Critical & Qualitative Research in Teacher Education:

A Blues Epistemology for Cultural Well-Being and a Reason for Knowing

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Defenders of white blues are often proponents of "color-blindness" as the ultimate weapon of anti-racism, but many of these color-blind whites are really resisting the importance of consciousness of race and race matters, with all the nagging reminders of racism contained therein. They believe that by refusing to use race as a criterion for anything, they are being the ultimate non-racists, but they are actually blinding themselves to the complexity of racial issues.

–Paul Garon, 1995

"I think we're at a moment now in which a blues nation has to learn from a blues people."

–Cornell West, Interview with Toni Morrison, 2005

"People who have no choice but to live their life in their black skins know racism when they see it. Racism is never subtle to the victim. Only White people say race doesn't matter."

–Carrie Morris, Pathways School Faculty Member, 1996 [1]

"Nobody's coming to get us. . .Nobody's coming to get us."

–Aaron Broussard, President, Jefferson Parish, Louisiana, 2005 [2]

But can you expect teachers to revolutionize the social order for the good of the community? Indeed, we must expect this very thing. The educational system of a country is worthless unless it accomplishes this very task.

–Carter G. Woodson, 1933/1977 [3]

Introduction

A growing body of teacher education research documents the fact that many experienced and future teachers resist a critically transformative understanding of race and racial inequity. This resistance, which can be understood as a result of mis-education, is an ongoing challenge for the profession and for teacher education research. Emergent inquiry-based pedagogical approaches that use the knowledge traditions and lived experiences of marginalized and oppressed groups in teacher learning (and un-learning racism) with community members suggest possible ways out of this knowledge crisis. However, research on teacher education has yet to address the belief structure of race in ideologically biased school/academic knowledge and research that contributes to the mis-education of teachers, although a tradition of Black scholarship has long recognized this epistemological problem (McDaniels, 2006).

Writing nearly a century ago in 1917, for example, Black sociologist, lawyer, and historian, George Washington Ellis, pinpointed the hegemonic role of ideological knowledge in maintaining the mythology of race and perpetuating racial injustice. For Ellis "scholarly activity had to be moved from the ideological position of racism to the ideological position of democracy" for the benefit of the entire society (Childs, 1989, p. 87). A few years later, the research of another Black historian, educator, and activist scholar, Carter G. Woodson, who founded "Black History Week/Month" in 1927, showed how ideological school knowledge

obstructs democratic community in the U.S. His analysis of mis-education, that is, how ideologically biased school knowledge systematically teaches whites to feel superior and Black people to feel inferior, led Woodson (1933) to call for teachers to "revolutionize the social order".

The integrity of Black culture, including its African roots, was fundamental in these scholarly challenges that Ellis, Woodson, and others have launched to combat the hegemony of ideologically biased knowledge (Gleason, 2006; King, 1992,1995). Scholarly defense of Black culture and heritage has been necessary, not solely to set the historical record straight on behalf of African Americans, but also as an investment in human freedom from dehumanizing supremacist ideologies. The "convergence of critical thought and action" (King, 2004, p. 351) and the inextricable connection between the general welfare of humanity and Black people's cultural well-being are defining qualities of this Black intellectual tradition that have been carried forward in the modern discipline of Black Studies (B. Gordon, 1990, 1995). A Black Studies theoretical analysis is employed in this chapter to consider how (and how well) critical and qualitative research (and practice) in teacher education produces knowledge, understanding, and social action for racial-social justice. This hyphenated term is used in order not to lose sight of Black people's group survival needs, that is, the "requirements for black existence," in transformative visions of equity and democratic inclusion (Cone, 1972, p. 27).

Focus of the chapter. This chapter focuses on four inter-related genres of critical and qualitative research in teacher education with racial-social justice aims: 1) critical race theorizing, 2) whiteness studies, 3) critical ethnography, and 4) practitioner inquiry, including action research "in, on, and for" teacher education (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2004).

The Black Studies theoretical analysis that informs the discussion of these modes of inquiry focuses analytical attention on the belief structure of race in ideologically biased knowledge in schools and academe and epistemologies and indigenous knowledge traditions from the ideological position of democracy. One example, the epistemology of the Black experience embodied in the African American blues tradition, will be used as a heuristic framework to suggest cultural well-being as a measure of what/how these modes of research can contribute to equity and democratic inclusion in education and society. It will be argued that a crisis of knowledge in teacher education research (and practice) exists because of the absence of marginalized and oppressed people's epistemologies as a foundation of knowledge for teacher learning and for teaching. Thus, the discussion of these genres of research goes beyond a focus only on the mis-education of teachers. Rather, the emphasis also is on producing knowledge for the benefit of marginalized communities and the general society's welfare. Several overlapping questions will illuminate this missing cultural well-being framework: 1) What/whose social vision does research honor and project? 2) Is the cultural well-being of marginalized groups a consideration? 3) What is missing in the theory and methods of these genres of inquiry, given these group survival needs, that is, the "requirements of black existence," for example? 4) Can research informed by the blues epistemology of the Black experience advance understanding of the interconnections among Black people's cultural well-being, positive inter-group relations, and humanity's general welfare?

Organization of the chapter. The chapter is divided into four parts. The first part, "Epistemologies and Knowledge Traditions for Cultural Well-Being," introduces the Black Studies analysis of the ideology of race and the blues epistemology of the Black experience.

"Decolonizing" methodology and theory articulated and used by indigenous peoples that complement the blues epistemology are also presented. The second part of the chapter, "From Critical Social Theories/Theorizing to Critical Research Methods," briefly reviews the genealogy of critical theory and methods in the social sciences and teacher education. The research examples discussed illustrate various critical methods, including critical race theory, critical ethnography, as well as investigations of the discourse of "whiteness," and feminist research approaches. The third section of the chapter, "A Continuum of Practitioner Inquiry: Learning to Teach for Social Change," examines the use of various qualitative research methods in teacher education research--from individual narratives to ethnography to action research in community settings. The final section, "Beyond the Crisis of Knowledge in Teacher Education Research and Practice," presents teacher education methods that incorporate community knowledge and new roles for community members that support mutually beneficial teacher learning and development.

Epistemologies and Knowledge Traditions for Cultural Well-Being

In spite of a burgeoning body of multicultural education literature (Banks & Banks, 2004; Goodwin & Swartz, 2004; McAllister & Irvine, 2000), teacher education research has produced no accepted consensus about what teachers should "know, be able to do and be like" to promote and safeguard the cultural well-being, sense of belonging, and agency of African American learners (King, 1994; Lee, 2001) or other marginalized students. Murrell (2001) offers this cogent description of "capable" urban teachers who:

. . .must be aware that there is a deep and profound violence embedded in the fabric

of American popular and institutional culture that is a significant and toxic part of

children's school experience. Where there is not an anti-racist awareness and explicit

pedagogy for working with African American children and families, there persists an

insidious violence that even the most well-meaning teacher will be a participant in

despite beliefs and values to the contrary. (p. 75)

In this vein S. King and Castenell (2001) assert: "the task of fighting racism has to be the

bottom line" if educational institutions are going to prepare "teachers with the will and the

strategies to teach all children" (p. 10). Assaults on "blackness as a cultural reality," as in the

following example, is one form that racism takes (Murrell (1997, p. 33). A student teacher

related in one of my courses how a white teacher at an award-winning elementary school

described the Black children in her classroom. The teacher said that there were two groups of

Black children in her assigned classroom: the "black-Blacks" and the "white-Blacks." The

teacher informed her that attempting to teach the "black-Blacks" would be a waste of time

because they have "black values." Teaching the "white-Blacks," on the other hand, who have

"white values," would be worthwhile.[4] The student was shocked and chagrined because she

was among those credential candidates who had resisted the focus on racial inequity in the

required cross-cultural communications course.

Knowledge for Cultural Well-being: A Task for Research

To combat such beliefs Murrell (2001) calls for a pedagogy "grounded in the history,

traditions, and cultural heritage of African Americans" (p. 33). However, this will require re-

writing academic and school knowledge (Loewen, 1995; Stevens, 2005; Wynter, 2006).

Following are three examples of ideologically biased academic/school knowledge, including

misrepresentations of slavery in textbooks and classroom discourse that contribute to the mis-

education of teachers and assaults on cultural blackness. First, an ethnographic investigation

in predominately white suburban middle school classrooms reveals the limits of the white teachers' knowledge and pedagogical skills regarding teaching about the enslavement of African people and the heritage of Native Americans. Classroom discourse renders African Americans "present in the curriculum" but only as slaves, and, thus, "absent in history" (Wills, Lintz, & Mehan, 2004, p. 107).

Second, in my work with teachers I ask if anyone can name the three universities that existed in West Africa before Columbus arrived in the Americas (Gao, D'jenné, and Sankoré at Timbuktu in present-day Mali). Nearly always the response is: "No." Kincheloe (2004) reports a similar experience when he asks whether teachers have studied "the story of the European colonization of Africa and the effects of the slave trade" (p. 1). In fact, the structure of knowledge in the discipline that separates African history from American history circumscribes what teachers (and their students) can learn about Africa, slavery, and the development of U.S. society. Teachers learn little if anything concerning the vital role not just of African labor but also the sophisticated knowledge and skills African people possessed that made the nation's development and wealth possible (Carney, 2001). Fragmentation of historical knowledge thus obstructs the critical understanding teachers need to explain African descent people's continuing impoverishment given the nature and function of global capitalism—then and now (Maiga, 2005). The devastation of urban communities that has undermined traditional African American culture, community viability, and beneficial socialization practices--conditions that are portrayed as a "culture of poverty" and as culturally deficient "black-values" (Heath, 1989; King & Wilson, 1994).

A third example is the way "dysconsciousness," the term I introduced to describe such "limited and distorted understandings" of racial inequity, is used in multicultural teacher

education and critical race scholarship (King, 1991a). Though it is often cited in discussions of racism, none of these publications reference the key finding of the original study of dysconsciousness: pre-service teachers typically explained racial inequality "as a historically inevitable consequence of slavery or as a result of prejudice and discrimination" (King, 1991a, p. 138), which they also linked to slavery. None of their explanations showed any recognition of the systemic nature of racism (Duncan, 2004) or the "structural underpinnings of inequity" (Cochran-Smith et al., 2005, p. 956).

Generating forms of knowledge and effective pedagogy that teachers need to address such ideological constructions of race is a task for teacher education research. As Hilliard (2001) cautions, however, researchers have unfortunately been "following the detour of race rather than the ideology that propels it" (p. 2). In a Black Studies analysis of the ideological belief structure of race Wynter (2003, 2006) argues that racism is a logical outcome, an effect of "law-like" societal cultural rules and ideas that govern our behaviors and shape our perceptions of reality (King, 2005b). This system of knowledge and representation defines "conceptual blackness" as the "alter ego" of "conceptual whiteness" (Wynter, 2003). Although "whiteness" studies have begun to proliferate, this understanding of what "race" does and which grasps the epistemic roots of assaults on cultural blackness, is under-theorized in education (Bush, 2004; Ignatiev, 1994; Jensen, 2005; Kent, 1972; Prager, 1982; Roediger, 1998).

The Blues Epistemology of the Black Experience

The task of fighting racism, then, entails the production of knowledge to combat this system of representation. It seems reasonable to expect that such research would benefit from the inclusion of epistemologies of marginalized peoples. Researchers of color recognize the

intimate connection between epistemology and methodology when justice is the objective (Bernal, 1998; Pizarro, 1998). The African American blues tradition, discussed next, offers such an epistemological vantage point from which to document, interrogate, and transmit knowledge of the existential Black experience. This discussion is intended to illuminate four key characteristics of the blues epistemology that: a) embraces the contradictions in the Black struggle for being; b) functions as a unifying impetus for community building; and c) provides clarifying social explanation, political knowledge, and spiritual understanding that is not solely for race consciousness but also d) to connect Black suffering with the universal ideal of the human spirit of freedom. The following historical overview presents the rich, underutilized potential of this epistemology for teacher learning and research about and also through African American cultural perspectives.

Critical social explanation/theorizing. McLaren and Farahmandpur (2001) define theory as a "living aperture through which specific histories are made visible and intelligible" (p. 301, *cf.* Grande, 2004, p. 28). The blues tradition constitutes a form of critical Black working class theorizing or social explanation. Woods (1998) argues that the blues constitutes an epistemology of African American thought that embodies "African American daily life, social explanation, [and] social action," that is, "how to act," solve problems, and behave (p. 101). Blues lyrics, which typically address themes of love and mistreatment, have often been misinterpreted as a "music of resignation." On the contrary, as Titon (1990) posits, the core of the blues is about "freedom from mistreatment, not submission to it" (p. 2). Whereas Black people have been subjected to unspeakable dehumanization, the blues response is love.

The record of African American cultural resilience and critical social thought conveyed in the blues contrasts with the culture of poverty deficit "theories" of Black life and culture that emerged in the social sciences in the U.S. around the same time that the blues moved along with Black people from rural areas of the Mississippi Delta to the urban north. Woods provides this illuminating account of the emergence of the blues tradition of "cultural transmission and social explanation":

> Emerging out of the rich tradition of African song-centered orature, and under conditions of intense censorship, secular and sacred songs became fountainheads of cultural transmission and social explanation. Furthermore, as a result of the extremely hierarchical class structure of Southern plantations, African-American working class thought would come to find its fullest expression in the blues: a "collective expression of the ideology and character of Black people situated at the bottom of the social order in America." (Woods, 1998, p. 56, *cf.,* Barlow, 1989, p. xii)

Black Studies scholarship recognizes in the "historic commitment to social and personal investigation, description and criticism present in the blues" a resource for critical knowledge and a source of theory (Woods, 1998, p. 30). In one program teacher educators and future teachers have studied blues culture, history, lyrics, and the lives of blues performers as aesthetics education (Asher, Fairbank, & Love, 2006; Love, 2006). Considering the subjugated knowledge traditions of Black people (or any other marginalized cultural group) as an epistemological resource for pedagogy, theory, or methodology in research, however, requires a revolutionary break with the dominant societal episteme or system of knowledge.

A people's marginalized history. The blues emerged in the 1890s during the violent repression following the brief period of "freedom" between the end of the Civil War and the

end of Reconstruction. Political "compromise" and betrayal resulted in the removal of Black troops and militia ("the Black and Blues") and the reinstatement of planter power and racial terror throughout the south (Cone, 1972; Cruz, 2005; Woods, 1998). It was during this period that the "hollers" that became the central elements of the blues emerged, as the formerly enslaved were savagely forced back to labor (again) in unfreedom on the levees, in the "fields, prisons, docks and streets" (Woods, 1998, p. 82). Levine (1977), in *Black Culture, Black Consciousness,* situates this blues tradition within the heritage of Black community building:

> Black secular song, along with other forms of oral tradition allowed [Black people] to express themselves communally and individually, to derive great aesthetic pleasure, to perpetuate traditions, to keep values from eroding, and to begin to create new expressive modes. Black secular song revealed a culture which kept large elements of its own autonomous standards alive, which includes a rich internal life, which interacted with a larger society that deeply affected it. (p. 297, see Woods, pp. 56-57)

As the following passage explains, the blues represents a collective response to this repression in the form of the "conscious codification of African American folk wisdom" and knowledge out of which other musical forms also evolved:

> The derivative of these forms such as jazz, gospel, rock and roll, rhythm and blues, funk, and rap all refer back to these anchors and their insights. These new musical genres are documentary in nature. That is, they must still explicitly, or implicitly, address African American consciousness of this period and the intellectual/performance traditions that emerged during it. (p. 83)

As an indigenous "American" art form (native to this country), which remains deeply rooted in an African ethos (values, functionality, and worldview) that survived among African Americans, the blues constitutes a unique social vision and critique of injustice that has been marginalized in, if not totally erased from, history. A wholly authentic but often maligned and misinterpreted musical form through which Black people have expressed a refusal to accept mistreatment, the blues can be understood philosophically as a "black point of view in song" (Davis, 1995, p. 69). The educational relevance of the blues is suggested in one artist's understanding of the meaning of the blues:

> To me, the blues is a literary and musical form and also a basic philosophy. When I get ready to study the mystical aspect of black people, I go to the blues, then I feel like I'm in touch with the root of black people. (Palmer, 1982, pp. 276-277)

According to Woods (1998), this blues epistemology represents "the beginnings of a *method of investigation*" (p. 21) that can recover "heroic movements" of Black cultural resistance that have been purged from "both historical texts and popular memory" (p. 4, emphasis added). This critical knowledge tradition is a cultural constant in Black music, including the blues as well as some forms of rap music and "conscious" hip-hop (Fisher, 2003, 2006). In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, for example, hip-hop artist Kanye West's criticism that President George Bush "doesn't care about Black people" has been "sampled," widely disseminated, and immortalized in a rap video/song via the Internet. In *Blues People* Jones (1963) explains that "the most expressive [Negro] music of any given period will be an exact reflection" of Black existence (p. 137). Following this line of reason, this chapter explores theoretical and methodological implications of this epistemology for group-affirming research in teacher education.

More than a musical genre. If language refers to a shared system of communication used by a nation, a people, or other distinct community, the blues "speaks" a communal language of the lived culture, material reality, and existential philosophy of Black existence. The blues gives voice to Black cultural ideals in a spoken record of Black suffering and transcendence that remains relevant and instructive. When visiting the Maori people in New Zealand, Bernice Johnson Reagon, African American historian, cultural activist, and founder of the incomparable female a cappella ensemble "Sweet Honey and the Rock," offered this insightful observation about Black music that also applies to the blues. Taking part in a discussion of "the significance of land to Maori identity," Reagon described the African American community "as one held together by song rather than by territory" (L. Smith, 1999, p. 126). Reagon's research and performances have revealed the deeper meaning embodied in the language of the African American sacred song tradition. When Christianity was being used explicitly to justify Black people's enslavement, for example, sacred songs— "Negro spirituals"—made use of Christian religious language and concepts with great critical insight and intelligence to repudiate this dominant ideology. A profoundly meaningful verse, "Everybody talkin' bout heaven ain't going there," in one of these "sorrow songs," *All God's Chillun Got Wings*, illustrates the subversive "reading" of the "Word" and the world encoded in these songs.[5] The injustice that Black people have suffered has also given blues singers and song writers opportunities to explore universal human themes made "specific through the African American experience" (Titon, 1990, p. 11).

The blues vision. The vision of social, cultural, interpersonal, economic, and racial justice in the blues implies certain conditions of freedom from mistreatment. As expressed, for example, in the blues song, "Further on up the road. . . someone is gonna hurt you like

you hurt me," the blues conveys a universal philosophy of how people should be treated. The spirit of love in the blues honors humanity's triumphal capacity to transcend dehumanization without diminishing or relinquishing the "space of being" in which Black people exist (Grande, 2004). Whether expressed in the determination to overcome heartbreak or hopelessness ("Been down so low, down don't bother me. . ."), the refusal to accept mistreatment (by a lover, a sheriff, or a bossman) affirms the singer's "somebodiness," that is to say, Black people's humanity (Cone, 1972). This vision of inclusion (in the human family) is neither "raceless" nor distorted by the mythology of race. Like the proverbial "crossroads" of the "deep blues," where the most accomplished performance of the art that any artist aspires to achieve is possible, the blues vision of humanity suggests a powerfully transformative reason for knowing: to honor individuality, group heritage, and human freedom—all at the same time—in spite of the depredations heaped upon one for being Black and poor. This is the essence of the unique democratic contribution of the blues.

The white blues. A long-standing controversy in the music world about the "white blues" concerns whether, given the traditional themes and content of the lyrics, the blues as played by white performers is "authentic." Some white performers argue that race should not matter in appreciating a virtuoso performance. Music critics and musicians remain at odds. This debate recalls persistent ruminations regarding "color-blindness" in teacher education literature. Within a guilt/innocence either/or mindset white pre-service teachers may profess to being and may prefer to remain "color-blind". These teachers resist the goals of racial-social justice teaching by proclaiming racial innocence and a commitment to a notion of raceless equity with no vision of an end to racial oppression. For another example, in

research and teaching contexts, critical theorizing that privileges social class and capitalist relations of production posit a class versus race theoretical explanation that, in effect, privileges "hybrid" conceptions of being and identity as opposed to Black identity and cultural integrity. Researchers or practitioners who embrace "color-blindness" call to mind the standpoint of "white blues" aficionados who "refuse to see race as a criterion for anything." The "decolonizing" research methods of indigenous peoples, as discussed below, affirm transformative research possibilities that aim to ensure cultural well-being, free from racial mistreatment, "annihilation and absorption into the democratic mainstream" (Grande, 2004, p. 172).

Decolonizing Methodology/Indigenous Epistemologies

The importance of identity, cultural rights, community building, and belonging in the Black intellectual tradition is mirrored in methodological and epistemological alternatives to denigrating culture that indigenous education offers (Loveland, 2003). For example, "decolonizing" research methods and scholarship in Maori, Native Hawaiian, and Indian education and research practice prioritize community and student well-being in the context of a communal future, a sense of peoplehood, and indigenous people's culturally sovereign "space of being" (Grande, 2004; Kana'iaupuni, 2005; Kaomea, 2005; L. Smith, 1999; G. Smith, 2004). In these approaches educational purpose goes beyond the traditional value system promulgated in U.S. public schools that emphasizes competitive individualism and individual academic success, high stakes test scores, materialism, etc. These outcomes imply values that are deemed "alien" to the culture of achievement of indigenous peoples as well as African Americans (Murrell, 1997).

Proponents of the cultural rights of dispossessed and indigenous peoples in education use methods that are intended to illuminate and recover "curricular silences" regarding the cultural and historical circumstances of indigenous communities and their collective heritages. Kaomea (2005) notes that such knowledge has been "buried, written over, or erased" and sometimes distorted beyond remembrance or recognition. One consequence has been the alienation of indigenous peoples from their own identity and heritage (Rollo, 2006). Native Americans and other indigenous educators, including the Maori of New Zealand, are using their heritages, languages, and other forms of "local knowledge" as pedagogical and methodological resources to: counter alienation, provide direction to research, preserve their culture, foster student achievement, and to ensure their collective survival as distinct peoples.

L. Smith describes Kaupapa Maori, or research by Maori people of New Zealand, for example, as more than a "paradigm." That is to say, it is also a social project "related to being Maori" that is "connected to Maori philosophy and principles" and "takes for granted the validity and legitimacy of Maori." The reason for knowing in Kaupapa Maori research also concerns Maori people's struggle for autonomy and "cultural well being" (Smith, 1999, p. 185). Kauppa Maori does not exclude non-Maori researchers but provides opportunities for their participation via equitable, authentic relationships with Maori partners. Along these same lines, as Angayuqaq Oscar Kawagley, Yupiak Elder and professor of education at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks observes: "The tide has turned and the future of indigenous education is clearly shifting toward an emphasis on providing education *in and through the culture, rather than about the culture* . Critical to such indigenous approaches to education and research is language, which is "the living artifact of a culture" (Loveland, 2003).

Grande (2004), another indigenous scholar, clarifies the difference between indigenous people's cultural well-being and the vision of social change/equity/democracy in progressive/ revolutionary/ critical theory and pedagogy. From the epistemological vantage point of "Red pedagogy," according to Grande, regardless of the choices of particular individuals:

> ". . .what distinguishes the indigenous struggle for (group) self-determination from others is. . .their collective effort to protect the rights of their peoples to live in accordance with traditional. . . ancestral ways. (p. 172)

Moreover, "this allegiance to traditional knowledge," including the preservation and use of indigenous language that conveys the peoples' "thought-world," has protected American Indians from total "annihilation and absorption" into the homogenizing, "democratic" European-centered "mainstream".[6]

Given that white teachers are the majority in the teaching force and given the various ways many white teachers (and parents) resist equity in education, it is not surprising that so much social justice-oriented teacher education research is directed toward understanding the "ideologies of privilege" of white teachers (Oakes, Rogers, & Lipton, 2006, p. 95). These efforts typically focus on the needs of experienced and prospective white teachers (e.g., their resistance or cultural encapsulation). One alternative is to create authentic research partnerships and methods of inquiry as "communities of practice" in which the epistemologies of community people are made relevant in the assessment of these efforts (Murrell 2001). The problematic belief structures of white teachers can also be addressed via theory, research methods, and pedagogy that illuminate the "ideologies of otherness" that are at the epistemic root of race-based inequities in schools and society. Before examining this

epistemic problematic using the conceptual tools of Black Studies, the trajectory of critical social theorizing from social science to educational approaches is discussed next.

From Critical Social Theories/Theorizing to Critical Research Methods

In constrast to positivism, critical research approaches share a connection with the emancipatory aims of critical social theories (e.g., neo-Marxist, feminist, postcolonial). Qualitative educational research has common roots in the interpretive traditions in sociology and anthropology that bear the influence of various post-positive theory and methods, including phenomenology, structuralism, semiotics, hermeneutics, symbolic interactionism, and ethnomethodology (DeMarrais & LeCompte, 1999).

Critical Roots in Common

Carr and Kemmis (1989) made a relevant distinction between critical social theory and critical social science. Critical theory is the result of a process of critical analysis. Critical social science is a form of practice in which consciousness (the enlightened human agency of individual social actors) "comes to bear directly in their transformed social action" (p. 144). Critical educational theory has been criticized for a "tendency toward social critique" without theorizing action that practitioners can use to "develop a 'counter-hegemonic' practice" to challenge domination (Anderson, 1989, p. 257). Other scholars view critical educational research as a mode of inquiry to collect data about "schooling practices and their relationship to the social order" of power in order to "ultimately undermine and transform that order" (Morrell, 2005, p. 42). However, race-centered and feminist theorists criticize the lack of attention to racism, cultural sovereignty, and women's oppression in critical approaches.

Critical social science rejects the epistemology, ontology, and determinism of logical positivism. The goal of positive social science is to explain social life, while the alternative offered by interpretive social science is to facilitate understanding of domination and alienation. Following Marx, critical social science is informed by a moral obligation to understand social reality in order to change it. Thus, the dual aim of critical social science is simultaneously to explain and to combat dominating relations of power in favor of democracy and human freedom. The notion of "critical" applied to theory and methods of inquiry and in education (and teacher education) can also be traced to Marx's understanding of the necessity of "ideology critique" for social change. Critical pedagogy (Giroux, 1988; Sleeter & Bernal, 2004), which is the analytical tool of critical theory applied to pedagogy, is indebted also to the Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire (1970/1993). Critical consciousness is a goal of Freire's revolutionary pedagogy of liberation. In addition to these European, Euro-American, and Latin American roots of critical and qualitative research methods and theory, this chapter draws on the work or a number of scholars of color whose scholarship is influenced by the principles of critical social science. Figure 1 (below) compares the common central features and distinct assumptions and concerns of critical social theory with feminist, critical multicultural, and race-central methods, theory, and pedagogy in social and education research.

Figure 1 About Here

Feminists and scholars of color criticize the lack of explicit attention to gender, race, ethnicity, and cultural sovereignty of indigenous peoples in critical theory and critical pedagogy (Ellsworth, 1998; hooks, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1997; Leonardo, 2004; Lynn,

1999). However, critical theorists strenuously reject the allegation that in giving primacy to social class, critical theorizing fails to address forms of oppression other than that of social class (McLaren, 2000; Scatamburlo-D'Annibale & McLaren, 2004). These critical theorists assert that such "misguided" criticism incorrectly assumes the working class is white. Also, within a class-based (e.g. class-first) radical political economy framework the meanings of socially constructed categories of difference or subjectivities (e.g., gender, race and ethnicity) are produced by the class-based relations of production that define the capitalist system. Thus, these categories of lived experience and identity are interrogated and interpreted through the lens of the material (objective) relations of social class, power, and privilege linked to the relations of production (pp. 188-189).

Ongoing class versus race (or gender) debates illustrate the complexity of competing theories of social change. A radical Black Marxist tradition also exists that posits a class-first analysis. Multicultural and feminist approaches offer various interpretive frameworks to transcend this debate. Given that race is a social construction, scholars also posit that "hybridity" is a more useful conceptualization of being and identity than race (McCarthy, 1998). African-centered theorists and indigenous scholars, on the other hand, give primacy to peoplehood (Bernal, 1998; Grande, 2004; L. Smith, 1999). Identifying with one's group heritage is considered neither an epiphenomenon of social class (or gender), a reactionary form of in-group solidarity, false consciousness born of societal exclusion (Hilliard, 2001; King, 2005b), self-deceptive "fictive" kinship, nor misguided, romanticized identification with "dead civilizations" on foreign continents (King, 2005b). In fact, recent research documents the power of "race-ethnic self-schema" to buffer students from the racial vulnerabilities of alienating schooling (Oyserman et al., 2003).

Critical Race Theory and Methods

According to Lynn (1999), in asserting that critical pedagogy had "failed to adequately address the question of race," Tate (1994) and Ladson-Billings (1997) helped put "race back into critical pedagogy" (p. 153) by applying the principles of critical race theory (CRT) in education. First articulated by legal scholars, then applied to education, critical race theory is an analytical lens developed by scholars of color to place race at the center of social analysis (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Parker & Stovall, 2004; Solórzano, 1997). Four precepts, delineated by Ladson-Billings (2005), define CRT in education. Critical race theory (CRT): 1) presumes that racism is normal not an aberration; 2) employs story telling as a mode analysis; 3) necessarily includes a critique of liberalism; and 4) points out that whites have been the primary beneficiaries of liberal/reform efforts (Ladson-Billings, 2006, pp. 300-302). In their introduction to a theme issue of *Qualitative Inquiry*, for example, Lynn, Yasso, Solórzano, and Parker (2002) describe CRT as an "ontological and epistemological framework with which to analyze race" (p. 5). Sleeter and Bernal (2004) emphasize that CRT, in addition to addressing the "intersectionality of racism, classism, sexism, and other forms of oppression," challenges Eurocentric epistemologies and dominant ideologies (e.g., meritocracy, objectivity, and neutrality) using "counterstorytelling as a methodological and pedagogical tool" (p. 245). Also, Pizzaro (1998) uses a CRT framework to develop research methods that are consistent with a Chicano/a epistemology.

A theme issue of *Race and Ethnicity* considers the impact of CRT in the ten years since the publication of Ladson-Billings and Tate's seminal article on critical race theory in education and teacher education (Dixson & Rousseau, 2005). While CRT theorists criticize the idealized standpoint of "color-blindness" in the dominant discourse (Dixson & Rousseau,

2005; Ladson-Billings, 1997), other scholars who have studied race and ethnicity in the social sciences argue for some degree of caution with respect to use of the construct race. The concern is not to argue for a class-first analysis but to emphasize that focusing on race as an analytical category can displace a needed critique of supremacist ideology and thereby reify a *false*, ideological construct (Hilliard, 2001; Stanfield, 1993). However, critical race theorists argue back that CRT illuminates the "everyday-ness" of racism and values and represents the voices, strengths, and complexity of the experiences of people of color (Chapman, 2005, p. 28; Lynn, 1999). Proponents of CRT use methods such as narrative inquiry, counterstories, historical ethnographies, autobiography, autoethnography, critical ethnography, and portraiture in teacher education research. In the passage below Duncan (2005) describes links between the use of these methods used by critical race theorists and Freire's liberation pedagogy:

> The centrality of narrative and storytelling in critical race approaches to educational research is consonant with Paulo Freire's (1995) view that changing language "is part of the process of changing the world" (pp. 67-68). Along these lines proponents of CRT in general emphasize aesthetic and emotional dimensions in their stories to stimulate the imagination and to inspire empathy to allow others to imagine the mind of the oppressed and to see, and perhaps vicariously experience, the world through their eyes. (p. 102)

Thus, these scholars argue are that critical race theory has the capacity to convey to others "insider" knowledge of race as difference.

A CRT framework for qualitative inquiry. Critical race theory also provides a framework for qualitative inquiry in teacher education (Duncan, 2002; Ortiz & Rhoads, 2000; Parker,

Deyhle, & Villenas, 1999; Sleeter & Bernal, 2004; Smith-Maddox & Solórzano, 2002; Solórzano, 1997). Emergent CRT "offshoots" include "critical race pedagogy" (Lynn, 1999) and "critical race ethnography" (Duncan, 2005). CRT has also generated a number of other complementary "connecting parts": LatCrit (Latina/o critical race theory), Tribal Crits, FemCrits (critical race feminists), Asian American poststructural critical legal positions, and critical race feminism (Brayboy, 2005; Parker & Stovall, 2004; Sleeter & Bernal, 2004). Following are examples of how Black, Latina/o, as well as white teacher educator-researchers employ the CRT framework to study their professional practice. These researchers use "counterstories" and narratives to analyze their experiences teaching mostly white future teachers. For instance, Duncan (2002) describes pedagogical strategies he employed in an urban ethnography course that "rendered race visible". That is, CRT has the power to bring "subtle forms of racial oppression. . .into bold relief" (p. 102). Other frameworks that are combined with CRT include Freire's problem-posing method (Smith-Maddox & Solórzano, 2002), portraiture (Chapman, 2005), and Black feminism, which is discussed in the next section.

Black Feminism and CRT in Teacher Education

In an article titled "The Burden of Teaching Teachers" Williams and Evans-Winters (2005), two African American women teacher educators, use the "lenses" of both Black feminism and CRT in reflective narratives of teaching white students. Reflecting on this experience they ask:

(1) [H]ow can those of us, who are on the side of social justice, bring race talk back

into the public forum of the teacher education classroom and (2) how can we get the

message to be digested, interpreted, and critically examined by teacher education

students who benefit from systematic inequality"? (p. 202)

The authors describe Black feminism/womanism as an ideology and political movement

"that examines issues affecting African-American women in the United Sates as part of the

global struggle for women's emancipation" (p. 204). Black feminism and CRT are presented

as "the hope for teacher education." Black feminism (BF), as an extension of critical social

theory, is concerned with "fighting against economic, political, and social injustice for Black

women and other oppressed groups" (pp. 203-204; also, Collins, 2000, p. 9). The authors use

these frameworks in a complementary fashion to examine their professional practice.

These researchers take a morally engaged, activist stance toward "the powers that be"

(department chairs, academic deans, provosts) and concerns that arose when their mostly

white female student teachers and their supervisors questioned, "interrogated and dismissed"

their teaching practices. Their recommendations to improve the climate for Black women

professors engaged in social justice-oriented teacher education include suggestions for: 1) an

alternative method of evaluation that takes students' retaliatory resistance into account; 2)

mentoring to support the retention of faculty of color; and 3) holding open discussions about

"learning from and with faculty of color" to address "who [which professors] students resist

and why" (pp. 216-217). Challenging and changing institutional practice fulfills an important

principle of critical race theory and is a central tenet of critical social science. As Dixson and

Rousseau (2005) note:

It is not enough to simply tell the stories of people of colour. Rather the educational

experiences revealed through these stories must be the subject of deeper analysis

using the CRT lens. Furthermore, CRT mandates that social activism be a part of any

CRT project. To that end the stories must move us to action and the qualitative and

material improvement of the educational experiences of people of colour. (p. 13)

The research examples discussed next illustrate critical ethnographic research methods in K-

12 venues.

Critical Ethnographies: Engaging Xicana[7] Teachers and Urban Youth

According to Anderson (1989), the "overriding goal of critical ethnography," unlike

other interpretivist research in sociology and anthropology "is to free individuals from

sources of domination and repression" (p. 249). Two examples of critical ethnographic

research, which provide opportunities for empowering learning in high school contexts,

illustate very different conceptualizations of race in critical research for educational and

social change. Xicana high school teachers and Black and Latino/a "urban" students who are

trained as "apprentices" study their own experiences using a combination of critical

ethnography and participatory research (Carspecken, 1996).

Xicana teachers as agents of change. Berta-Avila (2004) combines the methods of

critical ethnography and participatory research to provide an environment for self-identified

"Xicana" teachers to participate in an emancipatory "dialogic process." This research

experience illuminates connections between these teachers' identity and their mode of critical

(raza/race) pedagogy. Berta-Avila uses dialogues, journal entries, and observations to

understand how these teachers perceive their role in the classroom when teaching Raza

students. Language and (collective) self-identity emerged as important considerations in

exploring these practitioners' self-conceptualization of being "critical Xicana" teachers. They

view how and why they teach as a "political act for social transformation and the

emancipation of Raza students." For instance, one teacher participant links her role as a

teacher to her "Xicana" identity in a way that embraces her ethnicity, including her "indigenous roots":

> Xicana is how I identify myself culturally, historically, politically, and socially. I would expect a person who identifies him/herself as Xicana/Xicano to know her/his history and take pride in their indigenous roots. I would expect them to have a sense of responsibility to their community and be an advocate for those who have no voice and are silenced. I would expect them to understand what being political means. . . (p. 70)

Berta-Avila concludes that "grounding themselves in pedagogy for social change" and engaging the issues of race, class, and gender enables these teachers to expand their role in the classroom. Beyond being a "role model," who uncritically emulates a Euro-dominant consciousness and individual upwardly mobile success, these teachers see themselves as "change agents," who "critically challenge and address power relations" that affect their students and their communities (p. 68). As another teacher explains:

> If a Xicana/Xicano enters the classroom and has no social and/or political understanding of the institutions they are entrenched in, they then lack the skills needed to understand how educational systems and the dominant society are intertwined. He or she falls into the danger of perpetuating messages that Raza life experiences are not valid and they should forsake their identity in order to succeed in the United States.

Thus, Xicana/Xicano identity influences the relations between these teachers, their students, and the students' parents, from whom they learn and for whom they choose to serve as

advocates and cultural models. For these teachers, then, "it is not enough to be just a teacher of color."

The descriptions of the "critical Xicana" practitioners in this study are consistent with other researchers' reports of the political clarity of teachers of color (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 1999; Irvine, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 2000b; Lynn, 1999). On the other hand, the research literature also describes Black and Latina/o educators (and researchers) who favor assimilation and who are highly critical of their own culture and language (Wills, Lintz, & Mehan, 2004). Parents, too, who favor assimilationist goals, may adopt the dominant unfavorable view of their home language and culture.

Berta-Avila does not represent this study of Xicana teachers as an explicit investigation of or for teacher learning and development. However, the participatory research methodology employed afforded opportunities for these practitioners to reflect on their practice together and to examine the data and share their observations with each other. These opportunities for reflection engaged the teachers and the researcher in intentional and unanticipated mutual learning. This study also indicates another important ability that scholars emphasize as essential for social justice outcomes for African American students and other marginalized students: developing students' race-ethnic identities and identification with their communities and heritage are important resources for academic engagement (Oyserman et al., 2003). In the next example, however, high school students experience "becoming critical" without such a strong emphasis on race consciousness.

Urban youth becoming critical researchers. Morrell (2004), Morell and Collatos (2002), and Oakes, Rogers, and Lipton (2006) describe participatory social inquiry and organizing activities as learning opportunities that build communities of practice for pre-

service and in-service teacher education, urban school reform, and community change using critical research methods. These collaborative research activities engage practitioners and community members as well as students in significant roles as co-researchers/change agents. For example, Morrell and Collatos (2002) trained a multi-racial team of urban high school "student sociologists" who participated in this program of:

> ". . .critical teacher education that forefronts authentic dialogue between pre-service teachers and urban teens. . .who have been trained in the sociology of education [and who] provide mentoring to pre-service teachers enrolled in a teacher credential program." (p. 61)

In this four-year project Black and Latino/a urban high school students studied social theory and completed "critical research projects related to equity and access to education" (p. 63). This critical ethnography of students' literacy learning is situated within a postmodern cultural studies analysis of popular culture (e.g., neo-Marxian and Freire-influenced theories). Because racial "essentialism" is a concern Black and Latino/a youth are described as "members of multiple cultures and communities" (Morrell, 2005, p. 5). Although Morrell affirms the existence of racial inequities and the utility of culturally relevant and multicultural pedagogy, this researcher argues against "conceptions of culture as mono-racial identity" (p. 39). In fact, a somewhat color-blind category, "popular culture"[8] is one object of analysis. The question/dilemma Morrell poses for "critical educators who seek to educate for empowerment and access" is: "How do we effectively educate marginalized students in a way that addresses the impact of race yet transcends the social construction of race. . .and unifies rather than divides?" (p. 15).

To summarize, research employing the framework of critical race theory and critical

ethnography is contributing to a growing knowledge base on teacher education with critical social justice aims. We know less, however, about the design and effectiveness of teacher preparation experiences that contribute to the coherence of pedagogy, identity, and political understanding, particularly for teachers of color. This includes knowledge about how such learning experiences can intervene against internalized racism to "empower students of color to see the specific ways that whiteness causes them to think less of their individual and collective selves" (Allen, 2004, p. 128). A related problem is the support needed by faculty and "accomplished practitioners" who supervise and mentor these future teachers (Quiocho & Rios, 2000). Research is also needed that addresses how teachers and teacher educators can thrive in increasingly constraining and hostile educational contexts in schools and teacher preparation programs where technicist rationality and assimilationist priorities predominate (Kincheloe, 2004; King, 2005b; Okpodoku, 2003; Scott, 2003;West-Olatunji, 2005; Wilson, 2005).

The change agent role the Xicana teachers in Berta-Avila's study embrace suggests particular implications for teacher preparation. It would have be interesting to know something about how these Xicana teachers experienced their professional preparation. Did study of critical pedagogy, for example, inform their practice and shape their identity as Xicana teachers? Did Chicano Studies play any role in their professional development and identity? Morrell's student co-researchers studied sociology of education texts. Would learning about racism through the lens of a Black Studies analysis of the blues epistemology, or studying Mexican *corridos* (ballads) that express Chicano values and history enhance the students' abilities as mentors of pre-service teachers (Garcia, 2000; Pizzaro, 1998)? Can studying such forms of cultural expression illuminate important points of intersection in the

social histories of people of color?[9] In the research that concludes this section the focus is on how teachers can learn about racism. White women teacher educators use critical race theory in studies by white women professors who situate the pre-service and experienced teachers' learning within the academic discourse of "Whiteness studies".

Interrogating the Discourse of Whiteness

An emerging genre of critical qualitative research for teacher learning interrogates "whiteness" and ways that critical pedagogy and practitioner inquiry can contest unearned white privilege. This genre of "whiteness studies" includes critical and qualitative inquiry methods–journal writing, reflective dialogue–focused on "enlightening" participants regarding the educational implications of "white racial identity" and "white privilege." The focus of these studies is the limited ways in which many white teachers understand issues of race and systemic racism, including their own racial identity and "privileged positionality" (Marx, 2002; McIntosh, 1992; McIntyre, 1997, 2002; Ortiz & Rhoads, 2000). This genre of research, which is an outgrowth of critical "Whiteness" studies in education, labor, and cultural studies, as well as critical race theory (CRT), interrogates the discourse of "whiteness" using practitioner and narrative inquiry. These studies can be situated along a continuum of focusing on teachers' "cultural competency" (Irvine, 2002), critical multicultural education (Sleeter, 2001), critical feminist pedagogy (Brady & Kanpol, 2000; Weiler, 1989), and anti-racist pedagogy (Berlak & Moyenda, 2001; Kailin, 1994; Urrieta & Reidel, 2006; Zeichner, 1996). Typically the data in these studies is collected using qualitative methods (e.g., interviews, focus groups, student reflections/narratives) collected in single courses to document pedagogical impacts on future teachers' self-identification and

their understanding of societal or systemic (as contrasted with acts of interpersonal) racism. Data has also been gathered from multiple student cohorts, field placement experiences, and students' collages, for instance. Two examples of this genre that describe three research contexts will be discussed in this section.

Becoming critical of whiteness. McIntyre (2002) has analyzed 95 collaborative collages created by 450 students in 19 (4 undergraduate and 15 graduate) education courses. McIntyre's students have constructed these collages and presented them in class to represent and explain their understanding of what whiteness means. In addition, two graduate courses also afforded the opportunity to engage students in critical readings and participatory community action research. One finding McIntyre reports is that many students came to "see whiteness as an integral aspect of discourse" and they became aware of its impact on education. In another study Marx and Pennington (2003) employed a CRT framework to explore the racialized, culture-deficit thinking and identity issues that limited the ability of white teachers "to meet the needs of students of color." These authors analyze their separate but complimentary exploratory efforts as self-described white teacher educators, who have "taken to heart the call of critical race theorists and critical Whiteness scholars to open up a White discourse on White racism" (p. 92).

Based on their understanding of the existing literature and their previous experiences teaching white student teachers, Marx and Pennington created "pedagogies of CRT that would draw the attention of white pre-service teachers to their own positionality and help them to become critical of it" (p. 92). These teacher educator-researchers indicate that they were cognizant of white (student teacher) resistance and resentments against "cultures of color". They interpreted this resistance and resentment as markers of an (un)productive stage

of white racial identity development that is "mired in White guilt, fear or anger". (Such resistance, as discussed earlier in this chapter, continues to be a focus of the research of teacher educators of color, as well.) These experienced teacher educators engaged 12 white student teachers in two different settings in "supportive, trusting dialogical conversations" about the "taboo subjects" of race, "Whiteness," and "White racism".

Marx and Pennington describe the "sincere changes in attitudes" of student teacher/ participants in these studies, their adoption of "new language," their ability to see, name, and reject racism within themselves, and deficit thinking (about the children) "in everything from their teacher education classes, to the media, to their own home lives" (p. 105). Three student teachers participated in Pennington's study. These future teachers apparently were stymied in their development by the realization that they "lacked the cultural knowledge to be effective in the classroom and to be effective in interacting with parents" (pp. 104-105). By contrast, Marx's group of nine student teachers reportedly had empowering experiences by confronting racism in their teaching placements.

It deserves mention that the researchers in these three studies justify their pedagogical interventions on moral grounds rather than on the basis of demonstrated long- or short-term individual or institutional changes. The researchers do not report impacts on the actual practice of these future teachers nor are learning outcomes for the students they taught (and tutored) described. Despite student resistance, unsupportive university colleagues, and the warnings McIntyre received from a "disgruntled" administrator, she affirms her responsibility "as a white educator. . .to continue to provide prospective teachers" with opportunities to "see whiteness as a 'center stage problem'. . ." Marx and Pennington also

articulate an explicit moral commitment to this "controversial work" on behalf of children of color:

> Much of the work on Whiteness implies that the construct is too controversial, too risky, too complex to be used with undergraduates. . . We also see the effect on the children. . .Only when we are brave enough to undertake this kind of controversial work with our students and to fortify ourselves with the knowledge and skills we need to lead, will we be able to foster the necessary changes. Without this courage, our children of color will continue to be the ones left to absorb the truly destructive effects of White racism. (p. 107)

The committed stance of these teacher education practitioner-researchers mirrors the politically engaged practice of other scholars that will also be discussed in this chapter.

Unexamined /Unintended Implications: Intersectionalities of Race/Gender/Identity

One implication of researchers' attempts to address white teachers' "color-blind" thought through pedagogical interventions and practitioner inquiry is that the focus on "whiteness" may obscure other relevant identity considerations like gender (Gore, 1993). Much of the research on "whiteness" in teacher education is reported by white women teacher educators/researchers who are teaching mostly white female students. Marilyn-Cochran-Smith (2004) recounts her experience of becoming critically aware of her own "blind vision" regarding the continuing significance of race and racism in her teaching and research. Upon reflection, however she was able to gain the insight that white women teacher educators need to address the intersections of race *and* gender identity issues that are inherent in social justice teacher education. What Cochran-Smith recalls with regard to her own practice is worth noting:

> "We," I came to realize, often referred not to "we who are committed to teaching
>
> elementary school differently and improving the life chances of all children," but to
>
> "we White people (*especially we White women*) who are trying to learn how to teach
>
> people who are different from us." (Cochran-Smith, 2004, p. 98, emphasis added)

Cochran-Smith acknowledges that when the perspectives and experiences of the oppressed are not "sufficiently present" to inform the work, "blind-vision" can impair the efforts of white teacher educators to address issues of race, diversity, and social justice. She recalled, for example, discussions that had clearly focused attention on race in her work with future teachers. However, hindsight provided some understanding of what had escaped her vision and was missing in her approach:

> It is clear to me now, though, that these discussions [in the teacher education
>
> program] were framed primarily for the benefit of White students who were invited to
>
> learn more about racism through stories of other people's oppression. (p. 92)

Two other research contexts are relevant in illuminating perspective blindness with respect to race/gender intersectionalities. First, in revisiting the data presented in their book, *The Feminist Classroom*, Maher and Tetrault (1997) acknowledge that they lacked the interpretive framework needed to "see" the ways that a (feminist) "pedagogy of positionality" must also excavate whiteness (p. 322). Using whiteness/race as a lens, their re-analysis reveals what had previously escaped their vision   Second, Berlak and Moyenda's (2001) collaborative analysis of a classroom encounter with "whiteness" precipitated a reflective dialogue between the two women—a white Jewish radical teacher educator and a "militant" Black teacher. Their dialogue represents a unique examination of the intersectionality of race, identity, and gender in a teacher education context. Black and

Latino/a teachers and teacher educators too often bear the "burden" of seeing what whites often do not see regarding the "taboo" work of dealing with race, often without adequate support from their white colleagues and administrators (Jervis, 1996).

This discussion of the intersectionality of race, gender, and identity suggests needed directions for research. For instance, do white women teachers and teacher educators experience racialized anxieties, "resentments" or "blind vision" in gendered ways that differ from the experiences of white males? Do these dispositions affect their ability to work with families and communities of color? With boys and girls in their classrooms? Do Black women and Black men working with white women in teaching and research contexts experience particular antagonisms or vulnerabilities with regard to "whiteness" (or "blackness") that are exacerbated by their differing historical experiences of race and gender? Finally, critical social theory defines ideology as "an organized belief system that represents social change as impossible, even if it suggests modes of individual betterment within the frame of reference of the existing social system" (Agger, 1998, p. 8). Sleeter and Bernal (2004) refer to ideology as "consciousness formation" of individuals, "particularly their consciousness about how the society works" (p. 242). Do educators—no matter what their background—who are using a critical theoretical framework envision a collective future for children of color? Examples of practitioner inquiry in which the focus is on teachers learning to teach for social change in urban and culturally diverse communities are presented the next section of the chapter.

A Continuum of Practitioner Inquiry: Learning to Teach for Social Change

The genre of practitioner inquiry usually refers to practice-based research conducted by practicing teachers. Also included is the study of practice *for* teacher education by teacher educators. The forms of practitioner inquiry discussed below include collaborative action research partnerships and guided community-mediated inquiry experiences to support pre-service and in-service teacher learning. These research approaches can be located along a continuum of practice-centered knowledge about teaching and teacher learning (in schools and teacher preparation programs) from individual self-study to collective action research to guided community-based inquiry in which learning from and with community members takes precedence.

Several major analyses of the various types of practitioner inquiry have been done (Anderson et al., 1994; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2004; Zeichner & Noffke, 2001). Practitioner inquiry, that is, "systematic, intentional inquiry by teachers" (Lytle & Cochran-Smith, 1999, p. 84), is the term Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2004) use as a "conceptual and linguistic umbrella" to cover a number of research genres and modes of inquiry in which teachers engage in practice-centered investigation. This extensive review of the literature demonstrates multiple and varying descriptions of forms of practitioner inquiry. Included are genres of research focused on teacher knowledge about teaching, pre-service teachers' experiences while learning to teach (Britzman, 1991), collaborative investigations with practitioners and teacher educators, as well as the practice of teacher educators as the focus of inquiry. Rosiek and Atkinson (2005) identify three practitioner inquiry approaches related to understanding teacher knowledge and the process of learning to teach: 1) narrative inquiry/analysis, 2) action research, and 3) teacher research. These categories of practitioner inquiry are discussed below.

Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquiry, also referred to as self-narrative inquiry (Garcia, 1997), is multifaceted and includes various methods of practitioner inquiry, such as teacher reflective writing (in journals and diaries, for instance) and autobiographical writing. Autoethnography can also be included in this genre (Olsen, 2000). Forms of narrative inquiry such as teachers' stories and life narratives reveal aspects of teacher knowledge and the experience of learning to teach in different contexts (Clandinin & Connelley, 1990, 2000). For example, these methods have been used to explore the experiences of teacher support groups for novice teachers (Stanislaus et al., 2002) and the learning trajectories of pre-service teachers in "inner-city" teaching situations (Kea & Bacon, 1999; Rushton, 2001). Narrative inquiry reveals rich details of practical teacher knowledge and beliefs about teaching and learning. Like other forms of practitioner inquiry, studies of teacher learning using narrative forms seek their validation in the ways that "inquiry transforms practice" (Rosiek & Atkinson, 2005, p. 425; see also Feldman, 2003).

As the following journal reflection demonstrates, however, practitioner inquiry studies may show no evidence of teacher learning to transform their practice from the point of view of the lived experiences and epistemologies of diverse "others." Consider the lack of insight, empathy, and critical understanding in this journal entry, for example:

> What do you do with children who will not do their work, and every time somebody even brushed them they "explode in anger" but yet you know that their daddy is a drug dealer and they probably only get two hours of sleep a night? (Rushton, 2004, p. 74)

This study reports this student teacher's "unfavorable" classroom journey in an inner-city school resulted in a decision not to pursue a teaching career. Several studies by Cochran-Smith (1995a,b, 1990), which have been collected in the volume *Walking the Road: Race Diversity and Social Justice in Teacher Education*, represent powerful examples of learning to teach for social change (Cochran-Smith, 2004) in ways that address such deficit thinking. In this body of work Cochran-Smith draws on teacher narratives to document the experiences of teachers learning to "teach against the grain." The narrative accounts of these future teachers demonstrate how they come to see themselves as "both educators and activists." Cochran-Smith provides a coherent theoretical rationale for this pedagogical approach.

Practitioner (narrative) inquiry research that documents the "voice" of pre-service teachers working in inner city schools, in particular, which has frequently involved single case-studies, is limited with respect to developing broader theoretical understandings (or generalizations) across contexts and situations (Rushton, 2004). Although forms of practitioner research have gained considerable ascendancy, this genre of research remains engaged for the most part with a "narrow range" of theory (Noffke, 1999). Indeed, largely missing from pre-service practitioner inquiry studies are forms of teacher knowledge and practice-centered theory generated from within the cultural realities and epistemologies of students of color, their families, and communities. Cochran-Smith's (2004) research documents teacher learning in this direction. She suggests that teacher educators-researchers may also need to rethink what and how they teach in this regard and notes that "theories of practice developed by and about persons of color, as well as rich and detailed analyses of successful teachers of children of color, particularly poor children of color. . ." were missing

from her work (p. 97, originally published in 2000). Alternatively, Ball's study of the knowledge teachers need to effectively teach writing to African American vernacular English speakers recognizes the need not only for high expectations in the dominant society's terms "but also standards of the students' subcultures" (Ball, 1999, p. 243). Finding ways to draw upon and incorporate the perspectives and lived experience of community members in teacher learning and practitioner research in community contexts is an important dimension of the example of action research that is discussed next.

Action Research as Community-Mediated Inquiry

Action research, which can take many forms, has provided opportunities for both experienced teachers and future teachers to gain access to and to learn from community knowledge and perspectives (Gore & Zeichner, 1991). Noffke, one of the leading practitioners of action research in the field of teacher education, describes action research as "political, theorized practice" (Noffke, 1995, p. 3). This method of practitioner inquiry consists of a cyclical process of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Noffke and Somehk (2005) identify three types of action research: 1) the professional action research (focused on "improving services in a professional setting"), 2) the personal (focused on attaining "greater self-knowledge" and "a deeper understanding of one's own practice"), and 3) the political (focused on "social action to combat oppression").

The example of action research that will be discussed here is Hyland and Noffke's (2005) long-term collaborative teacher education action research program. These teacher educator-researchers have studied their own practice with white pre-service teachers by combining teaching with two levels of practitioner inquiry focused on: a) their own practice and b) the learning-to-teach for change experiences of their pre-service students. Hyland and

Noffke state that their aim was to deepen their understanding of "how community-based pre-service work may be used to develop a critical multicultural approach to the teaching of social studies" (p. 370). In collaborative inquiries in their social studies methods courses, taught in their respective teacher education programs at two different institutions, Hyland and Noffke use examples of the students' learning as well as focus group discussions, journal writing responses to assigned critical readings, and community inquiry experiences as data. These teacher educator-researchers use these multiple data sources to ask about the impact of "critical study of injustice in history, politics, economics, and geography" (p. 371). They ask, for example, "In what ways do community inquiry assignments influence pre-service teachers' understanding of marginality?" And "how do students see themselves in relation to the communities they investigate"?

According to Hyland and Noffke, teachers "need to understand and interrogate oppression in order to act against it in their classrooms." Their action research program also demonstrates their belief that "teachers need to become allied with marginalized communities in the fight for social justice" (p. 379). For instance, they asked students at one of their institutions to develop a relationship with a community member and to collaborate on a lesson that used the perspective, life history, knowledge, talents or interests of the community member in that lesson. By using learning-to-teach experiences that involve community-mediated practitioner inquiry, Hyland and Noffke consciously model for their students some of the ways that curriculum and teaching can address social justice goals. These researchers report new understandings of ways to incorporate inquiry methods into their own teaching. [10]

Developing pre-service teachers' self-understanding (and self-efficacy) in relation to teaching students from "historically marginalized" groups is one goal of the community-mediated inquiry activities Hyland and Noffke studied through collaborative action research. They note the fundamental importance of gaining "historical perspective" about the group being investigated for "making sense" of these inquiry experiences. They assign critical readings to provide "authentic perspectives of the group being studied" are "essential to the inquiry experience" (p. 378). [11] Some level of prejudice reduction among the student teachers is one result of these inquiry experiences that is documented in students' oral and written narratives, collaborative reflections, and seminar discussions. However, these researchers also call attention to an important drawback in their approach. In their efforts as critical educators who are conscious of gender issues from a feminist perspective, Hyland and Noffke attempt to resolve the contradiction of power and authority in their classrooms by giving their pre-service students the freedom to choose (comfortable) "cultural boundaries" to "cross." They acknowledge that students sometimes choose the least "challenging" cross-cultural community inquiry experiences.

In addition, Hyland and Noffke report that community learning experiences can re-inscribe various forms of privileged positionality related to the student teachers' race, gender, and class identity. In fact, pre-service students' fear of going into urban neighborhoods is a recurring theme in the literature (Buck & Sylvester, 2005; Duncan, 2002; Swartz, 2003). Moreover, practitioner inquiry focused on teachers learning to center students of color in their own cultural identities and heritages, as well as the needs of their communities, is still largely missing from this genre of research (Goodwin & Swartz, 2004). Practitioner inquiry also tends to neglect teacher's cultural and historical knowledge, that is, the mis-education of

teachers that contributes to the problems of "whiteness" and dysconsciousness. A number of teacher educator-researchers with considerable experience using anti-racism approaches in their courses speculate that college-level teacher preparation may actually be too late to change the deficit thinking and dysconsciousness of some future teachers (Berlak & Moyenda, 2001; King, 1991a; McIntyre, 2002; Swartz, 2003). As will be discussed below, in contrast to course-based learning, teacher inquiry in the context of ethnographic study groups, learning communities, and communities of practice seem to provide support for more critical learning.

Ethnographic Methods and Practitioner Inquiry and Communities of Color

Ethnographic research that engages experienced practitioners as co-researchers (Allen & Labbo, 2001; Bernal, 2002; Moll & Gonzáles, 2004) has generated forms of practical knowledge for teaching that build upon the "funds of knowledge" in the households of marginalized students (Gonzáles, Moll, & Amanti, 2005). This research recognizes that successful teachers of low-income students and students of color respect, have knowledge of, and establish relationships with students' home communities (Irvine, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Moll et al., 1995; Zeichner & Melnick, 1996). As Moll (2005) has noted:

> "Teacher education is. . . a matter of developing not only technical competence and solid knowledge of subject matter but also sociocultural competence in working with the diversity of student that characterize contemporary schooling." (p. 244)

Torres-Guzmán, Mercado, Quintero, and Viera (with Moll, 1994) are among a new breed of researchers of color who have designed new roles for students, parents, and teachers to participate in collaborative ethnographic research project in New York City and Puerto Rico, and supported both teacher and student learning in and about Puerto Rican communities in

new ways. Moll and Gonzáles have led this program of collaborative ethnographic practitioner research for more than two decades in Arizona and other locales. Practitioner inquiry experiences are combined with ethnographic home visits in order to identify social and cultural practices that can inform classroom instruction. Researchers and their practitioner co-researchers report that these forms of collaborative inquiry deepen teachers' understanding of structural inequities by positioning them to "view urban communities as reservoirs of strength, possibility, and talent" (Buck & Sylvester, 2005, cited in Moll & Hopffer, 2005, p. 246). This is an important dimension of the way the cultural "funds of knowledge" research program makes the intellectual, social, and cultural assets in families "pedagogically viable."

In summary, the growing acceptance of teacher education research produced in collaboration with practitioners represents a "hard-won paradigm shift" in the field (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2004). Significant strides have been made in giving "voice" to teachers as researchers of their own practice, including accomplished teachers and teacher educators of color. In addition, with varying results practitioner inquiry mediated by community knowledge takes many forms using various methods. For example, Allan and Labbo (2001) as well as Hyland and Noffke (2005) report that action research in urban communities has positively impacted prospective teachers' learning when they use what they learned from self-reflective, community inquiries to develop lessons. Relatively brief excursions and more extensive immersion experiences include both observation and inquiry activities designed to "shake up" students' deficit views in order to foster more critical awareness and understanding (Bernal, 2002; Duncan, 2002; Garcia, 1997; Wiest, 1998). Hyland and Noffke (2005) stress an important dimension of the need for such approaches in teacher education:

"Unless our White, heterosexual students learn to understand diversity in new ways, the children from these [underserved] groups in their classrooms will continue to have to live within the dominant culture everyday of their schooling" (p. 378). Assets or strengths-based approaches are gaining coherence in a growing body of research and scholarship that demonstrates the value of community-mediated inquiry experiences for teacher learning (Boyle-Baise & Sleeter, 2000; Oakes, Rogers & Lipton, 2006). Less systematically developed, however, are modes of inquiry in which full-fledged reciprocal research partnerships incorporate community knowledge and perspectives in the purposes and conduct of collaborative inquiry. A vision of critical and qualitative research in teacher education for the cultural survival of marginalized students and their communities, as well as for teacher learning, is taken up next in the last part of the chapter.

Beyond the Crisis of Knowledge in Teacher Education Research and Practice

Teacher education research is only beginning to address the complexities that developing theory and practice in authentic democratic partnerships among researchers, teachers, and urban/indigenous community members entails. Noffke's (1999) observation nearly a decade ago is worth repeating: "Theory generated within the work and lives of people of colour has only marginally been addressed" in teacher education research (p. 27). Murrell (2001) has made a similar observation that remains pertinent: the failure of educators "to draw on the local knowledge, perspectives, and cultural frameworks of people of color in diverse urban communities" is nothing less than a crisis of knowledge in urban education (p. 20). As Zeichner and Noffke (2001) point out, teacher education research is inherently connected both to conceptualizations of teachers' work and also to "debates about the

overall goals of education in society" (p. 298). Preparing teachers who have the knowledge, competence, and the will to meet the needs of underserved students of color in K-12 classrooms and who can center their students' learning in the epistemological perspectives of their families and communities remains beyond the purview of the high-stakes standardized testing regime's "conservative agenda to produce 'highly qualified teachers'" (Banks, 2004, p. ix; Malveaux, 2005).

Valuing /Using Community Knowledge: A Task for Liberatory Research

The "community nomination" method that Ladson-Billings (1994), following Foster (1991), employed to identify successful teachers of African American students illustrates how researchers can honor community knowledge, goals, and perspectives on education. Ladson-Billings relied upon the knowledge of community members to identify the criteria she used to select the teachers in her study of culturally relevant pedagogy. These criteria imply educational goals and pedagogy that transcend "conventional notions of the students getting good grades, scoring well on standardized tests, graduating from high school, going on to college, and securing good jobs. . ." (Ladson-Billings, 1994, p. 147). The parents Ladson-Billings interviewed "expressed an interest in an education that would help their children maintain a positive identification with their own culture." As one parent stated: "I just want [my child] to hold his own in the classroom without forgetting his own in the community" (p. 147).

This parent's goal, which expresses the communal ideal and social vision of the epistemology of African American achievement, can be understood as a "requirement for black existence". Whether in the classroom or a blues performance, the traditional African American cultural ideal values individual accomplishment in the context of community well-

being. This ideal contradicts prevailing conceptions of educational purpose and quality (Murrell, 1997). Boggs's (1974) classic description of Black "education to govern" for the benefit of a transformed, more just, democratic society is consistent with Tedla's (1997) articulation of "community mindfulness" as a goal of Black education and socialization. Following are examples of teacher education practice that value and use community knowledge in various ways and which suggest research questions and modes of inquiry for cultural well-being that are missing in "mainstream" teacher education research and practice.

First, in the "Community Teacher" model for effective urban teaching that Murrell (2002) has developed teachers, parents, school leaders, and community members participate as full-fledged partners in ongoing, collaborative practice-based community-mediated inquiry that supports teachers' and African American students' learning. Second, Hyland and Meacham (2004) propose a Community Knowledge Centered model of transformative teacher education that is centered on the "important and vital knowledge" that community members possess and that educators can learn them (p. 123). "Community Scholars," a project of New Ways to Learn, is a third model for teacher learning from and with community members. In this project (summarized in Figure 2) "low-income" public housing residents: 1) teach the teachers and teacher candidates how to respect low-income family members in schools and 2) decide to become schoolteachers themselves". Ishibashi describes this program:

> Between 2002-present several classes of established teachers, teacher candidates, and aspiring teachers in classes at San Francisco State University and the City College of San Francisco have experienced learning with and from Community Scholars. In collaboration with tenant associations in publicly subsidized housing, educational

organizations, public schools, service learning and mentoring programs, partnerships

have created collaborative spaces where "low-income" community members teach the

teachers how to respect them, their children, and extended family/community

members, and they decide to become formal (credentialed) education teachers

themselves (Jean Ishibashi, 2006, *personal communication*).[12]

Figure 2 about Here

What distinguishes these three teacher education program approaches just discussed

from the research in previous sections of this chapter? With the possible exception of the

"funds of knowledge" ethnographic research collaboratives, each incorporates "authentic

cultural knowledge of students' home communities" (Hyland & Meacham, 2004, p. 114)

through sustained, reciprocal engagement with community participants' knowledge and ways

of being. To the extent that community knowledge is salient as both content and process,

these model approaches demonstrate important tenets of teacher education *practice* for

cultural well-being. As such, these teacher education approaches represent *emergent* venues

for cultural well-being *research* informed by the blues epistemology of the Black experience.

Research within a cultural well-being framework from this epistemological perspective:

benefits both teachers and the community; connects teaching and teacher education with the

"Black struggle for being"; creates social inquiry spaces for (teachers and communities to be

engaged in) the mutual investigation of the epistemic roots of the ideology of race (e.g.,

assaults on cultural blackness); and community building and social action in alliance with

other groups are thus grounded in group-affirming heritage knowledge. Finally, these social

inquiry spaces will provide opportunities for critical social and political investigation of

community needs, for spiritual ways of knowing and healing for Black consciousness and to identify with humanity's struggle for freedom.

The crux of the matter is whose social vision prevails in racial-social justice-oriented research and how can this research be a liberating resource for social change? That is, what is the role of culture, heritage, and identity in research to combat the system of knowledge that propels racism and other forms of oppression? This question must be asked of various collaborative research-for-change efforts that engage students, teachers, and families as "critical" co-researchers (Cahill, 2004; Hammond, 2001; Morrell, 2004). My own research, which has not been identified in earlier publications using the terms "cultural well-being,," has created "research-as-pedagogy" contexts that have engaged educators, parents, and researchers in reciprocal inquiry activities that have helped to illuminate the "requirements of black existence" understood as a condition of the general welfare (King, 1991b, 1992; 2005a, 2006; King & Mitchell, 1995). An important consideration in this body of work, as noted below, is to devise research methods that afford opportunities for critical investigation of community needs and cultural practice as well as teacher's knowledge and pedagogy:

> This methodology recognizes that particular knowledge of the world contained in people's daily cultural practice and social experience is not merely distorted by the dominant ideology. Rather, knowledge generated from and grounded in people's culture and experience can be liberating as well (King & Mitchell, 1995, p. 67)

Black Studies and Ethnic Studies programs, an under-utilized resource for teacher learning and research, can provide opportunities for future teachers to community knowledge traditions and to interrogate the limitations of dominant knowledge. For example, Kiang (2004) describes a range of programmatic strategies using Asian American studies in a K-12

/ university partnership program that engaged Asian American prospective teachers in the recovery and affirmation of their cultural heritage. This program also provided African American and other teachers of color with valuable lessons about cultural diversity. Kiang concludes that "ethnic studies programs can lead and sustain powerful interventions in these areas precisely because of their foundational commitments to educational equity and social justice and their holistic relationships to diverse students, families, and communities.

Oakes, Rogers, and Lipton (2006) developed and describe various university-supported social "design experiments" that involve collaborative public inquiry and organizing for school and community change. This "learning power" program includes numerous examples of teachers, teacher educators, researchers, parents, and students engaged in sustained, "empowering" inquiry-based learning and "teaching for change" using critical and qualitative methods of research. (Morrell's (2004) critical ethnography is a previously discussed example.) These scholars cite the democratic grassroots organizing of civil rights movement leader/teacher Ella Baker as a model for this "learning power" approach. However, Baker's democratic social change methodology included coalition building from a "strong autonomous" African American community base (Ransby, 2003, p. 100). In Baker's practice this meant developing people's knowledge of and appreciation of their own history, culture, and identity—in the worker education curricula and in the Freedom Schools that she inspired. As Woodson understood, such knowledge, from the ideological position of democracy, can facilitate multi-racial alliances but is required to support the "space of being" marginalized groups need in a democratic society.

Teacher education research documents white teachers' resistance to investigating their "emotional investment in particular beliefs, assumptions, and worldviews" (Urrieta &

Reidel, 2006, p. 282) and their resistance adversely affects teacher educators of color and others who are committed to equitable education (Scott, 2003). However, framing teacher education research within the limited terms of a demographic imperative impelled by the predominate number of white teachers is an epistemologically inadequate "logic of inquiry" (Stanfield, 1993). Such a rationale risks remaining circumscribed within the limits of white teachers' mis-education and dysconsciousness (King, 2005b). Teachers need knowledge and skills that will enable them to teach in ways that foster students' intellectual and social development without diminishing the cultural identities, languages, and heritages of people of color. Educational and research purposes need to be broaded to include community perspectives. However, community participants involved in teacher learning also need opportunites to develop a critical understanding of their lived realities, cultural practice, and social histories. Researchers need methods of inquiry that can capture the beneficial effects of such knowledge and that provide support for community members' roles in contributing to and assessing the social utility of teachers' knowledge and pedogogical skills in the context of community change and survival needs (Patillo-McCoy,1999). Knowledge of the societal episteme is required for all. The opportunity to use this liberating knowledge in inquiry-based partnerships for professional teacher preparation is akin to the mutuality between the audience and the blues performer. Such new forms of knowledge and accountability in collaborative teacher education research and practice within a cultural well-being framework have implications for "the very notion of knowledge and how our definitions of what counts as knowledge produce hierarchies of power that have both real and symbolic effects on people's lives" (Hyland & Meacham, 2004, p. 177).

Conclusion

Through the lens of a Black Studies analysis of the ideology of race, this chapter examines selected examples of critical and qualitative research in teacher education with racial-social justice aims. A focus on the value of community knowledge and marginalized epistemologies informs the discussion of four interrelated genres of critical and qualitative research "in, on, and for" teacher education. The chapter considers how and how well critical and qualitative methods of teacher education research value and use the social vision and epistemological perspectives of people of color. Also considered are models for collaborative research and practice that engage teachers and parents and community members in mutual learning.

The relevance of the blues epistemology for teacher education research is the authentic knowledge for cultural well-being this worldview perspective offers. The blues has been described as "a dispossessed people's alternative to suffering and silence" (Davis, 1995, p. 84). What is missing in critical and qualitative teacher education research and practice? Effective ways to use the "subjugated knowledge" of the dispossessed as a liberating educational tool for cultural well-being and human freedom are lacking (Hyland & Meacham, 2004, p. 123). Also needed are spaces for social inquiry in which teachers, researchers, and community members can seek understanding in order to challenge the epistemic foundations of ideological racism in knowledge, research, and pedagogy. Historical understanding is crucial to address this crisis of knowledge in teacher education. At a time when "many people have lost hope in the possibility of liberal reform" in the U.S. (Bush, 2004, p. 11), West observes that it is time for a "blues nation to learn from a blues people"-- Black Americans. Yet, Black people's cultural survival has never been in greater

jeopardy. Duncan (2002) remarks that it is "fashionable nowadays to downplay and even dismiss race as a fact shaping the quality of life in the United States. . .in favor [of] class-based and gender-based approaches to understanding social oppression" (p. 93). It is even more fashionable to eschew anything that has to do with humanity's debt to Africa and the African heritage of African American people (Robinson, 2000).

Critical educators, as well as liberals and conservatives share a concern about whether racial/ethnic cultural identification "unifies" rather than "divides". Allen (2004) suggests a role for the subjugated knowledge of the oppressed in bringing about unity but within a transformed society:

> . . .people of color must provide the major source of knowledge, inspiration, and sacrifice in humanity's collective liberation from white racism . . .As people of color around the world engage in the struggle against global white supremacy, they should work to humanize both themselves and whites, *when strategic*". They should avoid the pull to follow the white model of humanity and instead replace repression with radical love. . . (p. 134, emphasis added)

This is the universal message the blues epistemology conveys regarding another possible way of "being in the world" (Reagon, 2001)—a way of being that is an urgently needed alternative to the "western bourgeois model" of the human (Wynter, 2006). This model falsely defines being human in terms of the anachronistic construct of race.

The spectacle of a white man, a prominent community leader, weeping openly on national television because rescuers had failed to arrive in New Orleans after hurricane Katrina to save not only Black lives but white people as well, suggests a vital lesson the blues has affirmed for quite a long time:

> If we are ever going to be a civilized [nation], we are going to have to begin to work as
>
> hard for the weakest and most maligned among us as we do for the strongest and most
>
> sympathetic. If we don't, any of us could one day face the consequences. (Sothern,
>
> 2005, p. 22)

Methods for transformative engagement with the Black experience, including study of the

overcoming human spirit and conditions that continue to give rise to the hopeful

determination of the blues, expressed in the most maligned of American languages (African

American Home Language), offer a possible way out of the "utter terribleness of our new

millennium" (Baker, 2001, p. 10). A "blues epistemology" for critical and qualitative teacher

education research acknowledges Black people's humanity, articulates cultural well-being as

a reason for knowing, and allays a white discourse of guilt/innocence. We are all implicated.

Coda

> "It's all my fault/ I musta / Did somebody wrong. . .
>
> Everything that's happened / You know I am to blame.
>
> I'm gonna find me a doctor / Maybe my luck will change.
>
> My mother told me these days / Would surely come.
>
> I wouldn't listen to her / Said I gotta have some fun.
>
> I musta / Did somebody wrong . . ."
>
> –Elmore James, Blues Artist Extraordinaire

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