Educators’ Understandings of White Privilege and Its Impact on Professional Roles

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
BY

Lorraine Marie Mitchell

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Frank Guldbrandsen, Ph.D.

March 2009

© Lorraine Marie Mitchell 2009

Acknowledgements

Although I have spent many solitary hours composing this paper, many people have been with me on this journey.

Thank you to Mary Hermes and Frank Guldbrandsen, whose class discussions especially ignited my ideas for this dissertation.

Thank you to Tom Peacock for first opening up the world of doctoral level qualitative research to me, and then completing the circle as committee Chair.

Thank you to Joyce Strand for your willingness to jump into my committee and saving the day for me.

Thank you to Mary Ann Marchel for asking, "How is your paper coming along?" and taking the time to really listen.

Thank you to Helen Mongan-Rallis for stepping up to help me when I know your plate was already so full.

Thank you, again, to Frank for being an "awesome" advisor. Telling me this challenge was doable was exactly what I needed to hear.

Last, but not least, thank you to Terrie Shannon, my mentor through the years and my editor. You have helped me with all kinds of details; my head has lost count of them, but my heart has not.

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my family.

To Mitch, who didn't realize he had married a professional student until it was too late, thank you for your love, encouragement and faith in me through all this.

To Will and Cam, who were and continue to be my inspirations to examine important issues of our time, thank you for letting me be your crazy mom.

I also dedicate this work to my mother and father, Gene and Arline Miller.

I know my work ethic and perseverance to succeed came from both of you.

I can't begin to tell you how much your words of support and pride in me came through at the times I needed it most.

Abstract

The gap between the demographic of white teachers and administrators working in ethnically and socioeconomically diverse schools and their students continues to widen. While federal 2003-2004 statistics indicate that 84% of teachers and administrators are white, 2006-2007 statistics indicate that 43% of students represent minority populations and continues to increase. White educators bring different life experiences with them that are often middle-class, English–speaking-only backgrounds. These backgrounds, researchers argue, make it difficult for white teachers and administrators to act as role models for their ethnically and socioeconomically diverse students, or to look at curriculum and instruction through a lens of multicultural pedagogy.

The purpose of this study was to better understand perceptions of white privilege that educators hold and how those perceptions impacted their teaching and administrative roles. Data was gathered and analyzed from interviews of educators who worked in two different ethnically and socioeconomically diverse elementary schools. Minnesota Department of Education Report Card statistics were used to determine ethnic and socioeconomic diversity. Participants in this phenomenological study were identified through purposeful sampling. Field observations were done at both schools with information used to describe the context of the study.

Among the findings were perceptions of white privilege varied greatly between the novice teacher and other experienced educators, and educators were aware of the

power they possessed as a result of their privilege. Findings also included indications that perceptions of white privilege led educators to have a particular awareness of the lived experiences of their ethnically and socioeconomically diverse students and families. Impact on professional roles was based on this awareness. Among the findings of how professional roles were impacted were educators' awareness family circumstances affected student learning and that high expectations were needed for all students. Further findings emerged from administrators that indicated they based many of their decisions on principles of multicultural education. Findings from experienced teachers revealed periodic work in opposition to the status quo.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 1

Introduction 1

Introduction 1

Problem Statement 3

Purpose Statement 4

Research Questions 4

Previous Studies 4

Significance of the Study 6

Assumptions of the Study 6

Limitations of the Study 7

Delimitations of the Study 7

Definitions of Terms and Concepts 8

Summary 8

Chapter 2 10

Review of the Literature 10

Introduction 10

A Brief History of Multicultural Education in Teacher Education 10

White Privilege 13

Development of White Racial Identity 13

Privilege and Power 16

White Privilege within Social Justice Literature 21

Developing Critical Consciousness 23

White Teachers in Diverse Settings 25

Color Blindness 25

Teaching Pedagogy 27

White Administrators in Diverse Schools 29

Administrators' Perceptions of Racism in Schools 29

Multicultural Education: Meaning for Administrators 32

Summary 33

Chapter 3 35

Methodology 35

Introduction and Methodological Overview 35

Researcher's Lens 35

Human Science Perspectives 37

Research Sample and Setting: Contextual Descriptions 38

Newton Elementary Magnet School 39

Newton's Neighborhood 40

Newton Interviews: Profiles 41

Annie- Administrator 41

Twylla- Experienced Teacher 41

Gordon Language Arts Magnet School 41

Gordon's Neighborhood 43

Gordon's Interviews: Profiles 43

Ann- Administrator 43

Susan- Administrator 43

Stella- Experienced Teacher 44

Summer- Experienced Teacher 44

Marie- Novice Teacher 44

Procedures 45

Data Analysis and Interpretation 47

Summary 49

Chapter 4 50

Presentation of the Findings 50

Introduction 50

Perceptions of White Privilege 51

Differing Perceptions 51

Awareness of Power 52

Power to Make Choices 53

Power to do Things on Your Own Behalf and for Others 54

Power to Believe in Self and Others 55

Looking Through a Different Lens 57

Reconciling Students' Reality Within a Privileged Life 60

Impact on Educators' Roles 65

Family Circumstances Affected Student Learning 65

Parents' Love and Aspirations for Children Recognized 70

Curriculum Connected to Students' Lives 71
High Expectations Needed for all Students 75
Social-emotional Goals Had High Priority 78
Administrators' Decisions Based on Key Principles of
Multicultural Education 80
Teachers Worked in Opposition to the Status Quo...83
Work in Ethnically and Socioeconomically Diverse Settings:
Extraordinary Challenges, Extraordinary Commitment 84
Summary 87
Chapter 5 89
Discussion of Findings...89
Introduction..89
Perceptions of White Privilege Held by Educators 89
Differing Perceptions 90
Awareness of Power 91
Looking Through a Different Lens 93
Reconciling Students' Reality Within a Privileged Life...................................94
How Educators' Perceptions of White Privilege Impact Their Roles 96
Family Circumstances Affected Student Learning 96
Parents' Love and Aspirations for Children Recognized 98
Curriculum Connected to Students' Lives 100
High Expectations Needed for all Students 101

Social-emotional Goals Had High Priority 103

Administrators' Decisions Based on Key Principles of

Multicultural Education 104

Teachers Worked in Opposition to the Status Quo..106

Work in Ethnically and Socioeconomically Diverse Settings:

Extraordinary Challenges, Extraordinary Commitment 107

In Conclusion 108

Limitations 110

Implications...111

Recommendation for Further Research 113

References...115

Appendix A 123

Letter of Recruitment for Teachers...123

Appendix B 124

Letter of Recruitment for Administrators 124

Appendix C 125

Consent Form for Novice or Experienced Teachers..125

Appendix D...128

Consent Form for Administrator...128

Appendix E 131

Interview Questions for Novice Teachers..131

Appendix F...133

Interview Questions for Experienced Teachers 133

Appendix G 135

Interview Questions for Administrators...135

Appendix H 137

Stages and Phases of White Racial Identity Development……………………137

List of Tables

Table 1. Demographics of Participants 39

She is white; her name is Sandy.
He is African American; his name is TreyVaughn.
It is the first day of school.
She wakes up for work in her double bed with matching linens.
He wakes up for school on the couch.
She makes herself a breakfast of gourmet coffee and organic cereal.
He makes himself a glass of Tang.
She picks out a pair of shoes that matches her outfit.
He puts on a pair of shoes that are too small.
She drives to work in her Subaru.
His mother's car has not been running; big brother runs to the bus stop with him and they ride the city bus.
As she drives to work she wonders if the co-op will be open tonight; she needs to pick up some spritzer and bread
As he rides the bus, he wonders who will pick him up after school.
She walks into her classroom to teach.
He walks into his classroom to learn.
Good morning, TreyVaughn, I am your new teacher, Sandy.

L. Mitchell

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Introduction

What will TreyVaughn's fate be this year? Will Sandy understand what TreyVaughn faces daily even before he walks through her classroom door? Will the educators in leadership positions at TreyVaughn's school willingly provide his mother a ride to school so she will not miss open house during the first week of school? What does Sandy or the administrators at her school believe TreyVaughn is capable of in her classroom? Do they believe all children are worthy of receiving a rich, challenging and thoughtful curriculum (Delpit, 2006)? Do the educators believe that the behavior problems or the appearance of not wanting to learn in their classrooms resides in students such as TreyVaughn or stems from their own beliefs and behaviors in the school?

These questions are raised out of concern and belief that white teachers and administrators who cannot identify with or who do not come from the same ethnic or socioeconomic background as their students may have difficulty being effective in helping those students live up to their intellectual, emotional and social potential (Nieto, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 1995; Landsman, 2006a; Kohl, 1994; Hancock, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 1994).

Educators such as Sandy must know their students in order to be good teachers, but first of all, they must know themselves. Palmer (1998) wrote, " The work required to 'know thyself' is neither selfish nor narcissistic. Whatever self- knowledge we attain as teachers will serve our students and our scholarship well. Good teaching requires self-knowledge: it is a secret hidden in plain sight" (p. 3). What Palmer referred to as the "inner landscape" (p. 3) encompasses one's beliefs, attitudes and perceptions. Indeed, one of Landsman's (2006b) beliefs is that "[the] art of teaching is about our voices, our perceptions, along with those of the students we teach" (p. 222).

Nieto (2000), Landsman (2006a, 2006b), Kendall (2006), Howard (1999), Garrison-Wade and Lewis (2006) and Ladson-Billings (1994), would have white educators, such as Sandy dig even deeper into their inner landscape. They would have them do the critical work of "self-reflection and examination" (Landsman, 2006a, p. 17) in order to acknowledge their white privilege and have them think about how white privilege affects teaching and learning in their classrooms and how white privilege affects the decisions administrators make as they lead their schools.

Problem Statement

Little is known about the perceptions of white educators regarding white privilege and how those perceptions impact their educational roles. White teachers and administrators are increasingly becoming an ethnic minority in their schools and it is more likely they do not come from the same socioeconomic status as their students. Statistics available from the United States Department of Education indicate "between 1979 and 2006, the number of school-age children (children ages 5-17) who spoke a language other than English at home increased from 9 to 20 percent" (United States Department of Education, 2008). The percentage of public school students who were considered to be part of a racial or ethnic minority group "increased from 22 percent in 1972 to 31 percent in 1986 to 43 percent in 2006". 2003-2004 demographics also show that 84% of teachers and principals were white (United States Department of Education, 2008).

This white educator/minority student dichotomy brings concern from many educators (Nieto, 2000; Cochran-Smith, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Landsman, 2006a; Landsman & Lewis, 2006; Hancock, 2006). White teachers and administrators bring different life experiences with them that are often middle-class, English–speaking-only backgrounds. These backgrounds, research educators argue, make it difficult for white teachers and administrators to act as role models, to look at curriculum and instruction through a lens of cultural responsiveness (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Ladson-Billings and other research educators such as Delpit (2006), Young and Laible (2000) and Landsman and Lewis (2006) would also add that many white, middle-class teachers also look upon

diversity as a deficit instead of a strength of their diverse students, and that many do not have high expectations of their minority students.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to better understand individually held perceptions about white privilege and how those perceptions impact the educational roles of teachers and administrators.

In order to achieve this purpose, data were gathered from white teachers and administrators. In-depth interviews at two different school sites, which had been identified as ethnically and socioeconomically diverse, provided the data for this study. The researcher interviewed one novice teacher, three experienced teachers, and three administrators, for a total of seven participants. Fieldwork included observations at both schools in order to be able to add context to the study.

Research Questions

1. What perceptions do novice and experienced white teachers and administrators hold regarding white privilege?
2. How do white teachers' and administrators' perceptions impact their respective roles?

Previous Studies that have Addressed the Problem

Previous studies that have specifically addressed the perceptions of white privilege that teachers and administrators hold and how those perceptions have affected their roles with ethnically and socioeconomically diverse students are minimal.

Landsman (2006a, 2006b) wrote about white privilege and about being a white teacher in an ethnically and socioeconomically diverse setting. Landsman has also

studied other white teachers in diverse settings. Additionally, Landsman has addressed the danger of having low expectations for ethnically and socioeconomically diverse students and encouraged "subversive teaching" (p. 224), which Landsman wrote was "challenging the strictures that keep certain students from certain classes, requesting things that run counter to the way a school runs" (p. 224). As an English teacher, Landsman wrote of the importance of white teachers respecting the dialect of their African American students, but also underscoring the importance of exposing their students to *standard English*, where much of the economic power in the United States resides" (p. 226). In other words, teachers must help students maneuver in the culture in which they are aiming to work.

Privilege and power are but two themes that Howard (1999) wrote about as he recounted his path to awareness of white privilege. The relativity of privilege was also discussed by Howard, who recounted a lesson he learned in his young years as a teacher while being the only white staff person in a summer camp for inner-city high school students. Howard wrote:

> They confronted me with the fact that even though my family was hanging on by a toenail to the lower rungs of the middle class, our limited success had been achieved through the land we stole from the American Indians and the labor we stole from the Blacks, Asians and Hispanics. (p. 15)

Howard's writings (1999) also included discussion on Black identity development, white identity, and what it means to be white. Howard emphasized that the understanding of white identity development by teachers is basic in order to be able to reach across the cultural and racial divisions that exist.

Previous studies that have attempted to specifically address perceptions of privilege of white administrators and how those perceptions have affected their roles in ethnically and socioeconomically diverse schools cannot be found. Other studies exist that look at white educators in ethnically and socioeconomically diverse schools, but their focus is not specifically on white privilege or they exclude how their roles may be affected. Many of those studies add to the understanding of this study and will be addressed in Chapter 2. What needed to be added to these studies was a direct examination of teachers' and administrators' perceptions of white privilege plus an attempt to understand how those perceptions affected their professional roles.

Significance of the Study

A study that explores educators' perceptions of white privilege and the effect those perceptions have on their educational roles is important for several reasons. First, this study could simply provide those in leadership positions in schools with a starting point of readings for themselves and/or for their teachers for staff development. Second, although one cannot make generalizations from this research, perhaps the results could lend themselves as a starting point for educators who are in leadership capacity at their schools who wish to explore the issues of white privilege with district administrators.

Assumptions of the Study

This study assumed that if white teachers and administrators have an awareness of their privilege, they will be more likely to look at their ethnically and socioeconomically diverse students with an attitude and belief that all the children in their school are worthy of receiving a rich, challenging and thoughtful curriculum

(Darling –Hammond, 1995). A second assumption was that participants had some, albeit not identical perceptions of white privilege and that those perceptions would not be static.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited for several reasons. The first reason was the researcher has worked in both capacities, namely as a teacher and administrator, so the researcher had preconceived notions about teaching and administrative roles. The second reason was this study used purposeful sampling, which is not random. The final reason this study was limited was when analysis is dependent upon the narratives of the participants, if the participants are not equally articulate or perceptive (Seidman, 1998) the data will be impacted.

Delimitations of the Study

This study sought to understand individually held perceptions about white privilege and the possible impact these perceptions have on the execution of the roles of teachers and administrators. However, the study's intent was not to generalize the data from the two schools and seven educators to other white, female teachers and administrators or other schools.

Definitions of Terms and Concepts

1. *Whites:* Typically referring to those who are the original peoples of Europe.
2. *White Privilege:* "…To be born into an environment where one's legitimacy is far less likely to be questioned than would be the legitimacy of a person of color, be it in terms of where one lives, where one works, where one goes to school, or pretty much anything else. To be white is, even more, to be born into a system that has been set up for the benefit of people like you…" (Wise, 2005, p. xi).

3. *Ethnic and Socioeconomic Diversity:* At the two schools in this study, ethnic diversity referred to racially heterogeneous student populations coming from diverse home cultures that reflected their ethnic backgrounds. White students represented a small majority at one school and were not representative of the majority at the other school. Socioeconomic diversity meant that although the spectrum of socioeconomic status was represented in these schools, a large majority of students at both schools qualified for Free and Reduced Lunch, which is typically an indicator of lower socioeconomic status.
4. *Social Justice:* "A concern for social justice means looking critically at why and how our schools are unjust for some students. It means analyzing school policies and practices-the curriculum, textbooks, and materials, instructional strategies, tracking, recruitment and hiring of staff, and parent involvement strategies-that devalue the identities of some students while overvaluing others" (Nieto, 2000, p. 183).

Summary

Differences in ethnicity between students and their teachers and administrators continue to be more pronounced. White teachers and administrators make up 84% of the work force, a statistic that has decreased only 2% over the last 10 years. However, the percentage of students who represent racial or ethnic minority groups continues to increase, from 31% in 1996 to 43% in 2006 (United States Department of Education, 2008). Differences in socioeconomic status between ethnic minority students and their teachers and the school administrators are also found. Teachers and administrators are

often from middle-class families, while many ethnic minority families are often living within low income and poverty levels.

Some researchers ask, do white teachers and administrators believe all children are capable learners and worthy of receiving a rich, challenging and thoughtful curriculum (Delpit, 2006)? Some researchers suggest that white teachers and administrators should be examining their assumptions and beliefs about teaching children who are ethnically and socioeconomically different than they are. Some researchers also suggest that self examination is needed for teachers and administrators regarding white privilege, and how that privilege affects the teaching and learning in their classrooms and the decision making process of administrators. Because little is known about the perceptions of white privilege that teachers and administrators hold, this study examines those perceptions and how those perceptions impact their professional roles.

CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to understand educators' individually held perceptions about white privilege and how these perceptions affect the execution of their roles as teachers and administrators. The review of the literature will start with a brief history of multicultural education in teacher education as other studies often allude to this history. The history is noted here also to add context to the study and highlight the background knowledge with which many white teachers may enter into their first classrooms. The literature review will then examine the topics of white privilege, white teachers in diverse classrooms, and conclude with white administrators in ethnically and socioeconomically diverse schools.

A Brief History of Multicultural Education in Teacher Education

Multicultural education has its roots in the writings of such scholars as Dubois, who wrote *Black Reconstruction* in 1935 and *The Souls of Black Folk* in 1953; Woodson, who wrote *The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861* in 1968; Bond, who wrote *Negro Education in Alabama: A Study of Cotton and Steel* in 1939, and Wesley, who wrote *Richard Allen: Apostle of Freedom* in 1935. Although names such as Baker (1977), Banks (1973), Gay (1971) and Grant (1973) are considered to have played a major part in the framework and development of multicultural education, these educators, who were already working in ethnic studies, took their lead from the previously mentioned African American scholars and the African American ethnic studies movement (Banks, 1995). Phase One of the multicultural education movement consisted of both individual

educators and institutions incorporating ethnic studies into the curriculum of the schools and of teacher education programs (Banks, 1995). In seeing that ethnic studies were not enough to bring about “school reform that would respond to the unique needs of ethnic minority students and help all students develop more democratic racial and ethnic attitudes” (Banks, 1995, p. 10), a second phase of multicultural education emerged. This second phase had a goal to bring about “structural and systematic changes in the total school that were designed to increase educational equality” (p. 10).

During the second phase, in the aftermath of the killings at Kent State University and Jackson State University, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) formed a commission that published a statement in 1972, titled “No One Model American.” This statement was presented “in the interest of improving the quality of society through an increased social awareness on the part of teachers and teacher educators” (AACTE, 1972, p. 1). The statement addressed multicultural education from the standpoint of cultural pluralism. The authors of this statement wanted multicultural education to be about seeing differences as a positive force, accepting and supporting these differences and cultural diversity is a “fact of life in American society” (AACTE, 1972, p. 1). In accepting multicultural pluralism, one accepted the principle that there was “no one model American” (AACTE, 1972, p. 1).

In 1976 the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) required that teacher education put multicultural curricula into their programs by the year 1979 (Cochran-Smith, 2003). This focus on diversity was not only to be put into the curriculum, but to be made deliberate in faculty instruction and field experiences

(Wiedeman, 2002). This was an influential development because 80% of the teacher education programs were NCATE members (Banks, 1995).

In Phase Three, two other groups, people with disabilities and women, set forth an argument that they were victimized by society and schools and demanded "the incorporation of their histories, cultures, and voices" into school and higher education curricula (Banks, 1995, p. 11).

Nieto (2000) argued that although it appeared that the AACTE meant for diversity to include issues such as race and social justice, "what took place in classrooms and schools in the name of diversity was little more than window dressing" (p. 180). Nieto was critical of teacher education programs when she wrote, "In spite of enormous change that has taken place in our society, some schools and colleges of education are still functioning as if we were preparing teachers for the classrooms a half a century ago" (p. 181). She maintained that many ethnically and socioeconomically diverse students have experienced inequities in their lives at home and school and have not been able to reap the benefits of a democratic society. Nieto said it was time for teacher education faculty to help their mainly white candidates understand and apply the concepts of pluralism in their daily praxis. Nieto also indicated it was time for "practicing and prospective teachers…to learn how to promote the learning of all students, and to develop educational environments that are fair and affirming" (Nieto, 2000, p. 183). To conclude, Banks (1995) wrote that multicultural education is now in Phase 4, which includes the "development of theory, research, and practice that interrelate variables connected to race, class, and gender" (p. 11).

Within the literature of white privilege, what will be examined is: 1) development of white racial identity, 2) privilege and power, and 3) white privilege within the discourse of social justice.

White Privilege

Development of White Racial Identity

In 1984, Helms studied white racial identity and identified six stages in two different phases (Appendix H). Stages one through three are included in Phase One, where people become faced with moral dilemmas that bring them to an awareness to abandon racism. Stage One, the Contact Stage refers to whites who are not aware of their privilege and power and the benefits that come with being white. Stage Two, the Disintegration Stage, is described as the stage where whites become aware of their whiteness and start to question how their belief system came to be. Guilt and anxiety accompany this stage. Stage Three, the Reintegration Stage, finds whites embracing white supremacy attitudes again, in order to resolve their guilt and anxiety, their beliefs allowing them to think that minority groups are deserving of how society treats them (Helms, 1993).

Stages four through six are within Phase Two, which describes a person developing a non-racist identity. Whites enter Stage Four, the Pseudo-Independence Stage, when they acknowledge they have responsibility for the racism in society and start to confront the realization that they have benefited from it, whether intentionally or not. Stage Five, the Immersion/Emersion Stage, is identified as whites transitioning away from paternal attitudes of helping minority groups towards developing a desire to change attitudes within oneself. The final stage, Stage Six is called the Autonomy Stage, in

which whites begin to draw parallels between racism and other types of inequality and dominance (Helms, 1993).

In studying the phenomenon of white privilege, the researcher was most focused on the fourth, fifth and sixth stages, the stages of finding a non-racist identity because the delineations of those stages best described the participants for this study. However, the researcher was cognizant that awareness of white privilege is something not static or linear.

Although McIntyre (1997) studied white, female preservice teachers rather than practicing teachers, her work is classic and will briefly be mentioned here. McIntyre wrote that she did consider Helms' six stages. McIntyre acknowledged Helms' stages of white racial identity, but considered the development as more of a social activity than a moral dilemma. McIntyre thought about white racial identity as a social activity where identity was forever being created and recreated as the preservice teachers in her study involved themselves in reflection and discourse (McIntyre, 1997). McIntyre adds support to this current study, which acknowledges the phenomenon of white privilege as non-static, as ever evolving within the mindset of the educators.

Howard (1999) placed great importance upon white teachers coming to understand their own racial identity. He stated, "white identity is intrinsically tied to direct engagement across the cultural and racial divide" (p. 19) and felt teachers needed to understand their own racial identity in order to become effective teachers in multicultural schools. Howard acknowledged through his studies of Erikson's stages of identity development in children and adults, that identity confusion is a natural part of human development. Instead of being anxious about thinking differently and developing

new beliefs after leaving one's home during the late teens and early twenties, Howard came to believe to do so is a developmentally appropriate process. Howard wrote, "The affirmation I received from Erikson's nonjudgmental descriptive approach has served as a constant reminder for me to employ similar positive regard when working with my colleagues on issues of race and white identity formation" (1999, p. 84).

Kendall (2006) added further understanding of white Identity. Kendall wrote, "Separating whiteness and white privilege is a bit like trying to unscramble an egg-pulling apart the yolk and the albumen. Although different from one another, they are mixed together, inseparable" (2006, p. 41). She wrote this in response to an encounter she had with a young, female college student who adamantly told her:

> 'I don't want you to see me as white!' I was puzzled; she had very white skin and red hair. I wasn't sure I could see her as anything else. 'How would you like me to see you?' I asked. 'I want you to see me as Jane.' (2006, p. 41)

Kendall (2006) wrote that Jane's comments are a common sentiment among white people. "We see ourselves as individuals rather than as members of groups, and we often feel little connection to others in our racial category." Kendall (2006) further added that because our whiteness puts us in the dominant power group, we feel we can tell other white people how we want to be seen, how we want to be defined. "Generally we choose to be viewed as individuals and we take offense at those who point out our group membership" (p. 41).

Privilege and Power

Privilege confers power, whether the privilege is acknowledged or not. McIntosh (1986) gave her readers this visual of unacknowledged privilege:

> I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets which I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was 'meant' to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible, weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear, and blank checks. (p. 2)

McIntosh's invisible knapsack contained many things, including complexities. Jensen (2005) agreed that a social phenomenon like white privilege is complex. "In a white-Supremacist society, however, all white people have some sort of privilege in some settings" (p. 8) despite scenarios that exist, such as non-white managers having power over white supervisees or non-white, middle-class families having more amenities than white, impoverished families. "Whiteness consistently conveys certain privileges" (p. 8). Parts of the complexity of this phenomenon becomes apparent when gender is also added to the mix, as men generally, but not always, have more benefits in this society than women.

Wise (2005) concurred with this complexity: "the notion of privilege is a *relative* concept, as well as an absolute one; a point that is often misunderstood" (p. x). He went on to say, "This is why I can refer to myself as a 'privileged son' despite coming from a family that was not wealthy or even close to it" (p. x). While white students may argue that they are not from wealthy families and do not have a sense of power, Wise explained, "The fact remains that when all other factors are equal, whiteness matters and

carries with it great advantage" (2005, p. ix). After all, Kivel (2002) pointed out, privilege has carried such an advantage that "many of us gave up our unique histories, primary languages, accents, distinctive dress, family names and cultural expressions" to be considered white (p. 26).

Lending to the idea that the notion of privilege is a relative concept because of class, hooks (2000) wrote about her life growing up in the apartheid South. The division between the poor whites and the Blacks was "intense and "fraught with bitter conflict" (p. 111). The wealthier whites had given the name of white trash to the poor white people in order to separate them and make themselves feel more elite. Blacks knew that the poor, white people, because of their skin color, still had more power and privilege "than even the wealthiest of black folks" (p. 111). hooks explained the relationship this way:

> On the surface, at least, it made the lives of racist poor white people better to have a group they could lord it over, and the only group they could lord it over were black people. Assailed and assaulted by privileged white folks, they transferred their rage and class hatred onto the bodies of black people. (p. 111)

From privilege comes power. In Webster's 2001 Revised and Updated Dictionary, one definition of power is "the possession of control over others" (p. 562). In education, control over others can be found in numerous places. Administrators have direct and indirect control over students when they adopt a schedule that allows students to have recess before lunch as opposed to lunch before recess, or develop policies that make it difficult for families to easily participate with their children at their schools. Administrators have power over teachers in their hiring practices, when administrators

support one particular curriculum over another, and through how much money they allot to teachers for such things as field trips.

Elementary teachers wield power over their students, sometimes overtly by requiring such things as a bathroom pass in order to leave the classroom or allowing their students to munch on snacks past an arbitrarily chosen snack time. Sometimes the power teachers exercise over their students is subtler or even invisible as teachers decide what they are going to teach from the curriculum and how they are going to teach it. These are but a few examples of what Delpit (2006) described as issues of power that can be found in classrooms, one of five aspects of the culture of power in education.

A second aspect in Delpit's culture of power is that there are rules or codes to know if one is to participate in this culture of power. There are a certain acceptable language and dress that are used at school, for example. A third aspect in the culture of power is that the rules one must follow are already an ingrained part of the people who have the power; students from white, middle class families find more success in schools because the schools have rules that the white students understand and have at home. A fourth aspect in the culture of power is that to be told explicitly about what the rules are makes it easier to acquire that power; as an example, a student of color may meet with more success if told by teachers outright that some behavior or language is acceptable at home, but not at school. The final aspect is that those who possess the power are most often the ones who deny they have the power or are least aware they have the power. On the other hand, those who have less power in the culture of power are usually the first to be aware of the power that others have (Delpit, 2006).

These aspects in the culture of power are foundational for an important understanding. If white educators provide curriculum or plan opportunities that simply reflect white, middle class values, goals and dreams, Delpit (2006) argued, “is to ensure the maintenance of the status quo, to ensure that power, the culture of power, remains in the hands of those who are already have it” (2006, p. 28). White students who have already been immersed and indirectly or directly schooled into the culture of power have what is referred to as cultural capital. These students are more apt to do well in schools. Diverse students may not achieve the same level of success if they are taught by white teachers who are unaware of a culture of power (Delpit, 2006).

Schools are thought to be “our primary sorting institution, the first place where we distinguish the winners from the losers” (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2003, p. 113). School administrators and teachers do not have plaques on their doors that designate them as such, but they are gatekeepers because they often hold the keys to the gates of students’ futures. For example, educators teach students to read and speak effectively, but as important, they have the power to help them understand the importance of using those skills when they are away from their families and peers. When is it best to convey one’s thoughts in the language of the majority? When is it permissible to write with colloquialisms? Delpit (2006) wrote that if educators are aware of these rules or codes of power that can help students meet with success, they need to share them. Educators who do not share this information with their students are not acting in their students’ best interest. Additionally, if educators do not acknowledge that they are gatekeepers and that there are “gate keeping points” (p. 39) such as knowing when it is ok to speak in one’s

home language and dialect, then Delpit warned, “Pretending that gate keeping points don’t exist is to ensure that many students will not pass through them” (p. 39).

In their study of white elementary and secondary teachers, Henze, Lucas and Scott (1998) used Delpit’s culture of power ideas at a professional development institute as a starting point to promote discussion. The researchers found talking about racism and power made for difficult discussions for the teachers. The researchers wrote, “Indeed, one cannot discuss race and racism without discussing power and power differentials, but we are even less conscious of and willing to discuss power than to discuss race” (p. 193). In their analysis, Henze, Lucas and Scott (1998) focused on “one major source of the discomfort associated with addressing issues of racism, power and white privilege” (p. 205). The researchers wrote, “Participants may have assumed they were talking about the same thing when in fact they were using the same words to talk about different things” (p. 205). In other words, the teachers had different definitions for power and different points of reference as to what power meant to them. Some teachers looked at power positively while others looked at power as always having negative connotations (Henze, Lucas & Scott, 1998).

In his book, *We Can’t Teach What We Don’t Know*, Howard (1999) wrote, “every organization has its own circle of power” (p. 76) and those in power exert “disproportionate control over the decision-making process” (p. 76). Those in the circle of power were more often white, had some financial wealth and had access to privileged information. Howard argued for educators to become advocates and include *others* in the circle of power. Howard, an educator himself, also spoke critically of his white peers. He said it was time for white educators and the leaders in the white community to “take on

the responsibility of undoing white ignorance rather than relying on people from other racial groups to carry this burden" (p. 77).

One more way to look at power should be noted. Sleeter (1996) suggested a social movement metaphor should be used for multicultural education to understand a power shift took place from the 1970's to the 1990's. Sleeter wrote social movements "attempt to shift power from power holders toward the movement's constituent base. However, the natural constituent base that began as children of oppressed groups and their parents and their grassroots advocacy organizations switched over the years" (p. 242), to groups of educators who, Sleeter said, were mainly white. These white educators did not see themselves as the power holders, but instead looked at themselves as part of the constituent base. Sleeter wrote this "misses the entire point of power-redistribution" (1996, p. 242).

The next section will address: 1) white privilege within social justice literature and 2) developing critical consciousness.

White Privilege within Social Justice Literature

In reviewing the literature that focuses on white teachers and white administrators working in ethnically and socioeconomically diverse schools, key search words come to the surface. Words such as *equity* and *diversity* are among them, but one phrase that stands out above all of them is the term *social justice* (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Gorski; 2006, Karpinski & Lugg, 2006; Kohl, 2002; Lugg & Shoho, 2006; Marshall, 2004; McKenzie & Scheurich, 2004; McMahon, 2007; Nieto, 2000; Theoharis, 2007; Wiedeman, 2002). For the purposes of this educational study, the researcher is using Nieto's (2000) terminology of social justice:

> A concern for social justice means looking critically at why and how our schools are unjust for some students. It means analyzing school policies and practices-the curriculum, textbooks, and materials, instructional strategies, tracking, recruitment and hiring of staff, and parent involvement strategies-that devalue the identities of some students while overvaluing others. (p. 183)

The literature on social justice is very broad. The intention of this brief section is to make the reader cognizant that within the broader literature of social justice, attitudes and beliefs of teachers and administrators towards ethnically and socioeconomically diverse student bodies, among other marginalized populations, are often addressed. These attitudes and beliefs include, although not always labeled as such, perceptions of white privilege.

Landsman (2006a) posits that becoming aware of issues of social justice begins with one's own perceptions of white privilege. In writing about the path from perceptions of white privilege to social justice, Landsman (2006a) said we must first see the privileges offered to us simply because of the color of our skin. From that vantage point, Landsman wrote, "We can begin to understand the privilege of class, of growing up with money and access; or the privilege of being a male, or that of being a heterosexual in a world that demonizes those who are not" (p. 24). Landsman added, "The more clearer and the more powerful this information becomes for us, the more we cannot deny the truths we are learning" (p. 24).

How would a teacher or administrator behave who was concerned about social justice? Educators argue to be in education with an eye for social justice, one must be both political and practical, a mix of change agent and one that helps students come to

understand what is needed to be successful in their schools, communities and society (Kendall, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Landsman, 2006a; Sleeter, 1996; Wiedeman, 2002).

Developing Critical Consciousness: Unveiling of Reality

While Landsman (2006a) gave us a way to move from awareness of white privilege to a cognizance of social justice, Freire's work added to the framework of this study by thinking about awareness in a different light. First, note what Shaull wrote in his forward to Freire's (2000) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*:

> There is no such thing as a *neutral* educational process. Education either functions as an instrument that is used to facilitate the integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, or it becomes 'the practice of freedom,' the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world. (p. 34)

When teachers become aware that education is not a neutral process, using the power they hold in their classrooms for their students' advantage and as a result go against their districts', schools' and even their own principals' policies in order to "take action against the oppressive elements of reality after learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions", they have developed what Freire (2000) called "conscientizacao" or critical consciousness (p. 35). Critical consciousness allows a teacher to see that their teaching pedagogy or other teachers' pedagogies may have elements of oppression. Freire (2000) warned teachers that these elements of oppression may be found in their practice if their attitudes or pedagogy contained such examples as:

1. the teacher teaches and the students are taught;
2. the teacher knows everything and the students know nothing;
3. the teacher thinks and the students are thought about;
4. the teacher chooses the program content, and the students (who are not consulted) adapt to it;
5. the teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his or her own professional authority, which she and he sets in opposition to the freedom of the students; (p. 73)

Freire (2000) used these examples and others to describe his concept of “banking education” (p. 73) where teachers and students are at opposite ends; know-all teachers deposit their knowledge into know-nothing students. He suggests that the teachers abandon the banking concept way of teaching and move towards a “problem-posing” (p. 79) pedagogy, described by Freire as a “posing of the problems of human beings in their relations with the world” (p. 79). Freire spoke of problem-posing education as intentional; people teach each other and are “jointly responsible for a process in which they all grow” (p. 80). Problem-posing education is the practice of freedom and an “unveiling of reality” (p. 81). Teachers (and students) become conscious of the “way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation” (p. 83).

In writing about successful teachers of African American students, Ladson-Billings (1994) also acknowledged that education is not neutral when she wrote, “[Education] is not an apolitical enterprise. It serves a function in society and individual teachers can act *consciously* [italics mine] to support or oppose those social functions or

they can act unconsciously (and mindlessly) in ways that *invariably* support them" (p. 134). Ladson-Billings (1994) applauded teachers who developed what she called an "oppositional nature" (p. 130) and wrote, "In the classrooms, working in opposition to the system is the most likely road to success for students who have been discounted and disregarded by the system" (p. 130).

hooks (1994) also spoke to the practice of freedom, which was included in the earlier passage by Shaull (2006) and added support to the idea of working against the status quo that Ladson-Billings (1994) argued for. When hooks wrote, *Teaching to Transgress*, she said, "celebrating teaching that enables transgressions- a movement against and beyond boundaries. It is that movement which makes education the practice of freedom" (p. 12). hooks warned, however, that the current educational systems are so ingrained in the banking system, in the status quo of how students are thought about and how oppressive pedagogy gets expressed in the classroom, that educators are rewarded more for not teaching against the grain and often face negative consequences when they do (hooks, 1994).

The next section will address white teachers in ethnically and socioeconomically diverse settings that includes: 1) color blindness and 2) teaching pedagogy.

White Teachers in Diverse Settings

Color blindness

Although originally written in 1979, Paley's book, *White Teacher*, went beyond the majority of multiculturalist thinking of teachers at the time, which was, "There is no color difference in my classroom. All my children look alike to me" (p. 12). Paley wrote of one African American mother's response to her after hearing those words:

> What rot," said Mrs. Hawkins. "My children are black. They don't look like your children. They know they're black and we want it recognized. It's a positive difference, an interesting difference, and a comfortable natural difference. At least it could be so, if you teachers learned to value differences more. What you value, you talk about. (p. 12)

Paley wrote about her own struggle of being able to mention color in her classroom, but she recognized where this struggle came from:

> When I was little we never referred to the color of the cleaning lady's skin. Of course, we would not say, 'nigger.' But in her presence, we would never say colored, black, brown, skin, hair, maid or Negro. In other words, we showed respect by completely ignoring black people as black people. Color blindness was the essence of the creed. (p. 9)

Wise (2005) added to the discourse on color blindness with the telling of his experiences when white teachers came up to him at a conference where he had spoken and they try to tell him that they do not see the color of their students; "I treat all my kids the same" (p. 16). Wise writes, "This is neither true nor desirable, as their kids in fact do have a race, and their race matters, because it says a lot about the kinds of challenges they are likely to face" (p. 16). Wise (2005) continued:

> To not see color is, as Julian Bond has noted, to not see the consequences of color; and if color has consequences, which it surely does, yet you've resolved not to notice the thing that provokes those consequences, the odds are pretty good you'll inadequately serve the needs of the students in question every time. (p. 16)

Sleeter (1993) put it in much the same way, " …[People] profess to be color-blind when trying to suppress negative images they attach to people of color…" (p. 161).

Teaching Pedagogy

As the researcher wrote in a previous section, multicultural education in teacher education has gone through various phases. There was a period where teacher education candidates graduated from their programs thinking they would be "doing" (Banks, 1989, p. 3) multicultural education in their classrooms if they focused largely on having books that depicted peoples of many color, had skin colored crayons available for their ethnically diverse students during art and if they included celebrations such as Kwanzaa in their curriculum. Multicultural education includes these teaching strategies, but multicultural education, as Banks (1995) suggested, is largely about school reform so that students who are from racially, ethnically and socioeconomically diverse populations will "experience educational equality" (p. 3). Also mentioned previously, females and people with disabilities have been added as populations that do not experience educational equity and so educators also argue for school reform for those populations.

Ayers and Ford (2006) asked, "Is there a distinctly urban pedagogy" (p. 196) that white teachers who find themselves in inner city schools can look toward for guidance, if equality is the main goal? Ayers and Ford argued that the problem for teachers is to decide how much they should take into account the complicated lives of their students, students who may well be living in poverty, in complex family circumstances, with family members who may be wrestling with drug or alcohol addictions and/or mental health issues. Ayers and Ford (2006) also argued that the term, city, "increasingly is code for the poor, the nonwhite, the immigrant, the economically marginal" (p. 197), so white

teachers must also recognize that along with poverty, the race of their students matters, as well. Ayers and Ford tell teachers, “an urban pedagogy must be built on the strengths of the city, the hope and the promise of city kids and families, on the capacities of city teachers” (2006, p. 198).

Whether it is called urban pedagogy, culturally relevant teaching or multicultural education, authors such as Delpit (2006), Garrison-Wade and Lewis (2006), Ladson-Billings (1994), Lawrence-Lightfoot (2003), McGee Banks (1989), Middleton, Coleman & Lewis (2006) and Sleeter (2006) offer white teachers a variety of ideas and suggestions. Their suggestions advance the goals of eliminating inequities that ethnic and socioeconomic diverse students encounter. They encourage teachers to:

1. be critical of the system they are working in and do not be afraid to take a stand against the status quo regarding curriculum, practice or policy that does not help students; students come first-be aware of the power teachers have to help students;
2. take opportunities to examine personal stereotypes, experiences, one’s own cultural background and place in the predominant, white American culture;
3. examine personal assumptions about ethnically and socioeconomically diverse families in an effort to honor and respect students’ home culture and understand that the relationship between teacher and family is complex; understand that all parents want what is best for their children;
4. provide an in-depth multicultural curriculum that is meaningful to students’ lives, and

5. help students understand the imperfect community and society they live in and give them the knowledge, skills and attitudes to change it for the better.

Codell (1999), a white teacher, told about her first year of teaching in a diverse, Chicago public school. Her story was full of examples that indicated she understood the kind of urban pedagogy that Ladson-Billings and others seemed to be writing about. Codell's book contained numerous examples of working against the status quo and for her desire to use culturally relevant curriculum. One example was that Codell set up a classroom library with her own funds because she did not see merit for her students in using the prescribed reading textbooks. "What for? Grown-ups don't read textbooks unless they're forced" (p. 29). She wrote that her books looked beautiful in the bookcase and hid the bullet hole in a window that never got repaired.

The next portion of the literature review will focus on two issues pertinent to this study. These issues include: 1) administrators' perceptions of racism in their schools and 2) the meaning multicultural education has for administrators.

White Administrators in Ethnically and Socioeconomically Diverse Schools

Administrators' Perceptions of Racism in Schools

Although this study, with its particular research questions, does not use the word *racism*, its concept, "the belief that one's own race is superior" (Webster's Dictionary, 2001, p. 591), is the broader parameter on which this study is based. White privilege is based on white skin and when one opens a book that examines racism, white skin or white people become the topic within the first few pages (Griffin, 1989; Jensen, 2005; Kivel, 2002; Mazel, 1998; West, 2001). While the focus here is specifically on educators'

white privilege, literature that added further perspective to this study addressed administrators' perceptions of racism and so it is included in this section.

The vast majority of people enter the field of education to become teachers because they want to make a difference in the lives of people. Administrators, who most often come from the ranks of teachers, are no different. It has already been established that more and more white educators find themselves teaching and caring for students in diverse settings, so when they are accused of being racist when they go into the field of education to make a difference, it provokes disbelief and outrage (Young & Laible, 2000).

Young and Laible (2000) identified and discussed three levels, three manifestations of racism. (1) The individual manifestation- where a white person, for example, willfully causes harm to a Chicano person, simply because of skin color. (2) The institutional manifestation-which includes how schools are organized, the curriculum that is chosen and how the administrators choose to use their budgets, which may not be to the benefit of all students, and (3) the societal manifestation- where one race is favored over other races because that race's values, culture, and expectations attached to that race dominate in society (Young & Laible, 2000). Young and Laible argued that in order to truly rid schools of racism, white administrators must recognize and understand their roles in all three manifestations. Ryan (2003) pointed out that institutional racism is particularly serious because administrators have substantial day-to-day influence over teachers in their schools and schools are places where racism "is often most evident" (p. 145).

Ryan's (2003) study also addressed personal and institutional manifestations of racism. Ryan's data revealed that administrators were more apt to call racist actions as stereotyping, and did not readily see what was happening in their schools as institutional racism, but individual prejudice, instead. McMahon (2007) pointed to this as well, writing, even in the face of overwhelming evidence that minority students are marginalized because of school policy, administrators still want to believe that racism does not happen in their schools (McMahan, 2007). McMahan's findings from her study of white administrators indicated "the participants struggled with even talking about the impacts of whiteness, racism and anti-racism on experiences of schooling" (p. 693).

Evans' (2007) research added perspective to this study in her examination of administrators' "sensemaking" (p. 162) about race and demographic change. Evans' findings highlighted a complexity faced by principals. Principals may be trying to challenge or change the status quo when they are still making sense of their own racial identities and figuring out where they stand in the sociopolitical landscape. Just as teachers must know their students so they can shape their classrooms accordingly, administrators must know their schools so they can "shape and influence the interpretation of issues and events that take place" (p. 162). And just as teachers must first know themselves so they understand why they shape their classrooms and respond to their students in the manner they do, administrators must "first interpret the meanings of the issues and events for themselves" (p. 162). Evans further wrote that to make sense of things, administrators "draw from various individual, social and institutional contexts to read meaning into the situations they must interpret. From this, leaders determine what to emphasize, downplay, or ignore in their words, actions, behavior, and decision making"

(p. 162). If an administrator claims to be sensitive to minority hiring practices, but decides not to hire an African American applying for a teaching position because she views the applicant as weak compared to white applicants based on the superficial appearance of a resume or expectations of dress, for example, Evans' wrote that this suggests the administrator may still be making decisions based on white norms. Personal interpretation of how an African American teaching applicant should *be*, led to a shaping of school hiring practices. Making educational decisions based on white norms is a form of racism, which brings the reader back to Young and Laible's (2000) ideas on institutional racism. Young and Laible wrote, "in contrast to individual racism, [institutional racism] is much less blatant in schools but does more harm because it occurs daily and is enacted by white educators, many of whom do not realize their actions are harmful" (p. 376).

Multicultural Education: Meaning for Administrators

It was established earlier in this chapter that multicultural education is more than teachers having books that mirror the ethnicity of the students in their classrooms or more than celebrating particular holidays that honor events or people who have made significant contributions to society. Gorski (2006) argued that the kind of multicultural education that Delpit (2000) and others spoke of, takes "a real examination and a plan to eliminate racism" (2006, p. 63). Drawing upon the field's "pioneering and leading voices" (2006, p. 64) of Nieto (2000), Sleeter (1996), and Banks (1995), Gorski reminded educators that multicultural education is " a political movement and process that attempts to secure social justice for individuals and communities, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, home language, sexual orientation, dis(ability), religion, socioeconomic status, or

any other individual or group identity" (p. 65). Gorski (2006) warned that social justice can only be done through school reform which is comprehensive and starts with a "critical analysis of power and privilege" (p. 65).

If an administrator is aware of white privilege, then using Landsman's (2006a) idea that becoming aware of issues of social justice begins with one's own perceptions of white privilege, should lead an administrator to conceive of multicultural education in the ways that Nieto, Sleeter and Banks had originally envisioned. How school administrators conceive these key principles of multicultural education can determine how they lead their diverse schools. Their conceptions of multicultural education can determine what curriculum and assessments they support, how and why they recruit and budget for the faculty and support staff they do, how and why they emotionally support the in-school and after-school programs for students and families and more importantly, how they finance those programs with their discretionary funds. Administrators' conceptions of multicultural education can also determine how they view the families of their students and interact with the neighborhoods their diverse schools are in, and what professional development opportunities they give to their teachers (Delpit, 2006; Garrison-Wade & Lewis, 2006; Gorski, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Young & Laible, 2000).

Summary

Evidence points towards a continuation of the demographics of a majority of white educators leading and teaching in increasingly ethnically and socioeconomically diverse schools. In order to be effective leaders and teachers in these diverse schools, research points towards a particular way of perceiving oneself, one's students, and one's society as necessary.

There is a wealth of information that has been written on white teachers and white privilege in our society. Newer studies are surfacing that address racism and how teachers and administrators view it in their classrooms and schools. However, an aspect of this study that makes it distinct from the existing body of literature is that this research looks at perceptions of white privilege directly with both teachers and administrators and how those perceptions impact their roles.

In the following chapter, the author will explain an overview of methods used and rationale for using them. Researcher's role and lens used in the study have also been explained, in addition to research sample and setting, context of the study, how the data were gathered and finally, how the data were analyzed and interpreted.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

Introduction and Methodological Overview

The purpose of this study was to better understand individually held perceptions about white privilege and the impact these perceptions might have on the execution of educational roles of teachers and administrators. This study used a phenomenological framework for in-depth interviewing of seven participants. In addition, the researcher also spent time observing in each of the elementary schools that participants worked in, in order to add context to the study. Interviews were analyzed using HyperRESEARCH, a computerized qualitative analysis program in addition to conventional analysis.

Researcher's Lens

Moustakas (1994) wrote that heuristic inquiry is a process that begins with a question or problem that the researcher hopes to find an answer to. He stated that, "the question is one that has been a personal challenge and puzzlement in the search to understand one's self and the world in which one lives" (p. 17). This is true in the case of this study. Although consciously unbeknownst to the researcher, the personal puzzle of white privilege was begun many years ago when the researcher had just started teaching. The setting was a privately run nursery school. A vast majority of the white parents of the young, white students held professional, white-collar jobs. Like the researcher, all the teachers were white. Her personal life mirrored that of her students and families. The researcher had high expectations for her students. Many of their parents were doctors, lawyers and professors; in the researcher's eyes they had a multitude of opportunities open to them. The sky appeared to be the limit for her students.

The puzzle continued as the researcher became a teacher and director of a childcare facility run by a local county social service department, where many of the parents were young and single. Some of the single parents were going to school and holding part-time blue-collar jobs, some of the parents were unemployed. Students coming from two parent families were in the minority. Those parents were almost entirely working in blue-collar jobs. Some of the students were African American, Native American, Hmong or were of mixed race. Again, all the teachers were white. The researcher's personal, comfortable life hardly resembled her students' lives. It was difficult for the researcher to relate to the families and at times she was not entirely sensitive to their struggles of unemployment and other difficult situations such as abuse of drugs and alcohol that can come as a result of societal and internal oppression. Although wanting to be the best teacher possible, she had little experience trying to take into account what her non-white and poverty level students may have been living through on a day-to-day basis. Her expectations for them, as compared to her previous white students may not have been as high.

Many years have passed since these experiences. The researcher has very different perceptions and a way of thinking about herself as a white educator in the nurturing, teaching and learning of non-white and poverty level students. An awareness of benefits given or not given to certain students because of their ethnic and socioeconomic status became evident to her. An awareness of white privilege developed as a result of examining personal values, beliefs and assumptions. The puzzle has been revealed to the researcher, but is not finished and may not ever be. This personal awareness of white privilege is the lens through which this study was conceived and has

been carried out, and was used to examine the literature and interviews in order to try to fill in more pieces of the puzzle. So from that standpoint, this study has a heuristic component.

Human Science Perspectives

In this study of human experience, the aim was to "capture data from the inside of the actors" (Josselson & Lieblich, 2001, p. 275), to capture educators' perceptions of white privilege in the context of their everyday lived experiences in diverse schools.

The researcher took components from two different human science perspectives in doing this research and in its data synthesis. The two perspectives used are referred to by Moustakas (1994) as empirical phenomenology and heuristics. In using empirical phenomenology, the researcher carried out in-depth interviews, with the assumption that meaning would emerge from the descriptive narratives of each participant as they talked about their experiences. Participants' individual perceptions of white privilege and how perceptions impacted their roles would come to be understood by the researcher solely through examination of the educators' "subjective, first-person perspectives" (Smith, 2007, p. 189).

In using a component of the heuristic perspective, the researcher, as alluded to in the previous section, took a personal "puzzlement" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 17) and began the study from that personal perspective. The researcher also used a heuristic perspective in attempting to keep the research participants "visible in the examination of the data and especially in the individual portraits as they continue to be portrayed as whole persons" (Douglass & Moustakas, as cited in Moustakas, 1994, p. 21).

Research Sample and Setting: Contextual Descriptions

Using selective or purposeful sampling (Seidman, 1998) by reviewing statistics from the state's department of education, two schools were preliminarily chosen. The intent was to involve white educators in the most diverse settings as possible in the Midwest. Those two schools were Gordon (pseudonym) Language Arts Magnet and Newton (pseudonym) Magnet Elementary schools, which had diverse populations of students ranging from preschool through grade five. A magnet school is a school operated by a public school district set up with special programs and/or curriculum in order to attract students who would not normally leave their homogeneous white schools and neighborhoods. Magnet schools receive additional funding for students, teachers, supplies and their programs. In other words, the effort is to integrate the schools with more white students by enticing them with enhanced programs and resources. Both schools were chosen for the study because of their ethnic and socioeconomic diversity and both the schools had been previously designated as magnet schools for the same reason, their ethnic and socioeconomic diversity.

Following is a brief description of the schools and some examples of what the public can see inside, displayed on the school walls. Also, because neither educators nor schools function in a vacuum, there is contextual information that includes the neighborhoods the schools were built in. Brief descriptions of each participant give further context to this study and help give a more focused picture of them. These descriptions are located within their respective school information. In addition, Table 1 provides an overview of the participants' demographics.

Table 1

Demographics of Participants

Name	School	Position	Teaching status	Professional Experience
Annie	Newton	Administrator	Experienced	32 years
Twylla	Newton	Teacher-Grade 2	Experienced	25 years
Ann	Gordon	Administrator	Experienced	10+ years
Susan	Gordon	Administrator	Experienced	10 years
Stella	Gordon	Teacher-Grade 2	Experienced	25 years
Summer	Gordon	Teacher-Preschool	Experienced	32 years
Marie	Gordon	Teacher-Grade 4	Novice	3 years

Newton Elementary Magnet School

Newton Elementary Magnet School (referred to from here on as Newton) is an older brick building built into a hill above the greater downtown portion of the city. According to the 2006-2007 Department of Education Report Card statistics, Newton's student demographics were: 51% white, 30% African American, 16% American Indian, 2% Hispanic and 1% Asian. Eighty-two percent of the student population qualified for Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL).

Upon entering the only unlocked door of three that face the main thoroughfare in front of Newton, a guest must climb the stairs to the office. At the top of those stairs sat a colorful totem pole. Next to it on the wall was a very large poster with a poem by the

Dalai Lama, titled, *Hopes and Dreams*. It read: Hopes and Dreams. Be Compassionate. Work for Peace in Your Heart and in the World. And I Say Again. Never Give Up. No Matter What is Happening. No Matter What is Going On Around You. Never Give Up.

Also on the walls of this main floor by where the office is located was a plaque with Martin Luther King Junior's, *I Have a Dream* speech. A bit further down on the wall from the plaque was a small, colorful poster with a quote from Charles Schultz-"Try Not to Have a Good Time-This is Supposed to be Educational." Directly across from the office was a quilt made of paper, put together by the teaching staff. It was made of their traced handprints, with their individual hopes for the school year written on their hands. Two examples from the quilt were, "I hope we are kind to each other" and "My hope is to have a safe place to learn, grow and have fun! I hope we remember; never give up!" Above the quilt was a mural that had different shades of people painted on the wall. The title of the mural was, The Eracism Mural Project and was adorned with the sayings; "We're all people", "Native pride", and "All races are equal."

Newton's Neighborhood.

Newton is located in a neighborhood that is six blocks up from the downtown heart of the city. It is considered an impoverished neighborhood; the Principal estimated that 99% of the students who attend Newton from the neighborhood take part in the Free and Reduced Lunch program. Newton is only a few blocks away in one direction, from one of the major hospitals in the city and a Community Health Center in the other direction. An old brick building, closer toward downtown, called The Center, is within an easy walk's distance from the school that contains a soup kitchen, a Clothing for Kids program, social and housing services.

Newton Interviews: Profiles

Annie-Administrator.

Annie's first teaching experience was at a reservation located in the same state she grew up in. Annie's path as an educator was unique because the same school she now was administrator in, she first came to as a teacher 32 years ago. She received a special education degree and received her reading certificate along the way. Annie was an administrator at two other schools before an elementary school closing brought her to Newton five years ago.

Twylla-Experienced Teacher.

Twylla entered the field of education, planning to be a writer for students with lower reading capabilities. The requirement of having to teach reading for several years brought her into the classroom as a teacher. She thought she would fulfill that requirement and be on her way to a writing career, but fell in love with teaching. Even after seeing how hard her mother worked as a high school teacher and originally vowing never to be one, Twylla has had her own classroom for about 25 years. The previous school Twylla taught at closed five years ago and she has been at Newton for five years, teaching second grade.

Gordon Language Arts Magnet School

Gordon Language Arts Magnet School (referred to from here on as Gordon) is an older, three story, rectangular brick building with high glass windows on both sides of the school. With the assistance of a three-year grant from the Federal Department of Education, the Gordon staff had implemented a unique curriculum, the Leonard Bernstein Artful Learning Curriculum, which uses the arts to engage students who have diverse

learning styles. The curriculum encourages the students to act as reflective thinkers and empowers the students to help create their learning experiences, when possible.

According to the 2006-2007 Department of Education Report Card statistics, Gordon's student demographics were: 45% white, 28% African American, 21% American Indian, 3% Asian and 2% Hispanic. Seventy-seven percent of the student population qualified for Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL).

As one entered the building from a side door, the only door accessible to the public and from which the students went in and out to the playground, one of the first things the researcher noticed was a large, colorful, Ojibwa banner. An informal display of pictures of all the teachers and staff was a short walk down, in a hallway that went into the cafeteria. By the office door was a container that held Campbell's soup labels that were collected for fund raising purposes. On another floor was a large framed picture of 207 students and 13 teachers taken by a professional school photographer. Most students were dressed very casually; a few students had on dress clothes, which included suits and ties.

Gordon's hallways on each of the three floors were adorned with students' drawings and/or writings. One stairwell displayed prints of Vincent Van Gogh's self portrait, along with one classroom's depictions of their own faces, using skin-colored construction paper and a few sentences about themselves. Next to the portraits was an actual picture of each child. Besides highlighting Van Gogh, there was a display enclosed in glass of a few prints of Jacob Lawrence's work. Lawrence was one of the best-known African American painters of the 20th century. He often depicted the history and struggles of African Americans.

Gordon's Neighborhood.

Gordon is situated in a neighborhood wedged between two major streets. A block or two separates the school from heavily traveled residential streets that carry cars, trucks and busses. A car repair and barber shop are close by one of the school's cross walks. A church, a city recreational facility and its field are within a block or two in another direction. The immediate neighborhood consists of mainly houses, both rental and owned property. There are a few duplexes in the immediate neighborhood, but they are small, either two story or side-by-side housing.

Gordon Interviews: Profiles

Ann-Administrator.

Ann started her career in education as a teacher, later than what would be considered typical. She initially taught at a jail and work farm before becoming a middle school math teacher. At the encouragement of her Principal there, Ann went back to school for her principal licensure. She spent six years as an Assistant Principal at a local high school before becoming the Principal at Gordon. She has been at Gordon for three years.

Susan-Administrator.

Susan began her connection to Gordon as a parent, while volunteering for the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), then as a PTA representative to an all-volunteer Collaborative that Gordon was a member of. Susan took on a leadership role ten years ago when she was asked by the board of the Collaborative to serve as the coordinator. Susan also has a nursing background and went back to college a number of years ago for a Master's of Fine Arts degree.

Stella-Experienced Teacher.

Stella was convinced she needed to be a teacher when she worked for the Forest Service and people became angry with her when she handed out tickets for environmental violations. She thought people needed to learn about the environment much sooner, so she became an elementary teacher. Stella has been a teacher for 25 years, working in three previous elementary schools at different grade levels, but this was her first year at Gordon. Stella teaches second grade.

Summer-Experienced Teacher.

Summer has been working with preschoolers for 32 years. Before coming to Gordon, she had worked for 14 years at an early childhood facility located in a housing development that housed several programs such as Head Start and early childhood family education. The closing of that building precipitated the move to Gordon, approximately five years ago.

Marie-Novice Teacher.

After entering college in the medical field and finding she was not quite ready for the college experience, Marie was almost thirty and volunteering in her son's Kindergarten classroom when his teacher encouraged Marie to go back to school to get a teaching degree. The end of this school year marked three years of teaching in the school district for Marie. This was her first year at Gordon, teaching 4th grade, after being displaced from a secondary science position. Before that she had taught as a substitute for a year and a half.

Procedures

This study was designed to better understand individually held perceptions about white privilege and the impact these perceptions may have had on the execution of particular educational roles of teachers and administrators. The researcher contacted the Principals of each school to establish interest and permission to do the research in their schools. After receiving Institutional Review Board approval, the researcher put sealed recruitment letters (Appendices A and B) in the work mailboxes of possible qualified participants explaining the research.

Initial qualification to be a potential participant was based upon being a white, female novice or experienced teacher or white administrator. Novice status was given to a teacher who did not have tenure, meaning three years or less of teaching, in the school district. Experienced teachers had tenure in the school district. Potential participants also had to have some awareness of white privilege. Which educators to select as potential participants who might have that awareness was the researcher's subjective decision based on talking with the participants or seeing them in action in their settings, during previous professional encounters. The researcher also had heard other professionals talk about the educators' work with students and families so additionally used that information to consider possible participants for the study. Because many of the novice teachers in these schools were unknown to the researcher, a type of purposeful sampling referred to as a snowballing approach (Seidman, 1998) was used. The researcher asked the Principals which novice teachers might have some awareness of white privilege so a pool could be established from which to choose from before recruitment letters were put in selected mailboxes.

Consent forms (Appendices C and D) were included with the recruitment letters. When the researcher received a signed consent form in the mail, the participant was contacted to set up an interview time. The researcher chose not to hide the purpose of the study from the teachers and administrators, so the recruitment and consent forms explained the purpose of the research.

Originally, twelve letters of recruitment went out; two letters to administrators, two letters to experienced teachers and two letters to novice teachers at each school. At one school, the one possible white male administrator did not send back a letter of consent. In all, five participants did not send back letters of consent, so ultimately the study involved seven participants, all female.

Observations were done at each school in order to document the overall school routine and culture of the schools to provide context for this study. Brief observations were done in classrooms in each school, in the cafeteria during several lunch periods, and posters, work samples and other artifacts that teachers and administrators put in the hallways were noted.

Questions for participants were created based upon the three sections that are typical to phenomenological interview (Seidman, 1998). Questions from Part One focused on the life history of the participants, uncovering such things as how diverse the neighborhood and school they grew up in was, and how they came to be a teacher or administrator. Questions from Part Two addressed the “concrete details of the participant’s present experience in the topic of study” (Seidman, 1998, p. 12) such as what brought them to teaching at the school, what would a typical day look like, and whether teaching methods or resources were altered to address inequities that were based

on the ethnic and socioeconomic status of their students. Part Three consisted of participants reflecting on the meaning of their experiences. Participants were asked questions that made them think about whether they had learned new ways of teaching or leading, how they made sense of their roles when they left their work environment to go home, and whether white privilege had any bearing on them as a teacher or administrator. Ideas for interview questions came from the literature review and the researcher's experience.

An iPod with a recorder adaptor was used to digitally tape record the interviews, which were then transferred to the researcher's computer for transcription. The researcher transcribed the interviews using Express Scribe, a computerized transcription program, and then printed them all out. Interviews of the novice teachers (Appendix E**)**, experienced teachers (Appendix F), and the administrators (Appendix G) were used to answer the study's research questions:

1. What perceptions do novice and experienced white teachers and white administrators hold regarding white privilege?
2. How do white teachers' and administrator's perceptions impact their respective roles?

Data Analysis and Interpretation

This study followed the advice of Creswell (2003) who gave "generic steps" (p. 191) for the researcher to: 1) Organize and prepare the data, which involved transcription of the interviews, and typing up field notes, 2) Read thoroughly through all the data, to get a "general sense" (p. 191) of it and 3) "reflect on its overall meaning" (p. 191).

After all the interviews were read from start to finish, notes were written in the margins of the typed work. These notes were either short phrases or words that the researcher felt reflected an idea or exact wording from the participants that were starting to appear in several places in one narrative and throughout the other narratives. These ideas or words that were found were tentatively identified as themes. In some places in the narratives, the margin notes reflected words that came directly from the literature review, while other notes reflected a special interest the researcher had.

After the initial identification of themes and other findings of interest were recorded in the margins of the printed data, the researcher went back to the digital data and used a computer-aided qualitative analysis program, called HyperRESEARCH, as an organizational tool. Whole paragraphs or sentences containing the participants' ideas and words that illustrated a particular theme, were copied and cut out of the original digital transcriptions and pasted into similar categories that identified a theme, such as *High Expectations*.

After this was done with all the transcriptions, a frequency count was taken to get a picture as to whether particular themes were really emerging from all the narratives. If a category showed up with a small frequency count, the researcher went back to the printed data to reanalyze written notes regarding the original identification of themes. Periodically after reanalysis, the original written notes were changed or refined that reflected a new way the researcher perceived the data. This change was also made in the HyperResearch program.

The field observation notes in this study were used solely as context to give the reader further understanding of each school and thus are included in the contextual

descriptions in an earlier section of this chapter. What teachers and administrators put on their walls for the public, students and other teachers to see gave an idea of what was important to them as individuals and as a collective group.

Summary

As the demographic chasm of white educators working with ethnically and socioeconomically diverse students continues to widen, there is a need to look more deeply into the ways educators' privilege is codified in today's schools. Through in-depth interviewing, the teachers' and administrators' perceptions of white privilege and how those perceptions may impact educators' roles were examined.

CHAPTER FOUR

Presentation of the Data

Introduction

The findings will be presented within two separate sections, based on the two, interrelated research questions. The first section will highlight the first research question, "What perceptions do novice and experienced white teachers and administrators hold regarding white privilege*?"* Findings include three main themes: 1) perceptions of white privilege varied greatly between the novice teacher and the other educators, 2) educators expressed awareness of power they possessed and 3) educators expressed awareness that they were looking through a different lens than some of society, their colleagues and family members. In addition, findings are presented in the first section that explored how the educators reconciled their work within their privileged lives.

Findings that highlight the second research question, "How do educators' perceptions of white privilege impact their respective roles?" include these eight themes: 1) family circumstances affected student learning, 2) parents' love and aspirations for children are recognized 3) curriculum connected to students' lives, 4) high expectations needed for all students, 5) social-emotional goals had high priority, 6) administrators based decisions on principles of multicultural education, 7) teachers worked in opposition to the status quo and 8) work in ethnically and socioeconomically diverse settings brought extraordinary challenges, extraordinary commitment.

Perceptions Of White Privilege

Differing Perceptions

This study set out to examine educators who perceived they have been benefactors of privileges because they were white. The first significant finding was that the length, depth and breadth of all the interviews pointed towards a marked difference between the only novice teacher and the other six participants. Two examples were comments about how she interpreted some of her diverse families' values of education: " Some of the parents that I have met have really opened my eyes to the fact that they don't all value education as I had hoped they would" or her comments on the meaning of white privilege and if white privilege played a part in her role as a teacher: " I think [white privilege] simply means having special treatment because you're white or better treatment because you're white. I don't think it has had a bearing on me as a teacher." Marie then added, "Maybe because I can't think of an example, but I do feel that there should be better representation for our diverse students and the teachers."

These statements from Marie put her in opposition to the thinking of all the other educators who talked about how much parents loved and wanted the best for their children and also voiced a strong acknowledgement that white privilege did play a part in their roles. For example, when asked if white privilege had any bearing on the work of the teachers in the school, Ann replied, "Oh, absolutely! I'll go back [to one of the teacher's statements]. 'You don't understand what our kids are like.' That's white privilege. That's not even a conception that you have it." Or Summer spoke about how parents want the best for their children: "It doesn't matter if it's a Black dad who you just

wonder what's going on, you just assume that parent wants the very best for that child. If you go in with that attitude, then you can make the connection."

Statements from Marie indicated that although her thinking was different than the other participants, there were issues that were associated with white privilege that she was contemplating. She said she was learning a lot and was being exposed to a lot of things that she never would have at other schools whose student populations were not as ethnically and socioeconomically diverse. She spoke about her college Master's class that she had been in a few days before and said:

> I would have been a person to say, I don't notice a difference between the students….I don't feel if they are Native American or African American that I would have said, I don't notice that difference. However, it was a big discussion that [by] me saying, I don't notice the difference, I am denying them who they are so I'm really trying to rethink that….I know I'm learning about the different cultures, but I guess I haven't addressed them individually.

The study brought out that participants' perceptions of white privilege were not identical; however, the findings point to a marked difference between the novice teacher and the other participants.

Awareness of Power

Although the term *power* was not used in every circumstance, what came through in the interviews was the participants' awareness that they and other white people possessed a power that many of their diverse students and their students' families could not activate within themselves. In some circumstances, the participants also used the

words *ability* or *where-with-all*; the researcher also identified them as words of power. In this section, teachers and administrators talk about several types of power.

Power to make choices.

The first type of power that participants were aware that they possessed due to white privilege was the power to make choices. Susan was a mentor to three American Indian teenaged girls. She spoke about how they have few role models who finish high school. Often what stops them from finishing is that they get pregnant. Susan spoke to them about her power to make the choices she had made. One of the choices she had made when she was younger was that she wanted to finish high school. She didn't want to have kids before she got married and had a partner to help her because her mom was a single mom. She wanted to wait until she felt ready and felt like she could support a family. "It's good for them to see [my house and how I live]-that you can work for things and that choices that you make can make your life be less of a struggle."

Although a subtle example, Stella spoke of a choice she was empowered with but felt her students did not necessarily know about or understand-the power to make a deliberate choice to be happy. She taught them that they are in charge of celebration. "We've already planned out the first thunderstorm; we're going to blow bubbles. We're going to stop everything and blow bubbles. So, we're in charge, you know, we're in charge of our happiness." Other statements about power to make choices came through as the educators talked about the choices that parents of white students, living in other neighborhoods could make, such as in Ann's statement:

> We are a high poverty school. We are also a magnet school, so we also draw in people who are in very high economic levels and they have particularly chosen

this school because they want their child to be educated in a diverse environment so they are ready to go out into the world-the real world-and be ready to function.

Power to do things on your own behalf or for others.

Another type of power that was identified was the power to do things on your own behalf or the power to do things for others. Ann related a story about the power of white parents doing something on the behalf of their children. It involved issues surrounding a school board decision to close her school, Gordon, and three other elementary schools. Elm Elementary, Washington Elementary Music Magnet and Patrick Henry Elementary. (all pseudonyms). All of these schools except Gordon had populations that had a large majority of white students. Right before she came to Gordon, [the school board] voted to close the school and then the school board reversed and they kept Patrick Henry and Gordon open…. "There was a huge community outcry to not close Gordon, at Patrick Henry also, but the Patrick Henry people had more power. I think it was their power that stopped it." Ann added, "Here, ultimately what stopped them from closing Gordon, [was that] the NAACP [National Advancement for Colored People] stepped in."

Although an administrator at Gordon, Susan talked about the power she recognized she had as a white parent to do things on behalf of her daughter when Gordon was in disarray from a previously ineffective principal. She was cognizant that "anybody who had a car or the means to carpool with other people in the neighborhood, went over to Westwood Elementary and Middle School (a pseudonym)." She made it clear that she and many of the parents were definitely working class and lower income people:

> But-talk about white privilege-I think we had the means to figure things out and we could present ourselves to this other school and say, hey, you've gotta enroll our kids here, because we have got to get out of this school-and they did.

As another example, Ann spoke of the power of the white families in the surrounding neighborhood. "If you walk around the neighborhood, there's lots of Caucasian families that have lived here forever, but they send their child somewhere else to a different magnet school because they have the ability to do that." Finally, Stella revealed an acute awareness of her power to do things on the behalf of others as she talked about helping parents:

> I can help the parent if they're stuck financially and they don't know what to do. I can help them contact the doctor. I can help speak for them. I can be called in and I have been asked to, to meetings to help speak for the parent. I know that and that's what I choose to do because I can.

Power to Believe in Self and Others.

A third type of power that was revealed in the interviews was the power to believe in oneself and in others. Stella spoke of the strong belief she had in her students, believing in their goodness, no matter what they try to do to get her to believe otherwise. "They can't sway me. They can bump up against me all they want, but I will never-and I always give them soft eyes-I don't get angry. There's no anger in me for them." Summer spoke with conviction about believing the young students in her classroom could be anything they wanted to be if given the right breaks in life. She felt it didn't matter if her students were from the poverty level or were Native American. She believed that with the right opportunities and the right people guiding them who believe they can succeed, her

students would succeed. “Just because they go to Gordon School, doesn’t mean you can’t make it in life. It’s tougher here; there’s some real tough kids. But why are the kids tough? Because there are really tough things in their life, too.”

Ann said this about the relationship between white privilege and possessing the power to believe in oneself: “So a lot of the experiences that families have been through, I have been through something similar; understanding with white privilege, there was always the belief that I could get out of it.” Ann went on to say, “Many of the families here don’t have that belief. That’s the difference between having the white privilege and not having it.”

In addressing the power to believe in others, Susan came at it from the angle of white students having the benefit of a whole society ultimately believing in their success. Susan gave these thoughts as she talked about her own college-aged daughter, acknowledging that tuition was really high, students were holding down jobs that don’t pay very well and rent was rising faster than student wages:

> So it’s kind of easy for just an average, middle-class white college student to think, What are these people complaining about? I have a difficult life too and I’m working my tail off. I think it is the idea, yes, you’re working your tail off, but you feel you have hope and people around you who support you and you’re in a society that basically you have a little passport that a lot of people do not have.

What emerged was that the participants were aware of the power they and other white people had access to. The narratives gave voice to the different ways power was identified.

Looking Through a Different Lens

Another theme was that of educators acknowledging that they looked at the world through a different lens than some of their white colleagues, parts of white society and even some family members. Here is what Ann had to say:

> I come from a little bit of a different viewpoint in that my husband is much older than me and my husband comes from a different world…And it's like he's from my parent's generation-I think he's three years younger than my mother-so he has different view and that's been very helpful to me because when I look at people and when you see good people who care about learning and you can see even the effect society has had on them, it's not an education problem, it's a societal problem, but we deal with it where we can-and I see my own growth.

Annie spoke about a comfort level with working in a diverse setting and revealed how she looked at the world: "I really love working with the diversity. I mean when I'm in an all white crowd, I feel different. It seems odd to me, as I look around, not to see all different colors and all different economic levels." Annie also spoke about how she saw some families in the city: "I just wish more people in our community had the chance to work with populations that were diverse because we do tend to be a very segregated community." Annie also talked about how her perspective was different than some of the district administrators. In her school district, families had the option to send their students to a different school in the district other than the school that was located within drawn boundaries and designated as their home school. "School choice is still important and there needs to be transportation, otherwise it isn't a choice for everyone; it's a school

choice for white privilege." Annie continued, "It's not a choice for those that don't have a car, don't have money for gas, don't have food. It's no longer a school of choice."

Susan spoke of an ability to see the talents of diverse kids and she noted that those talents were invisible to parts of white society:

> Where I have chosen to put some energy is to get kids out in the community who are extremely talented and say, look at these kids and what they can do! You know, change attitudes and see that talent and talk positively about friends that I have that are African American, American Indian friends, but for a lot of people that is all very invisible.

Stella spoke straightforwardly about how her disability first and foremost shaded the lens through which she looked at her diverse students. She spoke about that her disability influenced her because she was prejudged all the time and felt "outside the loop." Stella continued that she always felt outside the loop and outside of mainstream thinking. She said:

> People of color have that same issue of not being included or inclusive and I've had racism directed towards me because I am white and being a woman, but that is nothing to having a disability that you cannot change. And that has helped me advocate for students with learning differences, with color of skin, with poverty. It's something they can't help….So I think that understanding that children are like- their differences are like having a disability, without choice-that they need that confidence within themselves as they go through their developmental stages.

Stella also talked about what she has heard at the different schools she has been at. She spoke unhappily about how she has heard some other educators talk about their

ethnically and socioeconomically diverse students. "They use the term like, 'those people, them.' Them is such a divisive word. Them. You can hear it, more in their tone of voice, their eyes, their body positions. Instead of embracing, literally embracing, it's stiff body, hands crossed."

Twylla spoke very directly about the relationship between her awareness of white privilege and how she saw the world. She saw the world differently than those who were close to her and she provided an honest appraisal of it:

> Well, I'm a believer in the reality of white privilege and even knowing that sets me apart, I think, from educators in other schools. And I know not just in a cultural way, in a societal way-I've become more sensitive since being here.…I know white privilege exists in this world and I think even very good hearted people struggle with that….I think one of my insights is that there are people in my life who I love very dearly who live in a very white world and I've realized that by teaching here my whole world view is different….People who I thought were very broad-minded people have prejudices built into how they see the world. They will say to me, like, 'Well, I don't see why they don't just go get a job.' And I say, you know, no one ever told them that. This is the third generation of poverty in this family and it's not a mindset they were ever given.

Summer also provided insight into how she looked at her students and their families and the importance of the language that was used. She also revealed her awareness that in doing so she did not see eye to eye with some of her colleagues:

> Some of the [other teachers talk about the students as] "the have-nots." Just some people. Like it's a big thing to me, but not to everybody, I say families with

> low-income, not low-income families because I think when you say low-income families your emphasis in on the income instead of the family. So I think I hear things like that, that nobody else hears. But my ears hear that part, so even that I think indicates [how you make] reference to the families that you work with.

Although varied in their responses, all the participants except the novice teacher provided insight to the lens through which they saw their ethnically and socioeconomically diverse students and their families. The lens appeared to be that of an awareness of white privilege, which they acknowledged, set them apart from some members of society, some of their colleagues at work and some of their family members.

Reconciling Students' Reality within a Privileged Life

Landsman (2006) stated that when you become aware that by being born with white skin you are afforded privileges that people of other skin colors have not been given, this awareness allows you to start seeing injustices to others who have little privilege or power. This statement was foundational to the reason the researcher asked how educators made sense of their work with diverse students and families as they drove home to lives that they perceived as privileged in some respects (Stated in the interview protocol as, *"How do you make sense of your role as a teacher at the end of the day when you leave your work environment?"*). The researcher had wondered, if a white educator who had some awareness of privilege worked on a daily basis with diverse students and their families who frequently encounter individual, societal and institutional injustices, did it impact them in a personal way? Did the participants in this study reconcile their professional lives with their personal lives? If so, how?

Ann spoke about going through a lot of the same experiences as the families in the school; she had not always had a car or a place to call home. Ann talked about her belief in achievement, hard work and opportunities and that she believed she was in a job that gave people those opportunities. She was emotional when she talked seriously about her job as being a calling to work with students to give them opportunities and to believe in themselves:

> I work hard as I can and I feel really good about it, so when I go home I don't feel guilty, I'm just glad I'm home. I think that is probably the biggest answer is that I am doing something. Something important.

Annie admitted that she never really left her work environment; at least it was always on her mind whether she was at her cabin, out walking in the woods or on vacation. She also thought that by having her work on her mind it gave her more time to process and think things through so she could come up with more strategies and ideas on school issues. She went on to talk about how faculty and staff make sure that everyone is included and their basic needs are met. "No matter if we can go home in our car and go home and we have food in our refrigerator, we want to make sure that anything we do here, that people have the necessary pieces."

Stella did not talk about herself directly as she made sense of her work from a privileged standpoint, but did give some harsh criticism of other white educators she had worked with in the past that seemingly did recognize their students' reality. "They go home to that stabilized environment, where they can predict….They're so isolated and they're so predictable. It's so safe in its predictability….Some of them do lose track of that and hopefully a child will come and wake them up again." Stella also talked about

how judgmental some of the white teachers were, for example, towards the students who get head lice and then have great difficulty getting rid of it. “I think people judge people who don’t live up to this standard. What people perceive as a standard of living, which again, is a fallacy.”

As Summer talked about her own privilege, her own reality, she acknowledged the importance of keeping in mind what her young students’ realities were. Her statements indicated that she clearly understood what those realities were:

> This is actually where I want to be and this is a good place, and you know, it’s interesting, you work hard as you can here, and then I drive home to my house and my garage, and my garage is probably in better shape than some of my children’s homes I go to. I think about that at night when I go home… I really need to know that my reality, what is real to me and what my life is really like and what the children that I work with, they’re so different. I never worry when I go home-is there going to be food in the refrigerator? Are my neighbors going to be good to me or mean to me? I drive into my garage and life is fine and I come back here the next day and kids say to me, ‘Teacher Summer, I’m really hungry and I say, I’ll bet you are so let’s get something to eat’ or ‘Teacher Summer, my dad went to jail last night’ and I say, ‘yup, sometimes that happens. Sometimes moms or dads don’t make good choices and that happens.’ So, it’s not even like a real switch that I do. I don’t come in here and turn on a switch and change. It’s just that I understand the kids’ realities. I think that’s the key, right there.

When Twylla thought about how she reconciled her work and her personal life, she talked about how it had impacted how she used her money. She related what she

thought she would be purchasing when she had enough money, but now found that she was buying a lot of things for her classroom or for individual students. She also admitted that at times she wrestled with her purchases:

> It's hard to reconcile the fact that I work very hard and if I want to buy a new shirt sometimes, that's gotta be ok. But then saying that, I was considering buying a new sofa recently and I got thinking about it and you know, this one is still pretty comfortable-I have kids that don't have a bed; one of their hopes and dreams is that they'll have a bed someday.

Susan spoke at great length about her reconciliation, from different points of view. First, she noted that she lived in the same neighborhood as the students she worked with. She said she was very aware of the relativity factor. Some of her colleagues had bigger homes in nicer neighborhoods than what she is in, but on the other hand, Susan was aware that her small, nicely furnished, well kept home seemed *big and beautiful* to her students, as compared to their small, at times unkempt, apartments with no furniture and often no mattresses to sleep on. Second, Susan talked quite a bit about her values and finding a balance between her faith life, the vision she had for her work and her personal life. She talked about being aware that her work took a lot of *energy and deep thinking* and how important it was to her that her life counted for something positive in the world and that she felt she could be effective in that way. "I'm kind of living in a way where I feel like I'm in sync with what my values and beliefs are and being really clear about that with the people who know me and that kind of makes sense then. Kids know that." Third, Susan looked for the things she had in common with her students and their

families as human beings, but also acknowledged that her life would not be the same as her students' lives:

> Well, your life is kind of different than mine, but [the students] are clear that it's not all that different. I talk about my family and what they like to do and they have their family and the same with their faith life. There's this is what you believe in and there are things to me that I believe in. That's how I make the most sense of things is finding out what we have in common as human beings and then accepting that my life probably looks different in certain ways.

Marie spoke about how she recognized that she took things for granted, such as knowing there would always be food at her house. She acknowledged that her own children take having enough food for granted, as they would go to the cupboard, and say, "We have nothing good to eat." Marie felt that after hearing some of her students comment that they did not have enough food to even bring a snack from home spurred her on to think about how she could make her own children appreciate what they had. Marie also spoke about how her work had made her appreciate her own children more. Marie made a similar comment to Annie's, in that she spoke about how at school she and her colleagues worked to give their students the same opportunities as everybody else, "We do little things. We're going to the movies and….it's expensive, so we made sure that when we planned our field trip, they all have a popcorn and a pop. It may be an experience that they would never have otherwise."

The ways in which the educators talked so differently about how they made sense of their work within their lives of privilege show the complexity attached to this finding.

Their responses revealed passionate, thoughtful and honest attempts at trying to sort out what this meant for them.

Impact on Educators' Roles

This section highlights the second research question of, "How do educators' perceptions of white privilege impact their respective roles?" Eight themes emerged that were seen as indications that the educators had a particular understanding of how things were in the lives of their diverse students and/or family members. The literature points towards these understandings as a result of having an awareness of white privilege. In the following section the reader will find those themes and will also find how those perceptions have impacted their roles as educators. Briefly, the roles seemed to have been impacted with the result of educators actively doing something different than their peers with their students and/or families; at other times the impact seemed to be on the educators' ways of thinking, in their attitudes and philosophy.

Family Circumstances Affected Student Learning

One theme that emerged was an understanding that many ethnically and socioeconomically diverse students who come to their schools lead complex lives because their families lead complex lives, with participants acknowledging that this complexity had a great impact on students' learning. Many of the families were dealing with poverty, alcohol and drug abuse, mental health issues and/or homelessness.

As an administrator, sometimes Ann would hear frustrations from the teachers during their efforts in getting permission slips back from the parents for special occasions and field trips. She spoke about the importance of realizing that if parents are worried about where they were going to spend the night and if their child was going to have a

place to sleep, that it would be "pretty tough to be worrying about getting a permission slip back." The impact that this had on Ann was that she developed an understanding and practiced patience with the parents. "It's important for me to understand that and give that understanding back to them. If a parent is really, really upset, it probably isn't me; its probably something else that's going on in their life and I have to understand and accept that."

Another circumstance that was affecting student learning and that Ann felt was becoming a bigger issue all the time was that of parental drug abuse. "I mean, we have exploding early childhood [problems] and I believe it's from meth use in [this city]. And we're getting 3 and 4 year olds, so many kids in Kindergarten with no impulse control." Ann revealed her insight, "Where it would be easy to think-just rotten parenting; why don't they teach those kids how to behave? [But] the child is physically unable to control impulses because of what happened to [him or her] in vitro." The impact this had on Ann was that she had to, and was able to, think creatively as she talked about how parental drug abuse impacted her thinking and what kinds of solutions she would be looking for:

> I think that is something that we have to be aware of and deal with effectively because the old ways to deal with that, consequences, doesn't work when it's a physical problem. When it's a chemical problem in the child, it doesn't work. So that's probably one of the things where I'll look for different solutions because the solutions we had in the past, it's a different problem. And those are the kinds of insights to be aware of as society changes.

Annie was very passionate as she talked about one of the issues affecting her families with low-income, which was the rising cost of food. She talked about how many

families had less and less time to spend with their children because they were busy working:

> [The families] have less and less time to spend with their children and especially their babies and toddlers, so we're getting them in with less vocabulary. It's not because they're not smart kids, it's just because they haven't the adults in their lives that have had the opportunity to spend a lot of time just talking with them, sitting down and playing. There's an awful lot of tv watching, video game playing and-it's not the parent's fault. They need to go out and work; that's the reality.

As Annie talked about understanding her families' realities and how it impacted her, she revealed one piece of minutia about her role, that of acting as a driver if necessary. She also revealed an impact of working with diverse families in a broader sense, as she spoke about her philosophy of how white administrators can help ethnically and socioeconomically diverse families:

> If somebody can't get here, we'll send a taxi or one of us will go get them. If a kid can't get on a 7:00 a.m. bus, one of us goes and picks up the kid; it's not a problem. And the other thing is, we talk to our parents. Not a problem; it's no biggie. And you know I'll say to them, You know what, if I needed your help, you'd be at my door, helping me, That's the kind of community that we are. We just help each other. We do what we can for each other because we don't ever want our parents to think we're these white people, coming and swooping in on a horse saving the day, because that's not it at all. That's not it. That's not even close to it. It's working together as a team.

Susan said that she frequently heard from teachers and people in schools that work with students who have said, “What is wrong with these parents?” Susan acknowledged that parents can be frustrating and that the students are easier to deal with. “There’s drug addiction, parents who are in prison right now and just issues that have not really touched my immediate family, but I just imagine what that would be like.” Susan had a lot to say about how her role was impacted as a result of the complexity of the families at Gordon, in particular, how she worked with parents. She said the biggest thing was to “stay really positive about the person and always be solution oriented.” She said there were times in her office that she and her staff would refer to themselves as “the enthusiasm liaisons.” They worked hard at not getting put into a situation where the families were manipulating them. Susan admitted that, “ there are times that we are taken advantage of [because] people who have no control in their lives, get very good at manipulating systems, we know that. You have to really guard your attitudes carefully so it doesn’t get into, this lazy person just doesn’t care enough.” Susan was careful about not having assumptions, but at the same time, maintaining a high standard. She emphasized, “I really always come from where the kid is at. I’ll say, well, you know, your kid is so looking forward to you coming. I know they would just feel so proud if you would come.”

Marie acknowledged that before she started teaching at Gordon, she had never taken into consideration “what students have going on in their personal lives and how that can affect how they learn and what’s important to them.” The impact on Marie was that she realized that her students could not be treated equally. “They all have special needs and they need to be given what they need on an individual basis rather than kind of a

blanket for everyone." Marie's relationship with the families was impacted in that she did not meet very many parents. "They haven't come to conferences. I've called them to schedule telephone conferences and reschedule their conferences and they just don't come to school for whatever reason." Marie's teaching methods also changed from other schools she was at before in that she admitted that she now sent projects home only two or three times a year and sent home only a single sheet of homework a night, knowing that it would be difficult, for a variety of reasons, for parents to help their 4th graders.

Although she described her students as generally pretty happy, Stella saw and had to deal with anger issues that arose from some of her students, which she attributed from being in shelters and from "the abuse the Black community sees, especially with one family that just came up from Chicago. [The boy] knows a lot more about streets and the Chicago way of life and [I'm] trying to separate that from the classroom." Stella also voiced that her role had been impacted by the complex lives her students lead was her acknowledgement that she has gone to the homeless shelters with homework for them. Besides working through anger issues in her students, another impact on Stella was that she had to try to teach students who came to school with very little sleep. "[There are] the late nights [when parents are] partying, when there is fighting amongst Indian friends and the kids don't get any sleep and they come to school exhausted and they're trying to be what you are asking them to be."

What came from Summer's interview was an acknowledgement that some of her students are "really being taught things I know will come up to be a difficult thing for kids later, but I try to tell them this is another way of looking at it and this is another way of dealing with it." Summer had young students tell her about the violence that went on

in the house and she had to learn how to talk about it with her three and four year olds in a manner that gives them guidance in the classroom, but doesn't pass judgment on the parent. " Yup, your dad might just have punched that person, but I'm saying to you if you want that truck, just say, it's mine, I'd like to have it or if you're done I'd like to have it, but punching isn't going to solve it."

The lives of ethnically and socioeconomically diverse students are often full of complexities that do not stop when they begin their school day. The participants voiced this awareness with the impacts on their roles being varied.

Parents' Love and Aspirations for Their Children Recognized

Some parents do not show up at open house or conferences when teachers want them to. Some parents do not sign or return permission slips in a timely manner. Some students bring back homework that consistently shows no one at home has given them direction. Some students come to school without being fed. Some students come to school smelling of urine or wearing dirty clothes. All the administrators and the three experienced teachers revealed an ability to see that all parents love their children and want what is best for them, despite any behavior that might look contrary to that. Two examples are included here. Annie spoke about it in this way:

> Every single family absolutely loves their child, wants absolutely the best for their child. No, they can't always give it to them, perhaps because of their lack of education, because of their work or mental health issues; we deal a lot with mental health issues. So there's a whole realm of issues, but people love their kids and they really, they really appreciate it when the adults in the school see the good parts in their children. You know, I never want to lose sight of that.

Twylla admitted that she initially had some difficulty in understanding the parents when she first came to teach at Newton. She said it was a full grade period before she realized that she had been building a wall between herself and the parents. After coming to understand her families, she was amazed at the respect the parents showed her. She came to understand that her respect for them would be reciprocated. Twylla said, “They want the best for their children. But here [at Newton] some of them haven’t had the opportunity to know how to do that. But they want to know; they’re willing to come in and work.”

To be truly aware that parents love their children and want the best for them even when their behavior does not necessarily indicate it takes an ability to look beyond the words and actions when what one hears and sees is not altogether clear.

Curriculum Connected to Students’ Lives

Although not directly teaching the curriculum, the administrators in this study had great influence over which curricula were used and how they used in their buildings. All the administrators talked about the importance of connecting curriculum to the lives of their students. In addition, the teachers also understood that their classroom curriculum must connect to their students’ lives in order to be effective and in order to make sense to their students. Good teachers in all schools know that applying concepts to real world experiences is important, but these educators talked about deliberate attempts that had empowering and meaningful elements to them for students who are ethnically and socioeconomically diverse.

Ann talked enthusiastically about what some of her fourth grade teachers were doing as they introduced their unit on the Constitution of the United States. This unit was

designated as the students' Master Work, in the Leonard Bernstein Artful Learning Curriculum. Ann described how the teachers held up a picture of men, all white, who are signing the Constitution and the teachers proceeded to ask their students,

> What's missing from this picture? And kids start with the real basic stuff, you know. And then, we're 56% student of color [at this school], somebody says, They're all white! Where's the American Indians? Where are the Black people? Where are the women? And so they talk about that and they each write a letter to Madison explaining what they think the basic human rights should be. They write a letter and then they get together and decide as a class what the top ten are. And then they look at the Bill of Rights and all of a sudden they are intimately involved….After they talk about who's missing, the next day they have a tribal leader from the Indian Reservation come in and talk about how the Constitution was patterned after an Iroquois treaty and talk about how the Tribal Council is run now. And all of a sudden that American Indian kid that's in the classroom; they're suddenly very valued because the Constitution was written after something an American Indian did.

Believing strongly that the Leonard Bernstein Artful Curriculum was a good fit for the diverse population at Gordon, using the example from above to illustrate the point, one of Ann's roles was to convince the teachers that they were doing the right thing, in implementing this special curriculum. Ann stated, "Right now, sitting outside on the desk is a vote. Teachers are voting, whether or not we get another grant for the program that we're running, to take the grant and continue the program." Ann knew that it would mean "lots of work for teachers" but knew this curriculum was making a difference. "And my

job isn't to tell teachers what to do, my job is to convince teachers we know this is what works for kids and you need to make the commitment to do it."

Susan spoke of how some African American students who she knew to be disconnected from school responded positively to the opportunity to make masks that highlighted their culture. "What really blew me away was some of the kids ....just produced these amazing masks and some of them had a lot of real cultural design to them." Susan commented that the students have a lot going on and "this is a way they would have a chance to feel like they were communicating who they were and what their creative ideas were." This experience convinced Susan she should organize a spring cultural arts festival where other artists came in and did weeklong residencies. Susan said, "I think a lot of it was just seeing that we really needed to give kids a lot of different ways to find that they're smart and they have creativity within them and give them ways to express themselves."

In Summer's explanation of the importance of connecting curriculum to the lives of her children, she talked about the curriculum she was required to use. She had been told that the two people who wrote the curriculum did have children of poverty in mind. Summer talked skeptically:

> That's what I was told. I have a hard time believing that. I really do. I have a hard time believing that because some of the activities that they do I'm trying to understand what value that has for my kids. What is the teachable moment here? What is the thing…and some of the things I think are totally way out there. I'm sure that everything is of value, but some of the lessons I just go, this is

> ridiculous! What is it teaching the kids? What concept am I trying to get across to them? For me, the concepts need to be meaningful and they have to be useful.

As a teacher of diverse students, Summer's statement illustrated that her role as a teacher was not simply to teach what she was handed. Summer's role was also to think about how her students would benefit, looking closely and critically at the curriculum.

Twylla described why she brought in portions from a different curriculum, the Core Knowledge Curriculum, which was not required at Newton:

> That's one of the reasons I wanted to do Core because I thought there were some real holes, particularly in social studies and there's not enough chance for all children to feel some pride in their history built into our curriculum and I think that people need that. I think they all need to be able to look back and say my-and I'm putting quotes around this- "My people" made mistakes and "my people" have done some pretty great things for planet earth. I thought they need that at a young age so they can stand tall and move forward. So I deliberately do Core Knowledge that way.

Twylla's explanation made clear the importance of connecting curriculum to her students' lives. She believed her role was to go above and beyond, taking it upon herself to add to what she thought was best for her diverse students.

Participants' awareness of the importance of choosing and/or teaching curriculum that connected to the lives of their diverse students was evidenced in their statements. The participants gave specific examples that indicated their thoughts were not hypothetical; these were connections they had done and they were thoughtful about the outcomes.

High Expectations Needed for All Students

Another theme that ran through the interviews was an understanding of the importance of high expectations for all students, no matter their ethnicity or socioeconomic status.

Annie's comments about high expectations were subtle, but she voiced a belief that she expected the world to be within reach of all students. She spoke about how with many of the diverse families at Newton, older brothers and sisters, aunts, uncles and grandparents were the main caretakers for the kids because the parents were "trying to provide for them." Annie believed that the educational challenge of the school was to make sure they "infused so much into the lives of these children as far as vocabulary and experiences because we want them to see the world as an exciting place and know it's beyond our neighborhood and beyond [our region.]" Annie spoke adamantly about wanting and needing to convey to the students, "there is a vast world out there that's theirs, but they need an education to access so much of it."

Ann's comments were not subtle. She spoke about how, as a leader, it was her responsibility "to take this group of predominantly, almost all white teachers and first of all, get them to understand the type of student that they're working with." She talked about her frustration when she first came to Newton three years ago, and heard teachers say that she didn't understand the kind of students they were working with. "They don't say that to me anymore because what that statement was, was we can't have as high expectations for our kids as everybody else because you don't know what are our kids are like- and high expectations are *critical* for these students." Ann stated without reservation:

> We have to expect them to do absolutely their best and it is for any student. When I was growing up, my parents had high expectations for me. I believed I could do well, but they believed I could do well. We have to believe our students can do well; we have to have high expectations for them. And that's probably the key to leadership in a school like this, is you have to get your teachers to have high expectations for all of their students.

Susan talked about expectations this way; she saw that an important part of her role was to talk to kids about their lives, about "really dreaming about their lives. We want every kid to think big. We're really into helping them find what they like and what they're strong in." Susan talked about a part of the overall philosophy of her program, " was to help break the cycle of poverty with kids and give them skills and some confidence in themselves to be themselves and not to be measured by other people's standards, but by their own accomplishments."

The impact on the roles of administrators who understood the importance of high expectations for all students was not talked about in particular, but as larger ideas, of philosophy and perhaps policy, although the word policy was not directly used in their statements.

Unlike the administrators, the teachers were directly asked where they set the academic bar for their students and what guided them in setting it (Appendices E, F). Marie's comments showed a beginning understanding that high expectations were important, admitting that she had wanted to set the bar higher, but she had her hands full getting to know the workings of the school and her students. Marie was wrestling with the expectations of the students at Gordon, stating, "Maybe the bar is lower here, even

though I didn't consciously make it that way." She felt that at Gordon, less was expected from the students behaviorally and "maybe even academically because I also have a 4th grade son and work that he brings home-and he may get a 3 on it, I would say in my classroom I would have definitely given it a 4, with stars."

Twylla left no doubt where she stood about her expectations for her students, but also honestly described she did not always think that way:

> I set the bar pretty high and there again, I have to admit that when I first came to this building, if children didn't turn in their work, which was something I would never have accepted, I just let it go and then I realized, too, that's unacceptable. This is where the bar is and this has got to be what my expectation is. And if I wouldn't accept that from my own child, then I can't accept it from the children in this room. And so they know that my expectations are very, very high, but the also know that I'm not going to push them beyond where they can go; I don't want to bring them to that frustration point, so every year you have to decide where that is for every child.

Stella talked about expectations similar to how Susan expressed it, by encouraging her students to dream and talking to them about how those dreams become reality. She explained how she walked her second graders through it. "Let's draw a diagram showing the steps to get there. Ok. You're here. Where are you going to middle school? Where are you going to high school, to college? So then they can start visualizing that compass."

Summer spoke strongly about her expectations for her very young students. She thought she had high expectations in her classroom and she thought teachers must believe

that children can achieve much. "I don't think you walk into a Head Start classroom and think these poor children can't do anything because you're no good then. Why are you even here if that's what you think?"

The impact on the teachers as a result of understanding the importance of having high expectations for all students also came through the interviews as more philosophical than pedagogical, although Marie and Stella had particular examples of what they did.

Social-emotional Goals Had High Priority

While acknowledging the high expectations for student achievement in academics, the participants also spoke of an understanding that the social-emotional goals of their students needed to be of high priority.

Ann was adamant that no racial insults were ever acceptable. She dealt with racial insults immediately and "very, very specifically." Ann explained, "to use a racial slur against someone else is like saying "F-you" to a teacher. We deal with that right away to try to make sure that everyone feels valued and knows that those goals are really important in this school."

Susan spoke simply about the importance of developing students to be leaders, instead of followers. "We're all really trying to develop leadership skills with those kids as the year goes on, [for them] to be the initiators, [instead of] just saying here's what we're going to do today."

Annie indicated that Newton emphasized learning beyond academics. She saw her role as helping students develop the social skills that would make them worldly, such as how to communicate with others and how to be respectful. "We work a lot on creating a

peaceful environment here, so kids know what peace is, what it feels like and looks like and how they can solve their problems without using violence."

Stella talked about the social-emotional aspect of some of her students when she mentioned that "something new" had affected her teaching, which was the hair of the "little Black girls" in her classroom. She found that their hair was really important to them and if "that comes undone in the hall, their beautiful braids, you can't continue teaching them because they're focused on their hair, so you always have extra hair bands so they can fix their hair or you can fix their hair."

Summer's awareness that her students' social-emotional lives needed to take high priority at times and what her role as teacher looked like at one of those times follows:

> I can tell the kids are having a tough time right now so I'm just going to come in here and be as available as possible. Not worry about anything on my desk, not worry about phone calls, just I'm gonna be available and what has happened is that in the morning, that's what the kids really need. They need to have conversations and talk. I say, what's different in the room? Have the tadpoles hatched yet? You have to start the day out here just with conversation and being here for the kids.

The importance of the social-emotional wellbeing of her students came from Twylla as she simply stated where her priorities were. She wanted to empower her students so they could say, "I can do it. That's my most important role and to say to a child, I believe in you, so often, that they find themselves saying the same thing about themselves."

The need to make students' social-emotional lives a high priority without sacrificing the high academic expectations for their students came through in all the interviews. What may have appeared to be a dichotomy for an outside observer was not seen in that way for these educators. Both aspects were seen as valuable.

Administrators' Decisions Based on Key Principles of Multicultural Education

A finding that came from this study was that the administrators made decisions that were based on key principles of multicultural education that Banks, (1995), Grant and Sleeter (1989), Sleeter (1996) and Nieto (2000) and others refer to. This finding came as a result of asking the administrators, "Would you say that you have made any decisions in your leadership role that have helped to address any ethnic and socioeconomic inequities in this school? If not, who makes those decisions? If so, what kinds of decisions were they, what were some of the outcomes and what factors lead up to those decisions?" (Appendix G). This finding alone should not appear as unusual, as the overriding goal of multicultural education is to eliminate inequities found in schools and this is what was asked of the administrators, but the point of interest to the researcher was that from this question so many different tenets of multicultural education were codified in the administrators' examples.

Ann felt that every day, she made decisions that addressed ethnic and socioeconomic inequities. She gave several examples. This example, which was large scale, was initially deciding to move forward with the Leonard Bernstein Artful Learning Curriculum at Gordon. She said because of that curriculum decision, she has made many other, smaller decisions that she felt addressed inequities as well. She also commented that she looked at her budget and put a lot of discretionary funds towards having a

community liaison. One of the things the community liaison did was to go and pick up a parent anytime and bring them to school. Ann also decided to set up an account so the school could call and pay for a cab if a parent needed to get to school that way. She gave an example of something the liaison had done a few days prior to the interview, commenting that after the liaison had picked up a parent for a meeting the parent had asked if the liaison would mind stopping at Walgreen's so the parent could pick up a prescription. Ann felt good about the school being able to help families in that manner, but also indicated it was important in order for "the parents to have a good feeling about school and if they want to get here, they can get here."

Ann also talked with some frustration about decisions she would like to make, as she commented on the hiring process that was currently in place. "If a person of color comes in, I will just plain hire them, unless there is a [problem with] a background check or something. So I hire them and really encourage them to take their paraprofessional test." Ann said she had one person who took the paraprofessional test, so was very pleased. Ann's frustration came when she explained that if this person of color gets hired, she can be bumped by whoever is above her and if the school district goes through cutbacks, that person of color will be one of the first people in the school who goes. "We'll look at the best people and if they're people of color and there's potential, we'll keep them because we need them. I need my kids to see people of color in leadership positions in this building. That's very, very important." Ann further added, "And by leadership, I mean working."

Annie talked about several examples regarding the decisions she has made where she has felt she had helped address ethnic and socioeconomic inequities. First, she and

the site team purposefully funded an assistant principal, which one did not see in any other elementary school in the school district. Annie felt strongly about providing this position. "We want to make sure that either [the assistant principal] or myself can easily be accessed for our parents because many of our families just need extra support." Annie stated that the families "need to know where the Family Support Center is and if they don't have tennis shoes, how can they get their kids tennis shoes and all those kinds of things."

Annie added that she and her staff was very conscious about studying "how they could best reach all populations." As an example, in one of their professional learning communities they had been examining the book, *white Teachers, Diverse Classrooms.* As another example, Ann said, "When we saw a few years ago that our students of color were not succeeding in math, well, right away we did best practice research, we brought in literature and really examined how we can do things differently." Finally, Annie added:

> We have put extra money into a reading program because we know reading is essential. Our kids aren't going to get anywhere unless they can read, so as a Site Team, we have had to make a lot of other cuts in our building, but yet we still consider the reading teachers as such a core piece.

Susan spoke of a program that she funded which was supporting two parents in developing their leadership skills as part of a multicultural parents' group. "We actually pay people who are parents, who, if we just look at [the] socioeconomic [piece], it's not a huge chunk, but for some people it's really a start in recognizing their gifts and skills in a particular area." These two parents have had children in the programs that Susan funds.

Susan talked enthusiastically about the two parents. “Their children have graduated from high school, and have gotten college scholarships; they’ve beaten the odds that confront single mothers with low incomes and African American parents and I think, boy, they have done a good job!”

These statements from the administrators were concrete examples of taking the theoretical underpinnings of multicultural education and bringing many of them into practice.

Teachers Worked in Opposition to the Status Quo

A theme that ran through the experienced teachers’ interviews were statements which indicated understanding that there were times in their day that they could be most effective when doing things in opposition to the status quo. The statements that follow range from very direct to subtle.

Stella talked about working against the status quo directly and forcefully. “I’m not satisfied with the status quo of teaching or with just the white Christian culture. It doesn’t meet any of my needs and I know there’s a whole world out there that doesn’t meet [my students’] needs.” Stella left no doubt about how strongly she felt about working against the grain. “I’m ok, so therefore my kids are ok, goddamn it. Yeah, goddamn it.”

Twylla’s voice rose as she related this experience:

> I realize that this [new child to my room] can’t read at all and he had gone to what many people would consider one of the higher end schools in our district. They’ve received a lot of awards and they’re certainly doing a great job, but I wondered if any PDI’s had been done and if anything was in place for him, so I called the teacher and she said, “No, you know, we don’t like to do those on our Black

> children because then we might be called racist." And I said, "Well, does it feel like it might be racist to ignore the needs of a child because they have different colored skin?" And she said, "Well, we just don't want someone coming back and saying that because we don't have very many children of color, and if we single them out for special ed services or single them out for testing, then we might be called racist." And I thought, well, that cleared a lot of things up for me. Now I know why people want to be here. It doesn't matter what color you are; if you are in trouble, we want to find out why and I think that makes a big difference in this building.

Summer demonstrated an understanding of exactly what her students needed, despite a lunch schedule that begged to be followed. Her work in opposition to the status quo was very subtle, yet evident. She related why she stretched out lunch. "And then [a child says to me], I'm really hungry. Our meals are really longer here because we let the kids eat until they really think they've had enough and so forth."

These experienced teachers talked very openly about what they did or what they believed in order to best help their diverse students even when it was against what others were doing. Working against the status quo takes some bravery and the researcher noted that during portions of the interviews.

Work in Ethnically and Socioeconomically Diverse Schools Brought Extraordinary Challenges, Extraordinary Commitment

The interviews with the educators and the day spent in general observation at each school gave a strong impression that their jobs were long and tiring. The day in the life of an educator at an elementary school tends to be that way. A finding that emerged from

the narratives was that the ethnically and socioeconomically diverse schools were extraordinarily challenging, yet all the educators except the novice teacher voiced extraordinary commitment to their students and schools.

Here are some descriptions of what is meant by more than the usual routine of teaching in dealing with students and their families. Twylla gave one example where she periodically came face to face with parents who were angry because of the white privilege they perceived was going on:

> I have on more than one occasion [have had to say], "I can't help it that I'm white and I can't help it that I'm a woman; this is what I was born into. I also can't help it that I love your child. Now do you want to talk or not?"

While she was at work, Twylla not only had to face angry parents periodically who challenged her because she was white, but once she was at home, she had to try to explain to her white neighbors why she went to work in such a *dangerous place*. She explained that her neighbors were *rather shocked* that working at Newton would be her choice.

Stella relayed that she had delivered homework to a homeless shelter. She also spoke about a time she was walking in a neighborhood where many white people may not feel comfortable walking in, trying to find where one of her students lived to make a home visit to the student's family that gotten out of the shelter and into an apartment. "I didn't know the address, no phone. I'm walking down the street, I don't even know the names of the streets and I'm knocking on doors and the kids are answering the doors and they all know me!"

Susan shared one of her challenges:

> I can speak for the entire staff. We feel that there's tension in working with students of color sometimes because of things that might be called racist. You could be called that for holding a person accountable in a way that you would hold anyone else accountable and that is really good for the kids. So we're kind of big on fairness and keeping again, that focus on the kids…. I think a kid called me racist one time. I said, "You know, that's just not true. The problem is you hit this other kid."

The second part to this finding, that of having extraordinary commitment to their students and schools is revealed in these next comments. Ann stated, "This is a perfectly wonderful school! It's powerful to work with a group of people who really want to affect students' lives." Or from Annie: "The good news is, everyday that I pull in the parking lot, and this is the honest truth, I am so glad to be here. I love the children, I love working with the families and this staff is amazing!" Susan added this, "This is a passion for me; this is a calling. This is a place that I'm going to make a difference and it's a very particular type of a difference."

The examples from the experienced teachers also attest to their commitment to their diverse schools. Stella talked outright about the love for her students:

> And of course, I end up saying all day long, I love you [to my students] I'll sign it, I'll lip it. I really like where I am with that and now I'll only be of service in my education….I won't leave Gordon. I'll change careers if I can't be true to myself in that service.

Twylla told a short story about receiving gag gifts from her colleagues for "hearing the most new words" after her first year of teaching and added this, "They had

apparently taken bets as to whether I would last the first year. But [now] I just can't imagine leaving."

Summer also spoke of her commitment to Gordon: "I don't think there are lots of people who look at Head Start and really understand it. It is totally where I need to work because this is where my teaching makes the most difference. I truly haven't worked in a middle-class [school]. This is my reality.

To work in such a challenging school environment that ethnic and socioeconomically diverse settings can produce and yet have such a strong commitment to the school and to the students came through the interviews quite clearly. It is an interesting dichotomy.

Summary

Although the teachers and administrators had different roles as educators, common threads were most often found between them as themes emerged, but there were also findings unique to each role. The findings were presented in two different sections that highlighted each research question, although both questions were interrelated. As to the first research question, What perceptions of white privilege do educators hold? Findings included three main themes: 1) perceptions of white privilege varied greatly between the novice teacher and the other educators, 2) educators expressed awareness of power they possessed and 3) educators expressed awareness that they were looking through a different lens than some of society, their colleagues and family members. In addition, findings were presented in the first section that explored how the educators reconciled their work within their personal lives of relative privilege.

Findings that highlighted the second research question, How do educators' perceptions of white privilege impact their respective role? included eight themes: 1) family circumstances affected student learning, 2) parents' love and aspirations for their children recognized 3) curriculum connected to students' lives, 4) high expectations needed for all students, 5) social-emotional goals had high priority, 6) administrative decisions based on principles of multicultural education, 7) teachers worked in opposition to the status quo and 8) work in ethnically and socioeconomically diverse settings brought extraordinary challenges, extraordinary commitment.

A majority of these themes can be found within the literature, which will be discussed in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion of Findings

Introduction

This purpose of this study was to understand individually held perceptions about white privilege and the possible impact these perceptions might have on the execution of educational roles of teachers and administrators. Specifically, this study was designed to answer the research questions of:

1. What perceptions do novice and experienced white teachers and administrators hold regarding white privilege?
2. How do white teachers' and administrators' perceptions impact their respective roles?

This chapter serves to discuss the findings and to describe how the findings interact with the literature. The chapter also includes implications and limitations of the study, in addition to what the findings suggest for further research.

Perceptions of White Privilege Held by Educators

Three themes and an additional finding that highlight the first research question are discussed and how those findings interact with the literature are addressed here. Those themes are: 1) differing perceptions, 2) awareness of power, and 3) looking through a different lens. The additional finding is how white educators reconcile their students' reality that is embedded in their work as educators within their own, relatively privileged lives.

Differing Perceptions.

Marie, the only novice teacher in this study was found to have markedly different perceptions of white privilege than the other participants. In Chapter 4, the reader will note that Marie is not included in several of the examples; this is because the themes were not found in her narrative. I do not mean to imply that there was one, static perception that the other participants had; however, a comparison of all the interviews indicated that Marie, who had only been in this diverse setting for one year, was perhaps still trying to understand the curriculum, school setting, her students and their families.

Landsman (2006), using Dr. White's ideas, writes that understanding white privilege is a life long process. "It happens after consistent layers of exposure-the new insight from a novel, the getting inside of another person's heart and mind in a powerful film, or the portrait painted by an artist who lives in our neighborhood; these accumulate over time to influence our very thought patterns" (p. 22). Perhaps because this was her first year in such an ethnically and socioeconomically diverse setting and because she was still a novice teacher, Marie had not had the time or opportunities to think about white privilege in general or her own perceptions.

In her White Racial Identity Development Model, Helms (1993) may give us another way to consider why Marie's responses were markedly different than the other participants. (Note: This research is studying ethnicity instead of race, but Helms' model is very applicable. Thus, readers should also expand their thinking to include Native American identity and bi-racial identity, as well, as Helms' descriptions are explained.) In the first stage, the Contact Stage, Helms (1993) describes a person who has encountered a Black person. She writes that one of the characteristics of a person in this

stage may be that they make such comments as, "I don't notice what race a person is" (p. 57). Marie had openly expressed that very statement to me as she relayed an experience in her college course, but later, in her assessment of herself, she revealed that she was contemplating another way of thinking about it. One of the points in Helms' (1993) second stage, the Disintegration Stage, describes a person who believes, "Each person should be treated to his or her individual merits versus the belief that Blacks should be evaluated as a group without regard to individual merits and talents" (p. 58). Marie also voiced this realization as she thought about how she had previously been looking at her students through a color-blind lens: "I'm really trying to rethink that….so I'm learning in that way. I know I'm learning about different cultures, but I guess I haven't addressed them individually."

The other participants' statements positioned them in Helms' later stages that suggest they have looked critically at and disavowed racism and also have seemingly critiqued and embraced their white identity in a non-racist way. The other participants talk about white privilege, their benefits, such as power derived from white privilege, and that ethnic and socioeconomic minorities are oppressed because of not only individual attitudes, but institutional and societal oppression as well. Helms' model would suggest that these other participants display attitudes and behaviors that would be found in the later two stages, the fifth, Immersion/Emersion Stage and the sixth, the Autonomy Stage.

Awareness of Power.

"If you walk around the neighborhood, there's lots of Caucasian families that have lived here forever, but they send their child somewhere else to a different magnet school because they have the ability to do that."- Ann

Whether it was the power to make choices, the power to do things on your own behalf or for others or the power to believe in themselves or others, all the participants, except Marie, spoke of awareness of power they possessed or that other white people possessed as a result of white privilege. Researchers and authors have been writing about the power that accompanies white privilege (Jensen, 2005; Kendall, 2006; Kivel, 2002 Wise, 2005) and more specifically the power that white teachers have (Delpit, 2006; Henze, Lucas & Scott, 1998; Ladson-Billings, 1994; McIntyre, 1997). In her study of white, undergraduate teachers McIntyre (1997) wrote, “If indeed, power is an energy that fuels every facet of our lives, then white power is an energy that fuels the implicit and explicit realities of racism in this country” (p. 88). It was not a surprise that the educators revealed an awareness of power that white privilege brings because of what the literature review foreshadowed; what was more of interest was that their cognizance of power was threaded throughout the interviews, in numerous places. The participants were similar to McIntyre’s students, in that they constructed power within their roles as educators where they felt they could use their power in classrooms and school settings to empower students. McIntyre’s students verbalized seeing their power gained through white privilege as a good thing, as “tapping into [power] to improve the lives of others” (p. 90). However, they were unlike McIntyre’s students in that all the participants, but the novice teacher spoke of an awareness of institutional racism through policy, curriculum, school materials or resources. Stella’s statement illustrates this: “I have been called in to meetings to help speak for the parent, instead of having them be a victim too, [because of] *quick decisions and surface policies* [italics added]-I’m not afraid.”

Looking Through a Different Lens.

"There are people in my life who I love very dearly who live in a very white world and I've realized that by teaching here my whole world view is different."- Twylla

Twylla's powerful statement was illustrative of a kind of example that came from all the educators except Marie, of a mindfulness that their perceptions of white privilege presented a different lens through which they viewed their students, students' families and society. What is of interest here is the cognizance of the educators as to how very different their views were from some of society, their colleagues and family members, who have said such things to Twylla as, "Well, I don't see why they don't just go get a job." The educators' lenses certainly were varied, but their narratives evidenced an understanding that oppression and racism on many different levels gets in the way of "just getting a job."

Freire's (2000) ideas of problem-posing education where he spoke of it as "the practice of freedom and an unveiling of reality" (p. 81) might be found in Annie's statement, in her critique of district policies regarding school choice. Annie, as well, unveiled this reality: "School choice is still important, but there needs to be transportation, otherwise, it isn't a choice for everyone; it's a school choice for white privilege." Another idea of Freire's that lends understanding would be his statement that teachers become conscious of the "way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation" (2000, p. 83). Ann's acknowledgement about how her viewpoint was different than her older husband's suggested that she is conscious of the way she exists in the world as an educator and understands that perceptions of white

privilege are not static. Ann had commented how her husband's viewpoint had been helpful to her, as she referred to him here: "When I look at people and when you see good people who care about learning and you can see even the effect society has had on them, it's not an education problem, it's a societal problem, but we deal with it where we can-and I see my own growth"

Reconciling Students' Reality within a Privileged Life.

"I'm in a job that gives people those opportunities and that's the calling on my life to do that with students and to get them to believe in themselves. I work as hard as I can and I feel really good about it, so when I go home I don't feel guilty, I'm just glad I'm at home…. I am doing something. Something important."- Ann

During the interviews, I asked the question, "How do you make sense of your role as a teacher at the end of the day when you leave your work environment?" because this was one of the questions that held a high degree of interest for me. In Chapter 3, I talked about my earlier teaching experiences with ethnically and socioeconomically diverse students, when I was not aware of my white privilege. I was very aware that many of the ethnically and socioeconomically diverse students and families were struggling with a variety of issues, but I did not see them as resulting from institutional or societal inequities. I was not aware then of the huge jumpstart, the cultural and social capital I was given at birth because of my white skin. By the time I had some awareness of white privilege, I was no longer teaching full time in a setting where many of the students were ethnically and socioeconomically diverse. I have wondered what I would have done differently, both professionally and personally. I wondered how I might have made sense of my work, how I might have behaved, what I might have said differently with the

acknowledgement that I have great advantages over my students and families because of my privilege.

Other than finding that each educator's way of making sense of their work was unique, the other finding was that there is very little literature regarding how white educators make sense of their privilege against the backdrop of their work where they come into contact with students and families who may not have a share in those benefits.

Some examples of educators who have written about their white privilege are Howard (1999), Kendall (2006), Landsman (2006a), and Wise (2005) but they have not quite touched upon trying to reconcile their white privilege while in the midst of working with ethnically and socioeconomically diverse students. Paley (2000) came close in the writing of her book, *white Teacher*, but talked about how her whiteness impacted her teaching, as opposed to reconciling white privilege. In the new preface to her latest edition, Paley talked about deciding to "collect the goods on myself" (p. xiv) after being part of a group of teachers who was confronted by African American parents about how prejudice and unfairness was evident in their children's classrooms. Paley's guiding questions became, " Is this classroom in which I live a fair place for every child who enters", and "Does every child and family have equal say in the worlds we invent?" (p. xv).

The participants in this study spoke from immediate standpoints. Their reconciliations were very personal; several of them showed emotion when talking about this subject. This was not a hypothetical or theoretical interview question; it was something that they were faced with on a daily basis. Their thoughts had immediacy to them because the interviews were done during the school year and all the participants

would either be facing their students within minutes after the interviews or the very next day, which made their comments very powerful.

How Educators' Perceptions of White Privilege Impact Their Roles

The eight themes highlighting the second research question and how these findings interact with the literature are addressed here. Although the findings have been separated into two different sections, the second research question is derived from the first one. Those eight themes are: 1) family circumstances affected student learning, 2) parents' love and aspirations for their children recognized, 3) curriculum connected to students' lives, 4) high expectations needed for all students, 5) social-emotional goals had high priority, 6) administrative decisions based on key principles of multicultural education, 7) teachers worked in opposition to the status quo, and 8) work in ethnically and socioeconomically diverse schools brought extraordinary challenges, extraordinary commitment.

Family Circumstances Affected Student Learning.

"I guess I have never taken into consideration as much what students have going on in their personal lives and how that can affect how they learn and what's important to them…"- Marie

Most administrators and teachers of elementary-aged students understand that students' families are an integral part of the teaching puzzle. Communication between school and home often starts with a newsletter letting family members know when the first school-wide open house is. During Kindergarten Round-up in the spring, parents of Kindergarteners often get a chance to go into a classroom that their child may be attending in the fall and briefly talk to the Kindergarten teachers. During the elementary

years, teachers typically send home weekly newsletters and/or behavior reports, reminders of upcoming field trips and the need for permission slips, or letters asking for donations of consumable supplies, just for examples.

This study found all seven educators acknowledging that many of their ethnically and socioeconomically diverse students lead complex lives because of the complex situations their families lived in. This awareness seemed to have made these educators cognizant that effectively teaching ethnically and socioeconomically diverse students meant thinking and going about it in a different way, a way that took into account that complexity. As an example taken from the findings, Ann knew that periodically, she might be at the receiving end of angry words from a parent who wasn't really angry with her, but was venting frustration and anger as a result of difficulties encountered from other issues not connected with the school. Ann used that knowledge to be patient with and supportive of her families.

The literature supports the need for white teachers to recognize the complexity of students' lives in order to effectively reach them and teach them. Hancock (2006) wrote "white teachers must move beyond the notion of meritocracy and examine how white privilege blinds them to the reality of generational poverty" (p. 102). Hancock, in studying white teachers, shared this from someone in his study who told him that many urban families in her school lived in poverty and she believed that "an understanding of parental situations from a place of compassion and genuine care promotes cultural literacy and is essential to building relationships and academic success" (p. 102). Ladson-Billings (2006) reminded readers that it is important for educators to be challenging their intrinsic assumptions about families. Instead of looking upon parents as

roadblocks to their child's education, they need to realize that the roadblocks "actually may be beyond the parents' control…Is their lack of interest deliberate or do the parents lack knowledge about how to express interest in ways that the school recognizes?" (p. 132).

Parents' Love and Aspirations for Their Children Recognized.

"Every single family absolutely loves their child; wants absolutely the best for their child"- Annie

What Annie was trying to dispel was the stereotype that Middleton, Coleman and Lewis (2006) referred to as "the uninvolved parent of color" (p. 172). When white parents do not show up at a parent teacher conference or a special family event for their elementary school aged child, there is more often a rationalization by the teachers that perhaps a parent became sick or had a flat tire on the way. Most likely the teachers do not silently wonder if the white parent really cares how the child is doing in school.

The "uninvolved parent of color" stereotype can develop into a cycle of miscommunication at the cost of the child. If parents are stereotyped in a manner where teachers believe they don't care how their children do in school because they miss conferences, then educators may be less likely to communicate with them about homework and other issues that come up because they think it won't matter. If parents perceive that educators don't care about their children because they aren't hearing anything from their teachers, then a trusting relationship between teacher and parent cannot develop, which can interfere with the child's social-emotional and learning outcomes.

All the educators except Marie could see past most of the behavior of the parents that at times seemed to run contrary to loving and wanting the best for one's child. The educators expressed an understanding that external and internal oppression can lead to such things as mental health issues and drug and alcohol abuse, which, in turn, can lead to behavior that can be hard to understand or accept by educators. It seems as though their awareness of privilege gave them the lens to see oppression and racism that ethnically and socioeconomically diverse parents encounter. In addition to educators' statements, which indicated their recognition of the love and aspirations parents have for their children, their narratives revealed another element of multicultural education teaching pedagogy. McGee Banks (1989) and Middleton, Coleman and Lewis (2006) wrote about the importance of examining one's assumptions about ethnically and socioeconomically diverse families. Middleton, Coleman and Lewis wrote, "For many, the media determines the perception of Black or African American. The stereotypical portrayal of Black men as rappers, athletes, gangbangers, pimps, thieves, drug dealers and criminals…" The authors continued, " …Black females [are portrayed] as maids, pregnant teens, prostitutes and single mothers on welfare and Black families [are portrayed as] living in poverty in urban ghettos, in dilapidated housing, or in the projects…" (p. 163). Multicultural education teaching pedagogy consists of examining assumptions about families, assumptions that may have resulted from stereotypical byproducts of the media and other sources and have gotten in the way of really seeing why families may not be able to get to parent teacher conferences or special family events.

To conclude, Sleeter (1996) adds to this finding by writing about teachers' responsibility to secure social justice. Sleeter stated it was important for teachers to recognize the ethical dimension of teaching other people's children: "This means that such a teacher recognizes the aspirations oppressed groups have for their children and the barriers, both interpersonal and institutional, that persistently thwart their efforts" (p. 246).

Curriculum Connected to Students' Lives.

"We need to give them the skills to be able to do anything they want to be and understand the way society works and yet keep their identity, too."- Annie

Providing in-depth multicultural curriculum that is meaningful to students' lives is a tenet of multicultural education. Although the participants did not label their ways of thinking about their strategies of teaching or leading as tenets of either multicultural education, urban pedagogy, or culturally relevant teaching (Ayers & Ford, 2006; Banks, 1995; Garrison-Wade and Lewis, 2006; Gorski, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2003), the educators' statements indicated they had a critical eye when it came to what they wanted the students to know and come away with.

Connecting meaningful curriculum to students' lives was done in a sweeping way at Gordon. The school was using the Leonard Bernstein Artful Learning curriculum throughout the school, based on a deliberate decision by a majority of the teachers, supported fully by the administrators there. With this curriculum they could not only easily bring in different learning styles, but incorporate lessons that reflected and honored the ethnicity of the students. Also of great importance was that the curriculum was meant to empower the students. An example from Ann was how the unit on the Constitution

was taught much differently instead of from a Eurocentric point of view and that had made the Native American students sit up and take notice after learning the Constitution was patterned after an Iroquois treaty. Ladson-Billings (1994) would also have said that the approach to learning that was exemplified by the unit on the Constitution because it "allowed [Native American] students to chose academic excellence yet still identify with [Native American] culture" (p. 17). (Note: Ladson-Billings used the words African American in the words bracketed above, but she also stated in her 1994 book, The Dreamkeepers, "As is true with most researchers, it is my hope that this research will find broad applicability and be seen as useful for teaching students of any race or ethnicity" (p. 14).) Grant and Sleeter (1989) would also have supported the nontraditional approach to curriculum development, as in the example of how the Constitution of the United States was taught at Gordon from another perspective. Grant and Sleeter wrote that not only should education be multicultural but also from a social reconstructionist point of view. By helping students see and understand that the Founders of the United States were all white men who owned property, it encourages them "to become analytical and critical thinkers capable of examining their life circumstances and the social stratification that keeps them and their group from fully enjoying the social and financial rewards of this country" (p. 54).

High Expectations Needed for All Students.

"And that's probably the key to leadership in a school like this, is you have to get your teachers to have high expectations for all of their students"- Ann

Marie voiced that she was wrestling with what she expected of her students and what her daughter's teacher, at another school, but the same grade level, expected of her

daughter, but otherwise, statements from the educators suggested a strong understanding of the importance of high expectations for all students. Twylla admitted that when she was new to Newton, her expectations were not as high and she came to realize that her thinking "was unacceptable." Ann's statement was especially strong when she voiced her frustration after first arriving at Gordon, " Teachers [would] say, 'You don't understand the kind of students we're working with.' They don't say that to me anymore because what that statement was, was we can't have as high expectations for our kids as everybody else because you don't know what our kids are like-and high expectations are critical for these students."

A need for high expectations for students of color can be found in a variety of places throughout the current literature. Garrison-Wade and Lewis (2006) prefaced their writing with a quote from James Baldwin, "For these are all our children…We will profit by, or pay for, whatever they become" (p. 150). After their foreshadowing statement by Baldwin, the authors wrote this in their conclusions of a study on Black students: "Teachers' attitudes and expectations greatly affect all students. The students whom we talked with implied that their teachers' perception of their ability greatly impacted their academic performance. They responded favorably to teachers who held them to higher standards" (2006, p. 159). In quoting the late Sally Rudel, who had been Assistant Principal at South High School in Minneapolis, Holbrook (2006) made her thoughts quite clear: "Low expectations are the worst form of racism" (p. 110).

Social-emotional Goals Had High Priority.

"I think for me the biggest thing has been to empower kids to be able to say, I can do it. That's my most important role and to say to a child, I believe in you, so often, that they find themselves saying the same thing about themselves."-Twylla

The educators gave a variety of examples in explaining that they make the social-emotional needs of their ethnically and socioeconomically diverse students a high priority. In Delpit's (2006) new introduction to her book, she wrote about "As I submitted in *Other People's Children* it is still imperative that we actually teach children the academic skills they need to be successful participants in society, but I now realize, with ever-increasing clarity, that we must do that and much more" (p. xv). Delpit highlighted an exemplary school, Hyde School, which had a strong focus on character development. She briefly described Hyde School's mission as, "the education of the hearts, minds and souls of its students" (p. xv). Delpit wrote that the message to Hyde's students included " the true worth is measure not by their social status, intellect, or talents, but by the strength of their character" (p. xv) and "we admire [students'] attitude and effort, and care less about their actual achievements, because these will come with time if they develop character traits like those emblazoned on the Hyde School shield: Courage, Integrity, Concern, Curiosity and Leadership" (p. xv).

Although the educators in this current study did not talk directly about character development, I would argue that when Ann talked about the importance of making sure everyone felt valued, when Annie stated that she saw her role as helping students develop the social skills to make them worldly, and when one of Susan's goals was to develop students to be leaders instead of followers, that was about character building.

Summer had talked about the social-emotional development of her students, but in a different way. When Summer talked about how she could tell that her students were having a tough time and that the best thing she could do for them was to be as available as possible, that they need to have conversations and just talk about the little things happening in the room, I am reminded of what Kozol (2000) wrote:

> It's easy to forget how much of the existence of a seven-year-old child has to do with things that are not big at all and do not lend themselves to generalities and are, indeed, so small and so specific they would seldom earn a mention in a government report or book of sociology. The life of a child, after all, is made up not of social 'constructs' or developmental 'trends' but of much smaller things like stomachaches or hurtful words or red Crayola crayons. (p. 15)

The social-emotional well being of students was not part of the scope of the original literature search, but can be found in early childhood education literature (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997; Gonzalez-Mena, 1998; Hyson, 2003; Noddings, 2007).

Administrators' Decisions Based on Key Principles of Multicultural Education. "You talk about something that is a white privilege organization within our school district-let's hit that one right there. In the gifted program here, we'll take a look at who qualifies and if it does not represent our population, they need to find other kids that represent our population that maybe didn't [meet the] test [standards], but would be considered gifted and talented."- Annie

Annie offered a straightforward assessment of her own employer and with this statement showed an exemplary example of how all three administrators were trying to address ethnic and socioeconomic inequities at their schools. The administrators shared

many instances that were based on the theoretical key principles of multicultural education as offered by such educators as Banks (1995), Sleeter (1996), Nieto (2000), and Ladson-Billings (1994). Annie's example spoke directly to the principle that (Gorski, 2006) highlighted: "Multicultural education insists, "comprehensive school reform can only be achieved through a critical analysis of systems of power and privilege" (p. 65).

When Ann said, "I think that what people don't understand is how difficult it is for me to get people of color in this building working….If they do cutbacks, that's the first person who goes….We've always hired back according to last hired is first to go", it was a critique of an institutional system of hiring that was put in place by those who had power and privilege.

Sleeter (2000) argued for looking at multicultural education as a social movement. She stated that as a social movement, the natural constituent base of "children of oppressed groups, their parents, their communities and their grassroots advocacy organizations" (p. 242) has been claimed by "predominantly white groups of educators [who] look to ourselves as if *we* were the constituent base of multicultural education, which misses the entire point of power- redistribution" (p. 242). I think what Sleeter (2000) was arguing for could be seen in Susan's work. Susan talked about her program financially supporting two, non-white parents who were single moms, through her budget in order for them to develop leadership skills by asking them to lead a multicultural parenting group. Often low-income parents cannot follow the rules of the game to get a job, through no fault of their own. They cannot afford a good interview outfit or they have not been able to tap into training to learn how to create a resume if they even have

prior job experience. They may not have easy access to a computer to produce a resume. Susan changed the power-redistribution by not requiring that the parents follow the rules of the game. She not only gave them the opportunity to work, but the opportunity to learn to lead others.

Throughout several of the administrators' statements, I was struck by how close their work mirrored some of the ideas of Banks (1989). Banks wrote he had been talking to one administrator who told him, "the district had 'done' multicultural education last year and was now initiating other reforms, such as improving the students' reading scores" (p. 3) Banks told the reader, "Multicultural education must be viewed as an ongoing process, and not as something we 'do' and thereby solve the problems that are the targets of multicultural education reform" (p. 3). Annie had been involved in what Banks had been referring to. She not only talked about leading her teaching faculty through a reflective professional development study of white teachers working with diverse students, but there was also a strong sense from her that her philosophy of addressing ethnic and socioeconomic inequities was ongoing, year after year.

Teachers Worked in Opposition to the Status Quo.

"I'm not satisfied with the status quo of teaching or with just the white Christian culture. It doesn't meet any of my needs and I know there's a whole world out there; it doesn't meet [my students'] needs. I'm ok, so therefore my kids are ok, goddamn it."-Stella

All three experienced teachers revealed how they felt and what they did in their classroom as they went up against some sort of policy or mainstream thinking, for the benefit of their students. Stella's statement from above perhaps revealed the greatest awareness of a status quo in teaching and perhaps she felt the most tension of the

teachers, between what was expected of her and her students by society and what she felt was best for her students. It may be that the teachers' oppositional work, for the most part, went unnoticed; Summer, although not as outspoken as Stella, decided she would not necessarily follow the strict eating schedules because she knew her young students often come to school very hungry. The schedule was about satiating her students, not determined by how much time breakfast or lunch was restricted to.

Strong statements about working against the status quo have been written such as, "I believe that if teaching is to be effective, it must contain an element of the subversive" (Landsman, 2006, p. 221). Ladson-Billings (1994) also had strong words when she wrote that teachers have to do more than simply talk about systemic oppression, they also need to practice subversive pedagogy. Gorski (2006) laid out this question for educators to ask themselves, "Am I using resources earmarked for equity work or multicultural education for programs, that, although fun and interesting, fail to challenge the status quo?" (p. 75).

White Teachers in Ethnically and Socioeconomically Diverse Schools: Extraordinary Challenges, Extraordinary Commitment.

"This school has incredible camaraderie amongst the staff. We do that because we know that all of our days can be hard days. We know we are going to hear stories that can break our hearts or see behaviors from children that they're bringing in that have nothing to do with school, but everything to do with where their life is at and we know we need to support one another….The teachers had apparently taken bets as to whether I would last the first year, but I just can't imagine leaving"-Twylla

As the educators shared their thoughts through the interviews, some of their challenges were made known, some of which were extraordinary. For example, Stella

made visits to homeless shelters to deliver homework or Susan at times felt some tension when talking to parents about issues that might bring an accusation of "racist."

The educators had strong opinions that they wouldn't change where they worked. They had no desire to work in "cookie cutter schools."

This finding cannot be tied back to my original literature review as it was out of the scope of the study, but in revisiting the literature, strong teacher commitment in challenging schools can be found in effective schools and transformational leadership research (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006; Nguni, Sleegers & Denessen, 2006; Quartz, 2003; Rosenholtz, 1985).

In Conclusion

> So I called the teacher and she said, "No, you know, we don't like to do those [PDI's] on our Black children because then we might be called racist."
> And I said, "Well, does it feel like it might be racist to ignore the needs of a child because they have different colored skin?"
> And she said, "Well, we just don't want someone coming back and saying that because we don't have very many children of color, so if we single them out for special education services or single them out for testing, then we might be called racist."
> And I thought, "Well, that cleared a lot of things up for me. Now I know why people want to be here. It doesn't matter what color you are; if you are in trouble, we want to find out why."- Twylla

During my time with Twylla, she told me that somewhere along the way her thinking changed about how she taught ethnically and socioeconomically diverse

students. Twylla found that she developed an understanding that white privilege is alive and well in the world and that she has benefited from it. To better understand perceptions of white privilege, I have dissected the narratives of all the participants, including Twylla's. It is important to remember that while the findings and especially the literature are presented in an intellectual manner, Twylla and the other educators are very real. While the spotlight in this study has been on the educators, perhaps it is even more important to remember that the student being referred to in the conversation above is a very real child who represents what and who is at the heart of such studies as mine.

Studying educators' white privilege is daunting work. The effects and benefits of white privilege in education loom large, but often are not acknowledged publicly, with educators as no exception. This study attempted to bring out the perceptions of white privilege that reside so intimately within a person. Perceptions of white privilege were unique to each individual because of personal lived experiences. One of those perceptions was that of power. Power permeates education; it is codified in countless ways, but it is also rarely acknowledged. The theme of having an awareness of power was woven throughout all but one of the interviews; power is central to the discussion of white privilege. For one person to recognize they have power over individuals and other groups because of skin color helps bring further awareness of inequality and dominance, which also are a result of an imbalance of power. It can be difficult to reconcile and no two educators talked about it in exactly the same way.

So, with an understanding that ethnically and socioeconomically diverse students and their families have been subjected to inequities at their schools, in their communities and in greater society, the educators seemingly factored into their roles the knowledge of

the unequal footing their students and families experienced in those contexts as they went about their work. As the administrators were carrying out their roles, they were implementing principles of multicultural education. As the teachers were carrying out their roles, they were aware that at times they were working against the status quo.

Educators saw that family circumstances greatly affect student learning. Ann knew she had to be especially patient with parents who were taking things out on her. Educators recognized the love and aspirations parents had for their children despite behavior that seemed contrary to that. Twylla treated the parents with respect when she met with them, remembering that all parents want to hear positive things about their children. Educators understood the importance of connecting curriculum to their students' lives. Susan set up curriculum where students would have that opportunity. Educators understood that it was important to have high expectations for all their students. Ann conveyed to her teachers that under no circumstances should they come to her and tell her that she didn't know what their students were like. Educators understood that the social-emotional well being of their students also have high priority. Summer made a conscious effort to be as available as possible for her students on days when she saw they were having a tough time, putting aside other daily demands that come with teaching.

Limitations

As is the case with other studies, there are limitations to this research. The first limitation was the size of the participant sample, which was seven. I had originally distributed 12 letters of recruitment, including letters to four administrators, four experienced teachers and four novice teachers. I did not receive consent forms from one

administrator, one experienced teacher and three novice teachers. The data could have been stronger if all twelve had been part of the study. The only novice teacher who took part in this study had markedly different things to say about white privilege than the others in the study, so the voices of three more novice teachers could have been important additions to this study.

A second limitation is that the findings came from only two schools. The two schools chosen were the only pre-Kindergarten through fifth grade schools in the Midwestern city that were both an elementary school and diverse, according to state statistics, so these findings will not be generalizable.

Implications of the Study

This section will focus on recommendations for educational administrative policy that come from the findings in this study. These recommendations are based upon narratives in which the administrators talked at length about an awareness of how society, their communities and they have personally benefited from white privilege. It also should be noted that these recommendations do not imply that the administrators in this study were not already doing what I am recommending.

The first recommendation for administrative policy comes from the finding that the novice teacher had markedly different perceptions of white privilege than the other teachers and administrators. With seemingly very little or no awareness of white privilege, there was evidence that a teacher cannot see the ramifications of inequities that exist in their schools, communities and society, so therefore cannot see that they may need to change how they think about and actually go about their work. The novice

teacher's voice was either not found in some of the themes or had very little to say, which indicated that her role was not impacted to the degree the other participants were.
This first recommendation has two elements. The first element is that administrators in ethnically and socioeconomically diverse schools may need to revisit their teacher mentoring programs. The novice teacher was in her first year of full time teaching, along with being in an ethnically and socioeconomically diverse school setting. Administrators should provide opportunities and support for new teachers, no matter their skin color. Those opportunities are not limited to, but should include reading about and discussing issues that surround white privilege. Administrators should consider deliberately picking a willing, experienced mentor who is known to have an awareness of white privilege. This suggests that the administrators are very cognizant of how the teachers in their schools think about white privilege, which brings us to the second element.

The second element of this first recommendation comes from the literature that points out that awareness of white privilege comes in layers. Thus, the second element is that administrators should offer professional development in a safe and open environment that directly addresses white privilege for the entire teaching faculty on an ongoing basis. It would be valuable for the novice teachers to hear how experienced teachers think about white privilege, to hear that it is not a static concept, but evolving. Ongoing professional development that addresses white privilege also sends a message to the entire faculty of what the administrator philosophically values and indicates the direction he or she wants the school to go in.

The second recommendation comes from the finding that the administrators in this study were implementing or trying to implement principles of multicultural education

in their policies, but most of the conversations came down to budget. They talked about their discretionary funds or grants that made it possible for them to address inequities. The recommendation is that the local school administrators of ethnically and socioeconomically diverse schools create a consortium where they would make up the membership, along with parents of students and community members who share the neighborhoods with the schools. The consortium could perhaps act as a vehicle to bring voices to the public forum regarding the issues of inequality. It might also have greater influence with higher district officials and school board members regarding issues of funding and other policies that get in the way of implementing multicultural education principles, such as current hiring practices.

A third recommendation comes from the finding that teachers are periodically working against the status quo because they see it as necessary in order to be effective for their ethnically and socioeconomically diverse students. The recommendation is that administrators be aware of the likelihood that some of their teachers are working against school or administrative policies in their schools, and that administrators need to systematically review policies and procedures, with insight from their teachers, parents and community members. In most cases, teachers should not be punished by administrators for working against the status quo, but instead be buffered and encouraged to share what isn't working and why they see a need to work against the status quo.

Recommendations for Further Research

Since there are few studies that address educators' perceptions of white privilege directly and how those perceptions impact their roles, there is still much to be understood

about this topic. Several recommendations for further research as a result of this study are listed below.

More in-depth research is needed as to how past experiences plays a part in developing an awareness of white privilege. What were the crucibles (Kendall, 2006) for the educators that have brought them to this point in their awareness? What were their life experiences? Who were the people or what were the things that brought them to this place of understanding? Another aspect of the research might be to explore the question: 1) could any of these experiences be duplicated within the offerings of a school's professional development?

Future research is also suggested to better understand if and how administrators who have an awareness of white privilege can make a positive difference in their teachers' awareness of white privilege. One aspect of this study might include longitudinal research that follows white, novice teachers in ethnically and socioeconomically diverse settings for several years to get a better understanding of what lived experiences and /or school policies in the context of a work environment may or may not bring about the awareness of white privilege.

References

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. (1972). No one model american: A statement on multicultural education. Retrieved September 7, 2008 from http://www.aacte.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=384:aacte-statements-on-multicultural-education&catid=92:multicultural-diversity&Itemid=90

Ayers, W. & Ford, P. (2006). Urban pedagogy. In E.G. Reeves (Ed.), *The new press education reader: Leading educators speak out.* (pp.196-201). New York: New Press.

Baker, G. (1977). Multicultural education: Two preservice approaches. *Journal of Teacher Education, 28*, 31-33.

Banks, J. A. (1973). Teaching ethnic studies: Concepts and strategies. (43rd ed.). Washington, DC: National Council for the Social Studies.

Banks, J. A. (1989). Multicultural education: Characteristics and goals. In J.A. Banks and C. A. McGee Banks (Eds.), *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives*. (pp. 2-25). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Banks, J. A. (1995). Multicultural education: Historical development, dimensions, and practice. In J. A. Banks & C.A. McGee Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of research on multicultural education.* (pp.3-24). New York: MacMillan.

Bond, H. M. (1939). *Negro education in Alabama: A study in cotton and steel*. Washington, DC: The Associated Publishers.

Bredekamp, S. & Copple, C. (1997). *Developmentally appropriate practice in early*

childhood programs (Rev. ed.). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Cochran-Smith, M. (2003). Standing at the crossroads: Multicultural teacher education at the beginning of the 21st century. *Multicultural Perspectives*, *5*, 3-11.

Codell, E.R. (1999). *Educating Esme: Diary of a teacher's first year*. New York: Algonquin.

Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1995). Inequality and access to knowledge. In J. Banks & C.A. McGee Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of research on multicultural education*. (pp. 465-483). New York: Macmillan.

Delpit, L. (2006). *Other people's children: Cultural conflict in the classroom.* New York: New Press.

Dubois, W. E. B. (1935). *Black reconstruction*. New York: Harcourt Brace.

Dubois, W. E. B. (1953). *The souls of Black folk*. New York: The Blue Heron Press.

Evans, A. (2007). School leaders and their sensemaking about race and demographic change. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *43*, 159-188.

Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* (3rd ed.). New York: Continuum.

Gay, G. (1971). Ethnic minority studies: How widespread? How successful? *Educational Leadership, 29*, 108-112.

Gonzalez-Mena, J. (1998). *Foundations: Early childhood education in a diverse society*. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield.

Gorski, P. (2006). The unintentional undermining of multicultural education: Educators

at the equity crossroads. In J. Landsman & C.W. Lewis (Eds.), *white teachers/diverse classrooms: A guide to building inclusive schools, promoting high expectations and eliminating racism* (pp. 61-78). Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Grant, C. A. (1973). Black studies materials do make a difference. *Journal of Educational Research, 66,* 400-404.

Grant, C. A. & Sleeter, C. E. (1989). Race, class, gender, exceptionality and educational reform. In J.A. Banks and C.A. McGee Banks (Eds.), *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives* (pp. 46-65). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Griffin, J. H. (1989). *Black like me*. New York: Signet.

Hancock, S. D. (2006). White women's work: On the front lines in urban education. In J. Landsman & C.W. Lewis (Eds.), *White teachers/diverse classrooms: A guide to building inclusive schools, promoting high expectations and eliminating racism* (pp. 93-109). Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Helms, J. (1993). Toward a model of white racial identity development. In J.E. Helms (Ed.), *Black and white racial identity: Theory, research and practice* (pp. 49-66). Westport, CT: Praeger.

Helms, J. & Carter, R.T. (1993). Development of the white racial identity inventory. In J. E. Helms (Ed.), *Black and white racial identity: Theory, research and practice* (pp. 67-80). Westport, CT: Praeger.

Henze, R., Lucas, T. & Scott, B. (1998). Dancing with the monster: Teachers discuss racism, power and white privilege in education. *Urban Review*, *30*,187-210.

Holbrook, C.L. (2006). Low expectations are the worst form of racism. In J. Landsman &

C.W. Lewis (Eds.), *White teachers/diverse classrooms: A guide to building inclusive schools, promoting high expectations and eliminating racism* (pp. 110-121). Sterling, VA: Stylus.

hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*. New York: Routledge.

Howard, G. (1999). *We can't teach what we don't know: White teachers, multiracial schools.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Hyson, M. (2003). Putting early academics in their place. *Educational Leadership*, *60*, 20-23.

Jensen, R. (2005). *The heart of whiteness: Confronting race, racism, and white privilege*. San Francisco: City Lights.

Josselson, R. & Lieblich, A. (2001). Narrative research and humanism. In K.J. Schneider, J.F.T. Bugental & J.F. Pierson (Eds.), *The handbook of humanistic psychology: Leading edges in theory, research and practice* (pp. 275-288). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Karpinski, C.F. & Lugg, C.A. (2006). Social justice and educational administration: mutually exclusive? *Journal of Educational Administration*, *44*, 278-292.

Kendall, F. (2006). *Understanding white privilege: Creating pathways to authentic relationships across race*. New York: Routledge.

Kivel, P. (2002). *Uprooting racism: How white people can work for racial justice*. (Rev. ed.). Gabriola Island, BC: New Society.

Kohl, H. (2003). *Stupidity and tears: Teaching and learning in troubled times*. New

York: New Press.

Kohl, H. (1994). *I won't learn from you: And other thoughts on creative maladjustment.* New York: New Press.

Kozol, J. (2000). *Ordinary resurrections: Children in the years of hope*. New York: HarperCollins.

Kozol, J. (2007). *Letters to a young teacher*. New York: Crown.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1994). *Dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African-American children*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Landsman, J. (2006a). Being white: Invisible privileges of a New England prep school girl. In J. Landsman & C.W. Lewis (Eds.), *White teachers/diverse classrooms: A guide to building inclusive schools, promoting high expectations, and eliminating racism* (pp. 13-26). Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Landsman, J. (2006b). Bearers of hope. *Educational leadership*, *63*, 26-32.

Landsman, J. & Lewis, C.W. (2006). A call to action for white teachers in diverse classrooms. In J. Landsman & C.W. Lewis (Eds.), *White teachers/diverse classrooms: A guide to building inclusive schools, promoting high expectations, and eliminating racism* (pp. 1-10). Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Lawrence-Lightfoot, S. (2003). *The essential conversation: What parents and teachers can learn from each other*. New York: Ballentine.

Leithwood, K. A. & Jantzi, D. (2006). Transformational school leadership for large-scale reform: Effects on students, teachers and their classroom practices. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 17,* 220-227.

Lugg, C.A. & Shoho, A.R. (2006). Dare public school administrators build a new social

order: Social justice and the possibly perilous politics of educational leadership. *Journal of Educational Administration*, *44*, 196-208.

Mazel, E. (1998). *And don't call me a racist: A treasury of quotes on the past, present and future of the color line in America*. Lexington, MA: Argonaut Press.

McGee Banks, C. A. (1989). Parents and teachers. In J. A. Banks and C. A. McGee Banks (Eds.), *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives* (pp. 305- 321). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

McIntosh, P. (1986). *White privilege and male privilege: A personal account of coming to see correspondence through work in women's studies*. Paper presented at the Virginia Women's Studies Association Conference and the American Educational Research Association Conference. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED335262)

McIntyre, A. (1997). *Making meaning of whiteness: Exploring racial identity with white teachers.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

McMahon, B. (2007). Educational administrators' conceptions of whiteness, anti-racism and social justice. *Journal of Educational Administration*, *45*, 684-696.

Mckenzie, K.B. & Scheurich, J.J. (2004). Equity traps: A useful construct for preparing principals to lead schools that are successful with racially diverse students. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *40*, 601-632.

Middleton, V., Coleman, K. & Lewis, C. (2006). Black/African American families: Coming of age in predominantly white communities. In J. Landsman & C.W. Lewis (Eds.), *White teachers/diverse classrooms: A guide to building*

inclusive schools, promoting high expectations, and eliminating racism (pp. 162-181). Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Minnesota Department of Education Report Card Statistics (n.d.). Retrieved July, 2007, from http://education.state.mn.us/ReportCard

Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Nieto, S. (2000). Placing equity front and center: Some thoughts on transforming teacher education for a new century. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *51*,180-187.

Noddings, N. (2007). What does it mean to educate the whole child? In K. M. Paciorek (Ed.), *Annual editions: Early childhood education* (27th ed.). (pp. 61-64). Dubuque, IA: McGraw Hill.

Oakes, J. & Lipton, M. (2004). And equal education for all. In C. Glickman (Ed.), *Letters to the next president: What we can do about the real crisis in public education* (pp.184-192). New York: Teachers College Press.

Paley, V. (2000). *White teacher* (Rev. ed.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Palmer, P. (1998). *The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Quartz, K. H. & the TEP Research Group (2003). *Too angry to leave: Supporting new teachers' commitment to transform urban schools*. (Retention Report Series Paper rrs-rr001-0902). UCLA's Institute for democracy, education and access.

Rosenholtz, S. J. (1985). Effective schools: Interpreting the evidence. *American Journal of Education, 93,* 352-387.

Ryan, J. (2003). Educational administrators' perceptions of racism in diverse school contexts. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, *6*, 145-164.

Seidman, I. (1998). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (2nd ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.

Sleeter, C. E. (1993). How white teachers construct race. In C. McCarthy & W. Crichlow (Eds.), *Race, identity and representation in education*. (pp. 157-171). New York: Routledge.

Sleeter, C. E. (1996). Multicultural education as a social movement. *Theory into Practice, 35*, 239-247.

United States Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, Public School Teacher and Public School Principals Data Files, 2003-2004. Retrieved October 22, 2008 from http://nces.ed.gov

Webster's dictionary (4th ed.). (2001). New York: Ballantine.

Wiedeman, C. R. (2002). Teacher preparation, social justice, equity: A review of the literature. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, *35*, 200-211.

Wesley, C. H. (1935). *Richard Allen: Apostle of freedom*. Washington, DC: The Associated Publishers.

West, C. (2001). *Race matters*. New York: Vintage.

Wise, T. (2005). *White like me: Reflections on race from a privileged son*. Brooklyn, NY: Soft Skull Press.

Woodson, C. G. (1968). *The education of the Negro prior to 1861*. New York: Arno Press. (Original work published 1919)

Appendix A

Letter of Recruitment for Teachers to Participate in Doctoral Dissertation
Lorraine Mitchell, Principal Investigator
Title of Study: Educators' Understanding of White Privilege and Its Impact on Professional Roles

You are invited to be in a research study in which the purpose is to understand how individually held perceptions about white privilege might impact the execution of the role of novice and experienced white, female teachers and white administrators. You were selected as a possible participant because you have been identified as a white, female, novice or experienced teacher in this school setting.

My name is Lorraine Mitchell and I am an Ed.D student in the University of Minnesota Graduate Program in Educational Policy and Administration and faculty member in the Department of Education at the University of Minnesota Duluth. I have included the consent form for this study, so you would have a better understanding of what is involved.

If you are interested in being a participant, please call my office at 726-8601. I do not share an office, so if you call, your confidentiality will be preserved. If I am not in, please leave a message as to how I can reach you and what times would be convenient. If you prefer to email me about your interest and the best time to reach you by phone, you can do so at lmitche1@d.umn.edu. (Please note that my email starts with the letter "L", but ends with the number "one".) If you are willing, I can go over the consent form by phone and any other questions you may have about the study, or we can set up a meeting place and time.

I am very aware that your time and energy are at a premium and so if you are interested in taking part in this study, I will make every attempt to make this study fit into your life.

Sincerely,

Lorraine Mitchell

Appendix B

Letter of Recruitment for Administrators to Participate in Doctoral Dissertation
Lorraine Mitchell, Principal Investigator
Title of Study: Educators' Understanding of White Privilege and Its Impact on Professional Roles

You are invited to be in a research study where the purpose is to understand how individually held perceptions about white privilege might impact the execution of the role of novice and experienced white, female teachers and white administrators. You were selected as a possible participant because you have been identified as a white administrator or educator in a leadership position in this school setting.

My name is Lorraine Mitchell and I am an Ed.D student in the University of Minnesota Graduate Program in Educational Policy and Administration and faculty member in the Department of Education at the University of Minnesota Duluth. I have included the consent form for this study, so you would have a better understanding of what is involved.

If you are interested in being a participant, please call my office at 726-8601. I do not share an office, so if you call, your confidentiality will be preserved. If I am not in, please leave a message as to how I can reach you and what times would be convenient. If you prefer to email me about your interest and the best time to reach you by phone, you can do so at lmitche1@d.umn.edu. (Please note that my email starts with the letter "L", but ends with the number "one".) If you are willing, I can go over the consent form by phone and any other questions you may have about the study, or we can set up a meeting place and time.

I am very aware that your time and energy are at a premium and so if you are interested in taking part in this study, I will make every attempt to make this study fit into your life.

Sincerely,

Lorraine Mitchell

Appendix C

Consent Form
Novice or Experienced Teacher

Title of Study: Educators' Understandings of White Privilege and Its Impact on Professional Roles

You are invited to be in a research study in which the purpose is to understand more about how individually held perceptions about white privilege might impact the execution of the role of novice and experienced white female teachers and white administrators. You were selected as a possible participant because you have been identified as a novice or experienced teacher in this school setting. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: Lorraine Mitchell, an Ed.D student in the University of Minnesota Graduate Program in Educational Policy and Administration and faculty member in the Department of Education at the University of Minnesota-Duluth.

Background Information

The purpose of this study is to come to understand: 1) individually held perceptions about white privilege and the possible impact these perceptions may have on the execution of the roles of teachers and administrators.

The research questions are: 1) What perceptions do novice and experienced white, female teachers and white administrators hold regarding white privilege? 2) How do their perceptions impact the execution of their respective roles?

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

1. Participate in 2-3 interviews during an approximate 2-month time span. The interviews may last about an hour each. I would be recording the interviews in order to transcribe them onto paper. The first interview would take place before I come into the school to do a general observation of the school culture.
2. Be aware that I will be hanging out, doing a general observation of your school's culture for one day. I would be taking field notes in order to capture what goes on at the school, getting a feel for the rhythm of your school's activities, and writing other descriptions that would add context to this study. You will not be the focus of these observations.

You are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study

The study has a few questions that may be seen as sensitive, but you may choose not to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time.

The benefits to participation are advancing knowledge to departments of education about how perceptions of white privilege may impact the role of teachers and administrators.

Compensation:

There is no monetary compensation for participating in this project.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. I will ask that you do not use your last name on the recording and that you give only first letters of last names of the people that you talk about or you may give them pseudonyms of your choosing.

In my dissertation or any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you, other teachers, the city, the school or grade level you are working in. The field notes that I write and the interviews that are recorded and transcribed will be stored securely as mandated by University of Minnesota and Internal Review Board policy, and I will have sole access to it.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Minnesota Duluth. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is: Lorraine Mitchell. You may ask any questions you have now.
If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact me at home, (218-525-0509), or my cell phone (218-428-9881) or through email at lmitche1@d.umn.edu. As a doctoral student, I have an advisor who is giving me direction during this research study. Her name is Dr. Mary Hermes can also be contacted if you have any questions at 218-726-7233 or through email at mhermes@d.umn.edu

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact the Research Subjects' Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; (612) 625-1650.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature:_________________________________Date: __________________

Signature of Investigator:_____________________ Date: __________________

Appendix D

Consent Form
Administrator

Title of Study: Educators' Understandings of white Privilege and Its Impact on Professional Roles

You are invited to be in a research study where the purpose is to understand more about how individually held perceptions about white privilege might impact the execution of the role of novice and experienced white female teachers and white administrators. You were selected as a possible participant because you have been identified as an administrator in this school setting. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: Lorraine Mitchell, an Ed.D student in the University of Minnesota Graduate Program in Educational Policy and Administration and faculty member in the Department of Education at the University of Minnesota-Duluth.

Background Information

The purpose of this study is to come to understand: 1) individually held perceptions about white privilege and the possible impact these perceptions may have on the execution of the roles of teachers and administrators.

The research questions are: 1) What perceptions do novice and experienced white, female teachers and white administrators hold regarding white privilege? 2) How do their perceptions impact the execution of their respective roles?

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

3. Participate in 2-3 interviews during an approximate 2-month time span. The interviews may last about an hour each. I would be recording the interviews in order to transcribe them onto paper. The first interview would take place before I come into the school to do a general observation of the school culture.
4. Be aware that I will be hanging out, doing a general observation of your school's culture for one day. I would be taking field notes in order to capture what goes on at the school, getting a feel for the rhythm of your school's activities, and writing other descriptions that would add context to this study. You will not be the focus of these observations.

You are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study

The study has a few questions that may be seen as sensitive, but you may choose not to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time.

The benefits to participation are advancing knowledge to departments of education about how perceptions of white privilege may impact the role of teachers and administrators.

Compensation:

There is no monetary compensation for participating in this project.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. I would ask that you do not use your last name on the recording and that you give only last letters of names of other people that you may talk about or give them pseudonyms of your choosing.

In my dissertation and any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you or other administrators, the teachers, the city, or the school you are working in. The field notes that I write and the interviews that are recorded and transcribed will be stored securely, as mandated by University of Minnesota and Internal Review Board policy, and I will have sole access to it.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Minnesota Duluth. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time with out affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is: Lorraine Mitchell. You may ask any questions you have now.
If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact me at home, (218-525-0509), or my cell phone (218-428-9881) or through email at lmitche1@d.umn.edu. As a doctoral student, I have an advisor who is giving me direction during this research study. Her name is Dr. Mary Hermes can also be contacted if you have any questions at 218-726-7233 or through email at mhermes@d.umn.edu

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact the Research

Subjects' Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; (612) 625-1650.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature:________________________________Date: _________________

Signature of Investigator:____________________ Date: _________________

Appendix E

Interview Questions for Phenomenological Study- Novice Teachers

Novice Teachers: Interview One

1. What is your first name? (Will use pseudonym)
2. Tell me about your neighborhood and the city you grew up in. Would you say you came from a diverse neighborhood? What were the circumstances that brought you to that neighborhood when you were going to elementary school?
3. Tell me what it was like going to elementary school when you were growing up. Describe the physical setting where you attended elementary school. How did going there make you feel on a social and emotional level?
4. In hindsight, if you compared your ethnicity and socioeconomic status with those of your elementary grade classmates, would you have considered yourself the same or different? In what ways?
5. In looking back, do you think you may have had some advantages compared to your other classmates who were not the same ethnicity or socioeconomic status as you? If so, what might some of those examples have been?
6. How did you come to be a teacher? What part did your family members play in your decision? What experiences and/or previous mentors led you to this path?

Novice Teachers: Interview Two

1. What brought you to teaching at this school?
2. How long have you worked at this school?
3. What is it like to be a teacher at this school? If there were such a thing, what would a typical day look like?
4. How would you describe the ethnic and socioeconomic diversity of your classroom, the school and the community your school is situated in?
5. How does the ethnic and socioeconomic diversity of this school play a part in your daily activities as a teacher? Could you give me some examples that would illustrate this? If the diversity of the school does not play a part in your daily activities, why do you think this is so?
6. What would you say are one or two of your biggest influences on how your day in the classroom goes? What are the effects of those influences?
7. What have you learned about your students' diverse home backgrounds and what part do you think it plays in their academic life? What part do you think it plays in their social/emotional lives at school? How would you describe your relationships with families of your students who do not share your ethnicity and perhaps are from a different socioeconomic status than you?
8. Where do you set the academic bar for your students and what guides you in setting it?
9. Tell me a bit about the curriculum you use and if you think it is a good match for your students. Why or why not do you think it is a good match?

10. Would you say you or other new or relatively new teachers change your teaching methods in some small fashion or use alternative materials or resources because you believe these changes will better address inequities that are based on the ethnic and socioeconomic status of your students? What would you say the decisions were that led you or others to do this, or not to do this?

Novice Teacher: Interview Three

1. What would you say are some of your more important insights you have had from your encounters with your diverse students' families? Would you say you have learned new ways of thinking about being a teacher from students of diverse ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds?
2. How do you think families see themselves when they enter school settings if they are in the ethnic minority or different socioeconomic status from the teachers and administrators? What examples might illustrate your point?
3. What does the term white privilege mean to you? Does it have any bearing on you as a teacher? If so, how would you say it has affected your role as a teacher? If not, why not?
4. Do other teachers you work with or come in contact with at other schools talk about white privilege, but may not necessarily use that term? How do they talk about it? In what context?
5. How do you make sense of your role as a teacher at the end of the day when you leave your work environment?
6. What piece of knowledge do you think is missing from the general population that might help them better understand the complexities of white, female teachers teaching students from different ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds?

Appendix F

Interview Questions for Phenomenological Study- Experienced Teachers

Experienced Teachers: Interview One

1. What is your first name? (Will use pseudonym)
2. Tell me about your neighborhood and the city you grew up in. Would you say you came from a diverse neighborhood? Why or why not?
3. Tell me what it was like going to elementary school when you were growing up. Describe the physical setting where you attended elementary school. How did going there make you feel on a social and emotional level?
4. In hindsight, if you compared your ethnicity and socioeconomic status with those of your elementary grade classmates, would you have considered yourself the same or different? In what ways?
5. In looking back, do you think you may have had some advantages compared to your other classmates who were not the same ethnicity or socioeconomic status as you? What might some of those examples have been?
6. How did you come to be a teacher? What part did your family members play in your decision?

Experienced Teachers: Interview Two

1. How long have you been a teacher?
2. How long have you been at this school? What brought you to teaching at this school?
3. What is it like to be a teacher at this school? If there were such a thing, what would a typical day look like?
4. How would you describe the ethnic and socioeconomic diversity of your classroom, the school and community your school is situated in?
5. Describe your philosophy of teaching and learning. Has it been affected by the ethnic and socioeconomic diversity of this school or other diverse schools you have worked at? If not, why do you think that? If so, could you give some examples that would help me understand better how your philosophy has changed?
6. Where do you set the academic bar for your students and what guides you in setting it?
7. Tell me about informal or formal policies at this school that attempt to address the inequities that face students of different ethnicity or socioeconomic status and how you are affected as a teacher.
8. Tell me a bit about the curriculum you use and if you think it is a good match for your students. Why or why not do you think it is a good match?
9. Would you say you or other teachers deliberately change your teaching methods in some small fashion or use alternative curriculum materials or resources because you believe these changes will better address inequities that are based on the

ethnic and socioeconomic status of your students? What would you say the decisions were that led you or others to do this, or not to do this?

10. As you have come to know these families of your students who are from a different ethnic and socioeconomic background than yourself over the years, has it changed how you think about teaching or do things in your classroom? If so, in what ways? If not, why do you think that is?

Experienced Teachers: Interview Three

1. What would you say are some of your more important insights you have had from your encounters with the families you work with?
2. What path has your thinking about being a teacher taken from your work with students of diverse ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds?
3. How do you think families see themselves when they enter school settings if they are in the ethnic minority or different socioeconomic status from the teachers and administrators? What examples might illustrate your point?
4. What does the term white privilege mean to you? Does it have any bearing on you as a teacher? If so, how would you say it has affected your role as a teacher? If not, why not?
5. Do other teachers you work with or come in contact with at other schools talk about white privilege or use another term for it? How do they talk about it? In what context?
6. What piece of knowledge do you think is missing from the general population that might help them better understand the complexities of white, female teachers teaching students from different ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds?
7. How do you make sense of your role as a teacher at the end of the day when you leave your work environment?

Appendix G

Interview Questions for Phenomenological Study- Administrators

Administrators: Interview One

1. What is your first name? (Will use pseudonym)
2. Tell me about your neighborhood and the city you grew up in. Would you say you came from a diverse neighborhood? Why or why not?
3. Tell me what it was like going to elementary school when you were growing up. Describe the physical setting where you attended elementary school. How did going there make you feel on a social and emotional level?
4. In hindsight, if you would have compared your ethnicity and socioeconomic status with those of your elementary grade classmates, would you have considered yourself the same or different? In what ways?
5. In looking back, do you think you may have had some advantages compared to your other classmates who were not the same ethnicity or socioeconomic status as you? What might some of those examples been?
6. How did you decide to take on a leadership role? What part did your family members play in your decision? What experiences and/or previous mentors led you to this path?

Administrators: Interview Two

1. How long have you been in this setting?
2. How long have you had a leadership role at this school?
3. What is it like to be in a leadership role at this school? If there were such a thing, what would a typical day look like?
4. How would you describe the ethnic and socioeconomic diversity of this school and the community your school is situated in?
5. How would you say the ethnic and socioeconomic diversity of this school affects your role as a leader, in a general sense and if applicable, on a daily basis? Do you have any concrete examples you could share that would help illustrate this?
6. Would you say that you have made any decisions in your leadership role that have helped to address any ethnic and socioeconomic inequities in this school? If not, who makes those decisions? If so, what kinds of decisions were they, what were some of the outcomes and what factors led up to those decisions?
7. What would you say are some of your biggest challenges in your work that are a result of the ethnic and socioeconomic diversity of this school?

Administrators: Interview Three

1. What would you say are some of your more important insights you have had from your encounters with the families you work with?

2. What path has your thinking about being an administrator taken from your work with students of diverse ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds?
3. What piece of knowledge do you think is missing from the general population that would help them better understand the complexities of a school culture where white administrators make decisions that affect ethnically and socioeconomically diverse students?
4. In your conversations with those you work with, has the conversation around white privilege come up? Or are other terms used instead of white privilege? If so, what might some examples of those conversations be?
5. Do you think white privilege has any bearing on your work? If so, in what ways? If not, why not?
6. Do you think white privilege has any bearing on the work of the teachers in this school? If not, why not? If so, in what ways?
7. How do you make sense of your role as a leader when you leave your work environment?

Appendix H

Stages and Phases of White Racial Identity Development

Phase 1: Abandonment of Racism

Phase 2: Defining a Nonracist White Identity

Helms, J. (1993). Toward a model of white racial identity development. In J.E. Helms (Ed.), *Black and white racial identity: Theory, research and practice* (p. 56). Westport, CT: Praeger.