2009). For example, during initial drafts, the narrative surrounding Juan Diego

had grown evaluative and critical, hyper focused on the structures of white educational supremacy; a narrative that was damage centered (Tuck, 2009) and pushed strength and joy to the margins of the story (Wong & Peña, 2017). My advisors redirected me to the humanizing perspective and began to point to the many examples of teacher and youth agency that thrived within the school. The feedback informed revisions that aided in validation and crystallization by foregrounding the humanizing stories; eventually resulting in reanalyze the data multiple times for other missing stories (Howard, Thompson, Nash, & Rodriguez, 2016).

As previously described in phase two, provisional coding supported the development of cultural portraits which were used to engage in dialogic spirals and focused, ongoing observations with participants to review emerging themes. I then transcribed the member checking conversations, making memos to note participants' comments, challenges, and clarifications surrounding different provisional codes as they were discussed. I then returned to the code clusters with the coded data in the first column and the responses to the analytic questions in the second column. I created a third column responding the analytic questions a second time. In places where the responses in the second and third column conflicted or changed, I recorded a memo describing the shift. For example, the code "music therapy as accountability to students' needs" was recoded after the member check to:

- Accountability to students to building self-esteem

- Accountability to students is self-expression

- Accountability to students is building cultural heritage

The change was because Cecilia Gregory shared in more detail the needs of the students, as she interpreted them as a music therapist, using the same language from the original quote.

This reemphasized and redirected my attention to the terms "self-esteem," "self-expression" and "heritage" foregrounding the importance of using her own language and representing her meaning with precision. The resulting list of codes became a working list of preliminary findings.

The back and forth between data analysis and data collection was consistent with the constant comparative design, but it also reflected the actual work the teachers and I were engaged in: the dialogic spirals that moved back and forth but always forward. The list of preliminary findings were condensed and again shared with the participants through member checking using dialogic spirals. As the repeated, intentional conversations became interwoven, they produce what Kinloch and San Pedro (2014) name "storying" which became the findings in Chapters 4 and 5.

Institutional Review Board

In order to successfully complete the outlined methodologies and uphold the ethics of research, I abided by the policies dictated by the Office of Research Services including the completion of Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) training for qualitative researchers, had all research plans approved by the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), and selected sites where I have no vested or financial interest. After IRB approval, I contacted the "gatekeepers" at the site, in this case the administrators, and obtained permission in writing (Creswell, 2014, p. 96). I provided all participants with an informed consent letter and communicated often with all participants they could withdraw from the study at any time (Creswell, 2014; Patton 2015). During data collection I protected the anonymity of the school and participants by using pseudonyms for participants, places, and other identifying information and specified that I could not promise confidentiality, though I

took measures to do so (Creswell, 2014, p. 99). In order to meet compliance standards for the Office of Research Services, all electronic information will be stored on a password protected external hard drive and cloud storage for no less than seven years. All physical data, artifacts, and signed informed consent forms will be kept for no less than seven years in a locked file cabinet in the primary researcher's office or other appropriately identified secure location that meets IRB standards.

Conclusion

In Chapter 3, I provided an overview of the humanizing, critical ethnographic perspective and participant observation methods used in this study of the literacy practices of highly effective teachers at Juan Diego High School. This included a detailed look at the school and the three constant comparative phases of data collection and data analysis. In the following chapters, I examine the practices highly effective urban religious school teachers use to support adolescent students' literacy achievement and how the practices are understood through a culturally sustaining pedagogies framework. First, in Chapter 4 I focus on the highly effective educators' theoretical and philosophical understandings of effective instruction through a culturally sustaining pedagogies framework. Then, in Chapter 5 I more narrowly consider the implications of the educators' understandings on their literacy instructional practices.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

In preceding chapters I have outlined the ways American schooling was constructed on a colonial foundation that shapes educational structures today and often excludes the socially and culturally constructed literacies and identities of students of Color from non-dominant groups including first generation Americans, economically disadvantaged families, and those with religiously diverse identities like those at Juan Diego High School (e.g., Au, 1993; Banks & Banks, 2009; Gay, 2002; Hollins, 2015; Irvine, 1991; Ladson-Billings, 1992; Nieto, 2004; Sleeter, 1996). Additionally, I have considered how adolescent literacies (e.g., Alvermann et al., 2007; Kinloch, 2009; Kirkland, 2009; Moje et al., 2008) and instructional practices supporting non-dominant adolescents in secondary classrooms (e.g., Ladson-Billings, 1994, 2009; Lee, 2001) are constructed, particularly within urban Catholic schools (e.g., Dallavis, 2011a; LeBlanc, 2015).

Within this chapter, I foreground Alexandria "Alex" Jerome and Cecilia Gregory. As referenced in Chapter 3, both educators displayed characteristics aligned with the study's theoretical framing of highly effective, culturally sustaining educators (Table 2). While these characteristics are not an exhaustive or complete list of the work effective educators do to curricularize the key features of culturally sustaining pedagogies, they focused my observations and supported my ability to identify and analyze the work of educators like Miss Jerome and Miss Gregory. After introducing both educators, I describe and interpret two findings through Miss Jerome and Miss Gregory's stories and understandings about culturally sustaining, effective literacy teaching that answer the study's first question, *How*

does the framework of culturally sustaining pedagogies inform teachers' understandings of effective literacy instruction in a religious high school?:

1. Standardization restricts culturally sustaining curricularizing, but teachers enacted agency to negotiate dissonance

    a. Network standards are a starting point

    b. Prescribed texts can be adapted and challenged

    c. Teacher evaluation is an opportunity to prioritize

2. Culturally sustaining curricularizing is uncertain work

    a. Culturally sustaining curricularizing is uncertain

    b. Culturally sustaining curricularizing is in the margins

These findings foreground how the two educators' theoretically and philosophically understand their curricularizing while the next chapter more narrowly focuses on the implications of these understandings on their instructional practices.

In critical sociocultural theory, language and its meanings are developed through social interaction within cultural contexts and those contexts are never viewed as politically or ideologically neutral (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Gregory et al., 2004; Lewis et al., 2007). Therefore, I strive to allow meaning to come from the participants and their experiences within the cultural context of Juan Diego High School. At Juan Diego, approximately 60% of students identify as Latinx, 35% as Black, with the remaining 5% representing multiracial, North African, Middle Eastern, and white identifications. The families vary each year, but typically 40-50% of the families primarily speak Spanish at home. Additionally, though a Catholic school, about 55% of families identify as Catholic, about 40% Protestant, primarily Baptist and Pentecostal, and the remaining 5% a range of Muslim, Jewish, and secular

identities. The findings are not representative of other contexts but may contribute to gaps in the literature surrounding the construction of culturally sustaining literacy instructional practices within urban Catholic or other religious schools. Findings within qualitative research are not easily reducible and reflect the complexities of the research site (Carspecken, 1996; Madison, 2012). With this in mind, as described in Chapter 3, I used intentional methods such as dialogic spirals (Kinloch & San Pedro, 2013), critical friends groups (Costa & Kallick, 1993), and crystallization (Richardson, 2000; Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005) to develop interpretations with participants that capture as best as I am able the experiences of two teachers at Juan Diego High School.

Alexandria "Alex" Jerome

On my first full day at Juan Diego high school, I recorded a memo about my first meeting with Miss Jerome:

> Crossing to the gym, I saw the sides packed with students peering down onto the polished floors. A row of teachers and administrators stood along the left side of the erected volleyball court while a student in the center court held a microphone and sang. I smiled and introduced myself to Alex, an English Language Arts teacher who was sick and missed yesterday's staff meeting [where I introduced myself]. She struck me as skeptical of my presence in the school, protective maybe. I explained I hoped to observe one period of her class and after a pause gave a simple, 'Oh, sure.' [Another teacher] gave us a wink, his seal of approval. I hope that carries weight with her. (Field Notes, September 29, 2017)

I was initially cautious entering Miss Jerome's American Literature classroom, I felt unsure if I was wholly welcome because of her quiet demeanor in our first meeting. During the first visit, several juniors presented "book talks" or book reports over self-selected texts. First, Cameron, self-identifying as a Black male, anime fan, and influential member of the Christian Leaders club presented. Remembering me from the tour he gave during my first day at Juan Diego he began, "Alright everybody and Miss Panther," and launched into his

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book *No Vacancies* by J. K. Rowling. He was followed by Alysha, a self-identified Black

female interested in politics and the #BlackLivesMatter movement who read *Culture Warrior*

by Bill O'Reilly. I took detailed notes but found my fingers could not keep up with the pace

of discussion, back and forth, and cacophony of student voices. I quickly wrote what I called

a found spoken word poem using snippets of the speech I heard. The italicized text represents

my words, observations, and interpretations throughout the presentations and the normal font

represents students' and Miss Jerome's words.

> Parish council, so that would be like our board of directors at Juan Diego
> So that's like the urban areas here in [the city] except here they are...
> *He makes the comparison each piece of the book reflecting their worlds*
> She had a traumatic childhood, she was raped by her mother's drug dealer
> She was self-harming and cutting herself
> So she committed suicide to be with her brother
> *Student replies*, "This book sounds good"
> *Student replies*, "There's a lot going on"
> I couldn't watch the movie so I can't really compare it
> This is dark, I mean this is the bottom of the swamp
> Mhmm *students reply* Hey Miss Jerome can I read this book next quarter?
> *On Bill O'Reilly's book*, There's a lot of Caucasian people in it
> My favorite part, the African American tradition. He didn't know that many African American women could read a book like this. I thought that was racist, but that's it, was my favorite part. I proved him wrong. An African American woman was reading it.
> *Miss Jerome adds* I want to give you public praise for choosing a nonfiction book.
> *The student smiles* I can't take that to the bank! (Field Notes, October 2, 2017)

I noticed that students in Miss Jerome's class were talking to each other about texts they had

selected to read, were bringing up difficult issues of trauma and racism rather than avoiding

them, and students directed and led the conversations. Throughout the lesson I took detailed

field notes (Table 10) which I analyzed against the characteristics for highly effective

instruction informed by the CSP framework represented in Table 2.

Table 10

Phase One Observation of Miss Jerome

Characteristics	Evidence from Field Notes
Highly effective educators have knowledge of pedagogy and their discipline, enabling them to apprentice learners into a discipline's knowledge construction and specialized literacy practices (Moje, 2007, 2008, 2010; Pressley, 2006).	• Students are preparing to write a persuasive essay. She guides the understanding by scaffolding an example: chunking the video, asking probing questions to get students to fill in their outline. • Think aloud about first chunk of video explicitly names and models: text to self connection, citation, outline structures, summarizing main idea, supporting details • Gradual Release of Responsibility Model: after model/think aloud an outline breaks down the parts of a persuasive essay; students are asked to identify and analyze the video on the front, the back provides space for brainstorming their own. They do so in their small groups last 5 minutes of class.
Highly effective educators develop knowledge of students' hybrid identities in order to critically center students' languages and literacy practices within the curriculum (Au, 1992; Domínguez, 2017; Hollins, 2015; Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1992, 2017a; Lewis, Encisco, & Moje, 2007; Moje & McCarthy, 2002).	• Uses video, "Rihanna's 'Work' is not Tropical House." Student comments are positive (e.g., I love her!), curious (e.g., What's Tropical House?). Video features many excerpts of songs from Latin American, Afro-Caribbean artists and traditionally Latinx genres. • A suggested prompt for the persuasive essay is comparing and contrasting belief systems of an Indigenous group with tenets of Puritan's beliefs to make a claim. Another considers what the American Dream narrative means for Indigenous groups.
Highly effective educators modify, extend, and/or challenge prescriptive curricula, standards, or instructional practices, prioritizing the learner, context, and text	• Provides additional word bank in order to support unfamiliar background knowledge.

Table continues

(Irvine, 2002; Moje, Dillon, & O'Brien, 2000).	• Syllabus starts at Colonial literature: "Since we're studying Native American literature," models a think aloud for persuasive essay about the Dakota Pipeline • The walls are all full, every space with a reminder anchor chart (printed or self created), evidence of student group work, displays of authors of Color, book covers as art installations. The space reflects and represents the students even when they're not physically present.
Highly effective educators maintain high standards for student achievement beyond test results including student growth in agency and community accountability (Alim & Paris, 2017; Domínguez, 2017; Lee & McCarty, 2017; Morrell, 2010).	• Student: "Can we do a presentation on it since he's done it?" Miss Jerome: "Yes, if it's within your Lexile. Next time I'm going to ask you to pick a book that's 50-100 points above your Lexile" • Students guide discussion: Hands raise with authentic questions, "How did Ronnie die?" "What's your opinion, what could [the characters] have done differently?" "He's a product of incest" "What's that?" a student asks. Several voices chime in to help.

The 45 minute class period provided evidence of each characteristic. With Miss Jerome's permission, I returned to her classroom for two observations totaling 16 hours during phase two of data collection which corroborated my phase one observations: each characteristic of highly effective instruction was present across the three observations spanning four weeks. I approached Miss Jerome and suggested we continue to collaboratively investigate her pedagogy for phase three. She replied, "I would be honored. I miss having another adult in the room...in New York, there was always another aid or someone, so you could, you could talk more, observe students more." With her permission and encouragement, I spent nearly 200 hours observing within her classroom across four months.

By way of further introduction, I present narratives of Alex Jerome and Cecilia Gregory. I collaboratively constructed the narrative with each women based on several long interviews. The dialogue used to construct the narratives was collaborative, overlapping, and cyclical; our conversations and questions created recursive patterns until storying—the interwoven lines imbued with history and meaning that are built through iterative spirals of dialogue—was established and these narratives resulted (Kinloch & San Pedro, 2013). The narratives are set apart from and positioned before interpretations of findings to emphasize the humanity of each woman and their agency in telling their own stories (Paris & Winn 2013).

Alex's Story

I am a Black woman. A comic book nerd before it was cool. A romantic, a believer in the American dream because of my own memories growing up just outside of New York City, a train ride away from the world. The oldest of seven children, I remember going to the library with Dad so he could teach himself about computers. As a mailroom worker at IBM, he would collect discarded computers and fill up the living room taking them apart and putting them back together again—it actually annoyed me because that's where I wanted to play with my Barbie dolls. Eventually his skills earned him a position in Information Technology. He rose through the ranks to manager. As my childhood progressed, my Mom and Dad instilled a similar education rooted in self-reliance, hardworking ethics, and exploration. My grandfather and father were also pastors, but open to learning and exploring without religious boundaries. My childhood memories are all steeped in valuing learning: from watching *School House Rock* to frequent library visits to reading the Koran. My Dad's career moved our family from upper lower to middle class, and that opened even more

opportunities for learning. There were trips to the city for musicals, museums, and cultural experiences. Cultural diversity was valued in my childhood, I think it goes back to my Mom's childhood in Brooklyn in a predominantly Jewish community. My Mom's experiences meant I was the only Black kid at my school bringing matzah ball soup for lunch. I treasured the ethnic, racial, socioeconomic, and religious diversity in my neighborhoods and schools.

I was encouraged to read by my parents but struggled to truly love reading. It wasn't until we could afford a move to a suburb and stronger school district that my 8th grade teacher recommended a dyslexia diagnosis. It could have been an excuse to avoid reading, but my teacher was really interested in dyslexia and reading strategies, so she worked with me in after school tutoring to build sight word vocabulary. I think that's what improved my academic reading. My outside of school literacies exploded in middle school. I loved comic books, manga, and Sailor Moon cartoons. I would wake up before anyone else in my family to watch Sailor Moon because once my parents were awake they would change it to the news. Even if it was a rerun, my friends and I would discuss it before school. I began to really relate to characters in the books I read. I remember reading *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen and relating to having a lot of sisters and being the oldest and the pressure of it. Understanding characters helped me understand myself and understand other people. It was probably because I identified so strongly with Lois Lane, a journalist in the comic series Superman, that I got interested in journalism and earned a college degree at a state public university. After six months in journalism post-graduation, I was unsatisfied in a journalism career. School was a safe place and I love to learn and grow so I went back to school for a master's degree in English Literature. I focused on C.S. Lewis and was able to travel to

London to research at their university libraries. The degree included teaching certification, so I began subbing and working as a Teacher's Assistant for several years when the economic downturn made teaching positions hard to find.

While I was waiting for a job opportunity in a local school district, I kept thinking back to my experiences traveling in college. One of my favorite memories was a semester internship at Disney World. I decided to look for other similar experiences so I could travel more. This led to mission trips with my church to international locations and eventually a semester teaching English in Honduras. My parents were terrified to have me so far away the entire time so when the time came, I returned home (much to their relief) and kept looking for full time teaching positions. Hearing about Juan Diego was a total God thing. I was looking at different grassroots, activism, and social justice job board sites and saw the posting for a high school English teacher position that was over 1,000 miles from home. It was a Catholic school and I am Protestant. It was in the Midwest, and I'm a New Yorker. It probably only had farmland and corn and I loved public transportation and bagels. Despite initial concerns about a move to the Midwest and complete unfamiliarity with the city, there were so many signs from God that applying and accepting the position was the right move—so I did it!

I am finishing my fourth year at Juan Diego High School where I have consistently taught four sections of American Literature to juniors and one section of World Literature to sophomores. I know this is where God wants me. When I first moved here, I had no savings and just a few suitcases. My de facto department chair, Sarah Cruise, gave me furniture so I would have more than an air mattress, then bugged me until I bought a real bed. A former math teacher introduced me to a church where I established a base of friends. Each day I look

forward to the daily conversations and encouragements I receive from my students, colleagues, and administrators. The new President Al Gonzanga especially stands out because he's been so intentional about building conversations and relationships with me and the staff. But more than anything, I love the students! I advise Junior Student Government, oversee prom and its various fundraisers (okay, I don't really love the Prom part), started a manga club, and am constantly seeking out funding for multiple field trips. I realize now it's probably because I want to provide students with the same cultural experiences I value so much from my own childhood.

I have future plans, as well. I used to dream smaller, thinking I might want to be a librarian and only teach part time. I have a YouTube channel and YouTube community where I share book talks and videos about books, mostly science fiction and fantasy. I thought being a librarian would give me more time to read and work on writing my own novels that mix science fiction fantasy with religious themes. However, the more Leah and I talk and write and study I'm drawn to a bigger goal that I've always thought about but haven't seriously considered. I would like to be a Professor of English Literature. I've begun researching doctoral programs in the area, sought out scholars like Cornel West and Louis Gates to grow me, and settled on my future area of research: literacy development of the African diaspora through a historical lens and its implications on present day conceptions of value, success, and achievement within a localized Black community.

Cecilia Gregory

> Back inside, I began to set up my computer in the teacher's lounge hoping to write up all that I had experienced so far before it slipped my memory. Having not provided informed consent letters to the staff, I had not audio recorded a single minute and field notes will only go so far. No sooner had I sat down than Ms. Gregory, the music

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teacher, came into the lounge for coffee. She began to tell her story. (Field Notes, September 29, 2017)

I met Cecilia Gregory and immediately enjoyed her company and conversation. She was forthcoming and welcoming, telling me her classroom was always open and no question was off limits, "I'm an open book. Ain't got nothing to hide!" she would finish with a long belly laugh that punctuated every conversation and meeting we shared. In my initial observation, Miss Gregory was teaching a short unit on musicals as part of her Introduction to Music course for freshman. During the observation, I noted multiple examples of alignment with the characteristics of highly effective instruction (Table 11). As a part time teacher, Miss Gregory taught only two to three class periods a day, so my two full days of observation in phase two resulted in 8 hours of observation but over 4 hours of structured and semi-structured interviews. Miss Gregory was receptive to continuing to collaborate during phase three of data collection commenting, "I guess that means I must be doing something right." I spent just shy of 100 hours in observation within Miss Gregory's classroom, long interviews and conversation, and collaboratively analyzing student work and curriculum documents over the course of three months.

Table 11

Phase One Observation of Miss Gregory

Characteristics	Evidence from Field Notes
Highly effective educators have knowledge of pedagogy and their discipline, enabling them to apprentice learners into a discipline's knowledge construction and specialized literacy practices (Moje, 2007, 2008, 2010; Pressley, 2006).	• After beginning procedures Miss Gregory directed a short review: where they left off in the plot last time they were together, characters, themes. • Miss Gregory observed students' interactions with the musical noting the songs, characters, and scenes they had visible reactions to (e.g., laughter, sadness, singing/dancing along) to guide the next class period's analysis of the musical
Highly effective educators develop knowledge of students' hybrid identities in order to critically center students' languages and literacy practices within the curriculum (Au, 1992; Domínguez, 2017; Hollins, 2015; Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1992, 2017a; Lewis, Enciso, & Moje, 2007; Moje & McCarthy, 2002).	• Attention getter: "God is good" "all the time" "All the time" "God is good" • Open song: thank you Lord • Reviews Juan Diego poster with values and school prayer • Hot topics about music celebrities (e.g., student shares about a local artist dropping a new album) • Students from advisory are filing out as I enter, stacking a pile of magazines that range from *Vogue* to *Black Hair* to *Men's Health* to *Lowrider*. Miss Gregory purchases them for students on Free Reading Friday. • Purposefully aligned the musical selection (In the Height by Lin Manual Miranda) with students (60% Latinx, about 50% Spanish speakers)
Highly effective educators modify, extend, and/or challenge prescriptive curricula, standards, or instructional practices, prioritizing the learner, context, and text (Irvine, 2002; Moje, Dillon, & O'Brien, 2000).	• The other side of white board reads Music 101 <u>Goal:</u> Let's learn about music, culture, and society. <u>Tools you need:</u> lined notebook paper, pen or pencil. <u>Action:</u> Watch culture PowerPoint/follow and listen to teacher's directions, take notes. <u>Hispanic Heritage Celebration</u> and then in red: Tony Award Winning Musical: In

Table continues

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Highly effective educators maintain high standards for student achievement beyond test results including student growth in agency and community accountability (Alim & Paris, 2017; Domínguez, 2017; Lee & McCarty, 2017; Morrell, 2010).	• Firm commands to students "Put those snacks away!" and quieting talk during the musical • As I left, she explained her concern for the cuts in music programs and that the way music education is envisioned must change—no instruments? At least world music because students need to see where they fit in the globe and global community or they will be cut out.

Cecilia's Story

I was raised in a traditional Southern Baptist home in a working class predominately Black urban neighborhood in the same city as Juan Diego High School. I've been here since my childhood in the 1960s. I got interested in music because of my parents. They restricted the music I could listen to. So rock and roll and Motown, or what they called "the Devil's music," was for weekdays and on weekends, "the Lord's days" were reserved for jazz, country, and classical musicians. We were at the church every time the doors were opened so I was involved in church choirs and piano lessons earlier than I can remember. I started directing her first youth choir in 8th grade because I had the skills and my church had the need. It was great. I remember playing and performing for a woman's study once a week and at the end of the study they passed around a plate, so to say, and handed me an envelope just full of dollars. Well, I just thought that was something! I could make money doing what I loved.

I was pretty sheltered, I went to public schools but my social life revolved around the church. After graduating high school, I went to a local public university studying music therapy. I was really drawn to anthropology and ethnomusicology, learning about the way music functions within cultures. It's this cycle, where cultures produce music but music can

shape culture. I just found it fascinating! I couldn't find an internship, though, and you

needed an internship to graduate even in those days. So I spent several years working as an

administrative assistant on a different public university campus as part of the Ethnic

Awareness department while I waited for an internship to come available. I worked closely

with the professors and administrations in a humanities department designing programming

to increase racial and ethnic diversity on campus. We weren't an office in a physical way, but

we had our hands all over campus supporting ethnic and cultural awareness through guest

speakers, conferences, and trainings. I was the person who drove to and from the airport for

all the speakers so I had these Black scholars, authors, artists, and poets I was always talking

to one on one, hearing stories of my cultural heritage and history.

I found a placement for my music therapy internship up in a rural town an hour and a

half north of the city. After graduation, I was hired back in the city and spent twenty years as

a music therapist in a psychiatric unit of a mental health hospital. The goal of a music

therapist is to move a patient from one mental, emotional, or physical state to another to

prepare them for a healthy, independent life within their community. This begins by

analyzing a patient's medical records and working with a team of professionals, each with

different specialized skills, to develop an individualized treatment plan. Then, each member

of the team provides targeted interventions that are monitored and documented with attention

to the patient's reactions, patterns, and changes over time. For me, that meant starting where

the patient was most comfortable and familiar and slowly building up towards an end goal.

The intervention team met, sometimes weekly or biweekly, to discuss the effectiveness of the

different interventions and make changes to support the patient. These meetings centered on

an analyzing patient data. Documentation is IMPORTANT! It's how you communicate

effectively with the entire team, maintain records for accreditation requirements, and keep everyone else on the team happy. I don't know how many times I had to wait six, seven days for a doctor to hurry up with those charts so I could get my information in there before the next meeting.

I spent twenty years planning and running individual and small group intervention sessions on a psychiatric unit and that's where I learned to teach. I learned you don't hover over patients, you have to give them distance and space. That's how they become more independent but also if you get too close they might feel threatened. I had a few strong nurses show me to use a firm word and to not tolerate lewd behavior, but to allow a certain amount of noise and chaos. That's just what it's like working with patients that have a diagnosis like depression, schizophrenia, or dementia. You have to rely on the other people in your little community to intervene when if a patient is a risk to him or herself or others rather, you don't intervene as a musical therapist. You're not trained and might get hurt.

I did double duty the whole 20 years, I was a music therapist but also worked as a music director at several local churches. Working for the government though, there were always budget cuts squeezing and changing my job until I wasn't really a music therapist anymore, I was really an activities director. I just wasn't having it after awhile so I talked to my Pastor at the time. I was already the music director but he had this big grant to build an activities program at the church and I talked to him about being the Activities and Music Director. It was an opportunity to leave the bureaucracy of the mental health care system so I took it. I liked the job, but in that first year there were just so many politics I felt like I couldn't do my job well. Well, the Pastor was not using those grant funds the way that he said he would and suddenly he "didn't have enough money" for my position. I just decided

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private music lessons and Music Director positions at two churches—one Baptist and one Catholic—would be a better fit and get me out of there.

God never let me be without a job, though. I was constantly approached over the next several years by local Catholic grade schools that wanted me to be their music teacher. Now I'm not Catholic, I'm an old Baptist woman, but I didn't see how it was much different than playing at Catholic churches and I had done that for awhile. So I taught part time at a Catholic grade school for two years, but between budget cuts, my mom dying, and personal struggles I was comfortable letting the position go. I had heard about this new Catholic high school, Juan Diego, anyway. I had been working there as a choir teacher, just a little piddly thing for a few hours a week, but I did that for two years and then took the part time music teacher position.

Miss Gregory and Miss Jerome: Sustaining Agency

Cecilia Gregory and Alex Jerome are similar in many ways. Both draw from their disciplinary expertise as highly educated, credentialed experts in their respective fields to develop their curriculum in culturally sustaining ways. Both women acknowledge their own cultural heritages that inform who they are as daughters, as religious, and as Black women, to name a few of their hybrid, multifaceted identities. Both have worked at Juan Diego for a relatively short amount of time with minimal, predominantly part time experiences as traditional classroom educators prior to accepting their current positions. Miss Gregory does have a notable difference to Miss Jerome, however: Cecilia Gregory came to education after a long career as a music therapist and was dependent on the support of administrators and colleagues to learn how to actualize curriculum as pedagogy. It was their curricular similarities that drew me to their classrooms to consider the two findings detailed below that

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answer the research question: *How does the framework of culturally sustaining pedagogies inform understandings of effective literacy instruction in a religious high school?* The answer to my first research question explored in the remainder of this chapter is that the framework of culturally sustaining pedagogies *does* seem to inform Miss Jerome's and Miss Gregory's understandings of effective literacy instruction, yet there were obstacles to agentively negotiate including standardized curricula, testing, and teacher evaluations and uncertainties in the work of curricularizing culturally sustaining pedagogies.

Culturally sustaining pedagogies (detailed in depth in Chapter 2) build on original ideas of culturally relevant pedagogy, which has always focused on what is working with students of Color instead of what is not (Ladson-Billings, 2017a). As schooling has historically functioned as a space that erases and diminishes "the expansive contributions, heritage, intellect, and expertise of those who were enslaved or colonized" (Long, Souto-Manning, & Vasquez, 2016, p. 14), teachers can use culturally sustaining pedagogies (CSP) to decenter whiteness (Alim & Paris, 2017; Kinloch, 2017) and "reframe what we think about the students and their homes, as well as how we view ourselves, our social identities and our roles in this process" (Boutte, 2015, p. 3) through humanizing curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Beginning with "the knowledge that our languages, literacies, histories, and cultural ways of being as people and communities of color are not pathological" (Alim & Paris, 2017, p. 2), CSP asks,

> What if the goal of teaching and learning with youth of color was not ultimately to see how closely students could perform White middle-class norms, but rather was to explore, honor, extend, and at times, problematize their cultural practices and investments? (Alim & Paris, 2017, p. 3)

The key aspects of CSP that seemed to inform Miss Jerome's and Miss Gregory's literacy instruction that will be interwoven into the interpretation of two major findings below are (a) foregrounding "the everyday practices of youth from non-dominant communities" (Lee, 2014, p. 10), (b) resisting a focus on Western and Eurocentric print text and written language at the expense of orality and multiliteracies (c) framing literacy practices based on their own humanizing definitions of literacy and teaching instead of standardized versions or "damage-centered" narratives, (d) using disciplinary literacy tools in culturally sustaining ways, (e) providing alternate and counter texts to the prescribed texts in the Network curriculum, (f) teaching students to be agentive and to critique dominant texts that center the white gaze, (g) centering goals that go beyond standardized achievement, (h) balancing technical and creative/critical literacies, (i) creating a space for both the emotional and the technical, and (j) localizing instruction within the context of local, regional, and global communities. These features will be more deeply detailed and aligned with the five features of CSP—critical centering, community agency, historicized content, a capacity to contend with internalized oppression, and curricularizing these four elements—in Chapter 5. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss how despite the constraints placed upon them, the teachers' pedagogy was informed by CSP. To elucidate each of the findings and sub-findings, I highlight Miss Jerome's voice first and Miss Gregory's next in order to maintain the context of two very different classrooms and keep the storying threads metaphorically untangled (Kinloch & San Pedro, 2014).

Standardization and Teacher Agency

The first finding is standardization restricts curricularizing in culturally sustaining ways, but teachers enacted agency to negotiate dissonance. Standardization has restricted

culturally sustaining curricularizing in three areas: Network standards, prescribed texts linked to standardized assessments, and teacher evaluation systems. However, both educators are agentive in their literacy instructional practices to negotiate these challenges which are presented in three sub-findings: (a) Network standards are a starting point, (b) prescribed texts can be adapted and challenged, and (c) teacher evaluation is an opportunity to prioritize goals. Within this section, I will examine the first two sub-findings drawing from Miss Jerome's American Literature course and Miss Gregory's Introduction to Music course for the third sub-finding as a way to preserve the context of each educator's work.

Network Standards Are a Starting Point

Miss Jerome looks to administrative leadership to understand the expectations for her job, "They [the administrators] are my bosses, so I respect their opinions and what they ask me to do" (Jerome, January 25, 2018). Miss Jerome admits she's not familiar with schools in the area being a New York native, or what standardization routinely looks like within education. Just as she defers to Principal Billiart for her understanding of accountability measures, I discussed accountability with Principal Billiart during an interview about community:

> Panther: Tell me broadly about the local community.
> Billiart: You mean outside of the school?
> Panther: I intentionally did not specify.
> Billiart: When I think of local community and us [Juan Diego] I think of a couple of things. I think of the community of the parish. Um, which this parish is very unique. It's not a geographically representative parish, it's a choice parish—um, the [church] community attracts people from all over the city that have some sort of connection with them or who have family members who went there. Now there's some geographic element to it but it's not a Diocesan parish therefore it's not a geographic parish. So we partner with this group that like us is a community of choice which is interesting ...And then we also have on the other side [of the building] the benefit of have the community

<div style="margin-left: 2em;">

Panther:
services center who are very generous with serving our families for food needs, or medicine or anything that you might go to a social service agency for support. So, they're really good and have always been about making services available for kids that go to school here. They recognize that they are people of need and that's how they got here in the first place. So that's one community that we have. Um, the geographic community...

Panther: So, with that in mind, who within in the community do you feel the school is accountable to?

Billiart: We are accountable to a number of people for different things. Um, certainly for care of the space we are accountable to the neighbors, they own it. We remind kids, we have a dollar a year and utilities. You don't trash a gift. You just don't. But we're also accountable to the parent community that we do what we said we'd do which is get their kids ready for college. We're definitely accountable and I didn't mention some of these communities but, it's weird, I don't think of them in the same way as our [geographic] communities, we're accountable to the community of the work partners, to have kids that are ready to go, and to get them there and to get them picked up, having them looking good, all of those things. We're accountable to the [sponsoring religious order] who are our major sponsor...And then lastly which y'know, well, not lastly, we're accountable to the network of schools and for those ten standards that we all commit to be a Juan Diego network school. (Billiart, December 13, 2017)

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The geographic community, church parish, parents, work study partners, sponsoring religious order, and "lastly...well, not lastly, we're accountable to the network of schools and for those ten standards that we all commit to be a Juan Diego network school." While last in her list of communities that Juan Diego is responsible to, the Network standards are often the first priority in accountability measures. The school is dependent on the funding, sponsorship, and support of the Network to sustain the school. Principal Billiart explains the importance of meeting the accountability measures to the Network in terms of the local community:

<div style="margin-left: 2em;">

we're [Juan Diego] not going anywhere. That's not our plan. You don't bring people and go, this is what you could have, oops! Sorry we're closing. Which is what has happened in some charter schools in [the city] over the years and I think that's really hard on families. And that's why people move around. They don't know if anyone is for real and, and for long term. (Billiart, December 13, 2017)

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In order to meet the school's mission and serve the local community for years to come, Juan Diego is dependent on the layers of accountability and oversight provided by the national Network.

As a result of the schoolwide accountability to the Network, at Juan Diego, the strongest influence on the way literacy instruction is defined is the Network's standards based curriculum provided to each academic department. Referred to colloquially as "the benchmarks," the curriculum is a set of disciplinary content standards, instructional guidelines, and an end of course (EOC) exam; each of which are collaboratively created by educators across the Network. The summer before the current school year, Sarah Cruise, the English Department Chair, represented Juan Diego's English department, at the national curriculum revision meetings. Mrs. Cruise, an English educator with ten years of experience, all at Juan Diego, explains the benchmarks in English are drawn from, "the curriculum from the year before, the Common Core, and the ACT combined" (Cruise, October 24, 2017).

Miss Jerome's American Literature course is guided by 73 standards from the Network's English benchmarks. The standards are divided into three categories: language, reading, and writing. These three strands of literacy are the core components of Miss Jerome's curriculum. Within each literacy strand are sub-categories. For example, under the strand "language" there are four sub-categories:

- Grammar and Usage
- Sentence Structure
- Organization
- Knowledge and language

Each of these sub-categories contains a range of standards, anywhere from four to eleven. For example, the fourth sub-category, "knowledge and language" has four standards:

1. Use content-specific words and phrases while maintaining appropriate voice (e.g., diction, tone) when editing
2. Determine whether the author's word choice has achieved the stated purpose (e.g., to persuade, inform, entertain)
3. Identify connotative and denotative meanings of words that accomplish a specific purpose (e.g., tone and mood).
4. Verify the inferred meaning of words, phrases, and sentences from context and/or etymology.

Each standard represents disciplinary content knowledge that will be tested on the EOC and in smaller literacy events. Miss Jerome is required to post one or more of these standards each day within her classroom to demonstrate how the daily lesson is meeting the benchmarks. In the daily agenda she displayed for students on October 17th, for example, the top of the slide projected onto her screen read, "Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone." This standard synthesizes multiple knowledge and language standards presented above.

Considering the 73 standards for Miss Jerome's class, 56 of the 73 standards explicitly address writing practices such as, "Create precise, evidence-based claims that hold significance" and, "Skillfully embed evidence in writing to avoid free-standing/dropped quotations." Eighteen are reading practices such as, "Compare and contrast concepts, relationships, and/or ideas in a text" and "Annotate a text for comprehension and analysis." The remaining three standards relate to vocabulary within language practices such as, "Verify the inferred meaning of words, phrases, and sentences from context and/or etymology." Several of the standards traverse writing, reading, and vocabulary denoting their interrelated and dependent nature such as "Use content-specific words and phrases while maintaining appropriate voice (e.g., diction, tone) when editing." This standard refers to

disciplinary vocabulary, "content-specific words and phrases," as well as writing practices, "appropriate voice (e.g., diction, tone)" and "editing."

The standards define the literacy practices that Miss Jerome is required to teach and the ways in which students are evaluated on the EOC. The literacy practices described by the benchmarks define literacy as vocabulary usage, reading comprehension, and writing. Miss Jerome defines literacy as "being able to read and discuss intelligently materials given to you to use...to understand the vocabulary, be able to read it, and then be able to talk about it." She continues that this requires, "vocabulary, background information, and the confidence and skills to be able to share the information. To put it in some format whether it's a paper or a video or just some conversation." She emphasizes that literacy requires confidence and goes beyond simple reading tasks, "some people just see it as being able to read and comprehend. Like call and response...or it's purely vocabulary so just giving them terms and, terms to memorize" (Jerome, October 30, 2017). Within her definition, Miss Jerome describes literacy that aligns with the benchmarks, noting literacy requires "vocabulary," "being able to read," and "share the information...whether it's a paper..." However, she also extends literacy and literacy practices stating learners should be able "to read and discuss," "be able to talk," and "to share the information." Additionally, writing is not the only mode of production, she also places, "a paper or a video or just some conversation" as equally valid ways to demonstrate literacy practices and content knowledge. While Miss Jerome acknowledges the efficacy of Network benchmarks, her conceptions of literacy instruction and literacy practices are more expansive (Table 12).

Table 12

Literacy in English Language Arts

Network standards	Miss Jerome
Vocabulary	Vocabulary
Reading comprehension	Reading across print, digital, and multimodal texts
Writing	Producing and sharing information across designs
	Speaking and listening

The CSP framework is drawn from a lineage of work that foregrounds ways, "the everyday practices of youth from non-dominant communities" have been dismissed or resisted by dominant groups within education (Lee, 2014, p. 10) and the ways resistance is "reified through institutional practices along all ladders of the system of education in the U.S. (e.g., curriculum, textbook publishing, standards, assessments" (Lee, 2014, p. 10). The Network standards require literacy instruction on vocabulary, reading, and writing practices. This focus elevates Western conceptions of literacy while devaluing orality, media, and visuals (Janks, 2000; Smitherman, 2000). The culturally sustaining pedagogies framework builds on the work of sociolinguists like Smitherman (2000) who have long argued that a focus on print text and written language at the expense of orality is "a racial bias in favor of Western culture writ large. The argument in capsule form is that alphabetic writing invented by the Greeks made possible the literacy necessary for modern abstract thinking" thus placing literacies on a continuum where speaking is less civilized, less complex cognitive

work, and written text is more civilized and more complex (Smitherman, 2000, p. 88). Miss

Jerome intentionally views the benchmark's standards for literacy practices as one piece of a

larger understanding of her students' multiple literacies and practices across modes of texts

and designs. Miss Jerome's broad conception of literacy practices and texts reflects a

pedagogy of multiliteracies with over instruction and critical framing of texts beyond the

print-centric canon:

> A pedagogy of multiliteracies, by contrast, focuses on modes of representation much
> broader than language alone. These differ according to culture and context, and have
> specific cognitive, cultural, and social effects...multiliteracies also creates a different
> kind of pedagogy, one in which language and other modes of meaning are dynamic
> representational resources, constantly being remade by their users as they work to
> achieve their various cultural purposes. (New London Group, 1996, p. 64)

Literacy within Miss Jerome's classroom is "much broader than language alone," from a

multiliteracies standpoint her students' literacy practices during PLT, a class period that

functions primarily as a study hall, and the walls of her classroom encompass a variety of

representational modes and designs ranging across print and electronic linguistic designs, as

well as visual and spatial, gestural and audio texts (New London Group, 1996, p. 77). During

my first full day in Miss Jerome's classroom, I sat in the back corner next to the heater and

observing literacy within her classroom and watching students during PLT. I recorded

students' literacy practices ranging from speaking to writing in a long list. In my memo for

the week, I summarized what I had observed:

> What is reading in Miss Jerome's classroom? Reading is not a means to just one end,
> but the journeys that travel every rock and bridge sometimes not realizing the ground
> covered because you're talking with a friend, deep in conversation. A bookmark
> tucked halfway into a 1,000 page volume of *Roots*, green tattered waving until next
> time, and scrolled two thirds of the way through an ebook graphic novel, the finger
> trailing down the screen with intimacy. It's listening, relistening to the TedTalk that
> spoke directly to an audience of one, made students say, "me, too" or "I'll meet you
> there, just let me get my diploma and a degree." It's playing a screencast of a video

game while scribbling down Spanish homework answers and another ear to the girls in the corner who discuss whether or not Superman is cursed and who should play Spiderman, definitely *not* Jamie Fox. Discussing all the what ifs of movie storytelling and how the conflict could have changed if not for physics, force, and character flaws—oh that stubborn Mary Jane. The whine of a girl grabbing at his phone so he won't write that message for everyone in their small social media world to know, to see. Reading is cocking one ear towards the video, grinning at the etymology of hookers, sideburns, and war words in our lexicon. Reading is scrolling through an online math class, helping a classmate with his face to face class and mumbling that you miss asking a human person questions when you're confused. Reading in Miss Jerome's class is being surrounded by walls of books, their covers, and posters that remind, encourage, prompt, and gently guide. Cocooned in a world of books and texts, watched by plastic envelopes of Avengers comics and rows of Othello, Disney, Raisins in the Sun and Black Like Me Like Me Like Me Like Me is the echo of each cover, a river of mirrors, an ocean of windows, so many views as they high five, grin, and amble meaningfully along. (Memo, October 27, 2017)

I observed Miss Jerome's definition of literacy in action: students were reading print and electronic books, discussing movies and YouTube videos, dialoguing about homework from face to face and online courses. All of the literacy occurred in a classroom surrounded by texts including memes featuring popular Afro-Barbadian singer Rhianna, a range of book covers doubling as wall art, multiple bookshelves featuring graphic novels, plays, fiction novels, and books of poetry side by side, and stands of comic books.

Even when limited by the school's standardized definition of literacy, Miss Jerome tried to frame literacy practices in her classroom based on her own definition of literacy, as clearly represented in the way she approached a mandated requirement to teach ACT words. In January, I was helping Miss Jerome prepare new vocabulary for her word wall from her unit on archetypes when she mentioned she was purposefully selecting the words from a classroom text, *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* by Thomas Foster, that appear most frequently on the American College Test (ACT). She explained, "our [junior] level goal was to um see student improvement as far as ACT testing and one way that we are going to do

that is to teach key words and test them" (Jerome, January 8, 2018). Miss Jerome and the other junior team teachers selected about twenty common ACT words used across the disciplines for potentially different purposes. Examples included *explain, describe,* and *compute.* The teachers decided they would each develop a pre-assessment to determine students' familiarity with the words, explicitly teach the words' meanings, and then give a post-assessment to evaluate students' growth. "We also want to point to which words cause the most difficulty for students," she explained, as it could work in tandem with the school's need to collect standardized data:

> the school wants data, the school wants us to be able to enumerate what the problem is. I think this is the best way for us to do that, they wanted us to have a goal as a level and this was the one goal that we felt we could show progress. It will be fine, it will give the school the data they are looking for and at least the students become comfortable with the words that we are showing them. (January 18, 2018)

At first, she was concerned by the interruption the pre-test would be to her schedule and her plans for junior service day. Now in its third year, junior service day is an established event where all juniors work in small groups with one adult leader, traveling to a senior care facility where students spend time one on one interviewing a resident. Then, students return to school and spend the afternoon writing a biography that is later revised and edited in Miss Jerome's class and sent to the adult with a note of thanks. In years past, students have considered careers in health care, applied for jobs at the residential facilities, or struck up ongoing relationships with the senior citizens.

> I have to plan this [service day] around things...we have the pre-ACT testing with the words, that's a day that's gone. And it just kind of like trying to get it all get what's necessary done so I can kind of do what I want. That probably sounds really petty. I'm on board to do what they're asking. It's not so left field and the data that they gather is necessary for grants...I'm not trying to half ass anything. (Jerome, January 18, 2018)

However, realizing the value the school had placed on the junior team goal and the ACT testing, Miss Jerome spent time meticulously preparing for the pre-test. She pulled questions from the English section of past ACT tests which used the target words, editing them as needed to fit the pre-test format. She administered the pretest using Google Forms, calculated how students did question by question, and figured out which incorrect responses were the most frequent, ranking the words to determine which were in the top tier of misused terms, the middle, and the lowest tier that students had generally mastered. I arrived at Miss Jerome's classroom moments after she returned from a level meeting convened to review everyone's results.

> Jerome: maybe I misunderstood, but I did not see how consistently, when we talked about it today at our level meeting, it was not done in a consistent way...[I was] trying to actually model a section of the ACT thinking that was what the goal was. To help model the ACT while also going over these words and I don't think that happened. I think it was, excuse me, I think it was being half assed.
>
> Panther: You were given a goal. You didn't even really like that much. But you did it, gosh darn it!
>
> Jerome: Yes! [laughing] I came in with a chart, like am I just like this nerd? I came in with this chart with all my words.

Miss Jerome's chart also included information about which incorrect answers where the most popular, with notes scrawled along the side trying to figure out why students stumbled—"vague language," "common misconception," and, "missing background knowledge?" As Miss Jerome shared her process and results with me it became clear that from start to finish she had approached the task differently than her colleagues who had viewed it as an item on an already full checklist. Yet Miss Jerome recognized the shortcomings of focusing on the same set of words, or academic vocabulary, if they are not taught within the context of a discipline:

Panther:	You have such meaningful data you've gathered.
Jerome:	I thought that was the point...But no one seemed to care about the conversation. So, I was just kind of like, what am I doing here?
Panther:	That actually confirms it for me, because your team chose a goal based on standardized measures because it's what your school wanted...so in reality it became this literacy mission that's not actually useful, right?
Jerome:	[sighing loudly] Right
Panther:	So what would, or what would you want to do differently? If you had more of a voice or control over how the um, the junior team taught this? Or met this goal?
Jerome:	I would have liked from either [school guidance counselor] questions that I could go over kind of like as activators in the classroom. So have 25-30 ACT practice questions we could look at. Even if it's the same question that all the teachers have...I can have a science question in my class, that's okay, this is how ELA dissects this, history can say well here's the person you're referencing and from a historical perspective and then science what prior knowledge from chemistry could you draw from to answer this question.
Panther:	So, what I'm hearing, you would rather have the same 25-30 questions that use the words rather than just the words and then you talk about them, break them down, analyzing them across disciplines?
Jerome:	Yea, because these words, like we talked about last week, these words mean different things in different classes. (Jerome, February 7, 2018)

Instead of the standardized approach taken by her colleagues, Miss Jerome advocated a disciplinary literacy approach to meeting the team goal; one where educators support students in viewing the same questions through disciplinary ways of thinking and reading practices to understand how the disciplines divide and construct content differently (Moje, 2007, 2008; Moje et al., 2004). Miss Jerome's recommendation aligns with functional language analysis which trains students to go beyond close reading of a text or decoding of unfamiliar vocabulary, but instead focuses attention on the language patterns within a discipline (Fang & Schleppegrell, 2010). Disciplinary Discourse has specialized usages of vocabulary and sentence structure that demand readers to process, "dense information, abstraction and technicality, multiple semiotic systems, expectations for conventional structure, and appropriate 'voice'" (Schleppegrell, 2006, p. 51). Explicit instruction on the

usage of the academic vocabulary within the context of disciplinary standardized test questions is needed to demonstrate the relationships between disciplinary language, language structure, and its predictive nature in disciplinary texts (Fang & Schleppegrell, 2010). Language is one of the tool of a discipline's Discourse (Gee, 2014); making such tools visible and explicit supports adolescents' identification with membership within the discipline (Buehl, 2017).

The standardization of literacy was most clearly seen in the use of Lexiles. Juan Diego High School depends on grants to fund many of its courses, extracurricular activities, and physical resources. A grant funds a science and engineering program with its own software and daily volunteers from a local engineering firm. Another grant from a professional sports team funds the entire baseball team from uniforms to travel. A smaller grant recently earmarked the purchase of Spanish language resources the school used to purchase novels, magazines, and online subscriptions to Spanish language websites. One of the largest funding sources was a two year school literacy improvement grant from a local foundation. The foundation is known in the region and nationally for its historic support for urban education, literacy, the arts, and entrepreneurship. The grant is in its second year and the administrators are working with the grants coordinator to consider whether or not to reapply to extend the grant for additional years. All of the grants come with stipulations for annual reports that demonstrate how the funding was used and the impact of the funding on programming, instruction, and student achievement. The literacy improvement grant defines achievement as "student growth measured by standardized test scores." During a professional development day, the staff of Juan Diego gathered in the school's lunchroom. On a beige

wall, Principal Billiart projected a document outlining the requirements for the literacy

improvement grant. She described each requirement to the teachers:

> This is information we need to share with [our grants manager] so she can put together the grant [annual report] and know what we're doing with the resources and with the money that we're spending. Next, [reading from the list] 'teachers will use student's baseline literacy data to establish literacy improvement goals for each student.' We're going to look at some of our literacy data today. We know that some of our students that we're not seeing the great success with are going to need some individual student improvement plans. And SRI [Scholastic Reading Inventory] does give some ideas of how you can help those students in your classroom or in your advisory to improve and we need to make a conscious effort to take that to the students to the parents and to the other teachers on our level and talk about ways of making that happen. We have made literacy a very important part of our professional development. (Professional Development, November 3, 2017)

Principal Billiart recognized the grant was essential to provide professional development,

literacy instructional resources for teachers, and texts for students; however accepting the

funds came with necessary requirements. Tracking student achievement on the Scholastic

Reading Inventory (SRI) is one of those requirements. She explains the SRI as standardized

test focused on reading skills:

> But also, right, it's [SRI] a form of formative assessment and that's why we take it three to five times a year so they [students] can see their growth. And the people that have been very successful I think [sic] are the kids that know their Lexile and they know what they're working on, it shouldn't be a secret from them, um that this is, here are some strategies they can use to improve their Lexile and why improving their Lexile is a good idea. (Professional Development, November 3, 2017)

Billiart mentions Lexiles, or a quantitative reading level the SRI uses to record student

growth and set goals. Demonstrating student growth through increased Lexile levels is tied to

funding and the funding is tied to needed resources. Thus, the SRI, Lexiles, and standardized

measures of students' achievement become an important driver of literacy instruction.

    The standardization of literacy was most clearly seen in the use of Lexiles. During my

first visit to Miss Jerome's classroom when a student excitedly asked about a book that her

peer had just presented on, "Can we do a presentation on it since he's done it?" Miss Jerome

responded, "Yes, if it's within your Lexile. Next time I'm going to ask you to pick a book

that's 50 to 100 points above your Lexile" (Jerome, October 2, 2017). During my next visit, I

asked about the layout of her room which grouped students' desks in small groups of four

that faced each other rather than face a projector screen or podium as in many of the other

classes. She explained she did not feel comfortable lecturing and wanted the classroom to

visually represent whose voices were valued.

Panther:	And they're [students] working within these physical groups?
Jerome:	Yea
Panther:	Which you assigned?
Jerome:	Yea, I assign groups based on reading level.
Panther:	So they're all similar Lexiles?
Jerome:	Yes.
Panther:	Do they realize that or know that?
Jerome:	Yea, I don't tell them, this is the basic group, this is the advanced group, this is the proficient group, I don't say that. I do say, um, at the end of each quarter we take a Lexile test and then I shift around your groups based off of your Lexile score and I go through every group and I am sitting you next to people that I think will help you improve your Lexile score. (Jerome, October 27, 2017).

In these two examples, Lexiles influenced Miss Jerome's instruction, an influence that was

tied to gathering data to support continued grant funding that made access to the books in

question possible. Yet, Miss Jerome tried to contextualize the meaning of Lexiles for her

students. For example, all English teachers were required to provide their students with print

outs of their Lexile scores to create individual Lexile growth goals as one of the stipulations

of the literacy development grant. Miss Jerome explained to students

> We'll look at Lexiles and write a Lexile goal. The school wants us to have a goal for
> Lexile improvement, so I will provide you with a personalized reading achievement
> sheet and you will write your personal goal for improvement. My boss says I'm doing
> it, so we're doing it. (Jerome, January 25, 2018)

She then encouraged students that Lexiles show growth and the rate of growth naturally

changes over time: "The growth you see as a junior or senior in high school, it's it's, it's not

going to be the same as when you were in third grade. Right? The learning curve was steeper

then and now it takes more work to move" (Jerome, January 25, 2018).

After the class left, I asked her if the term Lexile gets used synonymously with literacy at

Juan Diego High School.

Jerome:	And it does! But like, but I feel like this is just part of a movement that has always happened. Even literary criticism y'know where...back in the day professors would just wax poetic about texts and just go off about various things but that wasn't scientific. The scientific method became the standard of this is what academia should strive for. So, talking about it in that abstract way, not that it was always perfect but that became frowned upon. There's these structures that you use when determining good texts bad texts, it became a little bit more scientific.
Panther:	So, this hard to define qualitative nature of being a literary critic became quantified in a way?
Jerome:	Yea. And even when you try to capture it, it's like capturing y'know smoke. You might get a little bit of it in a bottle but there's still parts of it that just kind of wisp away. So, I think, even though students have a goal to reach, a numbered goal to reach, I think it [Lexile] had its benefits, but there's going to be some part of the reading, unless they find on their own the joy of reading or being able to discover oh! If I picture this in my head, it makes it a little more understandable then if I just read vocabulary. I can now make a movie in my head when I read this book. Little things like that are being lost to this more mechanized way of looking at it.

In this discussion, Miss Jerome uses an example of literary criticism stating, "professors

would just wax poetic about texts," creating a curriculum that was focused on the educator,

not the content or skills needed to critically read and analyze the texts. As a reaction to

ineffective, teacher-centered instruction "the scientific method became the standard of this is

what academia should strive for." She concedes, "I think it [Lexile] had its benefits" but

understands it cannot capture full picture of a student's reading practices.

Miss Jerome's comments aptly summarize arguments by educational scholars who view the slide towards standardization as rooted in quasi-experimental studies that value efficiency and effectiveness over meaningful engagement (Coffee et al., 2017; Delpit, 2006; Sleeter, 2018). Miss Jerome asserts that the scientific method may standardize what is taught, but when the content is ideological it cannot do so perfectly. Miss Jerome expressed concerns that the standardization of literacy as Lexiles similarly focuses on narrow wisps of what students know, so goals like experiencing, "the joy of reading" or "being able to discover" are reduced to a "numbered goal." de los Ríos, López, and Morrell (2015) explain, "Too often in conversations about educational reform 'rigorous' instruction is juxtaposed against instruction that is relevant and meaningful to students" (p. 93). Miss Jerome is likewise concerned the Lexile level is not juxtaposed against relevant and meaningful aspects of literacy; just an incomplete picture. We continued:

Panther:	I like that metaphor. Smoke in a bottle. So, in that metaphor would the Lexile score, is that the bottle?
Jerome:	The bottle is yea, trying to capture a glimpse of where they're at, so the Lexile that would be the bottle. But it's not capturing everything. There is part of what would make a student a good reader that are just hard to get on a multiple-choice test
Panther:	What are the parts of being a reader and reading that you value that the Lexile can't capture?
Jerome:	Making connections to the text. Like, for me, that's what drew me in. And then being able to do just this [motions to *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*]. I was doing this before I read the book and went oh, that's what that is...So, like when I was younger, and I was reading texts, I was reading like *Goosebumps* and stupid things.
Panther:	*Sweet Valley Twins*, *Baby Sitter's Club*.
Jerome:	Yea, but like then there'd be a character in the book who was like, oh man this is so much, or this is just like, they'd be like, a character, they're such a Rochester or he's such a Rochester. They would be like, it'd be an allusion to other works and I'd be like what are they talking about? So, I did some investigating, so my texts led me to other texts and then others, so I felt like I was going back in time as a reader and then making all these connections on my own to all these other works

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of literature by the allusions that authors were making because I knew I wasn't understanding it, so I said there have to be other answers out there. That was the fun part of reading for me. Was this being this detective.

Panther: Are there other parts of what it means, truly means, to be a reader that Lexile can't capture?

Jerome: The inventiveness, I think. Taking words, and I used this before, but making a movie a picture of the book in your head. I feel like a lot of times students are very reliant on me to help them understand what a character looks like or just y'know setting the scene. Othello, I know students are having a very hard time setting the scene in Othello. So, I'm having to go through that, we're no longer in Venice we're in Cyprus and this is what it looks like, what the Elizabethan time looked like.

Panther: I'm also wondering about, you're also connecting students to literature that explores their heritage and identity and challenges their conception of difference. That was a big goal you set up for these book talks, and also like even just next Friday they're going to the community to capture biographies and stories. So, I also see a strong connection to student's identities and connections with the community. Is that fair?

Jerome: That is fair. It's also one thing I do not see a lot of right now.

Miss Jerome names different aspects of reading that the Lexile does not capture: "making [personal] connections to the text," using texts to understand the world and other people, "inventiveness" or creativity, and visualizing. Those literacy practices that are left are the ones easily assessed, such as summarizing, finding the main idea, or identifying vocabulary from print passages stripped of their context (Delpit, 2006). These literacy practices are rooted in Western conceptions of literacy (Alvermann, 2005; Alvermann & Wilson, 2011; Moje et al., 2000). Miss Jerome discusses other aspects of reading that more powerful and valued. From a CSP perspective, teachers who enact asset pedagogies, "are interested in differences in students' reasoning ability, problem-solving skills, and moral development— things that are not so easily measured by standardized tests" (Ladson-Billings, 2017a, p. 143). Multiple conversations about Lexiles indicated the culturally sustaining nature of

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Miss Jerome's goals for student achievement and growth, thus I intentionally teased out and shared what I viewed as the implications of her goals: exploring heritage, identity, difference, and building connections with the community. Miss Jerome's response acknowledges these goals but admits with the focus on Lexiles, "It's also one thing I do not see a lot of right now." The bell interrupted our conversation, so we returned to the topic two days later:

Jerome:	It's the same that happened in New York because everything was state testing, y'know. My nephew, one of my younger nephews gets tested in kindergarten and first grade.
Panther:	So not developmentally appropriate.
Jerome:	No, it's not. And it's the same issue, I've been fighting this issues since, yea, getting into education. The balance against what I have to do because the school wants me to do it versus this is what my students need to be successful or to go to college. Like pass, pass the test, but there's after the test. What happens after that? Y'know? ...one of the problems the school has is post-graduation, students maintaining and staying in school [college]...so that is I think a failure in part to prepare them for that. It's a different way of learning, it's not so much based on you getting this material so you can pass a test. (Jerome, January 27, 2018)

Miss Jerome articulates the tension "the balance against what I have to do because the school wants me to do it versus this is what my students need to be successful." Her concern is that if she does not get the balance right, students will not be prepared for college, they will only be prepared to "pass a test."

Prescribed Texts Can Be Adapted and Challenged

Not only do the benchmarks and Lexile assessments direct the definition and framing of literacy instruction but also the selection of texts that make up the course content; particularly because of the requirements of the Network's End of Course exam (EOC). Miss Jerome's syllabus synthesizes the expectations for American Literature's course content in its course description:

American Literature consists of reading and analyzing significant works of American literature from the Colonial Period through the Current Modern Era. This course views literature through an historical perspective. The objective of the course is to enable students to appreciate literature by developing their critical and aesthetic senses and by acquainting them with the rich, literary heritage of the United States. This is also a writing and grammar intensive class were students are expected to write, revise, and edit writing to meet collegiate standards. (American Literature Syllabus, 2017)

Within the course description, the class is described as, "a writing and grammar intensive class" that focuses on, "the rich, literary heritage of the United States." The literary heritage of the United States is time bound from the "Colonial Period through the Current Modern Era." The time periods and their respective representative texts are largely influenced by the EOC.

Miss Jerome's students are evaluated in a yearly End of Course (EOC) exam. The EOC contains 31 multiple choice questions associated with five different reading passages, three short response questions based on two short reading passages or quotes, 21 multiple choice questions about grammar and conventions, and one essay that requires two of four provided reading passages be synthesized into an argumentative writing artifact. The test is focused on the literacy practices outlined in the standards: reading comprehension, writing, and language with a focus on vocabulary. The texts used throughout the exam dictate the exact texts or styles of texts that must be included within Miss Jerome's curricula to ensure students' familiarity. "They [students] fall apart on the multiple choice questions," she explained, "the essay? No problem. I like that question, they're ready for it. But the multiple choice they just never do well." I asked why that might be.

The readings they [the Network] ask them [students] to do, they're just so benign, so boring. Not only are they [the EOCs] taking your time, but they're taking your time for something so dry. That just creates more barriers for students. First you have to

read this, but now we're going to make it something so boring. (Jerome, March 24, 2018)

Miss Jerome believes the texts are unengaging or irrelevant to students' interests and lives which causes low scores on the multiple choice sections. The major texts covered in the American Literature EOC are:

- "Antojos" (2015) a personal essay from Julia Alvarez provided by the Common Core
- An excerpt from the book *Walden* (1854) by Henry David Thoreau
- The article "The Role of the Media in a Democracy" (2014) by George Krimsky from The College Board, an organization that produces Common Core curricular materials
- An excerpt from the play "A Raisin in the Sun" (1959) by Lorraine Hansberry provided by The College Board
- The poem "Mother to Son" (1922) by Langston Hughes
- The Gettysburg Address (1863/1994) by Abraham Lincoln

The texts represent a range of print genres: an essay, book, article, play, poem, and speech. The poem "Mother to Son" and play "A Raisin in the Sun" use linguistic exemplars of African American English (AAL), following the past tense conjugation pattern of the verb "be" and regular reflective pronoun "hisself" (Boutte, 2007). The texts included in the EOC represent one Latina, one Black female, one Black male, and three white male writers.

The mix of genres, genders, racial and ethnic diversity appears impressive until further examination of how the texts are used within the assessment. For example, the personal essay written by Latina author and poet Julia Alvarez (1991) requires students to analyze the text for vocabulary, such as synonyms for the word "approximate," connotative and denotative meanings of the word "luminous," and the author's opinion on the definition or use of symbols. By comparison, the excerpt of the book *Walden* by white male author Henry David Thoreau asks students to summarize the author's main argument or thesis, analyze the tone, and identify the major conflict. Miss Jerome's concern that the passages are

"too dry" and "boring" may relate to the way the passages are used: students are asked to spend more time analyzing *Walden*, a text focused on the internal reflections of a middle class white male in a rural cabin.

Texts are tools with disciplinary Discourse that mark belongingness (Moje 2008; Moje et al., 2000), identity, and ways of knowing (Gee, 2014; Street, 1994). The texts selected for the EOC constitute a Network established canon. A canon, "refers to a set of texts widely accepted as the gold standard or norm," and by their very inclusion and exclusion suggest, "a finite set of texts adhere to a particular definition of quality and serve as a baseline for judgement" devaluing other texts (Spencer, 2014, p. 177). Giroux (1987) describes a Eurocentric canon as, "a pedagogy of chauvinism" that uses texts as ideological tools for, "the transmission and mastery of a unitary Western tradition based on the virtues of hard work, industry, respect for family, institutional authority, and an unquestioning respect for the nation" (p. 3). While the authors represent diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, the use of the texts within the assessments signals whose knowledge and values are centered within the canon.

"A Raisin in the Sun," a play by the Black female playwright Lorraine Hansberry is excerpted as a reading passage with 38 lines of dialogue followed by three questions. The play in its entirety is about Lena, the family matriarch, deciding to invest a life insurance check from her late husband in a new home in an all white suburb of Chicago and the systemic racism the Black family faces in making the transition. Miss Jerome teaches the play differently each year:

> By the grace of God that they [local theater] had 'Raisin in the Sun' performed locally and I was able to get us grant money to go see that [last year]. The year before we did it as a whole class reading, but I did not do a lot of this independent reading

stuff which does take up a lot of time because they have, y'know, I have to give the kids time to process and muddle their way through the text and I didn't do that my first year and that's something that I don't want to lose. (Jerome, January 2, 2018)

Students in the past have seen the play as a local theater production, performed the play as a whole class text, and worked through the play with independent and small group reading activities placing the text in conversation with the question: "Is the American Dream still valid in today's society?" The play is an example of hope and struggle, a nuanced look at the possibility to earn social and economic prosperity but in light of systemic forces of racism and classism.

The excerpt selected for the EOC is from early in the play when Lena's daughter-in-law, Ruth, discusses all the different options Lena has to wisely use her husband's life insurance: from investing in her son's business idea to taking a trip, but Ruth assures her the money is hers and not the family's, "Now that's your money. It ain't got nothing to do with me. We all feel like that." The passage is provided with the following context: "The following passage includes a conversation between Ruth and Mama about Walter's desire to invest their family savings in a liquor store."

After students read the passage, there are three multiple choice questions. The first question asks, "Which of the following emphasizes the differences between the two cultural groups?" (Figure 4). No reference or context is provided to support students' understanding of what cultural groups the question is referring to, nor is the phrase "cultural groups" included in the passage. The correct answer is A, "We ain't no business people, Ruth. We just plain working folks." The contrast between "business people" and "working folks" implies the phrase "cultural groups" means social class. This also means answer B, "Walter Lee say colored people ain't never going to start getting ahead till they start gambling

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on...investments and things," is incorrect. Students in Miss Jerome's class who are familiar with the play in its entirety would recognize issues related to racial tensions primarily and social class secondarily are prominent themes throughout the play. While inclusion of the play on the EOC drives the play's inclusion within the curriculum, familiarity with the play puts students at a disadvantage for responding to the question.

24. Which of the following emphasizes the differences between the two cultural groups:
    A. "We ain't no business people, Ruth. We just plain working folks."
    B. "Walter Lee say colored people ain't never going to start getting ahead till they start gambling on … investments and things."
    C. "Go on away and enjoy yourself some."
    D. "...it sounds respectable to 'em. Something white people get, too."

25. How does Mama refute Walter's decision to open a liquor store?
    A. Mama establishes that selling liquor is illegal during this time in the United State
    B. Mama argues that liquor sales are not strong enough to support the family
    C. Mama points out that there is too much competition in the community already
    D. Mama believes that liquor is immoral and does not want to be involved.

26. When Ruth says, "Well -- like Walter say -- I spec people going to always be drinking themselves some liquor," it can be reasonably inferred that:
    A. Ruth feels unsure about Walter's investment.
    B. Ruth supports Walter's opening a liquor store.
    C. Ruth agrees with Mama on the issue of Walter's plans.
    D. Ruth is opposed to Walter's opening a liquor store.

Figure 4. EOC questions for "A Raisin in the Sun" by Lorraine Hansberry.

    The second and third questions focus on the four lines of dialogue from the excerpt's larger conversation. They ask, "How does Mama refute Walter's decision to open a liquor store?" and "When Ruth says, 'Well—like Walter say—I spec people going to always be drinking themselves some liquor,' it can be reasonably inferred that" (Figure 4). The portion from the play's excerpt reads in its entirety:

    RUTH: No, Mama, something is happening between Walter and me. I don't know what it is – but he needs something – something I can't give him any more. He needs this chance, Lena.
    MAMA   *(frowning deeply):* But liquor, honey –
    RUTH: Well – like Walter say – I spec people going to always be drinking themselves some liquor.
    MAMA: Well – whether they drinks it or not ain't none of my business. But whether I go into business selling it to 'em is, and I don't want that on

my ledger this late in life. *(stopping suddenly and studying her daughter-in-law)* Ruth Younger, what's the matter with you today? You look like you could fall over right there.

Within a five act play about a Black family purchasing a home in an all white neighborhood and the various forms of systemic racism that they face, the excerpt that is selected for the EOC is a conversation about how to spend money from a life insurance policy. Within the excerpt, the questions focus on an even smaller exchange of dialogue discussing a liquor store. The two questions set up a false conflict between the women characters. I asked Miss Jerome for her perspective on the play's representation within the EOC. The conversation occurred over lunch and was not recorded; here I use restorying to evoke the essence of the conversation and interaction (Howard, Patterson, Kinloch, Burkhard, & Randall, 2016; Kinloch & San Pedro, 2014).

Jerome:	Looking at it, really thinking about it. It's like this assignment I did last week. We watched the video Nation of 100. Have you heard of it?
Panther:	What is it?
Jerome:	If you reduce the world to a nation of 100 people, it goes through what it would look like.
Panther:	I've seen a children's book like that, where it's broken down where the people would come from geographically, racially, languages, like that?
Jerome:	Yea, but also more than that. It goes through wealth distribution, technology access, even animals. So we watched this video and students made a bubble map of all the different ways people can have membership, or be labeled. Then I asked them to think about their book club books and highlight: who is represented? And from there, how are those communities represented? And then during the fishbowl [structured class discussion], you heard, how students were able to make those connections like, well *Slaughterhouse Five* [novel by Kurt Vonnegut] represents white male communities, but also veterans and mental illness because the character has PTSD, right? So they're questioning who is represented but also how they're represented.
Panther:	So students go into this question, both of these questions, and they're thinking about representation.
Jerome:	How is this community being represented? And that might make them think or question. I don't know. Maybe it's nothing. But maybe that's something.

Miss Jerome shares an activity she completed with her students that focused on issues of community representation to demonstrate the types of questions she challenges her students to ask as they read: "who is represented? And from there, "how are those communities represented?" The EOC's questions serve to diminish or erase the presence of race within "Raisin in the Sun," but that does not erase the racial history within the written text or the racial identities and knowledge of the students reading the text.

From a CSP framework, the critical centering of students' languages and literacy practices requires assessments that are, "not ultimately to see how closely students could perform White middle-class norms but to explore, honor, and extend, and, at times, problematize their heritage and community practices" (Paris & Alim, 2014, p. 86). Within the EOC, there are texts from authors of Color that traverse standard English and AAL and provide insight to the creative writing process of a Latina author. However, the texts are used in strikingly different ways. Notably, an excerpt from "A Raisin in the Sun" is cropped out of the larger context of the play with supporting questions that reframe the narrative based on, "stereotypes, omissions, and distortions" (Tatum, 1997, p. 5). Miss Jerome has selected the text to prepare her students for the passage they will face on the EOC; however she also equips students with analytic tools to ask "who is represented? and from there, "how are those communities represented?" Miss Jerome later expands her original thinking that her students struggle on the EOC multiple choice questions because "the texts were boring"; to implying students might be reading these questions and considering how the community is bring represented, "And that might make them think or question." Miss Jerome's comments are similar to Apple's (1993) argument that texts, even when taught, are not necessarily

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learned. Rather, readers' responses are dominated, negotiated, or oppositional. A dominant

reading accepts the message at face value, a negotiated reading disputes aspects of the text

while accepting the overall interpretations, and an oppositional reading, "rejects the dominant

tendencies and interpretations. The reader repositions herself or himself in relation to the text

and takes on the position of the oppressed" (Apple, 1993, p. 211). Miss Jerome alludes to

students' having the tools to negotiate and perhaps take on an oppositional reading to the

texts; these tools will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

The American Literature EOC further demonstrates a lack of neutrality (Freire, 1996;

Street, 1984) in the use of Langston Hughes' poem "Mother to Son" (1922):

> Well, son, I'll tell you:
> Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.
> It's had tacks in it,
> And splinters,
> And boards torn up,
> And places with no carpet on the floor –
> Bare.
> But all the time
> I'se been a-climbin' on,
> And reachin' landin's,
> And turnin' corners,
> And sometimes goin' in the dark
> Where there ain't been no light.
> So boy, don't you turn back.
> Don't you set down on the steps
> 'Cause you finds it's kinder hard.
> Don't you fall now –
> For I'se still goin', honey,
> I'se still climbin',
> And life for me ain't been no crystal stair.

One of the four questions following the poem asks, "The speaker's use of dialect:" with four

options to complete the sentence: "A. builds a level of suspense. B. adds comic relief. C.

establishes authentic characterization. D. creates dramatic irony." The question positions the

use of AAL as a dialect rather than a legitimate language with its own syntax and grammar

system (Baugh, 1999; Boutte, 2007; Dyson & Smitherman, 2009; Foster & Peele, 1999;

Paris, 2009; Perry & Delpit, 1998; Smitherman, 2000). For example, Hughes displays a

systematic use of I'se, a contraction of I is (Boutte, 2007; Smitherman, 2000). While not the

correct answer, the inclusion of option B "adds comic relief" further denigrates AAL by

allowing a test taker to consider the language is somehow funny, comedic, or to be laughed

at. Students who speak AAL are "as one ever feel[ing] his...two-ness" against the white gaze

within the proposed answers (Du Bois, 1903/1989, p. 2).

The students at Juan Diego are largely students of Color from non-dominant groups

including first generation Americans, economically disadvantaged families, and with

religiously diverse identities. The national, state, and professional content standards used to

create the Network standards for English center Western centered literacy practices

(Smitherman, 2000). Additionally, the national and professional standards provide

"fragments of knowledge" (Sleeter, 2018, p. 11) where, "the contributions of individuals and

groups of color and the role of race and racism as nonexistent, peripheral, or tangential"

(Vasquez Heilig, Brown, & Brown, 2015, p. 419). As content knowledge becomes

increasingly standardized, it also becomes more inexorably linked to whiteness as the

fragments included minimize race and contributions from persons of Color (Coffee et al.,

2017; Leonardo, 2000; Milner, 2010; Sleeter, 2018). Within culturally sustaining pedagogies,

by contrast, instruction is grounded in students' cultures of origin; though the mainstream

culture is also made explicit as means of challenging or accessing power (Ladson-Billings,

2017a). While Network standards normalize whiteness, culturally sustaining pedagogies

offer a solution: students use their repertoire of literacy practices to recognize, challenge, and reject the implicit whiteness within the EOC.

Miss Jerome challenges the canon prescribed by the EOC by adapting and challenging the mandated texts. Within the second interview during phase two, Miss Jerome brought up the preeminence of playwright William Shakespeare while discussing her sophomore's world literature curriculum:

> ...some academics don't like, I love breaking that idea of like sacred texts or the canon. Shakespeare belongs in this category. No! We can talk about *The Flash* and Shakespeare [together] because they are using the same tools to do the same thing. And they learn from the best. These people who write *The Flash* have read Shakespeare. They know how to write characters, too. (Jerome, October 30, 2017)

She describes breaking down the metaphorical canon that academics hold as valuable by either complimenting them with texts like the Marvel television series *The Flash* (2014-present), equally valuing linguistic representations and alternative modes of meaning that accomplish the same goals. Additionally, *The Flash* (2014-present) offers another text within the unit, as Miss Jerome explains, "the themes, the characterization is all there. Barry [The Flash] out of nowhere has this power, but it's literal. He's a super-hero. But he has this friend, or thinks he's a friend, Harrison Wells who turns out to be an Iago character." Her references to Shakespeare as a "sacred text" or part of a "canon" in the above interview excerpt rings especially true given that the American Literature EOC features a long nonfiction reading passage about Shakespeare connected to multiple choice grammar questions, despite the fact that he is a British playwright:

> Who is the most famous playwright in the English literary canon? Without a doubt, it's William Shakespeare. **(35)** <u>Because of his lasting legacy,</u> Shakespeare remains an elusive figure to biographers. According to the celebrated 19th century American novelist and humorist Mark Twain, we know more about the dinosaur Stegosaurus

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than **(36)** <u>he does </u>about Shakespeare. (American Literature 11th Grade, Juan Diego Network EOC)

Rather than select texts based on the Network prescribed canon alone, Miss Jerome makes agentive choices about what to teach based on its overall purpose. Then, if multiple texts meet the same purpose, she selects texts that will support her students' identities. She again discusses her beliefs about the teaching of Shakespeare:

> I don't mind it [teaching Shakespeare] but it's not my favorite thing. I don't like, I refuse to teach Romeo and Juliet. [sic] I just think it's a really bad story to teach young people. Like star crossed lovers and yea, I know it's meant to be a soap opera but with their [students'] hormones already the way they are I don't wanna encourage those sorts of bad behaviors because Shakespeare is already put on this pedestal and you're saying here's this other piece of work and here are all these characters really poor choices, but I don't know if they see them as poor choices whereas Othello we can, we clearly identify Iago is making poor choices. (Jerome, January 2, 2018)

Again, Miss Jerome points out the way Shakespearean texts are elevated as canonical. While Shakespearean texts are required within her course curriculum, she considers ways to challenge these texts by carefully selecting which parts of the canon to use. In this example from her one section of sophomore World Literature, she collaborated with the lead sophomore English teacher who taught all other sections of the course. They mutually decided Othello would be the best choice to meet the prescribed requirement to read a Shakespearean play; Miss Jerome standing firm in her belief that *Romeo and Juliet* was and inappropriate choice because its messages about love and suicide were dangerously amplified due to Shakespeare's prestige. How they taught *Othello* diverged. Miss Jerome balanced the print text of the play with reader's theater performances where students read the parts, audio recordings from professional actors, watched a modern movie adaptation, and compared each act of the play with episodes of a modern television show, *The Flash*, with similar characterization and themes. Miss Jerome explains:

> I had a teacher once tell me that Shakespeare was meant to be seen and not read. So, there will be certain passages that we read and then translate into modern English. So, but we're going to predominantly doing the BBC production...I found one through BBC with Christopher Eccleston who was the 9th Doctor on *Doctor Who*. I'm a total nerd. He played Iago and it is set in the 1990's race riots in LA, so it's very interesting. Othello was promoted to be police captain during the race riots because it was meant to quell tensions after a Rodney King like murder of a Black man by the police. It's all Shakespearian language, but the idea behind it is he has been promoted to kind of assuage the feelings of the community and Iago is probably jealous because he took a position that he felt he was qualified for. But it's a good production and relevant for today. (Jerome, January 2, 2018)

The movie adaptation of *Othello* Miss Jerome refers to, which was released in 2001, centered the racial tensions of the play in the context of the racial tensions in Oakland California during the 1990's. After watching this movie adaptation alongside readings of the play, students created visuals to accompany the key vocabulary in the text and paired the term Moor, a reference to Othello's North African ethnic heritage, and the term Black. Figures 5 and 6 show students' representations of the terms with a picture of a brown skinned women with natural hair, a black fist, and phrases like "Moor lives matter!" and "Black American PRIDE!"

Figure 5. Students represent the term "Moor" from Othello to Africa, pride, and the Pan-African flag.

Figure 6. Students connect the term "Moor" from *Othello* to Africa, Moor lives matter, Black American PRIDE! and South African flag.

Taken as a whole, Miss Jerome identified three goals for teaching *Othello*: explicitly teaching characterization, building familiarity with Shakespeare's language and writing style to prepare students for the EOC, and ability to identify themes and archetypes that support students' understandings across multiple texts. She intentionally sought out texts that would support her students to meet these goals (Table 13). Shakespeare was still taught, students were still prepared for the EOC, but the canon had been adapted to consider a wider variety of texts and place those texts in conversation with students' identities and modern day interpretations.

Table 13

Miss Jerome's Text Selections for Othello *by Goal*

Characterization	Familiarity with Shakespeare's Language and Writing Style	Familiarity with Othello's Themes
Print text of play (1601-1604)	Print text of play (1601-1604)	The Flash (2014- present)
The Flash (2014- present)	Audio recordings of play	Othello (2001) BBC
	Othello (2001) BBC	

Another example of Miss Jerome adapting the Network mandated texts rests with her teaching of Henry David Thoreau's book *Walden*. Miss Jerome knew students needed to be familiar with Thoreau's writing style and major themes in order to perform successfully on the assessment, but made the decision to meet those same demands in a different way. Instead, students read portions of the essay *Civil Disobedience*, also by Henry David Thoreau. She selected to use *Civil Disobedience* rather than *Walden* because the former highlighted abolitionism and civilian agency in light of oppressive government control. The essay was published in 1849, however the print text was paired with a movie. "We read it [*Civil Disobedience*] and watched the movie *V for Vendetta,*" Miss Jerome explained. "I thought the theme was there, in both, they connected it [*Civil Disobedience*] with the movie." The movie is based on graphic novel authored by Alan Moore and illustrated by David Lloyd released in 2006. It follows the story of a young woman, Evey, in a dystopic future society where an authoritarian government upholds injustice and suppresses freedoms. She is introduced to a rebel, V, whose education on the realities of government slowly disillusion

her, turning Evey against the dystopic police state. Students were able to consider how the concepts from a historical, nonfiction essay and futuristic, fictitious movie influenced their own understandings of government, unjust authority, and civic responsibilities.

Miss Jerome adapted the prescriptive English literary canon by considering the purposes for each mandated text within the EOC and translating those purposes into other semiotic tools. In terms of content, each mode or design of a text is a partial representation of an experience (Freebody, Luke, & Gilbert, 1991). Thoreau's experience with government control as white man in 1849 is different than that of the students at Juan Diego and of the imagined experiences of Evey and V in a futuristic totalitarian government. However, by interrogating, "representations through reflecting on what the form of representation allows them to see as well as what it prevents them from seeing" students are afforded an opportunity to question how meaning is constructed and produced and for what purposes (Alvermann, 2005, p. 122). While students within these examples are not moving across the modes of text themselves as active producers, they are interrogating the different sign systems. Rather than relying solely on print versions of Othello, students are reading print, listening to audio, engaging in the gestural and spatial designs of reader's theater, and evaluating the visual and audio representation of the BBC production against Marvel's *The Flash*. These "opportunities to invent connections between them...can lead to richer and more complex understandings" (Alvermann, 2005, p. 122). Miss Jerome adapted the prescribed Eurocentric, print based texts in the canon providing alternative ways for her students to make meaning (Moje et al., 2000, p. 177).

One other example of Miss Jerome's agency in adapting instruction to expand and extend prescriptive texts and standards mandated by the Network was her use of

counternarratives. Miss Jerome and her students studied the literature of the Revolutionary

Era and she noticed the standards and syllabus did not provide literature for the unit that

directly named or contended with human enslavement. The closest example was Patrick

Henry's Speech at the Virginia Convention which references slavery and freedom in

figurative language. For example, Henry states, "There is no retreat [from the British] but in

submission and slavery! Our chains are forged! Their clanking may be heard on the plains of

Boston!" The comments were not reflective of the reality of the enslavement of African

peoples during the Revolutionary time period; Miss Jerome was trouble by the speech's

silence on whose freedoms were being fought for in the Revolution. She made the decision to

teach Patrick Henry's Speech at the Virginia Convention but placed it alongside *The*

Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano by Olaudah Equiano, a formerly

enslaved Black man and a contemporary of Patrick Henry.

Panther:	So, they both have to do with freedom, obviously. And they're [students] are comparing and contrasting rhetorical devices. How did you select these two texts?
Jerome:	Um, cause I've read them together before and I liked them. It fits my grammar segment as well, because I'm doing parallelism and they're having to write sentences that model parallelism. So, they learned what that was grammatically and now they're learning how that works to create an effective persuasive speech. Like, give me liberty or give me death as an example of parallel structure...but the differences. So, they're both about freedom, but what's interesting is a lot of kids, Patrick Henry uses words like slave. "We have to fight for freedom," or um, "either we fight for our freedom or we be enslaved." And the kids are like oh, the British are going to enslave them and they were thinking very literally. Y'know? This is a metaphor. Like, the British aren't going to put them in chains, but there's actual, real slavery happening so, and so we think about that. It's interesting when compared to Equiano where he's talking about actual, real slavery. This is not a metaphor anymore. (Jerome, October 27, 2017)

While Patrick Henry's speech was a part of the Revolutionary Era curriculum she was required to teach, Miss Jerome thought carefully about its inclusion. From a grammar perspective, it fit with her Network mandated standards to identify connotative and denotative meaning ("Identify connotative and denotative meanings of words that accomplish a specific purpose [e.g., tone and mood]."), use parallelism in writing ("Use parallel structure to create meaning when writing."), and rhetoric ("Analyze how the author's choices [POV, diction, rhetorical devices such as ethos/pathos/logos, setting etc.] develop the concepts of a passage and/or literary text."). By intentionally pairing Equiano with Henry, students were analyzing each passage for ethos, pathos, and logos, but were able to compare the two contemporaneous texts—one a counternarrative to the other. This put Henry's connotative references to slavery in contrast to Equiano's denotative reference, such as, "Why are parents to lose their children, brothers their sisters, or husbands their wives? Surely, this is a new refinement in cruelty, which...thus aggravates distress, and adds fresh horrors even to the wretchedness of slavery." After comparing connotative and denotative meaning in both texts, she then asked students to consider the impact of the comparative pieces on Henry's ethos, or credibility.

This example is demonstrative for two reasons. First, Miss Jerome explicitly taught rhetorical reading. This refers to reading that is focused on identifying the author's purpose, the context of the text, the audience, and how the author's identity, structures, language, and style may influence the former frames (Haas & Flower, 1988). Warren (2013) argues rhetorical reading is a "gateway" practice for disciplinary literacy because it provides a framework for novices to engage with disciplinary texts to reveal the patterns of text, structures, language, and style for the disciplinary Discourse. Additionally, rhetorical reading

involves intertextual connections that acknowledge the reader, intended audience, and author as functioning with a particular social, cultural, historical, and political context (Lee & Spratley, 2006; Warren, 2013). The Network standards include reference to rhetorical devices ("Analyze how an author uses literary and/or rhetorical devices [e.g., satire, irony, or sarcasm, ethos/pathos/logos] to create meaning in a literary text.") which Miss Jerome extends. Instead of just identifying ethos, pathos, and logos, students are engaged in rhetorical reading to consider how the historical and political setting influenced the usage of ethos and critiquing its effectiveness.

The use of counternarratives is also notable for its explicit purpose: to name the historical contours of racism and enslavement. Miss Jerome perceived the pervading whiteness inherent in the prescribed Colonial and Revolutionary era texts. Whiteness refers to the socially constructed and maintained ideologies that sustain white supremacy within society (Leonardo, 2000). Common characteristics of whiteness include "[a] an unwillingness to name the contours of racism [b] the avoidance of identifying with a racial experience or group...and [c] the minimization of racist legacy" (Leonardo, 2000, p. 32). Including Henry's voice without challenging its minimization of racism and unwillingness to accurately name the contours of enslavement would have perpetuated the narrative and positioned the narrative of history with the colonizer rather than the colonized (Domínguez, 2017).

The two sub-findings considered how Miss Jerome's agentive practices in text selection negotiated the demands of standardization to support literacy instruction within her classroom. Specifically, that she understands (a) Network standards are a foundation to build from and (b) prescribed texts can be adapted and challenged. Definitions of literacy growth

within urban Catholic schools has historically relied on statistics and demographic labels to capture what Miss Jerome names "wisps of smoke in a bottle." These wisps of smoke justify the school's existence because they are tied to financial support from outside funders rather than focusing on the humanizing potential that "make[s] it possible for the students to become themselves" (Freire, 2000, p. 8). At Juan Diego, the statistics surrounding students' performance on Lexiles and ACTs are comparable to other public high schools in the geographic area and significantly lower than state and national figures. However, this portrait of "achievement" is incomplete. Miss Jerome's concerns echo the experiences of Vasudevan (2007) who similarly was required to collect data on a student she worked with in a juvenile justice program, Angel. When Angel prepared to leave the program, Vasudevan explained:

> He told me that Angel's PO [parole officer] wanted three pieces of information only: his attendance (above average at 70%); his most recent TABE [Test of Adult Basic Education] score (still a 3.5, unchanged from his initial score); and a note about his anger (I hadn't seen evidence of that and therefore couldn't respond). I was disheartened, but compliant. As Angel's teacher, I had valuable information that could have informed the teaching–learning relationships between Angel and the teachers in his new school context. (Vasudevan, 2007, p. 255)

In the same way, Juan Diego has other stories to offer about students' literacy and literacy growth: a Latina student who celebrated part of her Quinceañera at school by teaching a traditional dance to other girls who had never attended a Quinceañera. An award winning step dance troupe of students who also cheerlead for the school's basketball team. The story of a Catholic group from the community that upholds Mexican folk Catholic traditions; many of whom attend Juan Diego. The story of a Christian Leaders organization that, despite its name, is Interfaith and performs skits at morning assemblies to teach students about different religious traditions. And the story of 72 seniors who are accepted to and attending colleges

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after graduation, the majority as the first in their families to attend. That is 100% of the seniors, a rate well above local, state, and national figures.

The demands of Network standards restrict what counts as literacy and success; thus measures aligned with the standards, such as the ACT, and Lexiles, have become bottles. They imperfectly capture wisps of student achievement on certain, narrow skills at the expense of naming everything outside of the bottle as unimportant. CSP critiques such notions of achievement, pointing out that success on standardized tests alone leads to standardized instruction that does nothing to build student and community agency or uproot white supremacy within schools (Alim & Paris, 2017). Narrowing achievement to numbers or statistics alone dehumanizes the students schools are intended to serve (Coffee et al., 2017; McCarty & Zepeda, 2014; Vasudevan, 2007).

Teacher Evaluation Is an Opportunity to Prioritize

Miss Gregory is a part time music teacher, leader of Juan Diego's music program and a small student choir for all church masses, and an active member of several school committees including the freshman level team, Black History Month Committee, and Women's History Month Committee. While officially part time, the demands of curricular planning, committee work, and grading mean she puts in full days. With no classroom of her own, she has a small space in a larger copy and mailroom referred to as "the workroom." It was in this crowded space between the noise of the copier and a mix of Motown or classical orchestral pieces playing softly from her computer that we would meet to talk. While the topics were wide ranging, they invariably led back to teacher evaluation.

Teacher evaluation at Juan Diego High School is the job of the administrative team consisting of Principal Katherine Billiart, Assistant Principal Lawrence Neumann, and

Assistant Principal Teresa Clonard. These three leaders also share the responsibility for

recruiting, hiring, and dismissing educators with President Gonzaga. Mrs. Clonard described

the history of the teacher evaluation system at Juan Diego:

> this is the first year that we've used that [current evaluation system]. In the past we
> have used [a different system]. We had used one and we really didn't like the tool
> because, well there were some good practices with it, it was too generic. We wanted
> to be able to make it more personal. Um, so last year we tried to just do our own
> hybrid and it really didn't work at all. (Clonard, February 2, 2018)

After all three administrators attended a free training offered by a state university on the

adoption of an evaluation system, they unanimously agreed to move forward with adopting

it, excited that it could streamline the observation process, provide more substantive feedback

to teachers, and potentially increase the amount of observations each administrator

completed. The program describes itself on the associated website as, "a comprehensive

educator assessment system designed by experts on professional development and

assessment" that collect data from "Classroom observations of teachers, Unit of Instruction

(UOI) provided by each teacher, Professional Development Plan (PDP) provided by each

teacher, [and] Student Surveys" to provide, "a comprehensive view of educator

effectiveness." The system, which is the required public school evaluation system within the

state, includes a web interface that allows the school to set which indicators of teacher

effectiveness to focus on in a given year. According to the documents provided with the

evaluation system, the indicators define, "the expectations for performance for professional

teachers." The indicators include descriptions of the "knowledge and skills" that are essential

to good teaching "based on teaching theory" such as:

- Content knowledge and academic language
- Students' cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development
- Implementation of curriculum standards

- Instructional strategies leading to student engagement in problem-solving and critical thinking
- Classroom management techniques
- Verbal and nonverbal communication
- Effective use of assessments
- Self-assessment and improvement
- Induction and collegial activities

In its first year of implementation, the administrators decided to not complete student surveys as part of data collection for teacher evaluation, and instead primarily focused on classroom observations and professional development plans.

The classroom observations are standardized to provide the evaluator explicit instructions for the 15 to 20 minute observations to be conducted a minimum of five to seven times throughout the school year. For example, the observation tool for the indicator "The teacher cognitively engages the students in the content" first defines what the indicator means:

> The teacher cognitively engages students in the content. Cognitive engagement in the classroom refers to students' active mental involvement in the learning activities or mental effort, such as meaningful processing, strategy use, concentration, and metacognition. Cognitive engagement is different from behavioral engagement, which is cooperative participation, or adhering to classroom rules. Cognitive engagement is a key goal of many school reform efforts because it predicts achievement. (State Evaluation Tool Handbook, 2016)

Then, a rubric is provided that details what it would look like for the teacher to meet the indicator at various levels ranging from "emerging" to "distinguished" on a seven point scale. The rubric also provides a list of potential data the evaluator could collect including "evidence of practice" and "evidence of impact" to distinguish between the teacher's instructional actions and the students' reactions.

The system appealed to the administrators because it maximized their time within the classroom, focused their observations, and communicated feedback quickly to teachers

through the online system. However, the use of a standardized teacher observation tool for

evaluation stripped the school's agency at naming highly effective instruction for themselves.

Jaqueline Jordan Irvine (2002) articulated her concerns regarding similar teacher evaluation

systems:

> we [educators] cannot let uninformed policymakers, university presidents, business
> people, and even parents dictate, unilaterally plan, and evaluate our profession.
> Currently, a myriad of government agencies, foundations, and think tanks are
> defining what a 'good' teacher is. Without our input and leadership, they are likely to
> come up with lists of standards and prescriptions that suggest there is, in fact, one
> prototype of a good or effective teacher for all types of students, for all subjects, and
> for all schools. (pp. 48-49)

Irvine is concerned that a single definition of 'good' teaching will essentialize the complexity

of teaching into standards and prescriptions. Warner's (2016) content analysis on conceptions

of excellent teaching recommended the standards and prescriptions surrounding definitions

of good teaching be informed by the stated purpose for education that accompanies them.

From the evaluation systems' website, "the primary purpose of the Teacher Evaluation

Protocol is to promote growth in effective practice that ultimately increases student

performance," thus highly effective teaching is defined by standardized assessments.

The priorities embedded within the teacher evaluation system were focused on

"effective practice" that directly leads to student growth on standardized assessments. By

contrast, Miss Gregory described the Network standards for music education:

> my first line of work is to do what the Juan Diego way of teaching music education. I
> have found it was a little inadequate because it was so generalized. I mean it was just
> so vague you could do just about anything and I didn't feel it gave the child um a real
> good education in music. And I said well it's more to it than this. (Gregory,
> December 12, 2017)

She explained the standards for music education while she explained a lesson she completed

a few minutes prior:

> Gregory: So when I talk about the class, so the benchmarks[standards] of Juan Diego are music foundations, artistic expression, aesthetic valuing—see that's what goes into that, connections, the connections, see that's where the community thing is—writing speaking, and listening for the arts.
>
> Panther: Yep. Which is different than for history or for science or for math.
>
> Gregory: Okay, so do you see what? I was doing it for the arts or about the arts. And connecting is just trying to understand how that, how you plug into all of that. So I'm supposed to do all of that plus meet the standards. What I do is I incorporate the national standards would be what the state facilities [public schools] do which is to teach playing, singing, playing an instrument, improvising, composing, reading notation, listening, and analyzing.

Miss Gregory names the strands of music within her Network standards: music foundations, artistic expression, and aesthetic valuing represented through writing, speaking, and listening for the arts. She also considers the national standards from the National Association for Music Education (NAFME) which focus on application of broad musical literacies, writing, speaking, and listening, through discrete, musical literacy skills: singing, playing an instrument, improvising, composing, reading notation, listening, and analyzing music. Miss Gregory had only these guidelines when she began at Juan Diego, "I walked into nothing, the teacher before me, I don't know what he was or was not doing but I had nothing." With no school required syllabus, curriculum, or required texts, Miss Gregory had the autonomy and agency to build from the Network standards to capitalize on her own goals and priorities for student outcomes. She wrote her own syllabus first which she we reviewed together. She read the course description and student learning outcome:

> Gregory: So outcomes...[reading from syllabus] a major benefit of music education is to enrich the student's life and overall education. A student that participates in music has developed skills in group work, multitasking, spatial reasoning, mathematics, creativity, community spirit, and other areas. Juan Diego students experience a variety of musical, music activities which advocate sociocultural diversity, promotes uses and functions of the arts, and teaches about historical influences. [speaking to me] I do that when I start talking about the history of music. [reading from syllabus]

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> Upon the completion of music appreciation, a student will be able to articulate a humanistic approach to the role of music in a global environment.

Miss Gregory centered goals that go beyond standardized achievement such as, "group work, multitasking...creativity, community spirit." She discussed the valued knowledge that would be centered in the curriculum including "sociocultural diversity...historical influences...humanistic approach to the role of music in a global environment." Miss Gregory created a course syllabus that met the Network standards and went beyond them to balance technical skills with critical and creative thinking. Delpit (2006) explains the need for a balance between the two for marginalized students:

> skills are a necessary but insufficient aspect of black and minority students' education. Students need technical skills to open doors, but they need to be able to think critically and creatively to participate in meaningful and potentially liberating work inside these doors. Let there be no doubt: a 'skilled' minority person who is not also capable of critical analysis becomes the trainable low-level functionary of the dominant society, simply the grease that keeps the institutions which orchestrate his or her oppression running smoothly. On the other hand, a critical thinker who lacks the 'skills' demanded by employers and institutions of higher learning can aspire to financial and social status only within the disenfranchised underworld. Yes, if minority people are to effect the change which will allow them to truly process we must insist on 'skills' within the contexts of critical and creative thinking. (Delpit, 2006, pp. 18-19)

The Network skills focus on writing, speaking, and listening for the arts. The national standards focus on singing, playing an instrument, improvising, composing, reading notation, listening, and analyzing music. These are the technical skills needed for a career in music. However, that's not enough—for Delpit and for Miss Gregory minoritized students need more to compete and thrive in a global community. Miss Gregory explains how her curriculum has purposes beyond music literacy skills:

> this is music therapy in the real world...And so when I'm coming up with the kind of things that I do, I am thinking about how can I teach them how to overcome their adversity through music? And how can I build up their self-esteem? And those are

therapeutic goals. Building up self-esteem, feeling good about yourself...I want them to feel at home with this, I want them to express themselves with who they are, okay? Uh, I want them to um, learn...about their own culture. (Gregory, October 18, 2017)

Miss Gregory explains the adversity her students face can be overcome with self-esteem, self-expression, and knowledge of their own cultures. These goals are tied to humanization—goals that her course could be a space that, "make[s] it possible for the students to become themselves" (Freire, 1996, p. 8). Miss Gregory is reacting to media narratives that consistently dehumanize students. Miss Gregory brought such news stories to the faculty during level team meeting:

> also this weekend what got me was they they did a report on MSNBC and it went across the ticker, I just noticed it went across the ticker, and it said that of the charter schools across the nation...about 1,000 of them are predominantly minority. And of those that are predominantly minority about 99% of them are deficient in reading and math ...But then I said at the team meeting yesterday, does everyone know that? You could have heard crickets. I said, don't we get mostly charter school people here? We do. And they probably are predominantly minority.

Miss Gregory was surprised by the report noting that many of Juan Diego's students come from charter middle schools that are predominantly racially segregated; however her intent was to start a conversation about the accuracy of the report. "I know we struggle with that stuff, reading and math, but 99%?" she said, shaking her head back and forth. Miss Gregory is skeptical of what Eve Tuck (2009) calls "damage-centered research" that is "intent on portraying our neighborhoods and tribes as defeated and broken." (p. 412). Tuck (2009) focused on research within Indigenous and urban communities with minoritized people groups:

> the danger in damage-centered research is that it is a pathologizing approach in which the oppression singularly defines a community. Here's a more applied definition of damage-centered research: research that operates, even benevolently, from a theory of change that establishes harm or injury in order to achieve reparation. (p. 413)

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Rather than focusing on damage-centered media narratives about Juan Diego's students, Miss Gregory invests in building a humanizing curriculum that goes beyond skills based standards. While skills are necessary, so is supporting students' sense of self; thus extending the standards is preventing the erasure of students' humanity as waste (Coffee et al., 2017; McCarty & Zepeda, 2014; Vasudevan (2007).

Like Miss Jerome, the standards were a starting point that Miss Gregory built from; however, transforming the standards into instruction was more difficult for Miss Gregory. As a former music therapist, Miss Gregory viewed herself as a music expert, not necessarily a pedagogy or literacy instruction expert. This was established in my first meetings with Miss Gregory in early October:

Panther:	So, do you feel pressure with the literacy roll out that writing and reading have to look a certain way in your classroom or do you have flexibility with the way--?
Gregory:	I'm not going to worry about it because I feel like I'm not the English teacher. Unless someone came in and said it had to be a certain way. No one's done that yet...I think that what I'm doing, it's a lot for me to get the kids just to listen to music. Cause they haven't had any music at all. So I'm trying to develop skills in listening, compounded with writing, and it has to be very simple. Whatever it is it has to be very simple because some things, sometimes there are things that music teachers don't do.

Miss Gregory saw reading and writing as discrete, specific skills that English educators are primarily concerned with, and asserted that she is "not the English teacher." This is a common response from secondary educators who view themselves as disciplinary experts (Ratekin, Simpson, Alvermann, & Dishner, 1985; Smith & Feathers, 1983). As a music expert, Miss Gregory did not view herself as primarily responsible for teaching reading or writing practices nor did she believe she had the time in her curriculum because, "it's a lot for me to get these kids just to listen to music." This reflects a common critique of content

area reading (CAR) instruction: teaching reading and writing strategies takes time away from

content instruction (O'Brien & Stewart, 1992; Stewart & O'Brien, 1989; Vacca, Vacca, &

Mraz, 2005). Miss Gregory instead prioritized the teaching of musical literacy, or

"develop[ing] skills in listening" during the two days a week she saw her students. This is

more closely aligned with a disciplinary literacy perspective; rather than focusing on

universal or context free reading and writing practices, the discipline dictates the way content

is constructed and produced. In music, that means listening to and creating music. Miss

Gregory did admit she would include "simple" forms of reading and writing, but only if

"someone came in and said it had to be done a certain way."

In her third year of teaching, Miss Gregory has been supervised by a different administrator

each school year. Lawrence Neumann was her supervisor the previous school year. He

describes his time working directly with Miss Gregory positively:

> In a planning capacity, she puts more thought into a lot of her lessons I think than I
> think most people in the building to consider cultural relevancy and allowing students
> to choose, like project based assignment. Like, hey you've got kids anywhere from
> like Drake to Selena Gomez, talking about her personal connections with musicians.
> They have a musician project that they do. Um, the adverse side of that um, and not to
> knock it, is that the classes tend to be a little on the chaotic side. (November 20,
> 2017).

During his post observation meetings with Miss Gregory, conversations were, "a hyper focus

on the classroom management piece, but I don't want that to muddy how um, how hard the

lessons and well thought out those lesson are because they are great um, and the time added

for that" (Neumann, November 20, 2017). He recognized the immense amount of time,

thought, and care that Miss Gregory puts into her curriculum, noting its "cultural relevancy"

is an intentional part of the planning process.

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During the study, her supervisor was Assistant Principal Teresa Clonard. Mrs. Clonard

explained

> this is the first year that I've supervised her...so I haven't talked the process through
> as much as when she had Lawrence and when she had Katherine. And um, when I
> talked with her was my first reaction was, I think she might be a little remedial. She's
> taught younger kids before does she really know? But that was a first reaction. But
> then talking about lesson plans and talking about, how do you decide what should be
> taught? And she y'know, I just decided that we needed to make this, we needed to
> broaden, we needed to narrow down what we were doing here. Her explanation of
> how she does this. I think she's come a long way, I think she's doing a really good
> job. And she's one whose classroom management has improved greatly. She's still
> got crazy freshmen...And that's so intimidating for, a music class for freshmen who
> are so self-conscious about everything and everyone around them. (Clonard,
> November 20, 2017)

Similar to Mr. Neumann, Mrs. Clonard mentioned Miss Gregory's classroom management is

part of the primary focus for coaching conversations, but she acknowledged and respected

the thought and care Miss Gregory put into her curriculum and the growth she had shown. In

February, Mrs. Clonard had completed three observations and post observation meetings

with Miss Gregory and reiterated, "as I've gotten to look over her lesson plans and talk

through them, she really is putting a lot of focus on the kids and what they're getting out of

it." She still is concerned about the general structure and tone of the course, but is quick to

point out, "I think it's hard for anyone that doesn't teach every day. Y'know the structure of

her class and only having them [students] two days a week" (February 8, 2018). Mrs.

Clonard was also transparent about her own limitations coaching Miss Gregory as well:

> the struggle is, having so many new teachers and giving them the support, you're
> doing okay this is okay, this is how we do it and giving them enough time. Because I
> know that we [administrators] don't give our teachers enough time and sometimes we
> have to give more time to the teachers that aren't growing because we have to help
> them so much...So we [Juan Diego] need more coaching, we need to provide them
> [teachers] more feedback, we need to figure out how we can do that with the
> limitations of what we have. I know we don't have a lot of time during the day but I
> don't think our time is utilized as best it could be.

Mrs. Clonard knew teachers wanted more feedback, observations, and dedicated time to meet with their assigned administrative supervisor. However, Mrs. Clonard was stretched thin between supporting eight teachers who are new to the building and the many duties that come with an administrative role. She personally expressed concern she does not do enough: a standardized teacher evaluation system offered an opportunity to prioritize, "giving them [teachers] the support...with the limitations of what we have."

From Miss Gregory's perspective, Mrs. Clonard is an excellent supervisor, primarily because she has provided written and verbal feedback about observations more regularly than previous administrators.

> I'm going to be frank with you. Mrs. Clonard is the first supervisor I've had that actually consistently has come in and given me um written feedback on what, well, I take that back, Neumann did that once, that gave me written feedback on a real, she's given me about three levels. And that's because we've got this little system now that they're using, and they've developed the criteria on what they want to evaluate you on. (Gregory, January 29, 2018)

Miss Gregory appreciated the increased frequency of feedback the newly adopted teacher evaluation system provided. She also respected Mrs. Clonard feedback, taking it to heart— often by immediately implementing it. Mrs. Clonard noticed, commenting

> What I see, is if we talk about something, she's really going to try to implement it in the classroom. She's really good at trying to do that. She hears it and she looks at it and she'll run ideas by me before she goes into it. (Clonard, February 8, 2018)

Within the teacher evaluation system, Mrs. Clonard was prioritizing teacher feedback and the observation tools made the process more efficient. Miss Gregory, dependent on her supervisor's support to learn pedagogy relied on the feedback to improve her practice.

Miss Gregory proudly discussed her first observation of the school year, a highly rated lesson over *The Carnival of the Animals*, a traditional orchestra piece by French

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composer Camille Saint-Saëns. The lesson began with a series of vocabulary terms (Figure

7). Each term represents a descriptive word related to sound (e.g., timbre, frequency,

overtone) and the sound of instruments specifically (e.g., piercing, clear, brassy).

Figure 7. The key vocabulary for the orchestra unit.

Then, students watched two videos and listened to the musical piece while visually

following the different animated animals. While they were listening, they were also asked to

complete a worksheet. The worksheet lists the different animals and asks students to "write

one sentence that describes each musical selection. Use the musical elements of timbre

(quality of sound), tempo (fast/slow), or how instruments are used to give characteristics of

the animals." At the bottom of the worksheet the directions read, "Write a 4 sentence essay

on Disney's version of Saint-Saens Carnival." She verbally communicated the essay must be

in descriptive sentences.

Mrs. Clonard's general feedback on the lesson recorded in the teacher evaluation system reads:

> Excellent class for including academic vocabulary in the lesson! Students listened to selections from the Carnival of the Animals while seeing the animals displayed on the project[er]. They were to write a sentence about each musical selection that they heard. Students identified instruments which they heard as well as tone and tempo of the music.

It goes on to specifically compliment the vocabulary instruction stating, "Vocabulary was introduced effectively and students seemed focus[ed] and on task. Sounds of instruments were also engaging in the vocabulary instruction." Mrs. Clonard also described the lesson during a one on one interview:

Clonard: The other day I was in there and it was really just a lecture class. I mean there wasn't really much I could say, y'know. I'm amazed by the outcomes, though.
Panther: Oh yea?
Clonard: Well, they were listening to the instruments and they were able to identify the instruments and these are kids that haven't had that experience before, they aren't musical, they're being exposed to a lot, and I don't know how much they realize they're being exposed to...She's trying to y'know just get them to start thinking and looking, and I think she does do that. I hear them listen to music that I know is not their genre, or their appreciation very respectfully and I like that. I think that's really cool. So I think she's doing some really good things. I could sit and say as a, stop talking so much, try to get them more involved, but I've also seen her come so far with the classroom management of when, when they, when she's talking they are being pretty respectful. More so then I've seen in the past. She's getting there. (Clonard, February 2, 2018)

Mrs. Clonard recognized the class period was "really just a lecture class," but given past observations, noted that students were "exposed to...music that I know is not their genre." Noting students were listening to the classical music, completing worksheets, and "being pretty respectful." As such, she evaluated Miss Gregory with her highest evaluation scores of the school year. Although Mrs. Clonard recognized it was a lecture class, she did

not comment or provide insight on how Miss Gregory could improve. She admitted, "I could

sit and say as a, stop talking so much, try to get them more involved" but chose not to.

Instead, Mrs. Clonard's overall positive evaluation reinforced the efficacy of the curricular

choices and instructional decisions.

By comparison, I was present for Miss Gregory's next observation. The lesson was

aligned with a Network standard to define the different functions of music that Miss Gregory

adapted to be, "students will use a humanistic approach to define the role of music in a global

environment" (Music Appreciation Syllabus, 2017-2018). This is paraphrased by Miss

Gregory as, "function within your little community and your world" (Gregory, December 12,

2017). I asked Miss Gregory, "what would it look like or sound like if you're meeting that

[standard], students learning how to appreciate music in a global environment?" She

described how the standard translated into her lesson:

> I said some things, it was important to [the city] to have a symphony orchestra. I told
> you about the sponsors. There were many, many sponsors, and I paralleled it to
> football and basketball players because people contribute a lot of money for us to
> have a football team and a baseball team...It's meaningful, somebody thinks it has
> purpose if it's been here for 35 years. Yea. And that it meets a need for the cultural
> arts.

Miss Gregory was referencing multiple elements from the lesson. While students investigated

a local symphony orchestra as part of a larger unit on families of instruments, a whole class

discussion ensued while reading the orchestra's website. Miss Gregory demonstrated how the

orchestra was a part of the community: it received financial support from donors who

sponsored it, it employed over 150 musicians, and it offered services to the communities like

free concerts. Miss Gregory was meeting her standard by connecting students to the way

music functions within and supports the local community. The lesson had been observed by

her administrative supervisor, Assistant Principal Clonard. During our conversation, Miss

Gregory received an email showing her evaluation score. She stopped mid-thought to log in

and review her evaluation. Miss Gregory was disappointed to see she had gone down from

her last observation on "student engagement" and the use of academic and disciplinary

vocabulary was "not observed." She took a moment to process the evaluation before

continuing the conversation.

> Gregory: But I was also wanting them [students] to know about the community, to have community awareness. And I'm not sure if that was significant to her [Clonard] and the learning, but I think it's significant for you to be enculturated and engaged into your community. To know what's here. [laughter] So you ought to have something that takes you out of your little ghetto area and says did you know that it's right here? Right here at your fingertips? That's why I said it like I did, like I said it, I didn't say it with duress, I said it's right down the street you know? To let them know how it is to you.
>
> Panther: Erika said she hadn't see it so I pulled up a picture and she goes yea, I know what that is.
>
> Gregory: That shell, I said that shell looking building. And you know I didn't make it hoity toity, oh it's the [name of building], y'know? I didn't want it to be not approachable or not inclusive. So I tried to I tried to say it where, it's right in your neighborhood, it's right down the street from your school.

Miss Gregory was negotiating a perceived dissonance between what the Network

benchmarks required of her and what the school level observation was looking for. She

interpreted the Network benchmarks to be focused on "community awareness" and student

engagement as "engaged into your community." These were also related to her goals to

provide a humanizing, joy-centered narrative of the city to her students. She detailed all the

ways she focused on community awareness and engagement with the community: discussing

the local businesses that sponsor the performing arts center and orchestra, where it is,

connecting it to the students' geographic community, and presenting information for students

to be "enculturated" rather than feel the building is "hoity toity," "not approachable," or "not inclusive."

Miss Gregory then brought up another concern about the evaluation, "Hot Topics, I mean, I did Hot Topics. Isn't that something, too?" Hot Topics is a regularly occurring lesson segment where students announce "what's hot" in local, national, or global music news. That lesson, one student gave a summary of a recent concert at a venue less than a mile from the school and announced who would be performing there that weekend. Another student mentioned a rapper whose new album was about to drop. The lesson then transitioned into the focus on the local symphony. As Miss Gregory continued to analyze her lower evaluation score, she interpreted the meaning:

> Gregory: Yea, they [students] get excited about that [Hot Topics]. And that engages them. That's why I'm saying, I don't know why? It's always, evaluations are always subjective. What can you say? But I said okay, let me do Hot Topics, and most of them were singing. I mean what else is a music teacher going to do. [laughter]...It wasn't maybe as stellar as my Carnival of the Animals, she liked that. But that was a designed activity, that wasn't just a regularly available, it took me awhile to think through that.
>
> Panther: You do think deeply about your teaching, so it takes time to develop.
>
> Gregory: So yea, my class on a scale of 7, I kind of dropped here with the [unintelligible] 'demonstrates knowledge for the use of academic and disciplinary language and facilitates students accurate use of academic and disciplinary language' well see, I didn't really do a lot of that, I can understand how she feels about it. I wasn't really doing a lot of language learning by just telling them an instrument and counting them up
>
> Panther: You were using the disciplinary language but the students weren't really using it.
>
> Gregory: No, I was using it but they weren't using it, and that was the point to have the student have an accurate use of the language. And that wasn't my point, that wasn't my objective. (Gregory, December 6, 2017)

Miss Gregory thoughtfully considered Mrs. Clonard's feedback across observations, trying to understand her ratings and consider how she could improve her instruction, specifically what counts as student engagement and what the administration requires of vocabulary instruction.

> In January, I met with Miss Gregory and she discussed her most recent observation.

> So now it's how good is your, is your lesson plan addressing literacy. I really think that's what it is, so they've [administrators] melted it down to one thing, that if your class doesn't meet those standards of literacy than you may not have a high score...So, you are kind of backed into a system that you have to follow to teach the concepts. (Gregory, January 2, 2018)

In this excerpt, Miss Gregory explained a perceived shift in teacher evaluation for the current school; namely the evaluation system has "melted down to one thing...standards of literacy." Miss Gregory expressed concern with how the teacher evaluation system defines effective literacy instruction: "the model is you tell the students about your vocabulary, and also ask them questions about the topic, ...time to teach the concept and ...do an assessment, did they understand what they were to learn?" Based on the teacher evaluation material's own description, the format of the prescriptive framework was focused on developing instruction that would lead to student growth on standardized measures; thus this priority was communicated through the feedback options. Miss Gregory was receiving repetitive messages from the increased teacher observations to focus on vocabulary.

Miss Gregory was struggling with the expectations and began to negotiate them within her curricularizing. She revised an upcoming Beethoven unit to better support literacy following the system of (a) teaching vocabulary, (b) asking students questions about vocabulary, and (c) teaching about a concept or assessing vocabulary knowledge. First, she introduced vocabulary on the board for the classical music unit and lectured on the words' meanings. Then, Miss Gregory provided students with a word search so they could

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"preview" the words before additional instruction in the unit when the new semester began in January (Gregory, December 6, 2017). When she began the unit, she first taught the concept or topic by requiring students to watch the movie *Beethoven Lives Upstairs* and complete a worksheet to maintain engagement during the movie, something she learned from her highly evaluated *The Carnival of the Animals* lesson. In previous years, she used a multiple-choice test to assess students' comprehension of the movie. This year, she is adding an essay section to the test to increase students' writing and give students the opportunity to apply the new vocabulary. The unit followed the prescriptive pattern that Miss Gregory had internalized the administrators required: (a) she taught vocabulary via lecture, (b) asked questions about the vocabulary via worksheets, (c) taught the topic with a video and worksheet, and (d) assessed via a written test. While negotiating the instructional changes to meet teacher evaluation standards, Miss Gregory still maintained a humanizing focus within the essay.

"Look at this one," she said, "you'll see, this is the one I'm most proud of. You can have a copy of this. And you'll see all kinds of stuff that are therapeutic questions, but they have to do literacy writing answers," I looked over the questions:

1. Did Beethoven's great talent or his anger at the loss of his hearing justify his disrespectful actions toward others?

2. Why was Cristoph resentful of Beethoven's presence in the household at the beginning of the film? How did this change?

3. How did Cristoph deal with the grief over his father's death?

4. Can young people have good friendships with adults? Do you have such friendships?

5. Did Beethoven's great talent impose any special responsibilities upon him? Did he fulfill those responsibilities?

6. Evaluate and give examples of Beethoven's conduct in relation to the concept of caring.

The questions direct attention to themes such as disrespect, resentfulness, grief, friendship, responsibilities, and caring. Freire (1998) wrote, "I feel it is necessary to overcome the false separation between serious teaching and the expression of feeling," contending there is a place for expressing emotions and feelings (p. 125). He continues:

> What is important in teaching is not the mechanical repetition of this or that gesture but a comprehension of the value of sentiments, emotions, and desires. Of the insecurity that can only be overcome by inspiring confidence. Of the fear that can only be abated to the degree that courage takes its place. (p.125)

Miss Gregory was asked to include aspects of literacy instruction into her curricularizing that she did not fully agree with. She was concerned the overemphasis on vocabulary, or "mechanical repetition of this or that" (Freire, 1998, p. 125). However, she viewed the increased focus on vocabulary, reading, and writing as an opportunity to draw from her background and expertise as a music therapist to design instruction focused on therapeutic goals. In a society where Miss Gregory's students are misrepresented (Delpit, 2006), their stories left incomplete and damage-centered (Tuck, 2009), there is a place for discussion of sentiment, emotion, and desire in dialogue that works towards "inspiring confidence" (Freire, 1998, p.125). The essay test was a new way to meet school teacher evaluation expectations while not compromising her own goals. She explained the purpose:

> Everything that I do, even when I go to Beethoven I've got this goal of how Beethoven overcame his his his handicap. So when they learn about Beethoven in my class they've got to think...he became deaf. He still wrote. He didn't let anything stop him. And look at all of him. He wasn't just deaf, he's remembered for his music, for something beautiful. (Gregory, January 2, 2018)

Her purpose within the essay test was to notice Beethoven "overcame his handicap" but not to focus on the one aspect or way to define him, instead to consider how he is ultimately remembered.

The teacher evaluation process had shifted Miss Gregory's curricularizing to increasingly include instructional practices she did not always agree with or care for; however she remained confident in Juan Diego High School and its leadership. She explained,

> You've got to be a team player, you've got to work with other people, you're looking at your population, you have to everybody has to be, everyone here is for the education of the children. That's the general goal, you hope everyone here is for the general education and good of the child. (Gregory, December 12, 2017)

She trusts that the school is filled with people who have the same goal and may have different ideas on how to get there. The teacher evaluation system along with the Network benchmarks and Lexiles are all standardized tools to aid in the greater goal of "the general education and good of the child" when adapted and negotiated within larger goals.

CSP critiques widespread pedagogical approaches in American schools that focus on "'achievement' and 'opportunity' 'gaps,' and on cultivating discrete, 'high-leverage' practices and teacher skill sets that will lead to remarkable academic growth," naming each model a replication of colonial systems (Domínguez, 2017, p. 230). In our early conversations, Miss Gregory stated she would not focus on reading or writing strategy instruction, "Unless someone came in and said it had to be a certain way. No one's done that yet." By December, the teacher evaluation system had. The push for standardization in teacher evaluation was rooted in good intentions: the administrators wanted to increase the amount of feedback they provided teachers and make their time in classrooms more

meaningful and focused. While the administrators and Miss Gregory both view the purpose

of schooling as more expansive than achievement test growth alone, the teacher evaluation

system stated it as an explicit and primary purpose.

In early observations and an interview with Miss Gregory, I identified her as a highly

effective educator because she demonstrated the potential to produce outcomes that cannot be

measured by standardized achievement alone. During the three months I collaborated with

Miss Gregory, she increasingly spent time wrestling to make sense of the Network

benchmarks, the use of Lexiles and achievement data, and puzzle over feedback from the

teacher evaluation system while balancing her desire to be a "team player." The

standardization moves were necessary for the school: they presented opportunities for

membership with a national network, funding from grants and local foundations, and a

potential to provide more substantive feedback to teachers. Miss Gregory initially stated the

goal of her course and curriculum was, "students will use a humanistic approach to define the

role of music in a global environment" (Music Appreciation Syllabus, 2017-2018) or

"function within your little community and your world" (Gregory, December 12, 2017). This

aligns with CSP which developed against the reality of changing demographics globally,

nationally, and locally within schools and its central tenet focused on preparing students for

participation and agency within their own communities (Lee & McCarty, 2017; Paris &

Alim, 2014). Additionally, the humanizing goals within Miss Gregory's course remained in

place as other aspects shifted; her curricularizing challenged damage-centered narratives of

the students at Juan Diego and through music offered a place for negotiating emotions and

seeing stories of their culture that bought joy (Freire, 1998, 2000; Tuck, 2009; Wong & Peña,

2017). With these purposes driving her curricularizing, the teacher evaluation system

provided a challenge with its alternative goals; however, Miss Gregory negotiated this challenge by prioritizing her own humanizing goals.

Culturally Sustaining Curricularizing Is Uncertain Work

The second finding is teachers understand culturally sustaining curricularizing as uncertain work. Paris and Winn (2013) "conceptualize humanizing approaches as those that involve the building of relationships of care and dignity and dialogic consciousness raising for both researchers and participants" (p. xvi). As I considered research question one—*How does the framework of culturally sustaining pedagogies inform understandings of effective literacy instruction in a religious high school?*—I sought out ways to interpret the humanizing research framework of the study in order to center the voices educators in the answers. Throughout phase three of data collection from week 13 through 24, this meant spending increasing amounts of time with Cecilia Gregory and Alex Jerome in sustained dialogue. During conversations both women displayed vulnerable reflexivity about their work and both its joys and disappointments as they tried to balance the demands of the school, needs of the students, and their own needs as humans. Through listening, speaking, and trust sustained over time, stories emerged that contextualized their curricularizing of culturally sustaining pedagogies. I describe here the findings and related to data that captured the many nuances of working with youth. Through the framework of culturally sustaining pedagogies, Miss Gregory and Miss Jerome communicate (a) the work is often uncertain and (b) curricularizing occurs on the margins making the work lonely. Similar to the previous finding, I highlight Miss Jerome's voice in the first sub-finding and Miss Gregory in the second to maintain the context and keep the storying threads metaphorically untangled (Kinloch & San Pedro, 2014).

Culturally Sustaining Curricularizing Is Uncertain

As explored in the previous finding, Miss Jerome used her own agency to negotiate the tensions between supporting her school's needs and curricularizing to sustain her students' cultures and humanity. She also regularly builds space for students to develop their own agency within her curriculum, a long process that takes time and practice. Curricularizing means constant negotiation of different tensions and adapting to meet student needs; the constancy of the work leaves Miss Jerome feeling uncertain about her own efficacy as an educator. In one example, Miss Jerome had recently completed a lesson where students worked on a short writing assignment to define archetype in their own words and explained examples of three different archetypes from texts that were reviewed in class, or from their own lives and experiences. After the lesson, Miss Jerome expressed frustration:

Panther:	How ya doin?
Jerome:	All right. Just [sigh] trying to get them to put things in their own words instead of just using mine.
Panther:	How so? Or, what are you seeing?
Jerome:	So, the notes that I gave them, the definition of archetype? And we went over it in class and they still want me to say it, and as I was talking I could hear [motions typing on a computer]. Yea, I'm like no, I want it in your own words, how would you define it.

Miss Jerome describes several students in particular that struggled with different pieces of the assignment and making them their own. For this assignment, she decided to give the students a writing structure or outline to work from so their focus would be on the central purpose of the assignment: creating definitions and examples that were from their own perspectives and voices. She then returns to the idea of student voice:

| Jerome: | I feel like, once we got past that [the writing structure], they were able to, at least when we talk as a whole class, the three patterns we talked about for finding a predator archetype, what are the three patterns for a Faustian archetype? They were able to tell me those. Most of them |

were able to give me examples. We   shared a lot in class. But not everyone felt as comfortable with defining the words in their own words. They're finding it difficult to use their own voice. I tell them, just use your natural voice. Try to elevate it just a touch but be you.

Panther: I had that conversation with Claire when she was writing her biography. Every time she would start it she'd be like, this just sounds stupid. And we would read it, and you could tell it just wasn't her. Claire has a very obvious personality and style and way of speaking. So, I said why don't you just tell me the story of this person. And she's like, 'well the first thing you need to know about this guy is he cheats at Bingo!' And I was like, I think that would be an amazing opening!

Jerome: I tell that to kids all the time! I have the kids tell me, what is it you're trying to say? Just tell me what it is you're trying to say. And when they tell me in their own words, I'm like write that. They don't trust their own voice...they doubt their own voice sometimes. (February 7, 2018)

Irvine (2002) discusses the complexity of teaching:

teachers are thinkers and decisions makers who have a deep, thorough understanding of their content as well as a repertoire of teaching skills from which they choose and match these skills and content knowledge to classroom behaviors, situations, students, and curricula. (p. 49)

Miss Jerome is constantly making moment to moment decisions to match her content and pedagogy to classroom behaviors, situations, students, and curricular demands. To be an effective educator, Miss Jerome is thinking deeply and making decisions at a rapid pace; in brief breaks between class periods she is analyzing her decisions and battling uncertainty about its efficaciousness. As she turns to me, Miss Jerome is looking for confirmation that her decisions are effective or ineffective. However, effective and ineffective practices "depend on an ever changing set of circumstances that teachers face everyday" (Irvine, 2002, p. 50). Curricularizing through the CSP framework requires uncertainty; a lesson plan is a best attempt to anticipate the interests and needs of students and balance them with the requirements of policy and curriculum. Miss Jerome's experiences are similar to Ms.

Sanchez, a Latina educator in a low income community who taught predominantly Black and Latinx third grade students. In a case study examining her culturally relevant instruction after the adoption of a standardized curriculum, the researchers determined Ms. Sanchez constantly "negotiated tensions between fidelity to the curriculum and adaptations to her local context" because "While she agreed with the objectives of the [prescribed] lesson, she drew on her own pedagogical content knowledge to layer on more effective strategies to meet those objectives" (Maniates & Mahiri, 2011, p. 11). The complexity of the adaptations and consistency in revisions were exhausting work, but Ms. Sanchez persisted because she believed, "Instructional materials are one of many tools used to communicate and enforce policy initiatives" and would not allow uninterrogated curriculum or pedagogies into her classroom (Maniates & Mahiri, 2011, p. 19).

Interrupting uncertainty with whiteness. Miss Jerome worked to make her classroom a place where students feel safe to express their ideas in their voice, to build their agency so they can help critique and construct the academic discipline; these findings are explored in more detail in Chapter 5. In this finding, I consider the context surrounding uncertainty that emerged as a strand of the storying during the liminal conversations Miss Jerome and I shared between class periods (Kinloch & San Pedro, 2014, 2017). Nearly every recorded conversation Miss Jerome and I shared after the completion of a lesson began in a similar way: either I ask, "How was the lesson?," "What did you think?" or, like the previous excerpt, "How are you doing?". Similarly, Miss Jerome also began "What did you think?" "Do you have advice?" or "I don't know about that one." Miss Jerome was consistently seeking out feedback on her instruction. During the first several weeks of observation my reply was almost mechanically, "you first." I was intentionally positioning myself as Brown

(2014) describes, a "researcher as student" where my primary goal was to learn from Miss

Jerome. However, during one post lesson conversation during phrase three of data collection,

my role dramatically shifted. "I'm just not very good at it [classroom management]," Miss

Jerome said with irritation after a lesson where students had been talking with volume and

frequency that left her uncertain if she had met her instructional goals. I was internally aghast

because I had personally found it an engaging and revelatory lesson. Rather than ask a follow

up question such as, "What do you mean?" or "How so?" I broke the routine. I pulled out my

field notes and read them to her with added interpretation and commentary:

> There's definitely some off task behaviors and some side conversations, but there was
> one moment, okay, yea, so you made the comment [reading from field notes] 'don't
> write the speaker talked about a lot of stuff' and there was an eruption of sound after
> you said that...but I wrote down all the things they were saying and it was like 'yea,
> don't write the word stuff, why would you write the word stuff?' and 'that's what I'm
> going to be writing!' and then like other students were trying to outdo with terrible
> comments to write that are vague, but that demonstrates their knowledge of what's
> appropriate and inappropriate. So, there's all these social conversations, but I'm like,
> this is learning conversations. Then later when you were pointing out the race, they
> had amazing comments and they were really focused on Eve they said some really
> cool things. Someone said, 'well maybe Eve was just hungry.' and you made the
> comment, 'I'm sure there was other fruit available' and then these two groups of girls
> [motioning to the desks] that, yes they're very chatty, but they were like, someone
> said, 'why didn't Adam, he was with her, why didn't he just take it away? and they're
> like, 'a man can't just take it away from you, you have to choose it' and so having
> these feminist conversations and then they were talking about how um, 'they white!'
> [referring to images of Eve, Little Red Riding Hood, and several Hollywood actress
> who accused Harvey Weinstein of sexual assault] but then they kept going on, 'they
> got dark hair. They got freckles.' then someone muttered, 'They ugly.' and she's like
> 'mmhmm' [affirming noise] so they're trying to rewrite the story, what's beautiful?
> So a lot of really cool things. And then when you made the comment 'When women
> are depicted as vulnerable, they're often depicted as white' and another student
> muttered, 'and innocent' and another student right next to her goes, 'ha!'. And then
> this girl, just made me laugh, they were eyeing the picture of Eve and said, 'They the
> reason we got periods, that ho right there.' (Jerome, January 8, 2018)

The long, sometimes rambling notes I shared imperfectly captured the conversations that

were happening in the class throughout instruction. Students who were countering the

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narratives of young, white, female victims as vulnerable, innocent, and beautiful. Students

who were taking Miss Jerome's main point—to use specific examples and avoid vague

language in peer feedback—and proving their knowledge by outdoing each other with more

elaborate non-examples. Students who did this were making connections, sharing knowledge,

and learning from each other by intentionally creating counterscripts to negotiate new and

difficult concepts (Gutiérrez, 2008; Gutiérrez et al., 1999). Miss Jerome paused, "See I don't

get the chance to hear. All I hear is chatter and I'm like, [overwhelmed sound] let's go back."

She thinks for a moment and continues:

> Jerome: [laughing] Okay. Okay. I guess they're, they are on task. I wish I had someone, I loved being in the classroom with two adult bodies just because of that reason, because I don't hear that, I just hear chatter and my first thought is they're off task or they're not paying attention so I try to regroup or redirect their focus or please stop this exact behavior but maybe I don't need to because they're having good conversations. That's actually really encouraging, thank you. (Jerome, January 8, 2018)

This conversation represents a turn; in my desire to recognize Miss Jerome's uncertainty, I

began to talk her out of the uncertainty. However, teaching is uncertain work (McDonald,

1992) with no quick fixes (Alim & Paris, 2017; Domínguez, 2017; Lewis et al., 2007).

Rather, I was exerting whiteness by disrupting the focus on Miss Jerome's experiences,

emotions, and interpretations of the curriculum and recentering my own (Leonardo, 2013).

Within the space as a white educational researcher, there was an unequal balance of power

that I did not acknowledge or recognize as I offered my interpretations (Souto-Manning &

Winn, 2017).

The pattern in our dialogue shifted to reflect the new imbalance. Later that month,

Miss Jerome described some of the ways she's required to incorporate Lexiles into her

instruction, such as limiting student access to text based on Lexile and regularly review

students' scores on the SRI.

> Jerome: I'm not totally happy with [Lexiles] but I do it.
> Panther: I think I'm angrier than you are, honestly.
> Jerome: I think you have more information than I do...I feel like I need more knowledge so I can understand more what I need to do. So, I think that's why you said you feel angry and I don't, because there's a gap in knowledge that, my ignorance is preventing me from being angry. I guess that's a delicate way of saying it.
> Panther: I'm going to need to chew on that line, my ignorance is preventing me from being angry.
> Jerome: Yea. That happens in all walks of life. I mean if you don't know that there's this other achievable thing that you can do, but you've been doing this one thing for so long. If you don't know I can do that and why am I not doing that, then you're just like okay, this is great, I'm running the treadmill and I'm doing a good job of running the treadmill you pat yourself on the back for running the treadmill when you should be climbing the mountain and you're not because you didn't know it was something you could do. (Jerome, January 27, 2018)

I expressed my strong emotions about the way the school wide focus on Lexile had changed

and shaped Miss Jerome's instruction even as she was unsure about the meaningfulness of

the data Lexiles provided. As I expressed my anger, she explained her own thinking. Namely,

that she had been doing Lexiles for so long and had not seen, heard, read, or experienced

other ways of teaching or conceptualizing literacy growth, therefore she did not know enough

to be upset.

All listening is raced (Sassi & Thomas, 2012, p. 839). Within this exchange, I was not

listening to the nuance of the school site and the complexity of teaching, but rather was

listening through a damage-centered framework (Tuck, 2009). I expressed anger at the

emphasis on Lexiles from the position of a privileged outsider with access to knowledge and

experiences surrounding literacy assessments and took on the positionality of a white savior,

proselytizing efficacious literacy practices and distaining the complexity of the lived

experiences within Juan Diego (Utt & Tochluk, 2016). This foreclosed my ability to hear

Miss Jerome's uncertainty and instead I centered my own emotional and intellectual

reactions. Souto-Manning and Winn (2017) call for: "Suspending judgment and learning

from the resourcefulness and brilliance of communities and individuals minoritized by

societal norms" within educational research (p. xii). Indeed, within this exchange Miss

Jerome humbly, reflexively, and brilliantly allowed me the space to be angry, even as I did

not allow her the space to be uncertain.

Within humanizing methods, the analysis of my own responses as a researcher within

conversation revealed the ways I reinforced whiteness in my response to Miss Jerome's

uncertainty. Miss Jerome's uncertainty was a natural response to the complexity of teaching

and a hallmark of a reflexive educator. The moments between class periods created a liminal

space, or borderland, where transformation of herself, her teaching, and her understanding of

the two were in flux (Anzaldúa, 1987). Gee (1999) describes a borderland discourse that

places "personal subjectivities or ideologies" in conversation with the demands of a

developing professional self. Britzman (1994) describes this as, "the site of the struggle, a

place where the real is constructed, truth is produced, and power is effectuated" (p. 56). The

moments of uncertainty were where Miss Jerome was wrestling with her goals for students,

aspirational goals to become the teacher she wanted to be, and made sense of these goals in

light of a complicated, nuanced daily lived reality. Alsup's (2006) work with preservice

teachers found the borderlands were places educators negotiated tensions often resulting in

increased feelings of power and efficacy as an educator. Disrupting Miss Jerome's

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borderland discourse—even under the guide of helpfulness or encouragement—was

colonizing her agency and identity with whiteness.

Culturally Sustaining Curricularizing in the Margins

> Living in a multicultural society, we cross into each other's worlds all the time. We live in each other's pockets, occupy each other's territories, live in close proximity and in intimacy with each other at home, in school, at work. We are mutually complicitous—us and them, white and colored, straight and queer, Christian and Jew, self and Other, oppressor and oppressed. We all of us find ourselves in the position of being simultaneously insider/outsider. (Anzaldúa, 2000, p. 249)

Miss Jerome and Miss Gregory both communicate similar understandings of

curricularizing at Juan Diego High School, but in parallel conversations on separate floors of

the stone building. As members of different grade-level teams and different departments

there are few opportunities for the educators to spend intentional time together—this is not

odd, because the job of an educator at Juan Diego High School is a daunting one. The days

are long—from 7:15 am until the ninth hour bell at 3:45 p.m.—teachers are required to stay

late at least one night a week until the final bus leaves between 5:00 and 5:15 pm. Most

educators stay late multiple nights to oversee clubs, coach sports, and offer additional

tutoring. Hence, despite a desire to collaborate, both Miss Jerome and Miss Gregory

complete their work in the margins.

> Miss Gregory recalls trying to collaborate with other educators

> I've tried a long time ago, I had talked about partnering and working with other teachers and doing stuff that would be music and history, and music and math, and they [history and math teachers] don't want to do that...I was willing to give the history teacher some information that would go into what they're doing, but everyone kind of wants to work in their own world at their own pace and I said okay. (Gregory, December 5, 2017)

In her three years at Juan Diego, Miss Gregory recalls offering to collaborate with three

different educators. Here, she references a history and math teacher. In other conversations

she discusses a science lesson she proposed:

> All of music is vibration. How else are you going to make sound? So I had this lesson idea to partner with science, do a little experiment with vibration, sound tone, and maybe even, I saw this one, where the students make instruments? Well, [the teacher] didn't want none of that. And I get it. We're all busy. (Gregory, December 3, 2017)

The pattern remained consistent: Miss Gregory would express a desire to collaborate, an idea

she tried to share with staff or administration, and when it did not come to fruition, Miss

Gregory would admit "everyone kind of wants to work in their own world," or "we're all

busy." I asked her if she would prefer more collaboration, whether through school

infrastructure or informally, and she explained she would but:

> In the teachers' defense...The busy-ness of what everybody has to do. Sometimes there's a lack of opportunity to get together and actually talk through this and because we all have so many things thrown at us that we have to do this, and we have to do that. I mean we have team meetings every week, but we don't always get into the nitty gritty of it. We're barely scraping the surface, but we don't get down deep cleaning of stuff. I think it's because we don't have time. We know we only have about 30 minutes in this meeting and you have to cover so much stuff...You have to trust that everybody in their department knows what they're doing. But I guess I feel that I'm not always privy to knowing how to improve what I'm doing based on what they're doing. (Gregory, January 27, 2018)

Miss Gregory reiterates her understanding of busy schedules, packed meetings, and trust that

what is important is still happening within the school, but ends, "I feel that I'm not always

privy to knowing how to improve what I'm doing." Miss Gregory is left to complete her

curricularizing in the margins.

Miss Gregory is able to see and name ways her voice and identity have been placed in

the margins. She recalls fighting patriarchy within the Christian church as she fought for

previous job and her concern with patriarchy during her attendance at a Black Muslim

meeting that was supposed to be about Black empowerment. She also explicitly names how

marginalization occurs within her own work at Juan Diego. She shared a critical incident

(Kosnick, 2001) that occurred in September during my second week at the school site. Two

students engaged in a physical altercation. Violence was a rare exception at the school and an

uncommon experience that shook the staff and students. Miss Gregory was upset because she

had made several comments to administration prior to the altercation:

> I told [a supervisor] you know sometimes people don't see you for who you are. I
> said when I see things in kids, I have 20 years of psychiatric experience. I was on a
> closed ward. I know what it's like to be with, and write up reports on people with
> behavioral disorders and I did that for 20 years as a certified therapist. When I see
> stuff and say stuff, I'm not joking when I see it. I'm not here to diagnose anybody but
> I'm going to tell you what is showing up. (Gregory, January 25, 2018)

Miss Gregory was concerned her warnings were not taken seriously and the incident could

have been avoided. Later than day, Miss Gregory shared another memory that had occurred

the school year prior, "One time the nurse brought in a music therapist for a health aid, one of

the students from [local university]. I looked, I just sat there and watched her, didn't say

anything. And I tried to say a few things to her [the nurse] but she didn't get it" (Gregory,

January 25, 2018). Miss Gregory was uncertain if the nurse was aware that she, herself, was a

licensed and trained music therapist—she chose to believe it was an oversight and not an

intentional slight, but the moment stuck with her.

      These vignettes remained with me, also in the margins of my field notes and memos

with question marks. In January the separate conversations wove together into a more

complete story. I learned that the junior class was planning a service day trip to visit

retirement communities based loosely on the work of a music therapist and captured in the

documentary *Alive Inside* by Dan Cohen. I asked Miss Gregory if she had heard about the

trip since her background was in music therapy. After a long uncharacteristic silence, I asked,

Panther:	Did I upset you?
Gregory:	No, no. I'm just amazed they're doing music therapy and didn't say boo to me. But I'm not surprised. You know what? A lot of things are going on in this world right now and I just have no control over it. And race is a whole lot to do with it. And I hate to throw it up all the time, but it really is.
Panther:	You're talking about race within the school? Or country?
Gregory:	No, the way people look at you and credit, feel like you are what they say, worth it? And it's just like, they see you and don't see you.
Panther:	Ageism, too, I'm wondering.
Gregory:	That's true, age has something to do with it. I'm old now, but I just, both. Both. So I've got three things going on, I'm female, I'm old, and I'm Black. [laughing] I can laugh about it but, at first I would just say I'm Black and female. Now I'm old! [laughter]
Gregory:	But yea, yea, but I've got one more -ism on me that makes people say oh she doesn't. But that's okay. But a lot of people around here don't value what people know and that's true. You can tell them something and they don't want to hear because they don't think they need it. They think they know. (Gregory, January 25, 2018)

Miss Gregory names three barriers she daily faces in overt and covert ways: racism,

sexism, and ageism. Through the vignettes and this interaction, she named the structures that

have placed her in the school's margins.

Critical Race Theory (CRT) scholars point to the intersections of marginalization

across people groups and the dominance of race within those hybrid identities (Bell, 1992;

Yosso, 2005). Crenshaw (1989, 1993) in particularly discusses the intersectionality of Black

and female identities within American society to describe, "where power comes and collides,

where it interlocks and intersects" (2017, para. 4). Miss Gregory discusses how the

intersecting identities have placed her on the margins within societies' eyes and at times

within Juan Diego High School. Miss Gregory had a wealth of experiential knowledge to

support interdisciplinary instructional planning, identifying students that may need emotional and therapeutic intervention, and expertise to oversee a school service trip where students would be drawing from music therapy. CRT calls for the valuing of valuing of lived experiences of people of Color (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001), and Miss Gregory felt unvalued when her attempts to support the school and students were ignored and silenced and when her expertise was not called on as a guest speaker or supervisor in various school activities directly related to her knowledge.

Miss Gregory resists characterizing each of these incidents as stemming from individual racist or malicious actions. "They just don't know what they're doing," she reasons, "They're in their own little world and I'm in mine" (Gregory, January 25, 2018). The silencing and ignoring of people of Color is akin to camouflage, an attempt to uphold privilege and white supremacy by not having to see or hear anything that would challenge whiteness (Ladson-Billings, 2000). Miss Gregory's comments that "they are in their own little world" reflect the cocoon of unacknowledged whiteness that is difficult to see as long as the individual draws advantage from it (Leonardo, 2013; Milner, 2010). Rather, she sets up what at first appears to be a near binary: "they're in their own little world and I'm in mine." Two days later, I asked Miss Gregory to elaborate:

> I don't know...I have to acknowledge that sometimes I'm in my own world and I am what I am and I do what I do. But if somebody comes in and sees what I do, they have a different perspective. And I'm not going to knock your perspective because you saw it. (Gregory, January 27, 2018)

Miss Gregory offers not a binary, but what Anzaldúa (2000) would term nos-ostras:

> I write the word with a slash between nos (us) and otras (others). Today the division between the majority of 'us' and 'them' is still intact. This country [America] does not want to acknowledge its walls or limits, the places some people are stopped or stop themselves, the lines they aren't allowed to cross. …[But] the future belongs to

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those who cultivate cultural sensitivities to differences and who use these abilities to forge a hybrid consciousness that transcends the 'us' vs. 'them' mentality and will carry us into a nosotras position bridging the extremes of our cultural realities. (p. 249)

In the opening quote, Anzaldúa (2000) recognizes that in a multicultural society, the concept of a binary or dichotomy of insider and outsider is false; the hybridity and futility of identities is too complex to be entirely one or the other moving across time and spaces. Even as the dash creates a barrier that separates, it is also bridge with the potential to connect:

Joined together, nos + otras holds the promise of healing: We contain the others, the others contain us...they function dialogically, generating previously unrecognized commonalities and connections ...Drawing "us" and "them" closer together. (Keating, 2006, p. 10)

Miss Gregory recognizes the differences that mark her "nos" with some educators and students and "ostras" with others; she also names the barriers contained within the dash: racism, sexism, and ageism. However, the barriers are not the whole, complete story but part of the struggle and opportunity to connect, to become nos+ostras.

Miss Gregory elaborates:

Gregory: And I'm working hard to do my part but I don't know if anyone else really worries about that. About   working harder. I really can't make a judgement call on it, but I get embarrassed by it [student and school scores].
Panther: That's appropriate. You want more. You want more for the students.
Gregory: Yea, and I want more for the school. But y'know. (Gregory, January 27, 2018)

Miss Gregory expresses her concern over the school's overall poor performance compared to other schools in the Juan Diego Network and the in the city's metropolitan region but refrains from "making a judgement call" on the motivation of other educations; instead focuses on "working hard to do my part" because she wants "more for the school." Her comments align with Gándara's (1982, 1995) idea of aspirational capital or

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the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers. This resiliency is evidenced in those who allow themselves and their children to dream of possibilities beyond their present circumstances, often without the objective means to attain those goals. (Yosso, 2005, p. 78)

Miss Gregory admits she doesn't always know how to meet the goals of the school and Network, or best support her students, but wants more for her students and the school and maintains those "hopes and dreams for the future" even as she faces "real and perceived barriers" within Juan Diego and American society. It is the aspirational capital that provides her hope to remain at Juan Diego and work towards the something more. As Hernández and Anzaldúa (1995) discuss in an interview, the borderland where nos-otras becomes nos+ostras is an exciting place to be, "it is living in the midst of culture in the making. It is a very creative space to be in, one where innovative art and theory on the cutting edge is being constructed" (p. 10). While Miss Gregory curricularizes on the margins and faces barriers that sometimes ignore and silence her agency, she leverages her aspirational capital to view Juan Diego as an exciting, creative place to be.

Conclusion

Within this chapter I considered the research question: *How does the framework of culturally sustaining pedagogies inform teachers' understandings of effective literacy instruction in a religious high school?* First, Miss Jerome and Miss Gregory described the tension and dissonance to curricularize culturally sustaining pedagogies within Network and school standardization; however both educators enacted agency to negotiate the prescriptive requirements by understanding Network standards are a starting point, prescribed texts can be adapted and challenged, and teacher evaluation is an opportunity to prioritize goals. In the second finding, Miss Jerome expressed the uncertainty of curricularizing because the

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complexity of culturally sustaining pedagogies means the work is never complete and always in process. This also included a discussion regarding interrupting uncertainty with whiteness and the way white supremacy can colonize listening.

In Chapter 5 I consider the findings and interpretations related to the second research question: *What practices are highly effective urban religious school teachers using to support adolescent students' literacy achievement?* In Chapter 6, I offer implications and recommendations related to the findings.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

In the previous chapter I considered how the framework of culturally sustaining pedagogies informed teachers' understandings of effective literacy instruction in a religious high school. The findings described a school facing increasing pressures to standardize their curricula, assessments, and teacher evaluation; these systems defined literacy achievement in prescribed ways, eroding the administrators' and teachers' agency to define their own valued literacy instructional practices, texts, and goals. I presented the portraits of two highly effective educators at Juan Diego High School, Alex Jerome and Cecilia Gregory, whose curricularizing in the margins demonstrated agency to negotiate, adapt, and teach in culturally sustaining ways even as they understood their work to be uncertain.

In this chapter, I build on the findings from Chapter 5 where Miss Jerome and Miss Gregory were first introduced as highly effective teachers (Table 2) to describe the major findings answering my second research question: *What practices are highly effective urban religious school teachers using to support adolescent students' literacy achievement?* As I more narrowly focus on the implications of the educators' understandings of CSP on literacy instructional practices, I invite you deeper into the classrooms of Miss Gregory and Miss Jerome to consider their literacy instructional practices and to meet their students, about 60% of whom identify as Latinx, 45% Black, and between 40-50% of whom speak Spanish. Within this chapter I provide two findings and their sub-findings:

1. Highly effective teachers critically center youth identities and agency in literacy instructional practices

    a. Youth identities are centered in texts and literacy practices

  b. Youth agency is centered and (re)centered

 2. Highly effective teachers connect oppression and historicized content in disciplinary literacy practices

  a. Literacy practices name oppression

  b. Historicized oppression is challenged with disciplinary literacy practices

These findings connect to the key principles of CSP Paris and Alim (2017) highlighted in a recent interview:

 1. A critical centering on dynamic community languages, valued practices, and knowledge, not as marginal or bridges to something better, but as valued in and of themselves

 2. Student and community agency and input; accountability to the local communities and students

 3. Historicized content and instruction that connects present learning to the histories of minoritized communities

 4. A capacity to contend with internalized oppressions by countering deficit messages and white supremacist systems

 5. An ability to curricularize these four features in learning settings (Paris & Alim, 2017).

  The goals of culturally sustaining instruction are rooted in equity and access through critical, emancipatory schooling that prepares students to be active agents in their own lives, communities, and worlds; instruction that equally values hybrid racial, ethnic, and linguistic youth identities that are attacked, marginalized, and erased in traditional school structures (Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2014, 2017).

Critical Centering Youth Identities and Agency in Literacy Practices

Critical centering refers to educators intentionally placing students' languages, literacies, and ways of knowing as pivotal and central pieces of the curriculum. The languages, literacies, and ways of knowing are not additions but forms of community cultural wealth, or forms of aspirational, navigational, social, linguistic, familial, and resistant capital that draw knowledge from students and communities of Color to inform locally based, culturally sustaining instruction (Yosso, 2005). Put another way, the educators do not see

> Students' language (e.g., Navajo, African-American Language, Spanish, 'standard' English), literacies (e.g., Hip Hop, poetry, social media, street art) or ways of knowing (e.g., spiritual beliefs, ways of relating to adults and elders) as somehow marginal or to simply be added to the existing curriculum. Rather, these facets of students' selves and communities must be centered meaningfully in classroom learning, across units and projects (Paris & Alim cited in Ferlazzo, 2017, para. 16).

The first finding highlights ways Miss Jerome and Miss Gregory critically center youth identities and agency in literacy instructional practices not as something "simply to be added to the existing curriculum" but as meaningful and central to teaching and learning. This is accomplished in two key ways: (a) youth identities are centered in texts and literacy practices and (b) youth agency is centered and (re)centered.

Youth Identities Are Centered in Texts and Literacy Practices

Miss Gregory's curriculum is defined and enacted through a cultural lens. She introduces students to the concept of the "cultural matrix" (Gaston, 1968) within their first days each school year:

> Cultural matrix determines the mode of expression. That's the quote of E. Thayer Gaston. That quote has uh, made me make decisions about so many things that I have done in my musical career in education, in church, in anything I do because it helps me identify the person and try to um, assess where they are, where they, where they could be, or how they need to express, what they can express or how they, how they can express, for me to understand where they are even. Just baseline of where they

are. I think expression, or if they come at me with something I don't understand ...that's the cultural part of you that's showing up. You're letting me know. That's your footprint, your fingerprint. You're letting me know what you, what you respond to. (Gregory, October 6, 2017).

The quote is displayed as part of an introductory lesson titled "Music, Culture, and Society" where Gregory introduces music as socially and culturally constructed. She explains throughout the lesson, "Music is a reflection of the society that makes it," "The way music functions in a society is formed," and "Music is a reflection of culture. To understand the music we need to understand the role it plays in that culture." Defining music as socially and culturally constructed embeds Miss Gregory's curricula within a context: music must be explored through the historical and cultural context of her students' communities. Rather than building her curriculum around a Western canon of musicians, Miss Gregory intentionally builds her curriculum around students' linguistic, racial, and ethnic cultures. Miss Gregory integrates images that reflect students' racial and ethnic identities into her instructional materials, and their languages within the musical selections that are played, studied, and sung—each text selected to demonstrate the cultural nature of music. For example, as Miss Gregory moved through a PowerPoint for the Music, Culture, and Society lesson, I noticed a slide with the title, "Music is a Major Way to Express One's Culture and Beliefs." Two images were included: a mariachi band and an African drumming circle.

Panther: So how did you chose these two pictures in particular?
Gregory: I, I knew I, well, I know the population here is African. Are African descent and Latino descent and I tried to put the opposite, those two in particular. I, we do have some Asian and Samoan students, but it's not a large population. So I wanted to do the extreme so I just said okay, mariachi and African drumming ensemble.
Panther: So they're [students] seeing themselves reflected?
Gregory: Yea, they're looking at themselves. They really are looking at themselves because everyone's 'oh!' y'know. And one student said something very interesting, I liked what they said. 'Wow! Everybody's

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colorful!' [loud laughter] And I said, well y'know, you might have, you might be on to something there as those cultures being very colorful. Look at the way they dress. They are colorful cultures! [laughter] They have something in common! Y'know? They're, yea, there's something to think about. (Gregory, October 6, 2017)

Miss Gregory selected images that ensured "they're [students] looking at themselves." Miss Gregory began with students' cultures as a way to gauge their cultural knowledge and learn their preferences. This critical centering was consistent across the texts she selected for her music appreciation course. During an observation, I noticed students' reactions to the Latinx music Miss Gregory chose to play for a lesson: "Students positively respond to music, making connections 'I can't roll my r's like that'. Singing along to La Bamba, dancing to Mambo and Shakira. The excitement of Selena 'She's queen' 'can't be beat'" (Field Notes, October 18, 2017). I asked Miss Gregory what she noticed after the lesson.

Gregory: And it's interesting to see what they pick up, and there seems to be a trend of a lot of them liking Bachata and Reggaetón.
Panther: Yea, I saw a lot of that.
Gregory: Tejano, of course with Selena. They've got all that going on.
Panther: Yea, I would say the Selena song had the most positive reaction.
Gregory: Yea, that was so sad that she's gone.

She noted students' musical preferences carefully, using the information to guide her curricular design for future lessons and to select future music. Her curriculum was informed by the Network benchmarks and her lessons reflected it: students were listening to and responding to music. However, her goals stretched the required standards to center texts that featured students' identities, cultures, and valued knowledge within music.

In another example, Miss Gregory prepared for a unit on musical theater. Examples from the Network curriculum were focused on a canon of classic musicals ranging from *Sound of Music* to *Fiddler on the Roof*. Miss Gregory selected *In the Heights*, a musical by

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Puerto Rican writer and composer Lin-Manuel Miranda set in a predominantly Latinx urban neighborhood. She predicted students would enjoy the use of hip hop, rap, and spoken word on a stage, Spanish language, and expletives. I described students' reactions in my field notes:

> There is engagement with the movie, largely. Laughter, talking back to the movie, humming, clapping when songs are over. One song where a wife calls her husband a "son of a bitch" gets a large laugh. Several Latinx students giggle loudly when Spanish language is used. One student gasps, "they said na na na!" [reference to a Reggaetón song] During a dance scene one student remarks, "We'd better be dancing like that tomorrow night [homecoming]!" (Field Notes, October 6, 2017)

In the above examples, the texts Miss Gregory selected focused on audio, gestural, and visual designs intersecting with linguistic modalities (New London Group, 1996). Students watched the dancers in the song "Carnaval del Barrio" move across space and time, holding flags representing the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Chile, Puerto Rico, and Mexico using their bodies to communicate meaning that the students mirrored rocking back and forth in their seats, perhaps considering how an upcoming homecoming dance might mirror the visual and gestural representations (Leander & Bolt, 2012; Thibaut & Scott Curwood, 2018). Students listened to the audio and linguistic interplay in lines like, "My mom is Dominican-Cuban, My dad is from Chile and P.R. which means I'm Chile-Domini-Curican, but I always say I'm from Queens!" and, "I got café but no con leche." With Usnvi, a supporting character explicitly describing why his own language interwove English and Spanish in a spoken word performance: "Oy, piragüero, como esta?/ Reports of my fame are greatly exaggerated/Exacerbated by the fact that my syntax/Is highly complicated 'cuz I emigrated/From the single greatest little place in the Caribbean/Dominican Republic!/I love it!" The students reacted to the artists and songs that reflected their lived worlds excitedly

whispering over the references to "na na na!," use of Spanish, and mention of their own

ethnic identities. Students saw their identities, past and potential, within the texts.

The critical centering of students' culture from the previous examples were teacher

selected based on Miss Gregory's knowledge of students' ethnic, racial, and linguistic

diversities. Students' preferences shaped curricular choices, but the choices were still made

by Miss Gregory. Yet, students were able to use their heritage language as resources during

these literacy events. During the unit on Latinx music, for example, several Spanish speaking

students corrected Miss Gregory's and several peers' pronunciations so they would say

Tejano (Teh-aun-oh) rather than Tejano (Tah-jan-oh) (Field Notes, October 18, 2017).

Largely, however, Miss Gregory made decisions about what texts to feature in her course

curriculum based on her perceived knowledge of students' ethnic, racial, and linguistic

diversities even when it meant decentering her own preferences or familiar musical

resources:

> I hope when you saw them kind of dancing and feeling good, y'know, that's them
> feeling good about this [Latinx music]. And I listen to, what I played today, I had no
> idea what this stuff was. I'm only thinking, I'm only acting like a music therapist.
> What is their preference? And what is their age group? I'm gonna, y'know, just bank
> on that, but the research that I know exists in that, and apply that and hope it works.
> (Gregory, October 18, 2017)

This remained consistent across several months of observations. Miss Gregory used her

knowledge of students' racial and ethnic cultures, languages, and age group to select

curricular materials and texts and then adapted them based on student preference. In

December during a unit on singing, she began class stating, "Today we're going to review

some terms. [Pointing to her throat] This is our instrument, this is a human being's

instrument, their voice...To produce sound in any instrument you have to create vibration."

Her goal was to get every student involved in singing that day. A survey at the beginning of the semester revealed about 15% of her students had taken a music class in elementary or middle school and about 5% had experience singing in choir, music group, or with their churches. Miss Gregory was concerned that singing was an uncomfortable and unfamiliar practice for the majority of her students, so she made intentional decisions to center her students' identities in the texts she selected to reduce discomfort. She describes the decision:

> And I started out with Feliz Navidad because of the population, the dominant population, at least they can sing maybe it'll be something that they'll know and love. So, I still work with my music therapy background, preferences, what they understand, what they know and work from there. And someone said can you do Rudolph? Okay, Rudolph, I can get a few people engaged with Rudolph. Then I knew they like Mariah Carey, so okay, meet that preference, so more people would join in with that, so I react to their preferences and I am trying to respond to their needs, everybody sing. So, everybody gets involved. (Gregory, December 12, 2017)

In this example, she selected the primary text, "Feliz Navidad" by José Feliciano and Dave Willis, based on her knowledge of students' identities: about 60% of the freshman class identifies as Latinx and between 45-55% of her students in each class period speak Spanish. Miss Gregory adjusted texts throughout the class period based on student preferences as long the songs remained centered on Christmas. This led to "All I Want for Christmas" by Mariah Carey, "Santa Tell Me" by Ariana Grande, and ended with a raucous "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" by Johnny Marks. Ultimately, and much to the chagrin of the teacher who shares a wall with Miss Gregory, every student was singing—loudly—by the end of the class period.

Miss Jerome's classroom also centers students' diverse identities within her curriculum and texts, though slightly differently that Miss Gregory. While she also reflects the racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of the students within her classroom materials, Miss

Jerome also considers the missing identities. Miss Jerome noticed when she first arrived at

Juan Diego High School that access to traditional print books was limited. There was no

school library, so print texts were limited to two small carts in a hallway and teachers'

classrooms. Evaluating the books that students had access to, she was concerned that many

were dated and focused on white, predominantly male protagonists. She transformed an

entire wall in her classroom into a library created largely out of her own pocket to create

access to print texts that reflected the myriad of identities at the school. Part of that focus was

representation of the LGBT community, "to make LGBT identities just a normal thing within

the school." This decision carried risk within the private Catholic school. According to a

1982 Supreme Court ruling, public school libraries cannot have a book removed simply

because an educator or administrator dislikes it (Cart & Jenkins, 2006). Juan Diego High

School is a Catholic school and the statute does not apply; thus Miss Jerome is aware the

inclusion of texts with gender or sexual orientations are at risk of removal. Specifically,

because they contradict the official teaching of the Roman Catholic church. The United

States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) offers the following regarding the Catholic

teachings regarding sexuality:

> The [Roman Catholic] Church teaches that persons with a homosexual inclination
> "must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity." We recognize that these
> persons have been, and often continue to be, objects of scorn, hatred, and even
> violence in some sectors of our society (USCCB, 2006, para. 2); Any sexual act that
> takes place outside the bond of marriage does not fulfill the proper ends of human
> sexuality (USCCB, 2006, para. 6); While the Church teaches that homosexual acts are
> immoral, she [the Church] does distinguish between engaging in homosexual acts and
> having a homosexual inclination. While the former is always objectively sinful, the
> latter is not. (USCCB, 2006, para. 11)

In sum, that a "homosexual inclination" is not sinful, "homosexual acts" are "always

objectively sinful," though a person identifying as lesbian or gay "must be accepted with

respect, compassion, and sensitivity." Several of the books Miss Jerome included contain material that would be considered "always objectively sinful" under Roman Catholic church teaching, such as *Boy Meets Boy* by David Levithan and *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe* by Benjamin Alire Sáenz.

The official teachings translate into more nuanced practice within urban Catholic school sites. For example, Bayly (2007) describes a pivotal moment in 1995 when the Minneapolis-St. Paul Catholic Diocese was approached by concerned counselors, educators, families, and students who wanted to create a supportive school environment for youth who identified as LGBTQ. The Diocese supported the creation of a grassroots organization that included student voices and ultimately led to guidelines and training for the staff, faculty, and students within Diocese schools. After several years of work, trainings became a part of the Diocesan schools and resources were made available throughout the English speaking Roman Catholic church for other schools to adapt and adopt (Bayly, 2007). Despite official programs and trainings, however, students identifying as LGBTQ still face marginalization within Catholic schools. Love and Tosolt (2013) studied the experiences of three students identifying as bisexual and lesbian at an all-girls Catholic high school. While the school officially held to an anti-homophobic, inclusive message, the three youth experienced hostile, heteronormative climates where they felt pressure to hide their sexuality or were forced to be "in your face" and aggressively defend their sexual identity (Love & Tosolt, 2013, p. 186).

Miss Jerome does not point to specific students or stories of exclusion, but expresses concern that LGBT identities are not reflected in the infrastructure of the school. She views her text selections as part of larger, systemic resistance to the erasure of LGBT identities within Juan Diego. As junior student council advisor, Miss Jerome oversees prom and

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brought an example of this issue to the group: it was against school policy to sell prom

tickets to same sex couples. She explains:

> For prom we had to get permission from the school to allow our students to bring a
> same sex date...[they] fought for it, student council. They fought for it and they got
> what they wanted which was great. So, to put things in perspective, this is the second
> year that it's okay to bring a same sex date to prom. (Jerome, January 10, 2018)

The change in policy was a victory for Miss Jerome, "That's my one little yay! If I leave

school now, that's the one thing I'm really the most proud of" (Jerome, January 27, 2018).

Noticing the erasure of LGBT identities within the school made inclusion of such texts a risk

within her classroom; but Miss Jerome prioritized centering students' marginalized identities

across school spaces.

Miss Jerome noticed another way identities were erased within her curriculum. The

Network curriculum and school syllabus for her American Literature course begin with

Colonial Era literature, erasing the presence of Indigenous populations for centuries prior to

English colonization and silencing the literary traditions that existed prior to European

influence. While not a part of the prescribed curriculum, Miss Jerome intentionally begins

her course focused on Native Americans. She begins with a text students will read in their

American History course later in the semester: the Annual Message to Congress by President

Andrew Jackson. The message, the modern day equivalent to the State of the Union,

introduced the 1830 Indian Removal Act and resulted in the Trail of Tears. She recognized

this is part of the dominant narrative of American History: a history of an oppressed people

told by the colonizers. "The winners tell the story, but there's always more to the story," she

explains. Miss Jerome then challenged the narrative presented by Andrew Jackson and

introduced examples of Native American literature including the poem "An Indian Walks in Me" by Marilou Awiakta and *Coyote and the Buffalo* by Morning Dove.

The CSP framework rejects colonizing, whitewashed narratives where, "literacy is associated with the transmission and mastery of a unitary Western tradition based on the virtues of ...institutional authority, and an unquestioning respect for the nation" (Giroux, 1987, p. 3). Miss Jerome noted American Literature does not start with European, westernized traditions and colonization, but with a long and rich history. As a culturally sustaining educator embodying CSPs' call for "sustaining and revitalizing that which over the centuries has sustained us" (Alim & Paris, 2017, p. 12), Miss Jerome highlighted untold histories that were erased from the American Literature curriculum and confronted the stereotypical and distorted narrative about Native American people as subjects acted on in Andrew Jackson's retelling of the history. Key to understanding the need for culturally sustaining pedagogy is that Native American history does not begin with enslavement, subjugation, and oppression through American legal policies such as the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Indian Boarding Schools which systematically sought to "erase languages, parenting practices, and belief systems and replace them with European models" (Long et al., 2016, p. 14). It begins instead with fertile history long before European imperialists and colonists. Few states offer standards or recommendations for the inclusion of Indigenous American history, literature, or culture within the curriculum; thus, the inclusion of these topics is left at the discretion of the district, school, or classroom teacher (Warner, 2015). It is important to note, however, that Miss Jerome's selection of texts represented a partial, fragmented representation of Indigenous Americans as a homogenous whole from the past rather than the over 500 federally recognized tribes living in what is currently America. This is part of what

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Lomawaima (1995) references as a "dead and buried" approach that places Native Americans in the past rather than the present. This is part of the uncertainty of curricularizing, Miss Jerome's texts and literacy instruction surrounding Native American literature is still incomplete[1] (Reese, 2007).

Miss Jerome also centers students' identities through multimodal texts and online and digital content (Alvermann, 2017). This was articulated during a reoccurring conversation about the way students used their school provided laptops and personal cell phones.

> Jerome: I have this issue with certain teachers that are just, like, [dramatic hand gesture] cell phone usage.
>
> Panther: Can you put [dramatic hand gesture] into words?
> [laughter]
>
> Jerome: It means I want them to not be so narrow. Their vision is so narrow and they can't like. I know we're a school that has rules. And we have more rules than other schools. But there's gotta be some gray, some wiggle room for things that are happening. Like cell phones. Okay. Do we have to tell you, as an adult, that a girl may not have pocket space for her phone so she may be carrying it on top her books or in her hand? Don't pick on her. She's not doing anything. Or a student could be on a phone checking for the time. Like that's okay. People do that. And being okay.

Miss Jerome wants the school to recognize cell phone and other electronics are "things that are happening" within schools just as they are happening with adults and those outside of schools. She notes that students do use cell phones to check for the time and carry them with them continually—just like the adults in the building. She is confused about the narrow vision of cell phone policy at the school given that it is a policy that adults do not follow either in school or out of school. She continues,

> Jerome: I'm not saying that multitasking is great, but just because it goes off, if the student's not going to answer the phone, that's okay. I don't see what the big issue is of having that around and utilizing it. I want us to

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[1] Additional resources for teaching Native American literature, literacy practices, and valued knowledge is provided in Appendix B.

do...the grammar of the day on Twitter. Allowing them to see that there are good uses for this, it's not pejorative. It's not a negative. Your device is not a negative device. It can be used positively and for good use and we can show you how to do it for good use because all they're seeing is it's negative, it's negative. And they're not seeing how it can be used in a positive way and I think as teachers we can show them how to use that in a positive way. Use their voice, use their writing, and cause it can go negative. All of that can go negative.

Panther: So can reading.

Jerome: Yea! No, seriously. It's just another way of communication and being able to say okay, this is what you are doing, this is what you could do that's productive and positive and here's some choices. Now you have choices to make. And that's what being an adult and being a functioning member of society is, being able to make educated choices. But we're not providing them with those choices, we're just telling them you can't.

Panther: And you've challenged me and grown me on that. Because now I've been in this position of observing what are the students doing and what are they doing with it ...something I perceive as off task were on some kind of Skype messenger, messaging each other back and forth even though they are sitting across from each other? Middle school teacher Leah wants to be like well get off of that, just talk to each other, right there. Y'know? And really be authoritative about it. But now they have a written record of the conversation they were having that was related to what they were doing that they can save for later.

Jerome: No, and because you mentioned that to me, I found a model on a teaching website where a teacher did this and it seemed to work well in his classroom where they post, they post it up as notes so they can refer back to it later...I want them to have group conversations and every time we have a group day, I want you to record it and then post it up. So that way I have a record of what you discussed. (Jerome, February 2, 2018)

In this passage, Miss Jerome acknowledges that cell phone technology is not negative or positive, right or wrong, it is a series of choices that students have to make about a mode of meaning or "just another way of communication," and her job is to say, "here's some choices. Now you [students] have some choices to make." Miss Jerome's description of digital tools being policed relates to Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, and Tejada's (1999) description of a counterscript, the hybrid moments or spaces inbetween the official space of

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teacher instruction or the curriculum and the unofficial spaces of students' literacy practices; practices that are ignored or unrecognized (Baker & Gutiérrez, 2008; Lee, 1993). Miss Jerome recognizes the use of digital tools, acknowledging the counterscripts and drawing the into the curriculum. This is a third space pedagogy, where youth agency within the counterscript has transformed the instructional practices. Miss Jerome explains her transition to use cellphones and laptops as text, recognizing they are meaning making tools that are valued by students. Miss Jerome observed how her students were using the digital tools in sophisticated ways to make sense of new modes of discourse that may be unfamiliar. Other scholars have similarly found the counterscripts of youth often involve the use of semiotic tools to negotiate new academic Discourse (Moje et al., 2004). Instead of marginalizing or ignoring students' valued literacy practices, Miss Jerome repositioned students' digital literacies as valued instructional tools for literacy instruction.

Domínguez (2017) explains CSP and revitalizing pedagogies are meant to help, "educators learn to contest the ways coloniality lives in and through schooling," by foregrounding and situating the work with the colonized, not the colonizer (p. 233). Miss Jerome and Miss Gregory critically center students' identities within their literacy instructional practices by selecting texts that reflect the racial, ethnic, and linguistic identities of students across multimodal designs (Leander & Bolt, 2012; New London Group, 1996; Thibaut & Scott Curwood, 2018), rejecting colonized, whitewashed histories (Bayly, 2007; Reese, 2007), and by recognizing youth agentive tools, leveraging them for literacy instruction (Gutiérrez et al., 1999; Moje et al., 2004). In these examples, the teachers are doing the work of critical centering; both Miss Jerome and Miss Gregory have selected the

texts, named the literacy practices, and designed instruction based on knowledge of their students.

Youth Agency is Centered and (Re)Centered

As previously explored, Miss Jerome's instruction seeks out ways to decenter the dominant and required voices that are traditionally represented in an American Literature curriculum. She also intentionally centers students' identities within her literacy instruction, most notably within the texts she selects. However, she also intentionally finds ways to center students' agency within her literacy instruction by centering opportunities for students to be agentive, and reflexively responding to students' resistance and counterscripts as agentive practices to inform curricularizing. Agency is demonstrated in practices where youth and educators position themselves for the "strategic making and remaking of selves, identities, activities, relationships, cultural tools and resources, and histories" (Moje & Lewis, 2007, p. 18). In Miss Jerome's classroom, youth agency is on display before you walk into the door: a student-created banner with their classroom motto "I think it's fine" based on an ongoing inside joke between Miss Jerome and her students (Figure 8). It remakes the threshold to the classroom a marked place with a history that students have helped create. Immediately inside of the door where a flag holder once laid empty, students created class flags with class mascots to fill the space, a cultural tool to represent the classroom community and collective identity (Figure 9). Langer (2011) and Routman (2014) both list the same characteristic in their separate literature reviews of highly effective literacy classrooms: a visitor knows who the students are even when they are physically not present. In Miss Jerome's classroom there are multiple examples of students' agentive practices in naming and creating the space (Moje & Luke, 2009).
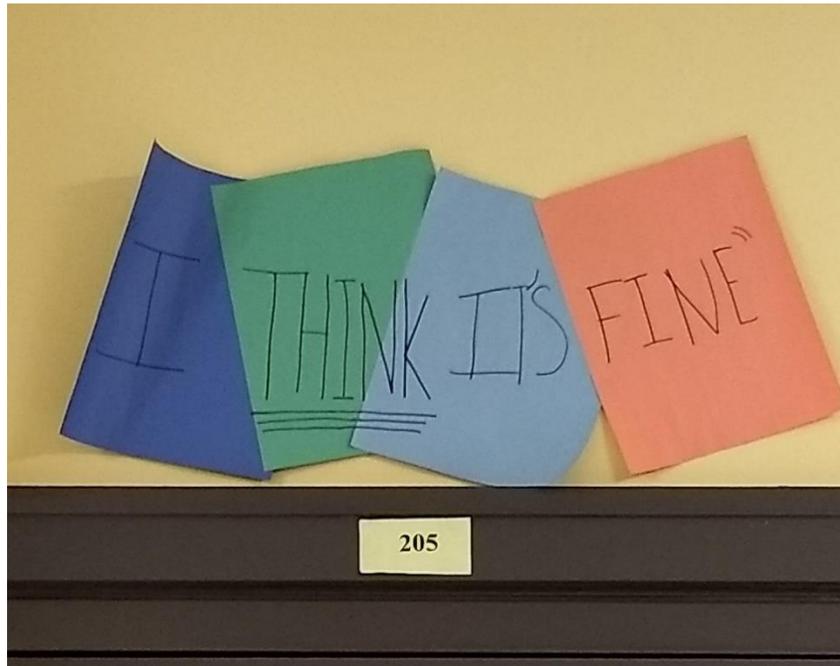
Figure 8. The student-created banner with the class motto.

Figure 9. The student-created flags featuring their class mascots.

Grammar instruction was one consistent element of the curriculum and daily instruction where the recursive process of centering students' agency occurred. Miss Jerome's literacy instructional practices surrounding grammar were in flux throughout the four months I spent in her classroom. Over the course of the school year, Miss Jerome narrated how the instruction slowly shifted from her attempt to be in control to centering students' agency. Miss Jerome began nearly every class period with a grammar of the day assignment. Students were given two questions: each question had two sentences, one which used a daily grammar rule correctly and one representing an incorrect grammatical usage. Students had five minutes to complete their work, then Miss Jerome discussed the answers with students encouraging them to write the correct responses and grammar rule accompanying it. These notes were used for independent reference and for points, or a grade, at the end of each academic quarter. During the time that passed between assigning the grammar of the day and discussing it, I noticed the majority of students did not complete the task. I asked one student, Alexus, why. She replied, "They're worth points at the end of the quarter; since it's the beginning of the quarter we don't really care yet" (Field Notes, October 30, 2017). This became an active theme across observations: over the course of four months there were 12 weeks of grammar of the day. In one set of field notes I wrote:

> What concerns the juniors today? A chemistry graphic organizer, history test, seminar quiz, and theology worksheet crowd out grammar. Ugly God the rapper, makeup tutorials, and previewing a video editing technique that he might use in his music video all crowd out grammar. Stuffed Elsa from Frozen, a missing hair track, and hot Cheetos crowd out grammar. A nap after a disrupted week back from break, text messages, and a livestreaming of a video game all crowd out grammar. (Field Notes, January 4, 2018)

The next week I recorded the following:

Students pick up their notes-check which includes grades for work (or missing work) on grammar of the day. I walk between the tables looking at who is choosing to complete the grammar of the day and who is not. Most are, but not until she [Miss Jerome] lectures/talks about it, not when the first five minutes are given. During the first five minutes some of the alternative choices include working on listening posters for this class, talking about a programming project that is an outside of school/extracurricular activity, texting, talking about what is due in other classes, watching a government video. (Field Notes, January 8, 2018)

Students routinely made the decision to complete other work articulating that it was either due first or they did not see the value of the grammar of the day lessons. One student, Adrian, commented, "they're not worth enough points to care." I shared this observation with Miss Jerome.

Jerome: Yea. I I did notice that. They are held accountable for at least getting the information down on paper because it's an assignment that they have to turn in. And because I do give the same ones to every junior I guess I'm allowing them to be able to do it later. They can get it from a friend. They can do it. But I'm not, yes I want them to write it down. But I also want them to apply it. So my concern is if they are able to apply it, whether they got it the day I put it on the board or they got it two days later from a friend, that doesn't matter to me. But they have it, they can go back to it, there are tools back there that they can access. There are tools. That's why I check it at the end of the third quarter, you should have those notes if I say please go back and see how to punctuate a complex sentence or you're misusing your commas or your semicolon here. You have to fix that. Well how do I fix that? I think you should go review your grammar notes and see. Make the correction.

Panther: And you had mentioned changing the Grammar of the Day assignments, something that Cruise had shared with you?

Jerome: That's the Grammar Bytes that I'm doing the Twitter with. And grammar is always changing, too. So. But that's where.

Panther: What do you mean by grammar is always changing.

Jerome: There are rules that get tweaked like comma usage. Like who, who's really looking for comma splices? Is that something that's really going to hold them back nowadays? (Jerome, January 25, 2018)

In this exchange, Miss Jerome is acknowledging that grammar is a centered, valued literacy in the required curriculum. However, it is not valued by students. She considered the purpose

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of the grammar assignment to be application, and therefore allowed students to take various

paths to get to the desired end result. Some students choose to complete the assignment in

class, and others to get the answers from a peer after the fact. She explains, "students need

autonomy or um, agency. Choice. They're making a choice and I'm letting them make that

choice" (Jerome, January 25, 2018).

The behaviors students exhibit—not completing the grammar of the day, expressing

lack of interest—are typically portrayed as resistance rather than tools and literacy practices

(Kinloch, 2017; Moje, 2000). In Moje's (2000) work with gang affiliated youth of Color, she

described the rich literacy practices and tools that youth engaged in:

> They [language and literacy practices] were used to make and represent meanings, to
> change or construct identities, and to gain or maintain social positions in a particular
> social space. Although the practices are often devalued as idle amusements unrelated
> to school, or are vilified as violent and deviant, they must nevertheless be considered
> as central aspects of the everyday practices of young people, practices that contribute
> to their identity construction and representation. (p. 679)

It is possible that students' reactions to grammar of the day are not rightly called practices of

resistance, but examples of identity representation (Kinloch, 2017), signaling of social group

affiliation (Moje, 2000), resistance to deficit views of students (Powell et al., 2006), and

rejection of dehumanizing content (Carter, 2006). Miss Jerome considered the patterns in her

students' choices and considered how the assignment could be adapted to meet the required

Network standards but still value students' agency. Noting that many students were engaged

with digital and multimodal content, social interactions, or both, Miss Jerome sought out a

way to meet her content goals while valuing students' valued literacies. She began using

Grammar Bytes, recommended by fellow English teacher, Sarah Cruise. The online grammar

website hosts a Twitter account with a daily grammar application question. Miss Jerome

shifted the assignment, telling students:

> So this is the Grammar bytes, the Twitter grammar of the day I was telling you about
> yesterday. For those of you that haven't done it yet, you're going to log onto Twitter.
> You might want to make an account just for this, you might want to use your real
> account, just know you'll be tagging Miss Jerome in these tweets, right? So you, you,
> so you might not want Miss Jerome to see what you're tweeting about or reading your
> Twitter bio, right? So you log on and use the tool bar to search for Grammar Bytes.
> You're taking the daily quiz they post and retweeting your results and tagging me in
> the retweet. Three times a week. On your own time. Not in here. So for homework
> three times a week, maybe it's all on one day on Friday maybe it's Monday, Tuesday,
> Wednesday you get it done, boom. This is what we're doing instead of Grammar of
> the Day for third quarter, we're going to try it out. I know you're on Twitter anyway I
> thought this would be more fun.

Miss Jerome did not view students as resisting the grammar instruction, but as active agents

in meaning making of the classroom space and content (Kinloch, 2017; Lee, 2014; Moje,

2000; Morrell, 2008). Within her grammar of the day instructional practices, something was

not working because students were making meaning about everything except the sentences

displayed on the projector. By moving the same grammar information and application to a

multimodal online social media platform, Miss Jerome guessed it would be more fun and

more engaging for students by centering their valued literacies. Powell, McIntye, and

Rightmeyer's (2006) work found that student behaviors considered off task were often

associated with an absence of some or all of the following characteristics: choice, challenge,

collaboration, control, constructing meaning, and consequences. The shift in instruction

increased choice and control for students by giving them control over when the assignment

was completed and choice over which grammar of the day questions they would respond to.

Students still faced the same level of challenge and same academic consequences. However,

students were still primarily working independently rather than collaboratively since the

Tweets tagged only Miss Jerome; additionally, students were applying meaning based on

grammar rules rather than constructing meaning.

Over the course of three weeks, students' completion of grammar of the day went up;

students were completing the grammar of the day assignments more regularly. However,

students were not regularly applying grammatical knowledge outside of grammar of the day.

This came up as we discussed exit tickets students had completed. I noted various red marks

where Miss Jerome had corrected students' grammar.

Panther:	So I'm noticing, I'm looking at the corrections you made here.
Jerome:	[Affirming noise] Yea, tense agreement.
Panther:	And the -ed you added? I'm still, I'm just learning about this myself, but um, I'm guessing without knowing that this student is Black and speaks Black Language?
Jerome:	[looks at name] Yea, she is.
Panther:	So in Black Language or African American Language, whichever you would call it, uh, the uh, the rules around past tense, I'm pretty sure it's a pattern to not add an 'ed' for past tense when there's a consonant at the end. So you added an 'ed' but really, she's following a grammar rule. It's just not the standard English grammar rule. So uh, with this as an exit ticket, what was your purpose for reading them over and giving points? Was this a grammar application, writing assignment?
Jerome:	I um. Huh. Y'know, I uh. I don't speak Black Language, I just never, that wasn't a part of um, my family never did that. So I don't think I know, would have known. So I probably shouldn't have marked that, right?
Panther:	I guess, I'm just thinking, is this assignment about grammar? Or content? And were students told what language to write in, like if you wanted standard English?
Jerome:	I don't know that I've ever, I've ever said it like that. Now I'm really thinking. This makes me want to take these [exit tickets] back and remark them.
Panther:	I don't know enough, I know I need to learn more about Black Language.
Jerome:	Me, too, because, I guess I'm thinking about my own grammar [instruction]. Where do I give them opportunities to just write in their own language? I guess I've never, I've not thought about it being a language. Panther: Would you be comfortable with that? Letting students just, write in um, non-standard English?

Jerome: For some things. You can't just let standard English go. That's what's on the EOC, that's what their tests are in and what they see and expect in the workplace. But yea, for some things. Not everything has to be formal. (Jerome, March 19, 2018).

Noticing a pattern between Miss Jerome's comments that students did not regularly apply grammar rules within their writing and patterns consistent with African American Language (AAL), I brought it up—through my own knowledge was imperfect and incomplete evidenced by my uncertainty over the use of African American Language (AAL) or Black Language (BL). Miss Jerome considered the feedback and questions. Later in the week, Miss Jerome brought up the topic again mentioning, "We [she and I] should learn about it [AAL] this summer," intoning she wanted to learn, "how to teach it and standard English, not a hierarchy, but equal. Equally valued" (Jerome, March 24, 2018).

The conversation marked another shift in Miss Jerome's literacy instruction surrounding grammar practices. At the beginning of the study, Miss Jerome stated, "I've changed the way I do grammar every year. I knew something wasn't right, it never seemed to work." In early observations, she centered a prescriptive grammar curriculum that reflected her required Network standards. A prescriptive model of grammar instruction typically focuses on explicit instruction surrounding grammatical "rules" relating to a range of linguistic skills (e.g., semantics, syntax, morphology, phonology, and pragmatics) and conventions (e.g., spelling, punctuation, capitalization) (Jespersen, 2013). Miss Jerome observed her students' agentive practices that devalued the prescriptive approach and began seeking out alternative instructional models. Part of the shift was recognizing students' language was reflective of their identities. Young, Barret, and Lovejoy (2013) similarly contend, "[l]anguage variation is a basic way in which we create and express our social

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identities. Attempts to eradicate language variation from the classroom are destined to

alienate students making them feel that their identity is inappropriate for the school

environment" (p. 51). Historically and today, urban high school teachers have been proven

across contexts to devalue AAL and mark it inappropriate for the classroom (e.g., Alim,

2005; Godley, Sweetland, Wheeler, Carpenter & Minnici, 2006). Students who speak AAL

or other non-dominant varieties of English are expected to code-switch or move from one

language to another based on situation or context; here, the shift from outside of school to

inside of school (Foster, 2002; Smitherman, 2000; Young et al., 2013). However, a more

effective approach is code-meshing, an approach that encourages students to read and write

in their native language (Canagarajah, 2009; 2011). For example, Vetter (2013) completed a

discourse analysis of three lessons across five months in the classroom of Gina, a white

educator, in her 11th grade English course. The students, predominantly African American

and Latinx, engaged in code-meshing. While Gina did not speak AAL, she valued AAL as a

literacy practice and set of rhetorical tools that many of her students brought to the

classroom. Students turned to their own language, rhetoric, and speech styles to understand

language. Vetter (2013) explained it:

> challenge[d] students to explore their own speech data...[and] incorporate linguistic
> variations into school curricula. This kind of work reconceptualizes literacy pedagogy
> to not only be inclusive of multiple languages in classrooms but also value those
> languages so that they contribute to students' understandings of what it means to be
> readers/writers. (p. 201)

Students' languages were valued, thus students valued the classroom community and were

more engaged to understand their identities as readers and writers.

Young, Barrett and Lovejoy (2013) agree with Vetter, contending when language is

seen through a descriptive lens rather than prescriptive and rule bound, it "fosters positive

attitudes towards undervalued varieties [of English and] emphasizes the development of language skills that extend beyond the acquisition of Standard English grammar" (p. 45). However, they extend the argument to include a benefit of code-meshing is learning, "the knowledge required to respect and interact with individuals from a broader range of language backgrounds" (p. 45). When AAL was unconsciously labeled a non-language in Miss Jerome's classroom, it became a deficiency; a way students did not measure up to a white standard (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Miss Jerome noted her students' agency in decentering the prescriptive grammar instruction, even welcomed it, as she reconceptualized her instructional practices the next academic quarter to center digital texts and social media tools. This changed the mode of meaning and increased student choice and control (Powell et al., 2006), but it did not disrupt the application of meaning, or the application of standard English which reinforced racialized linguistic hierarchies (Rosa & Flores, 2017; Smitherman, 2000). While Miss Jerome does not have a curricular framework to teach grammar for the forthcoming school year, she does have a plan to design grammar instruction that recognizes literacies and languages as differences, not hierarchies. As she commits to further study in descriptive grammar instruction and code-meshing, Miss Jerome is seeking out ways to recenter students' languages and literacies to value and sustain them.

Connecting Oppression with Historicized Content in Disciplinary Literacy Practices

Examining the curricularizing of Cecilia Gregory and Alex Jerome, a second finding is related to two tenets of culturally sustaining pedagogies: the capacity to content with internalized oppression and historicizing content. Analyzing hundreds of hours of classroom observations and interviews, a clear pattern emerged: both educators viewed these tenets as inexorably intertwined in and connected to their curriculum design and instruction.

Within CSP, a historicized view of culture rejects static framings of cultural identities; instead it places the past in conversation with the present to recognize they are interrelated and dependent (Alim & Paris, 2017). A critical sociocultural framing of literacy and culture similarly places schooling within a historicized ecological system where students' cultural heritages and social interactions are dynamic over time but influenced by the past (Lee, 2017). Thus, a historicized view of curriculum is essential given that "pedagogy is a tool that cannot be disembodied from practices and people in systems" (Gutiérrez & Johnson, 2017, p. 253). In other words, pedagogies, the educators that enact them, and the students that interact with them are all part of history. In American schooling, that history is rife with oppression from white educational supremacy (Gillborn, 2005; hooks, 1989; Leonardo, 2004). Placing the experiences of students from marginalized groups within a historicized context recognizes modern day inequities are at once remnants and present day realities. Within Juan Diego, the students face challenges because of the demographic realities they face; demographics that are often condensed to numbers and statistics such as 25% of Latinx students and 17% of Black students graduate high school proficient or above on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP, 2015). Sixty-one percent low income high school graduates start college, and 16% graduate (Mortenson, 2017). These statistics dehumanize students, reducing them to a number or label. However, this is an impartial list of damage-centered points of a graph (Tuck, 2009), not a complete story. As Wong and Peña (2017) note:

> these [are] heavy topics fixated on problems and issues, and the resistance with which people in these communities were powerfully engaging. Without intending it, the stories of these 'marginalized' peoples were left incomplete...how can we provide spaces for young people where they are not defined solely, or overwhelmingly, but their marginalization? How can we provide spaces for young people to extend and

imagine joy—to experience and theorize happiness for the sake of happiness, not happiness only as a means of relief and release from their struggles? (p. 132)

Students at Juan Diego represented marginalized groups within society and hear stories, statistics, and media reports that further misrepresent or erase their different identities. In the pursuit of sustaining these identities, Wong and Peña (2017) contend, the story can become hyper-focused on oppression and marginalization and miss out on opportunities to "extend and imagine joy" (p. 132). In Miss Jerome and Miss Gregory's classrooms, the interconnectedness of historicized knowledge and capacity to contend with internalized oppression are made explicit in two categories of practices: (a) naming oppression (b) and building disciplinary literacy practices to contend with oppressive systems. The teachers enact this pedagogy not so students can fixate on "problems and issues," but rather to challenge oppression and recreate new possibilities, ultimately "to extend and imagine joy" (Wong & Peña, 2017, p. 132).

Literacy Practices Name Oppression

Miss Jerome purposefully teaches her students to see and name oppressive systems. In fact, she describes this as a central purpose of her courses:

the thing that I'm worried about, it's like colorblindness and that I don't promote, I wouldn't promote that in my classroom because I want them to like, face it. And how do I deal with it? That's, the whole book club section for third quarter is going to be about facing difference whether its lifestyle, sexuality, or gender or race.

Miss Jerome rejects colorblindness, the refusal to name or see race, as one example of how a student might avoid difference. Colorblindness assumes there is something inherently wrong with Black and brown bodies that they are to be ignored (Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Delpit, 2006). Ignoring those differences can lead to erasure (Paris & Alim, 2017) or an assumption that whiteness is neutral and therefore the standard students are expected to conform to (Milner,

2010). Miss Jerome endeavors to force students to "face it" when there are differences that span lifestyle, sexuality, gender, and race so their identities are not devalued and erased in the process. I continued the conversation,

Panther: So, you say you reject the colorblind narrative. So, if there was someone who said I don't see color. What would be your response?

Jerome: Well, everyone else does. Or, people around you do and that colors how they see the world. You don't live in a world unto yourself. I can be color blind, maybe I can, maybe that truly happens in the world, but then I'm in a class with you, you necessarily aren't going to be colorblind and you say something that has all of this history behind it. Negative, can be positive, I still need to be able to deal with that and I can't live in a world where that's just, I opt out. That's just not going to be an option for you. (Jerome, January 2, 2018)

Miss Jerome wonders if people can truly be colorblind, saying "maybe that happens in the world." However, she is also conscious that society is not bias free because of "all the history behind it." Bonilla-Silva (2006) calls this the minimization frame, a discourse surrounding colorblind racism that perceives racism as individual acts and choices and since society moved past during the Civil Rights Era and the election of a Black president. Miss Jerome, like Bonilla-Silva, problematizes the argument because refusal to see or acknowledge difference is to "opt out" which is not an option in a multicultural society imbued with racist and oppressive systems. While, "individuals are not the ones who create larger systems such as 'capitalism,' 'patriarchy,' or 'racialized social systems,' ...they are the 'cogs' that allow these systems to run" (Bonilla-Silva, 2006, p. 221). Individuals who adopt colorblindness enact the microsystems of ignoring, silencing, and erasing cultural differences that uphold the macrosystems of capitalism, patriarchy, and racialized social systems (Lewis & Moje, 2003; Moje & Lewis, 2007; Rogers & Fuller, 2007).

Miss Jerome encourages students to see and name differences within her instruction as a rejection of colorblindness discourse. She recalls having a conversation with students about otherness because Othello, a central character in a Shakespearean play, was described as "an other" in a line of dialogue before later being identified as a Moor. She challenged her students to consider the ways people are defined or named as "an other" within society, "what if Othello was identified with the LGBTQ community or another type of other rather than what we associate with Black? What if he was someone from Palestine, that kind of other? Or some other Asian continent?" (Jerome, January 2, 2018). Othering is a theoretical construct to describe the association with self and those who closely identify with the self and the "other," or those who deviate from self-identifications (Spivak, 1985). It is an intellectual and social distancing. Miss Jerome challenged students to consider how some identifications are viewed as a more acceptable "others." Domínguez (2017) challenges the preeminence of othering within teaching noting "An educator cannot sustain something in their curriculum or pedagogy...love it, nurture it, appreciate the humanity it represents, when that thing is continually rendered impermissible, Other, to them" (p. 232). The argument is labeling certain identities as an other creates a distance—between the teacher and student marked as other, and between the curriculum and the student marked as other. Distance that can result in seeing the person as less than rather than a complete person with hybrid identities, agency, and possibilities (Domínguez, 2017). Miss Jerome actively rejects othering her students and challenges them to name how different racial and ethnic identities and sexual orientations—their own and those of their classmates and global citizens—are made into "others."

When students do not name racial and cultural differences, Miss Jerome does. During

an ongoing unit focused on archetypes, Miss Jerome was providing multiple examples

different archetypes such as the predator, the epic journey, and the tragic hero. As students

learned about common archetypes, they applied the knowledge to a variety of examples and

texts. Students were applying their knowledge to unpack the common characteristics of a

predator archetype. Miss Jerome displayed three images, asking students to summarize or

explain the story the image represented. First, an oil painting of Little Red Riding Hood.

Second, a pop art image of the biblical figure Eve speaking to a snake in the Garden of Eden.

Students easily named the stories and gave summaries. The third picture, Harvey Weinstein,

needed additional explanation and Miss Jerome explained he was a famous Hollywood

producer that had been accused of sexual assault by several actresses. Students began to

analyze the three images and stories to identify common patterns. Rapid fire, students called

out patterns: "The victims are all young," "The victims are all girls or women," "The

predator is always a man or male," "The predator tricks the victim," "The predator offers

something the other person wants." Miss Jerome acknowledged the comments, adding them

to a bubble map on the white board and students did the same on pieces of loose leaf on their

desks. Jerome: You've said the victims are usually young females, but how about white?

Student 1:	I wasn't going to take it there, Miss Jerome!
Jerome:	Well, I took it there.
Student 1:	I saw it, like how come they all be white?
Student 2:	Dang Miss Jerome! Like Tiana and the Princess and the Frog!
Student 1:	They give us one princess and think that's good.

The students' responses show it was on their minds, "I saw it" and something they had

previously considered, making an immediate personal connection to the only Black Disney

princess whose Black body is transformed into a frog for the majority of the movie. Miss

Jerome initiated the conversation, challenging students to notice race and name it within this excerpt. Irizarry (2017) worked with a group of Latinx youth in a high school setting where they studied the work of authors and activists who were Latinx. At the end of the semester one student, Alberto, said, "It was the first time I learned anything about Latinos" (p. 90). Taína, another student, explained, "I thought Latinos were dumb, that we were not smart...I see that we are [smart] now. I thought that because of what they teach us and how they treat us [in school]" (Irizarry, 2017, p. 91). Irizarry (2017) elaborates that the students came to the class skeptical of the readings, however that changed as they learned the texts were "for us by us" and with struggle and apprehension, became committed to identifying more texts featuring stories of Latinx history and voices. Further, it led to the realization that other disciplines were "whitewashed," or the curriculum assumed that Latinx voices had no place in world history, American history, English literature, or role in growing the fields of science and math. From a CSP framework, the students in Miss Jerome's class, like Irizarry's, were learning the whitewashed patterns in order to challenge them.

Miss Jerome explained after the lesson was complete:

Jerome: Yea. I want, I want it to be a point where we can have, just like we talk about race, e talk about gender, I want to be able to talk about that, too in class.

Panther: Has it come up as part of the general curriculum?

Jerome: No. I am adding it...

Within CSP, students come to know and to name oppression in its myriad forms; however this does not automatically translate to students' capacity to challenge or dismantle the "patriarchal, cisheteronormative, English-monolingual, ableist, classist, xenophobic, Judeo-Christian gazes" from dominance (Alim & Paris, 2017, pp. 2-3). Students need tools to do so.

Miss Jerome's use of particular disciplinary practices in literacy facilitated historicizing content so that students could name oppression in its myriad forms.

Historicized Oppression is Challenged with Disciplinary Literacy Practices

Miss Jerome strives for students to build tools to name and challenge oppression; conversations that indeed focused on weighty and heavy topics, but moved to joy. The tools she uses are drawn from literacy practices used by narrowly defined experts within the fields of literary criticism, but the tools are then redesigned by students. Finishing the previous conversation, Miss Jerome describes how she is adding the "naming" of oppression to her curricularizing:

Jerome:	Yea. I want, I want it to be a point where we can have, just like we talk about race we talk about gender, I want to be able to talk about that, too in class.
Panther:	Has it come up as part of the general curriculum?
Jerome:	No. I am adding it in with this conversation, when we go through *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*, I throw it in. There's a documentary that MTV did, *White People*, which is a good like, other perspective on what it's like to live here in America and um, so I have that that I want to show just so they have language to talk about gender issues or race issues because a lot of the texts I have speaks to that and I want them to have a framework for how to talk about it. My students have opinions about these topics, we've talked snippets about it, but I just want more vocabulary when it comes to having those kinds of conversations. So, like I want to introduce them to the Bechdel test and have them assess a movie according to the Bechdel test and does it pass or not? (Jerome, January 8, 2018)

Miss Jerome has evidence of students' opinions about race and gender that she noticed come up across conversations, sometimes initiated and pushed by her, sometimes on their own, and sometimes in conversations with each other. Supporting students' disciplinary vocabulary so they can "have language to talk about gender issues or race issues" was important to Miss Jerome because it was linked to the larger goal to see and name difference; but also to

provide tools to notice and challenge texts that minimize, distort, or erase difference.

San Pedro (2017) contends classrooms can and should be places for uncomfortable

conversations explaining, "pursuits of safety and feelings of comfort often leave Indigenous

students and other students of color on the margins of classroom discourse, since dominant

norms and standards are maintained in the pursuit of these so called safe spaces," thus the

safe space denies the development of critical thinking and listening, rendering only safe for

some (p. 102).

Miss Jerome's literacy instructional practices are drawn from disciplinary tools. The

central textbook she uses for her course is *How to Read Literature Like a* Professor by

Thomas C. Foster, a Professor of English that specializes in literary criticism. While Miss

Jerome positions Dr. Foster as an expert, Anzaldúa (1990) cautions narrow definitions of

expertise that historically have excluded persons of Color:

> Theory, then, is a set of knowledges. Some of these knowledges have been kept from us—entry into some professions and academia denied us. Because we are not allowed to enter discourse, because we are often disqualified and excluded from it, because what passes for theory these days is forbidden territory for us, it is vital that we occupy theorizing space, that we not allow white men and women solely to occupy it. By bringing in our own approaches and methodologies, we transform that theorizing space. (p. xxv)

Anzaldúa (1990) described how knowledge has been the territory of some—typically white

elites—while other valued knowledges have been disqualified, excluded, and forbidden. The

textbook *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* by Thomas C. Foster represents partial

knowledge of English literature and literary criticism. The book is divided into short essays

that define and describe common archetypes, or patterned themes or symbols that reappear

across texts. The archetypes include narrative patterns, such as the hero's quest or Biblical

story of the fall and redemption, and characterization patterns, such as the tragic hero,

predator, and feminist understandings of the mad woman. Miss Jerome uses the text to explicitly teach and model using archetypes to interpret texts. Then, she introduces additional tools for students to recognize patterns that explicitly challenge gender and racial representation that the book does not include, such as the Bechdel Test. This is a three question test introduced by cartoonist and self described lesbian feminist Alice Bechdel that helps determine whether or not the book, movie, or other text is feminist. Miss Jerome uses a video to introduce her students to the three questions: Are there at least two female characters? Do they speak to each other? Is it about something other than a man? Miss Jerome also adds a newer version of the test with a fourth question: do the two women have names?

After explicitly learning the disciplinary tools, Miss Jerome then asks students to apply the tools with guided practice (Fisher & Frey, 2013). This is typical of the gradual release of responsibility model (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983) which requires a teacher to first model a new strategy, skill, or practice, then engage students in guided practice either as a whole class or in small groups where students apply the new strategy, skill, or practice with support. Eventually, students are "released" to regularly apply the strategy, skill, or practice independently. During guided practice, students used the Bechdel Test to evaluate several texts including the children's book *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* and an audio recording of the short story *The Yellow Wallpaper* Miss Jerome paired with fan art depicting several key scenes. I sat in on a conversation about *The Yellow Wallpaper* three Latina students were having:

Janelle:	If I had to choose one archetype, I think predator because the husband, John, he was like, he was dominating Jennie [the wife]
Ana:	We have to pick one?

Janelle:	We can pick more than one.
Ana:	I can't pick one.
Paula:	Things have more than just, like just one.
Janelle:	But yea, he was dominating her by taking away her baby.
Ana:	I don't get that. Why did he do that?
Paula:	She had post- what's that thing? Post pardon? Like uh uh where you get depressed after you have a baby?
Ana:	Oh.
Paula:	I wonder if it was a boy or a girl.
Janelle:	I don't think it said. It's not important, it's more about how he [the husband] did it to have control over her.
Paula:	If it was a girl, it might have been a feminist text.
Janelle:	It doesn't count if the baby can't talk back. [looks to Ana for nonverbal confirmation]
Ana:	Maybe. I don't know.
Paula:	It could still be a feminist text, though. The woman in the wall? She talked to her.
Ana:	Did she have a name?
Janelle:	That *was* her! She was the woman in the wall! It doesn't count if she's talking to herself!
Ana:	That was her?
Paula:	Yea, it was, it was, it was like, part of her. She she's watching herself. I don't know, it's hard to explain. [looks to me]
Leah:	No, I, I think you're on to something. I'd like to hear more. What do you mean?
Paula:	She didn't have anyone to talk to, right?
Janelle:	Oh, cause, yea, the baby was gone so yea.
Paula:	So she was talking to herself, like, but like a part of her? She didn't know. Maybe she didn't know it was her?
Ana:	I don't get it.
Janelle:	I don't think that's feminist because it has to be two women. And the only women in the story are a maid, what's her? Mar-Martha? [looks to me]
Leah:	[nods]
Janelle:	Martha who is like, the husband is her boss! That's not, she's not about to go [in Martha voice] I disagree with what you're doing so I quit. [regular voice] that's her job, right? So there's that. Maybe the baby, but then just the wife. Jennie. So there's two women. They're both being, he's [John] the predator, and he's, he's in control of both of them. So how, this isn't feminist. This is a man book or whatever you would, manist?
Ana:	[laughing]
Paula:	No, like, yea to the whole predator thing, but she is, because she can't like, she don't have anyone to talk to so she. I don't know, makes

someone? But it's like, that's her having some of that control, right? So yea, I say this is feminist.

Janelle: [leaning forward smiling, hitting palm of her hand against the desk] The woman in the wallpaper is her! It's not!

Leah: Paula, are you suggesting a woman in relationship with a predator needs to, maybe not needs to, but might, uh, might, maybe metaphorically, split herself into different pieces?

Paula: [pause] I, I, well, I think Jennie did.

Janelle: Like, being different people when the man is around? [gives Ana a meaningful look]

Ana: [laughing]

Paula: Oh. [pause] Yea. Cause she, the wallpaper lady, she wasn't out when John came around. (Jerome, January 8, 2018)

Miss Jerome called time to the five minute conversations, ending the debate. Within the exchange, the three students drew from literary criticism using the archetype of predator, and the Bechdel Test as disciplinary tools to analyze the story. Janelle was able to apply the archetype of predator to the story noting the husband in the story "was dominating Jennie" through practices like "taking away her baby" in order "to have control over her." When Paula brought up a challenge, Janelle used the same predator archetype to challenge her classmate's assertion and support her argument about the husband, pointing out, "there's two women, he's...in control of them both." Paula was able to use the Bechdel Test to analyze the story; the analytic tool gave her the vocabulary to consider the role of the woman in the yellow wallpaper; perhaps the woman, though a projection of Jennie's fragmented mental health following postpartum depression, was an act of feminist agency: "that's her having some of that control."

In this excerpt, students were apprenticed into the thinking patterns of a disciplinary expert in literary criticism. Shanahan and Shanahan (2008) recommend this approach to develop discipline specific ways of thinking. Importantly, Moje (2007) challenges the cognitive apprenticeship approach, recognizing it apprentices students into repeating the

literacy practices of a discipline, not necessarily challenging them. While the disciplinary

literacy practices of identifying archetypes were helpful in understanding the story, and even

challenging the students' initial understandings of the text, it did not result in students'

directly challenging the patriarchal themes—just noticing them. Partially, this was due to

unfamiliarity. Students were engaged in guided practice applying the new tools. I asked Miss

Jerome what the next step would be:

> I'd like to see them apply the archetypes without me bringing it up or asking them to, so they they can apply it in real life. Like with their book club books. I heard Derrick say oh yea, like Junior is on a, on a hero's journey. But then also, to think, why? Why did the author do that and not this? Wouldn't it be better if? (Jerome, January 8, 2018)

Miss Jerome mentions a student, Derrick, who is starting to apply the archetype of a hero's

journey to his book *An Absolutely True Diary of a Part Time* Indian by Sherman Alexie.

However, application is not enough—she hopes to see students engage in critique of the use

of archetypes to challenge the way stories are told and texts are created.

In order to transition her students from application to critical analysis, Miss Jerome

uses additional literacy instructional practices to place modern oppression in conversation

with the past: complex text sets. This first revealed itself during an early conversation where

she showed me how she differentiates based on Lexiles. Her students were already arranged

in groups based advanced, or above grade level, proficient, at grade level, basic, which is

below grade level, and below basic which is well below grade level.

> I have these three different texts that are going to be given. We have the Declaration of Independence. This is my high, advanced group. Then my proficient groups will be getting that. And they'll be doing the same thing except I'm not going to color code anything. They need to come up with their own. But they, each group has the same task just a different level. So, in each group they're going to read the text that they're given, um, come up with their own color coding system to highlight ethos, pathos, logos. And then they have to annotate for, is there any repetition, is there any use of

parallelism, is there any use of rhetorical questions being used? So, annotate for that. Then I'm going to jigsaw them.

As she spread out the three different texts, something jumped out at me so I made the comment.

> Panther: I'm intrigued because I know you are tasked with American Literature, and I'm seeing that this one is the Keynote Address to the 2004 Democratic Convention by Barack Obama versus these, the Declaration of Independence, Letter to the Reverence, I mean we're talking about beginnings of America.
>
> Jerome: Yea, we're still in the Revolutionary period, so this [Obama's Address] is the only outlier. I like to bring a little bit of, okay, even those, this is 200 years in the past, there's still things we're connected by. There's still a reason we are still studying American literature, there is a string, here is a tie that keeps us all. All this literature is not just written in a vacuum. Y'know? Um, there's a lot of echoes of this [pointing to other two texts] in here [Obama's Address]. And then there are a lot of echoes of Phillis Wheatley in here [Obama's Address]. So, I try to make those connections if I can. (Jerome, October 2, 2017)

Miss Jerome is able to see how the past influences the present and ties each period of

American literature to modern day examples, interpretations, or patterned themes. Here,

students read Revolutionary literature from The Declaration of Independence, which in 1776

included the line, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that

they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life,

Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness" next to Phillis Wheatley's 1768 poem "On Being

Brought from Africa to America." Both texts were placed alongside Barack Obama's

Keynote Address to the 2004 Democratic Convention which quoted the Declaration of

Independence and included a story of his father's immigration—by choice—to America from

Kenya and his gratefulness for the move. Alvermann (1989) wrote, "teacher decisions

influence what students have the opportunity to learn, what students attend to, what they can

do, and how they learn in particular ways. These teacher decisions directly affect how the meaning of text is mediated" (p. 146). While the Network curriculum required a limited set of texts for the Revolutionary Era, Miss Jerome layered additional texts that reflected more nuanced understandings of the line "all men are created equal" from the Declaration of Independence by putting it in conversation with the poetry of a formerly enslaved Black woman. Additionally, students were able to mediate the phrase's meaning over time; recognizing its usage has changed from 1776 to 2004. Lee (2014) described the use of complex text sets as a disciplinary literacy instructional practice, "[t]he selection of text sets is important because it requires a careful analysis of the complexity demands of texts, such that students have opportunities to re-visit a problem set over time...as well as a common theme" (p. 12). Miss Jerome selected a range of text genres: a primary historical document, poem, and speech, which spanned levels of complexity. She paired students with different complexities of texts, though through structured class discussion she did not limit access to the content. Additionally, as Lee (2014) recommended, the texts shared a common theme related to freedom within America, and how the theme is understood over time.

The use of complex text sets across genres and modalities was a common theme in Miss Jerome's instructional practices. The interconnected themes in the texts were regularly related to issues of difference and oppression; Miss Jerome's instruction surrounding archetype intentionally supported students' ability to identify the themes. Paris and Alim (2014) ask the question:

> What if, indeed, the goal of teaching and learning with youth of color was not ultimately to see how closely students could perform White middle-class norms but to explore, honor, and extend, and, at times, problematize their heritage and community practices? (p. 86)

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In March, after six months of instruction, Miss Jerome's American Literature course regularly began to reflect the goals she had for teaching and learning with youth of Color as an answer to Paris and Alim's (2017) question. Using disciplinary literacy practices associated with literacy criticism such as archetypes and rhetorical analysis, students were regularly exploring, honoring, and problematizing complex text sets that reflected their own heritages and communities. One lesson exemplifies the potential for disciplinary literacy instruction within a culturally sustaining framework that supports adolescent literacy learning.

Miss Jerome began class by posing the following question: "Does the use of archetype limit cultural uniqueness or cultural expression?" Students had been studying archetypes for several months demonstrating their ability to identify archetypes across texts. I sat at a table with three students, Alexus, Adam, and Majesty. Alexus is an outgoing Black Catholic youth who often greeted me each morning. Adam is quieter Latino with a perpetual smile on his face and large black rimmed glasses. Majesty, a Black young woman, claims to have few friends in the class and largely keeps to herself unless engaged in a conversation about her favorite female hip hop artists; but her classmates respected her preference to listen. Together we turned to listen to Miss Jerome.

Jerome:	Let me model this for you, I'm going to talk out of both sides of my mouth.
	[laughter]
Jerome:	What did I say? Is that a bad saying?
Alexus:	No, no, it's just the saying or the way you say it.
Jerome:	Okay, well, I'm going to model this and I'm going to talk out of both sides of my mouth on it, kay? So here you have some African masks (Figure 9).
Adam:	[quietly] Wakanda forever.
Majesty:	[rolls her eyes, smirking]

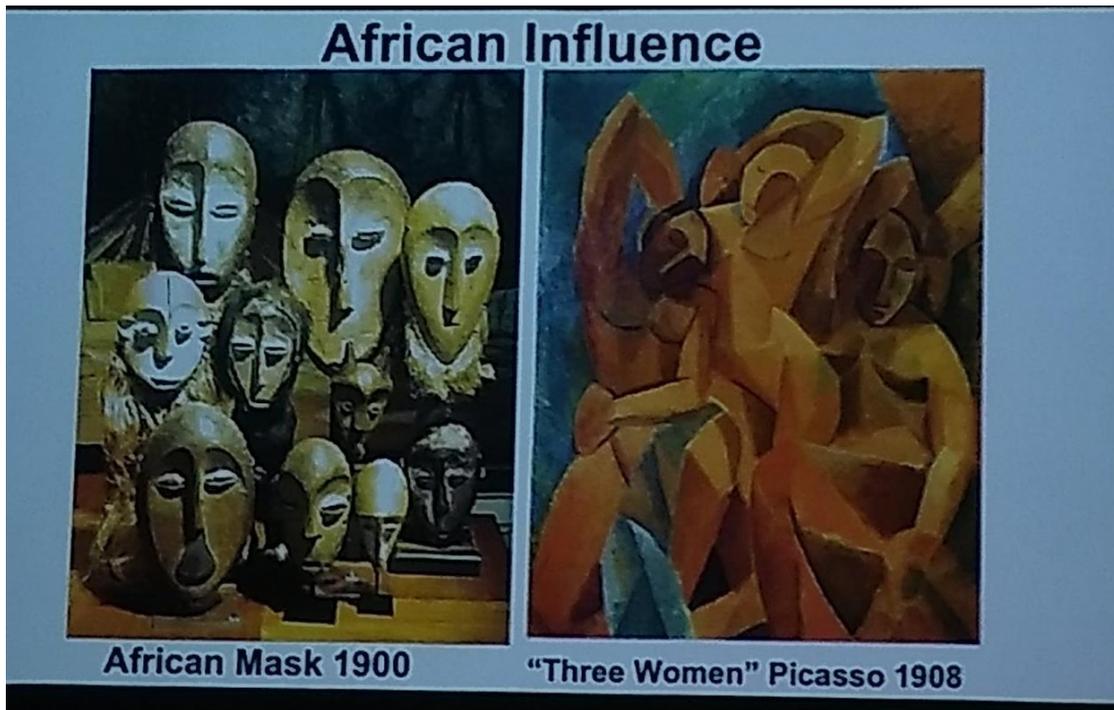|	
Jerome:	And on the right you have Picasso. Any of you ever hear of—do you know Picasso?
	[student responses come in unintelligible murmurs]
Jerome:	Okay, so he, he you can see it in the faces, he was inspired or uh used the masks, the African masks to create his painting. So, first I'm going to say yes, archetype, or using this pattern of African masks, limits cultural uniqueness. So I'm looking at these two and Picasso, he copied or took the pattern and did not make it his own. It's reproducing the African masks so they're just like, they're normal. There's nothing special or unique because the pattern is everywhere. But then if I were on the other side I might say, might argue um, No, no, this actually enhances cultural uniqueness because he adds to the pattern. I'm noticing here [motioning to masks] they're just a face, but here [motions to the painting] they're a full body.
Jerome:	[whispering] Wait, is that painting? [raises eyebrows in mock shock]
Leah:	Naked ladies?
Jerome:	Yea?
Leah:	Yea.
Jerome:	Whoa.
Alexus:	[laughing]

Figure 10. Comparing cultural archetypes in two pieces of art.

Miss Jerome displayed two new pieces of art (Figure 11). On the left is a painting completed by Kehinde Wiley. Miss Jerome explains Wiley recently painted the portrait of former president Barak Obama which was hung in the Portrait Gallery only a few weeks previously. The other piece is stained glass from a Catholic cathedral titled *Mary, Comforter of the Afflicted*. Wiley's is titled *Mary, Comforter of the Afflicted II*. Miss Jerome gives students several moments to study the two pieces of art. She had explained before the lesson, "we've been doing archetypes in their books and some movies and T.V. shows, but I wanted more, um, more examples." Miss Jerome's decision to include paintings, stained glass, and masks reflects her equal valuing of non-print modalities (New London Group, 1996). Alvermann and Wilson (2011) explain each mode has its own "affordances" that can convey and construct meaning differently; asking students to move across modes ranging from images to gestures to written language increases the opportunity for students to make meaning. By including sculpture, painting, and stained glass she was making use of other forms of symbolic representation that did not privilege print-based texts alone (Moje et al., 2000).
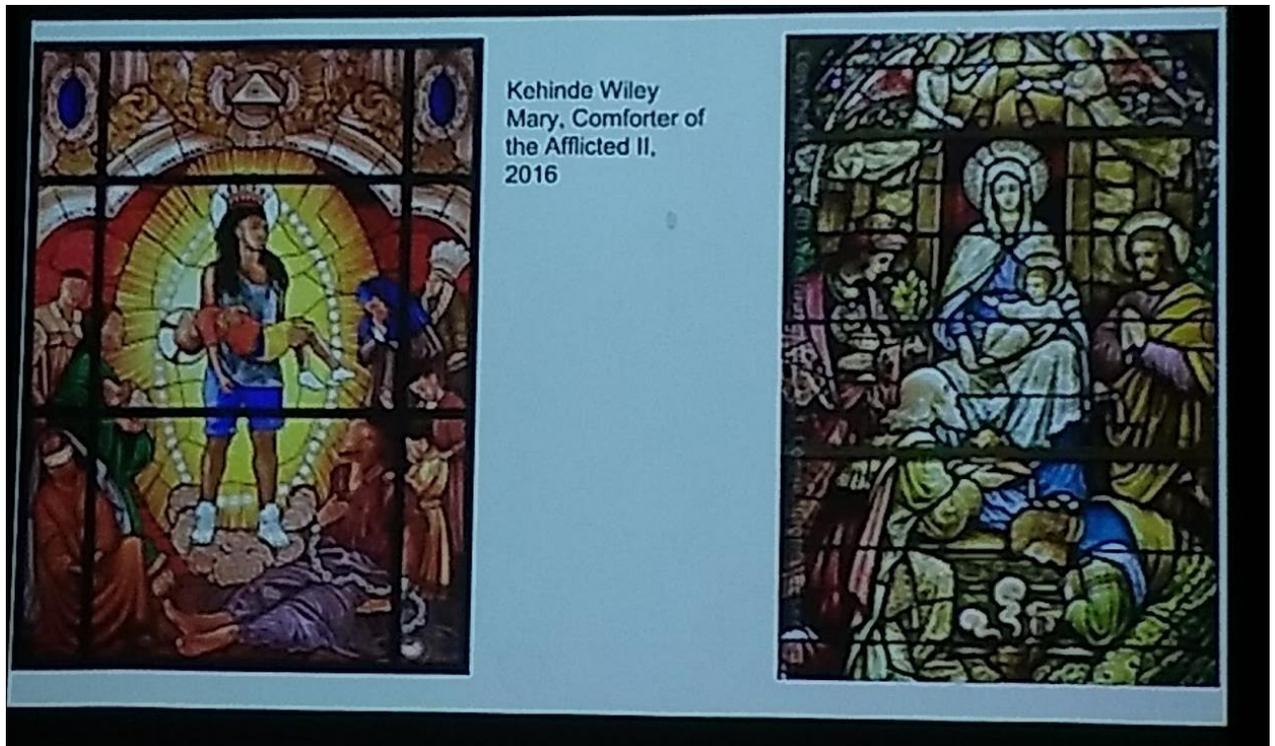
Figure 11. A painting by Kehinde Wiley paired with a Roman Catholic stained glass window.

Miss Jerome posted the question again: "Does the use of archetype limit cultural uniqueness

or cultural expression?" After a few long moments, I turned to my group.

Leah:	to Alexus, Adam, and Majesty] What do you think? What do you see?
Alexus:	That's blasphemous.
Leah:	Whoa! That was fast! What do you mean?
Alexus:	So this guy [pointing to Wiley's painting] just copied this one. And that's Mary. You don't mess with Mary.
Adam:	[laughing]
Leah:	Why not?
Alexus:	That's the mother of Jesus! You don't mess with that!

Alexus struggled to explain her thinking, so I prompted, "Do any of you identify as

Catholic?" Alexus and Adam nod. Majesty shakes her head no. "Okay," I continue, "So are

there some cultural archetypes you can't mess with?"

Adam:	No.
Alexus:	Yes. You can't mess with religion, that's too personal.
Adam:	Is it? I mean, the one on the left, is it even religious? I mean, that's a dude. That's not even Mary in the middle.
Alexus:	Yea, it's Mary because look at the crown and light stuff coming out of their heads.
Majesty:	Halos.
Alexus:	Yea, halos or whatever. That's supposed to be Mary but it's a man. And that's supposed to be Jesus but it's a, uh, well
Adam:	Is he like not? Is he dead?
Majesty:	Yea. So they like killed Jesus?
Adam:	Nah, nah, look. The way I see it, um that's like, Jesus is all innocent and all that but there [pointing to the right] he's alive and getting worshiped and all that. But there [pointing to the left] he's still all innocent but he's dead.
Majesty:	Jesus died, too.
Adam:	But people like are mourning instead of worshiping.
Leah:	Why?
Alexus:	I don't know but it's wrong. You can't do Jesus like that.
Leah:	Like what?
Alexus:	Like, like...I don't know, just like, you can't mess with religion.
Leah:	But what I'm hearing is knowing the story there [pointing to the right] is helping you understand the story on the left. Right? Like, um what Majesty said about the halos. You knew that because you knew this story [pointing to the right]. So can't archetypes help you understand better or um, understand another cultural story better?
Alexus:	Yea but [pause] that, that doesn't mean you should.
Adam:	If you have something to say. Or can say it better. Yea.
Leah:	Majesty, I really like your hair.
Majesty:	Thank you. [touching her braids]
Leah:	What would you think if I came in tomorrow as a middle aged white lady and had the same hairstyle?
Alexus:	Ohhh no! You can't do that.
Majesty:	[nodding in agreement]
Leah:	I'm not, don't worry, but why not? Why can't I?
Majesty:	White people be taking braids callin' them boxer braids but we know.
Alexus:	[nodding] That's ours, and then like, we get called ghetto or whatever for it.
Majesty:	Yea. Like [name of student] came in, she's Hispanic or whatever, and a group of girls were like no. Made her take them out. I don't think I'd do that, but yea.
Leah:	What if, Adam, what if I started saying "wow, that's so on fleek" and "that's so wig." "nice fit"?
Adam:	[laughing and cringing] Noo, no. Just. No.

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Alexus:	Yea, you can [gives Adam a stern look] I'd be like, thinking you're weird, but you can.
Leah:	So we're talking about religion [motions to screen], Black culture, and youth language. Three different cultures. [to Alexus] Why can I use patterns from some of them and not others?
Majesty:	You already got your culture. Why would you want to take from someone else's?

I moved to an empty desk to the side of the group to write some field notes about the conversation. Still able to hear the conversation, but no longer a part of it, the conversation continued.

Majesty:	[to Alexus] Did you hear about the whole Bruno Mars thing?
Alexus:	No.
Majesty:	So some people, I think on Twitter, so I saw it on Twitter, basically started coming at him saying he steals from Black culture.
Adam:	He's Black.
Majesty:	No he's not, he's like, I don't know what he is, something else, though.
Alexus:	I thought he was Black.
Adam:	[reading from his phone] Bruno Mars was born in Honolulu, Hawaii blah blah blah His father is of half Puerto Rican and half Ash-something Jewish. His mom is...
Alexus:	He's from Hawaii?
Adam:	His mom is from the Philippines.
Majesty:	He's Jewish?
Adam:	I don't know, that's what it says.
Majesty:	So these people were all saying he takes from Black music and gets all popular because people think he's Black when he's not.
Alexus:	I thought he was Black.
Adam:	Me, too.
Majesty:	But I'm Black and I like his music.

It was the most I had observed Majesty share in class; I lingered a few more moments but the conversation had turned to music, so I moved to another group of students: Joy, Derrick, and Anthony. Joy and Derrick were in the middle of an animated discussion and Anthony caught my eye, shrugged, and mouthed, "I don't know what's happening." Grinning, I took a seat and asked Joy to summarize where they were in the conversation. Joy was an excellent

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storyteller and already prepared to perform for her new audience member, a giant smile on

her face:

Joy: Okay, so you look at this stain glass thing or whatever, right? You've
            got this story. You have baby Jesus all happy and holy with his little
            glowy thing, you've got momma Mary all chill, Joseph on the side and
            these guys worshipping him, right? Okay, so I was saying they're all
            white, right? But over here [motioning to the left] no one's white.
Leah: How do you know?
Derrick: You know what I just, I just noticed this. Look you've got the feathers,
            is that a Native American?
Leah: Y'know, I hadn't noticed that until last hour, another student pointed
            that out.
Derrick: Whoa, whoa, look! So so in the corner you have a Native American
            person, right? You've got the person in the blue thing, the way I see it
            that's Muslim or whatever and then those kids, maybe that's the
            friends of the kid that just got shot or whatever and the man in chains
            down at the bottom, that's all enslaved people, so so so, you see? Each
            of these people they represented, the way I see it, they represent people
            that have been oppressed by [glances at me] sorry, um, oppressed by
            white people, right?
Leah: So what other marginalized groups do you see represented?
Derrick: I don't know about the orange person.
Joy: They're blindfolded.
Derrick: Blind maybe? Then the person in green is holding something.
Joy: A gift? Like the [motioning to the right] like the [looks to me] what are
            they called?
Leah: Wise men?
Joy: Yea. Three wise men, duh.
Derrick: Maybe a baby. Yea, then that last one, the dude, it looks like, crutches?
            So disabled?
Leah: What does that mean? Having all the marginalized people represented
            in the painting?
Joy: I wouldn't have noticed how white that one is [pointing right] unless I
            saw that one [pointing right]
Leah: Yea, and how many times have you been in a Catholic church with
            stained glass like that?
Joy: I know, right?
Derrick: So this is, this is a statement. I was saying, just before, I was saying
            the Jesus figure, right? You've got this   baby over here just born and
            you got this boy over here, just died.
Leah: How do you know that?
Derrick: The way he's laying and that woman is holding him
Anthony: That's a man, dude, those are dreads

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Derrick:	Whatever, so he's being held but he's all loose so he probably just died right? He's like, all the black boys.
Leah:	So he could be Tamir Rice?
Anthony:	Who?
Leah:	Um, Michael Brown?
Anthony:	Oh. [softer] Oh.
Derrick:	So you've got like the beginning of Christianity and you've got the end of Christianity.
Joy:	Huh?
Derrick:	Like, before and after. Before when all the white guys be praising Jesus but then you've got all these people on this side the effect, that's what happened when Christianity like spread.
Leah:	Oh, I think I see what you mean. So like, Christianity colonized all these people groups? It was why, why they're marginalized?
Derrick:	Yea, yea, so before, when Jesus was alive and then after, once Jesus died, what happened to everyone since.
Joy:	That's dark.
Anthony:	That's deep.

Miss Jerome wrapped up the small group conversations which had lasted about 13 minutes

and invited a representative from each group to share a summary of their response to

question, "Does the use of archetype limit cultural uniqueness or cultural expression?"

Alexus shared for her group saying:

> There are some cultures that are off limits. You can't just take those culture's archetypes or whatever because they don't belong to them. Uh, okay, so like I don't think this artist should be using Catholic art because that's just blasphemy because it's not theirs. But I guess you can sometimes, but there's a line. So yea, you can do it but there's a line.

Next, Derrick shared:

> At first we were, we noticed how you can use the same story the same pattern to understand more things. Like because we knew that story [motions to the stained glass] we knew more, but what we really think looking at it, or what I think, I don't think Anthony thinks this [Anthony shrugs] is this heightens it [motions to the painting] because it shows this history of how Christianity was in the beginning, when it was born and how the world is now after death, with all these groups that are oppressed or suffering. Like you got the single mom, the disabled person, the slave, the Native American, they're all suffering while all these guys [motions to the stained glass] are worshiping. So it's like before and after Christianity.

Miss Jerome pauses, "Thank you, I don't think, I don't know I had thought about it like that," before moving on to the next group.

Miss Jerome's goals for this lesson were multiple. First, she had three goals that came from the Network standards:

- Compare and contrast concepts, relationships, and/or ideas in a text.
- Analyze how the author uses structure (e.g., order of information, beginning/middle/end, chronology, cause & effect) to contribute to overall meaning of a text.
- Interpret content presented in different formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively etc.).

She extended these goals, adapting them for the lesson, and rewriting them:

- Compare and contrast concepts related to culture, cultural appropriation, and archetypal relationships in texts.
- Analyze how the artist uses cultural structures and images to contribute to overall meaning of a text.
- Interpret content presented in different art-based formats

Discussing the differences between the goals, Miss Jerome articulated her underlying goals: to directly address culture and difference and to more explicitly align the goals with norms in the discipline of literary criticism. I represent how the Network goals and Miss Jerome's goals aligned with CSP and extended the Network standards in Table 14.

After rewriting the standards to extend and contextualize them within the lesson, Miss Jerome selected art-based texts that reflected the racial, ethnic, and religious identities of her multiracial, multiethnic, and multireligious students; giving their identities visual presence. Before asking her students to engage with the question, "Does the use of archetype limit cultural uniqueness or cultural expression?" Miss Jerome had previously given students

Table 14

Mediating the Network English Language Art Standards

Content Goal from Network Standards	Rewritten Disciplinary Content Goal	Alignment with CSP	Extension
(Reading) Compare and contrast concepts, relationships, and/or ideas in a text.	Compare and contrast concepts related to culture, cultural appropriation, and archetypal relationships in texts	Critical centering of students' valued knowledge Capacity to contend with cultural appropriation	Use of archetypes
(Reading) Analyze how the author uses structure (e.g., order of information, beginning/middle/end, chronology, cause & effect) to contribute to overall meaning of a text.	Analyze how the artist uses cultural structures and images to contribute to overall meaning of a text.	Historicized content with cultural representation over time and across art	Multiliteracies take the place of traditional print texts
(Reading) Interpret content presented in different formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively etc.).	Interpret content presented in different art-based formats	Critical centering of students' and communities' valued literacy practices. Community and student accountability and agency	Collaborative conversations include multiple valued literacy practices (e.g., speaking, listening, viewing)

access to the discipline of literary criticism with literacy tools to name and analyze texts for

patterns. Students had previously demonstrated their ability to independently apply the

disciplinary literacy tools, but had not consistently extended or adapted the tools to critique

texts. Miss Jerome then provided historical context for the four different texts, providing

information about the creators of each work of art and their time periods. Within this lesson,

Miss Jerome also modeled the expert thinking patterns and discourse of literary criticism using sentence stems like, "I'm looking at..." and "I'm noticing..." referring back to details in the structure and images of the texts to support her claims. Tang (2016) noted explicit instruction in the use of disciplinary language and explanation sequences were the most common ways to apprentice learners into the discipline. Miss Jerome extended the practices, however, modeling how experts can also critique the design of texts, "So I'm looking at these two and Picasso, he copied or took the pattern and did not make it his own. It's reproducing the African masks so they're just like, they're normal. There's nothing special or unique because the pattern is everywhere." This model provided access to the disciplinary vocabulary and literacy tools to analyze the texts and critique their design. This is important because the point of disciplinary literacy instruction is, "to make it clear how disciplinary communities (or any discourse community, for that matter) produces knowledge, thereby enabling learners to question that knowledge" (Moje, 2010, p. 275). In disciplines and communities where expertise has been limited to those with power (Anzaldúa, 1990), the ability to critique dominant valued knowledge, come to different conclusions, and posit different theories challenges the macrostructures of power (Lewis et al., 2007; Moje & Lewis, 2007).

Students largely met the goals. Anthony was the only student to express a sense of confusion, though Derrick provided evidence additional conversation had happened within the group I had not observed, making the comment, "but what we really think looking at it, or what I think, I don't think Anthony thinks this [Anthony shrugs]." All other students demonstrated through their dialogue they had met one or more of the goals for the lesson represented in Table 15. For example, Adam was able to compare and contrast the stained

glass version of Mary, Comforter of the Afflicted and Kehinde Wiley's painting *Mary, Comforter of the Afflicted II* stating, "Jesus is all innocent and all that but there [pointing to the right] he's alive and getting worshiped and all that. But there [pointing to the left] he's still all innocent but he's dead...But people like are mourning instead of worshiping." He compares the two images of a Savior or Christ like figure as an innocent child and then contrasts the two images. In the Roman Catholic depiction, the baby is "alive and getting worshipped" whereas Wiley's depiction has the child "dead" with people "mourning instead of worshipping." Additionally, his tablemate Majesty demonstrates a critical centering of her valued knowledge—she engaged in the conversation, connecting a discussion around cultural appropriation with a recent online reading about Bruno Mars and accusations he culturally appropriated Black culture within his music. Finally, the third member of the trio, Alexus, spoke for the group during the whole class discussion, weaving in the use of the term archetype and problematizing the use of Roman Catholic imagery for art outside of Roman Catholic culture and spaces, "because it's not theirs." Alexus is problematizing and critiquing Wiley's art for appropriating Roman Catholic cultural symbols with specific historical, social, and cultural meaning.

While Alexus, Adam, Majesty, Anthony, Joy, and Derrick do not represent every student in Miss Jerome's classroom, the conversations they were initiating and sustaining were evidence that Miss Jerome's curricularizing was meeting her goals; goals that mediated the Network standards by extending them in ways consistent with a shared disciplinary literacy and culturally sustaining pedagogies framework. Lee (2017) describes the central problem of academic disciplines that CSP addresses:

Table 15

Student Evidence of Meeting Goal

Rewritten Disciplinary Content Goal	Student Examples
Compare and contrast concepts related to culture, cultural appropriation, and archetypal relationships in texts • Critical centering of students' valued knowledge • Capacity to contend with cultural appropriation • Use of archetypes	• Adam: Jesus is all innocent and all that but there [pointing to the right] he's alive and getting worshiped and all that. But there [pointing to the left] he's still all innocent but he's dead...But people like are mourning instead of worshiping • Majesty: You already got your culture. Why would you want to take from someone else's? • Alexus: There are some cultures that are off limits. You can't just take those culture's archetypes or whatever because they don't belong to them. Uh, okay, so like I don't think this artist should be using Catholic art because that's just blasphemy because it's not theirs. • Alexus, Adam, and Majesty's uncertainty with cultural appropriation (e.g., braids are not okay, Black music is okay, Catholicism is not okay)
Analyze how the artist uses cultural structures and images to contribute to overall meaning of a text. • Historicized content with cultural representation over time and across art • Multiliteracies take the place of traditional print texts	• Derrick: Whoa, whoa, look! So so in the corner you have a Native American person, right? You've got the person in the blue thing, the way I see it that's Muslim or whatever and then those kids, maybe that's the friends of the kid that just got shot or whatever and the man in chains down at the bottom, that's all enslaved people, so so so, you see? Each of these people they represented, the way I see it, they represent people that have been oppressed by...white people, right? • Derrick: At first we were, we noticed how you can use the same story the same pattern to understand more things. Like because we knew that story [motions to the stained glass] we knew more...
Interpret content presented in different art-based formats • Critical centering of students' and communities' valued literacy practices. • Community and student accountability and agency • Collaborative conversations include multiple valued literacy	• Joy: I wouldn't have noticed how white that one is [pointing right] unless I saw that one [pointing right] • Derrick: ...this heightens it [motions to the painting] because it shows this history of how Christianity was in the beginning, when it was born and how the world is now after death, with all these groups that are oppressed or suffering. Like you got the single mom, the disabled person, the slave, the Native American, they're all suffering while all these guys [motions to the stained glass] are worshiping. So it's like before and after Christianity. • Majesty collaborated with her peers introducing new topics for the first observed time

practices (e.g., speaking,
listening, viewing)

There is no academic domain that we teach in schools that is not influenced by contributions and practices from across historical and diverse cultural ethnic communities. And the new knowledge that evolves is hybrid. Understanding the hybridity of the undergirdings of disciplinary knowledge, understandings such knowledge as social constructions whole explanatory power evolves with time, should be a goal of CSP for all students. (p. 268)

Every discipline is constructed and reconstructed over time. There are diverse bodies of knowledge that exist within each discipline, but historically may be silenced or erased. CSP offers the potential to envision academic disciplines that are constructed and reconstructed with the languages, literacies, and knowledge of diverse youth. In Miss Jerome's class, the students are equipped with disciplinary literacy practices and applying them independently to critique the discipline—and the work is far from over. Shortly after the lesson, Miss Jerome discussed her next goals: a critical analysis of the *Autobiography of Malcom X*. Students would be tracing the two examples of a hero's journey archetype in his story: first his journey towards whiteness where he sought money, a white girlfriend, and processed hair to attain status and capital. Second, his journey towards Blackness within the Nation of Islam. "I want them to be able to be able to talk about assimilation and appropriation. How that frames conversations about a hero's journey and the tragic hero archetypes," she explained. "Because in May, we're going to be writing our own stories using archetypes, but remixing them. Drawing from the ways stories actually happen, not just the way they're told." Students in Miss Jerome's class were preparing to take on the identity of an expert in the discipline (Moje, 2008) and adapt the discipline's Discourse and tools (Moje, 2010) to

challenge the traditional English literary canon with their own literacy practices and valued knowledge (Paris & Alim, 2017).

In Miss Jerome's classroom, she rejected colorblind discourse (Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Delpit, 2006; Milner, 2010) and challenged students to notice and name hegemonic macrostructures, such as the erasure of Native Americans within American Literature, and microstructures, such as students identifying as LGBT not having equal access to the school Prom (Lewis et al., 2007; Moje & Lewis, 2007). Miss Jerome supported students' ability to name and discuss racism, sexism, religious oppression, and othering of differences by providing the disciplinary vocabulary. Miss Jerome also gradually supported her students' ability to take on disciplinary identities through explicit disciplinary literacy instruction that revealed the language, thought patterns, and ways of structuring knowledge within the discipline (Fang & Coatoam, 2013; Fang & Schleppegrell, 2010; Tang, 2016) through tools such as archetypes and rhetorical devices (Lee, 2014; Lee & Spratley, 2006; Warren, 2013). These key disciplinary literacy practices focused on connecting the past to the present through complex and multimodal text sets because, "Culture is not static, nor is it trapped in the past" (San Pedro, 2017, p. 112). Her construction of complex text sets uncovered layers of history that feed present day hegemonic structures and placed them in conversation. As Lee (2017) explained, examination of, "historic and contemporary institutional structures and policies" can leverage good for understanding the present day—but even more hopeful, it can position students to examine and question, "the hybrid and diverse underpinnings of traditional academic domains" in order to recreate the discipline's futures (p. 268).

Continuing the Story

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Miss Jerome and Miss Gregory add to an incomplete story of the youth at Juan Diego High School. While the Network, funding sources, and teacher evaluation systems demand data points, numbers, and Lexile levels, presenting the youth as a demographic label or essentialized statistic, these two educators present full pictures of the youth they learn with each day. In this chapter, I presented two findings answering the question, *What practices are highly effective urban religious school teachers using to support adolescent students' literacy achievement?* First, highly effective teachers critically center and recenter youth identities and agency in literacy instructional practices. This included text selections that reflected students' cultural identities, valuing students' literacies as equally valid alongside traditional print-centric canons: as Miss Jerome said, "it's not a difference as a hierarchy." Second, highly effective teachers connect oppression and historicized content in disciplinary literacy practices. For Miss Jerome, this means utilizing critical strategies from literary analysis to challenge cultural representation that erases or distorts marginalized groups.

On March 10th, the first day of Juan Diego High School's spring break, I spoke with Alex Jerome. "I talked to President Gonzaga this week about what it would look like to take over the English department next year with Sarah [Cruise] leaving," she added, mid-conversation. The unofficial chair of the English department had recently announced she was leaving the school after ten years. Despite two other educators in the English department with more seniority—both in years teaching and years at the school—President Gonzaga had approached Miss Jerome to offer the first officially recognized role of English Department Chair. After several weeks of thought, Miss Jerome accepted the opportunity. For the upcoming school year, Miss Jerome will oversee curriculum writing for all English courses at the school level, participate in curriculum writing at the Network level, and attend

professional development trainings to prepare her for the role. During the exciting transition for Miss Jerome, the English Department, and the school, there is an opportunity for Miss Jerome, Miss Gregory, and their colleagues to continue humanizing the story of Juan Diego High School and its students through Miss Jerome's depth of knowledge and leadership.

In the following chapter, I offer implications of this work and recommendations to support Miss Jerome, Miss Gregory, their colleagues, and leadership at Juan Diego High School, and my final conclusions.

CHAPTER 6

IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity or it becomes the practice of freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world. (Freire, 2000, p. 34)

Throughout the previous chapters, I sought to contextualize the literacy instructional practices of educators at an urban Catholic high school and examine the practices through a culturally sustaining pedagogies framework informed by critical sociocultural theories of literacy. This study adds to the larger body of humanizing, critical scholarship on culturally sustaining pedagogies, adolescent literacies, and disciplinary literacy education—intentionally naming the ways schooling functions to "bring about conformity" or conversely "the practice of freedom" (Freire, 2000, p. 34). Miss Gregory and Miss Jerome are two of the 63 teachers, staff, and administrators at Juan Diego High School who regularly challenge themselves and each other to "deal critically and creatively" with the present educational reality of standards, assessments, and teacher evaluation. Blackburn (2013) wrote, "Action might look like a highly visible and audible march through city streets, but it may not. Action often happens at personal and communal levels but has consequences at institutional and societal levels" (p. 55). At Juan Diego, action happened at personal and communal levels as described in the four findings and their sub-findings described in Chapters 4 and 5:

1. Standardization restricts culturally sustaining curricularizing, but teachers enacted agency to negotiate dissonance

    a. Network standards are a starting point

    b. Prescribed texts can be adapted and challenged

c. Teacher evaluation is an opportunity to prioritize

2. Culturally sustaining curricularizing is uncertain work

   a. Culturally sustaining curricularizing is uncertain

   b. Culturally sustaining curricularizing is in the margins

3. Highly effective teachers critically center youth identities and agency in literacy instructional practices

   a. Youth identities are centered in texts and literacy practices

   b. Youth agency is centered and (re)centered

4. Highly effective teachers connect oppression and historicized content in disciplinary literacy practices

   a. Literacy practices name oppression

   b. Historicized oppression is challenged with disciplinary literacy practices

Within this final chapter of my dissertation, I will discuss the implications for these findings for Juan Diego High School's teachers and administration team. While the recommendations are intended for the "personal and communal level" they may have "consequences at institutional and societal levels" (Blackburn, 2013, p. 55); thus, I will also include recommendations for further research at the intersection of culturally sustaining pedagogies, adolescent literacies, and disciplinary literacy, particularly within urban Catholic schools.

Implications for Teachers at Juan Diego High School

Drawing from a critical sociocultural theoretical perspective, pedagogies construct and use tools such as language, questions, processes, and texts used for instructional practices; each tool has meanings and functions that are tied to the particular context (Moje et al., 2000; Wenger, 1998), thus removing a tool from the context in which it was developed

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invariably shifts its effectiveness. Within this chapter, I provide tools to support literacy instructional practices for the educators and administrators who work at Juan Diego High School. Gutiérrez and Johnson (2017), "call out researchers who romanticize or present uncomplicated understandings of the practices of youth from non-dominant communities" (p. 258). They challenge researchers to avoid essentializing or simplifying the complexity of literacy instructional practices by suggesting they can be removed from the context in which they were developed. I align with other researchers within the field of CSP by cautioning these findings implicate tools for literacy instructional practices, but the tools, and therefore the practices, must vary as they are used in different contexts and with different learners (Irizarry, 2017). Rather than focus on discrete practices since, "there are no easy answers or prescribed pedagogies that will ensure success for all learners in their literate interactions in secondary schools" (Moje et al., 2000, p. 177), I choose to link practices to analytic tools rooted in principles of literacy and literacy theory.

The findings for research question one focused on agentive practices informed by the culturally sustaining pedagogies framework Miss Jerome and Miss Gregory used to negotiate the influence of standardization within their curricula and instructional practices; the implications of that finding are analytic tools and resources are needed to support teachers' negotiation of the standards within curricular design. Both educators used Network and professional standards as a base to build from. Miss Gregory added additional standards from several sources. First, the National Association for Music Education (NAFME) to increase disciplinary complexity. Next, drawing from her expertise as a music therapist her own goals related to building students' agency, identities, and growing students' knowledge of their own cultural heritages; what Freire (1996) would call humanization. Miss Jerome added

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additional levels of disciplinary complexity to the Network benchmarks by extending the standards to include multiple modes and counterscripts of texts and literacies, layering the prescriptive discrete reading skills embedded within the standards with extensions foregrounding critical thinking and using rhetoric as gateway for literary criticism (Warren, 2013). In order to negotiate these decisions, both educators critically interrogated and questioned the provided standards. Botzakis, Burns and Hall (2014) similarly agree that standards are, by nature, formulaic and narrow; they are not inherently bad but can reduce teaching to a checklist rather than one of the many complex tools at a teacher's disposal for curricular design. Miss Gregory and Miss Jerome made complex decisions about what to teach that were informed, but not governed, by the standards.

In Table 16 I offer questions to guide initial analysis of Network standards for educators at Juan Diego High School. The questions are primarily drawn from the thinking and questioning of Miss Gregory and Miss Jerome. Further, they align with CSP by explicitly foregrounding knowledge of students' heritages, languages, identities, valued literacy practices, and funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992) and intentionally question how students' valued knowledge and literacy practices can be leveraged within instruction. Building on the notion that cognition is culturally mediated (Cole, 1985; Hollins, 2015; Vygotskiĭ, 1978), Irvine (2002) contends, "I believe that students fail in schools not because their teachers do not know their content, but because their teachers cannot make connections between subject-area content and their students' existing mental schemes, prior knowledge, and cultural perspectives" (p. 47). The questions provide a system through which educators regularly name students' strengths and consider how those strengths influence the goals of instruction: centering students rather than standards. Additionally, the questions' language is

influenced by Carney and Indrisano's (2013) mediation of Shulman's (1986) Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) framework which explicitly names the subject matter content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and curricular knowledge needed within a given lesson or instructional practice. Carney and Indrisano (2013) add disciplinary literacy as an additional layer because it focuses educators' attentions on the literacy practices that are "inextricable intertwined" to disciplinary content (Fang & Coatoam, 2013, p. 628). These layers are important because instructional practices that are not adapted across disciplines (Alvermann & Swafford, 1989; Holt-Reynolds, 1990; Stewart & O'Brien, 1989) or for diverse learners (Alvermann et al., 2012; Griffin et al., 1991; Vaughn et al., 1997) are routinely ineffective at supporting youth disciplinary identities (Moje, 2008, 2010; Moje et al., 2000).

Given that disciplines are socioculturally constructed within sociopolitical histories, I would caution educators looking to disciplinary experts alone when considering other sources of meaningful disciplinary content knowledge or literacy practices. Miss Gregory turned to a professional organization, NAFME and related sub-disciplines of music, such as music therapy, to build her understanding of the discipline's valued knowledge and practices. Wickens, Maderino, Parker and Jung (2015) argue a narrow focus on experts in the field can be problematic given that disciplines are socioculturally constructed within sociopolitical histories. There is risk that experts may represent limited perspectives given histories of white educational supremacy that have always limited access to education and power within society (Nocon & Cole, 2009; Moje, 2010). As Miss Gregory stated, a goal is to prepare students to participate in their own communities; thus considering the valued knowledge and practices within the local community provides counterbalance to the limitations of

Table 16

Analytic Questions for Negotiating Standards

1. Who makes or creates the standards of the discipline?
   - Why is this standard (e.g., content knowledge, practices) important to the discipline? When is it used? How did it come to be valued?
   - What implicit values or norms does the standard contain?
   - What other standards of knowing and doing are valued in the local community related to this discipline? If you do not know, how would you find out? What resources (e.g., people, organizations, places, histories) in the local community are related to this standard?
   - What other standards of knowing and doing are valued in the discipline?
   - What goals do students' have related to the course and discipline?
2. What disciplinary content knowledge will students need to meet this standard?
   - What foundational concepts and vocabulary will students need to meet this standard?
   - What knowledge do students already have that relates to this knowledge? If you do not know, how would you find out?
   - What knowledge is not represented in this standard (e.g., diverse voices, experiences, genres, sub-fields)?
   - What connections can be made between students' existing knowledge and the disciplinary content knowledge?
   - What are likely misconceptions or common errors students will encounter while mastering this knowledge?
3. What disciplinary literacy practices will students need to meet this standard?
   - What literacy practices do students already have?
   - What connections can be made between students' existing knowledge and the different literacy practices?
   - What other literacy practices will students need to understand the discipline's Discourse that are not represented?

disciplinary content standards and experts. Additionally, it is an essential component to

support community agency (Alim & Paris, 2017; Brayboy et al., 2012).

In addition to Network standards, Miss Jerome was tasked with preparing students for

an End of Course (EOC) exam, the quarterly Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI), and the

American College Test (ACT). The assessments prescribed certain literary texts to be used in

her curriculum with the purpose of increasing student familiarity and preparedness for the

literacy events within each test. To negotiate the prescriptive curriculum, Miss Jerome added counternarratives that placed texts in conversation with their historical context and other perspectives. She also omitted or strategically replaced texts based on their purpose within the assessment. Additionally, Miss Jerome explicitly built students' capacity to deal with internalized and explicit oppression (Paris & Alim, 2017) through critical literacy analysis tools that equipped students to contend with the hidden curriculum within the assessments (Anyon, 1996). The analytic questions provided in Table 17 include the implications arising from Miss Jerome's negotiation of multiple goals: preparing students for standardized assessments, maintaining high academic expectations, and preparing students to be change agents in a pluralistic society. The questions reflect Miss Jerome's shift away from the corporate manufactured textbook for her American Literature course and highlight the sophisticated decision making process she used to expand, adapt, and omit prescribed texts within her instruction. Textbooks largely are unproven to support students' literacy development (e.g., Alvermann, 2011b; Alvermann & Moore, 1991; Ivey & Fisher, 2005), with synthesis of the research pointing to multimodal, interactive, and disciplinary texts as the most effective tools to support disciplinary content and literacy knowledge (Moje & Lewis Ellison, 2016). After completing the first draft of these analytic questions, I then compared the final recommended tool against Hollins' (2015) curriculum validation questions (see Appendix D) to ensure the resulting analytic questions still foregrounded and valued student and community culture.

Literacy instruction and curricular decisions cannot be reduced to lists of questions and lists of questions alone are not sufficient to curricularize in culturally sustaining ways

Table 17

Analytic Questions for Negotiating Texts on Standardized Assessments

- What is the purpose of the text on the assessment?
- What content knowledge will students need to comprehend the text?
    - What prior knowledge is needed for students to comprehend the text (e.g., specialized language, sentence structure, intertextuality)?
    - What disciplinary literacy practices will students need to comprehend the text?
- What is the hidden curriculum within this literacy event (e.g., standard English, Eurocentrism, colorblindness)?
    - Do students need to learn the hidden curriculum to be successful within this literacy event?
    - How will it be explicitly taught without giving up, sacrificing, or denigrating their own language, literacies, or culture?
- What modes of text are included (e.g., print, digital, diagram, political cartoon)?
    - Have students been explicitly taught how to navigate the text within the discipline?
    - What design features of the text may cause confusion (e.g., symbols, formatting)?
- Who are the authors of the text (e.g., gender, race)?
    - What is the profession of the creators (e.g., disciplinary expert, textbook publisher)?
    - What texts, authors, and professions are missing?
    - How does the content reflect the accomplishments of different cultural groups in developing new knowledge in the field?
- What is the historical and political context of the text?
    - Is the context provided?
    - Does it include a positive historical representation of the accomplishments, values, and beliefs of culturally diverse population?
    -

(Botzakis et al., 2014; Freebody & Freiberg, 2011; Irvine, 2002). Rather, this tool is useful

only insofar as it exposes the silences, gaps, and distortions that thrive in traditional print

texts, textbooks, and prescriptive curriculum (Alvermann, 1989; Apple, 1993; Giroux, 1984;

Luke, 1995; Moje & Lewis Ellison, 2016). The tool becomes more meaningful as it is

adapted to address the unique needs of the school, classroom, discipline, and learners. By

way of example, I provide a complex text set created by using the questions in the above

table. This text set in Table 18 relates to Miss Jerome's curricular adaptations based on the

Table 18

Complex Text Set for Gettysburg Address

Text(s)	Rationale
"Gettysburg Address in Translation" [electronic resource] from www.lincolnbicentennial.org	The purpose for reading the Gettysburg Address on the EOC is to (a) identify the main idea (b) identify one or more rhetorical strategies (c) explain one or more rhetorical strategies (d) explain why the rhetorical strategy is persuasive (d) not use first person in the response (e) not express a personal position An online resource the Address translated into 32 languages will allow students to read the address in their own language.

Excerpts from the Declaration of Independence
Excerpts from Pericles Funeral Narration
Psalm 90
	The Gettysburg Address contains direct references and allusions to other works including:
	  ▪ Quote from Declaration of Independence
	  ▪ Biblical allusions (e.g., consecrate, new birth)
	  ▪ Parallelism with Psalm 90
	  ▪ Parallelism with Pericles Funeral Narration
	Including these texts will support students' identification of intertextuality, a rhetorical device.

"I Come Off" [song] by Young MC (1989) "A Moment of Clarity" [song] by Jay-Z (2003) "More or Less" [song] by Talib Kweli (2007) "Up to No Good Living" [song] by Chris Stapleton (2017) "Pop Culture Does the Gettysburg Address" [video] from Time.com	The intertextuality also moves through history. These are more modern adaptations that directly reference or allude to the Gettysburg Address. They represent a range of rap, hip hop, and country music and a montage of movies, documentaries, and television shows that draw from the Gettysburg Address. This will support students' understanding of intertextuality by potentially connecting it with prior knowledge or more familiar concepts.

Google Arts and Culture: "Gettysburg Address"
  ▪ The Nicolay copy
	The Gettysburg Address contains complex linguistic features including:
	  ▪ Historical vocabulary (e.g., fourscore)

Table continues

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- The Hay copy
- The Everett copy
- The Bancroft copy
- The Bliss copy

- Semantic structures (e.g., the world will little note)
- Complex syntax (e.g., compound, complex sentences, em dash for appositive phrases, parenthetical asides, and commas)

Using Google Arts and Culture, students can compare the five different handwritten versions of the address and note how the vocabulary, language, and sentence structures are each different, but communicate the same meaning with slightly different effects. The analysis can support understandings of how these discourse tools were strategically used to communicate meaning through functional language analysis.

The resource also provides multiple other primary documents surrounding the address to place it in a historical context, provide students agency to investigate and select texts, and multimodal options such as a 3D map of Gettysburg today with embedded photographs from the Civil War. Adding the historical context will support understandings of the main idea.

The Poet X (2018) by Elizabeth Acevedo
The Crossover (2014) by Kwame Alexander

These two young adult texts use prose, poetry, or both to communicate. The writing uses complex syntax structures, include em dashes, to communicate ideas. It also provides examples from authors and poets of Color who code mesh Spanish and English and AAL and English.

"Chicago Times Editorial" published November 23, 1863 from www.teachinghistory.com

"The Gettysburg Address and the Mission Not Accomplished" by Scot Hancock from www.hufffingtonpost.com

The effectiveness of the rhetorical devices in the address is contested despite the question's implicit assumption it is universally persuasive. While the question asks students to not communicate their analysis, an extension would be providing students with examples of critiques to the speech both from the time period and today from diverse disciplinary experts.

"Black Soldiers in the Civil War" [web resource] by the National Archives	The Gettysburg Address is one remembrance of the Civil War battle. Other voices remember the Civil War from the era and analyze the speech from a historical perspective today. These texts represent additional positive representations of the accomplishments of culturally diverse groups in the era include a collection of photographs, letters, documentary videos, and articles about soldiers of Color from the National Archives. While the resources are predominantly focused on Black male soldiers, there are also limited resources about the accomplishments of Black women and Latinx Americans.
"Black Soldiers" [video] by Hari Jones for www.civilwar.org	

Table continues

inclusion of The Gettysburg Address (1863/1994) in the prescribed curriculum for the

American Literature EOC.

The complex text set in Table 18 reflects Miss Jerome's multiliteracies definition of

literacy pedagogy, including multiple modalities and media that lend themselves to critical

framing for students' situated and transformed practice (Lee & Spratley, 2014; Moje &

Lewis Ellison, 2016; The New London Group, 1996). Providing varieties of genres and texts

across a range of complexity and explicitly teaching students how to read and comprehend

the texts is more strongly associated with literacy gains than matching students and texts

through complexity scales, such as the Lexile (Hiebert, 2009). As students are taught to be

curators and facilitators of their own texts and texts that reflect their lived experiences, they

can navigate text sets independently to accomplish the various goals of instruction and their

own purposes (Moje & Lewis Ellison, 2016). Indeed, to become produces of texts that

challenge the dominate canonical narratives, languages, literacies, and modes of design and

create new possibilities within disciplinary Discourses (Moje, 2008; The New London Group, 1996).

Implications for Administrators at Juan Diego

In an early interview, Sister Terese described Juan Diego High School as a beehive—each person working hard day in and day out, sustained by their shared commitment to students. Of the 27 teachers in the school, I interviewed 13 regarding their decision to teach at the school. The answers represented educators who graduated from the high school and wanted to return to serve their community to others who are committed to urban schooling to those who care deeply about being in a Catholic space. But every response foregrounded the students: from "my heart's here. Cause I relate to these kids" (Sarah Cruise, October 24, 2017) to "I'm a Catholic um, I practice the faith, I preach personal spirituality to the kids, I want to share that" (Neumann, October 20, 2017) to "I love their [students'] guts. They'll rip your heart out and then you'll rip your hair out" (Emily Mail, October 23, 2017). The teachers care deeply for their students beyond their ACT score or Lexile level, however in order for the school to continue, standardized numbers drive the availability and sustainability of outside funding. The focus on standardized content and assessment can—and is—being mediated through teacher agency by foregrounding the principles of CSP. Such work involves the complicated, uncertain work of, "balancing academic, linguistic, and cultural interests," with the communities the school is accountable to, with the, "accountability policies that privilege a single monolingual, monocultural standard" (Lee & McCarty, 2017, p. 78). Lee and McCarty's (2017) work with Indigenous students from over 60 different Native nations in a public charter high school described such constant negotiations as, "a perilous balancing act that operates ..., 'under the radar screen' of state

surveillance" which "as with many schools serving minoritized youth, ...remains an unsettled and well-recognized tension that educators at these schools negotiate every day" (Lee & McCarty, 2017, p. 78). Yet the research demonstrates curricularizing aligned with CSP and the culturally relevant framework it builds upon can still produce impressive outcomes. Aronson and Laughter's (2016) synthesis of empirical research using a culturally relevant or responsive pedagogies framework from 1990 until 2015 determined instruction aligned with the frameworks was associated with gains on standardized measures in math, science, social students, English, and courses for students who are learning English as an additional language. Even more impressive were other measures of student growth such as increases in student motivation, interest in content, ability to engage in content area discourses, perception of self as capable, and confidence when taking standardized tests which were also consistent across the literature (Aronson & Laughter, 2016).

Miss Jerome communicates her uncertainty within the work of curricularizing and a consistent desire to analyze her work with colleagues. Miss Gregory similarly looks for feedback within her team level meetings and from her administrator supervisor but admits the busyness of the work means collaboration is often crowded out. The implications of this research point to the need for prolonged, sustained professional development and support structures for educators to learn, adapt, and analyze their work through the frameworks of culturally sustaining pedagogies and disciplinary literacy practices. Drawing from the strengths that already exist and thrive within Juan Diego High School, the work should include (a) connecting culture, theory, and praxis and (b) developing and sustaining professional development structures.

Connecting Culture, Theory, and Praxis

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Miss Gregory has a clear goal for her students and work that guides her interpretation of feedback. Similarly, Miss Jerome draws from her disciplinary knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and her beliefs about the role of schooling to negotiate and adapt the standards to support student learning. Freire (2000) defines praxis as action with reflection—because dialogue that never turns to change will never lead to transformation. Hollins (2011) explicates knowledge of learners, theoretical perspectives on teaching, and knowledge of discipline are the nonnegotiable bodies of knowledge for educators to use in all teaching endeavors. Teaching, she argues, is an interpretive process where theory, knowledge, and beliefs are regularly used to examine the results of instruction on student learning in order to adapt teaching. The beliefs these teachers have inform the decisions teachers make, just as their teaching begins to shape and reify their beliefs. Praxis is informed by learning theory and beliefs over time and across experiences in teaching (Hollins, 2011, 2015) and in CSP (Alim & Paris, 2017; Ladson-Billings, 2017a). At Juan Diego, professional development is an intentional space to place theory and praxis in conversation to negotiate important questions: who are our students, and what does that mean for instruction? Who are our communities, and what does that mean for instruction? Miss Gregory described curricularizing on the margins where collaboration was restricted by time or silenced within conversation. Miss Jerome regularly engaged in borderland discourses to navigate the uncertainty of culturally sustaining pedagogies; such as wondering how to be accountable to the school and students when they had two opposing needs (Alsup, 2006). Miss Gregory and Miss Jerome were each agentive in creating spaces to negotiate the "site of struggle" between their beliefs about students, theories on learning, and demands of the school (Britzman, 1994, p. 56). Concepts such as othering, or the process of identifying with people who share a

similarity and distancing oneself from those outside of the homogenous group (Spivak, 1985) and nos-ostras or, or recognizing barriers between us and them while still bridging the differences (Anzaldúa, 2000), can facilitate a deep exploration of school ideologies and culture. Hollins (2015) explains:

> Schools reflect the cultural norms of the larger society. These cultured norms and reflected in overall operations of schools including interactions among student and between students and teachers, and in the reward and punishment systems instituted. Examining ideologies and interconnected beliefs and values represents one way to reveal the deep meaning of culture. (p. 39)

Thus, to understand the "deep meaning of culture" in the lives, languages, literacies, and valued practices of students and communities at Juan Diego High School, culture must be interrogated at multiple macro and microlevels and connected to instructional practice.

Hollins, McIntyre, DeBose, Hollins and Thomas (2004) provide an example of professional development that puts theory and practice in conversation. Elementary teachers at an urban, high-poverty, academically low performing school serving predominantly Black students engaged in structured dialogue as part of a sustained, ongoing professional development structure. The educators collaboratively worked to (a) identify a specific challenge related to teaching and learning, (b) collaboratively research the problem and select an approach likely to work for their context and students, (c) regularly meet to discuss implementation of the approach and evaluate its effectiveness using student work samples and examples from their instruction, and (d) reflect on their experiences to guide their future practice. Over the course of two years, the professional development became teacher led and self-sustaining; it was not dependent on a single leader, such as a principal or literacy specialist, because the teachers had individually developed the skills and resources to effectively collaborate. Additionally, the researchers noted other benefits: more positive

comments about the students, an increased focus on the culture students bring to school, enthusiasm to collaborate, and developing new, context and learner specific instructional practices (Hollins et al., 2004). After two years, students demonstrated growth on standardized academic measures, transforming the school from its "low performing" title to winning awards from the state (Hollins et al., 2004).

Based on a synthesis of the literature on teacher professional development, Darling-Hammond and Richardson (2009) create guidelines for designing professional development within schools that are adapted for Juan Diego High School in Table 19. Just as Hollins and her colleagues (2004) found, the review suggests the most effective professional development approaches focus on building structures that lead to self-sustaining teacher agency (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009). Allen and Kinloch (2013) also caution that administrators cannot make practices prescriptive; rather they can make structures and systems to ensure valued practices are more likely to occur. For example, rather than demanding that community accountability look a certain way, questions can be added to lesson plans, unit designs, or coaching conversations such as "How can we connect with home and community?" (Allen & Kinloch, 2013, p. 386).

Table 19

Synthesis of Literature on Professional Development

Effective Professional Development*	Considerations for Juan Diego High School	Applications
Deepens teachers' knowledge of disciplinary and pedagogical content	• Have routines, norms, and structures been established to preserve the space for purposeful study of teaching and learning? • Are there other routine meetings, spaces, and structures for communicating other information (e.g., faculty meetings, emails)?	• An adaptable agenda or structure for regularly occurring professional development events (e.g., PLCs, LLT, in-service days) that outline a clear focus on topics related to teaching and learning (e.g., disciplinary content, instructional practices, student artifacts)
Helps teachers understand how students learn specific content	• What theories of student learning and students' languages, literacies, and cultures do teachers hold? • How do individual learns make sense of the content? Where are the common misconceptions, challenges, or patterns of success?	• Book clubs to learn about theories of culture and learning and how the theories are actualized in pedagogies • Completing classroom profiles (Hollins, 2015, p. 188-189) to learn about students and families • Community immersion experiences to learn about students' families and communities • Using focused inquiry, directed observations, and guided practice to understand student learning within a disciplinary context (Hollins, 2011) •
Enables teachers to acquire new knowledge, apply it to practice, and reflect on the results with colleagues	• When new information is presented (e.g., instructional practice) do educators have the opportunity to make sense of the new knowledge (e.g.,	• Completing lesson studies of the teaching cycle with structured dialogue (Hollins, 2011, 2015).

	discussion, analysis of examples) and apply the new knowledge (e.g., modeling, think alouds, instructional planning)? • Are qualitative examples of student learning (e.g., student work and artifacts) included as meaningful data? • Whose voices are speaking, demonstrating, and sharing during professional development?	• Long and short term action research projects (Kennedy, 2005) such as: o Content analysis of standards, EOCs, and curricular materials o Environmental ⌉ Table continues school • Focused inquiry (Hollins, 2011) such as: o Book studies around a topic o Brown bag lunches with article discussions
Is part of a school reform effort	• What are the goals the school is working towards? Have they been explicitly defined? • How are successes, innovative solutions, and persistent questions shared across professional development structures? • How is information systematically communicated to promote communication, transparency, and consistency?	• Development of clear beliefs, goals, and valued school practices related to students' languages, literacies, and cultures within instruction • Routines for discussing, negotiating, and reevaluating school beliefs, goals, and valued practices related to literacy instruction • Shared resources for educators by topic (e.g., formative assessments, resources for mathematics literacy, supporting English language learners) o Cloud based folder o Wiki (e.g., Padlet) o Physical space in teacher workroom for print resources by topic • Defined roles and responsibilities for building leaders in literacy and literacy instruction
Is collaborative and collegial	• How are opportunities to participate (e.g., LLT, conferences) and share	• Providing time early in the formation of a new professional development group to establish

| | (e.g., in-service days, during PLCs) determined? • What are the norms of discourse? Are they explicit or assumed? Whose voices and cultures do they represent? • How is responsibility (e.g., recording or gathering information, completing research, directing conversations) determined and shared? | and clarify goals, norms, and responsibilities. • Provide ongoing opportunities to revisit the goals, norms, and responsibilities. • Avoid dichotom good/bad, right/wrong) and respect differences (e.g., nos-ostras) • Allow uncertainty • Reject discourse, tools, or practices that position students and communities as "others" or through a deficit white gaze. |
| Is intensive and sustained over time | • How is space and time for professional development created and maintained? | • Provide ongoing opportunities to revisit the goals, norms, and responsibilities • Reevaluate the effectiveness of the structures including faculty, staff, families, students, and other school stakeholders from the community |

* Column and its contents adapted from Darling-Hammond, L., & Richardson, N. (2009). Research review/teacher learning: What matters. *Educational Leadership, 66*(5), 46-53.

Developing and Sustaining Professional Development Structures

The implications for professional development within Juan Diego draw from its natural strength: the knowledge, experience, and agency of its educators. From study to study, early education through higher education, discipline to discipline, it is the teacher is who makes the ultimate difference in student growth across all areas (e.g., Cantrell, Almasi, Carter, & Rintamaa, 2013; Warren-Kring & Warren, 2013). As Fisher, Frey, and Lapp (2011) discuss in their synthesis of the literature on school wide literacy programs, "[i]t was the teacher who mattered...teacher quality [is] the critical factor in successful reading instruction rather than the program" (Fisher, Frey, & Lapp, 2011, p. 359). Likewise,

supporting the sustained growth of educators at Juan Diego is pivotal to support student learning. Currently, the school already has infrastructure in place that can be leveraged to support professional development structures that directly support teachers: (a) a Literacy Leadership Team (LLT), (b) Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) for leveled teams, (c) disciplinary departments, and (d) all staff development days and monthly meetings. The former two structures will be explored further given their direct relevance to supporting literacy instructional practices.

Literacy leadership team. Whole school literacy improvement is difficult to sustain when it is dependent on one strong leader or literacy expert; the program and momentum are at risk if the singular leader leaves (Elish-Piper, L'Allier, Manderino, & Di Domenico, 2016). Urban schools in particular have higher teacher and administrative turnover than schools in other geographic regions (Bengston, Zepeda, & Parylo, 2013). Supporting literacy instruction requires a multi-pronged approach that does not rest on a singular figure. Au (2013) described a multi-pronged approach at a Hawaiian high school serving racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse students. By balancing different roles and responsibilities among a variety of staff members, the whole school literacy program was sustainable over time despite staff turn-over. The central aspect aligned with Juan Diego's LLT, what Au (2013) called a "liaison team":

> [the liaison team] consists of teacher leaders representing every key constituency in the school, including all departments, pathways, academies, or similar structures. The downfall of most attempts at schoolwide improvement in the high school is uneven progress across departments. As soon as one department falls behind and drops out, a whole-school literacy improvement effort can no longer be undertaken. (p. 536)

Currently, the LLT has unequal representation compared the racial, ethnic, linguistic, and disciplinary diversity on the teacher staff. This means voices are excluded from the meaning

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making process. As the LLT members establish themselves as leaders in literacy through the building and develop context specific instructional practices and tools for educators, the missing voices may reify misconceptions about disciplines, literacies, languages, and cultures.

Considering the role of the LLT, action-oriented professional development is connected to increased program sustainability, implementation of collaboratively designed practices and tools, and teacher satisfaction (Nunn & Jantz, 2009). This suggests teachers that have an active role in the program are more likely to find training effective and result in instructional change. An action research model uses participants within the context to research and enact change in practices; the teachers are not passive, but active agents of change (Kennedy, 2005). Drawing from the agentive work of Miss Gregory and Miss Jerome, the educators considered who was represented within their course texts and how they were represented. Thus, an action research project the LLT could undertake is a content analysis of the classroom texts used within a discipline, Network standards, embedded within the EOC, within a textbook, or the texts educators use for a bounded unit, a content analysis of the texts used for school wide professional development, or a content analysis of the environmental print within the school building, print, and digital materials. The analysis should center not just on representation—or diversifying the texts to represent different forms of cultural diversity—but on examining the values inherent in the texts. Domínguez (2017) argues, "If our discussions around diversifying content are not equally concerned with repositioning what valued knowledges and cultural patterns *are*, we continue to perpetuate coloniality" (p. 230). Thus, an important undertaking of the LLT might be a content analysis which would reveal what is currently valued within the curriculum, but additional action

would be needed to identify and center the knowledge and cultural patterns of students and communities such as focus groups with families, graduates, current students, and work study partners. Ultimately, as the LLT grows and changes in membership to reflect the diversity of Juan Diego, it can also shift to become an action-oriented liaison team to identify the obstacles to effective literacy instruction in the school and develop context specific tools to support educators' negotiation of the challenges. Thus, creating the school wide structures needed to support sustained literacy reform and support professional learning communities (PLCs).

Professional learning communities. Professional learning communities create an intentional community of practice where members come to share beliefs, practices, and values through interaction over time (Lave & Wenger, 1991). For educators, the beliefs are centered on shared theories of learning, developing instructional practices and tools, and creating shared values which, Hollins (2015) cautions, can reify deficit views of students' and families' cultures. PLCs are spaces to mutually understand the complex work of teaching. Irvine (2002) describes the work of teachers:

> teachers are thinkers and decisions makers who have a deep, thorough understanding of their content as well as a repertoire of teaching skills from which they choose and match these skills and content knowledge to classroom behaviors, situations, students, and curricula...depend[ing] on an ever changing set of circumstances that teachers face everyday. (Irvine, 2002, p. 50)

Irvine (2002) focuses on the processes and structures that effective educators use to make instructional decisions rather than prescribing strategies that claim universality. PLCs at Juan Diego are gathering spaces to address the needs of students; as communities of practice they are intentional spaces to design and evaluate the complex processes and structures Irvine (2002) recommends. Miss Jerome and Miss Gregory express a desire for collaboration with

colleagues, spaces to communicate and work through the uncertainty of teaching, and to have their own voices heard within the school—reevaluating the purpose of PLCs is an opportunity to meet the needs of teachers while focusing on student needs. Drawing heavily from the work of Etta Hollins, lesson studies embedded within an interpretive process (Hollins, 2011) and structured dialogue (Hollins et al., 2004) would provide a self-sustaining structure for embedded professional development. Lesson studies, "engage a group of teachers in collaboratively planning, observing, analyzing, and writing a reflection on a lesson for the purpose of improving a particular aspect of classroom practice...through repeated cycles" (Hollins, 2015, p. 2000). The teachers collaboratively identify a common problem, area of interest or concern, or pattern that needs to be addressed. Then, the educators complete a focused inquiry to identify multiple ways to examine and consider the topic (Hollins, 2011). For example:

- Reading and discussing research related to the topic
- Reading and discussing theoretical and philosophical understandings of the topic
- Conduct observations of students and interviews with students to better under the topic within its context
- Interrogating their own thinking about teaching and learning
- Examine the social, historical, and political context of the school in relation to the topic
- Examine the organizational structure of the Network and school that informs, interacts, or creates this topic
- Consider the procedures, rules, and discourse within the school that inform, interact, or create this topic
- Seek out the goals of community members and leaders through interviews and participation in the community
- Consider the resources in the community

Through focused inquiry surrounding the topic, educators come to recognize, "the relationship between learner characteristics, learning, pedagogical practices, and learning outcomes" (Hollins, 2011, p. 403).

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After focused inquiry, the PLC members plan and enact instruction using instructional practices and tools collaboratively designed based on the results of focused inquiry. The planning requires the educators to justify the instructional practice or tool, "based on knowledge of the particular learners, the learning process, subject matter, and the expected learning outcomes" (Hollins, 2011) to explicitly connect the decision making process to students, student culture, and the community even as the educators are negotiating the Network standards and prescribed curriculum. The implementation also includes observations of other members of the group or video and audio recording for later review (Hollins, 2015). Collaboratively, the lesson studies provide feedback and evaluation through guided practice. Other educators are able to guide each other in interpreting the instructional practices through multiple perspectives and lens and engaging in dialogue around the outcomes. In this way, lesson studies become a cyclical, interpretive process of applying the tools of focused inquiry, observation, and guided practice to improving quality teaching as educators are collaboratively engaged in planning, enacting, interpreting, translating, (re)-planning, and (re)-enacting in an ongoing, sustained cycle (Hollins, 2011, 2015).

Miss Gregory and Miss Jerome's instructional practices were influenced by standardization, however the system—whether a system of standards, assessments, or evaluations—did not shift their priorities for highly effective teaching. Within the demands for accountability, evaluation, and quantifiable data, the implication is youth identity, agency, and humanization can and indeed must be forwarded within prioritizations. For example, by prioritizing a whole school effort to name the goals, beliefs, and valued practices around culture, language, literacy, the teachers and administrators at Juan Diego are prioritizing students. The long term, action-oriented work is not without its uncertainties and barriers, but

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it intentionally creates a space to negotiate the challenges and demands present in any educational context.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study considered how culturally sustaining pedagogies informed the instructional practices of highly effective educators at an urban Catholic high school and examined how the culturally sustaining practices supported adolescent literacies and disciplinary literacy education. Throughout the study, Miss Jerome, Miss Gregory, and other teachers interwove religious imagery, language, and texts within their instruction to foreground youth identities, religious identities. Students used their religious identities and literacies to mediate their understandings of disciplinary content, such as Alexus emphatic statement, "That's the mother of Jesus! You don't mess with that!" while analyzing Kehinde Wiley's painting *Mary, Comforter of the Afflicted II*. This was not the primary focus of my analysis, but alludes to the work of previous scholars who have demonstrated religious identifying youth use religious literacies and religious texts to mediate their experiences within schooling (Openjuru & Lyster, 2007; Sarroub, 2002; Skerrett, 2016). This is complicated in multiracial, multiethnic, multilingual, and multireligious spaces. LeBlanc's (2017) ethnographic investigation of an urban Catholic high school described the classrooms as "race-making institutions" where existing ethnic and racial divisions are combined and reify religious divisions in, "even the most seemingly mundane talk and interaction" (LeBlanc, 2017, p. 105). Religion becomes racialized within the classroom discourse by the listeners. Rosa and Flores (2017) explain that listening is raced; when the speaker and listener hold different social positions and identity memberships, listening involves more than the words but "how their linguistic practices are heard" (p. 185). Juan Diego High

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School's highly effective educators repeatedly turned to the racial, ethnic, gender, religious, and linguistic diversities of students to design culturally sustaining pedagogies. However, I recommend further research through a raciolinguistic lens to understand how the multiple cultural communities to which youth belong are understood and negotiated within classroom discourse within racially, ethnically, and religiously diverse urban schools.

This study found culturally sustaining pedagogies are adapted to meet the needs of learners, the context, and the discipline. Miss Jerome's use of disciplinary literacy practices across diverse texts gradually led to students applying the tools to analyze, critique, and challenge canonical knowledge within the discipline. Thus, I recommend continued study to understand how youth leverage the tools of a disciplinary Discourse to disrupt the disciplinary communities that have historically rejected the knowledge and practices of nondominant communities. Such work aligns the critical sociocultural foundations and goals of disciplinary literacy through the culturally sustaining pedagogies framework (Moje, 2007, 2008, 2010; Paris & Alim, 2017). Lee (2017) provides the theoretical basis for the union, writing:

> There is no academic domain that we teach in schools that is not influenced by contributions and practices from across historical and diverse cultural ethnic communities. And the new knowledge that evolves is hybrid. Understanding the hybridity of the undergirdings of disciplinary knowledge, understanding such knowledge as social constructions whole explanatory power evolves with time, should be a goal of CSP for all students. (p. 268)

I also recommend further research that meaningfully asks: Whose practices are considered valued knowledge within the disciplines? How can youth challenge the knowledge to sustain the valued languages, literacies, and knowledge of their communities within the disciplines?

Considering the role of youth agency and religious identity in the disciplinary classroom, scholars have called for increased attention to the religious domain of youth literacies and literacy practices (Dallavis, 2011a, 2011b; Eakle, 2007; Jeynes, 2009; McMillon & Edwards, 2000; Sarroub, 2002; Skerrett, 2016). Given the connection between youth identity and literacy practices (e.g., Hull & Schultz, 2001; McCarthy & Moje, 2002) and the potential for leveraging youth literacies for literacy instruction (e.g., Gutiérrez, 2008; Moje, 2000, 2002), it will be valuable to further investigate how youth religious literacies and practices can be used to mediate disciplinary Discourse, particularly since disciplinary literacy is positioned as identity work (e.g., Buehl, 2017; Moje, 2008). Skerrett (2016) recommends research into "the possible roles of religious literacies in different curricular areas spanning literature, science, history, and other disciplines," to develop pedagogies and knowledge bases to support educators' ability to effective leverage students' funds of knowledge (Skerrett, 2016, pp. 986-987). My study also suggests the need for further research to examine the religious literacies and religious practices that youth draw from to negotiate a disciplinary identity, considering the following questions: How do youth religious literacies and practices mediate disciplinary Discourse? What literacy practices can disciplinary educators in religious diverse schools leverage to sustain students' religious identities?

Capturing Glimpses

> Even when you try to capture it, it's like capturing y'know smoke. You might get a little bit of it in a bottle but there's still parts of it that just kind of wisp away...The bottle is yea, trying to capture a glimpse of where they're at, so the Lexile that would be the bottle. But it's not capturing everything. There is part of what would make a student a good reader that are just hard to get on a multiple-choice test. (Jerome, January 25, 2018)

This study explored the literacy instruction at one urban Catholic high school and found that an increasing focus on standardization challenged educators to think strategically and plan creatively to meet the needs of standards—but also to push past them. The findings captured glimpses of joy within the school where educators are leveraging the cultural and linguistic diversity of youth identities and agency to develop literacy instructional practices aligned with culturally sustaining pedagogies and disciplinary literacies. These are sites of uncertainty, struggle, and change; however, in an increasingly standardized school system that tries to capture student achievement in a bottle, culturally sustaining pedagogies offer a framework that refocuses not on the smoke that is caught, but the parts that—if neglected and not named—will otherwise wisp away.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR ADMINISTRATORS

1. Tell me about the local community.
   a. What about its history impacts this school?
   b. Who within the community is this school accountable to?
   c. What is valued within the local community?
2. Tell me about the school.
   d. Who are the children and families who attend the school?
   b. Who are the leaders of the school?
   c. Who are the teachers in the school?
   d. What is valued within the school?
3. Tell me about your journey. How did you come to be a leader here?
   a. Tell me more about your decision to work here.

Literacy Instruction
4. A lot of people I have talked to define literacy in diverse ways, so I would like to know how you define literacy.
5. How does literacy change as you move between different classrooms, content areas, or disciplines?
6. What languages are represented in this school?
7. What literacies are represented in this school?
8. What are the literacy practices and assessments that you regularly encourage teachers to use?
9. Are there any literacy practices you use that would not work in other contexts (e.g., other disciplines, other schools)?
10. I am interested in describing what highly effective teachers in this school do to support literacy.
    1. What classrooms should I spend time in to see highly effective instruction?
    2. Highly effective literacy instruction?
    3. How do you define highly effective?

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies
11. I'm interested in ways students' languages, literacies, and voices are centered in the curriculum. This might look like students driving what is included in the curriculum, for example. Where in the school do you believe students' are centered?
12. How are community languages, valued practices, or knowledges included in this school?
13. In order to attend this school, students must identify as members of at least one marginalized community. How are students equipped to contend with internalized or external sources of oppression?

Wrapping Up
14. What questions do you have for me?

15. Is there anything I haven't asked that would be helpful as I consider what effective teachers in this school are doing to support literacy achievement?

APPENDIX B

RESOURCES FOR TEACHING NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURE

Appendix B

Resources for Teaching Native American Literature

Genre	Resources
Print Books*	Hidden Roots (2004) by Joseph Bruchac (Abenaki) The Birchbark House (1999) by Louise Erdrich (Turtle Mountain Chippewa) In the Footsteps of Crazy House (2015) by Joseph Marshall III (Sicangu Lakota) Son Who Returns (2014) by Gary Robinson (Choctaw/Cherokee) Indian Shoes (2002) by Cynthia Leitich Smith (Muscogee [Creek]) How I Became a Ghost: A Choctaw Trail of Tears Story (2015) by Tim Tingle (Choctaw) Moccasin Thunder: American Indian Stories for Today (2005) Edited by Lori Marie Carlson If I Ever Get Out of Here (2013) by Eric Gansworth (Onondaga) The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel (2007) by Drew Hayden Taylor (Ojibway) House of Purple Cedar (2014) by Tim Tingle (Choctaw) The Lesser Blessed: A Novel (2004) by Richard Van Camp (Dogrib)
Comics and Graphic Novels	We Speak in Secret (2014) by Roy Boney (Cherokee) Trickster: Native American Tales, A Graphic Collection (2010) Edited by Matt Dembicki Moonshot: The Indigenous Comics Collection (2015) Edited by Hope Nicholson Captain Paiute: Indigenous Defender of the Southwest (2015) by Theo Tso (Las Vegas Paiute Tribe) A Blanket of Butterflies (2016) by Richard Van Camp (Dogrib)
Movies and Documentaries	Reel Injun: On the Trail of the Hollywood Indian (2009) directed by Neil Diamond (Cree), Catherine Bainbridge, and Jeremiah Hayes Our Spirits Don't Speak English: Indian Boarding Schools (2008) directed by Chip Riche A Good Day to Die (2010) directed by David Mueller and Lynn Salt

	The Cherokee Word for Water (2013) directed by Tim Kelly and Charlie Soap
Resources for Educators	*Native Knowledge 360* from The National Museum of the American Indian http://nmai.si.edu/nk360 "American Indians" from DocsTeach tool sponsored by the National Archives and National Archives Foundation https://www.docsteach.org/topics/american-indians "Teaching Native American Histories" from the University of Massachusetts Native American History Project https://teachnativehistories.umass.edu/
Native American Scholars, Authors, Activists, and Organizations on Twitter	Debbie Reese @debreese Adrienne Keene @NativeApprops Eve Tuck @tuckeve Jeff Corntassel @JeffCorntassel Wab Kiney @WabKinew Amy Sturgis @drahsturgis Indigeneity @Indigeneity The Peel Indigenous Network of Educators @PDSBIndigenous UBC Indigenous Reads @ReadIndigenous Indigenous Writers @IndigWriters

*Recommendations from First National Development Institute from www.firstnations.org and reviewed by Debbie Reese at www.americanindiansinchildrensliterature.net

CURRICULUM VALIDATION

Appendix C

Curriculum Validation from Hollins (2015, p. 111-112)

1. How does the content address the particularistic aspects of the curriculum?
    A. How does the content provide a positive historical perspective for the related accomplishments, values, and beliefs of a culturally diverse population?
    B. How does the content reflect the accomplishments of different ethnic groups in developing new knowledge in the field?
    C. Does the content allow for the use of cultural knowledge as well as knowledge about culture where possible or appropriate?
    D. Dhow does the curriculum address the expectations and aspirations of the students and their caregivers?
2. How does the content address the inclusive aspect of the curriculum?
    A. Does the curriculum content promote a sense of interdependence, harmony, and national unity?
    B. How does the content help students find meaning in their own lives and in the lives of other human beings?
    C. How does the content help students learn to describe or interpret and express meaning acquired through their own experiences—real, vicarious, or imagined—as well as those of others?
    D. How does the content help students identify ways to improve the quality of life within their society and the world?
3. How does the subject matter content provide a balanced polarity between the two curricular domains?
    A. Are both the descriptive and expressive domains used for constructing new knowledge or making sense what already exists?
    B. Do students use both quantitative and qualitative means of inquiry?
4. Are the three curriculum strands integrated into the subject matter content?
    A. How is the subject matter content related to the students personally?
    B. How do the issues addressed in the subject matter relate to or affect different groups within the society?
    C. What issues are addressed in the subject matter content that relate to the health of individuals and groups of people?

5. Is the subject matter organized in a way that helps students understand the interrelatedness of the structure and major ideas across different disciplines?

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VITA

Leah Panther has lived in the Midwest her entire life moving from Illinois to Iowa to Illinois to Missouri across several decades. Her experience transitioning from a high achieving, college preparatory high school in a mid-sized city to a rural, underfunded and understaffed high school was a catalyst to enter the teaching profession to address educational inequities in schooling. She entered Augustana College in 2004 pursuing teacher certifications in English, speech, journalism, and art. She worked in a childcare center while completing her Bachelor's degree, expanding her previously narrow focus from secondary to the whole developmental range of birth through 12th grade education.

After college, Ms. Panther taught in a suburban middle school in Kansas City, Missouri for six years while completing a Master's degree in literacy education. Working in different literacy leadership roles across the school district and local urban community, she became invested in urban education. Particularly while working with immigrant and refugee families, Ms. Panther increasingly began to focus on the power of literacy to reify or challenge traditional societal structures. The experiences motivated her to return to school to earn a doctoral degree at the University of Missouri Kansas City. Within the interdisciplinary doctoral program, she worked as a graduate research assistant, graduate assistant, adjunct, teaching instructor, and various consulting roles to learn about the intricacies of higher education and build authentic connections between research, teaching, and service. Ms. Panther's collaborative work has been published in *Teacher's College Record, The Reading Teacher*, and *The Journal of Family Strengths*.

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