

READING YOUNG ADULT FICTION AND THE WORLD TO FIND RACIAL CIVIC
LITERACY IN A SOCIAL STUDIES METHODS CLASS

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Dedication

To my dad who did not get to see me complete this goal and my wife and the rest of my family who supported me through this journey.

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Abstract

This dissertation sought to explore the way preservice teachers grappled with race/ism and citizenship during a social studies methods class. Relying on the theoretical framework of racial civic literacy, this instrumental case study examines six white preservice teachers as they confront issues of race/ism in a young adult fiction novel and grapple with how they will address this in their future classroom. Findings indicate that although all six participants had the vocabulary to discuss race/ism through the lens of citizenship, the inclusion of young adult fiction did not create enough of a meaningful connection to substantially change the cohort's views on the connection between race/ism, citizenship, and teaching. The dissertation offers several implications from the possibility of racial civic literacy as an alternative framework to explore the way white preservice teachers learn to read the racialized civic experiences of their students and the use of young adult fiction to deepen white preservice teachers understanding of racialized civic experiences.

Chapter 1 introduces the context and problem that will be addressed throughout the dissertation. Chapter 2 features a detailed exploration of the theoretical framework of racial civic literacy and the pertinent literature about preservice teachers' beliefs and ideas about race/ism, citizenship, and teaching. Chapter 3 offers a discussion of the methods and methodology of the study and the researchers positionality. Chapter 4 presents the findings for the way the six white preservice teachers construct race/ism and citizenship relating to teaching. Finally, chapter 5 addresses a cross-case analysis of the findings, and discusses implications for researchers and teacher educators.

Chapter 1: Introduction

In their 2015 novel, *All American Boys*, Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely (2015) present the lived reality of racial violence at the hands of police for Black people. When Rashad the main character, a young Black boy, was accused of shop lifting, he was viciously beaten by Paul, a white police officer. As Rashad laid on the ground handcuffed, suffering blow after blow, Rashad heard the officer telling him to “stop fighting,” and through a haze Rashad thought, “My brain exploded into a million thoughts and only one thought at the same time – please...don’t...kill me” (Reynolds & Kiely, 2015, p. 23). From this violent, chilling scene, Zwillenberg and Giola (2017), in a literary analysis, remarked, “Rashad offers no resistance to his arrest. Even then, he cannot avoid a violent beating. He was constructed as a Black threat, even in his own community” (p. 59).

Although this was a fictional account, the all too frequent scene portrayed in this piece of young adult fiction (YAF) depicted a common experience for Black people. Over the last year, this reality has been pushed to the forefront in the national conversation after the murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer or the shooting of Breonna Taylor by a police officer in her Louisville home. In the subsequent protests for racial justice and police reform that spread in cities across the United States, some white¹ Americans have been confronted with the lived reality for People of Color. But this was not a new scene or something that has not happened before. Many of my preservice teachers might point to the Black Lives Matter protests that were sparked after

¹ According to the APA 7th edition racial identities are to be capitalized; however, I have followed the work of Matias et al. (2014) by not capitalizing white “in an attempt to re-equalize racial labels” (p. 303).

the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, in 2014, but these bouts of racial civic realization come again and again across the timeline of American history. No one captured this more succinctly than Dr. Kenneth B. Clark whose testimony to the Kerner Commission in 1968 stated that after looking over various reports on racial violence from the early twentieth century to prepare for his testimony, he leveled with the commission saying, “I must again in candor say to you members of this Commission – it is a kind of Alice in Wonderland with the same moving picture reshown over and over again, the same analysis, the same recommendations, and the same inaction” (*Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders*, 1968, p. 265). These examples of continued violence and inaction reinscribes a “racial hierarchy that made every non-white group less worthy and less eligible for citizenship” (Ladson-Billings, 2004, p. 110). This long history of racial violence has created Black and Brown people as “conditional citizens” (Brown & Urrieta, 2010, p. 80) or “maybe citizens” (Johnson, 2019) who were barred from wholly claiming their identity as full citizens (Davis, 2005).

Many students of color recognize this disconnect between their own civic experiences and those taught in the classroom (Castro & Knowles, 2017; Cornbleth, 2002; Flanagan et al., 2009; Rubin, 2007), but their teachers too often failed to address this (Castro, 2010; Samuels et al., 2019). The disconnect between students’ lived civic realities and the curriculum started with preservice teachers who seldom see the connections between race/ism² and citizenship. For example, in an early study of preservice teachers’ ideas about citizenship, Kickbusch (1987) asserted the preservice

² Because race and racism can be nearly impossible to separate from each other, throughout much of this dissertation, I follow the lead of Dr. Andrea Hawkman (2020) who linked the words as one in the form of race/ism.

teachers held *centrist* ideas of citizenship education. Thus, the preservice teachers emphasized patriotic histories, and rights and responsibilities driven citizenship that was centered around conformity through direct transmission. Little has changed in the last thirty years as many scholars have insisted that preservice teachers more often hold uncritical views of citizenship that focus on following rules, paying taxes, and voting as primary ways of engaging as citizens (i.e., Fry & O'Brien, 2015; Martin, 2008, 2010).

Beyond an uncritical view of citizenship, preservice teachers, especially white preservice teachers, struggled with nuanced views of race/ism (Castro, 2010; Jupp et al., 2019; Sleeter, 2001). These future teachers failed to see systemic (Wilson & Kumar, 2017) and current examples (Crowley, 2016) of the way white supremacy influences beliefs about race/ism. Additionally, white preservice teachers often worked to resist any notion of racial privilege (Case & Hemmings, 2005; Picower, 2009), because “race has never been an issue” for them (Amos, 2011, p. 486). Within the social studies, preservice teachers felt unprepared and uncomfortable addressing race/ism in the classroom (Buchanan, 2016; Demoiny, 2017). However, even when methods classes provided detailed curriculum on Black history (King, 2014) or an antiracist curriculum (Hawkman, 2020), the preservice teachers gained a vocabulary about race/ism but failed to broadly connect these ideas to their future classroom. This was not unsurprising as Chandler and Branscombe (2015) insisted white teachers see race/ism and whiteness across the curriculum, but there is a rejection of its place in the classroom.

Hence, social studies teacher educators have a difficult task of making preservice teachers more critical as they construct their ideas about race/ism and citizenship. And only a few studies with preservice teachers have examined citizenship and practices of

citizenship through the lens of race/ism (i.e., An, 2017; Kopish, 2016; Rodriguez & Polat, 2012; Salinas et al., 2016; Silva & Mason, 2003; Tannebaum, 2017). In one example, Urrieta and Riedel (2006, 2008) found their white preservice teachers struggled to see past their own privilege and recognize the way race has historically been a part of constructing citizenship. However, the broader field of social studies has taken up the call to critically examine this crucial aspect of citizenship in the empirical literature (Dabach et al., 2018; Hilburn, 2015; Jaffee, 2016; M. W. Johnson, 2019; Lo, 2017; Rodríguez, 2018; Rubin, 2007; Saada, 2013; Vickery, 2017). This study took up that call to closely examine the critical link between race/ism and citizenship with a group of preservice social studies teachers participating in a social studies methods course as they read the YAF novel *All American Boys* (Reynolds & Kiely, 2015).

Introduction to Racial Civic Literacy through Young Adult Fiction

As a white man who has taught in predominately white institutions from middle school, high school, and college, I approached this study with keen eye on challenging my own conceptions of race/ism and pushing myself to explore its connections to citizenship. Although I spend a great deal of time and detail exploring Racial Civic Literacy in chapter 2, I want to give a brief overview within this introduction and lay the groundwork for its connection to the use of YAF in a social studies methods class.

To begin, civic literacy often focused on skills, knowledge, and attitudes of the political process (Milner, 2002). However, these whitestream notions of citizenship forgot citizenship “looks different” to different people (Vickery, 2017, p. 327), and there remained a “democratic divide” (McLeod et al., 2010) that limited equity in access and participation (Levinson, 2010). Because People of Color have different civic experiences

(Cohen, 2010; Hacker, 1995) and a long fight for recognition as citizens (Brown et al., 2011; Brown & Urrieta, 2010; Volpp, 2005; Warren, 2010), any conversation about citizenship must begin by exploring the way race/ism shape civic realities as part of racial citizenship. Thus, racial citizenship created a *new citizenship* that recognizes these civic experiences and realities (Ladson-Billings, 2004) and different cultural experiences as citizens (Rosaldo, 1994b). To help understand and read the everyday racism people of color face as citizens, racial civic literacy drew on racial literacy. Guinier (2004) insisted racial literacy provided people the racial grammar to read the way race/ism impacted all peoples lived experiences and provided all people with critical knowledge to push against these oppressive systems. This study drew on racial civic literacy directly as it offers a new lens to directly address the way race/ism impact all civic spaces and experiences.

With an emphasis on “reading” the world, there seemed a direct link to the use of YAF to introduce a group of white preservice teachers to multiple civic experiences. Critical literacy and English education scholars (i.e., Falter & Kerkhoff, 2018; Glenn, 2012; Glenn et al., 2012; Mosley & Rogers, 2011) utilized YAF to spark conversations about race/ism. Mathews and Dilworth (2008), using the theory of multicultural citizenship, asked a group of preservice teachers to read YAF to find connections to social studies content. Students enjoyed the novels but saw many of the topics too controversial to address in their future classroom. In another study, Mathews (2011) had preservice social studies teachers read graphic novels. She found these alternative sources pushed preservice teachers to read more critically, but they still struggled to directly address critical controversial issues. Even with these mixed examples, this study turned to YAF as a source of counter-narrative to push a group of white preservice teachers to see

the nuanced intersections of race/ism within discourses on citizenship and challenge their assumptions about addressing this in their future classrooms. Counter-narratives and counter-stories highlighted the lived experiences of the marginalized by telling their stories that served as a “tool for exposing, analyzing, and challenging the majoritarian stories of racial privilege” (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). YAF might provided a way of learning to read the world for future social studies teachers through engagement with counter-narratives.

Purpose of the Study

In his book on teaching a high school class on race/ism, Lawrence Blum (2012), a philosophy professor at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, asserted “if civic engagement aims to improve the lot of all U.S. citizens and to create a more just society, understanding racial issues and being able to discuss them intelligently and productively with fellow citizens is an absolute necessity” (p. 186). But for teachers to address and facilitate these discussions in the classroom, they must have had the knowledge and skills to engage their students in these conversations. As Michael (2015) contended, most white people have limited skills participating and engaging in these conversations. With this in the forefront of my mind, I approached this study with the purpose of exploring how a cohort of mostly white preservice teachers constructed their ideas about race/ism and its connection to citizenship. Additionally, the purpose was to explore the way preservice social studies teachers take up the use of YAF to address critical issues of race/ism in their future classroom. Finally, I sought to see how teaching using YAF influenced the way preservice social studies teachers created lesson on the intersection of race/ism and citizenship.

The Research Questions

With the purpose of this research study being to explore the way white preservice social studies teachers constructed ideas about race/ism, citizenship, and teaching as part of a social studies methods class, the following research question guided this study:

- How does the inclusion of young adult fiction in a social studies methods class foster white preservice teachers' racial civic literacy?

For deeper engagement with this question, the following sub-questions were investigated:

1. How does the inclusion of young adult fiction shape white preservice teachers' conceptions of and beliefs about teaching of race/ism and citizenship?
2. How does the inclusion of young adult fiction in a secondary methods course build white teachers' racial literacy?
3. What influence does a secondary methods course using young adult fiction have on preservice teachers' conceptions of civic literacy?

These questions guided this instrumental case study (Stake, 1995) through all parts of the research process from the initial creation, to data collection, analysis, and writing. I have returned to these questions many times throughout the process of writing this dissertation.

Overview of My Dissertation

This dissertation was divided into five chapters. In chapter 1, I have introduced the study by presenting the problem, the tensions, and how this study attempts to address these. Throughout chapter 2, I explored the racialized construction of citizenship, the research literature around the construction of preservice social studies teachers' ideas about race/ism and citizenship, the use of YAF in the social studies and teacher

education, and the way Racial Civic Literacy serves as a theoretical lens to explore racialized citizenship. Chapter 3 included a discussion of research methods and methodology used throughout the study and greater details on my own positionality as a researcher. Chapter 4 presented findings of the preservice teachers' construction of race/ism and citizenship. This chapter further addressed the group of white preservice teachers' beliefs on what this means in their future classrooms. Finally, chapter 5 explored the cross-case analysis of the six preservice teachers and presents implications for social studies teacher education.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The literature in social studies teacher education was replete with numerous studies concerned with preservice teachers' construction of citizenship (i.e., Gatti & Payne, 2011; Journell, 2013; Martin, 2008). There were an equal number of studies that address race/ism (i.e., A. M. Hawkman, 2020; King, 2016). However, there were only a few studies which examine citizenship and practices of citizenship through a lens of race/ism (i.e., Castro, 2010; Kopish, 2016; Mathews & Dilworth, 2008; Salinas et al., 2016; Tannebaum, 2017). In one specific study, Urrieta and Riedel (2006, 2008) found their white preservice teachers struggled to see past their own privilege and recognize the way race has historically been a part of constructing citizenship. The broader field of social studies education has taken up the call to critically examine this crucial aspect of citizenship in the empirical literature (Dabach et al., 2018; Hilburn, 2015; Jaffee, 2016; M. W. Johnson, 2019; Lo, 2017; Rodríguez, 2018; Rubin, 2007; Saada, 2013; Vickery, 2017; Woodson, 2016, 2019). The same attention to race/ism must be fully part of any construction and analysis of citizenship in social studies teacher education to overcome the power of white social studies (Chandler & Branscombe, 2015)

This chapter will look at the relevant literature concerning the teaching of citizenship through the lens of race/ism in the education of preservice social studies teachers. The chapter began by looking at the historical construction of citizenship as a racialized identity. Then, the chapter will examine how preservice teachers constructed their own views of race/ism and citizenship. The chapter continued by examining teacher education programs in the social studies and how they have worked to challenge preservice teachers preconceived views on race/ism and citizenship. Next, the chapter

introduced and employed the concept of Racial Civic Literacy as a new theoretical framework that undergirds ways of pushing preservice teachers to critically analyze race/ism within the construction of citizenship. Finally, the chapter discussed the possibility of employing young adult fiction as a teaching method to promote RCL for preservice social studies teachers.

Race/ism and Citizenship: A Sociohistorical Connection

Throughout much of United States history, membership as a citizen has been restrictive. Smith (1993) noted “[f]or over 80% of U.S. history, its laws declared most of the world’s population to be ineligible for full American citizenship solely because of their race, original nationality, or gender” (p. 549). Thus, race has always been a part of defining and excluding people as citizens. A brief survey of United States history revealed a host of laws, policies, and practices established that are meant to limit membership and participation as citizens for all but wealthy, white, men (i.e., Haney-Lopez, 1996; Omi & Winant, 1986; Tehranian, 2000; Volpp, 2005). In one particular example, the nation’s founding document, *The Constitution*, codified the institution of slavery, which “created a racial hierarchy that made every non-White group less worthy and less eligible for citizenship” (Ladson-Billings, 2004, p. 110). Hence, People of Color could never assimilate enough to become full citizens, because they could not shed that part of their identity (Banks & Nguyen, 2008). So instead, People of Color became “conditional citizens” who were only granted rights of participation when it serves the interests of white society (Brown & Urrieta, 2010, p. 80). This racial history of citizenship influenced much of the history of the United States.

This study proposed that a new theoretical lens was needed to explore more deeply the construction of citizenship through the lens of race/ism. This section will begin by first defining race/ism. Then the section will continue by laying out the way race is constructed in our society. Finally, this section will examine more directly the idea of citizenship and how it is constructed through race.

Defining Race/ism

Race/ism has become a “confounding problem” that many in the dominant culture refused to engage with (Haney-Lopez, 1994b, p. 193). This has led to understanding race in “common sense” ways (Omi & Winant, 1994, p. 60), which missed the importance of it as a “master category—a fundamental concept that has profoundly shaped, and continues to shape the history, polity, economic structure, and culture of the United States” (Omi & Winant, 2015, p. 106). Race has not overshadowed the multiple identities put forth by the ideas of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991), the understanding that multiple parts of our identities shape the way we experience the world, but historically race has served as the “*template* of both difference and inequality” (Omi & Winant, 2015, p. 106). Race has served as the central way to classify and organize people in the United States (Roediger, 1991). Race has changed and evolved but always endured (Bonilla-Silva, 2001b). Since race has been instrumental in constructing norms in society, we must take time to unpack the construct of race.

Simply stated race is a social construct that is made real through the actions and treatment of people in society. Omi and Winant (2015) argued for a racial formation theory that placed race as a *concept* created to give meaning to the difference seen across humanity. Although not based in biology (Winant, 2000), the use of physical features

serves as one way to classify groups of people, but these groupings are not consistent across context (Milner & Self, 2014). The social construction of race is also impacted by society, history, and law. Omi and Winant (1994) referred to this as a “sociohistorical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, and destroyed” (p. 55). Thus, society and historical events impacted the construction of these categories of race, but they were never permanent and constantly change. For example, in *The Wages of Whiteness*, Roediger (1991) highlighted the Irish Catholic *race* leveraged the racial attitudes towards Blacks to move from the dregs of society in the period before the Civil War to fully embrace whiteness and the privilege it entailed. In yet another way, Haney-Lopez (1994a) used the historical example of people living in Mexican territories, who were seen as a variety of races prior to the conflicts with Mexico in the early 19th century, but then after annexation were recategorized to highlight their indigenous and Spanish heritage in courts and laws. These historical examples showcased the way race/ism is shaped by historical, social, legal, and physical characteristics that are constantly shifting.

Race/ism was constructed in our society but that does not make it any less real (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). As Mills (2000) argued, race is not real in a biological sense. However, it manifested in lived realities, meaning “race is made, unmade, remade; race is a product of human activity, both personal and institutional, rather than DNA; race is learned, rehearsed, and performed” (Mills, 2000, p. 448). Race became real by impacting everyday life. As example, in her article “Whiteness as Property,” Cheryl Harris (1993) recounted the story of her grandmother who passed as a white women to support her family by working in Chicago’s central business district during segregation. The experience of masking her identity and living in two worlds led to levels of stress and

anxiety that she rarely spoke about. Ultimately, taking on a white identity provided her grandmother with economic security to support her young family on the southside. Thus, the reality of race impacted the way people exist in the world.

Though race was constructed out of our own social and historical imaginations, race also served as the “*template* of both difference and inequality” (Omi & Winant, 2015, p. 106). As Omi and Winant (2015) contended, racial formation creates a *racial project* as economic, political, and cultural resources are distributed based on differences seen across racial conceptions. Then race by its nature of highlighting differences creates an oppressor and an oppressed. Likewise, Mills (2000) drew on social contract theory to create the racial contract, arguing that contracts always “produce domination and subordination” (p. 454). Within the contract, whiteness became property (Harris, 1993), protected by law, created to ensure white success at the expense of People of Color. Racism then is the system, which creates a *veil* (Du Bois, 1904) that separates and oppresses. To clarify, whiteness and white supremacy worked by using racism to subjugate. Thus, racism did not just happen, but is a sociohistorical creation, which works to actively oppress People of Color. Consequently, whiteness is established as normal and all the rest of humanity is “Other” (DiAngelo, 2018).

As a white man who grew up in a predominantly white Midwestern community, I have for all of my life participated in this racialized system that perpetuates the *veil* of white ignorance towards the reality of race/ism (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Du Bois, 1904). I am placing this small statement of positionality here as I try to define race, because for much of my life, I was ignorant of how race impacted my life and experiences. My white privilege (Mcintosh, 1989) in this system provided me with opportunities and access that

I cannot deny or merely reject. But simply recognizing my privilege is not enough, and to push against whiteness I must look more deeply at the systemic nature of whiteness (Leonardo, 2013). This dissertation is an opportunity first to explore the racialized nature of citizenship that has surrounded me my whole life and to think about ways social studies teachers and teacher educators can address these issues in their courses.

Impact of Race on Citizenship

At its most basic, citizenship is membership and belonging. From the earliest examinations of citizenship, the history and the social construction of race has been part of the calculations of this membership and belonging in the United States. An early theorist on citizenship, Marshall (1950) defined membership and belonging within citizenship as “civil, political, and social” (p. 10). Civil citizenship was legal belonging. Political citizenship was participation through enfranchisement. Finally, social citizenship was access to basic rights and services as citizens. In this view, social citizenship brought into focus “the contradiction between the formal political equality of the franchise and the persistence of extensive social and economic inequality” (Turner, 1990, p. 191). Hence, social citizenship captured the lived civic experiences of people within a society. Taking into account these three parts of citizenship, Parsons (1965) defined citizenship as “full membership in … the *societal community*” (p. 1009), with the societal community being “the commitment of members to the collectivity in which they are associated, and of the member to each other” (p. 1010). Although People of Color had achieved levels of civil and political belonging through public protest and legal victories during the civil rights movement, they still resided outside the realm of social belonging. Hence, Parsons

(1965) insisted Black people were excluded from the societal community of full membership.

Central to inclusion and belonging in the *societal community* and citizenship was defined based on race/ism with whiteness being the primary requirement for membership (Brown et al., 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2004; Urieta & Reidel, 2008). Omi and Winant (2015) insisted “[f]or five centuries the phrase ‘the American people’ has been understood as an implicitly white designation” (p. 75). As part of the racial contract, Mills maintained “Black American, African American, is oxymoronic, while White American, Euro-American is pleonastic” (p. 58). Thus, historically race and specifically the ever-changing definition of whiteness shaped ideas of citizenship (Haney-Lopez, 1996; Tehranian, 2000). Whether it was the 1790 naturalization law that limited citizenship to free whites (An Act to Establish an Uniform Rule of Naturalization of 1790, 1790); immigration laws throughout the late nineteenth and twentieth century, which defined different classes of white (Jacobson, 1998); or Irish-American workers fighting to claim whiteness for themselves (Roediger, 1991), whiteness was something to own and to protect as it privileges full citizens (Harris, 1993; Mills, 2000). As Ladson-Billings (2004) insisted “the laws of the land created a racial hierarchy that made every non-White group less worthy and less eligible for citizenship” (p. 110).

Even today, full and equal access to the *societal community* as citizens has remained limited because of different civic experiences. Although the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s fought to eliminate Jim Crow laws, in many parts of life from housing and education to banking, criminal justice, and access to political power, segregation has persisted (Bonilla-Silva, 2001b). In a large study recounting the

civic experiences of Black people, Hacker (1995) documented the “two nations” that persisted through tracing the growing income and wealth inequality, the persistence of segregated schools, and the continuation of the criminalization of Black life from the 1970s through the 1990s. The different lived experiences for People of Color and specifically Black people continued today. For example, race/ism has impacted the prison and legal system (Alexander, 2012), the growing gap of wealth inequality (Kochhar & Fry, 2014) and an entangling web of societal structures that ensnared People of Color, limiting their access to quality schools, housing, jobs, healthy food or any other basic necessities (Miller & Garran, 2007). But this research was not new and many scholars have “rehearsed with regularity” these systemic injustices that constructed different civic experiences outside the societal community for People of Color (Cohen, 2010, p. 8).

With this study’s focus in the realm of education, the rest of this section focused on the civic experiences within the education system. Examining civic experiences within education was essential because schools function as “contextually located civic institutions and as primary deliverers of civic education” (Levinson, 2010, p. 331). Thus, excluding People of Color fully from the *societal community* across the educational landscape created alternative lived civic experiences (Castro & Knowles, 2017)

Through the process of segregation, schools limited access to the societal communities for many students of color. As recently as 2019, 80 percent of Black and Latino students attended schools with 50 percent of the student body identifying as part of a minority or marginalized racial identity (NCES, 2019). However, only 19 percent of white students attended schools with 50 percent of students identifying as part of a minority or marginalized racial identity (NCES, 2019). For Black students these numbers

have grown from 74 percent and stayed consistent for Latino students at 80 percent over the last decade (Thompson Dorsey, 2013). These schools have only become more segregated in the years immediately following the *Brown decision* meant to end Jim Crow segregation in school (Thompson Dorsey, 2013). The continued segregation in schools limited students of color from equal access to the societal community.

Beyond the experience of attending segregated schools, students of color have different school experiences. Although there was less of a difference between high school completion rates and dropout rates for Black and Latino students and their white peers compared to a decade ago, Black and Latino students were still less likely to take advanced placement or similarly challenging course work (NCES, 2019). Likewise, students of color were disproportionately represented in special education classes (Ahram et al., 2011; Sullivan & Bal, 2013). Additionally, students of color were incommensurately more likely to face discipline that removes them from the classroom and the school (Gordon et al., 2000; Skiba et al., 2011, 2014). These experiences have left students of color with different experiences in schools, limiting access fully to the societal community.

Because schools also served as institutions to promote civic learning, the pedagogy and curriculum impacted the civic experiences for students (Castro & Knowles, 2017). In this way, civic education within schools helped students by providing them with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be active participants as citizens (Gibson & Levine, 2003). However, a “civic empowerment gap” continued to exist as students of color rarely see the skills and attitude necessary for active citizenship modeled in their classrooms (Levinson, 2010). This has led to a “democratic divide” with a gap in

participation based on educational experience (McLeod et al., 2010). In a nationally representative survey of 2,811 ninth grade students, Torney-Purta et al. (2007) insisted a classroom climate that was open to discussion, was ripe with analysis of political topics, and offered students interactive classroom activities led students to be more likely to consider voting later. These classroom practices that often-promoted beliefs of fairness and respect built positive civic experiences for students (Flanagan et al., 2007). But Latino students in high proportion Latino schools were less likely to have these civic experiences in the classroom (Torney-Purta et al., 2007). This has not been uncommon as students of color in a number of studies were less likely to engage in civic experiences in their classes like debating current controversial issues, analyzing current events, or participating in educational simulations (Kahne & Middaugh, 2008b, 2008a; Kawashima-Ginsberg, 2013). These examples highlighted the different lived civic educational experiences for students of color within schools (Castro & Knowles, 2017).

Historically, schools have served as spaces that limit civic education for students of color, but for many students of color, their experiences in and around the school further shaped their beliefs about their membership in the societal community. For example, Fine et al. (2004) led 11 focus group interviews with 101 students of color, who attended schools identified as failing for a lawsuit for equal access to quality schools in California. The researchers found students disengaged with ideas of citizenship and active participation in anything beyond their families and immediate communities because they felt ignored (Fine et al., 2004). The researcher insisted “the schools in question are educating youth toward intellectual mediocrity and alienation, and away

from academic mastery and democracy” (Fine et al., 2004, p. 2217). The student’s experiences in schools led them to feel disconnected as citizens.

Experiences facing discrimination and racism further eroded civic ideals of equal access to the societal community for many students of color. To begin, Flanagan and a team of researchers (2009) found youth from three marginalized ethnic groups of Latino, Black, and Arab American, who experienced prejudice and intolerance “may undermine their beliefs in the fundamental fairness of the system” (p. 515). These experiences with racism and prejudice shaped students’ perceptions of citizenship. In a study working with a group of Palestinian students born in and attending an American school, El-Haj (2007) recounted the students struggled to be both Palestinian and American during America’s war on terror. Similarly, Bondy (2015), working with a group of Latina students, insisted “belonging as a citizen and being Latina were rendered incompatible in a context where Latinas are marked as *criminal, invader, and cultural/racial/sexual threats*” (pg. 369). This has led to a “disjuncture” (Rubin, 2007) from the ideal American values that students of color learn about in their schools and their reality as citizens who are not afforded the same access to the societal community.

Because of these different lived experiences in society, particularly in schools, race/ism has always been central to the construction of citizenship. My own identity as a white man from the Midwest working at a Midwestern university in a classroom with primarily white students has directly influenced the way that I have constructed and thought about race/ism and citizenship. Although I acknowledged the raced reality of citizenship, I realized that I cannot and never will be able to fully comprehend this

reality. Thus, to overcome the thin veil of colorblind citizenship (Bonilla-Silva, 2001a), scholars on race and citizenship could not ignore the lived reality of all citizens.

Preservice Teachers Perspectives on Race/ism and Citizenship

With a clearer picture of race/ism and its influence on the construction of citizenship, this section began by examining generally, how preservice teachers have viewed and constructed conception of race/ism. Then this section explored preservice teachers' views on citizenship. Finally, the preceding section examined studies grappling with race/ism and citizenship within and across the field of social studies. With all participants in the study, identifying as white, this will spend a majority of these discussions examining perceptions and construction by white preservice teachers.

Preservice Teachers Beliefs about Race/ism

Over the past two decades, scholars have discussed and debated the impact of the demographic imperative. They feared the growing cultural, ethnic, and racial divide between the homogeneous teaching force, who has overwhelmingly been white and middle-class, and the growing racial and cultural diversity of students in the classroom. Although down from 83 percent in 2003-2004, 80 percent of teachers in U.S. public schools still identified as white in 2015-2016 (NCES, 2019). The largely white teacher population was unlikely to change as 73 percent of preservice teachers enrolled in teacher education programs in 2013 were white (US Department of Education, 2016). But while the demographic profile of teachers and preservice teachers remained consistent, student demographics have shifted and will continue to shift over the next several decades. In the fall of 2017, 48 percent of students enrolled in public schools were white but the National Center for Education Statistics projects that by 2029 white students will only be 44

percent of the student population with 66 percent of students identifying as a student of color (NCES, 2020).

The demographic imperative has pushed teacher educators to think more deeply about their preservice teachers grappling with whiteness in colleges of education across the country. While some scholars have insisted it is imperative to recruit and retain teachers who better represent the racial makeup in the classrooms (Villegas & Lucas, 2005), the reality of the demographic imperative means teacher educators must find ways to support white preservice teachers as they gain awareness about the role of race in a diverse, multicultural society (Sleeter, 2001). This has left teacher education with the monumental mission to prepare new teachers, who must be equipped at “confronting and transcending patterns of racism in schools” (Sleeter, 2008, p. 561). Before preservice teachers grappled with the vestiges of race/ism in schools, teacher educators explored preservice teachers’ beliefs about race/ism.

Scholars across the literature have documented that white preservice teachers have lacked complex conceptions of race/ism (Castro, 2010; Jupp et al., 2019; Sleeter, 2001, 2008). For example, King (1991) referred to this as *dysconscious racism* when her students had inaccurate ideas about the nature of racism, blinding them to the reality of systems. Being blind to the systemic nature of racism persists, which hindered preservice teachers’ ability to see the complexity of racism. Systemic racism was the understanding that historical and current structures have been put in place that advantage some racial groups while disadvantaging other groups. From housing loans, jobs, representation in media, safe housing and healthcare, white people have created systems that hinder People of Color from having the same civic experiences (Miller & Garran, 2007). In a study

analyzing teacher education portfolios, when asked specifically to define racism, Wilson and Kumar (2017) found 796 preservice teachers commonly defined racism as individual actions, both intentional and unintentional, or feelings of superiority. Failing to see racism in a systemic way led to views of racism as a simple binary observation making racists only bad people who do bad things against others (DiAngelo, 2018). This simple vision of racism forgot all the ways race/ism is woven into our society.

Conversations in teacher education about race/ism for many preservice teachers began by denying the impact of race/ism in society. For example, in a case study of a single white preservice teacher in a class of 24, Smith and Crowley (2015) found Michelle held a *not race* stance by framing racism in historical ways and currently unimportant in societal and classroom interactions. In another example study, Amos (2011) observed most of the 54 white preservice teachers in their multicultural education class held race as unimportant in the classroom because as one participant said “race has never been an issue for me” (p. 486). These preservice teachers, who were predominately from working class and lower middle class, failed to see the role of white privilege in their lives, believing they were victims of reverse racism (Amos, 2011). Many white preservice teachers attempted to distance (Case & Hemmings, 2005) and protected (Picower, 2009) themselves from grappling with race/ism in their teacher education programs. Case and Hemmings (2005) studied an education class centered around an antiracist curriculum. From classrooms observations and semi-structured interviews with 53 white preservice teachers, they distanced themselves from discussions of race/ism by remaining silent, refusing to participate in class discussions (Case & Hemmings, 2005). Additionally, the white preservice teachers created distance between themselves and

race/ism by disconnecting through the use of colorblindness and separating themselves as not owners of slaves (Case & Hemmings, 2005). To protect themselves from grappling with race/ism, Picower (2009) found eight preservice teachers enacted *tools of whiteness* to “deny, evade, subvert, or avoid the issues raised” during discussions of race/ism and oppression (p. 205). First, the preservice teachers employed emotional retorts of anger, defensiveness and guilty to obscure discussions of race/ism. Next, the preservice teachers deployed ideological retorts of progress against racism, racism merely as prejudice, racism as too big of a problem for just one teacher to change, and inability to relate to their students of color. Finally, the preservice teachers performed whiteness by remaining silent during discussions of race/ism, proclaiming altruistic desire to help all students, and stating they would have a romantic relationship with a person of color. These white preservice teachers do all they could to protect themselves from discussions of race/ism that challenge their world view (Picower, 2009). These studies showed the active nature that resistance to discussions of race/ism are enacted by white preservice teachers.

Distancing and protectionism were often found in white preservice social studies teachers as well. For example, Urrieta and Reidel (2006) distancing and protectionism took the form of avoiding anything in the class that addressed race/ism, responding aggressively in anger to topics around race/ism, and purposefully forgetting systemic examples of racism addressed during class discussions. As another example, Crowley and Smith (2015) identified tension for white preservice social studies teachers, who resisted seeing racism as systemic because they used their own individual lived experiences to dispute notions of white privilege. In both studies, preservice teachers resisted discussions of race/ism, but the active resistance worked to distance themselves

from race/ism and protect them from confronting their own privilege. As Mills (2000) insisted this was not a *white ignorance* (Mills, 2007) but a product of white experience that left white people seeing racism as an atypical events in society.

Additionally, white preservice teachers often focused on justifying themselves as not racist when addressing race/ism. Both Case and Hemmings (2005) and Picower (2009) found as white preservice teachers worked to protect and distance themselves from discussions of race/ism in education classes, they also adamantly insisted on not being racist but instead being a good person. This was not uncommon across the literature as was seen in a study of 16 white preservice teachers in a cultural diversity course where Pezzetti (2017) insisted the preservice teachers deployed instances of their own experiences with diversity to showcase a non-racist positionality. However, when asked about diversity in their future classrooms, the same preservice teachers saw teaching students of color as a liability that influence their teaching and students' learning. In another study, Batchelor and colleagues (2019) found preservice teachers in an online discussion after taking an implicit bias test found they were most concerned with asserting that "they were not racists, but good people" (p. 13). These preservice teachers saw race/ism as binary distinction with little critical thought about the role race will play in their future classrooms.

Moving into the social studies, preservice and in-service teachers brought similar attitudes into the classroom, causing them to shy away from the topic of race. For example, Martell (2017) interviewed and observed 8 preservice teachers as they started and continued through student teaching. During interviews all the preservice teachers subscribed to the belief that teachers must directly address race/ism in the classroom.

Even with these beliefs, when confronted with discussions of race/ism during student teaching, these preservice teachers reacted mainly by avoiding and diminishing the subject of race/ism in their classroom (Martell, 2017). Similarly, Chandler (2009) contended two white social studies teachers feared discussing race in their classrooms because of their ill-defined notions of race/ism that focused on notions of racial progress and colorblind pedagogy.

Although this research painted a bleak picture of white preservice teachers' views about race/ism and diversity, teacher educators must be cautious not to enter teacher education classes with deficit mindsets towards white preservice teachers (Lowenstein, 2009). Laughter (2011) underscored the importance of recognizing the complexity of the experiences of white preservice teachers. The two preservice teachers in the study were interested in exploring their understanding of race/ism to prepare them for diverse classrooms. Through the construction of racial development biographies, Laughter (2011) insisted these burgeoning teachers might not have fully comprehend all parts of race/ism. However, through exploring differing definitions of race/ism and reflecting on their own racialized experiences, the white preservice teachers thought about "racism at a much deeper level" (Laughter, 2011, p. 49). In another study with one white preservice teacher, who shifted from wanting to teach in a white rural school to teaching in a diverse urban school, Garmon (2004) outlined the complicated dispositions and experiences that shaped her growth in embracing diversity. The white preservice teacher, Leslie, held personal dispositions of openness to different perspectives, reflexivity to look critically at her own beliefs, and dedication to equity and equality for all people. These dispositions were fostered and nurtured through experiences with individuals who had different cultures, in

education classes, and in discussion groups that supported her growth (Garmon, 2004).

These studies gave hope that white preservice teachers have the capacity to grow in their understanding of race/ism, but “may require different approaches in order to become conscious” of race/ism (Laughter, 2011, p. 49).

The central strategy of connecting white preservice teachers to think critically about race/ism was through self-reflection. Later in the chapter, I discussed in greater detail specific strategies across the literature, but I felt it prudent here to discuss the role of reflection as part of the way teacher education can help white preservice teachers grapple with race/ism. For example, Kahn et al (2014) surveyed 58 preservice teachers. The preservice teachers who valued self-reflection held deeper commitments to the importance of diversity in their future classrooms. A commitment to personal reflection remained essential to grappling with race/ism. In a study of 13 preservice teachers, Milner (2006) found awareness of other cultures was an important part of learning to work in a diverse urban school, but preservice teachers who seemed most prepared were able to reflect on themselves in relation to others perspectives. These preservice teachers could compare and contrast their experience in a situation, which Milner (2006) believed helped them “understand themselves in relation to others” (p. 362). The process of self-reflection helped preservice teachers also put their own privilege into perspective. Working with three white preservice teacher, Crowley (2016) found that through self-reflection of their experiences the preservice teachers grew to see racism beyond the individual and identified structural privileges that helped them as white people. Although I discussed specific strategies used in methods classes to prepare white preservice

teachers to grapple with race/ism and diversity, I thought it important here to show the possibility of reflection to help teacher education prepare white preservice teachers.

In this first section I have focused on the beliefs that white preservice teachers bring with them into teacher education programs and have also looked generally at ways teacher education has worked to prepare white preservice teachers for schools that are becoming more diverse. Generally, white preservice teachers lacked depth in understanding the experiences of People of Color (Castro, 2010; Sleeter, 2001, 2008). This was problematic as schools continue to grow more diverse (NCES, 2020). However, through experiences that challenged white preservice teachers notions of race/ism and diversity (Garmon, 2004) and self-reflection (Crowley, 2016; Milner, 2006), teacher education might help white preservice teachers to see race/ism more clearly. But this work could be challenging as teacher educators push resistant white preservice teachers to acknowledge race/ism (Case & Hemmings, 2005; Picower, 2009).

Preservice Teachers Beliefs about Citizenship

Over thirty years ago, Kenneth Kickbusch (1987) asserted preservice social studies teachers held a *centrist model* of citizenship education, which emphasized patriotic histories, and a rights-and-responsibilities driven citizenship that was centered around conformity through direct transmission. These discourses of citizenship carried into their classrooms as the preservice teachers focused on controlling the classroom and transmitting a master narrative of curriculum with no concern for students' lived experiences. Although scholarship and teacher education programs have promoted the introduction of more critical views of citizenship (Knight Abowitz & Harnish, 2006), the knowledges, skills, and attitudes of civic education reifies a solely political view of

citizenship that often fails to account for the context and civic experiences of students (Castro & Knowles, 2017).

Preservice teachers lacked civic clarity, holding vague beliefs about the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of civic participation. For example, Mathews and Dilworth (2008) found preservice teachers envisioned good citizenship as being about voting, following laws, and knowing what is happening to make informed decisions (Mathews & Dilworth, 2008). In a similar study with middle and secondary preservice social studies teachers, Tannebaum (2017) stated the preservice teachers “views of democratic education often group themselves in notions of citizenship including—though not limited to—voting, speaking one’s own opinion, listening to the perspectives of others, following current issues, and participating in basic democratic processes” (p. 8). These examples were two of many studies (i.e. Fry & O’Brien, 2015; Martin, 2008, 2010) that found at all levels preservice teachers see citizenship narrowly as being only about political involvement.

Even with an emphasis on political knowledge being central to citizenship, preservice teachers have limited knowledge of civic institutions and political events. For example, Journell (2013) surveyed 121 secondary and middle school preservice teachers and then followed-up with in person interviews with 30 participants. During the survey students responded to questions on government institutions and processes, political personalities, and a variety of current events and resources used for learning political knowledge. From the results, Journell (2013) lamented preservice teachers’ ability to connect students to the curriculum without a complete understanding of political knowledge and current events. He attributed the lack of knowledge to preservice teachers

lacking “the habits necessary for political and social awareness,” which included preservice teachers lacking interest and ability to access resources, such as newspapers or news on the internet (p. 342). In a similar study, Doppen and colleagues (2011) tested 211 preservice teachers with a representative sample of 50 questions from a citizenship test, in a number of social studies methods courses who were preparing to teach high school, middle school, and elementary school. Prospective high school preservice teachers performed better on the test, answering collectively 91% of the questions correctly, middle school preservice teachers answered 77% correctly, and elementary preservice teachers answered 62% correctly. Although the high school preservice teachers did well on the test, they still struggled to answer questions naming their own state Senators, the number of Representatives in Congress and the year the Constitution was adopted. During reflection, many preservice teachers, even those who failed the test, agreed that the test was a good measure of what good citizens should know. Even those who were critical of the test questions thought the emphasis on trivial knowledge about history and the government should be replaced to better represent a person’s ability to be “a good, patriotic citizen” (Doppen et al., 2011, p. 88). With inconsistent civic knowledge, preservice teachers struggled to engage students deeply in civic discussions.

Preservice teachers also hold limited understanding of the skills of active political citizenship. In a series of studies asking a varied group of preservice teachers both elementary and secondary from a variety of disciplines, Martin (2008, 2010) found preservice teachers held personally responsible views of citizenship (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004) that emphasized being nice, following rules / laws and remaining aware so they can help others in the community. Fry and O’Brien (2015) with a large sample of

elementary teachers supports similar findings, insisting many of the preservice teachers focused on helping others and following rules as part of a general faith in institutions.

Many preservice teachers limited civic skills to individual actions in a society.

The knowledges and skills preservice teachers maintained as essential for good citizenship were connected to their general attitudes about citizenship. In a study examining preservice teachers attitudes about citizenship through analysis of the “Pledge Allegiance to the Flag,” Chiodo et al. (2011) insisted preservice teachers hold mainly patriotic, subservient views of citizenship. The preservice teachers in the study supported patriotic values of citizenship that center on loyalty and respect. Adding a nuanced perspective to the discussion of civic attitude, Castro (2013) pointed to “civic worldviews” as overarching beliefs about citizenship that influenced fifteen preservice teachers construction of civic skills. In the study, eight participants believed positive character traits, love of country, and forming a cohesive community were essential for a good citizen. The remaining seven preservice teachers believed awareness led to action that could change society. These general civic worldviews led the first group of students to believe deliberation and working towards the common good as a community were essential skills for all citizens and those who stressed awareness believed negotiating / bargaining were the essential skills of citizens. These broad beliefs about skills were directly influenced by the preservice teachers’ attitudes towards their role as citizens. Ultimately, the civic worldview of preservice teachers shaped their ideas about civic participation.

As Mathews and Dilworth (2008) insisted preservice teachers’ views of citizenship “are emerging, changing, and often contradictory” (p. 382). Gatti and Payne

(2011) examined the connection between preservice teachers' ideas about citizenship and their ideas about pedagogy. Using semi-structured interviews, the researchers grouped preservice teachers using Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) classifications of citizenship and their ideas of teaching on a continuum from transmission to constructivism to activism. Here, they found a link between civic beliefs and thoughts on pedagogical practices in the classroom. Preservice teachers who generally supported personally responsible visions of citizenship favored transmitting civic curriculum to their students and on the other end of the spectrum those who supported justice-oriented ideas of citizenship believed in the power of activism as a teaching strategy for citizenship in the classroom. Gatti and Payne (2011) insisted preservice teachers' civic identity or how they construct citizenship will have a direct impact on the students in their classrooms as teacher citizens but add a word of caution that preservice teachers were grappling with their identity as citizens and as teachers of citizenship during their time in education classes.

Unsurprisingly, many preservice teachers saw few connections between citizenship and identity, race, or culture. As an example, Silva and Mason (2003) probed preservice teachers' on their ideas about civic engagement and "teaching *about, for, and in* democracy," (p. 374). They insisted most of the six elementary teachers in interviews supported multicultural society. However, they held a limited understanding of how different people experienced society, missing "the connection between diversity and inequality, or that members of certain groups in society may not have access to the same social and economic resources as others" (Silva & Mason, 2003, p. 386). In another example, Tannebaum (2017) found preservice teachers in the study thought race and

ethnicity fell outside the scope of citizenship education. They talked of diversity, but rarely saw the connection to democratic and civic life.

For white preservice teachers, whiteness might have clouded their ability to see the connection between race/ism and citizenship. As an example, Urrieta and Reidel (2008) found the white preservice teachers held uncritical beliefs about citizenship, because their own identity had always afforded them membership as citizens. As Ladson-Billing (2004) insisted, this experience of membership has not always been the privilege of People of Color. In this way the white preservice teachers in Urrieta and Reidel's (2008) methods class have never had to question their membership so they failed to see the importance of identity, culture or race in how their students might construct citizenship. In another study, Rodriguez and Polat (2012) analyzed the personal histories of fourteen diverse preservice teachers. Across stories of othering, the preservice teachers recounted multiple facets of citizenship including civic citizenship, ethnic citizenship, and cultural citizenship. Even with these varied ideas of membership from civic to ethnic and cultural, these preservice teachers centered white, English speakers as "good citizens entitled to civic, ethnic, and cultural access, rights, belonging and participation" (p. 371). Historically race has set membership conditions of citizenship (Ladson-Billings, 2004), but whiteness blinds white preservice teachers to the reality of citizenship.

However, for some preservice teachers, life experiences and classroom experiences highlighted the connection between race/ism and citizenship. A study by Castro (2010) observed a group of student teachers who found ways to integrate critical multicultural citizenship into their classrooms. Though facing several barriers and constraints, the three preservice teachers' commitment to look critically at the systemic

limitations race/ism place on civic identity led to varying degrees of enactment during student teaching. These preservice teachers' deep commitment to critical views of citizenship shaped their student teaching experience. Through a class project pairing preservice social studies teachers with local high school students, Salinas et al (2016) analyzed the beliefs of one Latino preservice teacher, Gilberto, as he grappled with new views of citizenship. Gilberto came from a privileged background as a third-generation teacher and was partnered with Miguel a Latino student, who instantly bonded with Gilberto because of his racial and ethnic identity. Through the project, Gilberto got to know Miguel both in school and outside of school. Gilberto observed a fluent Spanish speaking student who was involved in his home and church community but was disinterested in school. Ultimately, Gilberto began to see school privileging specific ways of knowing and being a citizen that are racially and culturally constructed.

Teacher Education for Racial Civic Literacy

Within this subsection, these studies examined the way teacher educators within teaching methods courses pushed preservice teachers to grapple with race/ism as a part of the civic experience through classroom curriculum and course projects. Although there were a number scholars who have preservice teachers grapple with race/ism in general education courses or diversity courses (i.e., Desai, 2019; Milner, 2006; Solic & Riley, 2019), the studies in this section focused on methods courses because social studies specific teacher education courses is at the core of this study. The first group of studies focused on preservice teachers working through their ideas on race/ism (Buchanan, 2015; Demoinsky, 2017; Hawkman, 2020; King, 2014, 2016; Martell, 2017). The second group of studies looks at the way methods courses ask preservice teachers to grapple with

racialized citizenship (An, 2017; Castro, 2014; Mathews & Dilworth, 2008; Palpacuer-Lee et al., 2018; Salinas et al., 2016; Urrieta & Reidel, 2006, 2008). Finally, I addressed the way Racial Civic Literacy can center race/ism in discussions of citizenship to help preservice teachers grapple with reality of racialized citizenship.

Interrogating Race/ism in Social Studies

In this first group of studies, these preservice teachers believed discussions of race/ism were important, but many felt vastly unprepared to broach the subject with their current and future students. For example, Demoiny (2017) found preservice teachers after a social studies methods course conceptually understood the need to address and discuss race/ism in the classroom, but lacked models for how to tackle the topic affectively in their future classrooms. Without effective models for how to discuss race/ism in the classroom, the preservice teachers were filled with the fear of offending students, parents or administrators (Demoiny, 2017). In another study, Buchanan (2015) found white preservice teachers in two social studies methods courses and a reading methods course believed “the avoidance of race, their ‘uncomfortableness’ with discussing race, and race as controversial as normal” (p. 20). Hence, they felt unprepared to discuss race/ism with their students, because they lacked experience engaging with topics around race/ism (Buchanan, 2015). In a final study, Martell (2017) contended preservice teachers in a social studies methods course and during student teaching avoided or diminished conversations of race/ism when students asked questions, because they believed they lacked content knowledge or felt the conversation would be unproductive. Although preservice teachers believed they should address race/ism in their classrooms (Demoiny,

2017; Martell, 2017), without models, they struggled to actualize this in their future classrooms.

In another set of studies, King (2014, 2016) tried to add nuance to preservice teachers conceptions of race/ism through the study of Black history. During a summer program, King (2014, 2016) invited several students in a social studies methods to participate in a voluntary reading program over the summer that emphasized readings on Black history meant to challenge preservice teachers with insights into the agency of Black people throughout history and to overcome the heroification of famous Black men and women. As King (2016) found when examining the preservice teachers lessons and interviews through the lens of racial literacy, the preservice teachers expanded their vocabularies around race/ism, but they struggled to identify race/ism in the broader curriculum outside of the typical periods of slavery, reconstruction, and the Civil Rights Movement. Part of the dilemma is that the preservice teachers seemed to focus not on the agency of Black people throughout history but instead on the oppression, which created a historical narrative of victimization (King, 2014). Although the preservice teachers gained a more nuanced understanding of race/ism and were willing to address the topic in classes, they struggled to address race/ism outside of the common historical narratives (King, 2014, 2016).

White preservice social studies teachers must continually struggle to understand their own whiteness as they learn to grapple with race/ism in their future classrooms. In a study framed around an antiracist social studies methods class, Hawkman (2020) highlighted the constant struggle for white preservice teachers as they persistently grapple with their own white identity while trying to learn to address race/ism through the

lens of antiracism. The author found some white preservice teachers embraced antiracism drawing connections by looking critically at race/ism and whiteness throughout education and even successfully planned lessons centered on antiracist teaching. For other preservice teachers, they hesitantly participated in discussions of race/ism but were unwilling to openly challenge racism through lesson plans, which is a central component of antiracism. Ultimately, Hawkman (2020) found even those who embraced antiracist ideas of race/ism waffled towards hesitancy throughout the course. Even with the knowledge of antiracism “preservice teachers might be able to recognize race/ism...but may not know what to do about it in the classroom” (Hawkman, 2020, p. 21).

Although addressing race/ism in a number of ways, Demoinsky (2018) found three themes across her study with social studies teacher educators who addressed race in their methods courses. First, the teacher educators asserted the need to broaden preservice teachers content knowledge connected to race/ism. They began by facilitating discussions of race/ism, introducing the preservice teachers to counter narratives and multiple perspectives of history and oppression. Next, the preservice teachers built their own pedagogical content knowledge of teaching issues of race/ism through teacher educators modeling in their methods classes ways to engage students in these conversations. Additionally, preservice teachers saw other examples of teachers teaching about race/ism through models within scholarly and practitioner-based articles. Finally, preservice teachers used journals and class dialogues to push preservice teachers to reflect on their own privileges around race/ism. The preservice teachers were quick to highlight the context of their university and their experiences working with preservice teachers shaped the way they addressed race/ism in their methods class. The teacher educators sought to

make race/ism visible for the preservice teachers but feared resistance, so they inconsistently addressed this in course documents. Instead, race/ism were central to course content and experiences.

Confronting Race/ism to Construct Citizenship in the Social Studies

Teacher educators leveraged the theoretical underpinnings of the course to push preservice social studies teachers to examine citizenship through the lens of race/ism. In the first study, Urrieta and Reidel (2006, 2008) introduced a critical perspective in their secondary social studies course. The instructor (Urrieta) required the predominantly white class to reflect on their own civic identities and course readings through class journals and discussion. In addition, the preservice teachers created a short unit idea about citizenship and a longer unit centered around any social studies topic. After being asked throughout the course to confront the racial and cultural construction of citizenship, Urrieta and Reidel (2008) found the preservice teachers “failed to consider how their role and privilege as white racial beings and white racial educators would affect their work with students from different racial and socioeconomic backgrounds” (p. 102). Although the curriculum within the class sought to provide multiple perspectives to disrupt common ideas of citizenship, the preservice teachers held fast to their preconceived ideas of colorblind citizenship.

In the second and third studies, Sohyun An (2017) and Kopish (2016) framed their methods courses around global citizenship to present preservice teachers with multiple ways of being a citizen. An (2017) introduced preservice elementary teachers to a framework of global citizenship in three sections of a social studies methods course. Ultimately, the preservice teachers envisioned new ways to see citizenship through a

global lens, but were still unsure about how to address global issues in their future classrooms. An (2017) used global citizenship to create distance for preservice teachers to interrogate their own privilege as citizens. In a third study in a global issues in education course, Kopish (2016) introduced preservice teachers to global perspectives through projects and dialogue with international students, finding many teacher candidates opened their eyes to the lived experiences of immigrant and refugees and their perspectives on citizenship. Although some preservice teachers realized their privilege as citizens, a number struggled to identify with the oppression faced by some citizens because of their identity as immigrants. Using a global citizenship lens provided preservice teachers distance to discuss ideas of oppression around citizenship, but global frameworks could not overcome the privileged views of citizenship many preservice teachers still held.

In two additional studies Castro (2014) and Mathews and Dilworth (2008) asked preservice social studies teachers to think about racialized citizenship through the lens of multicultural citizenship. In their secondary methods course, Mathews and Dilworth (2008) found that white preservice social studies teachers saw little relevance to race/ism when understanding citizenship because they saw racism as historical or only relevant to People of Color. Thus, viewing citizenship through a multicultural lens was unnecessary for them in the white communities in which they hoped to return and teach. When working with four preservice teachers of color, Castro (2014) noticed their own civic experiences shaped their understanding of race/ism as citizens and as future teachers. However, teacher education provided spaces to reflect more deeply on their ideas of citizenship. The course further provided the preservice with a vocabulary, tools, and

skills to enact their critical vision of citizenship. Thus, teacher education courses must provide tangible skills and tools to push preservice teachers to reflect and enact multiple perspectives of citizenship (Castro, 2014). Preservice teachers' personal biographies as citizens and experiences with race/ism weighted heavy on their construction of citizenship.

Need for a New Theory to Grapple with Race/ism in the Construction of Citizenship

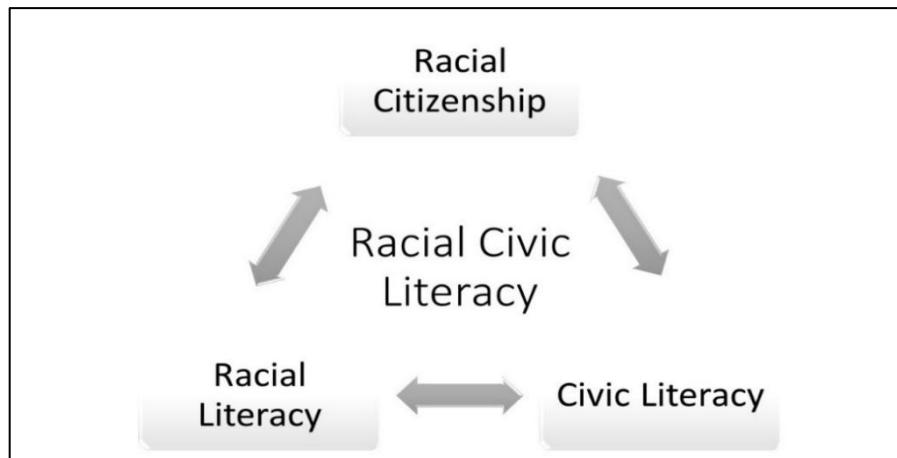
Over all, the social studies literature was ripe with examples of P-12 teachers and students wrestling with the construction of citizenship through racial and cultural lenses (Dabach et al., 2018; Hilburn, 2015; Jaffee, 2016; M. W. Johnson, 2019; Lo, 2017; Rodríguez, 2018; Rubin, 2007; Saada, 2013; Urrieta, 2004; Vickery, 2017; Woodson, 2016, 2019). As an example, Rubin (2007) interviewing students found “Many urban youth of color in the study pointed to a disjuncture between these civic ideals [what is taught in schools and text books] and the reality of their lives” (pp. 477-478). Students of color highlighted the way race/ism influenced their experiences as citizens, which impacted the way they thought about enacting citizenship. Moving from students’ examination of the interconnectivity of race/ism and citizenship, the social studies research also looks closely at the way teachers can enact citizenship in their classrooms. Looking from the perspective of teachers, Vickery (2017) accentuated how five Black female teachers both realized and pushed students to examine critically “the shifting construct of citizenship and who is considered a citizen further demonstrates the constant correlation between citizenship, intersection of identities, and notions of power and privilege” (p. 339). These examples highlighted the way social studies has broadly taken up the call to examine race/ism within the construction of citizenship.

However, only a relative few studies addressed the importance of race/ism as part of the social construction of citizenship (Castro, 2010; Mathews & Dilworth, 2008; Silva & Mason, 2003; Tannebaum, 2017; Urrieta & Reidel, 2008). Because teachers' visions of citizenship directly impacted the teaching of citizenship in their classrooms (Levinson, 2010; Patterson et al., 2012), teacher education in the social studies must nuance preservice teachers' understanding of the construction of race/ism and citizenship. Studies focusing explicitly on the teaching of race/ism highlighted that many preservice teachers believe they must address race/ism in their future social studies classrooms (Demoiny, 2017; King, 2014, 2016; Martell, 2017). However, some preservice teachers lacked knowledge and understanding about race/ism, which seemed to limit their ability to address the topic (Demoiny, 2017; Hawkman, 2020; King, 2014, 2016). This became clear when preservice teachers confronted the topic of race/ism in the construction of citizenship (An, 2017; Castro, 2014; Kopish, 2016; Mathews & Dilworth, 2008; Urrieta & Reidel, 2008). Many preservice teachers saw little value in understanding how race/ism impacts citizenship because their own privilege had shielded them from the racial construction of citizenship (Mathews & Dilworth, 2008; Urrieta & Reidel, 2008). While other preservice teachers, either through the distance of global citizenship (An, 2017; Kopish, 2016) or their own life experiences confronting race/ism (Castro, 2014), believed social studies had to confront race/ism to fully address ideas of citizenship. Thus, a new theoretical tool might be needed to connect conversations of race/ism to the construction of citizenship for preservice social studies teachers and the social studies teacher educators in their methods courses to overcome the power of white social studies (Chandler & Branscombe, 2015).

Racial Civic Literacy

Because citizenship has not allowed equal participation and membership or belonging to all peoples (Castro & Knowles, 2017; Ladson-Billings, 2004), a new theoretical framework is needed that accounts for these civic experiences. The history of racism and white supremacy meant citizenship and its membership were experienced differently by different people (Ladson-Billings, 2004). For this reason, Dr. Castro's (Castro, 2021; Castro & Williamson 2021) theory of racial civic literacy (RCL) could help in this study to examine race/ism and citizenship within a social studies methods course. RCL (see Figure 1) attempted to critically examine the way race/ism and citizenship coalesce in society to inform the way people feel connected to and separated from the public and political participation and engagement.

Figure 1: Racial Civic Literacy Model



Following the model set forth by Castro (2021), the structure of RCL began with the examination of the knowledge, actions, and attitudes of civic literacy, which too often took an uncritical view of active participation by citizens. Secondly, RCL unpacked the way race/ism has been central in constructing citizenship through what Castro calls racial citizenship. His vision of racial citizenship moved beyond lack of access to focus on how

the historical and cultural construction of citizenship through race/ism had led to alternative ways of knowing and being a citizen for People of Color. The final component of RCL was racial literacy, the practice of reading and unpacking the way race/ism is understood in the world. These brief discussions helped construct RCL as a lens to examine the way white preservice teachers begin to grapple with the racialized reality of citizenship that they often have the privilege of not seeing.

Civic Literacy

Civic literacy often forgets and dismisses the different lived civic realities of People of Color. For example, Milner (2002) constructed civic literacy as the “knowledge and skills to act as competent citizens,” which he measured through voter turnout and political knowledge (p. 3). This narrow vision of civic literacy placed strict guidelines on what is a *good / ideal citizen*. This view further put a premium on political knowledge, such as current events or government processes, and values only political participation in the form of voting or joining political organizations (Levinson, 2010). However, this view of civic literacy forgot the power and privilege, which has been central to the historical construction of citizenship (Ladson-Billings, 2004; Urrieta, 2004). As an example, Cohen (2010) requested a frank and honest conversation about the political reality facing Black youth, insisting “their structural environment both limits their power to make real choices—their agency—and imposes high costs on their lives” (p. 17).

Citizenship has been constructed to primarily force assimilation on cultural groups who have different knowledge and participate outside of the political sphere (Banks & Nguyen, 2008). This construction of civic literacy asked little of citizens to question the status quo promoting complacency and compliance (Marciano, 1997). With

this popular view of civic literacy, it was not surprising that Kahn and Middaugh (2011) in a survey of high school senior found “patriotism appears to lead them to want to stifle critique” (p. 99). Instead, I wanted to construct civic literacy from a critical perspective that scrutinizes knowledge construction and values cultural ways of knowing, participating, and being a citizen.

Critical civic literacy maintained citizens must learn and have “the ability to think critically and objectively about the nation’s fundamental premises and practices” (Marciano, 1997, p. 1). To critically analyze our role as citizens, we must dig deeper than patriotic ideals of civic participation and ask questions of whether the country has lived up to the promise of *liberty and justice for all*. Thus, critical civic literacy moved to a justice-oriented view of citizenship (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004) or a critical view of citizenship (Knight Abowitz & Harnish, 2006) by “not taking for granted what is known and in place, instead rigorously and wholeheartedly questioning the assumptions that undergird current ideas, practices, policies, and structures” (Teitelbaum, 2011, p. 12). This means for citizens to be literate they must look more deeply as they constructed knowledge to critique systems of oppression (Marciano, 1997) and questioned the official knowledge and common-sense arguments that undergirded civic education (Apple, 1999).

In addition to critically examining the role of citizenship, I also wanted to change the discussion of civic literacy to include cultural ways of knowing, participating and being a citizen. In her discussion of the gap in civic empowerment, Levinson (2010) acknowledged traditional civic literacy too often privileges specific ways of knowing and being citizens. Highlighting that knowledge of what happens in your neighborhood or

participation in a nonpolitical organization are important civic practices, but they fell outside of the traditional definition of civic literacy. However, Levine (2011) asserted “civic engagement beyond the political sphere...tends to promote social cohesion,” which leads to connections that impact the lives of citizens in the community (p. 3). This meant we must broaden participation and knowledge beyond the political to get a clearer picture of what civic literacy means for all citizens. In Ladson-Billings’ (2004) powerful argument for cultural citizenship, she insisted those on the margins have little access to power but through participation in public community organizations such as churches, these same citizens impact their community in social and political ways. Taking this further, Oberchain and Pennington (2015) contended differentiated views of civic engagement are necessary because “what may be better for one community member may not be better for all members of the community or the community as a whole...citizens carefully reflect upon the good of the community, as well as their own civic interests” (p. 133). But this was not new. Young (1989) insisted democracy requires “differentiated citizenship” because not all groups can participate equally in the traditional political process. Civic literacy must be expanded to create spaces for group knowledge and experience to be shared and valued. As an example, from literacy education, Kirkland (2013) described the literacy practices of a group of young Black men as they participate in the *cypha*. The *cypha* was a work in concert between the boys as they constructed poetry in the form of hip-hop to describe their life and experience. Although literate in the knowledge of the neighborhood and their culture of the community, these young men knew their knowledge was unwelcome in the classroom. The knowledge and practices of participation in communities must be welcomed as part of civic literacy so that we

celebrated citizens “right to be different and to belong in a participatory democratic sense” (Rosaldo, 1994a, p. 402). Thus, this view of civic literacy looked to expand and welcomed all ways people live and participate in their community.

Racial Citizenship

Racial citizenship was an approach to citizenship that acknowledged how civic experiences were bound by ones racial and ethnic identity. Like Black historical consciousness, racial citizenship traces how race defines civic experiences (Brown et al., 2011). Supporting the construction of racial citizenship, Ladson-Billings (2004) traced how race cannot be removed from any definition of citizenship. Thus, Mills (1997, 2000) characterized civic life as confined by a *racial contract* that establishes, which individuals were deemed legitimate civic actors and who were not (e.g. denial of citizenship (Brown & Urrieta, 2010)). Thus, citizenship “looks different” to different people because of the racialized construction of citizenship (Vickery, 2017, p. 327).

The sociohistorical construction of race in the United States precluded People of Color from being full citizens. Thus, the nature of citizenship for Black and Brown folks took on a different trajectory based on their lived civic experiences. For example, Hartman (2007) asserted the historical roots of slavery imprinted on Black bodies an “afterlife of slavery” (p. 6). Insisting that even after the end of the slave trade and chattel slavery, race/ism continued to hinder equitable access to basic human necessities for People of Color, impacting historical and current construction of citizenship. Hence, Black people developed their own civic practices within their own communities (Ladson-Billings, 2004). With these different lived civic experiences, People of Color developed a more nuanced relationship with their civic identities. Likewise, Tillet (2012) insisted the

nation's history of oppressing Black people from slavery to Jim Crow and the more current iterations of systemic racism, have led to a "protracted experience of disillusionment, mourning, and yearning [that] is in fact the basis of African American civic estrangement" (p. 9). This *civic estrangement* comes from the reality that Black citizens were legal citizens, whose experiences betrayed different lived civic experiences. This created new and different relationships with the broader societal community of being a citizen. However, Black people were not alone as Asian (Volpp, 2005), Latino/a (Brown & Urrieta, 2010), and Indigenous peoples (Warren, 2010) were always racialized citizens, who confronted separation from the societal community. Ultimately, racial citizenship created a different ontological and epistemological experience for People of Color. With Black and Brown folks born or naturalized in the United States but always "cognizant of the reality that they are in fact Americans and American citizens yet are unable to fully grasp that identity and claim it as their own" (Davis, 2005, p. 157).

Even when People of Color have assimilated to the dominant culture, their racialized identities alter their place as citizens. For example, in an examination of historian, Carter G. Woodson's work on the teaching of Black soldiers as the idealized civic participants, Brown et al. (2011) highlighted the construction of Black soldiers as "deviant civilians" during times of peace but necessary patriots during war time (p. 294). Hence, the experience of Black soldiers as ideal citizens who were often silenced throughout history led Brown et al. (2011) to insist "'race' should be seen as inextricably embedded in the historical and contemporary meanings of United States citizenship" (p. 293). Similarly, Collins (2000) maintained within the realm of politics Black women remained second class citizens, but their labor was an indispensable cog in the American

economic system. Thus, Black women were essential personnel, who are marginalized across the political spectrum. To account for these lived realities, Ladson-Billings (2004) argued for a *new citizenship*, which recognized the multiple ways of knowing and being as raced citizens by “defin[ing] allegiances and self-interests along a variety of axes—racial, ethnic, international, regional, religious, and political” with a goal of moving towards a more equitable civic experiences for all people (p. 117). In this way, racial citizenship addresses the historical roots of white supremacy and segregation by accounting for the different ways Black and Brown folks have come to know and be citizens.

The racialized nature of citizenship has led People of Color to look more critically at visions of citizenship (Castro & Knowles, 2017). For example, while interviewing 10 first and second grade Black boys, Johnson (2019) found the children created a category of *maybe citizen*. This category described men like George Washington who descended from hero status to maybe citizen as the students learned more about his history as a slave owner. Conversely, these same students shifted their beliefs about Colin Kaepernick, a perceived bad citizen for kneeling during the *National Anthem*, to maybe citizen as they learned about the purpose of his protest. As many of these young boys struggled with being labeled as troublemakers, they eloquently constructed rich descriptions of how citizenship was influenced by unfair rules and unequal treatment. Ultimately, Johnson (2019) insisted the “early elementary Black males knew all too well how one’s social position can evoke undue penalty” (p. 389). Moving into middle and high school, Rubin (2007) insisted students of color often found a *disjuncture* between the ideals promoted in their social studies classes and the reality of their lived experiences “amid larger

structural inequalities” (p. 473). Likewise, Cornbleth (2002), interviewing a group of diverse high school students, found students with experience facing racism critiqued the American experience as a “façade” that fails to deliver on the promises of prosperity and equality for all citizens. Even these young citizens recognized the presence of racialized citizenship. Thus, any examination of citizenship must account for racial citizenship, which has constructed a separate civic lived experience for People of Color (Ladson-Billings, 2004).

Racial Literacy

Racial literacy could then function as a tool to critique and critically read the way race/ism influence all citizens lived experiences. Guinier and Torres (2002), in their seminal book *The Miner’s Canary: Enlisting race, Resisting Power, Transforming Democracy*, introduced *racial literacy* as a movement “beyond the initial descriptive step of an oppositional consciousness to identify patterns of injustice that link race to class, to gender, and to other forms of power” (p. 29). To begin, racial literacy started by naming racism as a system that works in society and not as just individual acts of racism or prejudice (Guinier, 2003). Accordingly, becoming racially literate means one must begin to decipher the many ways race “adapts its syntax to mask class and code geography” (Guinier, 2004, p. 100). Guinier (2004) further insisted becoming racial literate entailed grasping the grammar of racialized structures to both recognize the oppressive systems that oppressed People of Color and to learn the language to push against those structures. Ultimately, racial literacy was a skill of reading the racialized world (Guinier, 2003, 2004).

In another iteration of racial literacy through a lens of critical whiteness studies, Twine (2010) constructed racial literacy “as a reading practice, a way of perceiving and responding to the racial climate and racial structures that individuals encounter daily” (p. 8). After examining the experience of white parents raising Black and multiracial children, Twine (2010) found four ways the parents learned to read the world of race/ism as they navigated being part of multiracial families. Racial literacy began by first recognizing racism in “routine or everyday forms” (Twine, 2010, p. 93). Secondly, racial literacy insisted one assess the intersection of race with class and gender to examine the impact of race and racism. Next, one grappled with the impact of whiteness in the context of race/ism. Finally, racial literacy asked one to navigate the “local geographies of race and racism” (Twine, 2010, p. 93). For these white mothers, their growing awareness to protect themselves and their children led to a growing mindfulness of everyday racism. These strong familial bonds opened these white women’s eyes to race/ism and its impact on all People of Color.

Drawing directly on Twine (2010) and Guinier (2004), Stevenson (2014) insisted education must prepare students to cope with the reality that race/ism often lead to racial conflict. He actualized racial literacy as a practice or skill-set that allows people to *read*, *recast*, and *resolve* before, during, and after experiencing a racially charged encounter. Within this model Stevenson (2014) wanted People of Color to learn to confront and cope with racially stressful experiences by seeing their own efficacy in sharing their lived experiences with race/ism. This could help white people learn to listen actively and empathetically to People of Color about their experiences with race/ism. Ultimately, racial literacy for Stevenson (2014) provided a phycological underpinning that focuses on

learning to see and engage in the real world with race/ism. Thus, racial literacy became a discursive practice to understand and reflect on the way race/ism affects all peoples daily lives (Grayson, 2018).

For teachers in the classroom, racial literacy as a skill and a pedagogy offered opportunities to push students to critically examine the way race/ism played out in the world. Examining a single teacher's practices in an elective social studies class, Hawkman (2019) found Mr. de la Vega advocated for racial identity development through helping students gain the skills of racial literacy. Mr. de la Vega pushed students to define the vocabulary and gain insights into the grammar of race/ism. Ultimately, he wanted students to look critically at the world and ask "Why is it this way?" (A. Hawkman, 2019, p. 224). Epstein and Gist (2015) interviewed three teachers who taught students to read race/ism in the world, which "fostered a critical consciousness of the structures, assumptions, and normalized practices which construct race and engineer racism" for the students in their classrooms (p. 58). These few examples highlighted the possibility of teaching with and for racial literacy can offer teachers in the classroom.

As a result, teacher educators must prepare future teachers to be racial literate in their future classrooms and read the structures race/ism in the world. Rogers and Mosley (2008) insisted teacher educators must provide preservice teachers "a set of tools (psychological, conceptual, discursive, material) that allow individuals to describe, interpret, explain and act on the constellation of practices that comprise racism" (p. 110). Then teacher educators incorporated a variety of methods to help their white preservice teachers build the knowledge and skills of racial literacy. For example, through the study of Black history, King (2016) found preservice teachers gained a nuanced awareness of

the historical role of racism in the country, which was central to reading race/ism in the world. However, even with their growing awareness, the preservice teachers still placed the study of race/ism in specific periods and topics, highlighting their misunderstanding of the continuity of race/ism across history (King, 2016). In another study of teacher educator working to develop racial literacy, Sealey-Ruiz and Greene (2015) asked preservice teachers to critically examine popular media portrayals of young black men to disrupt the narrative of violence. Teacher education classes might offer a space for, especially, white preservice teacher to practice talking about race/ism (Reisman et al., 2020). Thus, teacher education must help preservice teachers develop racial literacy to examine the role of race/ism more critically in society.

Facilitating Racial Civic Literacy through Young Adult Fiction

A final component of this study was the use of young adult fiction (YAF) to spark discussions in social studies methods classes around the issues of RCL. As previously discussed, preservice teachers, many of who were white, matriculate into colleges of education with limited ideas of race/ism (Castro, 2010; Sleeter, 2001, 2008) and citizenship (Mathews & Dilworth, 2008). Thus, teacher training programs offered programs that push preservice teachers to grow in their understanding of race/ism (i.e., Crowley & Smith, 2015; King, 2016; Smith & Crowley, 2015b) and citizenship (An, 2017; Castro, 2010; Kopish, 2016; Mathews & Dilworth, 2008; Urrieta & Reidel, 2006). The use of YAF offered the possibility of introducing preservice teachers to multiple perspectives, which helped them grow as they learned RCL.

In her popular essay, Sims Bishop (1990) argued books and literature can serve as windows that allow students to see and learn about other cultures. But they could also be

mirrors that reflect or allow students to see their own culture in the curriculum. Hence, books and literature were cultural artifacts allowing people windows to look into and learn about different cultures and cultural experiences. With a central goal of creating experiences that pushed preservice teachers to grapple with multiple perspectives (Sleeter, 2001, 2008), cultural artifacts provided avenues for teacher educator to create windows for preservice teachers to explore different cultural ways of knowing and being. Additionally, cultural resources offered an engaging approach that could be closely scaffolded by teacher educators to ensure reflection and dialogue. Although this study focused on YAF or books as cultural artifacts to examine the way different citizens experience race/ism, other mediums served to showcase cultural ways of knowing and being as a cultural artifact.

Films, as cultural artifacts, offered the possibility to confront preservice teachers with multiple conceptions of knowing and being a citizens through the lens of race/ism (Stoddard & Marcus, 2006). Beginning by exploring the use of film in teacher education, documentaries introduced race/ism into teaching about citizenship for preservice teacher. Marcus and Stoddard (2009) insisted films can introduce multiple perspectives and controversial issues “promoting reasoned judgement, promoting an expanded view of humanity, and deliberating over the common good” (p. 281). Thus, films offered entry points to engage students and preservice teachers on race/ism and citizenship. In a study of graduate preservice teachers, Parkhouse (2015) used the film *Precious Knowledge* (Palos, 2011) and discussions of Chican@ resistance movements to push the preservice teachers ideas about being activist teacher citizens. Generally, some students saw concrete ways to include activism in the future class. While other preservice teachers

were reluctant to promote critical views of citizenship in their future classes. Even with these varied experiences, Parkhouse (2015) asserted the use of the movie provided students a real-world model to think about and envision ways to enact citizenship in their future classroom.

Movies and documentaries served as curriculum tools to address race/ism for preservice teachers, but teacher educators included purposeful reflection. After five white preservice teachers viewed, *When the Levies Broke: A Requiem in Four Acts* (Lee & Pollard, 2006), a documentary on the aftermath of hurricane Katrina, Segall and Garrett (2013) found the preservice teachers struggled to address race/ism in their discussions with peers. Although race was at the center of the documentary, the preservice teachers did all they could to “circumvent and diminish race” by remaining colorblind, refocusing on socioeconomic class, and reframing the discussion away from systems and oppression to individual actions (p. 279). In an elementary social studies methods course, Buchanan (2016) found preservice teachers showed empathy to the perspectives portrayed in the documentaries on the Civil Rights Movement but remained passive to portrayals of white race/ism. To push preservice to more critically examine these documentaries, Buchanan (2016) promoted the importance of various instructional strategies that included “anticipation guides, structured discussions, and written reflections” to ensure preservice teachers critically engaged with the portrayal race/ism throughout the documentary.

Movies and documentaries have always had a well-established place in social studies classrooms (Marcus & Stoddard, 2009), but this study focused instead on the use of YAF to spur conversations and teach for RCL. YAF told stories that resonate with young people by connecting to the complexities of real life as experienced by young

adults (Cart, 2018). Over the last decade more and more titles of YAF have grown to address multicultural perspectives with an emphasis portraying real life lived experiences of People of Color (Brooks, 2006; Gere et al., 2009; Lazar & Offenberg, 2011). This genre of fiction offered ways for preservice teachers to engage with multiple perspectives gaining insights on race/ism and citizenship.

English language arts and critical literacy have promoted multicultural YAF as an engaging way to broach conversations of race/ism in classrooms (Glenn et al., 2012; Groenke et al., 2010; Thomas, 2015) and in teacher education programs (Falter & Kerkhoff, 2018; Glenn, 2012; Haddix & Price-Dennis, 2013). For example, Glenn (2012) insisted discussion by preservice teachers of “the counter-narrative texts encouraged consideration of their won Whiteness” and confront their own biases (p. 342). However, when preservice teachers attempted to create simple narrative from the counter stories of simply shared humanity, they lost “the ways in which race influences how every person sees and is seen” (Glenn, 2012, p. 344). Adding to this discussion, Haddix and Price-Dennis (2013) highlighted how fiction can work as a tool to examine race in a methods classroom but the authors caution that this will only work if curated and facilitated by teacher educators who push preservice teachers to examine race/ism through a critical lens. Exemplifying these pitfalls, Falter and Kerkhoff (2018) found preservice teachers emphasized the importance of neutrality during book discussions of *All American Boys* (Reynolds & Kiely, 2015), the story of a Black young man who is wrongfully assaulted by a white police officer. Bean and Rigoni (2001) pushed a group of social studies teachers in a critical literacy class by having them read and dialogue with a group of Latino/a students at a local high school as they both read and analyzed *Buried Onions*.

(Soto, 1997). The high school students' perspectives goaded the teachers to see the race/ism presented in the book more deeply after engaging with students on the topic. Through these few studies, it was apparent young adult fiction could spark discussions of race/ism in teacher education.

Because of the prominence of citizenship in social studies education (Banks, 2017; Ladson-Billings, 2004), the use of YAF might allow for a critical examination of race/ism through the lens of citizenship. For example, Mathews and Dilworth (2008) used young adult fiction as part of their methods class to have preservice teachers examine the way citizenship is influenced by identity. The preservice teachers then used these topics to frame and create lesson plans toward teaching controversial issues. Many of the preservice teachers were hesitant to engage in the teaching of controversial issues and worried about the time required to teaching using young adult fiction in the classroom. Although Mathews and Dilworth (2008) referenced the use of young adult fiction as part of the methods course, the authors spent little time discussing the possibility of using the genre to question the construction of citizenship through race. This study shows the potential of pushing preservice teachers to grapple with citizenship and racism using YAF.

The goal of teacher education was to create moments of engagement that pushed preservice teachers to question their biases (Sleeter, 2008). Personal experiences learning with communities through service-learning and field service have shown potential in expand preservice teachers to see multiple perspectives of race/ism and citizenship (Salinas et al., 2016; Wade & Raba, 2003). But the call to incorporate critical discussions for preservice teachers beyond a single class or experience fills the literature (Sleeter,

2001). The use of cultural artifacts such as movies and books seemed to offer a promise in engaging with race/ism and citizenship. The incorporation of documentaries and movies was common practice in social studies (Marcus & Stoddard, 2009), but it is rare in the social studies literature (Bean & Rigoni, 2001). English and literacy education have shown the promise of multicultural YAF to elucidate issues of race/ism (Glenn, 2012), but they rarely expanded this to include the construction of citizenship. Thus, the inclusion of multicultural YAF showed promise to introduce preservice social studies teachers to multiple perspectives as they grapple with RCL.

Goal of Racial Civic Literacy in Young Adult Fiction

My goal for using RCL in this dissertation pushed preservice teachers to see the interconnectedness of race/ism and the construction of citizenship. Castro (2021) initially constructed RCL out of the literature of civic literacy, racial citizenship, and racial literacy to help explain the way race/ism and citizenship intersect in young adult fiction. For this dissertation, I saw RCL as a tool to help white preservice teachers see the way racial identity has always impacted civic experiences. Thus, using RCL in conjunction with YAF was meant to push participants to engage with reading the racialized civic world that many white preservice teachers miss all around them.

Conclusion

With few studies in social studies teacher education that directly connect the construction of race/ism and citizenship (Castro, 2010; Mathews & Dilworth, 2008; Silva & Mason, 2003; Tannebaum, 2017; Urrieta & Reidel, 2008), this study attempted to add to this body of literature. Because the social studies curriculum and teaching too often shrouds itself in whiteness (Chandler & Branscombe, 2015), RCL sought to help white

preservice teachers both read race/ism in the world but help them transfer this critical view to their future classroom. Additionally, with an emphasis on the use of RCL, it seemed prudent to look at the way preservice teachers “read” YAF, but also the way that they read the world of race/ism and citizenship. This added to a number of works in literacy and English education (see Falter & Kerkhoff, 2018; Glenn, 2012; Glenn et al., 2012; Rogers & Mosley, 2008) who also utilized YAF to foster discussions about race/ism. I hoped the use of YAF as a counter-narrative might challenge preservice teachers and facilitate a more nuanced understanding of race/ism and citizenship (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). In the following chapter, I detailed the methods of this case study to explore race/ism and citizenship with six preservice social studies teachers.

Chapter 3: Research Methods and Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine the use of young adult fiction (YAF) in a social studies methods course to facilitate preservice teachers grappling with how to engage with their future students on race/ism and citizenship. The research questions shaping this study were grounded in a critical examination of race/ism and citizenship through the theoretical construct of racial civic literacy (RCL), which was at the nexus of racial citizens, racial literacy, and civic literacy. This study was centered around the main question:

- How does the inclusion of young adult fiction in a social studies methods class foster white preservice teachers' racial civic literacy?

This main research question was then deconstructed into three sub-questions that approach RCL from the individual lenses of racial citizenship, racial literacy, and civic literacy:

1. How does the inclusion of young adult fiction shape white preservice teachers' conceptions of and the teaching of race/ism and citizenship?
2. How does the inclusion of young adult fiction in a secondary methods course build white teachers' racial literacy?
3. What influence does a secondary methods course using young adult fiction have on preservice teachers' conceptions of civic literacy?

Through a host of methods and theoretical lens, I turned to qualitative research to help answer these research questions because qualitative research is “*interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed*” (Merriam, 1998, p. 6; italics in

original). Qualitative research stitched together these multiple stories of individuals much like a quiltmaker or filmmaker (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011) to “reveal how all the parts work together to form a whole” (Merriam, 1998, p. 6).

Ultimately, qualitative methodologies seemed best suited, because qualitative research was “interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, p. 6). Additionally, Creswell (2014) insisted qualitative research takes place in real world settings, using theoretical perspectives with researchers gathering and interpreting data. Thus qualitative research offered the researchers a plethora of methods, methodologies and theoretical lens that can make “the world visible in a different way” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 4). With the focus of the study to better understand the way preservice social studies teachers constructed their ideas about citizenship through examining race/ism, I found it important to ground this study in a setting that asked preservice teachers to grapple with these issues. For this reason, a qualitative approach seemed well suited to explore this methods course.

Through the rest of this chapter, I reviewed my theoretical framework to explore how it influenced the collection and analysis of data. Next, I provided an overview of the context around the case under study. Then, the chapter explored the data collection and analysis procedures used throughout the study. Finally, the methods chapter explained how this dissertation study builds rigor and trustworthiness throughout the entirety of the project.

Theoretical Framework

From the construction of research questions through to the collection and analysis of data, this dissertation study was rooted in the theoretical lens of RCL. Although discussed in chapter 2 in greater detail, in this section I gave a brief overview of RCL to help as I discussed the collection of data and the analysis of the data. A brief recount of the major tenants of RCL informed the rest of this dissertations study.

RCL embodied three major tenants including racial citizenship, racial literacy, and civic literacy. Through this research I wanted to critically explore how preservice teachers envision and construct their own beliefs of citizenship and race/ism through their engagement with YAF. Although not specifically stated as critical, this theoretical lens looked explicitly at the way race/ism has influenced the construction and experience of citizenship. To begin, RCL recognized the historical roots of white supremacy and racism that has led to racial citizenship, where black and brown people experience different lived civic experiences (Brown et al., 2011; Brown & Urrieta, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2004). Historically, whiteness has been synonymous with full citizenship (Omi & Winant, 2015; Urrieta & Reidel, 2008), which has left people of color constantly fighting to participate as full citizens (Brown & Urrieta, 2010; Davis, 2005; Tillet, 2012; Vickery, 2017; Volpp, 2005). Thus, racial citizenship merely stated the reality of the way citizenship has been constructed in the United States. Through the inclusion of YAF, this methods class juxtaposed two civic lived experiences and then through interviews and class discussions and assignments, preservice teachers were giving opportunities to share and explore their thoughts on race/ism and citizenship. Ultimately, I constructed the preservice teachers'

beliefs about racial citizens through these multiple engagements with race/ism and citizenship.

Secondly, RCL drew on racial literacy (Guinier, 2004; Guinier & Torres, 2002; Twine, 2010) in a quest to help white preservice teachers learn to read the racialized world that surrounds them. Guinier (2004) insisted becoming racially literate included seeing the racialized world and being able to read the racial grammar of racialized structures. Expanding on this construct, Twine (2010) emphasized the role of whiteness in clouding and obstructing the way race/ism play out in the everyday experiences for people of color. Hence, racial literacy in this context asked white preservice teachers to learn to read the world through a different lens or at minimum understood that their experienced in the world were not the same as their students of color. Although many preservice teachers understood the need to address and discuss race/ism in their future classrooms (Demoiny, 2017; L. J. King, 2016; Martell, 2017), many lack the knowledge and skills to critically confront the way race/ism was a part of the classroom and students lived experiences. Whiteness shielded these preservice teachers for much of their lives (DiAngelo, 2011; Leonardo, 2009), so this study sought to explore how YAF could introduce multiple perspectives and helped them build ways a language to talk about race/ism in their future classrooms.

Finally, RCL drew on a new form of civic literacy, which recognized the importance of racial citizenship and racial literacy. Civic literacy often focused solely on political knowledge knowing specific laws or current events and civic skills such as voting (Milner, 2002). However, in my vision of civic literacy, I wanted to include a critical view of civic literacy that asks citizens to question what civic knowledge and

civic skills should be. This critical vision of civic literacy asks citizens to look critically at the reality of civic experiences and ask if these meet with the promises espoused in the founding documents of the country (Ladson-Billings, 2004; Teitelbaum, 2011).

Additionally, a critical vision of civic literacy recognized the community aspects of knowing and participating as citizens are racialized (Ladson-Billings, 2004; Rosaldo, 1994a, 1994b). Thus, being civic literate within this framework recognized racial citizenship and the importance of racial literacy in understanding the knowledges and skills of a citizen. Most preservice teachers held shallow and vague constructions of civic knowledge and skills (Mathews & Dilworth, 2008; Tannebaum, 2017) and few saw a link between race/ism and citizenship (Mathews & Dilworth, 2008; Urrieta & Reidel, 2008). This was problematic as many students of color see the promise and idealism present does not mesh with the lived civic reality of students of color (Rubin, 2007). Though there were examples of teachers of color (Rodríguez, 2018; Vickery, 2017) and preservice teachers of color (Castro, 2010; Salinas et al., 2016), who worked to critically examine civic practices, most white preservice social studies teachers were colorblind to race/ism within citizenship (Urrieta & Reidel, 2008). This limited the way preservice teachers envision active citizenship for their future students. Thus, through analyzing the multiple perspectives presented by YAF, this study inquired whether the introduction of YAF could help preservice teachers grapple with the way race/ism influenced civic engagement.

This theoretical framework shaped this dissertation by providing a clear lens to examine a group of white preservice teachers as they grapple with race/ism, citizenship, and teaching in a secondary social studies methods course. From data collection through

the analysis and ending with reporting the findings, RCL influenced the way that I grew to understand this particular case or social studies methods course.

Case Study Research

Case study methodology was used to study preservice teachers in a social studies methods course in the spring of 2019 that used YAF to explore race/ism, citizenship, and teaching. In this dissertation, I turned to a case study, first, because of the main research question of exploring “how” YAF influences preservice teachers’ ideas of RCL. As Yin (2014) insisted case study is predisposed to help in the answering of “how” and “why” questions. Case study sought to explain the impact of an event or experience, which was at the center of this dissertation. Within the study my overall interest in understanding the way preservice teachers reacted to YAF in secondary methods course made clear the choice of case study methodology.

In addition, case study methodology created boundaries (Smith, 1978) around the case, which allowed for a deeper understanding. For Stake (1995), bounding a case allowed researchers the ability to examine “the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances” (p. xi). Thus, case study led to “particularization” (Stake, 1995, p. 8) and a deeply nuanced vision of an “integrated system” (Stake, 1995, p. 2) or case. Furthering the importance of case study allowing for deep understanding of a case, Yin (2014) asserted that case study presented researchers the opportunity to “understand complex social phenomena” from a “holistic and real-world perspective” (p. 4). Ultimately, the boundness of a methods class created a case that allowed me to gain a more nuanced understanding of the phenomena. When researchers “fence in” the case (Merriam, 1998, p. 27), they were positioned to

understand the case more deeply. Thus, researchers could examine the particulars of the case, described in detail phenomena presented by the case, and refined through heuristic means greater understanding of phenomena (Merriam, 1998). Hence, the bounded nature of these six preservice teachers who were participating in social studies methods course allowed me to explore the ways YAF influenced the way preservice teachers construct race/ism, citizenship, and their philosophies about teaching these ideas. In this dissertation, I relied on a variety of data sources from semi-structured interviews, course materials, preservice teachers' assignments, and field notes. These sources of data helped show the complexity and the nature of the case in its entirety as I explored issues around race/ism, citizenship and teaching within the method course.

Although I focused on the particulars of six preservice teachers in one social studies methods course, this was an instrumental case study (Stake, 1995) that examined six preservice teachers' conceptions of race/ism, citizenship and teaching during their methods course. Stake (1995) asserted access to the case to collect data is a central concern that must be thought of as part of the study. In this case study, the instructor was open to hosting me in the methods course. Additionally, the instructor and graduate teaching assistant worked through this course to explore themes of race/ism and citizenship with these preservice social studies teachers. However, I was interested in the larger context as an example of this work and not just on the teaching of these two dedicated methods teachers. Thus, case study allowed for *naturalistic generalization* which allowed researchers to nuance or particularize the issues of the case (Stake, 1995). The case at the center of this study was six preservice teachers participating in the second of three methods courses taken by all middle and high preservice social studies teachers.

The methods course took place during the spring semester of 2019. In the proceeding sections I provided greater detail on the context and composition of the case. Then I described data collection and analysis procedures. Finally, I discussed the measures to triangulate and build trustworthiness.

Context of the study

My dissertation was set in the spring 2019 semester, in the second of three social studies methods courses in an undergraduate teacher education program. During the semester, the instructor and a graduate teaching assistant allowed me an opportunity to do a follow-up to the initial study with another cohort of future social studies teachers as they read the book *All American Boys* (Reynolds & Kiely, 2015). I progressed with the second iteration with the goal of gaining more participants than the initial pilot study and adding additional components to explore race discussions and ideas of citizenship as the preservice teachers in the methods course connect to a fictional incident of police brutality and violence.

Middle University Teacher Education Department

This dissertation study took place at Middle University. Within the education college there were roughly 900 students enrolled with nearly 90% of undergraduates in the programs seeking certification in a PK – 12 setting upon graduation. Across the whole university, about 80% of the total campus population identify as white, but this figure rose to over 85% within the education college. The realization of the lack of diversity across the campus and within the education college has led administrators and faculty to embrace conversations, programs, and events meant to address issues around diversity and equity at Middle University. These efforts have led to the creation of

programs to recruit and retain more students of color and future teachers of color; inclusion of programming and events that discuss issues of race/ism, class/ism, gender and other instances of bigotry and oppression; and addressing these issues within across the teacher education program. The education college was committed to the work stating they were centrally focused on preparing teachers to “embrace different perspectives” and “respect individual differences.”

Social Studies Program

The social studies program at Middle University used a cohort model that combined preservice teachers seeking both middle school and high school certification. Within the program, preservice social studies teachers enrolled in a series of three teacher methods courses, which they started usually as juniors in the fall and continue through the spring and fall of the following year. During their methods courses, the preservice teachers were concurrently enrolled in observation hours to meet state requirements. After completing the three-course sequence the preservice teachers typically enroll in student teaching the spring semester of their senior year.

This dissertation study took place in the second of three teacher methods courses. The first of the three-course series focused on getting students to think critically about teaching social studies in different ways. Although the instructor varies by semester, this course generally introduced preservice teachers to constructivist teaching, critical examination of the master narrative, and reflection on their own philosophy of teaching. Preservice teachers engage with readings and have discussions that often focused on different ways of teaching that challenge their ideas about race/ism and the classroom. In

past semesters graduate students have served as teaching assistants for this course, but I was not a part of the instruction team for this course in the fall of 2018.

In the spring each year, the cohort of preservice social studies teachers enrolled in the second methods course. In the second methods class, students move from the philosophical to explore tools and strategies to implement their new ideas in their future classroom. During the spring of 2019, this included modeling constructivist teaching, presenting on the limitation of history textbooks (Loewen, 1995), introducing students to teaching with documents, then preparing them to discuss young adult fiction with social studies critical literacy strategies (Ciardiello, 2004; Soares & Wood, 2010) and ending the class with students creating lesson plans focusing on teaching a racial incident in their future class.

Although data was collected during the entirety of the semester, the focus of this study centered around the use of YAF to push preservice teachers to grapple with their ideas about race/ism, citizenship, and teaching. Thus, the preservice teachers read the book, *All American Boys* (Reynolds & Kiely, 2015), and then held a series of discussions and activities to think critically about the connection between race/ism, citizenship, and their role as teachers. The novel by Reynolds and Kiely told the story of police brutality through the lens of Rashaad, a young black boy who was viciously attacked by a white police officer, and Quinn, a white classmate of Rashaad who witnessed the violence. Both characters wrestle with what to do in the days after the incident of police brutality. The victim, Rashaad, questions whether to participate in a protest organized by his older brother against police brutality in the city, because he wanted to move on from the violence. The observer, Quinn, struggled to see his racial privilege when confronted by

his best friend, the brother of the police officer who believed the violence was justified and the officers cousin, who was helping organize student protests at school against racial violence (Reynolds & Kiely, 2015). Both of these *all-American boys* have to grapple with the different lived experiences that race/ism have placed on all of us as citizens. But for our white preservice teachers, these provide stories and counter-stories of the racialized experiences people of color face throughout civic life (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002; Zwillenberg & Gioia, 2017).

After reading the novel, now preservice teachers must grapple with how to engage with race/ism in their future classrooms. Ultimately, the preservice teachers created lesson plans to teach about race. However, prior to creating the lesson plan the preservice teachers read a series of research articles about teaching race/ism (Bolgatz, 2005a, 2005b; Caldwell, 2012; Castro et al., 2015) and then through a jigsaw activity developed rubrics of how to teach race/ism in the classroom. The preservice teachers used these rubrics as models to create and evaluate their own lesson plans about teaching a recent racial incident. Additionally, throughout the class students wrote journals, read articles, held class discussion, and submitted several lesson plans. These classroom activities and assignments set the context of the methods course.

Participants

There were 21 preservice teachers total in the social studies methods course during the 2019 spring semester. I first met many of the preservice teachers the previous semester, in the fall of 2018. I attended several small group meetings with their field supervisor. This meeting gave me the chance to build relationships with some of the participants prior to the start of the spring semester. Eventually, all 21 preservice teachers

agreed to participate at various levels of participation. One participant verbally agreed to be in videos and audio recordings of the class but asked that his dialogue and assignments not be used for data. This was confirmed toward the end of the semester during a brief conversation as well. The focus of this study is on a sample of six of the twenty-one preservice teachers. The sample included three women and three men from the course who all identified as white. The participants of the study were chosen through purposeful sampling (Merriam, 1998) to select six preservice teachers. Using a purposeful sample made the most sense as I sought to gain a variety of perspectives from a variety of students in the class to create maximum variation (Merriam, 1998).

To achieve the purposeful sample (Merriam, 1998), I started by initially, trying to meet with all 20 participants. Because of scheduling conflicts, I, eventually, scheduled interviews with 14 of the initial 20 participants. For this dissertation, one of the 14 participants was a women of color, and another participant did not schedule a third interview, so I decided not to use their data. With the remaining thirteen participants, I read the data sources for the participants. Making general notations, I created brief profiles of each participant. Using these profiles, I selected six participants that offered a variety of perspectives on race/ism, citizenship, and teaching. Six participants made the most sense, so that I had an equal number of women and men and winnowing down to six participants also allowed for richer description during the analysis phase, which was an essential part of a case study (Stake, 1996).

Data collection

Following the practice of Yin (2014), I entered this social studies methods class in the spring with a clear plan to collect data that was directly connected to research

questions. A clear plan of data collection helped me become what Stake (1995) referred to as a *connoisseur of data* to focus on the research questions at the center of data collection. This focused data collection led me to center on four main sources of data for this study. In the rest of this section, I discussed the process and procedures for the semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and documents created by the participants.

Semi-structured Interviews

The first source of data in this dissertation came from a series of semi-structured interviews that were audio recorded and transcribed. Generally, I included interviews because they helped researchers when observation alone cannot explain “how people interpret the world” (Merriam, 1998, p. 72). Because fully structured interviews rely on a predetermined order of questions, they offered little room for participants to interject their own “perspectives and understandings of the world” into the interview (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, p. 109). Thus, I chose to use semi-structured interviews that permitted preservice teachers to “define the world in unique ways” (Merriam, 1998, p. 74). Within these semi-structured, I began each interview with a predetermined set of interview questions, but we rarely followed the questions exactly. The interview protocols (Appendix A) focused the interviews around open-ended question that were connected to my research questions, but using a semi-structured format allowed preservice teachers the opportunity to take the interview in a variety of directions based on their experiences and their beliefs. I then relied on probing questions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015) throughout to dig deeper into the preservice teachers’ ideas about citizenship, race/ism, and their ideas about teaching. Ultimately, these semi-structured interviews were very different for each

participant, but the interview protocols reminded me and helped me return to my research questions when we went in tangent directions.

For this dissertation, the interviews followed Seidman's (2006) three interview protocol. For Seidman (2006), the first interview focused on *life history* to help gain perspective and context about the participants for later interviews. The second interview centers on participants' experiences around the topic of study. Finally, the third interview allowed participants the opportunity to reflect on the experience of the study. In this study, I met with the preservice teachers for three 45 to 60-minute interviews. In the first interview, questions focused on building rapport with the preservice teachers and gaining context about their experiences by asking them about their background, their initial thoughts on race/ism, citizenship and teaching, and their encounters with diversity. These interviews generally took place during the first six weeks of the semester. The second interview took place over several weeks after midterms. During this interview, the conversations focused on the preservice teachers' thoughts on the master narrative and perceptions of race and citizenship through a discussion of YAF. The final interview took place at the end of the semester and into the summer with interviews taking place over the phone often. This final interview asked preservice teachers to explore their ideas of teaching race in the classroom and concluded with overall impressions and reflections on the course. Protocols for each of the three interviews created a framework, but the semi-structured nature led to varied conversations with each participant.

During each interview, I was careful to remember my role in the class and their perception of me as a teacher and an instructor of the course though I was only in the course as a researcher. For each interview, I tried to set them at ease by holding

interviews on their schedules and in places that they selected. This also meant that during the interviews, the preservice teachers often asked questions about what I thought. During these interactions, I tried to turn them around to focus on their ideas. This was not always possible because as a teacher, I wanted to help the preservice teachers who I thought about as my students. This was a conflict that I had throughout the interview process, but when asked directly about my thoughts I tried to not impress my ideas and beliefs on the participants.

Classroom Observations

The course met for fourteen of the sixteen scheduled classes over the semester. I was present at all of the official course meetings. During whole class discussions, small group discussion, and instructor led direct instruction, I sat at the side of the class with a notebook or my computer taking field notes for one source of data for classroom observations. Later in the semester when the course transitioned to YAF and the teaching of race/ism, I recorded these class discussions using audio and video. Fieldnotes, audio and video were an additional source of data for this dissertation.

Before discussing the specific sources of data collected as part of classroom observation, I placed myself within the classroom. Simply stated, my presence in the classroom impacted what was said and what happened during whole class discussions, small group discussions, and even the periods of direct instruction. Thus, I would say that I was an “observer as participant” (Merriam, 1998, p. 101). As a teacher and having helped with instruction of this class before, I did bring this into the classroom. Although, my main goal was to observe the class, but as a teacher I found myself participating when questions were asked about classroom experiences. During small group discussions, I

also moved around the class asking probing questions and shadowing students' thoughts. This became a definite struggle to separate myself from the role of the teacher as part of data collection. This realization was important as I will now explain the data sources gathered as part of classroom observations.

Fieldnotes *inscribed* the actions and language of participants transferring them from "passing events...into an account, which exists in its inscriptions and can be reconsulted" (Geertz, 1973, p. 19). Thus, fieldnotes became an essential form of writing down what was happening to return to later as a source of data for researchers. However, as an observer of the class, I could not catch or write down everything happening so I am constantly making decisions about what to include and what to leave out of the fieldnotes (Emerson et al., 2011). For this reason, before entering class and from the pilot study I knew I focused and noted what was said and reactions by participants around discussions of race/ism, citizenship, and teaching. With the goal of paying "special attention to the indigenous meanings and concerns of the people studied" (Emerson et al., 2011, p. 15). Thus, my field notes were me jotting down ideas, conversations, and particular moments as they happened during class.

In addition to field notes, I also audio and video recorded four class sessions. From past studies, I found that I could not catch all the multiple conversations and reactions during the large class discussion and group discussions. With the study's focus on YAF, I felt it important to audio and video record these class sessions that focused on teaching race/ism and citizenship through the use of YAF to capture more of the direct dialogue of participants. Though I realized video and audio recording have a field of view that is limited by the camera or the range of the microphone, these recordings helped me

better capture students' reactions and specific language. The recordings focused on preservice teachers directly talking about their reactions to the book as part of a Socratic seminar and a few small group discussions. On top to the recordings, I continued to take notes during the class discussions and group work but collected the recordings to listen in on groups that were outside of ear shot. These filled in and expanded my observations during this part of the methods course.

As well as the data from class observations, I also held debriefing sessions to hear comments and thoughts from the two instructors after the classes. I jotted down fieldnotes during these conversations but also recorded some of these conversations to reflect on later. Although I did not directly see this as part of the study, these reflections provided time to get initial thoughts and gave me different perspectives on what happened during the class. Ultimately, these debriefing sessions added depth and more context to my fieldnotes of my classroom observations.

Course Assignments

The last piece of data was work produced by the preservice teachers during class, in groups and on their own. The syllabus contained readings and assignments from previous iterations of the course, but with this study's focus on race/ism, citizenship and teaching these were narrowed to a few assignments that revolve around YAF and teaching about race/ism in their future classes. Data from student work for this study came from preservice teachers' reflective journals and racial incident lesson plan.

Self-reflection was often a central part of teacher education programs and their attempts to help white preservice teachers as they grapple with their own identities and

the realities of race/ism (Crowley, 2016; Milner, 2006). In this dissertation to spur on self-reflection and to get insights into all preservice teachers' ideas about citizenship, race/ism, and teaching, I asked a series of five reflections questions over the course of the semester (see Appendix B for the class reflective questions). These reflection questions asked the preservice teachers in the study to look critically and explore their own beliefs on these topics. These questions were developed a priori to elicit students' reactions and beliefs related to their ideas about race/ism, citizenship, and social studies teaching.

Although developed before the start of the semester, other questions used in class discussions were a posteriori to ask students to reflect on the YAF novel and to look more deeply into the thoughts on the teaching about race/ism in their classrooms after completing a group project centered on this skill. These journals served as a way for preservice teachers to reflect and share with researchers their beliefs but also gain insights into their take-aways from our discussions of teaching about race/ism in the classroom.

The racial incident lesson plan was the third of three lesson plans in the class. After completing the book *All American Boys* (Reynolds & Kiely, 2015), the instructor introduced the final lesson plan first by showing a video of the “unite the right” rally and subsequent protest that took place in Charlottesville, Virginia in August of 2017. Then students were prompted to write a lesson plan about how they might teach a racial incident in their future classroom. Before progressing with writing the lesson, preservice teachers were prompted to discuss their thoughts and fears about teaching about race/ism in the classroom. These fears were later organized into generalized statements and students organized them during the final interview. After this activity, preservice teachers

formed groups. Within each group they read a series of articles (Bolgatz, 2005b, 2005a; Caldwell, 2012; Castro et al., 2015) that exemplified in the social studies research how teachers address race/ism in the classroom. Once they read and discussed the articles, preservice teachers constructed a racial incident rubric. These rubrics were to focus on keys to successfully teaching about race/ism in their future classrooms. With group rubrics completed, each preservice teacher then completed a lesson plan focusing on a racial incident current in the news or based on the fictional incident in the book, *All American Boys* (Reynolds & Kiely, 2015). Finally, the preservice teachers wrote a reflection justifying lesson plan choices to effectively address race/ism in their future classroom. For this dissertation, I have collected the group rubrics, lesson plans, and reflections as part of the racial incident lesson plan.

Data Analysis

Case study as a method focused on diving deeply into understanding the whole of the case, but provided no specific way to analyze the data that is collected throughout the process (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2014). As Stake (1995) insisted, the process of analysis in case study is the making of *impressions* about the data and then breaking “the new impressions apart, giving meaning to the parts” (p. 71). Thus, analysis was “the process of making meaning” for the researcher from the data and the interactions during the data collection process (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, p. 202). However, this process of analysis has left qualitative case study analysis as a sealed *black box* with qualitative researchers disappearing into the analysis processes and emerging with findings (Merriam, 1998). In this section, I tried to crack open that box to provide insights into my process of

analyzing the copious amounts of data collected over the course of a sixteen-week semester.

Because analysis did not just begin at a “particular moment” (Stake, 1995, p. 71), data analysis is a “recursive and dynamic” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, p. 195) process that continued before, during, and after leaving the field as part of data collection. Thus, my initial thoughts on analysis started at the beginning of the semester as I worked with the course instructor and my advisor to create interview protocols, student journal entries, and the procedures for the completion of student assignments. I also adjusted interview protocols and questions throughout the collection process as I met with the lead instructor and the teaching assistant during our post class meetings and after reflecting on interviews throughout the entirety of the process. Hence, analysis was interconnected to the planning and collection of data in a case study (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014) and from my first iteration of this study to the current study, I kept this in mind.

With no defined rules for data collection and analysis within case study, thick description of the case and its context were all the more important (Merriam, 1998). In my dissertation, I turned to a varied data sources, literature, and the RCL theoretical framework to provide the thick description required of qualitative case study (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995). The varied data sources from field notes, interview and class discussion transcripts, and student work led me to eclectic coding, which allowed for a “repertoire of methods simultaneously” (Saldaña, 2016, p. 213). During the multi-stage coding, I drew on the theoretical lens offered by RCL to explore preservice teachers’ construction of teaching, race/ism, and citizenship.

To begin, I used provisional coding to chunk and organize data (Saldaña, 2016). Provisional codes were determined from the component pieces of RCL to including racial citizenship, racial literacy, and civic literacy to analyze the way preservice teachers constructed ideas around race/ism, citizenship, and teaching. I started by organizing the data into what Creswell (2007) called “leaning codes” to help in “winnowing” down the data into manageable chunks (p. 152). These codes were ideas about race/ism, beliefs about teaching, and construction of citizenship. In addition to codes around RCL, I also included open codes (Charmaz, 2006), initial codes (Saldaña, 2016) or emergent codes to leave room during this initial reading to code for “surprising” and “not anticipated” data from the start of the study or from the pilot study (Creswell, 2014, p. 198). The purpose of remaining open to new and emergent codes pushed me as “the researcher to reflect deeply on the contents and nuances” within the data (Saldaña, 2016, p. 115). This initial reading or coding helped me to focus on the different constructs as I moved forward in the analysis process.

After the initial coding of the data, I next read data sources using focused coding to tag and define chunks using preservice teachers own language, concepts, and understandings of race/ism, citizenship, and teaching (Charmaz, 2006; Saldaña, 2016). The goal for this was to read the data with the goal of forming categories within and across the constructs that were previously coded with my first round of provisional and open codes. For example, in this process, I noticed participants thinking about and discussing ideas about neutrality when thinking about race/ism. Some participants were concerned with remaining neutral in how they discussed these issues in the classroom, but other participants discussed that teaching is never neutral. This was an example of

one category that developed across the data that helped me look more closely at how participants were making sense of race/ism, citizenship, and teaching.

Finally, I began axial coding (Saldaña, 2016) to start the process of constant comparative analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Axial coding took what was fractured during the first round of coding to put it back together and make sense of the categories found during initial coding (Saldaña, 2016). Axial coding was part of constant comparative analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Because Glaser and Strauss (1967) provide a vague idea of constant comparative analysis, I turned to Boeijie (2002) who clearly outlined the process of constant comparative analysis to create themes within and across the data. Based on my data, I reread each interview and compared the preservice teachers' construction of race/ism, citizenship and teaching across each individual interview. After completing this for each interview, then I compared codes and interviews across each of the interview iterations. Next, I compared and constructed profiles and memos for each of the preservice teachers across all three of the interviews. Then I compared all preservice teachers' assignments, journals, and interactions observed in class discussions and activities. Finally, I compared coding across the interviews, fieldnotes, and finally the assignments. This clear plan of comparison might not be "constant" but it created "many moments of comparison" to ensure "traceability and credibility" within and across the process (Boeijie, 2002, p. 406). For example, during the constant comparative process, I looked more closely at the ways each preservice teacher discussed their thoughts on neutrality in the classroom. Ultimately, their discussions and thoughts about neutrality reflected different ways they thought about the construction of race/ism and the way they envisioned addressing these issues in their future classrooms.

Instead of being a theme, their thoughts on neutrality were parts of each preservice teachers' construction of RCL. But comparing across each participant helped me better understanding the way each discussed the idea of neutrality. Through this multistage process, I hoped to determine the most important codes and categories that connected back to RCL and my research questions. Throughout this process, coding and memoing was essential to track my insights and thoughts. From this coding process, I then progressed to theme generation which I built through the construction of *categories of categories* that were combined through the analytical process (Saldaña, 2016, p. 278).

Trustworthiness and Rigor

Part of creating trustworthiness was to create quality qualitative research, which employs "rich rigor," "sincerity," and "credibility" in practice (Tracy, 2010, p. 839). Creating rich rigor in the study began by having theoretical understanding and abundant sources of data that can help researchers explore the nuance of a phenomena (Tracy, 2010). Case study was uniquely positioned with researchers diving deeply to understanding the case and the context around the case (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). Although I discussed rigor in the next section, I thought it important to note turning back to the literature and at the same time being intentional about data collection, methodical about analysis procedures, and providing evidence from the data to support claims and themes. Rigor was not enough to build trustworthiness with the reader, but it began the process that helped impress upon your reader to trust your findings.

In a case study, rigor was about having a clear research plan where one can see a straight line connecting the research questions to data collection, to analysis, and to the presentation of the findings (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). In my view,

rigorous research was intentional and thoughtful in the way each stage of research was carried out. This did not mean being blinded to new sources of data or hold fast and not being able to adjust research questions. Instead, rigorous research did mean making these decisions in a purposeful way that accounts for your own positionality, epistemology, and theoretical lens that work in combination to create a solid frame for the research. Rigor also meant taking extreme care in the way data was collected and analyzed (Tracy, 2010). To ensure rigor in research, Tracy (2010) implored researchers to ask themselves these series of questions:

- Are there enough data to support significant claims?
- Did the research spend enough time to gather interesting and significant data?
- Is the context or sample appropriate give the goals of the study?
- Did the researcher use appropriate procedures in terms of field note style, interviewing practices, and analysis procedures? (p. 841)

These questions guide the researcher to think about the data collection and analysis in a wholistic manor, which should work towards creating quality qualitative research (Tracy, 2010).

To show the rigor to the readers in a case study, it was imperative to continually show your reader every part of the study from research questions, methods, analysis, and findings. Yin (2014) argued quality case studies “completely” describe the case and “completely” exhausts all sources of data (pp. 202-203). The completeness also must be present when describing methods processes and analysis procedures, which shows readers behind the curtain of the procedures that informed the researcher (Yin, 2014). Additionally, researchers must show readers through vignettes, stories, and voices of

participants to build thick descriptions of the case at the center of the study (Stake, 1995).

Using these multiple voices let the participants represent the themes and subthemes that were constructed through the analysis process (Tracy, 2010). These processes went a long way in showing your readers the rigor inherent in the study.

Beyond rigor, the researcher must create sincerity and have credibility to build trust that the study was of high quality. As Tracy (2010) insisted, sincerity builds trust in two specific ways. First researchers built trust through showing readers that the writer has taken time through self-reflection to place themselves in the study to think critically about their own positionality and show the readers genuine reactions to the process of research (Tracy, 2010). Building on self-reflection, researcher's reflections established transparency by laying bear biases and process followed during data collection and analysis. Furthering this idea, Merriam and Tisdell (2015) insisted researchers must pay "careful attention to a study's conceptualization and the way in which the data are collected, analyzed, and interpreted, and the way in which the findings are presented" to build trust between researcher and reader (p. 238). Being transparent built trust by showing your readers how you moved to your conclusions as you progressed through the research process.

Promoting sincerity started the process of building trust, but building credibility through thick description and triangulation encouraged trustworthiness in research (Tracy, 2010). Thick description showed the interplay of culture and context through detailed depictions (Geertz, 1973). The process of showing the reader the context as opposed to telling them what to think built trust as readers gain a nuanced view of the data that connects to analysis (Tracy, 2010). To build trust through credibility,

researchers must also rely on multiple data sources, methods and lenses as part of the process of triangulation (Tracy, 2010). But as discussed earlier, triangulation was not about finding an absolute location of the phenomena but is instead about constructing meaning through thick descriptions that showed participants and the context of the case (Stake, 1995). Hence, the multiple data sources allowed researchers to check across the data for other examples either in interviews, in field notes, or in other data sources (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Following these practices of credibility built trustworthiness for the reader.

Positionality

To begin to explore my positionality, I looked back to my time in graduate history courses while I worked on a master's degree in history. Throughout my graduate program, historiography classes pushed me to see interpretation as central to the job of a historian. In classes, we often discussed the way historians collected documents and then put this evidence into context to construct stories of the past. The emphasis in these classes focused on historians taking themselves out of interpretations to rely solely on the documents. However, I have come to realize that historical interpretations are always shaped by who is collecting, curating, and interpreting the story. This background has led me to hold a view somewhere between a constructivist and a constructionist approach to research. Across both paradigms of viewing research and the production of knowledge, “human beings do not find or discover knowledge so much as we construct or make it” (Schwandt, 2000, p. 197). Crotty (1998) expanded on this notion stating events and instances in the world “may be pregnant with protentional meaning, but actual meaning emerges only when consciousness engages with them” (p. 43). Researchers’ interactions

with data and participants produces meaning, but the meaning does not come on its own. Holding a constructivist lens, I agreed that as a researcher, we brought our own cultures, beliefs, experiences, and understandings of the world with us. These factors shaped the way I constructed or made sense of the world around me. However, Crotty (1998) clarified a distinction between constructivism and constructionism, insisting constructivism focused solely on the individual making meaning and constructionism examines “the hold our culture has on us” (p. 58). Although still working through and processing this distinction, I was a constructivist in that I brought everything that I was into the construction of research questions, data collection, analysis, and reporting. Additionally, I could not neglect that my experiences were shaped by my cultural experiences and positions, which was part of the way I conceptualized the study. As someone struggling through constructivism and constructionism, I have generally come to realize another researcher without my experiences or knowledge of the preservice teachers will construct different meaning. Nevertheless, these interpretations were shaped by the culture that has surrounded me throughout my life. In this way constructionism and constructivism worked in combination to account for both my own experiences and broader influences of culture on the research process.

Because I held a constructivist / constructionist position, my own identity as a researcher and my general life history becomes central to my discussion of positionality. These experiences impacted the entirety of the research process. My identity as a white, heterosexual, cisgender male from what I called the Midwest and being raised by two parents in a middle-class household, who was a former high school teacher, informs the way I looked at and experience the world. For example, growing up in a predominantly

white community and having taught in predominately white rural communities, I have been in the majority and have rarely been forced to confront my racial identity, which makes whiteness seem *normal*. As many scholars of whiteness insist, whiteness and white culture infect society to place whiteness at the center as the norm making race and culture something Others must contend with (i.e., Bonilla-Silva, 2001b; DiAngelo, 2011; Leonardo, 2009; Mills, 2007). For example, while a preservice teacher, I was introduced to ideas of equity. Yet, race was not confronted directly as an issue of equity and white instructors focused on the impact of class or ability. Looking back attending a predominantly white high school and college, race was rarely a topic of conversation in the classroom. Through my experience as a doctoral student and my own self-reflection, I have come to realize these limited experiences do not come by accident and this silence only works to reify the power of white supremacy. The reality, as Roediger (1991) insisted “even in an all-white town, race was never absent” (p. 3). I am continually working to hone my ability to see my own racial privilege but also see the systems that racialized us all.

I could explore multiple parts of my identity in greater detail because all my intersecting identities impact the study in a host of ways. However, for brevity, I addressed two identities that I felt had the greatest impact on this current study and my work with preservice teachers. The first identity, I must acknowledge in working with this group of white preservice teachers was my own racial identity as a white person. Though I have briefly discussed the way my own white identity blinded me to ideas of race/ism, I thought it also important to acknowledge that my whiteness provided me with an insider connection that helped white preservice teachers open up during interviews and

other one-on-one interactions. I believed this is similar to what Picower (2009) experienced when she stated “my participants felt safe to open up and reveal some of their previously unspoken beliefs about race and difference” (p. 200).

The other identity that I felt needs further exploration is that of my identity as a teacher. This identity shaped my lens and place as a researcher in the classroom and during interviews. Although introduced as a research assistant in the class, many of these preservice teachers knew me as a former high school teacher. Part of this was because I met many of them the semester before as part of their field placement. Knowing that I was a teacher, during class discussions or interviews, preservice teachers often asked my thoughts on a subject based on my experience in the classroom. Most of the time I deflected with probing questions, but as a teacher I saw these preservice teachers as my students, which meant that I often provided them with my opinions to help as they grappled with the topics of race/ism, citizenship and teaching. For me teaching was about building relationships with students to work towards learning. This meant that I felt it important to model that these difficult questions are something that I still grappled with and I was interested in how they thought about these topics. This identity shaped many of my interactions throughout the study; so, this identity was about my past but also impacted all parts of the study from the formation of research questions, to data collection and will definitely have an impact on my analysis.

Generally, my identity, experiences, and culture shaped the way I see the world, which informs the way I construct meaning. As I think about this study my own limited experience exploring the topic of race/ism as I think about citizenship influences me to

better prepared preservice teachers for the world that was growing more diverse. But I was cautious because this process is continuous.

The final two chapters of this dissertation that follow present the findings of the study. In chapter 4, I presented three findings from across the six participants. This chapter attempted to address the overall research question as I think about how six preservice teachers constructed ideas about race/ism and citizenship during the methods class. In chapter 5, I attempted to share findings more broadly across the cases and outlined limitations and implications from my study.

Chapter 4: Findings

Ultimately, I identified three major themes across the research that connect to my overall research questions. These three themes attempt to address the way 6 preservice teachers in a social studies methods class processed the ideas of racial civic literacy as they engaged with young adult fiction. Within each theme, a few of the preservice teachers leaned into the ideas of racial civic literacy wholly, while other participants seemed to draw connections to the ideas of racial civic literacy but in the end struggled with their own ideas of race/ism and citizenship to fully engage with the construct of racial civic literacy.

Although I analyzed each participant or case separately, I will present them based on themes that emerged throughout the analysis process. Presenting each case within the larger themes better represents the constant comparative process of looking and comparing the way each participant engaged with YAF and grappled with the constructs of RCL. The first theme focused on the way preservice teachers think about race/ism as they connect to the book *All American Boys* (Reynolds & Kiely, 2015). The second theme explored the way participants engaged with their own constructions of race/ism through their beliefs on their own whiteness. Finally, the third theme considered the way participants constructions of race/ism influence their beliefs on addressing the subject in their future classroom.

Rationalizing Paul's Actions

In the first theme, I started by examining the way participants think about Paul, the police officer who violently assaulted Rashad in the book *All American Boys* (Reynolds & Kiely, 2015). As each participant reflected on the book and on Paul, I began

to see the way they thought about and understood race/ism. For Connie, William, Mike, and Bridget, the construction of Paul as a character in the book was important to see and understand him as a racist individual. For the remaining preservice teachers, Mark and Gloria, Paul was simply part of a racist system and his individual actions betrayed larger systemic problems. Thus, Paul and our conversations about Paul betrayed the reality that many white people see race as individual actions by bad people (Mills, 2000), but for society to grapple with race/ism, it must confront the reality that whiteness and white supremacy created systems of advantage for white people (Leonardo, 2004).

Individualistically Rationalizing Racism for William, Connie, Mike, and Bridget

DiAngelo (2018) contended white people of see racism as bad people doing racist things. However, for a deeper more nuanced understanding of race/ism, scholars insisted white preservice teachers must come to understand the systemic nature of race/ism and begin to see the way race/ism moves beyond just individual racist actions (Castro, 2010; Jupp et al., 2019; Sleeter, 2001). Preservice teachers must learn to grapple with the way race/ism have created unequal systems for People of Color and white people. This has led to systems of oppression that impact all facets of life for People of Color. Connie, William, and Mike wanted to learn more about Paul to better understand what led to his actions and finding out as Connie wondered “where he becomes a bad guy.” William first poseed this question during the class discussion about whether we should have had more information about Paul in the book to better understand his perspective and find out what made Paul a bad person. Although he asked the question during the class discussion, he did not add much to the class conversation. However, when I asked him about that during our second interview, William stated,

Maybe I didn't get that far, but a lot of times whenever something like that happens, there's something deep-rooted within somebody, whether it be their family or a bad experience they've had with a certain group of people, but it seemed like, with Paul, he was this good guy who played baseball with his brother and helped his friends out, and it just almost seemed like it came out of left field, and that makes it even more puzzling, but even more disgraceful at the same time... Because it's-- I try to be as logical as possible, but I don't believe that something can come out of nowhere, like a hate. Maybe it's because I've never understood it, because I've never had that feeling like, "This group of people, they're not good for some reason," unless I've been given a reason to think that way about a person or a situation. I've always needed a reason. So that's why with Paul I was like, what happened? You almost want to know his life story of, what brought you to this? And maybe I didn't get that far in the book to hear about that, but I just-- I don't know what brought him to that.

Thus, to understand the racists actions of Paul, we must see what made him such a bad person. As William insisted something must have happened to Paul to make him a bad person and to become a racist. Paul in this view seems like a nice older brother but to do something this bad, William believed something was bubbling under the surface that made him a bad person who was racist.

Connie held similar beliefs wanting to know exactly “where he went wrong” to become a racist or as she said, “where he becomes a bad guy.” Now she did want to make clear that he was meant to be the antagonist of the book, but she believed adding to

his story would be interesting. This might give readers insights by letting us, the reader find out more about him by stating,

I guess just the difference between being a good person and doing your job and then just taking it to extreme. I don't know. It would be interesting to see where that came from- like where the violence came from, why he thought it was okay, maybe who taught him that. What was he told in police training? And I think that would be interesting background information to have.

Hence, learning more about Paul would help us understand where he turned into a bad person and a racist. She did note that training could influence a police officer, but it was always centered around that good bad binary of racists being bad people who do bad things (DiAngelo, 2018). This betrayed what Bonilla-Silva (2001b) referred to as a “simplistic schematic view of the way racism operates in society” where racism is a set of beliefs that foster prejudice which leads to discriminatory actions (p. 22). This individualist view of race/ism forgot the way structures were built into systems that “reproduce” advantage for white people in society (Bonilla-Silva, 2001b). Thus, Paul’s reaction to Rashad, a young Black boy, was ingrained in him throughout his entire life.

Mike worried that without fully exploring Paul the novel too easily made him a bad person. Before reading the book, Mike was “annoyed” believing the book would negatively portray the police. After reading the book he changed his mind about the book because of the use of multiple perspectives, but he still worried that Paul’s perspective was not told. When asked about the book, Mike responded,

Initially, I think somebody described it [*All American Boys*]. And initially, I was kind of annoyed. And it's kind of embarrassing to say annoyed, but I think it was

a feeling of, "This is another book about a young African American boy who - or male, I guess - who is the victim of police brutality. And I bet you anything that the police are not going to come out looking great in this novel." And number two, it kind of normally tries to paint someone as a villain without looking at their humanity. And those were my thoughts.

Although Mike pointed to ideas of racial etiquette stating he was embarrassed by saying he was annoyed, he still believed that this book would show only a bad cop who attacks a Black all American boy. After reading the book, Mike did appreciate the perspective of Quinn who was struggling with his own white privilege and wanted to emphasize literature needed an antagonist for the story, which Paul embodies. However, he still felt readers need more perspective on Paul to ensure he was not just "a villain" or a bad person. Through a literary lens, Mike still saw the good-bad binary (DiAngelo, 2018) of race/ism to include a sense of universalism that focuses on the humanity of individuals, which as DiAngelo (2011) contended this construction of race/ism "functions to deny the significance of race and the advantages of being white" (p. 59). However, Mike's seemed to show growth as he questioned and reflected on his initial reaction to the book.

Because Bridget did not read the book, she never directly addressed her thoughts on Paul. However, her reaction to the book showed an overall belief that talking about race/ism only perpetuated racist ideas. From her experience, the education department "just shoved that down your throat to where it's not even relevant to teaching anymore. The stuff we're learning isn't even – it's just about how has race been an issue." For Bridge discussions of race/ism were important but she was at best fatigued (Flynn, 2015) and at worst resistant (Case & Hemmings, 2005; Picower, 2009) at the idea of continually

having to address race/ism as part of her future classroom. Bridget's experience shaped the way she initially saw the book, stating,

... because of my experience with the education department of which I told you about in my first interview. It's just very sort of drilled on nonstop, everything we do has to be about race issues. Everything we do. And I think my freshman, sophomore year that was another one of those things that was thrown into it because I hadn't read the book and I just knew it was about police brutality. And I just assumed that since it was a writer who was African American too, it was just going after police and there wasn't two sides to it.

This belief led her to resist initially reading the book feeling she knew it would only vilify the police based on everything she knew about the book. She said after the class discussions she now sees the value of including multiple perspectives within the book, but she still never got around to reading the book. This could be an example of her being busy and being stressed from other classes. However, her not reading the book, could be an extension of the resistance of not engaging in these discussions about race/ism that she believed only serve to vilify one side. Though she never directly addressed the character of Paul her contention of vilifying police from a Black perspective exemplified the belief that racist activities are perpetrated by bad people.

Rationalizing Systemic Racism for Mark and Gloria

Racial literacy pushed people to read the racist systems that engulf all members of society and influenced the way we all read and see the world (Guinier, 2004; Twine, 2010). Thus, looking at the way preservice teachers saw and discussed Paul could give insight into the way they were grappling with race/ism. Both Mark and Gloria read Paul

not as a bad, racist individual but as a product of a racist system that lead to a culture of police brutality. For Mark, Paul's actions were detestable but these were part of a large societal issue. In our second interview Mark discussed Paul as making a bad decision and needing to be punished. As part of this discussion, he alluded to a deeper discussion in his journal as he reflected on the book. This led me to the journal where Mark states,

The easy thing to do is want to hate Paul. Frankly, we don't get a lot of extra details around Paul in the novel that makes finding a nuanced view of him possible. I reacted to vicariously [sic] to his beating of Rashad in the early part of the book that I truly despise him. Not one aspect of what he did was right. Not one aspect of what he did is excusable. Even if you want to believe that he was truly looking out for the manager/owner of Jerry's Store, no one in the store was in imminent danger, so more investigation was necessary. But, moving one step forward, if Paul truly believed the lady was in danger, once he had Rashad detained and the perceived threat neutralized, why further brutalize him? At the heart of that lies, probably, faulty training. But work, at the heart of it lies racial bias. If Paul was socialized to believe that black boys are always up to no good, or are folks that white people or police should be suspicious of, then that explains his actions.

Mark's discussion of Paul made clear that Paul's actions were racist and did not excuse them. However, he also wanted to make clear that these actions came from a place of socialization in the way he was raised and the training he might have received as a young officer. Thus, the actions of Paul were part of a bigger context that forced people to examine the way race/ism is mixed into so many of our institutions. Hence, Paul's actions

were not just simply the actions of a bad and racist individual but indications of a racist system that protected white supremacy.

Gloria found the same connection, pointing to Paul as “the product of an institution.” In her second interview, she discussed that Paul in the novel functions as a “symbol of a much deeper problem” in the way race/ism influenced police, who are not trained to deal with their own biases. This became clear when she discussed Rashad’s dad who was a former police officer who was involved in the shooting of a young Black boy. Gloria said

I thought that was really important to see the institution build from the police on not trusting and more likely to blame Blacks for being the perpetrators and not the victim is deeper than a race issue. It’s in the institution of the police academy.

Hence, Paul’s racist actions, however, detestable must be examined through a bigger lens that focused on overcoming the institutional racism perpetuated by systems that led to the oppression of Black and other People of Color. She seemed literate in reading the grammar of racialized structures to see past just the actions of individuals to work toward confronting oppression (Guinier, 2004). To critically examine the book and to think critically about policing, Gloria believed society must confront the systems that surround police and grapple with these institutions to confront and think about race/ism.

These initial visions and the good-bad binary (DiAngelo, 2018) toward racism carried throughout this theme and highlighted the way these preservice teachers discussed their understanding of race/ism. As Guinier (2004) insisted racial literacy “acknowledges the importance of individual agency but refuses to lose sight of institution and environmental forces that both shape and reflect that agency” (p. 115). Much like

Crowley and Smith (2015) the four preservice teachers of Mike, Connie, William, and Bridget struggled in “thinking structurally” to see the systems around Paul and want to focus on the individual actions of him as a police officer (p. 171). For these four participants, their analysis of Paul thought only about individual actions and lost sight of the larger systemic institutions within policing and in society for white people (Bonilla-Silva, 2001b, p. 48). For Mark and Gloria, who saw Paul as a metaphor for the systems of white supremacy. They seemed more conscious (King, 1991) of the way race/ism influences structures, which then impacted the way all people are racialized in their experiences.

Confronting white Privilege

The way participants viewed Paul seemed to help understand the way they confronted and thought about unpacking ideas around white privilege. Although we had no questions directly asking preservice teachers about white privilege, they all eventually discussed the idea throughout the interview process. While Mark and Gloria were open reflective and willing to grapple with their own white privilege, the other participants struggled with connecting white privilege to their own experiences. These preservice teachers were far from ignorant (Mills, 2007) of the way whiteness influenced their experiences, but instead possesses a “white racial knowledge” (Leonardo, 2009, p. 110) that produces an uncritical way of reading and interpreting race/ism in the world around them. In the following section, I explored the way participants seem to be disconnected from whiteness, resistantly denying whiteness, and having bubble bursting experiences.

Disconnected from whiteness for Connie, William, and Mike

Connie, William, and Mike discussed at length their construction of race/ism and privilege, but all three openly resisted their own racial privilege creating a disconnect between their theoretical understanding of race/ism and concrete connections to their own experiences. Early in our first conversation, Connie raised the issue of race/ism and privilege discussing a confrontation over the topic with her father. Before Connie left for college, her dad told her to “make sure you don’t let them turn you into a liberal.” While arguing with her father, she pushes back at the idea and through the conversation she brought up the idea of racial privilege. She then recalled explaining racial privilege to her father, which ended in a direct confrontation. This was her recounting the confrontation in our first interview:

And then I said something about white privilege. And right as soon as it came out of my mouth, I was like shit. I'm like, I know, I just opened up a door. And then he's like, what are you saying? Like I am white privileged? And I'm like, well, yeah, like, that's what I'm saying. I'm like, I'm saying that every white person that's. he was like, but I was born poor. And I was like, it doesn't matter. Like, if you're born poor, I'm like, it has nothing to do with like your economic status. That's not what I'm saying. I'm saying it has to do with the color of your skin and how people treat you. And then he ran me up to my room. And he took a minute to cool down and then he came up and said, if you ever say the words, white privilege again in my house, I'm not going to pay for your college. Any of your living expenses. You can say goodbye. He's like, you're not even going to get as much as a single tampon from me. I remember he said that. I was like, oh, okay,

well, I guess we're just going to stray away from those things. So, I didn't really talk about politics with my dad. They just don't agree (Interview 1).

During this exchange, Connie learned racial privilege and race/ism were not topics to be discussed with her parents. The message became clear these discussions can get out of control and led directly to confrontation. The direct confrontation also seemed to shut-down deep reflection on the topic of whiteness and how privilege worked in her life.

When I asked her what her racial identity means earlier in the same interview, she began by saying "I feel like maybe white people don't have like as much as a connection to their race as people of color do." Her disconnection from race was interesting after just explaining her knowledge of white privilege that led to a confrontation with her farther.

A part of Connie's disconnection with whiteness came from her belief that whiteness was normal and the standard experience for all people (DiAngelo, 2011, 2018). Hence, in our conversation she discussed the way whiteness had always been the norm for the way she had experienced the world:

I think it's like a predominant culture type of thing. So, we don't even think about it. And like as a majority culture, I think that we just don't pay attention to him or like, oh, this is the way that things are. Like, this is the way that people's parents act. And this is what we do on the weekends. This is the way that people vote. This is in that's just kind of how we grow up thinking about things. And we don't think about it as like a white people thing we think about it as a very funny thing. Because we think it's an everybody thing because we don't really learn to consider how other people live, or what they experience or what their culture is like.

Although Connie could explain what white privilege was, she had trouble connecting the idea to her own racialized identity and lived experiences. Additionally, Connie explained the way her own white privilege created a sense of normalcy around her experiences as a white person, which blinded her to seeing all the ways race influences her lived experiences (DiAngelo, 2018). Although she saw the way whiteness surrounds her, she failed to think of herself as racialized (Twine & Steinbugler, 2006).

Beyond her struggle to connect her own whiteness with privilege, she struggled to connect that all people, including herself, were racialized in the system. She believed the murder and subsequent protests in Ferguson Missouri “opened [her] eyes” to the reality of race/ism in the world. She remembered when it happened and she began to question the interpretation she was getting from her parents by saying,

that it was really one of the first incidents that really opened my eyes to my surroundings such as stop kind of ducking my head and be like, "Okay, this is what my parents think so I'm just kind of-- my parents are never wrong. So just kind of stick behind them. And then I was like, "No, that's really messed up."

When thinking about these events she felt like her eyes were opened to the way race/ism impacts people in the United States. Although her eyes have been opened, she highlighted her inability to see herself as racialized or being impacted by race/ism. When I asked her if she relates to what happened to Rashad in *All American Boys* (Reynolds & Kiely, 2015), she says,

Yeah. I don't think that Rashad was relatable for me because I'd never seen anything like that. And I guess Rashad was similar to the whole Michael Brown narrative where it's like he wasn't doing anything wrong. He just got attacked for

no reason. Michael Brown was killed. Rashad was probably almost killed. For me, that wasn't something that was as relatable and I was just like, "Oh, I feel bad but I can't connect." I would never expect to connect in a million years but nothing like that has happened to anybody close to me. I sympathize with this character, but I couldn't empathize. It was just too distant for me, and I wish that-- obviously, I'm grateful that nothing like that has ever happened but I just couldn't-- I was like, "This is awful. I feel terrible." But I was at the point where I was like, "Yes. This is something I've seen. This is something I can connect to."

It was more distant for me than Quinn was.

Through these exchanges it seemed apparent that Connie had a vocabulary to talk about race/ism and think about oppressive systems. However, she struggled to connect to this in her life. Her whiteness had shielded her from experiencing these events (Bonilla-Silva, 2014), protecting her from seeing the way everyone was racialized in these systems of oppression.

The disconnection with race for Connie also was exemplified in the way she thought about language when talking about race/ism. In the third interview, when discussing differences between cultural diversity and race/ism she believed “cultural diversity has more a positive connotation to it.” For Connie this was because

As opposed to race because people are like, "Oh. It's because of your race or you're racist or you're going to play the race card." Race this, race that, blah, blah, blah. And you're like, "Cultural diversity, that sounds a lot better." If you say diversity, cultural diversity, we have all these people coming from all these places. That sounds a lot better than-- I don't know.

Connie seemed to understand race/ism and privilege but then struggled to connect it to her own life and experiences as a white person. She believed racial identity has little impact in her life but can then explain on a basic level that racial privilege did lead to unearned advantages. Connie showcased an example of “white racial knowledge” of knowing how to invoke the ideas around race/ism without directly using the words (Leonardo, 2009). Thus, she showcased that she possessed the vocabulary and grammar of race/ism (Guinier, 2004). However, using other language allowed for a universalism, which was white culture as all culture and hinders white people from grappling with the way race/ism influenced the way they navigated the world because they rarely faced obstructions that force them to think about their racial identity (DiAngelo, 2011).

In our second interview, William was quick to highlight our countries history of oppression and believed the United States must confront this reality. William saw the importance of having conversations about race/ism so that society could progress and white people need to grapple with past oppressions:

And oppression, yeah. If I'm drawing connections, I relate to my own life and anytime I've ever failed to progress in my life, or get past something, it's because I was ignoring something that was ugly that it happened in my life and I hadn't confronted and wrestled with it. So, I would argue and say that if we want progress and unity, like I said, we, you've got to confront these things. We don't have to feel guilty about the things we've done because we're not the humans who did that-- did those bad things, but we still need to acknowledge that a lot of the bias, the foundation of our society is built on these things that we should wrestle with. Because I mean, it's like college campuses, people are starting to

realize that yeah, this was built on slave labor. We wouldn't be where we are as a society without Manifest Destiny and Native American lives. We did bad things. Or the American people at that time did bad things. And so, you can't ignore it because it literally has brought us to where we are now.

However, in his discussion, William was putting race/ism in the past. These were things from the past that must be confronted by society today. This helped explain when asked about his own racial identity in the first interview, William said

I... I honestly don't really think about it too much. I think more. I really like I'm... I like to think a lot about things and so my biggest belief is that everybody, our biggest differences, our brain, and the way we think about things. And so, for me, my race, I never really wanted to let it define me too much, because I know that everybody thinks differently. And that's brought up. And that's because of, you know, how we've been exposed to the world and our experiences.

Hence, William was blind to his racial identity in part because he wanted to focus on the individual and seeing each person as individuals. He brushed over those who experienced the world different than him (DiAngelo, 2011). This made it easy for William to believe race was not important in his experience and the problems of race/ism fell into the past as something society has to grapple with to move on from.

Additionally, William acknowledged his privilege but did not see his own racial privilege. During the second interview, William realized that his own racial identity has provided him with privileges stating,

everybody has their own struggle, but as far as things that we can't control, I've never had to deal with oppression based on the color of my skin. And I think

because I can understand that, it makes me more grateful and it makes me more angry with the oppression that does go on.

He realized that racial privilege existed and that his whiteness protected him from having these experiences. However, when pushed to tell me what racial privilege means for him beyond a broad sense of not being oppressed, he exclaimed, “personally, I make sure to never take it for granted. I never use privilege. Some people do. I’ve never.” So, when pressed to explain how racial privilege impacted his life, he struggled to describe his own privilege and saw privilege as something he could deny and not take advantage of. His belief that he could simply deny or not “use” his privilege showed his inability to see the way he capitalized on his “possessive investment” in being white (Lipsitz, 1998, p. 23). William much like Connie seemed to have a rich vocabulary of race/ism, but struggled to connect the words directly to the way they navigate and pass through the world.

In a more nuanced exchange, Mike called on the same vocabulary and was beginning to connect these ideas to his own experiences, but he was still hesitant about confronting his own white privilege. In our first conversation, when I asked him to reflect on what his white racial identity meant to him, he stated,

And I think for me, whiteness is being given those opportunities that others have not had. And I think private school, or both my parents being doctors, it's hard because my dad is one of those pull yourself up by the bootstrap's guys. And so, it's difficult because you kind of start seeing the other sides of the story and you realize that it's not always that way. At least I found so far it could change. My viewpoint could change if I learned something new, but I think definitely that has

a huge influence on it. And so, whiteness, for me has been about being able to have tons of opportunities, being able to kind of enjoy things that others have not, learning about history. And I almost cringe at the term white privilege, because it's an uncomfortable term for me. It's very internally difficult to do that. He understood whiteness and was grappling with what racial privilege meant to him. He was open and receptive to grappling with these ideas and seemed to be comfortable leaning into these discussions.

Mike had been pushed to think about other perspectives and these had pushed him to grapple with his own racialized experiences. Even going so far as to realize people of color had vastly different experiences. When discussing YAF and the ideas of citizenship, Mike stated,

If you look at certain definitions or ideas of citizenship, and then you look at Rashad's case, and we see that he wasn't really treated with the fairness that somebody that looks like me would have or somebody that looks like Quinn would have been treated with. I think you can definitely relate and tie those together, and say, man, citizenship looks wildly different between kids that go to the same high school and kids that live kind of right next to each other.

Mike showed his understanding and realization that for people of color citizenship looked different than it did for him, highlighting an understanding that racial citizenship was a real experience that he had the privilege of not experiencing.

Even with his knowledge and realizations about racialized civic experiences, Mike seemed to still struggle with his own white privilege and felt "uncomfortable" discussing it. Later in the interview he discussed participating in a privilege walk and

reiterated the uncomfortableness of it all, but took a step further stating that he felt silenced in discussions of race/ism:

nobody really wants to hear about people complaining if they've been given opportunities that the people that other people have not been given. Nobody really wants to hear about that. Nobody really wants to hear about kind of white male privilege because you are in the position of power and position of having those opportunities. And so, I think that because of your identity in those certain facets, I think you almost automatically get discounted.

Mike seemed to understand the way race/ism and power work to silence voices, but he felt that his voice was often silenced in these conversations. Though he was grappling with his own whiteness, he took a perspective that he was being silenced, which portrays a facet of white fragility that all white people feel like they should always have racial comfortability (DiAngelo, 2011, 2018). In addition, Mike, just like Connie and William, could define white privilege but, they all struggled to identify their own place in the hierarchy when reflecting on their own white privilege (L. Johnson, 2002). However, Mike showed a lot of growth and promise as a preservice teacher who wanted to learn more about race/ism and was open to hearing and learning from other's perspectives.

Resistantly Denying whiteness for Bridget

Where Mike, Connie, and William were open to thinking about race/ism (Garmon, 2004), Bridget saw little connection to race/ism in her own life. In our first interview after describing her own racial identity as white, she stated,

Like, I mean, I'm, I'm white, but if I was Hispanic, or if I was Black, like, like, Can I be Hispanic or Black or white? Like, I guess it doesn't. Really. I don't really see it as like a thing or not.

Bridget saw little connection to her racial identity and her experience in the world. The statement that if she was another race or ethnicity would not impact her perceptions shows that she saw it as unimportant in her lived experience. She seemed blinded by the whiteness that surrounds her (Hawkman, 2020), leading to a belief that everyone experienced the world as she has (DiAngelo, 2011, 2018). Taking it a step further, when I asked her why it was not important to her she continued,

what happens to you what happens to your life like that should never be used as like a crutch for anything, or like an excuse for anything or reason for anything. Like, there's so many things in the world. It's life, like how many, so many lives so many things going on, like, race shouldn't be like, like, I'm blonde. People could think of Stupid, but like I'm blonde, like I'm white. And like it, I just don't think that it should be important because if it becomes important, then it becomes something that's debated or, like competed or put on something that makes it something that it doesn't mean to be like, I don't know. I just know. I don't know (Interview 1, 2-18).

For her race had never been something she had to think about. Whiteness was normalized, which meant everyone should have the same experience (DiAngelo, 2011). She used her own experiences and traumas as a foil to “discredit white privilege” (R. M. Crowley & Smith, 2015, p. 172). Additionally, Bridget struggled to see the way whiteness impacted and influenced and had limited awareness of the way whiteness

impacted the way that she passed through the world and experienced everything in the world (Garmon, 2004; Twine, 2010).

Beyond not reflecting on her experiences, she was not open to hearing others experiences. Even in classes that asked her to focus her own identity and about others lived experiences, she saw little to no connection to her teaching and her own future classroom. In the first interview she was quick to tell me

I'm going to be straightforward. I feel like the ed department has shoved diversity down my throat since I've been here. I feel like I have, I feel like I learned more about diversity than I do teaching. (Okay.) Like if we're being straight up (Interview 1, 2-18).

For her learning about “diversity” and navigating the way race/ism influenced relationships in the classroom was not connected to teaching. She stated, “I feel like I'm learning more about like, they were seeing cultural issues versus like actually teaching.” Bridget saw this overarching theme across the education department as a zero-sum game that if the classes were teaching about grappling with identity and issued around diversity then they did not take the time to engage with preservice teachers about the practices of teaching. She was conditioned as a white person to hold an “anomaly view of racism” whereas “most blacks have a symbiosis or multiple traditions view” (Mills, 2000, p. 454).

Bridget's dismissive attitude toward people of colors racialized experiences was accentuated by her ideas on race/ism and citizenship. Bridget acknowledged the existence of race/ism in civic experiences but used her whiteness to both blame victims (Case & Hemmings, 2005) and invoked a colorblind vision of racialized civic experiences. For

example, when I asked her in the second interview, “Does the teaching of oppression of different cultural groups play into teaching citizenship?” Bridget responded,

I would say so because it's a lot of it has to do with their rights that they're not understanding and that's why they're oppressed and that's what they're trying to overcome and stuff. So, I would say yeah because citizenship is a lot about your rights and then also your responsibilities.

As Bridget reflected on the connections between race/ism and citizenship, she nominally admitted that civic experiences were shaped by racialized experiences but then pivoted sharply. She presented an ahistorical view that forgot the history and legacy of slavery, Jim Crow, and segregation and focused on a rights and responsibilities view of citizenship. This led her to believe citizens who were marginalized through civic experiences were to blame. They were ignorant of their rights and responsibilities, which was what has led to their oppression. Her whiteness protected and blinded her from seeing these experiences (Frankenberg, 1993), which allowed her to dismiss racialized civic experiences as civic illiteracy (Marciano, 1997; Teitelbaum, 2011). Bridget nominally addressed her colorblind vision of citizenship in the above quote, but in a later interview she flushed out the ideas by stating,

Race should be a part of those conversations... And I think it important, but I don't think that the only instruction of race and ethnicity in citizenship should be talking strictly just about why the United States is so just – if you want to just focus on police brutality, or you just want to focus on our internment camps, or you just want to focus on these things, I think those things should be said but I also think there should be something said for the fact that we are American. We

have all these things. Because yes, that's a part of our history. That's a part of our present history that's going on now but there's still another flip side to it. And I don't think that the only introduction of race and ethnicity with citizenship to students should just strictly be that because if they don't see that there are movements or type of things that we can focus on that make things better then that's the only thing that they're going to know. And they're going to think that that's the only way that it can be.

Again, Bridget saw connections between race/ism and citizenship but feared talking about negative civic experiences forgot how to “make things better.” She feared talking too much about race/ism in the class will only serve to poison students to American exceptionalism. The problem was that many students of color already saw a disconnect between the promise and reality of racialized civic experiences (Rubin, 2007). Thus, she wanted to treat all students as the same with the same experiences as her. Because for her, race/ism was not something she was forced to think about as part of her own lived experience, then it was not something that was part of teaching and engaging with her future students. Bridget could stay in a “white comfort zone” (Twine & Steinbugler, 2006, p. 358) where race/ism was disconnected from teaching and learning.

Bubble Bursting Experiences of whiteness for Gloria and Mark

While Mike, Connie, William, and Bridget have some of the vocabulary to discuss race/ism, they failed to internalize the way whiteness impacted their lives. Gloria and Mark possessed a similar vocabulary of race/ism, but they were also open to reflect on their own racial privilege, relished the experience of engaging with different perspectives in their education classes, and realized they have more to learn. Gloria and

Mark were open to experiences that challenge their conceptions of race/ism, which led them to identify experiences that have burst their white bubbles.

First, Mark and Gloria both realized that their white identity had provided them with racial privilege and seemed willing to face their privilege to prepare for their future classrooms. Gloria thought about her own experience going to a predominantly white private school in a rural area just outside of a major city wanting to push students to see they

can't judge people's experiences because they haven't especially like the white students haven't ever lived as a minority. And so like that, and like especially like coming from, from like, me, like, I hadn't, like ever really experienced diversity in high school and everything and then like, so I like, didn't really understand how like, how it was different, like how it affects how racism can affect people in their like daily lives just in terms of where they live, and like, what their job is and what kind of education they're getting.

Gloria came to college having few experiences engaging with people of color but she believed central to her identity was that she had to listen to other's experiences. She was open to thinking about the advantages she had to be cognizant that not all people have had these same advantages.

Mark was a non-traditional preservice teacher, who was in school again after leaving college earlier in his life. He felt this distance and time allows him perspective to examine his privilege and thought about the advantages from being white more critically, stating in the third interview, I “never would have thought about [this] when I was younger.” In the third interview, he continued reflecting on his races and what that meant

in his future class when discussing writing the third lesson plan on a critical racial incident. During the interview Mark and I discussed his white identity and what that meant:

Mark: ...as a white man, that was the hardest one for me to write. So would, I think, felt better knowing if I was in the ballpark of, yeah, this is teachable. You could use this. This has really good perspective. Something like that.

Me: You said for like obvious reasons. Then you said your own identity that it was really hard for you. What about it made it hard?

Mark: It's because I always--situations like that I feel like I have less credibility being the waspy white guy. It's not really something I or anyone in my family has ever experienced. And the odds are, when you just look at statistics, probably never will. And that's not going to be the case for maybe some of the students that I'll actually interact with that might not take what I have to say as seriously as someone who might have more in common with their living experiences.

Mark was open to reflect on his privilege and what that meant for him in his future classroom. He realized that his experiences might be different from his students, but that could not stop him from discussing race. He also insisted that was essential that he was open to listening to his students to hear their experiences in the world. Both Gloria and Mark were open to reflect on their privilege and realize that it was important to listen to the experiences of their students (Garmon, 2004). Additionally, they were beginning to read the world to see and think about the way whiteness impacted the way they traveled through the world (Twine, 2010).

Secondly, beyond openness to reflecting about their own identities, both Mark and Gloria recounted the benefits to them in the way the education department had emphasized this in the courses they take. Gloria recounted the various classes that asked her to think about her own privilege and explored the way race/ism influences the way people walked through the world. She especially found the department's initiative to create a space to house and discussed issues of inclusion and diversity important for preservice teachers to attend. These initiatives and courses helped her learn more about different lived experience and to hear different perspectives. The chance for these experiences offered her opportunities "to be informed" to things "directly affecting my students and the rest of their lives." Mark supported this believing the education department created this course to prepare students to grapple with race/ism. Now he realized he cannot learn it all in just a few courses, but he stated, "I'm at least more aware of the diversity that exists on a real level because you know, the department now has a sequence of courses. It's geared for us to be to be thinking about that." This new awareness might be the start of their ability to see and hear the "everyday racism" that they were once blind and deaf to (Twine & Steinbugler, 2006). For Gloria and Mark, the department and the courses within their field have pushed them to think about multiple lived experiences, which they felt was essential for all teachers.

Next, although both Mark and Gloria were open and reflective about their racial identity, they also both recounted numerous experiences that have pushed them to see their position as a white person in a racialized society and what that means for them as future teachers. In his second interview, Mark discussed the character of Quinn saying,

I sort of already had that Quinn moment where I kind of feel like I've already grappled with this and stood on the fence for so long and watching like, Oh, I see this is happening but fear I've got and dad tell me this and whatever and then you kind of realize, "Wait a minute. No. There's not a time to really sit on the fence."

He went on to recount the Thanksgiving after the protests in Ferguson. Remembering his cousin had to miss the regular family gathering because he was deployed as part of the national guard and his “all-white family were not at all sensitive to why people in Ferguson might have felt about police brutality, or oppression, or racism that still exists”. He described a general feeling that racism had ended with the civil rights marches and protest of the 1960s, stating “that’s where I was at.” But he did not stay there (Milner, 2010), recalling discussions with a friend who teaches math at a local high school. Mark recalls,

He would get me to think about just different cultural factors that influence kind of what we talk about in class because he always brought it from the classroom perspective. Just like one of the things that he had to adjust to because we come from almost the exact same background. We're the same age, grew up in the same area, the exact same background. And he kind of learned on the fly at the school that, first of all, there's a higher instance of discipline being taken towards African American males in high schools. And a lot of times, it's not because those kids are inherently bad, but it's because of socioeconomic factors that is—or factors outside of school that that student can't really control. And that those factors that he can't control are the results of a perpetuated sort of cycle of oppressive behavior that goes back a long, long time—is going to take a lot of work to reverse. And he was

the only friend that I had that seemed to be sympathetic towards the protesters and towards the Brown family.

This experience helped push Mark *off the fence* to see the effects of white supremacy within society and to think critically about his own racial identity. These conversations fostered self-reflection and put ideas about school into context for Mark. The push by his friend helped him see his own privilege. Beyond conversations with his friend, Mark also remembered a class at the university that pushed him to reflect further on his own privilege. Across multiple interviews Mark stated that class can “open peoples’ eyes to the fact that it [racism] exists...[without] making me feel guilty.” In interview two talking about the same class, he described the formative conversations in the class by recalling how the instructor stated,

how a whole bucket of white people tears isn't going to do any good for change.

And probably it doesn't do any good if you get somebody angry or feeling guilty or defensive when you're trying to expose them to a real issue, get them to think about how to change a problem. I mean, you can't shy away from the fact that it exists.

This class offered Mark the space to reflect and confront race/ism and his own privilege. He seemed open to the long process to reflect and think about the way race/ism impacted so many of his life experiences. These experiences also helped Mark see the importance of having conversations about race/ism in his future classroom. He began to see the racialized structures (Guinier, 2004) and reflects on his own identity and privilege as a white person (Twine, 2010; Twine & Steinbugler, 2006). The pool of whiteness seemed to be disturbed, which allowed him to see the water all around him (Hawkman, 2020).

During Gloria's senior year in high school, she vividly remembered the protests in Ferguson over the prevalence of police brutality in Black communities and calls for racial justice on college campus across the country. Gloria believed these events

affected me by being aware that that happens, which changes your perspective a lot, especially as I was—and the university stuff that just happened—I was about to be going to the university the next year. It was just like a huge floodgate of like, "Whoa" And that broke me out of my bubble a little bit.

Then early in college she had several additional bubble breaking experiences from living with an international roommate from Venezuela to studying abroad in Spain to having a sister-in-law who is a naturalized citizen from Mexico. These experiences and relationships pushed her to learn more about the experience people of color. She also learned to read the way race/ism is portrayed in the media from her own father. She recalled her dad becoming upset at the stories on the national news,

Just emphasizing the looters and the violence going on and the pictures they would show of Michael Brown and that sort of thing and the pictures that—versus the pictures they would show of the police officer. And my dad would just—and then just he gets mad about this.

These experiences and conversations broke her out of her bubble allowing her to gain awareness that not everyone experiences the world in the same way she does. Both Gloria and Mark seemed to grow more racial literate as they reflect on the experiences that have challenged them to think about race/ism from multiple perspectives. Although they were open to questioning their racialized experiences (Garmon, 2004), this showed how "becoming racially literate is an interactive process that includes both support and

challenge” (Rogers & Mosley, 2008, p. 125). These experiences and deep reflection pushed Gloria and Mark to reflect on their own positionality as future white teachers.

Finally, Mark and Gloria realized they had to keep working to learn more about their own biases. Gloria recalled reflecting about her racial biases and wanting to acknowledge culture, but not let negative biases impact her in the classroom. She said,

Even when you're walking at night and if you see a black man sometimes you eye—I do get nervous sometimes, and then I get mad at myself because I'm like, "Why would I have been this nervous. And then you're like—but also, I should be aware of everyone. It's kind of like the common struggle of—you should still see color but also you shouldn't treat people different because of their color. That is such a difficult thing in my brain to do sometimes. Like the difference between acknowledging color versus not. Because of not being prejudice against that or anything, and falling into those prejudices.

Gloria continued in her next answer that she had to continually confront her bias because of her worry of falling into the statistical patterns of other white teachers by over disciplining students of color. Although she had started confronting her privilege and reflecting on what her identity means in the classroom, Gloria realized she must continue to reflect to ensure she could support all her future students. Mark admitted that through course work in education “it did force me to think about issues that I wasn’t even aware were issues and that you know that these things were important to people.” Both Mark and Gloria realized the process of learning to read the world of race/ism (Guinier, 2004) was an ongoing and reflective process that was more than just one class or just one experience. This was a new way to see and read the world that will take deep thought

and practice. Because of their openness to new experiences and conversations and connections with people who had challenged their views on race/ism (Garmon, 2004), Mark and Gloria were starting to read the way they carry whiteness through their lived experiences (Twine, 2010) and juxtaposing these experiences with those of their future students.

As each participant grappled with race/ism and white privilege it became ever present the way reading as a racial literacy practice was a continually evolving exercise that included personal challenge and support (Rogers & Mosley, 2008). For Mark and Gloria, the process of growing racially literate was not complete, but they possessed the racial vocabulary to read race/ism in the world (Guinier, 2004), were starting to read the everyday racism that was ever present in the world (Twine & Steinbugler, 2006) and saw the way whiteness influenced the way they experienced the world (Twine, 2010).

Although Mark talked of being pushed *off the fence* and Gloria had been broken out of her *bubble*, they both seemed to see this new racial knowledge as part of a process that must continue throughout the rest of their lives. They saw systemic inequalities as part of learning to read and become civically literate. Mike, William, and Connie had the vocabulary, which created a racial awareness toward different racial civic experiences. However, they were still learning to read everyday racism in the world. They knew race/ism should influence their experiences because courses had introduced the idea, but their experiences work to “discredit white privilege” in racing the world for them (Crowley & Smith, 2015, p. 172). They have a growing knowledge of race/ism, which might help them confront racial issues in their future classrooms, but without a critical view of race/ism, they might change little when designing and enacting curriculum

(Hawkman, 2019; King, 2016; Sealey-Ruiz & Greene, 2015). In the case of Bridget, she seemed to openly enact *tools of whiteness* (Picower, 2009) to distance herself from all talk of race/ism (Case & Hemmings, 2005) focusing on her own racialized experience in a seemingly post-racial world. She seemed *dysconscious* (King, 1991) of the way race/ism impacted and influenced the way she navigated the world (Frankenberg, 1993) dismissing even the most basic attempts to grapple with privilege (Giroux, 1997; McIntosh, 1989). Besides Bridgett, each participant seemed to be grappling with their own whiteness and white privilege but each struggled differently with what this means for them in their own lives and in their future classrooms.

Stances Toward Teaching Race/ism in the Classroom

The ways the six preservice teachers engaged with race/ism highlights the ways they began to think about race in their future classroom. Within this section we looked at their critical racial issues lesson plans, which were one way of highlighting how they thought about teaching race in their future classroom. I wanted to note that the future teachers were not able to teach these lessons but through their interviews, I could see how they were constructing their vision and ideas about teaching race/ism.

Although they all believed that social studies teachers must address and discuss issues of race/ism, the two participants, Gloria and Mark, who recognized Paul and policing as part of a larger system of racism believed teachers should not be totally neutral when addressing race/ism in their future class. They seemed to be moving toward an anti-racist perspective when addressing race/ism (King & Chandler, 2016). For Mike, Connie, and William, their personal struggle with race/ism seemed to lead to an internal struggle with confronting race/ism but at the same time remaining neutral in the

classroom. However, Bridget saw strict neutrality and including multiple perspectives as a crutch to fulfill the requirement of the class to address race/ism. Her crutch led to her belief that as a teacher she will need to stay completely detached and only let students raise issues about race/ism. These views seemed to betray a non-racist view of teaching social studies (King & Chandler, 2016).

Holding onto Non-Racism in the Classroom

With their limited connections to systemic racism and their struggled with their own privilege, Mike, William, and Connie often held conflicting views that teachers must always remain neutral when teaching about race in the classroom, believing in “the possibility of racial innocence of people, policies, and ideas” (King & Chandler, 2016, p. 8).

Mike Teaches with Neutral Distance

Mike held up neutrality as essential but was internally conflicted on the reality of achieving neutrality in his future classroom. For example, when Mike was asked about addressing race/ism in the classroom, he referred to the previous class discussion where the class watched news coverage of the violence during the protests in Charlottesville Virginia in 2017. This was an excerpt from the second interview:

Mike: I'm still struggling with yesterday because we were talking about the one that I got caught up on was moral judgment versus trying to kind of influence [the students]. And not trying to—you want your kids to have a moral judgment almost but you don't want to kind of persuade them to a certain side. So, I think I'm still struggling with that.

Me: Can you talk me through that struggle?

Mike: Yeah, absolutely. I think all these issues, we brought up the point that there should be a moral response. And I think a lot of people in the class would agree that there should be a moral response. There should be some kind of response inside of you as a human being that says that isn't right. And what I'm struggling with is that's got to come from somewhere. That's got to come from some type of world view. That's got to come from some type of mindset that you have developed and grown into as you're moving along. And so, if you have that certain mindset—we as teachers absolutely have that mindset. And so, we're going to be struggling with morality in the classroom just as much as our students are. And I think it's interesting to try and have teachers remove that almost from themselves. I think people think that teachers should remove that from themselves. And I think it's hard because I don't think you can remove that. You can't remove your worldview from what you teach. And it's difficult. And so, finding a balance, it's almost a catch 22 trying to do that and trying to say, "That's messed up. That's not a good part of our society that we want to kind of respect." And finding a balance between that and your students and kind of facilitating a discussion where they talk freely about something, it's a difficult task.

Mike saw the struggle to remove himself from the curriculum and teaching his students. He seemed to see that total neutrality could be nearly impossible because the questions teachers asked, the resources they chose all betrayed “mindsets” and “some type of world view.” Though he saw the impossibility in holding a completely neutral discussion on race/ism, his steadfast reliance on neutrality betrayed a sense of “privilege and distance” from the realities of facing race/ism in his everyday life (Dunn et al., 2019,

p. 464). Race/ism was still a series of individual acts so teachers must not place judgment on individuals, which might directly impact their students (King & Chandler, 2016).

In his critical racial issues lesson, Mike never pushed students to see race/ism in systemic terms. For his lesson, Mike drew directly on class discussion of the “Unite the Right rally” in Charlottesville asking students to learn about the rise of white supremacy and connections to the alt-right. His lesson on the alt-right began with a warning at the beginning of the lesson plan for students stating,

the teacher will preface this lesson by recognizing that because this lesson focuses on white supremacy which targets Jews, African Americans and other groups that your students may be involved in, it is important to be mindful that seeing and discussing the topic could be upsetting for some or many of your students. Some students may feel comfortable or interested in discussing these issues in class and others may feel nervous, uncomfortable or angry talking about this topic.

After the introduction, Mike planned to review class norms, which included “respecting their peers and valuing every voice that speaks or stays silent.” He then wanted to facilitate an affinity mapping activity where students wrote their definitions for white supremacy and alt-right. The class would then organize these definitions looking for themes or common ideas. Then the teacher would put on the board “important components they want students to have” on white supremacy with the ideas of

- 1) whites should have dominance over people of other backgrounds, especially where they may co- exist;
- 2) whites should live by themselves in a whites-only

- 3) white people have their own “culture” that is superior to other cultures;
- 4) white people are genetically superior to other people.

Then students would read an article on the links between the alt-right and white supremacy in groups³. This led to a Socratic seminar discussion focused on the questions from the article about how to combat and confront white supremacy. To conclude the lesson students would complete a reflection to the question “what should we do about white supremacy and the alt right?” Across his lesson, Mike wanted students to connect and critically think about how to confront white supremacy after the current event of the protests and violence that erupted in Charlottesville. Although he wanted students to critically think about the rise of white supremacy, it was framed around white supremacy as individual actions and beliefs of hate. With a focus on prejudice, Mike never addressed the systemic nature of the way white supremacy impacted his future students.

William Teaches in Fear of Giving Life to Racism

Like Mike, William grappled with how to enact neutrality during discussions about race/ism. As William discussed his lesson on the critical racial event, he stated, “it’s our job [as teachers] to make sure that we stay as human as possible when talking about issues that even the teacher is learning about.” He underscored the importance for teachers of building relationships and connecting students and being real with students when the teacher was thinking deeply about something that had happened. This meant the teacher will obviously not be neutral and objective when these issues were raised in the classroom. However, later in the interview William insisted that his role was only to

³ Mike did not include a reference for the source of the article. After a search this is a handout created as part of a lesson plan created by the Anti-Defamation League. Most of Mike’s lesson plan follows the structure of the lesson plan published online.

facilitate a discussion, “present information and help them [students] form an opinion.”

William contradicted his vision of neutrality as a teacher when he stated he was the arbiter of information to help students form their own opinions. He highlighted the conflict and the impossibility of teachers being truly neutral or objective when issued of race/ism were discussed.

William feared injecting race/ism into classroom conversations can “overwhelm” students if done “needlessly.” In our third conversation when discussing connections between race/ism and citizenship, William implied students come into his classroom unracialized and that discussions on race/ism only served to put emphasis on one of students many identities when he stated, “I don’t want to give life to the idea of racism if I don’t have to.” In this view William “assumes the possibility of racial innocence” for his students who came to his classroom not knowing about race/ism (King & Chandler, 2016, p. 8). He emphasized this belief stating,

Because I don't want to discount the fact that there are racial issues, but I also don't want to bring it up and make it the main conversation needlessly. Because I think there are times where if we're having these conversations about Ferguson and we're having conversations about the Civil Rights Movement and then we move right into citizenship and how racism is involved in that. I think it might, like I said earlier, it might overwhelm students and I don't want to-- because racism is such an important issue, I don't want to overwhelm students with that conversation. So, when it comes to citizenship, I don't want to make racism the main focus of citizenship or the racial issue. Just because I don't want to overwhelm students.

William did not want to “overwhelm” students by raising discussions of race outside of specific events that he saw as directly connected to race. Just like King (2016) emphasized in his study of student teachers using black history as a racial literacy project, the majority of students in the study failed to see the omnipresence of race/ism in the way people experienced the world. For William, he wanted to protect students from discussions of race/ism when he felt there were not direct connections to race/ism. However, he struggled to read the everyday racism that constantly impacts every person as they experienced the world. William believed he could be neutral by not “needlessly” discussing race in the classroom.

Finally, William asked students to compare the protests in Ferguson, Missouri after the killing of Michael Brown with the Montgomery Bus Boycott and protests from the 1960s. He planned to begin with an informal discussion about current events related to the protests in Ferguson and then presented a lecture where he wanted to “give a broad overview of what happened, how it happened, and how it has affected modern movements.” After the lecture students would read two articles. One article focused on the civil protests in Ferguson (Eligon & Smith, 2015) and the other article recounting protests in the 1960s (“‘Hot Summer’; Race Riots in North,” 1964). As students read the articles, they compared and contrasted the two events in a graphic organizer and then in a Socratic seminar or other preferred discussion method students around the questions of

1. How were the two readings similar in terms of people's anger and the reasons behind their anger?
2. In what ways do you think these events shaped today's social climate?
3. Can riots ever be justified? What are some reasons for either argument?

4. What moves society forward faster, violence or peace?

William's goal was to get students to think about connections between violence and protest and whether there were ever a justification. After the discussion students completed a four-question multiple choice quiz that begins by asking the "underlying issue surrounding what happened in Ferguson" with the answer being racism. The next question was "do riots push anything forward" with answers of yes, no, or depends. For the second question the correct answer was no. He also asked students "what can we do?" with possible answers of "educate ourselves," "be active," "nothing," and "move away." For this question the correct answers were to educate ourselves and be active. The final question of the quiz was a true and false question of "Ferguson was the only event that was bad in terms of backlash?" with the correct answer being false. Throughout the lesson, William pushed students to see the historic nature of oppression by connecting the events of Ferguson to those of the Civil Rights Era. However, he failed to get students to see the systemic nature or race/ism, focusing on these major events without connecting the events to larger systems of oppression. Again, there was a focus on racist actions as individual actions, which ignored the larger systems that perpetuated white supremacy (Mills, 2000).

Connie Teaches Carefully to Not Upset Anyone

As Connie thought about her classroom, she knew that she must discuss race/ism with students but was afraid of upsetting the students. As part of another class, she helped in a research study with high school students as they discussed race/ism. From this experience Connie learned,

that white students are not as comfortable talking about it, and it's kind of like a white guilt embarrassment type of thing like, "What do I do?" It's kind of their attitude about it or like, "I don't know what to say," which is understandable.

Nobody tells you what to say about that kind of stuff. But I learned that the black students were a lot more comfortable talking about it and that they were a lot more for talking about it in the classroom and pushing to make students uncomfortable because that's the only way that things will change.

Through her research, she confronted the reality that white students were not comfortable talking about race and that she would have to push them to have these conversations. However, when she thought about having these conversations in her future class, she was afraid of upsetting students. Thinking back on her own high school experience, she worried about how to talk about race in a nonconfrontational manner that will not upset students who disagreed, stating,

Because if God forbid, we were ever in a situation like that at a school that I taught, it would definitely be polarized, and there'll be people on both sides. And it's hard to touch on. And you don't want to upset anybody. And you don't want to cause any conflicts, especially among students, because they can get physical. They're in high school. They can say mean things. They can do really bad stuff. I have no doubt about that. And so, it's really—you got to kind of, I don't want to say tiptoe, but you just have to be careful. And I'm still trying to learn how to be careful, because you don't want to piss anybody off. That's what my thing is, is if you cause a fight between students or if you—I wouldn't know how to stop that. I would be

like, "Well, you both hold valid opinions," but that's not going to stop them from being pissed at each other. It's just how it is.

Connie worried that classroom discussion on racial topics can cause violent confrontations, so she did not "want to upset anybody." She acknowledged that students would bring in multiple perspectives, but she saw her role in these discussions as maintaining order by being "careful" to not "piss anybody off."

Connie was not just afraid of upsetting her students but also fears reprisal from parents if she was not neutral in the classroom. In a long exchange Connie insisted neutrality is problematic, but she feared a confrontation with parents. In our exchange on discussing race/ism in the classroom,

Connie: That [talking about race/ism] is not easy and you have to be really careful.

Me What do you mean?

Connie: You don't want to upset anybody. And that's my thing, I don't want to make anybody uncomfortable in my classroom. I don't want to make anybody upset. I don't want anybody to feel like it's not their place to be there. And you have to justify other people's opinions but you can't—but there are obviously wrong opinions here. Do you justify those? It's going to be really hard to learn.

Me: Talk me through that. Is there a specific example you're thinking?

Connie: I think if somebody was like, "Oh, yeah, Paul was totally in the right." And I can't just be like, "Okay. You're right. That's a valid point." But I think at that point, you just say, "You think Paul was in the right? Why do you think that?" And then if they could explain that—I don't know. That would be hard for

me is just to try to get somebody's opinion and try to be like, "Okay, why do you think that?" And then if it's just still something that I just absolutely just think is in the wrong, that's hard. And of course, you don't want to be like too transparent with your views.

Me: Why not?

Connie: I think that's frowned upon. And I don't think parents like it. I know parents don't like it actually because they're like, "Oh, you're teaching my child to think this one way just because you think this way. Now, they think like this. They have these views instead of these views." Because I had one teacher in high school, everybody was like—all the parents, in particular, were like, "Oh, my god, Mr. S is a communist. He's such a liberal." And I was like, "I like him." And they're like, "Yeah, well he's teaching you how to think like him," or whatever. And I'm like, "I think he's cool. I think he's a nice guy." But that was kind of—I think that's why people frown on it. I think it's maybe you shouldn't be totally transparent because then parents are going to be pissed at you or whatever.

In this exchange, Connie impressed on me the importance of being “careful,” which seemed to be remaining neutral in conversations of race/ism. But even as she thought about being neutral, she highlighted how difficult that will be when students brought in “wrong opinions.” She thought about pushing students to reflect and thought about what that meant and how they came to these ideas. However, she was quick to emphasize that she could not be too “transparent” with getting students to question their ideas or she would upset parents in the district. For Connie being neutral in class can be problematic, but she insisted it was necessary to not upset parents in the district.

Beyond fear of upsetting people when talking about race, Connie also struggled to critically read everyday examples of race/ism in the world (Guinier, 2004; Twine, 2010), which reinforced a belief that neutrality was possible in the classroom. Although she was not able to teach her critical racial incident lesson plan, she was able to teach a lesson on scandal around Watergate during her field experience. As part of that lesson, she asked students to create a political cartoon about a scandal. During our second interview, Connie recounted,

And they had a really fun time with it. They had the best time. It was really funny. I had somebody draw Obama in his tan suit towards the end of his term when everybody freaked out because he wore tan. And they were talking about that. And then some of them did it over Watergate, and it was just fun to see what they could come up with.

Connie saw this as a fun activity, but she failed to differentiate between the legal scandal Nixon faced as part of Watergate as the similar to the “scandal” of the country’s first Black president wearing a tan suit. She did not see this as something to get students to think about or reflect on as part of the lesson. In this experience, Connie seemed to not see this as a racial event, which was missing these “everyday” forms of racism that are part of being racially literate (Twine & Steinbugler, 2006).

Connie’s push for neutrality hindered her ability to push students to see systems as part of discussions of race/ism. To begin her lesson, Connie asked students to reflect on the killing of Tamir rice and then compared that to a law passed in New Jersey ordering schools to teach students how to engage with police in a manner of “mutual cooperation and respect.” Connie began the lesson by introducing students to the lesson

objectives for students to “recognize what police brutality is,” “recognize how racism exists in our current justice system,” and “identify the events of the Tamir Rice shooting.” She then proceeded with the lesson asking students to discuss “what they know about police brutality, modern racism, and more specifically the Tamir Rice shooting.” After this brief discussion students read a copy of the law passed in New Jersey and read an article on the bill (C. Collins, 2017). Within the lesson plan in reference to the bill, Connie stated,

This bill implies that we need to actively avoid racism even though it is not our fault; that we need to defend ourselves against the police instead of having the police change their ways. This bill avoids the actual problem at hand here and just masks it with the “you should over-comply when you obey the law”.

Connie continued with a class discussion focusing on the events around Tamir Rice asking students about what happened and how they might have reacted in this situation as the officer. She also added in the lesson that during the discussion “we will hold an open discussion in class about these questions, and make sure that it is a judgement free zone.”

In our final interview, Connie reiterated this idea of a “judgement-free zone” for discussion. This seemed to make a statement about the importance of remaining neutral as a teacher, ignoring the history of systems that often silence students of color in the classroom. Finally, the lesson concluded with students individually reflecting on the questions and submitting these as an exit ticket. Throughout her lesson, Connie hinted at the systemic nature of racial violence by police but then in questioning focused on the individual actions of the police officer in this one shooting. Like many white preservice

teachers, she continued to struggle with connecting to white supremacy as a system of oppression and not just individual bad actors (R. M. Crowley & Smith, 2015).

Bridget Teaches through a Delicate Approach

For Bridget neutrality meant teachers “should teach about racial events when they occur in society, with a delicate approach.” Her *delicate approach* focused on making herself neutral in all parts of discussion on race/ism. First, teachers must remain neutral and not be the ones raising issues around race/ism in the classroom. Bridget believed race/ism will come to the surface naturally as part of discussion if students see the connection. Nowhere was this more present than in her critical racial issues lesson plan. The purpose of the lesson plan was to address a racial incident that has happened and create a lesson plan about how she might talk about race/ism in the classroom.

Bridget created a lesson plan about the murder of Tamir Rice, a twelve-year-old Black boy killed while playing with an air gun in a Cleveland, Ohio park. The vague and disjointed lesson provided no direct questions about the central issue of addressing a racial incident. Instead, she highlighted the innocence of the victim by stating “an innocent child was killed because of many factors,” but then asks students to list the factors and “relate [them] in some way to historical examples from the past.” But nowhere did she directly address the central issue of the lesson plan, which was race/ism in society or in police brutality. When asked specifically if she should include a question about race/ism in the lesson she answers that that will only “make students feel like they have to say certain things that maybe they don’t really know about.” When asked to explain what she meant by “answer a certain way,” Bridget states,

I feel like if we go about this in a way that I am saying something like, "This shooting only happened because of race issues and that's the only reason why." I feel like I can't say that, just like I can't say World War I or World War II only happened because of this and this. And I feel like that is one of the most obvious reasons and something that would be talked about. And I feel like if I just put that in there then that's the only thing we're going to talk about. And I feel like there's always other things going into it that may not be more important. And I feel like, obviously, the racial side of this is like very majority of it, but I feel like if I just put that in there, that's the only thing that my students are going to focus on.

The discussion of race/ism in the classroom then will happen almost naturally out of students grappling with these ideas. For Bridget, students saw one of the “factors” was race, but she did not want that to be all students focus on in the activity. She admitted “racial issues happen,” but talking about them alone did little to address other factors like “lack of communication” between the 911 operator and the responding police. She wanted to minimize the role of race/ism in this incident and hoping students will *see it* is one way to accomplish this feat.

The next part of a *delicate approach* to neutrality was for teachers to allow all opinions into the class discussion. A component of the critical racial incident lesson plans was each small group of students created rubrics or guides to construct their ideas about how to teach race/ism in the classroom. The rubrics were created after reading four articles that modeled how teachers at a variety of levels and contexts addressed race/ism in their classes. When asked the most important part of her group’s rubric, Bridget said the inclusion of a statement or norms that created an “accepting classroom” is essential

for creating a safe environment for students to discuss race/ism. Though she thought it important for students not to engage in “personal attacks.” She took this to mean that all opinions must be welcomed and accepted in the class. She stated, “everyone does have a right to an opinion, whether it could be the worst opinion in the world, and you know it’s horrible, but they have a right to do that. But it was not just respecting the right of students to hold these opinions, she took that further believing these students needed to share these opinions in class:

So I feel like you have to let students say things that are sometimes the hard things to say, obviously while being respectful, because she did it in a respectful way and made it clear that she wasn't coming after anyone, but I think that that's definitely important, because you're not going to get to hear other perspectives if you don't allow for even the most outlandish ones or the most whatever ones.

Teachers must welcome and accepted all opinions in the class to address tough or hot button issues around race/ism for Bridget. Neutrality meant that teachers were removed from the conversation to allow for ideas to be presented and explored by students. Letting students explore ideas through critical conversations was not inherently bad, but there was little thought for students of color and for their experiences grappling with race/ism in their own lives. Maintaining safety in the classroom for all students was impossible when the expectation of sharing all and any opinions was the expectation.

For her critical racial incident lesson plan, Bridget focused on the shooting of Tamir Rice. She began by having students watch a video from the BBC and then read an article from CNN about the murder. Then on a worksheet, she asked students to complete a series of questions centered on explaining what happened leading up to the shooting

and then what could have been done differently. To get at doing things differently, Bridget asked students if they would have called police, was the information purposefully left out by the dispatcher, and “do you think this incident could have been prevented?” After students have completed the questions, they would then participate in a Socratic seminar to discuss the questions. After the seminar students reflected on the class discussion using the following prompt:

Communication is extremely important in most aspects of our world, in a case like Tamir Rice we must reflect on what happened. An innocent child was killed because of many factors. What are some of these factors? Do any of these factors relate in some way to historical examples from the past?

Throughout the lesson Bridget asked students about a violent racial event, but she never directly asked students about race/ism and if that was one of the “factors,” which led to the murder. Although she read and discussed a series of articles (Bolgatz, 2005b, 2005a; Caldwell, 2012; Castro et al., 2015), showing model teachers directly discussing and focusing on race/ism, throughout Bridget’s lesson, she only referred to a “racial event” during the course objectives, which she never directly shared with the class. Bridget approached students as though they came into her classroom void of racialized experiences and innocent of race/ism (King & Chandler, 2016). Additionally, she failed to have students critically look at bigger systemic “factors” leaving this as just another example of racial violence with little context.

Pushing Toward Anti-Racist Practices in the Classroom

For Mark and Gloria, the realization that race/ism was an everyday encounter that students must learn to read and respond to means that simple neutrality does nothing to

confront the racist systems. The two teacher candidates were clear that they wanted to provide multiple perspectives, but they were not neutral in discussions of race/ism.

Mark Resolves to Directly Address Race/ism

Mark stated clearly when discussing race/ism there are “absolutes.” The *absolutes* seemed to be a common understanding that race/ism is real and present in our society. When discussing his critical racial incident lesson plan, Mark wanted to introduce multiple perspectives about the murder of Tamir Rice at the hands of police. He provided students with an article about the case, part of the 911 transcripts, and part of the prosecutor’s report on the events. However, Mark made clear that multiple perspectives did not mean negating the reality of race/ism and introducing perspectives that question others humanity and experiences. As he reflected on his critical issues lesson, Mark indicated he wanted students to engage with

multiple understandings. This, from the very basic, this [the murder of Tamir Rice] was bad too, police brutality is a real thing. It's not an opinion issue regardless of what your parents might say at the dinner table. [Other students] would never say it in the class, but that's a whole other thing. And then racism, it's not this abstract idea that exists in our past. It wasn't over in 1968.

Mark wanted to make *absolutely* clear for students that racism was a real and current problem that all people have to confront and grapple with. Mark made it clear the way race/ism is historically rooted and had influenced the creation of systems to perpetuate white supremacy. Thus, teachers must directly addressed these connections in the classroom (King & Chandler, 2016).

Mark wanted students to “explore racial bias” and “contextualize the history of police brutality” through a lesson and class discussion after the murder of Tamir Rice. Mark began the lesson by having students read about the events of the shooting, read a portion of the 911 call, and complete ten discussion questions. Then Mark planned to present a brief lecture “to provide context to the shooting” by also reviewing historical timeline of major examples of police brutality. After this, students would participate in an informal discussion using the discussion questions. Within the questions students would be asked about the events around the shooting and the 911 call, if the police officer was justified, if they “think implicit racial biases on the part of any of the involved parties might have played a role in how these events played out,” comparing this event to other historical events, and finally asking students why is it important to discuss these events. After the discussion students would read a short article by CNN (Almasy, 2015) asking students in small groups to think about the conclusions of the investigation into the officer ruling the shooting was “tragic but reasonable.” Finally, students ended with writing a reflection journal on the final findings of the prosecutor who did not prosecute the officer in the shooting. Within his lesson, Mark want to promote reading the racialized world by presenting historical examples and connections as a systemic problem (Guinier, 2004)

Part of making it “clear” was that Mark directly confronted the way race/ism was present in the event. As part of the PowerPoint created for the lesson, Mark defined the terms implicit bias, racism, empathy, and privilege. Then as reflection questions for the discussion after students had read all the documents, Mark wanted to ask students directly if implicit bias might have factored into these events and when reflecting on the lesson

plan states, "I do think asking head-on about whether or not there might have been implicit racial biases at play is a central question for them to ask." Directly confronting the issue of race/ism in this event, Mark hoped this pushed his future students to come to "an understanding that there's an inherent, unfair, racial based inequality happening." Thus, directly confronting the race/ism was the only way to learn to recognize the oppressive systems and push against them. Mark stated in the second interview,

"Oh, yeah. This is something that still does exist. And it's something that never really went away." And I don't necessarily think that the sort—the more oppressive natures of our systems are that way like on purpose now. But they're holdovers from the way the system was designed. And so yeah. I think for me, that was just like a wakeup call. So yeah, I think if you don't teach it, it makes it that much more difficult to recognize when it's right in front of you. And it might make you even defensive about it if you think, "Oh, the problem's gone." So, I do think you have to teach it. And I don't think it's something necessarily even can only be taught to high school students.

In Mark's view, teachers must directly address issues of race/ism with students by asking questions that might make some student uncomfortable, but to confront whiteness teachers must address the systemic nature of the way race/ism have led to privilege for some in society. Hence, directly confronting race/ism within lessons was a central component of Mark growing more racial literate and moving beyond merely being neutral when discussing this in his future classroom (King, 2016).

Gloria Confronts Racism through Teaching about Migration

Gloria also saw that to confront race/ism, teachers must ensure the safety of all students in the classroom, which made strict neutrality impossible. In Glorias' lesson she wanted her students to grapple with the way race/ism influences historic and current immigration policies in the United States. The lesson was written on the heels of the massive child detention policy instituted by the Trump administration, and she used this as the starting point for her critical racial issues lesson plan. Central to this lesson was defining terms. Gloria was clear to set a distinction between "illegal immigrants" and the use of the term "undocumented migrants." She says,

I did definitions, which I thought were really important for this lesson, because they are... I wanted to make sure that my students weren't saying illegal immigrants. I wanted to make sure they were saying undocumented. And just certain things that they probably hear a lot but don't know for sure what it is.

Later when asked why definitions and this distinction was so important, Gloria responded with empathy and thought about the students in her classroom expressing,

Well, first of all, I think that if there were any students who were undocumented in the class. It's really important to not say illegal, because that's just insulting to think that a person is illegal, to think that their being in and of itself is against the law. But then just realizing that saying that is hurtful. But then you probably wouldn't think about that because I never thought about that but then just like-it's just insulting to think of—it's so degrading to call someone illegal. So just having that discussion and being like—in one of my classes, this girl was—during a civil rights unit, this girl referred to people as colored and the host teacher was like, "Oh, well we're not going to use that word because of the negative

connotation," and she said, "Well, that's what my dad calls them, that's what my dad says." She's obviously not coming from a place of hate, neither was her dad, it was literally that was what they were taught to call people of color. But it was having that discussion so that they're not like kind of—that is like most people nowadays know not to say colored people because of the connotation, but illegal immigrants is something that you hear—I mean, you hear the president [President Trump] say it. It's said a lot and you may not realize the negative connotation that has, especially when you're hearing government leaders say it.

Gloria began by expressing the importance of terms when talking about issues of race/ism in her lesson. She then drew a connection to a teacher correcting a student to see the way words can be so hurtful historically when students used those words. She connected these two examples to make sure that during discussions of race/ism that students were thoughtful of others humanity. Gloria was conscious that language has consequences so she could not stay neutral and just let words be used that might hurt students involved in these sometimes-tense discussions. As Leonardo (2009) insisted "White racial knowledge is an epistemology of the oppressor to the extent that it suppresses knowledge of its own conditions of existence." (p. 110). Gloria seemed to make visible for students the importance of the language of whiteness, so students might begin to critically examine their own racialized experiences.

In her critical racial lesson plan, Gloria wanted students to explore the events around the detention and separation of children after crossing the American Mexican border seeking asylum in 2016. She began the lesson asking students, "to write about a time they were separated from their parents or a time they felt homesick." Then during a

debrief on this topic, she wanted to emphasize that the class will be discussing controversial issues that day. She reminded students about class discussion norms, though these were not included anywhere in the materials created. She then continued the lesson presenting a brief period of direct instruction defining important terms for the lesson of zero-tolerance policy, undocumented immigrants, and asylum. She then presented a brief lecture on American foreign policy and involvement in South and Central America and American immigration policy. After the short period of direct instruction students would watch a video (AJ+, 2018) and an article from *Time Magazine* (Reilly, 2018) on the Trump administration's family separation policy. After some background information on the topic, students would participate in a fishbowl Socratic seminar. Gloria planned to give students time to reflect on a series of questions that focus on their opinions on the current topic. She also wanted students to connect this to ideas about race with specific questions like:

Do you think there would be as much focus on this topic if the immigrants were coming from a predominantly-white nation, such as the UK? What effects do you think this type of policy has on the way that some Americans view people who identify as Latinx?

After the conclusion on the seminar, students would take time to reflect on the question “Do you think it is ok to separate the children of undocumented immigrants from their families? Give two reasons why or why not. What is one way you think the US could improve the migrant situation?” Throughout the lesson, Gloria wanted students to connect current events to the past and saw the way race/ism impacts current policies (King & Chandler, 2016).

Additionally, Gloria, much like Mark, saw the importance in addressing the issue of race/ism directly within the lesson. At first, I was a little skeptical of her topic because we have regularly had students choose current issues that have little connection to race. Gloria reiterated the connection to race by being clear that the connection to race/ism was if the people migrating looked more white then it wouldn't necessarily be happening or as harsh. And I think that it is putting a stigma on all people who look like that in terms of just even if someone has come to the US completely legally, has a green card, but if they are dark skinned especially if they look Hispanic then there are people who would say nasty things to them. And so, I think that seeing how the reason why these children are being put in cages isn't necessarily because of the way that they look, but the effect that it's having on them and the fact that it's happening on the entire community within the United States because people are being thought of as illegal or undocumented. Even though they may not be, but because they look that way, they're like, "Oh, that's an undocumented immigrant."

In her explanation, she was clear that migrants' racial identities are what was at the center of the current issue and that communities were being impacted across the country. Moreover, Gloria realized that students will only grow racially literate if they were directly confronted and asked to think about the systems that uphold racism. She highlighted the racialized system of immigration that dehumanized Latino citizens across the country. Within her critical racial issues lesson, Gloria asked students to grapple with the way racial identity impacts individuals' lived experiences, which was the start of getting students to interrogate the oppressive racist structures in society.

Conclusion

Across this section, I have examined the way these six preservice teachers think about teaching race/ism in their future classroom. Although all participants were open to discussing race/ism in their future classes, they held very different perspectives on how to approach this with students. For Connie, William, and Mike, their uncritical examination of the systems of race/ism limited the building of connections about the systemic nature of race/ism that influenced racial civic experiences of their students. They unknowingly were supporting “racial structures” and agreeing to “racial knowledge” that maintained the institutions of white supremacy (King & Chandler, 2016, p. 19). However, Mark and Gloria attempted to highlight the sociohistorical nature of white supremacy to push students to examine race/ism more critically in their classrooms and in their students’ communities. Ultimately the way participants constructed ideas about race/ism directly influenced their thoughts and ideas about addressing the topic in their future classrooms.

In the next chapter, I will explore a cross case analysis of the five participants to examine the way each constructed their beliefs as racially civically literate preservice teachers.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Introduction

In this dissertation, I have explored the way six white preservice teachers constructed their ideas of race/ism and citizenship as they thought about addressing critical issues in the classroom. During the Spring semester of 2019 the cohort of prospective social studies teachers grappled with their ideas of teaching about race/ism in their future classroom, but most of these teachers struggled with their own white identity and what that means for them in their future classroom. In this chapter, I will begin with an overview of the previous chapter. As part of the findings of chapter 5, I showed how each participant betrayed their construction of race/ism through their discussion of Paul in the book *All American Boys* (Reynolds & Kiely, 2015). These constructions of race/ism helped each participant as they reflected on their own privilege as future white teachers in the second theme. While a few participants were open to examining their racial privilege and positionality as future teachers, other future teachers were hesitant to make these same connections between themselves and race/ism. In the final theme, I explored the way each participant constructed a lesson on a critical racial event in the news. Some participants fell on the spectrum of moving towards anti-racist teaching while other participants remained race neutral or colorblind as they thought about constructing these lessons. These three themes provide insights into the way these preservice teachers read and think about the racial construction of citizenship and how this will influence the way they approach these ideas in their future classrooms.

The remainder of this chapter will begin with a cross-case analysis of the data. Then I will discuss implications of the study. Finally, the chapter will present limitations

to the study design. Then continue with a cross-case analysis of the six preservice teachers and implications for researchers and teacher educators. Finally, the chapter will close with some final reflection on this study and the use of YAF in the social studies.

Learning to Read Race/ism in their Civic Worlds

Across this study the six preservice teachers fell into three main classifications after I analyzed them through the lens of RCL. Although these were not permanent places, this represents where the teacher candidates were at the time of the interviews, class participation, and the construction of their critical issues lesson plan. These are general categories that our teachers seemed to fall into as I was working with the data during the analysis process. This does not mean that participants are “stuck” in the position. Just as Laughter (2011) challenged teacher educators to look for student growth and learning as white preservice teachers learn to reflect and assess their own understandings of race/ism. Additionally, Garrett and Segall (2013) cautioned teacher educators that preservice teachers struggling and sometimes rejection is part of the process of growing in their nuanced understanding of race/ism and citizenship. Thus, I want to be clear that there were many points of growth as they grappled with their ideas about race/ism, citizenship, and teaching. In the preceding subsections we will discuss the way Mark and Gloria drew deeper, more critical connections between race/ism and citizenship as they thought about teaching social studies and become more racially civically literate. Mike, Connie, and William showed signs of beginning to read the world through both racial and civic lens, but ultimately, they took on a mentality of being civically liberal. Finally, Bridget pushed back against connections of race/ism and civic

experiences, which ultimately shaped the way she thought about teaching these topics which betrayed a belief of being civically colorblind.

Racially Civically Literate

Through interviews, lessons, and class participation, Mark and Gloria seemed to be moving towards becoming literate in reading the world through a combined racial and civic lens. Their experiences and perspectives have left them open and reflective (Garmon, 2004) to seeing and listening to multiple lived experiences (Amos, 2011; Crowley & Smith, 2015) and integrating these ideas into their future classrooms. Because whiteness created advantage through separation and othering, race/ism often goes unnoticed by white people (Frankenberg, 1993). Their more critical view of citizenship and participation embraced critique of the way people of color have been silenced throughout the democratic practice (Knight Abowitz & Harnish, 2006; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Thus, Mark and Gloria seemed to be starting the process of learning to read the racial and civic world and reflected on their own place within these systems.

Essential in seeing the complexity of race/ism and citizenship was beginning to see themselves as part of a racialized system. Both Mark and Gloria recognized Paul, the white police officer in *All American Boys* (Reynolds & Kiely, 2015) as part of a system and not just a single racist person. As Crowley and Smith (2015) insisted preservice teachers must begin to see the complexity of race/ism not as individual actions but as systems of oppression, which can often be unnatural to analyze events beyond one's own experiences. Seeing racist actions as part of systems helps preservice teachers critically analyze the way race/ism impact people of color and not just focus on “bad actors” doing “bad things,” which leaves little room for change and racial justice. Mark and Gloria as

preservice teachers are beginning to see the systems all around them that influence the way they navigate and walk through the world as citizens and as teachers. This ability to see systems pushes them to analyze race/ism and citizenship not just through their own individual experiences. Instead, they are consciously thinking about the way people of color experience citizenship much differently than they do. Hence, seeing police brutality represented in the novel serves as a window into the way people of color experience the world and they want to bring this critical view of the systems around citizenship into focus for their future students.

Beyond just opening their eyes to the systems around them, Mark and Gloria were reflective in thinking about their own racial privilege. They both realized they have not had the same experiences as people of color. However, instead of focusing on their experiences as normal (DiAngelo, 2018) and using these experiences to “disprove” their privilege (Crowley & Smith, 2015), they talked about listening and growing in their understanding of different lived experiences. Mark focused on being pushed off the fence by course work and friends who challenged him to see his own privilege as a white citizen. Gloria recounted bubble bursting experiences in classes and with peers who have pushed her to be reflective about her own privilege and position in society. After being made aware of police brutality, both preservice teachers have taken time to grapple with their own place as white citizens. These moments of critical reflection on their own positionality had pushed them to reflect on past events and see the way race/ism impacted their experiences. Although this reflection was not a linear process (Garrett & Segall, 2013; A. M. Hawkman, 2020), they continued to move and grow as they recall moments of resistance. However, they were open to discussing these in a way that pushes them to

think more deeply about connecting to all their future students. Mark and Gloria were open and reflective (Garmon, 2004) to struggle with their own construction and place in our racialized system, which sparked a dialogue that might help them when these issues arise in their future classrooms.

Civically Liberal

Mike, Connie, and William seemed to use a racial civic vocabulary but struggle to critically engage and connect this vocabulary to their own experiences and perspectives. Part of this disconnect came from times these participants practiced the skills of distancing (Case & Hemmings, 2005) and protecting (Picower, 2009) themselves from discussions of privilege and race/ism in their future classrooms. This was not uncommon as Garrett and Segall (2013) and Hawkman (2020) had insisted this ebb and flow of resistance and grappling is part of white preservice teachers negotiating with race/ism and privilege. Essentially, Connie, Mike, and William upheld non-racists stances admitting that race/ism is part of all peoples' civic experiences. However, they feared focusing too much on race/ism in the context of citizenship. For example, William insisted talking too much about race/ism in the discussion of citizenship will only "give life to the idea of racism." So, instead of being racially civically literate and reading race/ism in all civic experiences, Connie, Mike, and William promoted individual liberty, emphasizing individual's liberty to fully participate as citizens. This liberal view of citizenship (Knight Abowitz & Harnish, 2006) acknowledged different civic realities between white people and people of color but champions individual liberty especially for people of color to fully participate as citizens. Hence, these preservice teachers embraced a civically liberal view of RCL.

Connie, Mike, and William saw themselves as non-racialized individuals independent from the racialized systems that all people navigate. To begin, these preservice teachers, like many other white preservice teachers, struggled to see race/ism and civic experiences as part of a larger systems (Crowley & Smith, 2015; Pezzetti, 2017; Urrieta & Reidel, 2006). All of these preservice teachers focused on Paul from *All American Boys* (Reynolds & Kiely, 2015) as being a bad person, which betrayed an often held belief that racism is perpetrated solely by individual actors and not inherently part of larger systems (DiAngelo, 2018). Part of this is that they possessed a rudimentary vocabulary of race/ism that limits their ability to read its complexity in the world around them (Michael, 2015). They were not ignorant of the way race/ism impacted civic experiences (Mills, 2007), but were always focused on the way People of Color had these experiences. They knew they would never have to experience the same treatment and the fear that Rashad faced as a young black boy as Paul attacked him, but then did not connect this to the way race/ism was inherently part of their lived experience or the systems that are around all people. Consequently, they were blind to the systems or pool of whiteness they swim in (Hawkman, 2020).

Secondly, without seeing the systems that favor whiteness that surrounded them, Mike, Connie, and William languished over their own privilege. They could define white privilege discussing specific ideas about the way white people experienced privilege in society. But when pressed to think about their own positions as white people, they dismissed their racialized experiences as unimportant, uncomfortable, or unused. For example, Connie discussed the role race privileges her with her parents but then almost in the same breath said race has little impact in her or other white people's lives. Because

she understood the idea that as the dominant culture, she is less likely to be forced to think about her identity, she does not take her knowledge a step further to see the way her racial identity has positioned her in society. William intellectually could define white privilege but then stated he “doesn’t use his privilege,” like he simply rejected his whiteness (Leonardo, 2013). As another example, Mike knew and could name his advantages but then questioned the importance of being made uncomfortable in the process. Though uncomfortably might be important component for white preservice teachers to grow (Laughter, 2011), Mike seemed to unpacking his own privilege (Mcintosh, 1989), which did not push him to reject his ideas of whiteness (Lipsitz, 1998). Mike is moving in his understanding, but he seems hung up on his own privilege, hindering his ability to critically read the racialized world. Mike, William, and Connie openly discussed ideas around white privilege but then see little connection to their own experiences Crowley & Smith, 2015). Their disconnect led them to naming the way race/ism implicitly impacted racialized civic experiences, but not able to read it in their own lives. This seemed to make discussions of race/ism academic pursuits that have less to do with real world civic experienced for many of this group of preservice teachers.

While Mark and Gloria described gradual changes or experiences that led to bubble bursting experiences, Mike, Connie, and William described internal and external tensions that maintain the integrity of their whiteness bubbles. For Connie it might have been fear or family pressure that strengthened her bubble and pushed her to less critical views of the way civic participation were experienced. Although she had the vocabulary, the fear of confrontation seemed to force her to negotiate the way she constructed ideas about civic experiences through her understanding of race/ism. In a different way,

William and Mike do not talk about direct confrontation about their ideas of race/ism shaping civic experiences. However, they struggled to think of clear specific examples of the way race/ism had given them privilege. They could not point to events or instances in their lives where they were confronted with their privilege in society. Mike eloquently discussed the way Rashad had a vastly different civic experience from Quinn, but he had not had the same visceral critical experience like Quinn to push him to more critically question his own positionality. Connie, Mike, and William seemed open to discussions of the way civic experiences were shaped by race/ism (Garmon, 2004). But the whiteness bubble was not popped or they missed the critical reflective step (Crowley, 2016; Milner, 2006) that made them conscious of their own privilege (Laughter, 2011). Hence, Connie, Mike, and William are civically liberal in their connections between race/ism and citizenship when teaching in their future classrooms.

Civically Colorblind

Where the first five participants were at least open to discussions of race/ism, citizenship, and teaching, Bridget pushed back insisting the education department's emphasis on equity and justice belabored discussions of race/ism at the expense of learning to teach. Throughout her life she had been blinded by whiteness to not see the world as racialized. This directed her to conclude that racial identity has little bearing on civic, teaching, and learning experiences. She emphasized the importance of individual rights and responsibilities (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004) and the "commonality, consensus, and unity" of all citizens (Knight Abowitz & Harnish, 2006, p. 658). Even when confronted with the idea of diverse civic experiences, Bridget seemed to deny, resist, or forget the importance of race/ism in the world (Case & Hemmings, 2005;

Picower, 2009; Urrieta & Reidel, 2006). Just like the participants in Urrieta and Reidel's (2008) study, Bridget's experiences as a white person had shielded her from seeing racialized civic experiences. This pushed her to a *not race* perspective (Smith & Crowley, 2015) ignoring the current historical moment in the way race/ism impacted civic and classroom experiences for students. Ultimately, she appeared to employ a colorblind approach to all parts of her life, which leads to a construction of citizenship and belief about teaching that was civically colorblind.

First, just like those with a civically liberal perspective, Bridget constructed herself as a non-racialized individual independent of racial systems. When I asked about her racial identity, she quickly identified herself as white, but then stressed that this is not important and that she could be any other race and it would not matter. This exchange betrayed a belief in a universal civic experience and a colorblind belief that her experiences seem *normal* (DiAngelo, 2011, 2018) for everyone. Across our discussions she regularly failed to see the way whiteness shaped all her experiences (Frankenberg, 1993; Hawkman, 2020) and failed to see the complexity of race/ism in the way People of Color navigate this world (Mills, 2000).

Finally, Bridget denied and resisted all attempts at reflection on anything related to race/ism. For example, she did not read the book because of her belief that a "writer who was African American" would be "just going after police." And only saw the merits of *All American Boys* (Reynolds & Kiely, 2015) after the discussion in class where instructors introduced the multiple perspectives from the book. In another example, Bridget confided in me that the "ed department has shoved diversity down my throat." Bridget divulged to me (probably as a fellow white person) that the emphasis on these

discussions only caused greater problems. Although not saying she was colorblind outright, she emphatically wanted to impress upon me that race/ism were only problems because we discussed them. She implied that the United States must unite around an American ideal, which for her was cloaked in whiteness. Bridget resisted any attempt to reflect about race/ism (Case & Hemmings, 2005; Picower, 2009) because this was not something she had experienced (DiAngelo, 2011; Smith & Crowley, 2015).

Growing Racial Civic Literacy

As I concluded and thought about the cross-case analysis of these six participants discussed above, it became clear that there were some conditions that help a group of white preservice teachers grapple with race/ism and citizenship when they think about their future classrooms. First, it seemed clear that preservice teachers must begin to look at race/ism through a systems lens. This was not an uncommon finding as research has repeatedly shown that a deeper nuanced connection by white preservice teachers only came after they began to see the systems of white supremacy that surrounded all citizens (Hawkman, 2020; Smith & Crowley, 2015). Seeing the systems of oppression helped push preservice teachers to see beyond simple racist actions and opens their eyes to see or stop ignoring the racialized world around all citizens. Mills (2000) insisted white people and people of color often talk “past each other” when discussing race/ism because they have such different “pictures of social reality” (pp. 453-454). Pushing preservice teachers to focus on a systemic view of race/ism will foster deeper and more substantive conversations for white preservice teachers.

Secondly, as many scholars have noted, white preservice teachers must be compelled to reflect on their own racial and civic privilege as part of growing more racial

and civic awareness (Crowley, 2016; Kahn et al., 2014; Milner, 2006). But as Crowley and Smith (2015) highlighted white preservice teachers often used their own experiences as a foil to dismiss ideas of racial privilege. For the preservice teachers in this study, taking a structural approach helped Mark and Gloria put their own privilege into perspective as they grappled with ideas of privilege. However, William, Mike, Connie, and Bridget struggled to read the systems of racial privilege, which seemed to hinder their ability to fully confront their own racial privilege. Naming white privilege and being able to define this vocabulary of race/ism was a small part of learning to read it in the world. Much like King's (2016) assertion that white preservice teachers acquisition of racial history did not always precipitate a critical racial grammar. There seemed to be a deeper more critical connection that has helped Mark and Gloria form a deeper association and grapple with their own racial position in the racial civic structures that was missing for the other white preservice teachers.

Finally, the reading of YAF as a counter-story (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002), the subsequent discussions, and lesson on race/ism and citizenship in teaching social studies pushed these white preservice teachers, but I cannot say that there were significant shifts in RCL. For Mark and Gloria, the work in the methods class served to reinforce their perspectives and deepened their own reflective process. For Mike, William, and Connie, I could see them thinking and grappling with these multiple perspectives and wanting to be more racially and civically aware in their future classrooms, but YAF did not create enough of an intimate connection for them to shift. Although it was worth noting that each of them seemed to become more reflective as we get to the final critical racial issues lesson plan. Not surprisingly, this one experience was not enough to push them further

along the path to being racially civically literate for their future students. Additionally, it was important to remember that judging growth and change in preservice teachers' perspectives on race/ism can be difficult to assess because they have to be open and honest about these difficult and often undiscussed topics. Finally, as a negative case, Bridget seemed to disconnect during much of this and did not read enough of the YAF novel to really even judge her change. Although not generalizable across all contexts, this seemed to point to YAF as a solid additional piece to training white preservice social studies teachers. YAF alone did not seem to make substantial changes alone, but it along with other projects and experiences could help white preservice teachers in the process of grappling with race/ism and citizenship as they learned to read it in the world.

Implications

These findings offered important implications for white preservice teachers as they grappled with race/ism, citizenship and their construction of teaching throughout a methods class deploying the use of YAF.

For Educational Researchers

To begin, the theoretical framework, RCL, offered insights into the way a group of white preservice teachers constructed racial and civic identity, and challenged the way they thought about addressing this in their classroom. This framework helped contextualize the way all citizens have varied civic experiences, which was often universalized and ignored by white people. The inclusion of RCL provided a context and framework to help researchers focus on the way these diverse civic experiences were constructed and contextualized by all people. This study highlighted the way white

preservice teachers were aware of diverse civic experiences, but this awareness still did not push all preservice teachers to critically examine their own racial and civic experiences. Thus, teacher education and social studies needed additional studies that examined the way race/ism impacted civic experiences and RCL could offer a critical lens to exploring how to push preservice teachers to critically read this in the world.

For Teacher Educators

This study offered some support to dive deeper into the use of YAF in exploring issues of race/ism and citizenship with preservice social studies teachers. Although not definitive in creating *bubble bursting experiences*, the use of YAF helped especially white preservice teachers read and experience counter-stories (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). In the case of Mark and Gloria, YAF seemed to support and pushed them to critically read race/ism and whiteness in the world all around them. For the other preservice teachers, they were pushed as they thought about race/ism in the context of citizenship. For example, Mike seemed to move to read race/ism in the world across the semester. In the first interview when asked about his racial identity he had the vocabulary to discuss his own privilege but seemed handicapped by a guilt of uncomfortableness of grappling with whiteness. In later interviews he continued to grow as he thought about the way his life and civic experience were different than those of Rashad from *All American Boys* (Reynolds & Kiely, 2015). However, the use of YAF alone was not enough to push him to more critically examine his own whiteness and did not go far enough in pushing him to look at the structural issues surrounding race/ism. Part of this came from the choice in YAF. The YAF novel of *All American Boys* (Reynolds & Kiely, 2015) did not seem to provide enough insights into racial citizenship to push this group of

preservice teachers to more directly connect the structural factors that racialize civic experiences. Ultimately, teacher educators must remember this was a process of growth by preservice teachers and that one experience could not be enough so these are issues and topics that must be addressed across the program. Even though some preservice teachers denied and resisted like Bridget, many more will grow from these experiences.

To add depth and nuance to YAF, one possible solution would be to pair it with service-learning and field experiences to help students draw direct connections between the insights they gained from the stories and real-life experiences they learned from students in their placements. As Salinas et al. (2016) captured the way a service-learning project expanded preservice teachers views of race/ism as part of the construction of citizenship. In this study the preservice teacher grew to question ideas about citizenship after viewing a Latino student as a valued member of his community but devalued as a member of the classroom community. In a second study, researchers followed four graduate preservice language teachers as they attend a language program with parents and students who are learning English (Palpacuer-Lee et al., 2018). Palpacuer-Lee and colleagues (2018) found the preservice teachers learned “to see the world, their community, their role, their language of comfort, their familiar landscape through someone else’s eyes” (p. 601). In a third study, Wade and Raba (2003) led a weeklong field experience for preservice teachers in urban Chicago schools to challenge their views on race/ism. Through interviews and course projects, Wade and Raba (2003) insisted teacher educators must include deep and focused reflection with preservice teachers before, during and after their experiences. Ultimately, reflection on these experiences

would be deepened by the inclusion of YAF that might help the white preservice teachers grow as racially civically literate individuals.

Beyond just creating experiences white preservice teachers must be pushed to examine their own racial privilege as part of the process of growing into more racially civically literate teachers. Although a number of studies have shown how directly addressing white privilege through reading critical studies can lead to pushback and resistance (Hawkman 2020; Urrieta & Reidel 2006, 2008), preservice teachers must have the historical background of multiple racially coded civic experiences (King 2014, 2016) and a space to reflect on their own privilege (Crowley 2019). YAF directly paired with other critical texts might offer the space to push preservice teachers to create more personal connections with the experiences of People of Color. The use of YAF in a social studies method class along with additional resources and experiences served as another avenue for teacher educators to push white preservice teachers to grow as racially civically literate teachers.

Limitations

Just like any research study, this study has several limitations. The first limitation was that as the primary source of data collection, analysis, and reporting, I brought my own experiences and biases into the research. As with all qualitative methods, my own experiences as a teacher and teacher educator shaped and influenced the way that I looked at and understood the data. However, taking the advice of Lowenstein (2009), Garrett and Segall (2013), and reflecting on my own experience as a white teacher, I was empathetic to these six white preservice teachers as they grappled with their own relationships with race/ism and citizenship. Thus, I saw this project as part of my own

process in growing in my ability to engage students in conversations about race/ism in the classroom. Additionally, I have built relationships with these preservice teachers through class engagement and interviews and for some a white racial bond (DiAngelo, 2018) seemed to form as the instructor and teaching assistant are people of color. This relationship might have helped the preservice teachers open up to me more than if it was a typical researcher participant relationship. However, this relationship and my allyship with the instructors might have also pushed the preservice teachers to be guarded during discussions of race/ism as part of a racial etiquette to not share their hesitancy. Secondly, the purposeful sampling (Merriam, 1998) of a small group of six participants in a single methods course during the spring semester of 2019 limited the ability to draw general conclusions about all white preservice social studies teachers (Stake, 1995). Finally, with limited control over the field placement and curriculum in their placements, the preservice teachers were not observed teaching. Thus, pedagogical decisions about enacting anti-racists teaching were based on lesson plans, class observations, and interviews. Despite these limitations, this study offered insights into the way a group of white preservice teachers in a social studies methods class were challenged in their ideas on race/ism and citizenship through YAF.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore the way a group of white preservice social studies teachers engaged with YAF to grapple with the RCL. Through this study, I witnessed the growth as a future teachers thought about how to engage with race/ism and citizenship in their future classes. From these findings it was clear that YAF alone cannot push white preservice teachers to see the systemic reality of racial privilege, but it has

helped many think more deeply about what race/ism means as they addressed citizenship in their future classrooms. As an example, Mike was growing as a racially civically literate teacher but he knew by the middle of the course the importance of addressing the diverse racialized civic experiences in his class and that it would be “foolish to not preemptively take action,” to get prepared to have these conversations with students.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: Semi-Structured Interview Protocols

APPENDIX B: Class Reflective Questions

APPENDIX A: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Interview Protocol 1

- Demographic Information
 - Please describe the high school you graduated from.
 - Was it urban, suburban, or rural?
 - Was it public, private, or international?
 - What is your perception of the make-up of the student body (socio-economic, racial, and cultural)?
 - Did you attend more than one high school? If so, how did these schools compare?
 - Do you see yourself teaching in school similar to the one in which you attended? (What grade level do you see yourself teaching in?)
 - Do you think the make-up of the student population in your high school was similar to or different from the make-up of the student population here at the University? Explain.
- Social Studies and Teacher Education
 - What do you think is the purpose for teaching social studies in public schools today?
 - What experiences have helped shape your sense of social studies teaching?
 - As a future teacher, what do you hope your students will gain as a result of your social studies lessons?
 - How has your thinking about becoming a social studies teacher changed since you first entered the teacher education program?
 - What experience in the teacher education program has had the most influence on your philosophy about teaching social studies?
 - How has your field experience contributed to your sense of teaching social studies?
- Social Studies and Citizenship
 - Many equate the teaching of social studies with creating effective citizens. How would you characterize an ideal citizen?
 - How would you facilitate these characteristics in your classroom?
 - Given the growing cultural diversity in today's society, do you think that the way schools think about and teach for citizenship needs to change?
- Social Studies and Diversity
 - How would you define race? Racism? Cultural diversity?
 - Tell me a little bit about your experiences with interacting with individuals who have different cultural or racial or economic backgrounds from?
 - What has been the nature of these experiences?
 - Positive? Negatives?
 - What have you learned from these experiences?

- What have you learned about teaching in a culturally and linguistically diverse classroom?
- What experiences have you had so far teaching with culturally and linguistically diverse students? What have you learned as a result of those experiences?
- How prepared do you feel to work with students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds?
- What else would you like to learn when it comes to teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students?

Interview Protocol 2

- **The Class so Far**

- How is class going so far?
- What is your sense of Dr. Castro’s vision for social studies teaching?
- How does this vision align or not align for your sense of social studies teaching? Explain.
- Have you changed in your think about social studies education? (If so, why/how?)

- **Curriculum and Master Narratives**

- How would you define the “master narrative”?
- In your opinion, what ought to be the purpose for teaching social studies content?
- In your journal, you were asked about the statement: “Some believe that teaching about the oppression of different cultural groups in U.S. history takes away from a sense of American unity and progress.”
 - Can you address your response to this now? [Researcher will have original response.]
- What role (if any) does knowing about the oppression of different cultural groups play in the development of good citizens? Explain.
- Loewen Project:
 - What was your Loewen project about? What role did you play in your group?
 - What have you learned about the presentation of history in public schools as a result of the Loewen project?
 - Does what you learned influence the way you see your role as a social studies teacher?
 - What impact will this learning have on your future teaching?
- Should a teacher incorporate social studies content that addresses the historical experiences of different cultural groups? If so, how might a teacher do this? If not, why not?

- ***All American Boys Book:***

- What are your thoughts about the book? (How far did you get? Was it valuable to read?)

- Which character / characters did you relate to?
 - Thoughts on Paul, Jill, Carlos, Spoony, Rashaad's father / mother, and who else.
 - What themes did you find compelling in the book?
- How does the content of this book relate to...?
 - Citizenship?
 - Social issues?
 - Multiple Perspectives?
- How would you teach this book to public school students?
 - What approach would you take?
 - What challenges do you think you might face?
 - Which aspects of the novel do you feel might appeal to your future students?
 - Which themes would you stress?
- How confident do you feel in teaching students a book like *All American Boys*?
 - What have you learned about teaching novels?
 - What have you learned about teaching about controversial issues?

Interview Protocol 3

- Perceptions of Social Studies Teaching and Curriculum at end of class
 - At this point of the semester, how do you see yourself as a social studies teacher?
 - How would you characterize the teaching of social studies teachers that you have had while you were in public school?
 - In what ways have these experiences with other social studies teachers influenced you now?
 - Given this point in the semester, how would you characterize the beliefs about social studies teaching from your social studies methods courses?
 - What are examples of how these beliefs come out in the instruction of the course so far?
 - How similar or different are these beliefs to those of the social studies you have had in the past?
 - Has your philosophy and approach to teaching social studies changed since the start of the social studies program?
 - If so, how so? What elements of the program have influenced this change?
 - If not, in what ways are your beliefs about teaching similar and/or different to that expressed in the program?
 - What do you feel that you need to learn more about to feel confident as a social studies teacher?
- Teaching About Race:
 - Racial Lesson Plan:

- How do you define race and racism?
 - How is this definition different from cultural diversity?
 - Let's look at your lesson plan.
 - Can you explain what you and your team put in your rubric?
 - Now, can you walk me through what you did in your lesson plan? [Researcher unpacks the lesson plan.]
- Challenges about Teaching Race
 - What challenges do you anticipate in discussing a racial incident or event?
 - Here are some of the challenges and fears discussed in class about teaching about race. Can you comment on how you feel about these? {see comment cards}
 - What strategies might you employ to discuss race in the classroom?
 - How confident do you feel with teaching about race/racism in the public-school classroom? Explain.
 - What resources would you rely on to assist you in teaching about race/racism?
- Race Teaching Mostly White Communities
 - Is it important to teach about issues of diversity or issues of race in school classrooms with only white students or few students of color?
- Is teaching about race an important part of teaching citizens in a social studies classroom? Explain
 - How is identity connected to your ideas of citizenship?
 - How do you incorporate ideas about race into your teaching about citizenship?
- Social Studies, Curriculum, Citizenship
 - Thinking about this semester:
 - What would you say has been the most influence activity you have done in the class?
 - How has your view of teaching history evolved (if at all) as a result of this course?
 - How has your view of teaching issue of race evolved (if at all) a result of this course?
- Member-checking/Follow-up
 - I want to ask you about some of your journal responses and to some of the elements in your final reflective paper.

APPENDIX B: CLASS REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

Reflective Journals

Journal 1:

- Think about a social studies teacher who had a positive impact on your sense of social studies teaching. Please describe the way that teacher taught. What was her/his approach to social studies content? How did that teacher engage students? What qualities of that person would you like to emulate?

Journal 2:

- Some believe that teaching about the oppression of different cultural groups in U.S. history takes away from a sense of American unity and progress. What is your position on this? Please provide specific examples from your experiences (e.g., prior experiences in school, field experiences, life experiences, etc.) to make your ideas clear.

Journal 3:

- What makes an ideal citizen? In what ways should social studies help students become citizens?

Journal 4:

- Address these prompts:
 - What was your overall impressions of *All American Boys*?
 - Which character do you feel you related to the most? Why?
 - What were your thoughts about Paul?

Journal 5:

- How should social studies teachers teach about racial events when they occur in society? What challenges do you feel affects the teaching about race and racism?

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Vita

Jason Williamson was born in Fremont, Nebraska. After graduating from Fremont Senior High School in 2000, he matriculated to Northwest Missouri State University (NWMSU) in Maryville, Missouri. While at NWMSU, he majored in history with a minor in public history. Initially, Jason wanted to work at a museum. This led him to studying abroad in London, England, where he worked at two local house museums. After returning from London, Jason started graduate school for history at NWMSU. While completing a master's degree in history, Jason began taking education classes to get certified to teach high school social studies. After completing student teaching, he took time away from the classroom and worked as a geographic information system technician for five years while he finished his master's thesis. Finally in 2011, Jason had completed his thesis and decided to enter the classroom at Fatima High School in Westphalia, Missouri. While at Fatima, he taught American history, dual credit American history, world history, and current events. In his time at Fatima, he also coached basketball, cross-country, and track and field. After five years at Fatima, Jason decided to pursue his goal of completing a PhD, but it shifted from history to focus on teaching social studies at the University of Missouri – Columbia. Focusing on working with preservice teachers as they grapple with issues of race/ism, citizenship and teaching, he is also interested in the way social studies teachers use discussion in rural classrooms.

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This dissertation was typed by Jason Williamson.