WHITENESS AND WHITE PRIVILEGE:
PROBLEMATIZING RACE AND RACISM IN A "COLOR-BLIND" WORLD, AND IN EDUCATION

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Abstract

Whiteness and White privilege are not terms that are easily identifiable, well known or universally accepted. This article argues that Whiteness captures different, overlapping and fundamental concerns that shape contemporary societies globally, and can be used to understand, problematize and deconstruct a range of social conditions, interactions, and lived realities for all people. Education, social class affiliations, gender, religious connections, and an infinite number of experiences shape (individual and collective) identity; however, the history of our times has made race an inextricably salient feature of our collective consciousness. There have been multiple claims of "color-blindness," and the prospect of a post-racial society has been propagated by many mainstream, normative groups, especially espousing the Eurocentric (White) vision and version of reality, history, hegemony, culture and society. To meaningfully discuss Whiteness and White privilege, it is necessary to consider the context, and how historical, cultural, social, political, and economic factors are diverse (and sometimes similar) in varying geographic spaces and nations. The objective of this work around Whiteness is, ultimately, to build a more

decent society, achieve greater levels of social justice, and to address the deeply held values, manifestations, and realties that can lead to marginalization, racism, hatred, differentiated outcomes, and perverse social realities within cultural diversity, and multicultural societies. This article links the analysis of Whiteness, power, and privilege to education, concluding with some suggestions for critical engagement in and through education so as to, hopefully, lay the groundwork for social justice and a more socially just society.

Keywords: Whiteness, racism, social justice, teacher education, cultural pluralism, democracy, hegemony

INTRODUCTION

Whiteness and White privilege are not terms that are easily identifiable, well known, or universally accepted and have have been traditionally overlooked, notably by Whites, from local, national, and international discussions in the public, cultural, political, and educational realms (Watson, Howard-Wagner & Spanierman, 2014). Ironically, Whiteness and White privilege have been contested by White settler societies, in particular, in countries that often propose to be "post-racial," such as Canada, the USA, Australia, New Zealand, and European nations (Lund & Carr, 2015). Although many scholars—such as Applebaum (2011), Bush and Feagin (2011), Dei (2009), DuBois (1903/2007), Henry and Tator (2009), James (2009), McIntosh (1988), and Tochluk (2010)—have drawn attention to, and critically researched, Whiteness and White privilege, there remains a lack, albeit with an increasing amount, of critical educational discussion and action surrounding Whiteness in connection to racism in education especially in countries with significant White populations (Leonardo, 2009; Lund & Carr, 2015; Wise, 2011; Yancy & Davidson, 2014).

This article argues that White power and privilege remain significant concerns within educational, governmental, political, economic, and social structures, which capture different, overlapping, and fundamental concerns that shape contemporary societies globally (Watson, Howard-Wagner & Spanierman, 2014). This focus can facili-

tate a more critical understanding, problematization, and deconstruction of a range of social conditions, interactions, and lived realities and experiences that influence and impact all people. The inherent connection and link between Whiteness, power, and privilege in relation to education is analyzed herein with a view to presenting arguments and proposals for an educational project that develops social justice, democracy, and the potential for meaningful social change (Carr, 2011; Wallis & Fleras, 2009; Yancy & Davidson, 2014). While discussing theoretical dimensions of the racial problematic, the article also links with the fundamental relationship to education for democracy, which is concerned with meaningful, critical engagement and political literacy in and through education (Abdi & Carr, 2013; Carr, 2011).

To meaningfully discuss Whiteness and White privilege, it is necessary to consider the context, and how historical, cultural, social, political, and economic factors are diverse (and similar) in varying geographic spaces and nations. The intention of this article is not to diminish, alienate, or denigrate those who are White, and the goal of thinking and discussing Whiteness is not about guilt and shame, for that would be pointless and counterproductive (Lund & Carr, 2015). The objective is to further dialogue, and hopefully contribute to the movement for tangible action, to build a more decent society, achieve greater levels of social justice, and to address the deeply held values, manifestations, racism, and lived realties that can lead to marginalization, hatred, differentiated outcomes, and perverse social inequalities and injustice. Although such dialogue can lead to discomfort, mixed emotions, and a range of jarring sentiments, it is fundamental and can be extremely liberating and emancipatory for all of society, regardless of racial perceptions, histories, and categorizations, to engage in debate, reflection, and action in relation to highly contentious issues related to Whiteness and racism. The following sections—after further elaborating a conceptual framework on a post-racial society, and the linkage to democracy—explore the demographic, historical, social, economic, political, and educational perspectives and context(s) of Whiteness and White privilege. The concluding section presents some suggestions for engaging further in a dialectical process aimed at addressing Whiteness in relation to education.

POST-RACIAL FANTASIES AND WHITENESS

Regardless of societal beliefs about being post-racial, it is important to recognize that racism and racial inequalities remain rampant (Applebaum, 2011; Frances & Henry, 2009). It is also important to recognize that, as Cornel West (1994) put it, race does matter (Orelus, 2011; Watson, 2013), especially within the light of racialized societies. Race matters, not because of some eugenics-fabricated, essentialized, genetic-based destiny, one that is meant to mark the cognitive, physical, and social capabilities of people based predominantly their skin color and phonotypical traits. Rather, race matters because of the lived experiences and historical realities that have placed racial identity at the center of how countries and peoples have been organized in relation to socially constructed racial hierarchies that have always placed the White race as the pinnacle (Applebaum, 2009; Yancy & Davidson, 2014).

It has been theoretically argued by scholars (McIntosh, 1988; Sullivan, 2006; Wise, 2011) and activists, such as Jane Elliott[2], that Whiteness and White privilege are often ignored or neglected, willingly or unwillingly, by many people in society, especially Whites; however, for there to be any serious hope of attaining social justice, it is critical for White people to be understood as being fully part of the racial equation (Lund & Carr, 2015; Yancy & Davidson, 2014). Deliberate and critical debate is vital, and there should be some meaningful connection to deliberative democracy, which can enable diverse students/people and groups to identify, deconstruct and more fully appreciate diverse racialized realities and power constructs (Abdi & Carr, 2013; Carr, 2011; Lund & Carr, 2011, 2015). Racism, like sexism, involves everyone, those who are the recipients of sexism/racism; those who are the instigators; those who develop the rules, structures, and frameworks; and those who permit and/or attack sexism/racism (Henry & Tator, 2009; McIntosh, 1988). Thus, legitimating the notion of a "color-blind" society without fully engaging critically in the process of eliminating racism would be a highly nefarious, and dangerous, enterprise, one that formal, normative power structures seem to able to present with hegemonic ease (Abdi & Carr, 2013; Dei, 2009). What would be the benefit, for whom and how, of denying the existence of

racial discrimination when it plays such a fundamental role in structuring the societies in which we live?

I have previously argued with Lund (Lund & Carr, 2011, 2015), and echoing the sentiments of renowned scholars such as DuBois (1903/2007), historically, and Leonardo (2009), within a contemporary context, Whiteness, White privilege, and White supremacy have been inscribed into the normative consciousness of all dimensions of society. In this context, it is critical to acknowledge the ideology of meritocracy, "color blindness," and the supposed neutrality of capitalism. Social inequalities are influenced by entrenched systematic, structural, socio-cultural, political, and economic realities (Carr, 2011; Leonardo, 2009). Dei (2009) has argued that the most pressing and current societal challenges include the refusal of legislators, political leaders, educators, and other leaders in society to acknowledge the causes and effects of racism. Thus, there is a critical need for governmental and educational systems to be more cohesive, critical, and devoted to transparently addressing social inequalities at all levels (Bush, 2011; Jenson, 2005; Watson, Howard-Wagner & Spanierman, 2014).

Education, social class affiliations, religious connections, and an infinite number of experiences shape (individual and collective) identity; however, the history of our times has made race an inextricably salient feature of societal collective consciousness. The salience and dissonance of Whiteness throughout educational and governmental settings is a critical aspect that underpins the assertion that in order to achieve greater social justice, peace, and democracy, and regardless of discomfort, such discussions and subsequent actions are extremely important and necessary (Applebaum, 2011; Sensoy & Angelo, 2012). For countries proclaiming to be democratic, such as Canada and the USA, it is necessary to ask: are they truly democratic when there are obvious and seriously entrenched, systematic, and far-reaching social inequalities and systematic racism (Carr, 2011)? My research through a project entitled *Democracy, Political Literacy and Transformative Education* has highlighted the problematic nature of, and connection between, democracy, and education, especially in relation to social justice and racism (Carr, 2011, 2013; Carr & Becker, 2013).

DEMOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVE OF WHITENESS

While rarely discussed but fundamental to providing context to the discussion, the current percentage of the global population that is White is roughly 17% and is decreasing.[2] Many countries in Europe as well as Canada, the USA, Australia, and New Zealand, traditionally thought to be White, despite Indigenous populations and historic racial diversity in the latter four, are becoming increasingly less White. Increasing levels of migration, immigration, inter-marriage, cross-racial adoption, and a number of other factors, such as a low birth rate for Whites, have contributed to the rapidly shifting demography, with some analysts predicting a level of 10% of the human population being White by the year 2060.[3]

Specifically, in Canada, there is a widely-held conception of Canada as a "White Country," equally Christian and English- or French-speaking, a country firmly grounded in law, governance, and political economic (White) realities (Henry & Tator, 2009; Lund & Carr, 2015). The truth is that Canada has always been characterized by cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity (Carr, 2008b; Lund & Carr, 2015). First Nations peoples have been in Canada for 10,000 to 20,000 years, far predating the arrival of Europeans some 500 years ago, and the USA faces a similar dilemma, in which Indigenous peoples had advanced civilizations, governance models, and societal structures in place prior to the arrival of White, European colonizers (Carr, 2008b). In addition, the massive infusion of African slaves was meant to support and bolster White supremacy, and Christian missionaries were used to enforce the harshness of segregated, apartheid-like social structures forcefully imposed to maintain explicitly racialized societies (Dei & Kempf, 2006; Lund & Carr, 2015).

As countries such as Great Britain, France, Spain, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, and Germany become more ethnoculturally and racially diverse, it is expected that the migration of people of all origins will continue to increase as a result of war, famine, economic interest, conflict, violence, and simply the need to be reunited with family (Watson, Howard-Wagner & Spanierman, 2014). Also facilitating migration from the South to the North is the belief that a better life may exist in the "developed" North (Hoerder & Faires, 2011). The North

and South are inextricably linked, as the North needs immigrants to sustain economies, pay for pensions, and expand its political and cultural landscapes (Hoerder & Faires, 2011). Many in the global South are led to believe in the natural superiority of the North, and are enticed and/or compelled to come to the global North, which is framed in a normative sense as being more prosperous, "civilized," and livable. As traditionally perceived homogenous societies are now confronted with the reality of ethnocultural diversity being interwoven into the fabric of Swedish, Dutch, Canadian, French, and German (and other) national cultural identities, the question should not be whether or not to accept and integrate immigrants and or "refugees" but rather how to co-exist and live together peacefully, effectively, and in a socially just manner (Sensoy & Angelo, 2012).

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF WHITENESS

From the middle of the 15th century, the enterprise of slavery saw the dramatic and horrific dislocation of 12 to 15 million Africans to the Americas, and as the slave trade was enacted and orchestrated by White Europeans, there have been many debates regarding the complicity of those selling slaves based on the premise of natural superiority, xenophobic beliefs, religious inspiration, and the brute force of weapons and torture (Dei & Kempf, 2006). Enjoined with colonialism and European power, slavery initiated and enforced regimes of terror that exploited local African populations, pillaged natural resources, set up strategic military zones, and colonized education systems and, importantly, the mind (Abdi, 2012; Dei, 2009). In some cases, the result has led to self-hatred, and, in others, hegemonic catastrophe, dependence, and deception, ultimately the antithesis of sovereignty, democracy, emancipation, and independence. The necessary intersection (intersectionality) of Whiteness has not often been inserted into the equation.

For instance, when slaves overthrew the French colonizers of Haiti in 1804, in an act of historic resistance, there were, at that time, some 144 racial classifications to categorize every single type of racial identity (James, C. L. R., 1963/1989). The classifications related to the degree of racial purity of each of the parents, and, as this legacy

continues to this day, skin color is still excessively important in Haiti and globally.

BIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE OF WHITENESS

With the introduction of DNA analysis and other scientific measures, it can now be acknowledged that racial purity is a myth. All people, regardless of racial origin, have the same four blood types (A, B, AB, and O) and largely share similar genetic traits. Within the USA, where genetic and DNA analysis are relatively common, it can be observed that all people in society share and have similar genetic configurations as well as "mixed" blood in which ancestors can be traced back hundreds and thousands of years ago (Watson, 2015). A recent television show in the USA found that a leader of the White Supremacist movement, who took a test for racial purity, was found to be genetically 14% Black.[4] As many scholars acknowledge, all humans originated from Africa, and the mixing that took place throughout slavery and throughout endless migrations is a plausible explanation for the decreasing purity of once isolated genetic configurations (Watson, 2015).

The notion of racial purity in broad swaths of humanity, including, for example, in Latin America and the Middle East, is nothing short of non-sensical. The range of skin color variations, for example, within families is sometimes vast, and the labeling of categories, such as *mulatto*, *mestizo* or *mixed race*, confirms the problematic nature of seeking to prove the belonging to a single, pure racial lineage. Hence, understanding the social construction of race is more meaningful, constructive, and salient (Sensoy & Angelo, 2012). The Eugenics-based notion of racial superiority has been denounced and rejected numerous times despite some White scholars, politicians, and extremists continuing to divide people based on racial origin (see Lund & Carr, 2015).

ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVE OF WHITENESS

Historically, racism has existed as a function of economic systems, and hierarchical disenfranchisement, and racialization has enriched dominant groups in society, while impoverishing others (Leonardo, 2009). Further, racialization constitutes a prominent feature of society, and the way in which thought, knowledge, and epistemology are

processed are all developed through socially constructed race filters (Leonardo, 2009; Wise, 2011). Henry and Tater (2009) have conceptualized what they call "democratic racism" and the way in which racist behavior, actions, and outcomes are codified in society. As laws, courts, judges, institutions, and legislative bodies, among others, were developed by Whites from a distinctly White vantage-point, creating a normative, hegemonic underpinning of society, which is essentially White-based, thus normalizing racism (Henry & Tator, 2009). Ultimately, democratic racism has allowed social inequalities and injustices to be accepted as "common sense" (Henry & Tater, 2009).

The norm is White, and it would, therefore, be abnormal, for example, if greater proportions of Whites dropped out of school, were imprisoned, or lived in poverty, etc. than, for example, Indigenous peoples, peoples of African origin, or other racialized peoples. It is important to recognize that different contexts produce different results, and not all racial minorities experience racialization in the same way; some groups may experience higher levels of economic success, while other groups experience higher levels of unemployment, under-employment, and lower status employment (Wise, 2011). In some cases, there is the social construction of "model minorities," who integrate more easily, contest discrimination less, and achieve relative economic success in spite of an obvious racialized society (Hartlep, 2013). This is not to insinuate that social class, gender, and other variables are not relevant; however, race, for numerous reasons, has been a driving and fundamental force over time, and the intersectionality with race along with other social variables has often been determinative (Bush, 2011; Sensoy & Angelo, 2012).

POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE OF WHITENESS

At the political level, laws have been passed in North America, and most definitely in other countries, that are overtly racist, and or condone racist practices and policies (Henry & Tator, 2009; Lund & Carr, 2015). In Canada, for example, there have been specific laws against the Chinese (a "head-tax") in regard to immigration, in addition to the internment of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War, which had the ultimate effect of decimating communities, stigmatizing

and stripping Japanese-Canadians of their assets, and leading to assimilation (Carr, 2008b; Omatsu, 1992). Further, during the 1920s, federal and provincial government policies excluded approximately 50% of Japanese-Canadian fisherman from engaging in British Columbia's commercial fishing and also developed rules disqualifying Japanese-Canadians from many fields of employment, including careers in law, education, pharmacy, and nursing (Omatsu, 1992). Other nefarious actions in Canada include the 1960s razing, the literal destruction, of a Black area in Halifax known as Africville and untold indignities imposed on Indigenous peoples, including the placement of children in residential schools where the linguistic, heritage, and cultural connections to families were forcibly removed and where stories of abuse are legendary (Carr, 2008b; Francis & Tator, 2009).

SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE OF WHITENESS

At the social (and socio-cultural) level, an infinite number of stories, myths, nursery rhymes, books, posters, games, school curricula, traditions, sports, and societal experiences have constructed, influenced, and shaped society with an appreciation, and deference for, Whiteness in the form of White supremacy, power, and privilege (Sensoy & Angelo, 2012). Skin lightening, skin bleaching, "passing for White," cultural and media representations of beauty commonly associated with Whiteness or "lightness," and the plastic surgery industry have all fed into the continuation of notions of White racial superiority (Wise, 2011).

In relation to sports, James (2009) examines race and the socio-cultural worlds of student athletes, and found that there are accepted notions of athletic superiority regarding race as well as how educational structures produce and reproduce inequalities and racism. Moreover, James (2009) questions that, if sports participation supposedly provides such important socializing benefits, what does it say about our society that sports are now so highly segregated among students and athletes. An example of this in North America is that hockey is identified as a predominately "White" sport and basketball as an essentially "Black" sport (James, 2009). Race has been accepted and used to explain interests, talents, capabilities, and beliefs about the types of

athletic activities best suited to particular ethno-racial groups, ultimately fulfilling the racist discourses and practices that are found in North American schools, and in society in general (James, 2009). Similarly, the preference, concentration, and/or dominance of particular students and athletes in specific sports are a by-product of the education, economic, social, cultural, and political scaffolding and conditions in a given society.

It is equally intriguing to note the racialized vantage-point of fans showing up to international football/soccer games with their faces painted black, coupled with the frequent taunting of players "of color" on and off the field? For example, at the 2014 World Cup in Brazil, a number of fans attended the Germany-Ghana game with their faces painted black or displaying pro-Nazi propaganda, and, further, racist symbols and manifestations have been commonplace in many European countries.[5] In the hockey world, racism has also been a solid pillar underpinning player selection for years, preventing or impeding Black players from being selected or integrated at the professional level.[6] Racism in basketball, football, and baseball has also been a fundamental feature of social relations over the past century.[7]

EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE OF WHITENESS

In regards to the educational context, many important questions need to be posed, such as, over the past few decades, has formal education worked to support or diffuse racism? Kendall (2012) and Wise (2011) have questioned whether current education systems are concerned with building a better and just society, one that interweaves citizenship and community with learning? Or rather, is education imbued with dominant and hegemonic power relations, and, if so, what can be done about it? How has education challenged injustice, questioned diverse realities, and championed marginalized groups (Sensoy & Angelo, 2012)? What is taught, by whom, and how? These are a few of the questions that cannot be understood without a connection to Whiteness, White privilege, and race relations, and also without a direct linkage of education for democracy (Carr, 2011; Lund & Carr, 2015).[8]

Dei and Kempf (2006) recognize that racism is an integral com-

ponent of Western societies and claim that race is an illusionary Eurocentric concept that functions to ensure inequality and oppression, arguing that critical anti-racist discourses need to consist of a framework that works with the salience of race in order to research positive, action-oriented solutions. Moreover, the concept of race cannot be discussed with regard to lived realities without addressing the denial and salience around race as a valid concept of analysis (Dei, 2009). Whiteness is often rendered invisible through its process of normalization and influence of deeply entrenched dominant structures, and the permanence of skin color as a salient marker of identity through human history has influenced the structural dynamics of Whiteness as well as the mythology of "racelessness," which has been the hallmark of Canadian identity (Lund & Carr, 2015). Race is not a static or fixed concept, and the denial of race and racial difference is at the heart of the failure to acknowledge racism (Henry & Tator, 2009). Research and political engagement must draw upon personal experiences and the larger social mechanism that organize society in order to question how power is negotiated. Critical race theorists (Bonilla-Silva, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1988) have argued that educational discussions and positive actions need to recognize that racism and racial ideology are entrenched systematically into society, predominantly through laws but also enhanced and disseminated through other institutions and cultural manifestations.

Critical versions of anti-racism involve looking deeper personally to examine one's own racism and privileged positions, to critically reflect on how the dominant sector exercises power over minorities, and to take responsibility for the disempowerment of others (Dei, 2009; Fleras, 2009; McIntosh, 2009). Some scholars (Fleras, 2009; Lund & Carr, 2015; Yancy & Davidson, 2014) argue that education is a fundamental junction, from which to critically combat the structural roots of racism through direct involvement, deliberative dialogue, and critical action.

There is not only one vantage- or entry-point to engage the issue of power relations and Whiteness (Kendall, 2012; Sullivan, 2006; Tochluk, 2010); rather, such power relations need to be critiqued and challenged at multiple levels. There is a clear connection between

education and democracy in that massive, systematic, detrimental social inequalities are incompatible with the notion of a *thick* democracy (Carr, 2011; Carr & Becker, 2013). The understanding of a *thick* democracy can be conceptualized as a society in which meaningful participation, critical engagement, transformative education, and the re-positioning of a more inclusive, open and responsive set of processes, institutions and conditions are developed and embraced, all of which challenges hegemony and inequitable power relations (Abdi & Carr, 2013; Carr, Zyngier, & Pruyn, 2012).

The model I propose aims to consider democracy and social justice through the separate and interconnected lenses of curriculum, pedagogy, educational policy, institutional culture, and epistemology. The framework encompasses components that lead to different and varying questions, reflections, analyses and critiques of what exists, why, and the identification of specific and general obstacles and barriers. The current curriculum in many North American educational settings has some important ideas, concepts, and evaluation protocols; however, it may also be disconnected from the pedagogy or institutional culture (Carr, 2011). The problem and challenge of Whiteness requires a (re-)consideration of individual and collective experiences, realities, connections, challenges, and possibilities, all in relation to how power works, how institutions function, and how epistemology is cultivated and elucidated (Lund & Carr, 2015). Bringing together ideas, concepts, theories, groups, interests, and frameworks can have a beneficial impact on the conceptualization, development and implementation process of educational policies, programs, and processes, all within the spirit of Freire's seminal work, which has been a motivational factor for this work (Abdi & Carr, 2013; Carr, 2008a, 2001, 2013).

As education stretches past and beyond the boundaries of educational institutions, it is fundamental to understand what informs educational policy, its implications, the hidden curriculum, and the process of developing and implementing curriculum. What are the messages that students, educators and others receive, formulate, understand, and engage with in formal and public schooling? How do social media, reality shows, normative television, news reporting, and other broad-based, mainstream trends affect what we know, what we do, and what

happens in schools? Is North America truly a "post-racial" society as has been suggested by the first non-White President of the United States of America? These questions help frame an educational project that problematizes Whiteness in the following section.

THE LINKAGE TO EDUCATION AND TEACHING

Educators are in a critical position to impart values, influence attitudes, and positively influence communities through their actions inside and outside of the classroom. Teachers do not simply transmit or impart knowledge; importantly, they frame the context in which content is debated, developed, understood, and problematized. As knowledge is produced and constructed, teachers cannot exempt themselves from the myriad ways in which students learn and, significantly, how they experience schooling and education. Therefore, identity and identity formation is fundamental, and, consciously or unconsciously, the identities of educators, students, and individuals play a pivotal role in society, including within a racialized sense (Kendall, 2006; Lund & Carr, 2011; Yancy & Davidson, 2014).

At another level, it is necessary for the content and curriculum of teacher education programs to be appropriately contextualized and problematized so that multiculturalism, diversity, anti-racism, and cultural pluralism are not marginalized to a single course or to some sort of rhetorical mantra alone (Sensoy & Angelo, 2012). Important concerns need to be addressed broadly, consistently, critically, and in a cross-cultural manner. Therefore, the conditions for effective engagement must be established throughout the entire educational experience, in materials, visual prompts and displays, official gatherings, meetings, and diverse circumstances and encounters, among other formal and informal areas.

Teacher education programs should be concerned with developing authentic, meaningful, and sustained dialogues related to identity, difference, and social justice in a holistic environment, including faculty, students, the broader community, educators, and pre-service educators (Kendall, 2006; Lund & Carr, 2011, 2015). Debate, critical discussions, and a panoply of contentious questions should not be omitted, controlled, diverted, or limited, which can potentially verge toward

transformative education (Carr, 2011; Lund & Carr, 2011). To gain an understanding of Whiteness and White privilege, it is crucial to be open to how people of all identities experience race, racialization, and racism. It is equally important and effective to engage with a range of voices, media, and people of different lived experiences to exemplify the nuanced complexity of Whiteness (Kendall, 2006; Sensoy & Angelo, 2012), although many educators and educational agencies have argued that discussions regarding race are often too uncomfortable for students and the classroom (Watson, 2015). Nevertheless, the key to discussions of Whiteness and White privilege is acknowledging discomfort, and, importantly, not allowing it to deter from the importance and necessity of engaging in such work (Lund & Carr, 2015). Difficult questions require difficult and critical discussions, and this process is fundamental to facilitating change and social justice.

It is also important to (re-)consider the purpose of pre-service educational programs and services. Ultimately, being conscious and critically engaged with social justice requires educators and society to engage in a fundamental process, not simply aiming for an endpoint. In addition, it requires the cultivation of educational leadership with a vision that is not solely focused on the immediacy of gathering performance data, examinations, and the teaching of specific and normative techniques. It also means considering how power and inequitable power relations influence the learning experience as well as being open to be open to and engaged with such processes and approaches (Tochluk, 2010; Wise, 2011).

CONCLUSION AND PROPOSALS TO ADDRESS WHITENESS, PRIVILEGE, AND IDENTITY

Race continues to matter as a central organizing principle in society, and the depth of injustice continues, influencing where people live, work, and, in particular, how their (racialized) lived experiences play out in real time (Wallis & Fleras, 2009). To continue to assert that Canada, the USA, and other countries around the globe are "raceless" or are "post-racial" societies is to sustain a hegemonic myth, thus perpetuating systems of external colonization based on race, class, and gender (Leonardo, 2009; Wallis & Fleras, 2009; Watson, Howard-

Wagner, & Spanierman, 2014). It is not that race is objectively real; however, many people believe it to be real, and it remains misunderstood and under-theorized, at least in broader societal terms. There is, however, a changing contemporary context, from the openly racialized past, to one that does, at many levels, challenge racial inequalities (Bush & Feagin, 2011; Kendall, 2012).

Nonetheless, race will remain a fundamental social reality and phenomenon as long as Whiteness is entrenched in the core values, institutional arrangements, and the Eurocentric political order of European-based, and other, societies. Formal equality in theory is not always operationalized to equate formal equality and equity in daily live (Bonilla-Silva, 2013). Race-conscious initiatives must be part of the solution to deconstruct Whiteness, White privilege, and racism. Scholars such as Dei (2009) and McIntosh (1988) have developed a broad range of tools to analyze racial formations as they exist and change across space, time, and theory. Critical self-reflection is crucial in assessing where *we* have come from and where *we* are heading as well as being able to work collectively to respond critically to racialized hegemony (Lund & Carr, 2015; Wallis & Fleras, 2009). Political and educational decision-makers and leaders need to re-examine indigenous (de-)colonialization and to be politically engaged in anti-racism work to expose the structural ways in which White supremacy and privilege continue to exist (Wallis & Fleras, 2009). The process of chipping away at, and disrupting, White power and privilege requires formal and informal, explicit and implicit, and structural/systemic and cultural processes, measures, actions and realities (Lund & Carr, 2011, 2015).

I have previously (Carr, 2008a) developed fifteen proposals (Figure 1) to initiate critical reflection and action within teacher education that, together, can offer the potential and prospect for transformative change.

Figure 1 – Fifteen Proposals for Education Students to Transform Themselves In/Through/With Education (Carr, 2008a)

Accept that no one knows everything, and that we can always learn

Content is never devoid of context

3. Work locally but make the linkage with the international milieu

4. Media literacy is not a sound-bite

5. History is not uni-dimensional

6. Culture is more than sombreros, tacos and mariachis

7. Problematize war and fight for peace

8. Humility is an unbelievable virtue

9. Be wary of being a follower

10. Accept that you are a political being

11. Read and write, and seek out authors far from mainstream culture

12. Think about life without money

13. Consider the proposition that there is hope

14. Examine important events, personalities and experiences in your own education

15. Affirm that "I can do what I can do"

It is important to recognize that there is no one magic or perfect way of developing and implementing such initiatives. Achieving transformative education requires time, resources, good will, organic as well as structured organization, and openness to commencing on an important, yet often difficult and discomforting process.

A broad, open, and inclusive net must be cast in which different realities, identities, and experiences are interrogated throughout the teacher education program and in which challenges and opportunities are recognized (Lund & Carr, 2011). An emphasis also needs to also be placed on the fact that non-action, recalcitrant dissonance, and omission will only lead to further social injustice and inequalities. In critiquing power and power relations, it is necessary to make them central throughout the learning and teaching project, in which

power can be problematized locally, nationally, and globally, and can also connect with education for democracy (Abdi & Carr, 2013). Deconstructing power, racism and Whiteness in every course, practicum, and major milestone throughout the teacher education program is also imperative to ensure that there is bone fide interest and support of the social justice process. Further, it is important to gather data, and to make the process of data collection an opportunity for collaboration and discussion in which quantitative, qualitative, and other forms of data can be analyzed, presented, and debated in a creative and critical way. It is necessary for educators, students, and individuals to question what has been done; what is currently being undertaken, including the outcomes and the measures; and what can be realistically achieved in the future. The uncomfortable reality in formal education is that plans, agendas, measures, resources, and policies need to be cultivated and made tangible through processes that build some level of consensus and also demonstrate leadership, which requires long-term, bone fide commitments over short-sighted, expeditious political efforts (Abdi & Carr, 2013; Carr & Becker, 2013).

Similarly, it is incumbent to problematize materials, books, curriculum, and other resources that are used throughout the educational experience and to also search for diverse ways and perspectives in which to understand how Whiteness, Eurocentric vantage-points, and explicit, implicit, conscious, and unconscious representations of people and groups may be concretized, avoided, and contextualized. Providing formal directives in print does not mean that it will be taught, learned, communicated, and understood in the way that it was intended or that materials may be representative of differing histories and perspectives. Throughout uncomfortable and problematic discussions regarding race, racism, Whiteness, and White privilege, it is important to focus on social justice, agency, action, and transformation, not, as previously noted, on guilt and shame (Lund & Carr, 2011, 2015).

Media literacy is also an integral area that should be reimagined, problematized, and critically taught and learned so as to sensitize, mobilize, and present students with critical analytical perspectives and skills (Carr, 2013; Sensoy & Angelo, 2012). The mainstream media should be understood and deconstructed in order to better understand

propaganda, editorial control, corporatization, bias, controlling the message, dehumanization, and other ways that underpin and support a vision of White power and privilege (Carr, 2013). Political literacy should also be infused throughout the formal and informal components of the teacher education program as well as in schools, thus seeking to establish *thicker* forms of democracy (Carr & Becker, 2013). Often, teacher education students and educators do not connect democracy to education, and many believe that their specific, overriding responsibility is to convey knowledge and to teach a specific subject or discipline, without understanding and engaging with diverse social realities and power relations (Carr, Zyngier, & Pruyn, 2012). Thus, aiming for higher levels of political and media literacy involves taking action well beyond elections and normative judgments in addressing social inequalities, hegemony, and Whiteness (Carr, 2011; Jenson, 2005).

In conclusion, this article has sought to highlight and acknowledge the context of Whiteness and White privilege, in addition to the inextricable link to social justice, which is tethered to a robust notion of (thick, critical, and meaningful) democracy. It is conceivable that steps towards building a more equitable, just, and transformative educational experience can be achieved through a more open, engaged/engaging, and critical formal and informal approach to social justice in education. Since Whiteness is extensive, often elusive, well protected, nebulous, and extremely difficult to unravel and identify, it is essential that discussions, deliberations, and action plans be conceptualized and implemented to address, at myriad levels, White power, and privilege in and through education.

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(ENDNOTES)

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2   See http://www.janeelliott.com/

3   There are a number of short articles, blogs, videos and statistical graphics that document the estimate of a world population of around 10% for Whites/Caucasians by the year 2060. For example, see: https://www.google.ca/search?q =world+population+by+race+pie+chart&sa=X&espv=2&biw=778&bih=696& tbm=isch&imgil=yPhOCfHsTzg5JM%253A%253B26jOyfoH81MdNM%253Bhtt p%25253A%25252F%25252Fcommons.wikimedia.org%25252Fwiki%25252F File%25253AWorld_population_pie_chart.JPG&source=iu&pf=m&fir=yPhOC fHsTzg5JM%253A%252C26jOyfoH81MdNM%252C_&usg=__uJi1gUY3i0q-89- druS3W_qAuwI%3D&dpr=2&ved=0CCgQyjc&ei=14vuVJrTJ4WfyATcpYB4#img dii=_&imgrc=yPhOCfHsTzg5JM%253A%3B26jOyfoH81MdNM%3Bhttp%253A% 252F%252Fupload.wikimedia.org%252Fwikipedia%252Fcommons%252Fd%25 2Fde%252FWorld_population_pie_chart.JPG%3Bhttp%253A%252F%252Fcom mons.wikimedia.org%252Fwiki%252FFile%253AWorld_population_pie_chart. JPG%3B900%3B600

4   See http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2493491/White-supremacist-Craig-Cobbs-DNA-test-reveals-hes-14-African.html

5   See http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/football/world-cup/10958490/Fifa-fails-to-punish-a-dozen-of-clear-racist-and-homophobic-incidents-at-World-Cup-2014-according-to-Fare-report.html, http://www.theguardian.com/football/2014/

jul/03/fifa-racism-world-cup, and http://time.com/2911124/racism-and-nazism-are-haunting-germanys-world-cup-campaign/ .

6   For instance, the story of Herb Carnegie, a Black Canadian born in Toronto in 1919, who was considered one of the best players of his generation was prevented from playing professional hockey (see http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/herb-carnegie/). Similarly, a recent book by Val James, the first American-born professional hockey player, documents the implicit and explicit racism on and off the ice that he faced throughout his professional hockey career (http://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/04/sports/hockey/val-james-first-us-born-black-player-in-nhl-publishes-autobiography.html?_r=0).

7   Racism in basketball, football and baseball, and in professional sports, in general, has been well documented (see http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/4/28/sports-protests-sterling.html .

8   See the *Democracy, Political Literacy and Transformative Education* website at www.education4democracy.net .