

A Post-Intentional Phenomenological Exploration of Reading Whately

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FAULTY OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

BY

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

Dr. Marek Oziewicz, Adviser

June 2019

Acknowledgements

Working toward a PhD and writing a dissertation is never a truly solitary venture. While this crafted text is my original work, it is imbued with the collective influence of the incredible people in my life—my fellow travelers along this path and those who stood along the side and constantly cheered me on—who have guided me to this moment in time. I could not have undertaken or completed this expedition without your support. My endless gratitude is yours.

To Shawn—Your constant love, support, and encouragement along this wild ride of an incredible, tenuous, wonderful, difficult, and delightful journey has been my everything. Even for an exceedingly loquacious person, there are hardly enough words to express what it has meant to me to be on this adventure with you by my side. I am truly blessed.

To my family and friends—My parents, Daddy and Barbie, Mom and Al, my sister Jessica, my aunts and uncles, and my cousins, Shawn’s parents Gale and Cheri, his grandmother Jessie, and the rest of his family—thank you! April, Megan E., Patty (Grammar Goddess and copyeditor extraordinaire), and Sarah P. D.—thank you! Your care, discussions of my research and scholarship, many phone calls, texts, emails and direct messages, in-person and virtual hugs, cards (Aunt Nancy—yours always made me smile), reassurance, unconditional love, and constant cheerleading truly lifted me up along the way. Thank you for always believing in me.

To the members of my committee—You saw the spark of something in me that I could not always see in myself and found ways to fan that small ember. Your influences on my scholarship, how I want to be as a professor and teacher educator, your incredible support

and generosity of time have changed my trajectory as a scholar in beautiful and powerful ways. Marek—thank you for letting me be the steward of Peik 45—what a gift! I also appreciate how your constant joy and excitement was always the boon I needed, even on the most challenging days. Mark—PIP feels like home to me as a scholar, thank you for laying out the welcome mat and inviting me in. You always help me to say “yes, and” to the entangled, partial, knotted goodness of being a phenomenologist. Annie—your mentorship, guidance, and facilitation of the Elementary Education colloquium have been absolutely transformative for me. Thank you for really seeing me and pushing me to see myself through a new lens: a public scholar who seeks to destroy The Hege. Jim—you introduced me to Patti Lather and saw the very first glimpse of the multilayered footnoted shenanigans that were to come. Thank you for sharing a format where my voice emerged.

To my participants—Thank you for trusting me with your words, your experiences, and your reading lives. This dissertation would not exist without your generosity of time and spirit. I am truly indebted to you.

To my professors, past and present—I am so grateful for the learning you have facilitated, the opportunities you have created for me to think deeply about important ideas and theories, the feedback you have shared about my writing, the powerful conversations you facilitated with fellow students, and the encouragement to always take up my scholarship in your classes. I am smarter because of you. My UMN professors—your influence on my dissertation is clear. The course readings and writing shaped my understanding of myself and reading whitely as a theory and the presence of that synthesis presence in this dissertation makes it better. With special thanks to Dr. Alice Young, one of my mentors at Marymount University, who would greet me *every time* she

saw me after I graduated with: “Hi, Sara! Have you applied for PhD programs yet?”

Thank you for seeing the title Dr. in front of my name before I could even imagine it!

To my students, past and present—I am so grateful for the time we have spent together. You have inspired, taught, and shaped me as a teacher and teacher educator. It has been my honor to have been part of your educational journey. Never forget: once a Sterner Star, always a Sterner Star.

To Lee, Megan V., and Tiffany—This dissertation would not be the same without each of you. Your presence in my life has made all the difference. You have been such an incredible support system for me. Thanks for talking me off ledges, listening, advising, and mentoring, uplifting me, sending me care packages and Cheetos, calling and texting (your GIF games are on point, to boot). Megan and Tiffany—your wisdom and encouragement as PhDs with completed dissertations has been such a powerful gift (who else would I email on the darkest night?). Lee—it has been fun to be dissertating together (even the angsty bits were better as a duo). I appreciate you.

To my writing collectives—Lasagna and KLK: Abby, Amanda, Laura, Lee and Megan—thanks for being such incredible scholars, writing buddies, and friends. You are amazing humans and I feel grateful that I get to write, work, and laugh with you!

To my fellow PhD students—It has been such a delight to navigate the ups and downs of PhD Life with you! Thanks especially to Abby, Amanda, Dawn, Emily, Kristin, Laura, Lori, Meghan, the TERC crew, my fellow ELED PIPsters: Geri, Halah, Jen, Kelly, Keitha-Gail, and Tiffany (PIPster-sister extraordinaire), and the UMN KidLit team.

Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam.

Dedication

To the two most inspirational women in my life, my incredible mothers:

Kathleen Snyder and Dr. Barbara Daugharty

for proving that it is always the right time to follow your educational dreams.

Mom, when you took the step to pursue your advanced degree, I saw your courage and joy in the face of challenge. Your tenacity and perseverance through your graduate school journey (and beyond) stayed with me and buoyed me through my own.

Barbie, when you became a doctor, I wanted to be one, too. My path was different, but it was easier because you led the way with determination and grace, showing me that I could accomplish anything I set my mind to, no matter the level of difficulty.

I am here because of both of you.

Abstract

Since its beginning, children's literature has been influenced by white gatekeepers and power brokers. From authors, illustrators, and publishers to librarians, educators, and booksellers, the people creating and promoting children's literature have been predominantly white (Borsheim-Black, 2015, Thomas, 2016, Welch, 2016). Due in no small part to this dominance, literature for young people has served as a platform that promotes white cultural supremacy, indoctrinating readers of all races into a default of whiteness beginning at very early ages (Elliott, 2016; Welch 2016). Given that children's literature is an important pedagogical tool in classrooms (Gebhard, 2006; Hoewisch, 2000), it is crucial for preservice and in-service teachers to build critical consciousness of the dominant reading experiences that have been produced and provoked by this reality (Sterner, 2019).

Drawing on post-intentional phenomenology (Vagle, 2014, 2015, 2018) and multilayered narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connolly, 2000; Connolly & Clandinin, 2006; Lather, 2007), this dissertation investigates the ways in which these dominant reading experiences—the phenomenon I have named reading whitely—shapes readership. To understand reading whitely, I consider, explore, and theorize its productions and provocations as they took shape in the learning experiences and course interactions of the preservice teachers and other students enrolled in an undergraduate children's literature course I taught. Informed by this context, I situate reading whitely at the conceptual nexus of children's literature (Bishop, 1990; Derman-Sparks, 2013; Thomas, 2016), teacher education (Darling-Hammond, et al, 2005), second-wave white teacher identity studies (Jupp, Berry & Lensmire, 2016; Jupp & Lensmire, 2016) and culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2006, 2014).

To engage with reading whitely, I selected a single course assignment, the Readerography, as my focal phenomenological material. The Readerography is a reading biography that asks students to explore their identity as readers and consider which books have been important in their reading life. I used four specific aspects of the readerography: the assignment, the list, the pivot, and the response. Analysis of student readerographies revealed that the participants are both informed by reading whitely and reinforce it. This dominance of whiteness and its normalization is a hidden force that must be disrupted through conscientization and praxis.

Reading whitely, while influenced by several thought traditions, is my original theoretical concept. The term creates a platform to begin to dismantle the dominant reading experiences that circulate in the background of our normalized narratives around books and reading. Naming the phenomenon—using reading whitely as a heuristic for dominant reading experiences—is a first step toward articulating a new theory that helps understand the role of reading whitely in maintaining white supremacy. Building on these new understandings of what it means to read whitely, the study suggests the importance of developing critical knowledges to disrupt this phenomenon. The theory should inform efforts to promote equity-based literacy pedagogies that center anti-oppressive practices and disrupt white supremacy, to develop teacher education that is dedicated to social justice and extend understandings of why more inclusive children's and adolescent literature is needed. It should also further conversations that guide the education of

preservice teachers as they learn to read, use, and promote diverse and inclusive texts in their reading experiences.

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Narrative Interlude to Chapter One: I Read Whitely Most of My Life

Entering into the Narrative¹

It was the second class of the semester. We had started a preliminary exploration of our individual experiences with children’s literature by discussing a list featuring remembered and beloved books from childhood and adolescence that each student had crafted. The first assignment of the semester was their initial opportunity to share a little bit more about themselves with our learning community.

The students were sitting in pairs at their table groups, talking with animation and excitement as they shared their colorfully curated lists of books. The room was filled with laughter and eruptions of connectedness that rose over the productive din of the room, “Me too!” “I also love that book!” “Oh, that book? I had forgotten that book!” Heads nodded, and embodied signs of agreement weaved through the room as readers made connections and discoveries.

This light and joyful conversation continued for some time. Only after I sensed that everyone had had a chance to share did I feel it was time to shift our focus. I thought I was ready to guide the class to a deeper discussion, moving beyond just reveling in nostalgic favorites. I knew I wanted to provide students the opportunity to think more deeply about the identities that were represented in the dearly loved books that were featured on their lists.

¹ I have chosen to start in the middle of the story, bringing you as a reader into the midst of this framing narrative. I hope it will stand as a narrative introduction to this work, help you to post-structurally enter into the middle of this research, and provide a quick experiential snapshot of the work that is to come. I use footnotes sparingly through this short narrative, as moments of explanation where I feel it is necessary. More context follows after the narrative and throughout this larger dissertation.

I paused a moment and gathered the class's attention. It took some time to quiet their conversations, and a few partnerships continued talking, now more quietly, through most of this transition. Drawing their eyes back to the screen where the presentation slides for the class were projected, I clicked the next slide with very little preamble.

Digging Deeper: Check Your Favorites

Go through your readerography titles and consider do any of your selected books have a main character who:

- Identifies as a cis-female
- is a person of color
- follows a different religion
- Is differently abled
- is from a low socioeconomic or working class family
- identifies as LGTBQ+
- has a diverse family make up

Figure 1: Guiding Questions for Critical Analysis of the Readerography

The students stared up at the words before them and it seemed as if the room took a collective breath. Immediately in that moment, the atmosphere in the room transformed. The earlier energy of jubilant readers happily sharing about their cherished childhood books deflated.

After some consideration in the quiet discomfort that I had created, with what, in the moment, felt like a rather poorly transitioned shift in the lesson, the class turned back to their partners and began to talk in low murmurs. The joy on their faces, so present just a few minutes previously, had disappeared. The room filled with other emotions and grew quiet as guilt, frustration, and betrayal began to spread through the space. As they began to dig deeper into their lists, they realized that the books they most fondly remembered starred white cisgender (mostly male) able-bodied heterosexual

protagonists that lived at the center of the action. Many reflected that there were few exceptions on their lists, even for the few students of color² in the classroom.

It was an eye-opening experience for them to begin unpacking the reading experiences that shaped their understanding of children's literature. It was clear from their deflated demeanors that this activity had exposed their complicity in a readership marked by dominance. And what did it mean if their lists contained only protagonists that reflected the majority, even the animal ones? What did that say about them as people? As teachers being trained in a social-justice-oriented teacher preparation program? In a children's literature class with a focus on diversity?

With concern for their discomfort³, and in an attempt to acknowledge my own reading patterns and book choices, I looked out into the room and said the first thing that jumped into my mind, "I have *read whitely* most of my life." Heads nodded, the discomfort of the previous moment ever so slightly released. There was a resonance as the class collectively had a moment of shared understanding.

Building Context: Teaching Children's Literature

I had been waiting in the wings for my graduate assistantship assignments to change, and for different opportunities to arise as they do when people graduate. After my first year of graduate school, it was finally my turn to teach the signature course for

² Please note: this class did not have any Black or Indigenous students, thus my use of students of color/POC. Where applicable I use Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC) as a more inclusive term.

³ While I had intended to bring attention to their book lists and planned for the process to be quite illuminating, I had not thought through the fact that it might also precipitate a distressing discovery. At the time, with this first guiding of the process, I struggled with this obvious shift in the room's tenor and my reaction was my in-the-moment way of dealing with my own processing of the emotions in the room, both my students and my own. I also now recognize this as a privileged response that centers white emotional norms. I will revisit this experience in later chapters of the dissertation.

our children's literature program area. I had observed my colleagues teaching the class, reviewed multiple syllabi, worked with our team to plan the semester, and implemented my version of Literacy Education 3004⁴ that was distinctly me, but still fit the institutional vision and model for the course. I was thrilled! It was a delight to be able to teach again. I had missed teaching after I left my elementary classroom to pursue my degree. Truthfully, I cherished every semester that I was able to serve as the professor for this course.

The Readerography: The Context of this Story

The first assignment of the semester, one that I added to the LE 3004 requirements, asked students to trace their reading lives through a reader biography with 10 titles of children's and adolescent literature that were influential to their readership. I called this assignment the readerography⁵ and it has been on my LE 3004 syllabus since that first semester⁶. I had initially envisioned the readerography as a pedagogical tool that would serve as a scaffolding process to remind students of their personal connections to children's literature and highlight the role it had played in their lives. Students created their readerography, selecting from three different formatting options, between the first and second class meetings. During the second class of every semester I devote time for the students to share their readerographies as part of the day's learning activities. This sharing of titles always fills the room with the happy chatter of readers

⁴ Throughout this study I use this pseudonym or LE 3004 to refer to this course about children's literature that I taught before and during this research process. More details will follow about this course and its importance as the research site in subsequent chapters.

⁵ And yes, I rather enjoy that I created this clever title for a reader biography!

⁶ As explored in the opening narrative. This is something I continued through all five sections of the course that I taught over four semesters during my graduate studies.

who are building relationships over shared titles. It always makes my own bibliophile heart ever so happy⁷. What a way to kick off the semester!

With a summer break between the first time I taught LE 3004 and the second, I had time to think about my pedagogical practices and fine-tune my iteration of the course. One change that I made was to use the discussion of the readerography during the second class as a tool to begin thinking more deeply about representation⁸ of protagonists and experiences in our own readership⁹. I may have done this during my first semester teaching the course, but I cannot find any evidence of that in my materials and notes from that semester. The precise details of when this moment occurred are much less important than the fact that it happened, and I saw a flash of reading whitely. The phenomenon was provoked for me in that discomfort I felt while working with my students as we made the critical shift to see the ways that dominant narratives had lived out in their reading experiences.

⁷ I usually wander around the room and lean in to the sharing of books, jumping in to nod with joy about my favorites and note connections. Even though I know that I am going to ask them to dig into these titles with a more critical lens, I can't help myself but to take it all in and enjoy.

⁸ My own developing racial consciousness influenced this decision. I was starting to look more critically at my K-6 teaching practices around children's and adolescent literature as part of the process. I wrote a final paper for a class where I used theories of racialization and neoliberalism to interrogate an assignment I had used while teaching in Northern Virginia using picturebooks that featured the experiences of enslaved people. As an advocate for diverse and representative literature I had also started to look more deeply at my own reading practices and the ways in which representation/non-representation had influenced my reading experiences. I know that these experiences must have shaped this change.

⁹ In the story of my first experience working through this shift in the assignment, I could tell that the students felt bad about what they had read, and that is never my intent. I wanted them to build awareness of their readership and start to stretch their critical thinking skills around dominant narratives which they may not have realized were at work in their own lives. I purposefully make no value judgement on my students' reading choices (or at least I try not to), but on the lack of representation in children's literature that has made its impact on their list. As child readers, so many of their choices were guided by the adult readers around them who were in turn shaped by white supremacy.

It Only Takes a Moment: A Provocation of Reading Whitely

I have come to call this moment of clarity, of provocation and eye-opening, the pivot. And it has happened five times now—each time I have asked students to look more closely at their book lists. It is interesting to think of how the phenomenon was so clear to me in that first pivot as I looked out at the discomfort¹⁰ in the room and the term reading whitely just emerged organically from our conversation. I realize now how the acknowledgement of the term in the room and in my body resonated. It became a working term for a type of reading, and I have used it as shorthand ever since. By explicitly naming what had been framing our reading, it opened up the phenomenon in a new way.

¹⁰ Now having done it multiple times, I think this discomfort is important. Yet I try to enter into the discomfort in a way that doesn't feel like a gotcha and that recognizes the way that white supremacy is systematically at work on all of us as readers. I don't want the guilt and white fragility to cloud the importance of this moment in the learning process.

Chapter One: Introduction—An Exploration of Reading Whitely

A Narrative Framing of Reading Whitely

What if a reader is simply the collection¹¹ of all their reading experiences?

Together, those experiences would accumulate to form them as a reader. The fluid expression of their reading identity would be shaped and re-shaped through interactions with texts, other readers, and their internalized discourses about reading and literature. If the reader is a white cisgender heterosexual middle class American, it is likely that their reading experiences have been steeped in whiteness and middle-class norms. The books they read are filled with powerful white protagonists who exert agency over their experiences and are central to the text. The teachers, librarians, family members, and friends who suggested books to them were also shaped by these same dominant norms. Because whiteness and middle class norms were the default for them, there are unspoken racialized and normalizing experiences at work in the books that they read. Unconsciously, they steeped in these white norms and the “tea stain” of that experience coated their way of understanding books. They read whitely.

Settling into the Story: Background and Context of the Study

Reading whitely is a phenomenon that often works in the background; thus, it is an adverse influence that is often overlooked. This study seeks to explore the how the productions and provocations of the dominant reading experiences that have shaped

¹¹ I am inspired by the work of Mikhail Bakhtin who envisions the collected dialogical uses of language as part of the heteroglossia, which links every living utterance to those that have come before. (Morris, 1994/2003). “The living utterance, having taken meaning and shape at a particular historical moment in a socially specific environment, cannot fail to brush up against thousands of living dialogic threads, woven by socio-ideological consciousness around the given object of an utterance” (Bakhtin, 1935 in Morris, 1994/2003, p. 76).

readers, a phenomenon I have characterized as reading whitely. The purpose of this study is to investigate reading whitely as it is produced and provoked in the lived experiences and learning activities of the study participants, many among them preservice teachers, for whom disrupting reading whitely is especially important, given their future impact in classrooms. A crucial objective of this exploration of the phenomenon is to begin to reveal how reading whitely takes shape and consider what it means to read whitely. The phenomenon of reading whitely has not been explicitly studied in other scholarship to date, and the heuristic is my original theoretical concept I hope to contribute to whiteness studies and education. This study bridges multiple scholarly disciplines, working at the nexus of teacher education, white teacher identity studies, culturally relevant pedagogy, and children's literature. While the impact of racial awareness in each of these disciplines has been studied separately, this project's collective emphasis on all four offers a promise that my findings will move each field forward.

This study was conducted with two sections of an undergraduate children's literature course Literacy Education 3004: Diversity in Texts for Young People (LE 3004¹²), which I taught at a large, research-oriented Midwestern state university in the fall of 2017. The course focused on developing knowledge of diversity of formats, genres, and representation in literatures for young people. The study is situated in the macro context of the field of children's literature and education and the micro context of the collective experiences of two university classrooms' students and professor. The participants' lived experiences of reading whitely guide the study and help to engage with

¹² Pseudonym, as noted in the narrative interlude above. The course served as the official site of the study and was the final time I taught the course.

how the phenomenon takes shape and has been produced and provoked both in their previously developed reading experiences and through their participation in the course. The phenomenological materials generated from the study include course design and planning, instructional pedagogies, course materials, completed assignments, and the classroom interactions of 59 students. To further engage with and tease out the productions and provocation of reading whitely, six focal participants were interviewed, using the semi-structured interview process favored in phenomenology. As the study shifted to analysis, the productions of reading whitely, though rooted in lived experiences, became the focus of the study. This process involves a post-intentional phenomenological analysis of the phenomenological materials to note the intensities of the phenomenon and its vivid illuminations. Using the three-part analytic method of post-intentional phenomenology (Vagle, 2018) I theorize the ways in which reading whitely is produced and provoked in the study. This analytical shift provided a means to consider the phenomenon in intricate and multifaceted ways that might exist beyond the specific context of the course. In this introduction I provide an overview of the study

The Research Problem: Defining and Disrupting Reading Whitely

Just about every book a kid picks up has white people in it. And, just about every book is written and illustrated by a white author or illustrator. For literally hundreds of years, white kids have seen themselves reflected in the books they read, and they've had the chance to see people who look like them as writers and illustrators of those books. By default, they've been able to see a possible-self. By default, they could imagine themselves as the writer or illustrator of that book. It may not have been a conscious thing, but it was the norm. The default. The air they breathe. Every day.

—Dr. Debbie Reese, 2014, para. 4

“Reading whitely” (Sterner, 2019) is an original theoretical heuristic I developed to identify the phenomenon and explore how reading experiences have been shaped by dominant narratives of whiteness and white cultural norms. This reality can be seen very clearly in the publishing statistics generated through the University of Wisconsin’s Cooperative Children’s Book Center’s (CCBC) annual review of published titles. According to Thomas, citing statistics from 2014 and 2015, “the CCBC has found that every year, over 85% of all children’s and young adult books published feature White characters—a statistic that has *barely moved since the 1960s*” (2016, p. 112, emphasis added). Whether intentional or not, children’s literature has served as a tool to maintain white cultural supremacy, indoctrinating readers of *all races* into a representational default of whiteness. Whiteness is situated as the accepted norm for readers beginning at very early ages. They read and experience texts through a whitened default view that hegemonically centers whiteness. There is still much work to do to ensure that all young readers see themselves and their peers adequately and authentically reflected in the books that they read.

It is important to recognize that it can be challenging for my white students to acknowledge their role in the white domination. Yet I believe it is only through explicit and compassionate exposure to the realities of white dominance that preservice teachers will develop racial consciousness to the system that has so formed them. It is only through seeing the system and the role it plays in their lives, and after engaging with such difficult knowledges over time (Britzman, 2000) that they will be empowered to disrupt white supremacy. In my pedagogical practices, this centers around understanding the ways in which children’s literature has been shaped by, is a product of, and reinforces

whiteness. The path of this process begins with explorations of how the experience of reading whitely marks people of *all races* who live in a white supremacist society and by exposing how white cultural norms are perpetuated in children's literature.

Children's literature is deeply infused in elementary school classrooms (Gebhard, 2006; Hoewisch, 2000), serving both as literacy and content instruction, as well as a platform to encourage students to develop a love of reading. Teachers, then, serve at the frontlines, operating as both promoters and gatekeepers of children's literature and the reading experiences of their students. They often have much sway over the books read and promoted in their classrooms, as well as influence the reading selections of their students' personal reading outside of formal instructional literature. When teachers do not realize that their own reading experiences cloud their understanding of reading and representation, they may not even be aware that their selections are based on norms that reflect only the majority¹³. Furthermore, this hegemonically shaped model of readership impacts educators, whether in-service or in teacher preparation programs, as they enact literacy and content instruction with children's literature. In an educational system that serves increasingly diverse student populations, but is predominantly taught by middle class white women (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Grumet, 1988; Villegas & Lucas, 2002), disrupting the influences of white supremacy, both in general and in children's literature, is crucial. Therefore, I believe reading whitely often serves as a barrier that keeps teachers from fully embracing the diverse and inclusive texts that would be beneficial to the readership of *all* their students.

¹³ Because this was my experience as a teacher and a reader, I am driven to explore the phenomenon of reading whitely in my dissertation and in future work. I can now see how my own gatekeeping of literature limited the representation of protagonists and experiences for both my students and for me.

Purpose of the Study:

Guiding preservice teachers to comprehend that children's literature is a complex and multilayered field that is steeped in systems, discourses, and histories is an essential first step of Literacy Education 3004. Literature for children is often seen as cute and unassuming, which allows for the "gut level" messages of reading materials for children to often go unchecked. Developing a racial literacy about children's literature is a core component of this work, because it offers teachers the ability to more critically consider how white supremacy and white cultural norms are at work in texts created for young people. Thus, the main purpose of this research is to more deeply investigate how reading whitely takes shape as it is produced and provoked in the lived experiences and learning activities of the participants to flesh out what it means to read whitely. With this aim in mind, three areas of study foreground my practice: teacher education, second-wave white teacher identity studies, and culturally relevant pedagogy. While each discipline is distinct and has its own method of academic study, together they open possibilities to theoretically consider and conceptually frame the phenomenon. Accordingly, I situate reading whitely within the theoretical intersections that I see between the three¹⁴ as they interact with children's and adolescent literature.

¹⁴ I created the Venn diagram to visually situate the theory in this section and to further ground my own thinking about intersections and the phenomenon of reading whitely. Based on a suggestion from Mark Vagle during my Preliminary Oral Examination process, I will work to create an image that is less bounded and more visually demonstrates the rhizomatic nature of the way each of these disciplines are intertwined and woven together. An updated conceptual framework is included later in Chapter Three.

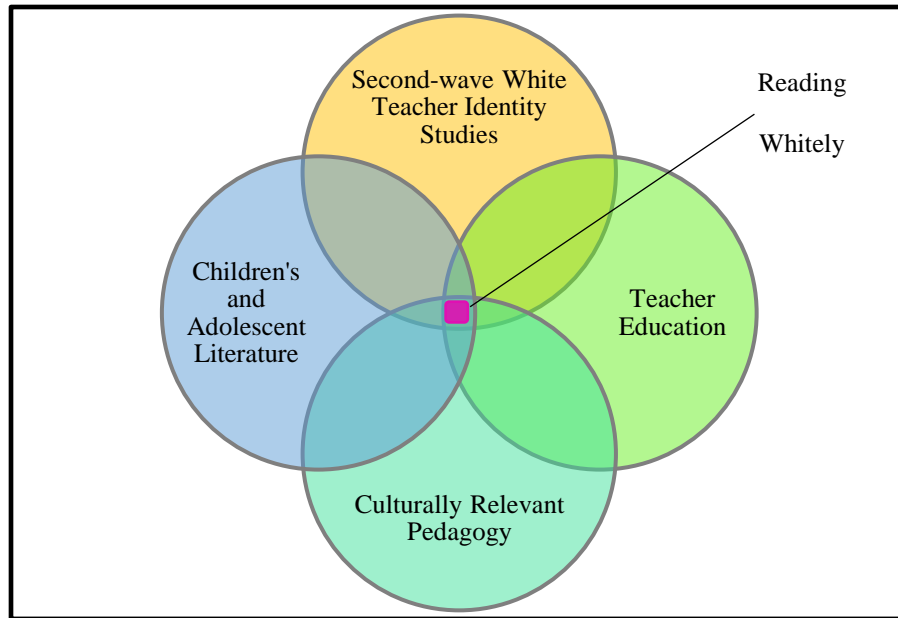


Figure 2: Initial Conceptual Framework of the Study

The secondary purposes of the study connect deeply to the main purpose and provide insights regarding reading whitely in the areas of teacher education, children’s literature representation, and dismantling white supremacy. First, the study explores and describes the ways that reading whitely takes shape and is produced and provoked in preservice teachers and is impacted by instructional practices of teacher training programs. The investigation considers how reading whitely plays a role in the reading experiences of preservice teachers and other participants in LE 3004. Secondly, the study endeavors to bring the phenomenon of reading whitely from the subconscious to the conscious of those who read whitely. This work is intended to provide an initial location to interrupt the practices around the selection, promotion, and reading of children’s literature that are steeped in white cultural norms and based in the predominance of whiteness. Consequently, the research serves to disrupt reading whitely in order to

promote inclusive and diverse children's literature as indispensable fixtures in the future classrooms and reading experiences of the participants of this study

Research Questions¹⁵:

The primary question of this research is: What does it mean to read whitely? Secondary questions help to concentrate my research beyond a general focus on the phenomenon into the context of my data collection site as a location of teacher education. These questions include: 1) What role does reading whitely play in the reading experiences of preservice teachers? 2) What does it mean to explore experiences of reading whitely through the context of a preservice teacher training course? 3) What is the experience of exploring diversity and inclusivity in children's literature for those who read whitely? 4) How does that experience seem to change over the progression of a semester-long course that promotes diversity and inclusivity?

Significance of the Study:

There are two reasons why I believe this project is significant. First, reading whitely as a phenomenon, and an original term for the phenomenon, has not been explicitly studied in other scholarship to date. Naming the phenomenon and studying its productions and provocations is an important first step in this new scholarship. Second, this study is also significant to the field because it bridges multiple scholarly disciplines and enriches each of them. Reading whitely reverberates at the nexus of teacher education, second-wave white teacher identity studies, culturally relevant pedagogy, and children's literature. While each of these disciplines has been studied separately—with

¹⁵ This section is highly influenced by the model of Dr. Keri Valentine's intentionality statement that Vagle includes in chapter 8 (2018, p. 148–149).

some scholarship that examine intersections of two of the disciplines—the emphasis on all four is significant because it contributes new scholarship across these connected but divergent fields of study. I believe that my findings at this intersection of theory will move each field forward because of this study. Its most direct outcome, though, will be in my continued scholarship and future career in teacher preparation, especially in the training of elementary school teachers.

Theoretical-Methodological Framework: Post-Intentional Phenomenology

This study takes up post-intentional phenomenological theories and methods, as the epistemological and ontological underpinning for this qualitative research of reading whitely. Phenomenology, most simply stated, is the study of phenomena and how they are manifest in the world. “Phenomenology recognizes the reality and truth of a phenomena, the things that appear” (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 15). Phenomenology can be both a theoretical lens and a methodological process that offers researchers an opening to engage with phenomena as they are experienced. Current theoretical understandings of phenomenology are grounded in the philosophical teachings of Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger¹⁶ (Dahlberg, Dahlberg, & Nystrom, 2008; Sokolowski, 2000; Vagle, 2014, 2015, 2018). However, contemporary phenomenologists have developed the initial philosophical understandings of the field into current day theoretical and qualitative research methodologies. Though it has evolved, phenomenology will permanently echo

¹⁶ I note this philosophical lineage here as a tracing of the history of phenomenology. I also recognize that Heidegger’s association with, and membership in, the Nazi party is massively problematic, and his work is tainted because of that reality. Thanks to conversations in a PIP Scholarship group organized by Mark Vagle, I continue to further interrogate this history and to consider how best to engage with these roots of the philosophy that acknowledge and respond to the tensions of its foundations in productive and disruptive ways. That process is an ongoing one for me as a scholar.

back to the origins of the philosophy and the early methods of Husserl and Heidegger. The strength of that echo varies in modern methods depending on the type of phenomenology that frames the theoretical orientation of the study.

A core phenomenological principle from the philosophy is intentionality. In phenomenology, intentionality is the way that humans develop awareness of an object within a subject-object relationship (Sokolowski, 2000; Vagle, 2014, 2018). It is through the process of being phenomenologically open to perceiving the phenomena that intentionality¹⁷ is most put into action. As Vagle further explains, intentionality “is used to signify how we are meaningfully connected to the world” (2014, p. 27). Intentionality is often confusing in American English usage because it becomes closely associated to the concept of intent or the purpose for doing something. Yet for phenomenologists, being aware of our intentionality is the grist that shifts our ways of seeing phenomena as they are manifest. Embracing intentionality provides openings to glimpse the phenomena as they are being experienced (Vagle & Hofsess, 2016), even though that glimpse is tentative, partial, elusive, and multi-directional.

Post-intentional phenomenology is an emerging branch of the field being advanced by Vagle (2014, 2015, 2018). It takes up the foundation established by Husserl and Heidegger and expands their work into a new realm of study. The essences of the past, which are sometimes misconstrued as positivistic aspects of the philosophy, are no longer central. Instead, the theory endeavors to find the productions and provocations of a phenomenon (Vagle, 2015, 2018). The theory makes the shift from knowing and being to

¹⁷ Different branches of phenomenology have varied ways to set aside the researcher’s intentionality. I appreciate that Post-Intentional Phenomenology does not ask me to disregard my own connectedness to the phenomenon, but to embrace it through post-reflexion. See methodology section for more details.

becoming. Central to this branch of phenomenology is a recognition that phenomena are produced in varied and multiple contexts and are constantly fluctuating, being both made and unmade in the process.

Vagle's development of post-intentional phenomenology is also deeply influenced by the French philosophers Deleuze and Guattari. He cites their concept of lines of flight, as explored in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987), as guiding him to conceive the many, partial, and tentative multiplicities of phenomena (2014, 2015, 2018). For Deleuze and Guattari, lines of flight are closely linked to the idea of assemblage, or the layered and entangled aspects of the lifeworld. Following the possible lines of flight allows the post-intentional phenomenologist to consider the productions and provocations of phenomena as they take shape, "flee, elude, flow, and leak" (Vagle, 2015, p. 11). The move to consider lines of flight expands considerations of phenomena beyond Husserl and Heidegger, acknowledging their elusive nature. With this understanding, the post-intentional phenomenologist recognizes that we are always entering the middle (Vagle, 2014, 2018) of the entangled and partial productions and provocations of phenomena under study.

Also central to post-intentional phenomenology is the role of post-structural studies, Foucauldian understandings of power relationships, and the role of embodiment as discussed by Merleau-Ponty. In this context, the use of the prefix post does not refer to a movement happening after, but indicates a grounding in post-structural, post-humanist, and post-post studies (Vagle, 2014, 2015, 2018). By signifying the "post" aspect of the theory, this framework recognizes that there is no one set way of knowing phenomenon because they are "partial, situated, endlessly deferred and circulating through relations" (Vagle, 2014, pp. 111–112). This focus on "post-ness" also regards knowledge, ways of

being, and identity as fluid, always complex, and multiple in their manifestations. In post-intentional phenomenology, a single intentionality no longer exists, and intentionality must become plural. The post-intentional phenomenologist brings intentionalities to the table to see the connections that are manifest through the assemblages and lines of flight of the phenomenon as it is experienced by real, fleshed, bodily people living in the world. In this research, the specific focus is on the lived experiences of preservice teachers who are training to enter the field of education and teaching communities of practice as advocates and champions for *all* their students.

The Methodology of Post-Intentional Phenomenology

To make the shift from philosophical theory to a concrete methodology, Vagle has created a clear and practical methodological process that is philosophically grounded while also providing a well-marked path to engage with phenomena under study. This process consists of five components that create clearly delineated and still flexible methods to explore the multiplicities of phenomena in graspable ways. This study was designed using these components:

1. Identify a post-intentional phenomenon in context(s), around a social issue
2. Devise a clear yet flexible process for gathering phenomenological material appropriate for the phenomenon under investigation
3. Make a post-reflexive plan
4. Explore the post-intentional phenomenon using theory, phenomenological material, and post-reflexions
5. Craft a text that engages in the productions and provocations of the post-intentional phenomenon in context(s), around a social issue. (Vagle, 2018, 139)

In keeping with the methodological process and following the guidelines of Component One, it is important to formally state the phenomenon and its contexts as part of this framing of the study.

*Reading Whitely and Contexts of the Phenomenon*¹⁸

Reading whitely takes shape in many contexts but is produced and provoked where regularized understandings of normalcy and discourses of influence are steeped in the hegemony of white cultural norms and white supremacy. It lives in readers and exists in reading experiences, on library hold shelves, and in cherished memories of favorite books. It is historically constructed in the lists of books that people have read and valued as well as those that have been ignored, overlooked, and abandoned. It is economically produced through market-driven forces of the publishing industry and the mechanism of book commerce. Reading whitely is also socially constructed through reading experiences with others, in conversations and reading recommendations. Any place where reading occurs could be a context to explore the productions of reading whitely; from home, school, and library, to beach, coffee shop, and bookshop.

Post-Intentional Phenomenology—A Valuable Method to Explore Reading Whitely

The theoretical and methodological assumptions of this branch of phenomenology resonate with how I position myself as a scholar and the epistemological commitments I make in my research. Because I see lived experiences as a complex tapestry of interlaced phenomena that can provide significant knowledge about the world, I call upon this methodology to consider them in intricate and multifaceted ways. Post-intentional phenomenology seeks to “see what the phenomenon might become” (Vagle, 2018, p. 136) by noticing how a “post-intentional phenomenon is produced and produces, is

¹⁸ “Situate the phenomenon in the multiple and varied contexts in which you believe it resides...[to] serve as merely a starting point. You need to remain open to the phenomenon as you are studying it” (Vagle, 2014, p.127).

provoked and provokes—through social relations¹⁹ in the world” (p. 140). It recognizes that phenomena are constantly being made and unmade and thus are ever evolving, multiple and partial, sometimes concretely expressed, at other times elusive to grasp. The assumptions and philosophical grounding of post-intentional phenomenology help me to “contemplate and theorize the various ways things manifest and appear in and through our being in the world” (Vagle, 2018, p. 23), while allowing the multiplicities of my own lived experience and identity to inform the research.

Moreover, the method of post-intentional phenomenology provides a valuable and tangible means to explore phenomena as they take shape, in their multiple/partial/varied/complex manifestations, productions, and provocations within a complex and layered exploration process that does not deny my presence and positionality in the research. It also allows the weaving of other methodologies to illuminate the phenomena as it manifests in the moment of study (Vagle, 2014, 2018). This distinction sets post-intentional phenomenology apart from other types of phenomenology and makes it especially relevant to my study of reading whitely and my emerging scholarly identification as a post-intentional phenomenologist.

In my post-intentional phenomenological research, I include narrative inquiry to explore phenomena in a descriptive manner and honor the value of stories as a location of lived production of phenomena (Clandinin & Connolly, 2000; Connolly & Clandinin, 2006). Additionally, taking up the arts-based foundations of narrative inquiry, I call upon

¹⁹ Vagle recognizes that phenomenon take shape both as “individual experiences but also as a social apparatus” and circulate, ebb, flow, emerge and are made/remade through the complex entanglement “among direct lived experience, discourses, habits, politics, practices, contexts, histories, language, art forms, popular media, politics, objects, etc.” (2018, p. 140).

the methodological assumptions of writing that is outside of the traditional form to “explode beyond tradition” and give the phenomenon an artful path in my writing (Vagle, 2014, p.136²⁰) and a process for thinking through my engagement with the phenomenon. I am most drawn to the work of Patti Lather, a post-structuralist feminist, who uses various forms of narrative inquiry for her scholarly writing. Her assemblage-style²¹ writing pushes the boundaries of traditional texts with different formatting styles, split-pages, footnotes and endnotes used as narrative and analytical devices, and other means to disrupt the reader in productive ways. Together, these layers and stories build a powerful interaction with the text.

Post-Reflexion Plan

Post-intentional methodology calls for a process of making a post-reflexion plan to account for the researcher’s presence in the study. The process is central to the post-intentional phenomenological research study design and implementation and remains an ongoing process throughout the analysis and writing phases of the study. With post-intentional work, the researcher’s presence is a deliberate part of the study and the post-reflexion plan helps to more transparently capture that presence. As Vagle (2018) notes, “post-reflexion is not about setting aside our prior knowledge, assumptions, and beliefs about the phenomenon, but exploring how they play a part in producing the phenomenon. It asks the post-intentional phenomenologist to try to *see what frames their seeing*—to try to locate and name their assumptions of what is normal and what surprises them” (p. 153,

²⁰ Vagle (2014) states, “As van Manen aptly describes it, this research activity is an art” (p. 136). I hope my multilayered text format does justice to this art.

²¹ The connection for me became clearer when I realized that Lather references Deleuze and Guattari throughout her work, even directly exploring lines of flight and assemblages in multiple texts (Lather, 1995, 1997).

emphasis original). My post-reflexion plan was completed in two phases, the first while I was teaching the course and gathering data, and the second after the course was completed during the data analysis and writing periods of the research.

Phase I: I used multiple means to capture my post-reflexive thinking throughout the semester. I used a system of voice-memo recordings on my password-protected phone as an embodied way to capture key moments of data to return to and explore more deeply throughout my study. This voice-memoing was often coupled with my walk to and from campus before and after I taught the classes. These post-reflexive walks, as I began to call them, have become powerful phenomenological materials that deeply inform this study. The memos recorded before class prepared me to be phenomenologically open and allowed me to connect with my teacher/researcher/teacher/educator/scholar identity before I started a six-hour teaching session. After teaching both sections, I would use the recordings to capture my noticings from the day of teaching, to note students who would be good focal students for the second phase of data collection, anecdotes from class, times when I felt the intensities of reading whitely flair during class, and my own embodied noticings and responses to that experience. For deeper reflexion work, I used a post-reflexive journal (PR Notebook) to capture field notes, observations, and moments of reflexion. I would often listen to the voice-memos as a guide. These notes included specific sections for the post-intentional foci to help me attune to what was framing my seeing: connect/disconnect, assumptions of normality, bottom lines, and shocks (Vagle, 2018, p. 154). It is these foci that help shape my interactions and analysis of the data and connect with the productions and provocations of the phenomenon that I experienced during the semester. To add an additional layer to the plan, I used an arts-based research

process of a bricolage-style scrapbook. This intermittent scrapbooking process, using a large notebook²² allowed me to collect and layer together drawings²³, visualizations, printed images, quotes, and other ephemera of the process.

Phase II: After the semester was completed in December of 2017, the post-reflexive process shifted as the study moved from the main data collection phase of teaching the course to early analysis and focal participant interviews. As I began to gather data directly from the focal participants through interviews and selected artifacts that reveal potential productions of reading whitely, I continued with the same post-reflexive plan, using post-reflexive walks, voice-memoing, and the post-reflexive notebook. I found that my main post-reflexive work happened in my PR Notebook, though I continued to use the bricolage scrapbook and voice-memos as I continued through the second phase of data collection and into analysis and writing. Post-reflexion is an active process, and I find that I keep my PR Notebook open even as I am typing my dissertation.

Data Collection and Analysis: Exploring Productions and Provocations of Reading Whitely

Context for Data Collection

The site for data collection is two separate sections of an undergraduate children's and adolescent literature course, Literacy Education 3004 (LE 3004²⁴) which I taught as a graduate instructor during the fall semester of 2017. The course is offered at a large

²² This was inspired by a project that I completed in an Interpretive Research course focusing on Post-intentional Phenomenology I took from Mark Vagle in 2015. I used a similar process to create and consider three important quotes from Louise Rosenblatt.

²³ As a non-artist, these will serve as way for me to visually capture ideas, lines of flights as they flee and flow, and ways that I interact with the phenomenon of study but will not necessarily serve as final products to be shared in the completed dissertation. My emphasis here is on the bricolage process as a method for reflexion and creativity.

²⁴ Pseudonym

research-oriented state university in the Midwest. The class, designated by the university as a writing intensive course²⁵, is a graduation requirement for Early Childhood Education majors and Elementary Education majors. Most of the students enrolled in the course plan to pursue their initial licensure in elementary or early childhood education and will eventually become Pre/K–6 classroom teachers. Most of them also identify, like me, as white cisgender females, reflecting the norms of the larger teaching field (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Gere, Buehler, Dallavis, & Haviland, 2009; Grumet, 1988; hooks, 1994; Kreamelmeyer, Kline, Zygmunt, & Clark, 2016; Miller Dyce & Owusu-Ansah, 2016; Sleeter, 2001; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

The course has a three-tiered focus to build knowledge about high-quality literature for young people: developing an understanding of genres and formats, reading a variety of children’s literature, and an exploration of diverse and inclusive representation within those formats and genres. I have purposefully shifted the course to consider the term diversity with a more critical eye toward intersectional representation of identities not solely based on race or ethnicity. To do this I often use the term *inclusive* in conjunction with, or instead of, *diverse*.

Literacy Education 3004 requires preservice teachers to consider themselves as readers and to also think about the young readers they will influence in their future classrooms. They must not only see its value as an art form and as a pedagogical tool, but also begin to recognize the implicit and explicit messages that are embedded in literature

²⁵ This formal university designation requires that writing intensive courses have a strong commitment to writing that is characterized by the following: writing is integrated and is a clearly defined component of the course, it is a significant part of coursework with completed pieces consisting of *at least* 2,500 words cumulatively, that it is part of the overall course grade, that direct writing instruction, revision and feedback are part of the integrated practice, and that instructors have an understanding of the practice of writing instruction.

for young people. The critical knowledges that become central to this process are founded in curriculum that leads to racial consciousness building. I have shifted the course to explicitly name the ways in which cultural norms and systems of whiteness are taken up, in, and through texts. For example, the students do a critical analysis of their favorite books using the readerography mentioned in the opening narrative, they read the statistic reports from the University of Wisconsin's Cooperative Children's Book Center's (CCBC, 2019) annual review of published titles, and they read and discuss why #OwnVoices (Duyvis, n.d.) writing exists and is important.

The two sections studied were taught on the same day, and used the same syllabus, schedule, and online interface. The total enrollment for both sections was 59 students, with 27 students enrolled in the first section and 32 in the second section. Section One met in the afternoon from 12:20 to 3:00 and Section Two met in the early evening from 3:35 to 6:00. While there was a 35-minute break between the two courses, students often overlapped as they arrived early to claim their seats or asked questions before and after class, though they never formally interfaced in person as part of the course. Fall 2017 was the fourth and final semester that I taught the course. Most assignments, presentations, and discussions had been informally piloted and developed through my work with students the three previous semesters as instructor²⁶.

Study Participants

The general study participants consist of the 59 students enrolled in both sections of the course. This level of participation is based on the Institutional Review Board's

²⁶ See Appendix B for an evolution of the readerography assignment over time. It reflects the informal piloting of this phenomenological material.

official designation of the collection of course-related materials as an exemption for research. It states that an exemption meets this criterion if “[t]he project is limited to one or more course-related activities designed specifically for educational or teaching purposes where data are collected from and about students as part of routine class exercises or assignments and otherwise do not meet either of the definitions of Human Research in Section 1.0.” (Investigator Manual (HRP-103), 2017, p. 13). General data collection under that designation focused on the regular course assignments, course activities, reflections, and class discussions of all the general participants. Specific artifacts and phenomenological materials (data) for deeper analysis were selected from the large number of general course-related activities and materials.

From the larger groups of general participants, 33 students consented to participate in one-on-one interviews. I used a multi-step process to select seven focal participants for unstructured interviews from that larger group. The process concentrated on how their reading experiences informed my initial conceptualization of the productions and provocations of reading whitely and how each potential focal participant’s work and readerographies connected to the research questions of this study. One of the selected participants opted not to participate due to time constraints of the current semester, thus six interviews were completed. These interviews were intended to be “dialogic, open, and conversational” (Vagle, 2014, p.78), to look more deeply at how reading whitely has been experienced by my participants. I used my research questions to build an interview road map and loosely guide the interview’s structure but did not have a formal protocol. Each interview was recorded, transcribed using the transcription service Temi, and reviewed to make sure that the transcription process correctly captured the

content. The interviews serve to depth to the study, but much of the analysis, in the end, is based on core assignments of the course and my post-reflexive walks. I used the same review and transcription process for the post-reflexive walk voice-memos.

Data Sources: Gathering Phenomenological Materials

As is called for in post-intentional-phenomenological research, I have relied upon a variety of sources to gather phenomenological materials that help to illumination the productions and provocations of reading whitely.

Research Questions	Phenomenological Materials
1) What role does reading whitely play in the reading experiences of preservice teachers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readerography assignment • Written, audio, social media, and video artifacts from the course, class sessions, and the online course interface (Moodle) • Transcripts from the unstructured interviews conducted with participants • Transcripts from the researcher’s post-reflexive walks and voice-memo notes • Field notes and ephemera from the researcher’s post-reflexive notebook and bricolage scrapbook
2) What does it mean to explore experiences of reading whitely through the context of a preservice teacher training course?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written, audio, social media, and video artifacts from the course, class sessions and the online course interface (Moodle) • Transcripts from the unstructured interviews conducted with focal participants • Transcripts from the researcher’s post-reflexive walks and voice-memo notes • Field notes and ephemera from the researcher’s post-reflexive notebook and bricolage scrapbook
3) What is the experience of exploring diversity and inclusivity in children’s literature for those who read whitely?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing diversity jigsaw activity • Defining diversity and inclusivity activity • Other written, audio, social media, and video artifacts from the course, class sessions, and the online course interface (Moodle) • Transcripts from the unstructured interviews conducted with focal participants • Transcripts from the researcher’s post-reflexive walks and voice-memo notes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field notes and ephemera from the researcher’s post-reflexive notebook and bricolage scrapbook
4) How does that experience seem to change over the progression of a semester-long course that promotes diversity and inclusivity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written, audio social media, and video artifacts shared during the course, during class sessions and the online course interface (Moodle) • Transcripts from the unstructured interviews conducted with focal participants • Transcripts from the researcher’s post-reflexive walks and voice-memo notes • Field notes and ephemera from the researcher’s post-reflexive notebook and bricolage scrapbook

Process for Data Analysis

The analysis process is a refined vision of post-intentional phenomenology (Vagle, 2018). It takes up a three-part focus that balances a review of the phenomenological materials, thinking with theory, and post-reflexion. It begins with a process to look at a phenomenological material as whole and deconstruct it through a process of question-driven noticings that open up the lines of flight of the phenomenon. This hearkens to the traditional analysis process of phenomenological research that uses a whole-part-whole method to consider the whole and then operationally and analytically discern the productions and provocations of the phenomenon before synthesizing the findings as new insight into the phenomenon. The next aspect of analysis is the taking up of theory, using Jackson and Mazzei’s concept of thinking with theory (2012). I plugged in theories of reading as a transaction (Rosenblatt, 1960, 1978, 1982, 1983, 1988), hegemony (Gramsci, 1971a, b), conscientization and praxis (Freire, 1970) and used a theorizing process inspired by Lather (1993, 2007) to work through this aspect of the analysis process. Time was spent with the theory and the building of a process to put it to work with the phenomenological materials under analysis. The third part of the analysis takes up post-reflexion, the ongoing process of *seeing what frames my seeing* as a

researcher, in order to unpack my reflexive thinking throughout the study. While this three-part process could easily seem linear, it is intended to be an intertwined and entangled process and, depending on the intensities of the phenomenon, the weight given to any one part could swell and shrink. The process and interplay of these three components of the post-intentional phenomenological analysis process are intended to be iterative and recognized as entangled and multilayered.

It is also important to note that though I gathered phenomenological materials from two different sections of the course, post-intentional phenomenology does not seek comparisons of the phenomenon across such settings. It simply seeks to consider the productions and provocations of reading whitely they exist in multiple, partial, and varied contexts (Vagle, 2014, p. 136).

Researcher Positionality

As the instructor of the course, I was a participant observer who held the greater power dynamic. To protect my participants from feeling obliged to participate in the study as an activity linked to their grades, I systematically separated research participation from enrollment in the course. I also worked hard to adhere to the delineated procedures to build separation from my two roles in the study. First, throughout the semester, beginning with the first class, I was explicit about the course serving as the site of my dissertation research. I gave an overview of the research process and participant anonymity, but I did not name the phenomenon in this process. I did not want to influence the potential productions of reading whitely as they occurred naturally throughout the course.

Students were encouraged to participate, but explicitly informed that their enrollment did not mean expected participation beyond course-related activity. To help support this claim, their participation was hidden from me until after the semester was completed and grades were submitted to the university. The consent meeting took place during the third course session of the semester. To conceal participations, the completion of the consent forms was conducted like final course evaluations; a student leader collected the consent forms, sealed them in an envelope and took the envelope directly to the office of an elementary education adviser in the department where the course was taught. Ongoing reminders of consent and the nature of the course as a research site were included on the online platform and in the weekly course presentation. Additionally, participants were informed throughout the semester that if their feelings about participation in the study had changed in any way, they were welcome to alter the consent form at any time during the semester by visiting the adviser's office and changing the form. The forms remained sealed and were not retrieved from the adviser's office or reviewed until after all course grading was completed and final grades for the fall 2017 semester were submitted to the university and the spring semester began in January 2018.

Definitions of Key Terms

I include this section in the introduction to make my choices of specific terms explicit as well as to formally define how I take up these terms throughout this dissertation. It is important to recognize that “[l]anguage is not a neutral medium that passes freely and easily into the private property of the speakers' intentions; it is populated—overpopulated—with the intentions of others. Expropriating it, forcing it to submit to one's intentions and accents, is a difficult and complicated process...”

(Bakhtin, 1935 in Morris, 1994/2003, p. 77). And while this section provides insight into my intentions with these key terms, it is only an initial foray into the complicated process of meaning making and the discourses that shape the words that I highlight here.

White Supremacy: As a white scholar who is committed to disrupting white supremacy and developing teachers who do the same, it is important to name and explicitly define the term. White supremacy is a two-tiered concept that I have derived from the work of Leonardo (2004). He recognizes that it is a larger structure of “white racial domination” that is not simply based on white privilege (“white racial hegemony”) but on the systematic advantage that “is secured by a process of domination, or those acts, decisions, and policies that white subjects perpetrate on people of color [as well as Black and Indigenous people]” (2004, p. 137). By differentiating that white supremacy is about dominance, not advantage (though white privilege is a result of that dominance), I feel better equipped to engage with and disrupt the systems of white supremacy in which both my participants and I have been steeped.

BIPOC: Black, Indigenous, Person/People of Color. This acronym is used as an inclusive term that recognizes non-white people who are oppressed, minoritized, erased, underrepresented, and/or dehumanized through systems of white supremacy. Because the foundational structures and history of the United States are steeped in anti-Black and anti-Indigenous oppression and dehumanization through enslavement, genocide, and racial trauma the inclusion of BI with POC is a distinction meant to highlight and disrupt systemic antipathy, violence, and erasure. This term does not capture all intersectionalities or serve as a monolith to encapsulate the complex and multifaceted lived experiences of racialized identities.

LGBTQIA+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual. This acronym includes the plus sign to indicate and respect the diverse identities, intersectionalities, and multiplicities in this community and reflect additional markers of identity that are not included in the initial seven (LGBTQIA). This term does not capture all intersectionalities or serve as a monolith to encapsulate the complex and multifaceted lived experiences of sexuality, sexes, or genders.

Children's literature: This can be an ambiguous term unless clearly defined. In many academic circles, it serves as a broad category that encompasses all types of literature created for and read by for young people (Nodelman & Reimer, 2003). Because it has a focus on children as part of its nomenclature, some scholars denote a separation in children's and young adult literature (Wolf, Coats, Enciso, & Jenkins, 2011). Because the coursework I teach includes the exploration and discussion of Young Adult (YA) books, despite an elementary level focus, I use the wide definition that includes a range of reading materials created for young people: from board books to YA novels. Moreover, there are two additional characteristics of children's literature to consider in conjunction with this definition: adult influence on children's literature and the economic realities of the business of children's literature.

First, due to the age of the target audience, literature is commonly mediated for children by the adults in their lives. This often begins as the simple economic act of purchasing books, as adults are the financial stakeholders in the transaction. It extends beyond economics in concrete ways, as adults in the lives of young people become the arbiters of what counts as good literature. Their endorsements of books, through purchase or suggestion, denote a value statement to young readers. “[A]dult writers, readers,

publishers, scholars, teachers, and librarians influence the production and reception of these texts through their performance of generic expectations” (Westman, 2013, p. 466). During school-aged years, this influence is frequently held by teachers and librarians, careers that remain majority white (Gere, Buehler, Dallavis, & Haviland, 2009; Villegas & Lucas, 2002), further reinforcing the dominance of whiteness in gatekeepers of the field.

Another key aspect in understanding children’s literature is recognizing the economic and market-driven aspect of the field. Even from its beginnings as a specialized component of publishing, the industry, which remains predominantly white (Lee, 2015), has always been a business venture (Lerer, 2008). Books for young people continue to make up a large share of the profit margins in the publishing industry (Lerer, 2008; Nodelman & Reimer, 2003). The industry is driven by a need to appeal to consumers: that will entertain and engage. The dominance of white supremacy often marks these decisions, with the industry demonstrating a reluctance to public BIPOC authors, often citing that inclusive books, or books that feature non-white or protagonists with less represented identities will not sell. While this has subtly started to shift in the industry in recent years (see Figure 4: CCBC Statistics from 2002–2018), it is still a predominant issue in the field.

Dissertation Overview

This dissertation is a combination of a traditional five-chapter dissertation, with an additional analysis chapter, and a crafted text that is influenced by Narrative Inquiry and Arts-Based Research processes. Some chapters include stories, images, or poetry as a means to incorporate esthetically oriented openings into the text. Additionally, this

assemblage approach provides a space for the lines of flight to interweave and entangle in the text through multiple layers. To frame the layering of the literature review of Chapter Two, I include, as a preface to the chapter, an analytic interlude that maps out the multilayered text process I utilize. Building on the reflection of the goals and methods of this study presented in Chapter One and the conceptual framework of the review of the literature, Chapter Three takes a deeper dive into the methodology of post-intentional phenomenology and the methods I used to explore reading whitely in this study. Chapters Four and Five take up the three-part analysis process and explore the ways that reading whitely takes shape in the Readerography Assignment. In Chapter Four, I engage with transactional theory and a theory of hegemony to consider productions of reading whitely as they reverberate in and from the assignment and list focal aspects of the readerography. Moving from productions to provocations, Chapter Five explores the pivot, the formal shift to critical analysis of the books included in the readerography and the subsequent response to this shift. Utilizing theories of praxis and conscientization and Latherian theorizing guides this final analysis process. The dissertation closes with Chapter Six. In addition to sharing implications and ideas for future studies, it provides a platform to explore how reading whitely takes shape and how I might conceptualize the opposite of reading whitely.

Analytic Interlude: Chasing Lines of Flight—Crafting Post-Intentional Phenomenological Writing

A post-intentional phenomenological study is not just written, it is crafted. And now we dive into the craft of a “text that engages the productions and provocations of the post-intentional phenomenon in context(s) around a social issue” (Vagle, 2018). In this process, post-intentional phenomenologists taking up the post-intentional mantle are openly “encouraged to play with form²⁷” as we create a text that can beautifully illuminate that phenomenon under study. I savor the use of the word craft. It is a verb that evokes an aesthetic characteristic of the writing. It is also a verb that calls to me as a scholar who appreciates the beauty of a well-turned phrase, being lost in the art of a master of the craft, or the way an evocative page turn in a picturebook can absolutely captivate an audience of students during a read aloud. It is the crafted and thoughtful text that pulls us in as participants in a literacy experience. I deeply appreciate the value placed on crafting just the right text to illuminate post-intentional phenomenological research. It must be the right text for the phenomena, the phenomenological materials, and the researcher.

Because post-intentional phenomenology allows the weaving of other methodologies to illuminate the phenomena as it takes shape and uses post-reflexive processes to acknowledge my presence in that taking shape (Vagle, 2014, 2018), it opens the possibility of what a constitutes a well-crafted text. For me, the text crafting process is deeply connected to ontological commitments that recognize the importance of

²⁷ You have already experienced my *formatic playground* in the opening narrative that preceded Chapter One.

storytelling as a way of knowing that are central to narrative inquiry and arts-based research. Therefore, I include narrative inquiry as a means explore reading whitely in a descriptive manner (Clandinin & Connolly, 2000; Connolly & Clandinin, 2006) throughout my dissertation and scholarly writing.

By taking up the arts-based foundations of narrative inquiry, I have the space to craft my writing in a way that allows the text to “explode beyond tradition” (Vagle, 2014, p.136²⁸) and give the phenomenon an artful path to emerge throughout the dissertation. I believe that using a layered approach to craft this text interjects narrative throughout the formal writing and enhances how the phenomenon is experienced by both my readers and me. The layers, which take on different forms throughout the dissertation, serve as a means to bring story and reader experience to the forefront of the writing. The narrative interludes, layered footnotes and the sections where I take up a multilayered structure of writing embrace the crafting of the text in different ways. The use of these writing devices purposefully engages with the multiplicities of experience and adds depth to this crafted dissertation. They give glimpses into the lifeworld that has been shaped by and is shaping reading whitely. Additionally, the use of stories and different writing formats helps to illuminate and demonstrate the complex and entangled realities of academic writing, scholarship, and the presentation of research findings.

Diving into the Entanglement: Multilayered Writing

While learning about narrative inquiry, I was most drawn to the work of Patti Lather, a post-structuralist feminist, who uses various forms of narrative inquiry for her

²⁸ Vagle (2014) states, “As van Manen aptly describes it, this research activity is an art” (p. 136). I hope my use of narrative inquiry does justice to this art.

scholarly writing. I continue to be inspired by her scholarship and post-structuralist commitments to qualitative research. While her writing has been pivotal for my scholarship, it is her assemblage style texts that have most inspired me. This writing pushes the boundaries of traditional texts with different formatting styles, split pages, footnotes and endnotes used as narrative and analytical devices, and other means to disrupt²⁹ the reader in productive ways.

Lather's writing as productive disruption³⁰ is most salient in the multilayered prose crafted for *Troubling the Angels: Women Living with HIV/AIDS* (Lather & Smithies, 1997). "The textual and interpretive practices [of creating multilayered texts] work toward a multiplicity and complexity of layers that unfold an event which exceeds our frames of reference, evolving insight into what not knowing means" (Lather, 1997, p. 254). Expanding Lather's method of crafting a multilayered text allows me to chase the lines of flight of reading whitely as I work through the core components of a post-intentional phenomenological study. It allows me to deliberately "turn [my]self over to the openness, wonder, and inquiry" (Vagle, 2018, xvi) of both the writing process and the research itself. In the act of writing and in the texts that emerge from the process,³¹ the crafted compilation of words becomes an explicit textual assemblage³². For me,

²⁹ Even my use of this footnote is an act of disruption that is technically not allowed in APA. And yet, the allowed but discouraged endnote does not permit the same textual layering I feel is essential to crafting a multilayered text. The endnote sequesters the analytic, post-reflexive, and interpretive writing to the end of a chapter and practically divorces them from the page. The interplay of texts, the reader's need to toggle and make reading decisions, is lost.

³⁰I credit this phrase and my initial explorations of it to Dr. Annie Mason and the Elementary Education Colloquium of powerhouse female scholars that she led. I am also grateful to those scholarly colleagues for helping me to develop an understanding of how I embrace productive disruption in my work. Though Lather often describes her work as disruptive, as well.

³¹ As stated, Lather's quote about the process included above, it is both the text that is created and the process of writing the text that are important to this assemblage.

³² In my writing experimentation with the form thus far, my layered texts have included images with captions (which I call visual vignettes), sidebars, footnotes, and/or endnotes.

multilayered writing is an embodied way to capture the illusive lines of flight³³ that emerge from the study. Through the assemblage, it is easier for me to grasp the productions and provocations of reading whitely that are circling around and taking shape in the phenomenological materials, thinking with theory, and post-reflexions under analysis in this study.

Through the process of crafting the different layers of multilayered texts, I create opportunities to both reflect upon, and illuminate how, reading whitely is lived out in the world and in the phenomenological materials I have explored in my study. This layered approach to writing about and through complex phenomena allows “a productive way to further theorize contemporary conceptualizations of phenomenology” to access the “in-between” spaces that “must be philosophized—conceptualized, discussed, opened-up, and contemplated” (Vagle, 2015, p. 9). It is in the process of crafting the layers, or the art of the narrative format, where phenomena begin to open up for me. Such non-traditional writing also acknowledges that there is no one set way of writing about reading whitely or any other phenomenon. I recognize that I could never capture a phenomenon in its entirety because of the fleeting and multidimensional nature of its partial manifestation, or as it takes shape in the productions and provocations that are evoked in and through a study. Yet the layering, and the process of layered writing³⁴, gives me a different access

³³ While this is a momentary and incomplete capturing of *some* of the lines of flight that swirl around the phenomenon of reading whitely, it is an important place to begin that work.

³⁴ When I am writing a multilayered text, I do not write sequentially but move throughout the layers, shifting between them as the analysis, narratives, productions and provocations, and taking shape of reading whitely call me to a different layer. In many respects, each layer is always in a process of becoming; being made and unmade as I move between them, following the lines of flight of my writing. As one line of flight leaks into another, I try to follow it where it will take me. In this text, the footnotes allow me to phenomenologically approach the in between spaces of the phenomenon of reading whitely, post-reflexion about the writing process, and open the way I “turn myself over to the craft and see what comes of it” (Vagle, 2018, xiv).

point to consider any given exploration of a phenomenon. It is a “form that engages the productions and provocations” of reading whitely (Vagle, 2018, p.180).

Layered Literature Review: A Guide

This methodological interlude serves as a preface to Chapter Two and helps to set the stage for the layered writing you will experience throughout the review of the literature³⁵ in the following chapter. My choice to use layered text in the literature review allows me both to recognize the scholarship that has been integral to my work and to highlight how the conceptualization of reading whitely has been deeply shaped by that literature. The layers work with each other to illuminate the lines of flight of reading whitely as they “elude, entangle, and take on various intensities in and over time, and across contexts” (Vagle, 2015, p. 11). Layering the text helps attune my intentional relationship to the phenomenon of reading whitely in a way that traditional writing cannot.³⁶ Through this process, I allow reading whitely to become “an assemblage that produces, rather than means... is not a ‘thing,’ it is the process of making and unmaking the thing” (Vagle, Clements, & Coffee, 2017, p. 2) even here as it breathes in and out of the literature review. The phenomenon is not something solid, defined, and contained in a single and bounded definition. Instead, the action of layering releases some of the multiplicities of reading whitely and provides me glimpses of how it manifests in the lived experiences of those who read whitely, including myself. Because I include no

³⁵ I use footnotes as a formal layering process throughout the rest of the dissertation.

³⁶ The process of writing the layers takes me through the text in a non-linear fashion. I pay more attention to my embodied ways of knowing, allowing “what frames my seeing” (Lather as quoted in Vagle, 2014, p. 132) to emerge as I follow it to a different section of the text to build a new layer of the writing. Mirroring the work of Vagle, Clements, and Coffee, this embodied writing process “attunes [me] in unexpected ways to particular moments, experiences, ideas, and literacies that may otherwise go unnoticed” (2017, p. 9).

specific directions how to read the multilayered text, it “is open for innumerable makings and unmakings from readers” (Vagle, Clements, & Coffee, 2017, p. 2).

One additional aspect that is crucial in my construction of a multilayered text, is the consideration of my reader. The multiple layers and possible pathways for reading my dissertation shift the traditional model of reading and cause the reader to attune to the text at hand in a different way. As readers encounter the different layers, they experience an unexpected progression in the flow of the text, thus disrupting the customary reading process, perhaps even serving to disrupt the dominant reading experiences that have shaped your own readership. The assemblage, in this experience, is taken up in a bodily manner that reunites mind and body³⁷. Readers must actively determine how to interact with the text, making the reading process both more complex and contingent on the reader. The reader’s experience adds another layer to the text in a way that further enhances the “becomingness” of the phenomenon as it is explored in the writing. I hope this also allows you to engage with the productions of reading whitely presented here on a more emotional and embodied level³⁸.

In this preface to Chapter Two the layering is minimal, utilizing footnotes throughout, but in the full review of the literature the multiplicities of the text increase and the reader will need to navigate more choices as a reader. Yet I recognize that

³⁷ Because the writing is no longer linear, the norm of “proper reading” is disrupted through the layers. The reader must decide where to read next, how to process the footnotes, and how to comprehend the written layers of this assemblage. I value that the reader is co-constructing meaning as they make decisions about how to interact with the text.

³⁸ Reader Lather’s (1997, 2007) work, this was simultaneous mental and emotional labor. My mind and body were united in the reading process, in a way that was slightly disorienting. I was comprehending text and feeling the purposeful tension of constantly negotiating meaning making across layers, a process that I was not used to as I initially read this work.

reading of this type of writing can be challenging, so I include a road map³⁹ to the different layers, explaining how I have structured each layered section. While this does not tell my readers how to interact and engage with the text, it provides them the information to plan their road trip through the layers. I hope readers enjoy their travel through this text.

³⁹ I do this in recognition of the reading challenges I experienced, as noted in footnote 38, with the goal of informing the path that you take through the text. While I embrace the embodied experience of reading such texts, I do not desire to frustrate my readers, rather engage them in a new way of interacting with academic writing. I recognize that the process can cause disequilibria when it is first encountered.

Chapter Two: Conceptual Framework—Review of the Literature

Children’s books continue to be an invaluable source of information and values. They reflect the attitudes in our society about diversity, power relationships among different groups of people, and various social identities (e.g., racial, ethnic, gender, economic class, sexual orientation, and disability). The visual and verbal messages young children absorb from books (and other media) heavily influence their ideas about themselves and others. Depending on the quality of the book, they can reinforce (or undermine) children’s affirmative self-concept, teach accurate (or misleading) information about people of various identities, and foster positive (or negative) attitudes about diversity. Children’s books teach children about who is important, who matters, who is even visible.

—Louise Derman-Sparks, 2013, para. 1

Emma Reflects on LE 3004 (Guiding Questions in Italics):

What stuck with you from our class?

How powerful books can be for kids. Choice. Having a variety of books in your classroom and in being conscious about what books are in my classroom. What those books mean and who the books are representing and who is not represented and why, or like, what ways are they represented.

Do you think you would have thought about representation in the same way?

Definitely not. I grew up in a small suburban town. I went to small private, basically all-white schools. I think the class [LE 3004] really challenged the way I view myself. I was always able to see myself in the books I read. And I wonder if I wasn't myself, would I have seen myself in books? I start to think that because I *did see myself* in books, like I was able to have those imagined experiences from reading. Oh, I could be that princess. I could do this, I could do that.

And I think that starting to think about the books that I read growing up was important. Not that it's like that teacher's fault or whatever, but like, you know, but they were so white. And I definitely would not have thought about that. I know that, like,

classes like this one have really challenged my thinking. Although it's hard, and can be super uncomfortable, but it's what we need to address as teachers. Because you're going to have a variety of students in your classroom. To only serve to one section of them is really unfortunate and not okay. So, I recognize that I need to have more than just the books I grew up with. I need to find more books that are what I didn't grow up with and that doesn't represent just my religion, my race, or what I believe in, but a variety of things.

I begin this review of the literature by bringing together the epigraph above from the “Guide to Selecting Anti-Bias Children’s Books” and a selection from my interview with focal participant Emma. By situating two separate but connected voices to open this chapter I am able to illustrate a plurality—different fields, scholarly traditions, and lived experiences—that inform the initial conceptual framework of this study. Emma’s responses to my questions, as she reflects on her experiences in LE 3004, demonstrate the nexus of the conceptual frameworks that initially guided my understandings of reading whitely. As a white cisgender female and preservice teacher in a teacher education course who has started to embrace culturally relevant commitments to children’s literature selection, her experiences reflect the scholarly contexts that both foreground and guide this study.

In this chapter, I discuss and highlight the individual fields of study that contributed to my conceptualization of reading whitely and stand as the scholarly forebearers that guide this research. I recognize and honor that they form the building blocks for developing a new understanding of the complex phenomenon of reading whitely. Through the use of the multilayered text, I will also highlight the ways in which these individual fields of scholarship overlap and interconnect. By recognizing the

entanglements of the different theories, I hope to build an expanded conceptual framework that serves to reveal key aspects of what it means to read whitely and to acknowledge productions and provocations of the phenomenon that have emerged from this foundational literature.

Expanding the Framework of Reading Whitely: An Introduction

This multilayered review of the literature⁴⁰ explores the four core areas of scholarship: children's literature, teacher education, second-wave white teacher identity studies, and culturally relevant pedagogy (See Figure 3: Updated Conceptual Framework of the Study, next page). While I situate the phenomena of reading whitely within the theoretical and methodological intersections of these fields⁴¹, it is important to discuss their contributions individually⁴². I believe that each of these areas of scholarship help to illuminate the complex and myriad ways in which reading whitely is produced and provoked in dominant reading experiences.

⁴⁰ For this review of the literature I used the following search terms: history of children's literature, diversity in children's literature, teacher education, White teacher identity studies, culturally relevant pedagogy. I used the University of Minnesota Library MNCAT Discovery tool that allows for a simultaneous search of hundreds of databases. Because they included seminal texts in each of these areas, I also relied on course texts from doctoral courses entitled Practices in Teacher Preparation and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy as the initial foundation of this gathering of literature.

⁴¹ I initially created the Venn diagram to visually situate the theory in this section and to further ground my thinking about intersections and the phenomenon of reading whitely. Based on a suggestion from Dr. Mark Vagle at my preliminary oral exams, I created an image that is less bounded to more visually demonstrate the rhizomatic nature of the way each of these disciplines are intertwined and woven together.

⁴² I recognize that each discipline is distinct, has its own method of academic study, and developed through its own historic trajectory, yet, they are so deeply connected for me that I found this formal separation to be an important but challenging task.

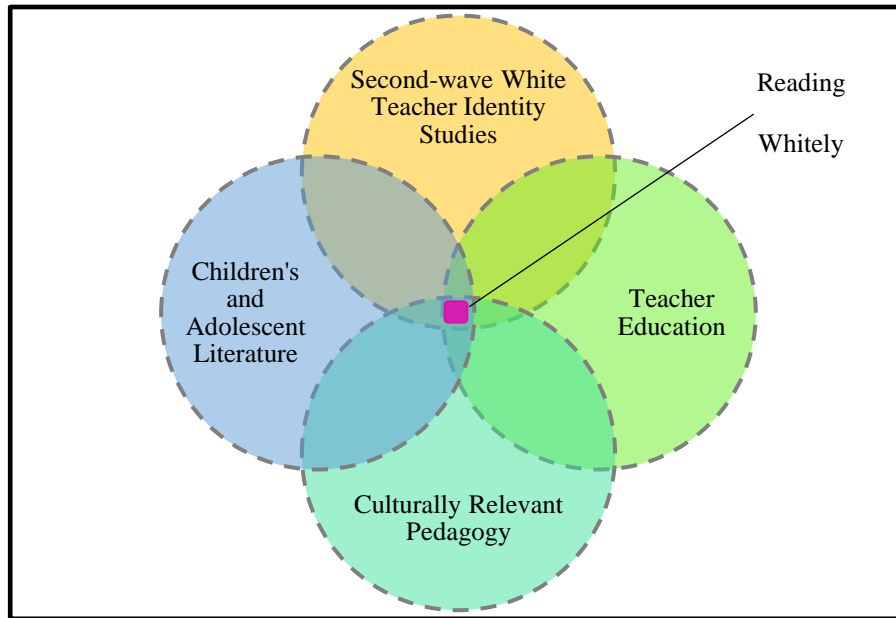


Figure 3: Updated Conceptual Framework of the Study

In the central text⁴³ the literature review begins with the micro context where the concept of reading whitely started for me: children’s literature. Consequently, a short history of the field is provided and then framed with a critical look at the lack of representation that has been a product of that history. The literature review then shifts to the macro context where my understanding of reading whitely became more salient: education. This section includes an overview of the field of teacher education, bringing sociocultural theory and the concept of the apprenticeship of observation to further shape and focus this vast area of scholarship. The next theoretical lens that guides this work is rooted in teacher education but has an emphasis on understanding the racialized identities of white teachers. Recognizing the need to disrupt the negative damage of whiteness in the field of education, the review continues by engaging with second-wave white teacher identity studies to make sense of the way hegemonic forces of white

⁴³ See Analytic Roadmap below for more details.

cultural norms shape reading whitely. Finally, through a discussion of culturally relevant pedagogy, the literature review closes with a pedagogical framework and teacher-education-based method to guide preservice teachers to critical knowledges that they will need to disrupt reading whitely and provide culturally relevant instruction in their diverse classrooms. In the sidebar section of the text, I narratively frame reading whitely, basing it in my own experiences as a reader and a teacher and then consider the foundational theories together to further open the conceptual interpretation of what it means to read whitely.

Interacting with the Layers: Planning your Reading Journey

As noted in the preface to this chapter, I provide an analytic roadmap to help guide your reading journey⁴⁴ through this multilayered review of the literature. The writing in this assemblage lives in three distinct but interconnected layers⁴⁵: the central text, footnotes, and text in the sidebar. The analytic roadmap below explains how I use each for a different purpose and conceptual focus as I explore the foundational literature that has informed this study and my understanding of reading whitely.

⁴⁴ I know this disruption of the usual flow of reading can be disconcerting to first time readers and hope this explanation helps to guide your reading.

⁴⁵ Through the process of reading the different layers of this section, I hope to mirror the phenomenological researcher's way of always entering into the middle of a phenomenon (Vagle, 2018, in reference to Deleuze and Guattari). Thus, through this process, depending on how you choose to read the layers (as noted above), you will be wading into the middle of reading whitely and jumping into the nexus of the conceptual framework as you take in the text.

An Analytic Roadmap

The **central text** is written as a traditional review of the literature and serves as the location to formally explore the scholarship that guides this study. The work that I include here reflects individual aspects of the theoretical nexus in which I have come to understand the phenomenon of reading whitely.

The **footnotes** augment the central text and add an additional layer of both analysis and embodiment. They are places where I will provide additional explanations, wonderings, and share how I post-reflexively consider the literature under review and how these foundational theories have shaped my understanding of reading whitely. The footnotes will also be a location where I explicitly name my processes, where possible, appropriate, or valuable.

Note: I use footnotes in both the central text and in the sidebar. The different locations of the text guide the footnote numbering system, and when you see a footnote number that is out of order or significantly larger than the other footnote numbers, it originates from the text in the sidebar. To help make this distinction clear I have also changed the font to *Currier New* 9pt. to indicate the footnotes that are references to the text in the sidebar⁴⁶.

The **sidebar**, in *Ariel* font, takes up the intersectional connections that I distinguish between the literature under review. It will be a place to both note and respond to the entangled mix of all four topics as they rise, fall, and explode through the writing process and the natural overlap of these intertwined fields.

A Layered Exploration of the Literature Under Review

Children's Literature: A Micro Context

To consider the complexities of reading whitely and the way that dominant reading experiences have shaped readers, it is important to establish the historic and social influences of children's literature that have formed that readership. I share a brief tracing of the foundational moments that have marked the field and the ways in which scholars have noted

At the Intersection of Theory: A Framework for Understanding Reading Whitely

For teacher preparation programs with a social justice orientation, like the site of this research, an exploration of children's literature, teacher education,

⁴⁶ This additional visual clarity is based on a suggestion from Patricia Collins, an early reader of this chapter.

a historic lack of representation in books created for young readers.

*The Story Begins: A Historic Tracing*⁴⁷

Compiling such a concise history is a challenging endeavor and any author taking up such brevity⁴⁸ must be very selective about the important historical⁴⁹ moments to include. This compilation of historic moments, it must also be noted, is grounded in a traditional Eurocentric orientation⁵⁰ to children's literature which is considered to be the foundation of the field⁵¹. I begin⁵² when consumable nature of books had increased with more access to printed materials, due to the invention and proliferation of the printing press⁵³.

second-wave white teacher identity studies, and culturally relevant pedagogy together can open new possibilities for developing equity-based practices.

Although each exists separately, when considered together a new framework for developing critical knowledges around children's literature and reading whitely emerges. It can be easy to overlook or underestimate the

⁴⁷ A longer version of this historical tracing is included as Appendix A.

⁴⁸ For brevity, both here and in the extended version included in the appendix, I have opted not to incorporate specific titles in this historical tracing. I acknowledge that seminal texts have impacted children's literature in powerful ways that have had a clear influence of the history of the field.

⁴⁹ For this study, a chronological order serves the best purpose while allowing for a concise overview. Whether ordered by chronology, genre, seminal titles, format, issue-based, or audience, scholars continue to discuss the organizational method to best chronicle the history of the field (Shavit, 1995; Lerer 2008; Stevenson, 2011; Westman, 2013).

⁵⁰ I recognize this origin as hegemonic and based in the dominant discourses that often determine which history is recorded and valued.

⁵¹ While I would rather highlight marginalized histories, I must demonstrate how children's literature has historically and materially limited authors, illustrators, readers, and protagonists not of European ancestry. I believe that these moments best serve to frame the central focus of my research: the struggle for more diverse and inclusive reading materials for young people and how that is at play in reading whitely.

⁵² Again, there is not a scholarly consensus on when children's literature first developed in a formal sense. I include multiple scholarly discussions about its beginnings in the extended historical tracing.

⁵³ There is a body of children's literature that existed before this time which is recognized by children's literature scholars and is included with the extended historical tracing.

Early children's books, published in the 15th through the 17th centuries, frequently followed a formulaic pattern and served as didactic tomes to teach clear and concise moral lessons based in religious ideologies and societal norms. Texts were also created for general educational purposes such as hornbooks to be used in classrooms⁵⁴. "The new educational impact system both legitimized books for children," Zohar Shavit claims, "and created a certain corpus of texts and set of norms according to which official books for children had to be written" (1995, p. 29).

A shift, in part initiated by English book publisher John Newbery⁵⁵ in 1744, began the process of making children's books that were distinctly different than the materials published for adult readers. Newbery achieved great financial success by producing children's books that shifted the content beyond the educational or religious focus that dominated earlier texts. Subsequently, the production of books created especially for young audiences swelled. Easier

power⁸² of children's literature. "Children's literature may be the most influential literary genre of all. Picturebooks, chapter books, middle-grade and young-adult novels all serve the most noble of purposes: to satisfy the need for information, to entertain curious imaginations, to encourage critical thinking skills, to move and inspire. Within their pages, seeds of wisdom and possibility are sown" (the Brown Bookshelf, 2016). Seen in a more critical light, children's literature can be used as a means to center equity and social justice, highlight inclusive representation, and implement culturally

⁵⁴ It is important to note the explicit connection between children's literature and pedagogical tools of education from the very early stages of the field.

⁵⁵ He is often cited as the father of the field (Nodelman & Reimer, 2003; Stevenson, 2011; Townshend, 1996; Tunnell & Jacobs, 2013). Though it is important to note that scholars recognize that there were other lesser-known publishers creating materials for children as early as 1702 (Nodelman & Reimer, 2003; Stevenson, 2011).

⁸² This power can be exerted along a multifaceted continuum of influence, from restorative to damaging, from positive to negative. I want to recognize its multiplicities and not frame the impact as one-dimensional or as a binary.

printing techniques proliferated, and the eventual emergence of public libraries also helped to increase the accessibility of printed literature.

The industry grew, embracing the new form, and children's literature became an entity into itself. The increased quality and capabilities of the printing industry allowed illustration in children's literature to flourish. This development is often marked by the highly acclaimed work of British illustrator Randolph Caldecott⁵⁶ who started illustrating children's books in 1878 (Lerer, 2008; Stevenson, 2011; Townshend, 1996 Tunnell & Jacobs, 2013). The possibility of what could be considered as children's literature, from format to content, began to radically increase.

Another clear marker of this expansion in children's literature is the emergence of important awards for literature for youth. The first award for children in the world, the Newbery Medal was established by the American Library Association (ALA) in 1921 by Frederic G. Melcher (Smith, 1957). Since that time, the ALA awards have expanded, both in the number of categories and the quantity of books

relevant teaching in any classroom.

The Story Begins: A Personal History of Reading Whitely

As a child, my white identity was reinforced in the default of whiteness that was present in the books that I read and cherished. I held the white privilege of looking in a book and being able "to discover [my] racial identity affirmed in history, literature, and civilization in general" (Leonardo, 2004, p. 137). I saw myself in those pages and my existence was validated by that representation. The discursive practices that formed my perception of what constituted good books were shaped by my white identity and the comfort of representation. This dominant pattern of readership is what I

⁵⁶ Though like Newbery, Caldecott was not the first or even the only illustrator to create such books, but he is noted for doing so at the highest level with his vivacious and incredibly colorful illustration style.

awarded and they continue to be an influence on the children's literature community.

The publishing industry responded to the increasing popularity of children's literature⁵⁷ denoted by the Newbery and created new divisions and imprints constructed specifically to market books for children and young people. Like most industries at the inception of this shift in publishing, they were initially captained by white men of middle class (and higher) means and eventually opened doors for white women in this field (Smith, 1957). Due to this influence, the predominance of whiteness as the gatekeeper⁵⁸ to the field was cemented, ensuring that white cultural norms continued as the normative discourses, images, and content were embedded in children's literature (Larrick, 1965; Smith, 1957).

Another key aspect in the history of children's literature is the economic and market-driven aspect of the field. Even from Newbery's beginning as a specialized publishing house, the industry has always been a business

theorize as the phenomenon of reading whitely.

Looking back on my work as an elementary school teacher I now recognize how the consequences of reading whitely were lived out in my classroom. Because I read whitely I also chose and suggested books to my students just as whitely. Without check, my practices around children's literature elevated whiteness as the normalized discourse of representation. My unexamined whiteness and lack of racial consciousness reinforced narratives of white supremacy in my classroom and likely caused damage to my students. The books I

⁵⁷ As author Lois Lowry notes, "the major breakthrough in the history of children's literature: the awareness that children would rather laugh and be entertained, than to be instructed and improved" (2011, p. 193).

⁵⁸ I will establish in the next section of this chapter how that influence of whiteness and white gatekeepers at the inception of modern-day children's literature continues to impact representation and inclusion in the field.

venture. “[I]n America, once public libraries became established, once prizes for children’s literature were funded, once children’s authors became arbiters of taste and tie-ins,” Seth Lerer notes, “children’s literature became a public business” (2009, p. 8). Books for young people continue to make up a large share of the profit margins in the publishing industry (Lerer, 2008; Nodelman & Reimer, 2003).

Diversity and Inclusivity in Children’s Literature: A Partial Historical Tracing

When discussing the history of a field so steeped in white and Eurocentric origins, it is important to note that this history has also included clear calls for more inclusive representation. One of the earliest, or at least most cited, renouncements of the overrepresentation whiteness in the field came in 1965 when Nancy Larrick highlighted the “all-white world” of children’s books. Pointing to the overabundance of whiteness on her library shelves, she decried the poor representation⁵⁹ of the few *inclusive* titles that existed there. In the books with BIPOC protagonists set in America, damaging stereotypes abounded, and well written books were the exception to the rule. “As long as our

selected implicitly demonstrated that white identities were the only identities of value in my classroom and in the world. While this damaging message of dominance is destructive to students of all races, it is particularly destructive to non-white students whose identities were reduced by my actions.

The Larger Context: Conceptualizing Reading Whitely Beyond my Story

Reading whitely is produced in the macro contexts where white supremacy is the normalized narrative and white cultural norms are the hegemonic influence. Readership that has been steeped in this normalizing influence of whiteness produces, and is produced by, reading whitely. Thus, as I noted

⁵⁹ I was most riveted by her extended discussion of the representation of smiling enslaved people in these books, which could easily be transferred to current conversations about the depiction of slavery in children’s literature today.

children are brought up on *gentle* doses of racism through their books” (Larrick, 1965, 63, emphasis mine) material violence and damage will be *benignly*⁶⁰ committed against the youngest consumers of literature.

Bringing more context to the historical reality, Thomas (2016) is clear to note that while Larrick’s landmark article is credited for being a first formal call for inclusive literature for children, she waded into a movement that was already in process in BIPOC communities. To combat the prevailing negative messages and erasure foisted on their children by mainstream publishers, leaders in Black, Indigenous, and Latinx communities were creating children’s literature that was authentic and reparative throughout both the 19th and 20th centuries (Bishop, 2011; Durand & Jiménez-Garcia, 2018; Elliot, 2014; Thomas, 2016). This work continued through the Civil Rights Movement and was also taken up by the multicultural education and ethnic studies that followed (Thomas, 2016).

in Chapter One, any place where reading occurs could be a micro context to explore the productions of reading whitely. Yet the focus of this study is specifically situated in an undergraduate children’s literature course, Literacy Education 3004 (LE 3004), which is a required course in a teacher education program. In many ways, these contexts of dominant readership, though not studied specifically, come to play in the course and in the study because they have accumulated as a collection of experiences⁸³ in both the participants and my lived experience of the phenomenon.

⁶⁰ The results are certainly not benign.

⁸³ I am inspired by the work of Mikhail Bakhtin who envisions the collected dialogical uses of language as part of the heteroglossia, which links every living utterance to those that have come before. (Morris, 1994/2003). “The living utterance, having taken meaning and shape at a particular historical moment in a socially specific environment, cannot fail to brush up against thousands of living dialogic threads, woven by socio-ideological consciousness around the given object of an utterance” (Bakhtin, 1935 in Morris, 1994/2003, p. 76).

Pioneering African American children's literature scholar Rudine Sims Bishop⁶¹ (1983) revisited Larrick's article with her own study and noted that "we are no longer where we once were, but we are not yet where we ought to be" (p. 653). Her statement acknowledges that the ethnic studies-based work of the 1960s and 1970s had brought *somewhat more* inclusivity to children's literature. She observes this as a positive motion forward but closes her monograph noting, "[t]he world of children's fiction also remains largely white in terms of the characters, the authors, and the audiences for whom the books are written." (p. 653). Shifting ideologies helped to bring more awareness to a need for better representation.

The multicultural movement of the turn of the 21st century and the internet age helped to amplify the call for better representation in children's literature. This movement also marked a transition in the field of education⁶² where the celebration of and exposure to different cultural backgrounds became important. Seeking more cultural pluralism, parents, teachers, and librarians embraced diverse literature⁶³ more

It is Just What's on the Shelf: Representation and the Publishing Industry

Since its inception, the domain of literature for young people has been dominated by white gatekeepers and powerbrokers. From authors, illustrators, and publishers to librarians, educators, and booksellers, the people creating and promoting children's literature have been predominantly white. Due, in no small part to this dominance, literature for young people has served as a platform that promotes whiteness and white cultural norms. White supremacy is enforced in the form of complex and authentic white protagonists, imitating the identities of the

⁶¹ Her early work only uses Sims in the citation. This is reflected in the references list, with articles published before 1990 listed as Sims and those published in 1990 and after listed as Bishop.

⁶² Again, there is an explicit link between movements in the field of education and children's literature.

⁶³ Referred to as multicultural literature throughout this period. The term multicultural, especially when connected to children's literature, has come to be associated in recent years with more "tangible traits" and

vigorously during this time to “promote cultural awareness and sensitivity” (Bishop, 1997; Ching, 2005; Harlin, Murray, & Shay, 2007; Horning & Kruse, 1991; Kruse, 2001; Reimer, 1992) especially within white dominant culture. Discussing Kruse’s 2001 essay on the need for cross-cultural understanding using children’s literature, Harlin, Murray, & Shea (2007) state that “[m]ulticultural children’s literature enables readers to expand their knowledge of other cultures, especially when their environment offers limited experience with diversity” (p.300).

During this time, Sims Bishop (1990) wrote what might be her most quoted piece, building an enduring metaphor for representation in children’s literature. She notes that books for young readers:

...are sometimes windows, offering views of worlds that may be real or imagined, familiar or strange. These windows are also sliding glass doors, and readers have only to walk through in imagination to become part of whatever world has been created or recreated by the author. When lighting conditions

gatekeepers of the field, while BIPOC characters were either stereotyped or simply absent (Larrick, 1965; Sims, 1983). “Since troubling discourses of colonialism and supremacy are transmitted via childhood stories,” children’s literature scholar Ebony Elizabeth Thomas notes, “it is absolutely critical that these functions of children’s literature are revealed, historicized, and interrogated” (2016, p. 115). Elliott (2016) has even contemplated what reparations or reparative actions should be made for this long history of damage and erasure. After the multicultural movement, and with BIPOC gatekeepers beginning to exert their influence in the industry, this phenomenon has

claims that it “overlooks deeper ideologies that affect the distribution of power in society” (Ching, 2005, p. 129). For this reason, some scholars have discontinued using it at all (Bishop, 2011; Durand & Jiménez-García, 2018; Thomas 2016). I recognize this flaw in the term and acknowledging the systemic nature of power and white supremacy, thus, I choose to use *diverse and inclusive literature* instead of *multicultural* as a term in my own work.

are just right, however, a window can also be a mirror. Literature transforms human experience and reflects it back to us, and in that reflection, we can see our own lives and experiences as part of the larger human experience (para. 1).

Versions of this sentiment continue to shape modern scholars' work around representation because of Dr. Sims Bishop's tireless work to push children's literature beyond its historic discourses of whiteness⁶⁴.

Representation Today

started to change. However, the legacy of exclusion remains. White fragility⁸⁴ and claims of a need for niceness⁸⁵ in the community are coded discourses that have been used to shut down and resist⁸⁶ conversations about racialized stereotypes and poor depictions of BIPOC identities.

⁶⁴ As I take up this metaphor in my own work with preservice teachers, I also add that the mirrors and windows must be of fine quality, not funhouse mirrors or windows made of old-fashioned wonky glass, both of which distort the reality of a lived identity. I have found this to be a helpful starting place for conversations about representation because it allows my mostly white students to consider how stereotyped or inaccurate representation in literature can be damaging.

⁸⁴ This is "a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium" (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 57).

⁸⁵ The #KeepYANice hashtag is a classic example. Though it originated as a way of policing criticism of Andrew Smith's sexist (according to critics) representation of female protagonists (*Book Smugglers*, 2015), it continues to be used to informally shut down other criticism in Young Adult literature. Nice is often a term used by and for white women. When used to shut down conversations about representation of race, it negates and erases the legitimate and angry concerns of BIPOC writers who feel the violence and erasure of their racialized readings every single day. Nice has become a rallying cry that covers the mundane racism that reinforces that only a "few brightest, cleanest" (Garcia, Yosso, & Barajas, 2012) and nicest BIPOC authors need apply. *With gratitude to Patricia C. Collins for sharing the Book Smugglers reference.*

⁸⁶ This resistance has come in many forms, from the overt racism of social media trolls (often outside of the community) to the subtle microaggressions that attempt to reinforce that children's literature is not a place BIPOC to have a full voice or authentic representation. This response, while not positive, demonstrates that there is a force rattling the systematic cage of white supremacy and pressing the field toward change in a manner that was not present when Larrick and Sims were bringing their concerns to the forefront.

The Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC) at the School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison studies the publishing statistics of the industry and gives both a current and a historic snapshot⁶⁵ of representation in the field. They create an annual report analyzing the protagonists and authors of the books that they receive each year⁶⁶ (Figure 4: CCBC Statistics from 2002–2018).

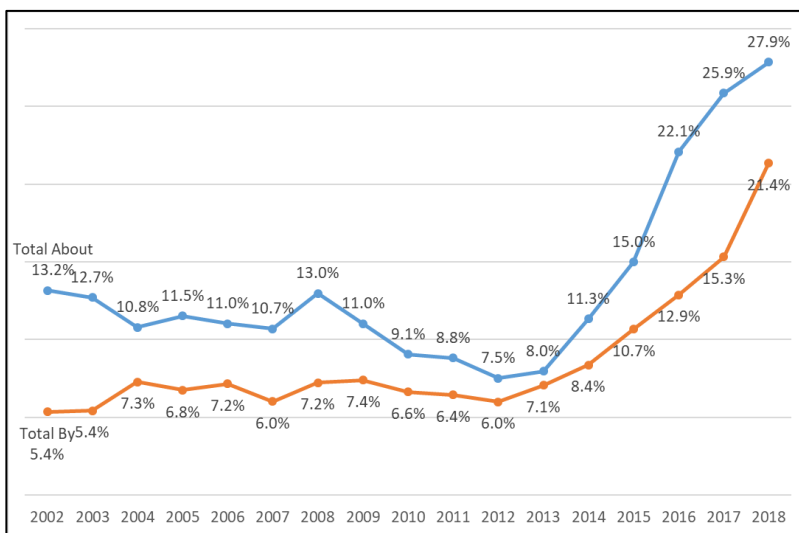


Figure 4: CCBC Statistics from 2002–2018

The statistics, which focus solely on quantity and not quality, demonstrate that books both by and about BIPOC are still lacking in representation, though are increasing in number. While the report shows progress in the quantity of

Knowing the systems of power that govern our society, is not surprising that attempts to upend the status quo of white supremacy in children’s literature have been met with resistance. Because children’s literature is marked with both whiteness and the presumed *cuteness* of producing materials for young people, it is also forcefully governed by white norms of politeness and niceties.

While often giving lip-service to diversity, the white power brokers couch their desire for maintenance of dominant norms in the “language of symbolic racism” that still maintains politeness while very clearly, and through “socially

⁶⁵ “We examine everything that comes into the CCBC annually in order to determine what gets counted. This includes picture books, novels, and non-fiction. We also count any small press and self-published books we receive... We do not include reprints of previously issued books in our count.” (CCBC, 2019)

⁶⁶ They receive “most, but not all, of the trade books published annually in the United States by large corporate publishers, ...some smaller trade publishers in the United States...several trade Canadian publishers that distribute in the United States...[and] a small number of independently published and self-published books.” (CCBC, 2019)

representative books, white or inanimate object protagonists (such as animals, vehicles, foods, etc.) continue to make up over 70% of the submitted texts, despite non-Hispanic whites only making up 63% of the U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, “ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates,” 2016). “The numbers are far from the only important thing to consider when it comes to multicultural publishing for children and teens, of course. The books themselves matter. Every year we see amazing books by and about people of color and First/Native Nations people published. There just aren't enough of them” (CCBC, 2019, para. 13). The statistics also show that while there are more BIPOC protagonists being featured, more white authors than BIPOC authors are writing those experiences⁶⁷. And, while this does mark a growth in diversity, it does not necessarily demonstrate authenticity or inclusivity of the depictions of diversity included in these books⁶⁸.

acceptable” mechanisms, rejects the call for change (Thandeka, p. 90). Subsequently, while claiming to meet the call for diversity, opposition to it is demonstrated in the tangible lack of action taken up in the children’s literature industry. It is clear that when only white decision makers are at the helm of this industry, writing for young people serves as a place of stereotype, erasure, and traumatic violence⁸⁷ for young readers.

Yet, the status quo for children’s literature is being disrupted by the voices that push past white fragility and call out

⁶⁷ These phenomena have not gone unnoticed and have led to the rise of the #OwnVoices hashtag on social media. Corinne Duyvis (n.d.) author and co-founder of the “Disability in KidLit” weblog started this identification tag to help sort out the books that are “doing diversity” and those that are diverse and authentic denoting that the author holds the same identity as the characters in the book.

⁶⁸ Presumptions that white authors can write *all* diverse experiences are a quintessential two-faced technique of status quo maintenance: it implies that the field is diversifying its representation while at the same time not diversifying its authorship.

⁸⁷ This can also translate to the violence of being seen as less than and non-human in ways that shapes narratives around BIPOC bodies and lived experiences and erupts as physical violence.

This phenomenon of outsider authorship is not new. “[I]t should not be surprising that disagreements and controversies have arisen around issues such as the effect of an author’s cultural background or perspective on the text he or she produces” wrote Rudine Sims Bishop in 2011, “the extent to which cultural perspectives matter or should matter to the reader, the writer, and the critic; and who has the ‘right’ to tell the stories of a group that has been marginalized by the dominant culture” (2011, p. 226). The key is that books are written in such a way that the mirrors are not the funhouse circus variety and that the windows are not filled with old-fashioned wonky glass that distorts the representation of a character’s identity to the readers.

The Field of Education: A Macro Context

Because I situate the phenomenon of reading whitely in the macro field of education⁶⁹, it is important to draw connections to three focal areas of the discipline⁷⁰ that

white supremacy where they see it. The call for diversity in children’s literature has been gaining more traction among wider audiences⁸⁸, in part due to the internet and social media. BIPOC views are magnified on previously unavailable platforms⁸⁹.

Now it is their voices, not the narratives of dominance that otherize, that define who they are and “contribut[e] to the total image of the American by depicting the experience of their own groups” (Ellison, 2003, p. 99. Yet those who will not be silenced and speak out against stereotyped depictions or

⁶⁹ I note throughout this review of the literature and the dissertation that reading whitely exists in many contexts (see sidebar) and is produced and provoked through a multitude of conduits, pathways, and thresholds, but my work puts a spotlight on where it exudes from the educational context of teacher education and my specific research site.

⁷⁰ Education, writ large, is not a monolith and is a rather unwieldy beast that must be tamed in the form of exploring a few individual components of its vast and not completely distinguishable nature.

⁸⁸ There is a concern that through this process diversity has been commodified.

⁸⁹ Because BIPOC voices are using this very public platform to fight against white supremacy and name the racism, bigotry, erasure, and other hegemonic forces at work in the field, it can also be a toxic and damaging space that often leaves them under attack. See continued conversation in the sidebar below for further discussion and exploration of this phenomenon.

undergird this study: the training of teachers to work in the field, the racialized identities of white teachers who make up the majority of the teaching force, and the pedagogical tools that teachers must develop in order to take up anti-oppressive educational practices and center equity and social justice. “Teacher education programs throughout the nation have coupled their efforts at reform with revised programs committed to social justice and equity. Thus, their focus has become the preparation of prospective teachers in ways that support equitable and just educational experiences for all students.” (Ladson-Billings, 1995)⁷¹. I discuss each individual concept and explore the aspects of teacher education, second-wave white teacher identity studies, and culturally relevant pedagogy that build the conceptual framework of reading whitely in the following subsections.

Teacher Education

Teacher education is a complex and varied discipline that focuses on the preparation and development of new

absences of their own lived experiences, are the most under attack. They are positioned in ways that subvert their authority at such claims and use white discursive norms of politeness and the pain of white fragility to silence important conversations about representation (Larbalestier, 2016).

The publishing industry is still resistant in many ways, often citing that diverse books or books with non-white, differently abled, often marginalized characters will not sell. They ignore the need to add diverse authors to their pantheon of writers and to have other aspects of their industry (editors, marketing staff, agents) also be more

⁷¹ I rather marvel at how this quote from 1995 is still relevant to the reality of the teacher education programming and the teacher training programs that I have worked with in my own education as a teacher and as a developing teacher educator and doctoral student. While Gloria Ladson-Billings was not alone in this recognition of the shift in the field, her words here resonate with me. For teacher educators like myself who are committed to disrupting the status quo of an educational system that continues to systematically fail marginalized students from BIPOC, working class, and impoverished communities, this is a vision yet unrealized in 2019.

teachers⁷². There are many contexts for this work, from university level undergraduate and master's programs to state level boards of education that offer teaching licensure through testing or alternative preparation programs. Teacher education serves many purposes for many people. It exists in the gaps, as Ronnie Davey suggests, between “the school and the academy, between theory and practice, between teaching and research, between the ‘real world’ and the ‘ivory tower’ and so on” (2013, p. 2). Though rooted in theory, teacher education is also focused on exploring practice and the pragmatic requirements of preparing teachers to enter and remain in education. In the introduction to *Preparing Teachers for a Changing World*, John Bransford, Linda Darling-Hammond, and Pamela LePage (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005) frame teacher education as a field that is preparing “adaptive experts” who emerge from training programs with “core ideas and broad understanding of teaching and learning that give them traction in their later development” (p. 3). While many theories inform the field, two emerge as important for a

diverse (Lee, 2015). This has led to instances where books written by white authors as *diverse* books which are not authentic or have major stereotypes and harmful tropes. The book simply checks a box for the industry: one character of color, check; one side character with a disability, check; one LGBTQIA+ friend in the mix, check.

Dahlen grapples with this issue as she asks, “In a society that is information-poor and information-resistant regarding the stories of underrepresented groups, how do editors, reviewers, librarians, and educators determine whether the books we create, review, teach, and promote are thoughtful, accurate, and

⁷² My focus is on those who are preparing to work in schools that require official teaching licensure from a state licensing body. There are private and parochial schools that do not require formal licensure and/or may not require their teachers to have a formalized teacher training.

consideration of reading whitely: communities of practice and the apprenticeship of observation.

Taking up the sociocultural theories of Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991), teacher education guides emerging teachers-to-be into the larger community of practice of teaching. A community of practice is a socially situated collective⁷³ of individuals taking up a shared pursuit (or profession) where convergence of identity is created through participation and the intersection of common goals. In their theory, the community of practice is constantly in the process of becoming, with experts in full participation within the community and novices beginning their entry at the periphery.

Because the community practice is produced through “a historically constructed, ongoing, conflicting, synergistic structuring of activity and relations among practitioners— [it] must be deciphered in order to understand specific forms of peripheral participation through time.” (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 56). Teacher education, and the teacher educators who are full members of the community of practice, set a path for the novice teacher to move from their peripheral

representative? How do we understand the context of stories that are unfamiliar?” (2016, p. 23). These questions should guide our thinking about diversity and representation.

Doing diversity is different than being authentically diverse and inclusive. This represents another way in which white supremacy remains and white gatekeepers continue to thwart the call for change while claiming to do diversity but not embracing true inclusivity. The world of children’s literature writ large must face more consciously its long-term history of white supremacy

Thankfully, because of the laborious and difficult work of those who

⁷³I use the term *collective* to indicate a group of people gathered with a general focus around an activity. It is not necessarily as cohesive as a feminist writing collective in academic circles.

location in the community and come to the center of practice as experts themselves. Finding the correct path from the periphery can, at times, be a challenge because the not-yet-but-almost teachers are conjecturing their future classrooms within the community of practice and have yet to gain access to the actual practice of teaching. In addition to teaching the day-to-day practices of being a teacher, a core component of teacher education, then, is to help preservice teachers develop their professional identity as they shift from being students to becoming teachers. This transition is difficult, at times, due to the apprenticeship of observation that can cloud a novice teacher's understanding of the real identity of the teaching community of practice.

Many preservice teachers are influenced not only by their teacher training programs, but also by the years of informal training or "unwitting apprenticeship" they received in their own schooling experiences (Britzman, 2003; Cuban, 1993; Hammerness et al, 2005). This phenomenon was coined the "apprenticeship of observation" by Lortie (1975, as referenced in Hammerness et al, 2005, p. 367) and references the unofficial education about teaching

continue to demand authentic representation, small and incremental changes are shifting the children's publishing world and we are starting to see pockets of the industry that are recognizing the need for change.

Dominant Reading Experiences Shaped by Whiteness

When reading whitely, the default and dominance of whiteness coats every reading experience from protagonist, to plot, to setting. Even if protagonists are not expressly racialized by an author, the reader who reads whitely whitewashes them and transforms them into the dominant cultural norms. The default of whiteness is so present that people who read whitely often whitewash characters

and “teacherness⁷⁴” that develops throughout the process of their K–12 schooling. As an assemblage, or perhaps even a bricolage, the models of teacherness and the ephemera of what the observer perceives to be the communal habits of this community of practice fuse together over the years as interconnected and subconscious knowledges about teaching. Yet, the apprentice of this observation, the student spectator, is on the periphery⁷⁵, quite unaware of the intricacies of planning, pedagogy, theoretical frameworks, district norms, etc. that guide teachers and maintain their membership in the teaching community of practice. Without intervention, the influence of the apprenticeship of observation most strongly affects a teacher’s ability to move beyond the status quo of their subconsciously learned understandings and lived experiences as students and how they manifest in their emerging identities as teachers.

who are explicitly written as not white.

An infamous example of this phenomenon occurred with the casting of the movie adaptation of Suzanne Collins’ 2008 novel *The Hunger Games*. The selection of Amandla Stenberg, a Black actor, to play Rue, a character who was expressly written to have dark skin, was met with derision and racist outrage from a number of white readers of the novel. The predominance of whiteness and the experiences of reading whitely deeply impacted these readers. They read the character of Rue through a prevailingly white lens that is a byproduct of the

⁷⁴ I use *teacherness* to encapsulate what it means to become a teacher, act like a teacher, use the tools, language, and signs of a teacher. It is my shorthand for the identity of those people who are seen and accepted as full participants of the teaching community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

⁷⁵ In terms of the teaching community of practice, I believe that this is why everyone I have ever interacted with socially has an opinion about teaching and the career teachers have been formally trained to do. Because they experienced it as students, there is a familiarity with the profession that doesn’t seem to exist in other fields. I even find that when working with preservice teachers they struggle to see the pedagogy of my own courses, though I am expressly modeling it for them.

*White Teacher Identity Studies*⁷⁶

Contextualizing the discourse of teacher identity with the predominance of whiteness in the field is a grounding factor that reveals how racialization and the hegemony of white cultural norms contribute to dominant reading experiences of reading whitely. It is important to acknowledge that before coming to teacher preparation programs preservice teachers and readers are steeped both in the apprenticeship of observation and by normalized white racial discourses that are endemic to our society is also an essential grounding factor of this work. “Clearly, preparing [white] teachers to teach children of diverse racial, ethnic, social class, and language backgrounds is a pressing issue in teacher education today and will continue to be for some time to come” (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p. 20).

The framework for this subsection begins with an understanding that “continuing business as usual in preservice teacher education [especially in regard to white racialized identities] will only continue to widen the gap between teachers and schools” (Sleeter, 2001, p. 96). As schools continue to grow more racially diverse (Adair, 2008; Gere et al, 2009; Lucas, 2002, Matias and Mackey, 2016;

insidious ways in which white supremacy normalizes white culture as dominant (Flowers, 2016; Leonardo, 2004; Mason 2016; Matias and Mackey, 2016; Sleeter, 2016). In my conceptualization of the term, I contend that reading whitely is the norm among readers who have been steeped in a white supremacist society.

Reading Whitely in a Cardigan: Teachers Keeping Watch at the Gates

Reading whitely, especially for teachers, has consequences that begin in classrooms and pedagogical practices involving literacy, and expands out to live in the identities of their students. As a gatekeeper to representation, reading whitely reproduces white supremacy through multiple means, from

Picower, 2009; Sleeter 2001; Villegas & Sleeter, 2016), teacher educator practices that deeply explore race and white supremacy become even more crucial (Lensmire, 2017; Tanner, 2017). Equipping preservice teachers to see how white supremacy works in the world as a hegemonic force and to dismantle white discourses about race (Borsheim-Black, 2015; Lensmire, 2017) are critical knowledges that must be centered in our curricula.

White teacher identity studies have evolved in educational research through two waves of scholarship (Jupp, Berry, & Lensmire, 2016). The first wave of research about white teacher identities (McIntyre 1997; Sleeter, 1993; Sleeter, 2001) looked at how white teachers, often acting as individuals, denied and resisted the significance of race and white privilege and centered on race-evasive identities of white people (Jupp, Berry, & Lensmire, 2016). Many of

reading choices, how protagonists are represented (or misrepresented), and by what books are endorsed and used in the classroom.

Whether educators recognize it or not⁹⁰, these are value-laden choices, that can either reinforce white supremacy or disrupt it.

When white identities populate classroom libraries, read alouds, and assigned readings, a clear message is sent to the students of that classroom. Through this seemingly innocent means, whiteness is

⁷⁶ I first encountered this scholarship through the generous guidance of Annie Mason. I knew that I needed to theorize whiteness in my work and had planned to take up critical whiteness studies to guide my thinking. The field of critical whiteness studies is intensely interdisciplinary, and I found the broader focus less helpful for my teacher education specific considerations. Crowley (2016) takes up both fields and helped me to consider each one before determining that second-wave white teacher identity studies were more beneficial to my scholarship.

⁹⁰ Even if only a small percentage of my preservice teacher students have similar reading experiences to mine, it is still important to build this critical awareness of the whiteness on their shelves and in their reading lives. Anecdotally, in my research I find that most of my students, even those who identify as BIPOC, are unaware of the effects of white supremacy and the default of whiteness that has influenced their readership, or what Matias and Mackey (2016) would call internalized whiteness. I believe that racial consciousness specifically focused on the whiteness of children's literature as well as culturally relevant practices to selecting literature are central ways to provide openings that can create disruptive agency.

these studies focused on exposing the ways in which white teachers ignored both racialized identities and the ways in which their whiteness reinscribed white dominance and racism through biased pedagogies and teaching practices. While this was an important task, it did not recognize the complex construction of race and identity of the white teachers that were acting within a larger system of white supremacy (Marx & Pennington, 2003; Mosley, 2010). First-wave studies built a strong foundation to explore “the overwhelming presence of whiteness” in our schools and how it can be a silencing factor for BIPOC students and educators.

Starting in 2003, the scholarship shifted and began to demonstrate how white teacher identity was not only more complex, but also deeply situated in both historic and social contexts. This second wave of scholarship recognizes that white teachers are not simply individual agents of whiteness or racists acting outside of the larger and dominant system, but are part of a larger system of white supremacy (Adair, 2008; Berchini, 2016; Berchini, 2017; Crowley, 2016; Leonardo, 2004; Marx & Pennington, 2003; Mason, 2016) and that the teaching force continues to be predominantly

positioned as the most important, or the only identity of worth. White racial identity as dominant is reproduced and non-white identities are diminished and devalued, or subtractive in nature (Valenzuela, 1999). These are damaging messages for students of all races, and lead to a continued systematic cycle and reproduction of white supremacy.

For BIPOC children, the stakes are higher, because these subtractive messages reinforce that their identities are not important to our society, a fact that continues to reverberate in the material realities of the impact of white supremacy on non-white people.

Thus, it is not surprising that teachers resist

white middle class women (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Gere et al, 2009; Grumet, 1988; hooks, 1994; Kreamelmeyer, Kline, Zygmunt, & Clark, 2016; Miller Dyce & Owusu-Ansah, 2016; Sleeter, 2001; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). In second-wave white teacher identity studies, scholars are demonstrating how white teachers are not only working within a system of dominance, but also how they are coming to grasp their own complicity in a complex structure of white hegemony. These studies take a more nuanced perspective and seek out opportunities to actively disrupt the status quo of whiteness, while at the same time recognizing that it is a challenging and multifaceted process. “Expecting a radical, measurable transformation in a short period of time is unrealistic given the complexity of the task at hand [racial identity development and coming to terms with white racism]” (Marx & Pennington, 2003, p. 107). They also move away from essentialized understandings of white identities to recognize the complex and nuanced nature of racialization and conscientization, the Freirean (1970) term for becoming aware of the normalized systematic influence of unseen hegemonic discourses. This shift was a first step in

adding *certain* books to their classroom selections. Books that untested books which move away from a focus on the canon of traditionally taught literature, include experiences that are outside of a teacher’s norm, those that their own teachers did not promote, or those that contain seemingly controversial subject matter are not easily adopted (Freedman & Johnson, 2001). It seems that “the knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes that [preservice] teachers have, then, shape[d] what they choose to do in their classrooms and explain[s] both the constancy and the change that have shaped the core instructional practices that have endured over time” (Cuban, 1993, p. 20). The process, whether in teaching or in text

finding methods to guide teacher development in racial consciousness.

Mason (2016) furthers the consideration of the complex nature of white teacher identity development and demonstrates that racial awareness is not a one-sized fix-all or a single semester cure. Racial consciousness, instead, is an ongoing process of realization, consideration, and eventual action (or sometimes inaction and resistance) that takes time and effort. One aspect of this process is a discussion of the ways in which preservice teachers also must often unlearn the racist realities of white supremacy, and privilege. They know how to “talk the diversity talk” through *diversity discourses* (Mason, 2016) that reject racism verbally but use coded language and distancing techniques of ‘white talk’ (McIntyre, 1997) or “race talk” (Pollack, 2004). Dismantling white ways of seeing and talking about race and diversity are important aspects of the racial conscientization work of teacher education.

As teacher educators, we are bound with a responsibility to consider how to develop critical knowledges that guide preservice teachers to enact anti-

selection serves to both maintain and reproduce the status quo. However, by building critical knowledges about reading whitely and children’s literature, teachers can gain cultural competence⁹¹ regarding literature. They can take up those knowledges to critique and reimagine the status quo, a core aspect of Ladson-Billing’s (1995) original vision of culturally relevant pedagogy.

**Preparing Teachers:
Building Critical
Knowledge**

In order to prepare teachers to bring a culturally relevant awareness to their literature selections, they need to understand the realities of representation in the field of children’s literature. I strive to

⁹¹ Cultural competence, like racial consciousness, is an ongoing process. I do not suggest that it is a singular moment of clarity, but a continuous development that takes a lot of time and effort.

racist pedagogies and work toward racial consciousness (Berchini, 2017; Ladson-Billings 2006). One such possibility is to include pedagogies that develop racial literacy (Johnson Lachuk & Mosley, 2012; Mosley, 2010; Mosley & Rogers, 2011; Rogers & Mosley, 2008) in preservice teacher coursework. Racial literacy, which shares intellectual roots with second-wave white teacher identity studies, recognizes the systemic nature of racism and white supremacy. It “requires us to rethink race as an instrument of social, geographic, and economic control of both whites and [BIPOC]. Racial literacy offers a more dynamic framework for understanding American racism” (Guinier, 2004, p. 114). Guinier further delineates the concept, recognizing that racial literacy is both contextual and recognizes the relationship between race and power. She also emphasizes that, “while racial literacy never loses sight of race, it does not focus exclusively on race. It constantly interrogates the dynamic relationship among race, class, geography, gender, and other explanatory variables” (2004, p. 115).

Understanding of the hegemonic and systemic forces of our society is a crucial component of teacher development. It is the explicit and repeated exposure to the

educate the future teachers in my classes with a different way of seeing children’s literature and their own possible role as gatekeepers of whiteness in that world. “Coming to identify and understand how our narrative histories inform our interpretations and interactions is an essential aspect of preparing preservice teachers for teaching all children effectively” (Johnson Lachuk & Mosley, 2012, p. 326) and ensuring that their classroom libraries, required reading, and promoted texts are diverse and inclusive for *all* their students.

Through this study and in my own practice, I work to build critical knowledges that disrupt the dominant discourses of reading whitely and that inform

ways in which hegemony is enacted—especially for white people who can be oblivious or unwilling to acknowledge the systems of dominance that mark our culture (Picower, 2009)—that can begin to develop racial literacy in white preservice teachers. It is imperative for teacher education programs to embrace curricular and programmatic decisions that forefront racial literacy and racial conscientiousness raising as critical knowledges⁷⁷ that are developed in their teacher preparation programs.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Culturally relevant⁷⁸ pedagogy (CRP) (Gay, 2000, 2002a, 2002b; Dixson & Fasching-Varner, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2006, 2014; Miller Dyce & Owusu-Ansah, 2016; Milner, 2011) identifies the significance of pedagogy that acknowledges and values the cultural, linguistic, racial, and economic backgrounds of their students as relevant.

understandings of children’s literature and literature selection practices in the classroom. It is important for preservice teachers to be able to look at children’s literature through more critical lenses. Without interventions that bring critical consciousness to the influences of the way that white supremacy reverberates in the children’s literature that is used in schools, it will continue to be reified in the literacy practices of their future classrooms.

Locating Reading Whately in Teacher Education

⁷⁷ This commitment seems singular here on the page, but I do not want to imply that these programmatic choices serve as a single panacea or a one-workshop intervention to the “—isms” that are endemic to white supremacy and hegemonic forces of oppression, but are recognized as an ongoing and continuous commitment of a program that must be reexamined and revisited often. I believe that racial literacy and racial conscientiousness, especially for white people, are always in a process of development, and are being made and unmade by the systematic forces that surround dominant cultural norms.

⁷⁸ It is also referenced by some scholars as culturally responsive pedagogy (Bergeron, 2008; Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Gere, Buehler, Dallavis, & Haviland, 2009; Hayes & Juarez, 2012; Sleeter, 2011; Souto-Manning, 2009; Villegas & Lucas, 2002) or culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2000, 2002a, 2002b; Villegas & Lucas, 2002, recognize this as the action the stems from the pedagogical theory) by some scholars. I choose to use the original term generated by Ladson-Billings because I believe that all extensions of the theory have added nuance to her work, but not surpassed it, especially after reading her 2014 revisit of the theory. I will discuss the emergence of the term *culturally sustaining pedagogy* (Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2014) below.

Earlier studies recognized that cultural incompatibility (Vogt, Jordan, & Tharp, 1987) and the systematically oppressive nature of education that positions school culture⁷⁹ as a more valued replacement of home culture and creates “an oppositional cultural frame of reference and oppositional identity” (Ogbu, 1987, 334) are strong contributors to BIPOC student failure in schools. As noted above, because the cultural and racial identities of teachers and students continue to become increasingly divergent, culturally relevant pedagogy that centers on and values the background of students is essential.

Through a study of successful teachers of black students, Ladson-Billings (1995) developed a grounded theory of culturally relevant pedagogy which, when enacted, she refers to as culturally relevant teaching (1995, 2006, 2014). This pedagogical commitment is grounded in a teacher’s “ability to develop students academically, a willingness to nurture and support cultural competence, and the development of a sociopolitical or critical consciousness” (p. 483). When taken up together, these three components provide a potentially powerful path to engage

While LE 3004⁹² is situated in the context of training teachers, the phenomenon of reading whitely exists in multiple, partial, and varied contexts both inside and outside of that space. I can see how the apprenticeship of observation is taken up by my students and how they conceptualize the quality of children’s literature and think about their own teachers’ practices regarding reading and literature. Teaching practices, or ideas about literature, gained from the apprenticeship of observation are decidedly more rooted in the past, meaning that traditional and sometimes ineffective practices of teaching become centered in the body and not the brain.

⁷⁹ It is important to recognize this as the dominant white culture that guides most school systems.

⁹² Further explored in the context for data collection included Chapters One and Three of this dissertation.

with the transformative educational practices that are needed to more equitably educate *all* children.

In the preparation of teachers, one approach to beginning this process is to offer explicit courses to develop social consciousness about race and culturally relevant teaching practices (Crowley, 2016, Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014; Mason, 2016; Miller Dyce & Owusu-Ansah, 2016; Sleeter, 2001). “Although some prospective teachers enter their teacher preparation programs with a strong sense of who they are socially and culturally, most need to engage in autobiographical exploration, reflection, and critical self-analysis to develop that sense” (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p. 22). The discourses of white supremacy⁸⁰ are “so frequently deployed in social and discursive practices that they seem to be ‘natural’ or self-evident” for many teachers and preservice teachers (Ngo, 2010, p. 10). A formal disruption of these practices is needed to facilitate racial consciousness development that moves beyond the dominant narratives and the silences that frame white racialized identities.

Freedman and Johnson (2002) demonstrate how these factors influence the choices teachers make in selections of reading materials for students⁹³.

At the Nexus: A Conceptual Framework for Disrupting Reading Whitely

In the past, the practice of literature selection in many classrooms has been based on a subtractive model that privileges whiteness as the default for representation in children’s literature. It is essential to guide preservice teachers to take up a culturally relevant and additive stance when selecting books. They must find books that represent

⁸⁰ These can include, but are not limited to: erasure of racial history/identities, white politeness about not discussing race, the great unsaid of whiteness (Thandeka, 2007, p.3), race descriptions that are explicit in private and muted in public (Pollock, 2004), diversity talk (Mason, 2016), or contradictory discourses that rely on binary based understandings of race and racialized stereotypes (Ngo, 2010). Additional discussions of these discursive practices are included above in the White Teacher Identity section of this chapter.

⁹³ Which I contend, based on my own lived experiences as a classroom teacher and a K-5 support specialist, are also situated in whiteness and the phenomenon of reading whitely.

It is important to note the barriers to enactment of culturally relevant pedagogy. As it has been broadly taken up in the field of education; being taught in teacher education programs, proclaimed as practice in classrooms, and popularized across America, the lived-out realities of CRP have been critiqued. Scholars note that many teachers' conceptions of CRP are simplistic or inaccurate (Hayes & Juárez, 2012; Sleeter, 2011), that true enactment of CRP is challenging and often illusive (Fasching-Varner & Seriki, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 2006), that teacher education programs, also populated by predominately white teacher educators, often undermine their teaching of CRP through the complicit enactment of white racial dominance (Hayes & Juárez, 2012). Ladson-Billings (2014), acknowledges some of these barriers in her later work, *Culturally Relevant Pedagogy 2.0: a.k.a. the Remix*, recognizing that teachers often have a "limited and superficial notion of culture" (p. 77) and that there has been too much emphasis on the first two aspects of her theory and not enough concrete development of sociopolitical or critical consciousness. She recognizes this as only a partial enactment of her theory.

their students in ways "that value and actively promote respect and [demonstrate] a search for connection between teacher and student and among [the] students themselves (Valenzuela, 1999 p. 21). When authentic care and a culturally relevant orientation is an overt aspect of the text selection and suggestion process for the students in a classroom, it becomes an additive way of seeing each child and takes their lived experience and reader identity into consideration.

Representation in the class-endorsed texts, thus becomes centered on the identities that children bring to the classroom, and teachers live out their ethic of cultural relevance⁹⁴ by

⁹⁴ Mariana Souto-Manning (2009) demonstrates a clear connection between literature selection and culturally relevant teaching practices. She used

Though complex and entangled, and potentially challenging, explicit discussions of race, whiteness, and racial identity paired with critical reflection (Miller Dyce & Owusu-Ansah, 2016) can help to break the codes of silence (Crowley, 2016; Mason, 2016) and build spaces for teachers to have more complex understandings of culture (both their own and others) and the sociopolitical consciousness that is needed to see, critique, and work against the oppressive status quo. Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, especially when paired with racial conscientization, is one method teacher education programs can employ to empower preservice teachers with more practical methods of teaching that will affirm their students, particularly those outside of the dominant hegemony⁸¹.

ensuring that each student engages with a text that is a mirror of their lived experiences. I hope to draw them in to the community of practice as children's literature agents of change (Villegas & Lucas, 2002) within their own classrooms.

Building on the initial conceptual framework and review of the literature explored in this chapter, the next chapter bridges from theory into practice as I explicate the methodological turns that I take up to explore reading whitely in this post-intentional phenomenological study.

inclusive children's literature, anti-oppressive educational practices inspired by Freire (1970), and the tenants of critical literature to successfully build critical democratic literacy practices with her first grade students.

⁸¹ It is important to note the emergence of Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2014) which expands on Ladson-Billings work, taking up some of the challenges of enacting CRP and suggesting that a new stance toward sustaining practice are needed as part of this new terminology. In this framework, the humanization of students focuses on more than relevance, but in pedagogies that "support young people in sustaining the cultural and linguistic competence of their communities while simultaneously offering access to dominant cultural competence" (Paris, 2012, p. 95).

Chapter Three: Studying how Reading Whitely Takes Shape—the M/methodology of Post-Intentional Phenomenology

Review of study's purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore the ways that dominant reading experiences, especially those steeped in white cultural norms, shape adult readers' interactions with, and considerations of, children's literature. I use the term reading whitely as a heuristic to encapsulate this phenomenon. In part, this study exists to flesh out the ways that reading whitely is produced and provoked in macro and micro contexts by providing a clearer snapshot⁹⁵ of the phenomenon. These dual contexts occur in the experiences of the research participants, our classroom interactions and course activities, and in my role as instructor/observer/researcher, which in turn are deeply influenced by the macro contexts of the dominant systems that have shaped our reading experiences and course interactions. In addition to opening up these productions and provocations, the other main rationale behind the study is to forward methods to disrupt reading whitely. To know the phenomenon, even in this partial manner, is to be able to begin building critical knowledges about reading whitely that can disrupt how it works at the hegemonic edges of dominant discourses about reading and children's literature. This study also seeks to unpack, at least momentarily, some of the entanglements of the theoretical frames that helped to shape its conceptualization and build the foundations of this study.

⁹⁵ This study would never claim to be able to capture a complete unpacking of the entirety of the phenomenon, to determine its complete essence, or even settle on general manifestations that emerge from and through this study. Yet, it is a first step to begin to understand how the productions and provocations of reading whitely take shape, flee, leak, and slip from the work of this study.

Methodology in Focus: The Value of Post-Intentional Phenomenology

At its core, phenomenology is simply a purposeful means to study phenomena that, though born of philosophy, has grown into a well-established qualitative research methodology. As noted in Chapter One, there are many different branches of phenomenology which may share historic roots but have differing commitments and ontological assumptions. Expanding from transcendental and hermeneutic phenomenology and making post-structuralist commitments, post-intentional pneumonology is distinct from other forms. It is these aspects and the emphasis on social change that make this particular branch of phenomenology especially useful for a study of reading whitely.

Many aspects of dominant reading experiences have been explored individually through other forms of research⁹⁶. However, it is a shift to consider these experiences as a collection and recognize that they exist as a tangled, multifaceted, and complex phenomenon. The conceptualization of reading whitely as a unique phenomenon that stands on its own and could be studied using varying qualitative means is an important move forward. It requires a specific methodological magnifying glass to focus on reading whitely in a way that dives into the middle of these complexities and multiplicities to recognize they are “connected and interconnected in all sorts of unstable, changing, partial, fleeting ways” (Vagle, 2018, 135).

⁹⁶ For example: the impact of children’s literature on readers (Derman-Sparks, 2013; the Brown Bookshelf, 2016); using children’s literature as a context for examining and expanding cultural beliefs (Brindley & Laframboise, 2002) or understandings of diversity (Harlin, Murray & Shea, 2007); the importance of and need for representative literature to counter the predominance of whiteness (Bishop, 1990; Dahlen, 2016, 2017; Elliott, 2014; Larrick, 1965; Reese, 2018; Thomas, 2016); the importance of children’s literature instruction for preservice teachers (Gebhard, 2006; Hoewisch, 2000); children’s literature as a tool for culturally relevant pedagogy (Souto-Manning, 2009); making reparations for the damage that children’s literature has done to BIPOC readers (Elliott, 2016) to name a few.

As a researcher who takes up the commitments of post-intentional phenomenology⁹⁷, I believe it is the best method for exploring reading whitely. It purposefully studies the lived experiences of the participants with productions and provocations of reading whitely, but it goes beyond that to center the phenomenon itself as the unit of analysis. It is a purposefully philosophical way to qualitatively engage with expressions of reading whitely through multiple means. It can be valuable to illuminate how the three interconnected theoretical aspects that comprise the name of this methodology demonstrate the core commitments of this research.

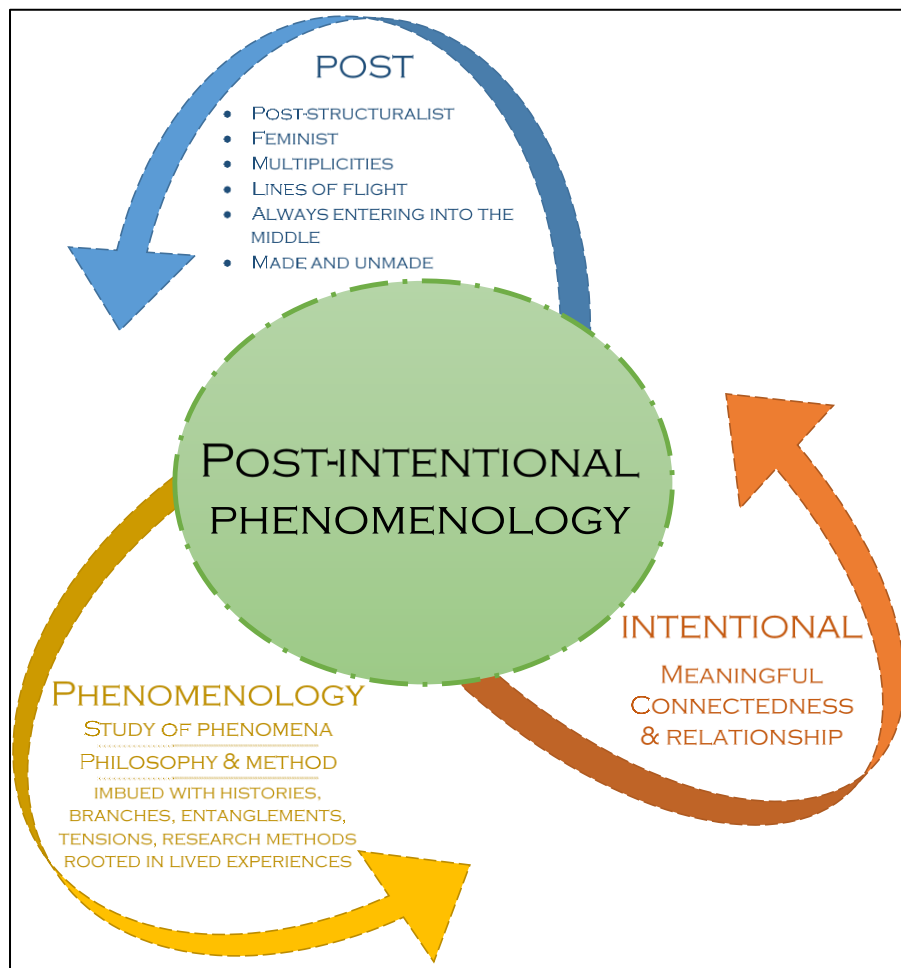


Figure 5: Visualization of the Named Aspects of Post-Intentional Phenomenology

⁹⁷ Those of us who identify as post-intentional phenomenologists often use the shorthand term of PIP to refer to this branch of phenomenology. I will use that abbreviation in the footnotes section of this chapter.

What I value most about post-intentional phenomenology as a method, is that it provides a means to explore phenomena through a complex and layered approach that does not deny my presence and positionality in the research process. It also allows the weaving of other methodologies to illuminate the phenomena as it manifests in the moment of study (Vagle, 2014). This is a distinction that sets post-intentional phenomenology apart from other types of phenomenology.

In my post-intentional phenomenological research, I include narrative inquiry to explore phenomena in a descriptive manner and honor the value of stories as a location of lived production of phenomena (Clandinin & Connolly, 2000; Connolly & Clandinin, 2006). Taking up the arts-based foundations of narrative inquiry, I call upon the methodological assumptions of writing that are outside of the traditional form to “explode beyond tradition” and give the phenomenon an artful path in my writing (Vagle, 2014, p.136⁹⁸). I am most drawn to the work of Patti Lather, a post-structuralist feminist, who uses various forms of narrative inquiry for her scholarly writing. Her assemblage-style writing pushes the boundaries of traditional texts with different formatting styles, split-pages, footnotes and endnotes used as narrative and analytical devices, and other means to disrupt the reader in productive ways.

Post-Intentional Phenomenology: A Methodological Overview

The methodology, though rooted in and engaging with philosophy, provides a practical means to explore complex phenomena. Through the five-component process, first conceptualized by Vagle in 2014 and revised in 2018, the philosophical

⁹⁸ Vagle (2014) states, “As van Manen aptly describes it, this research activity is an art” (p. 136). I hope my multilayered text format does justice to this art.

underpinnings of the Methodology⁹⁹ of post-intentional phenomenology are enacted as methods to actively take up researching phenomena in a post-intentional manner. This study was designed using these five components outlined as follows:

1. Identify a post-intentional phenomenon in context(s), around a social issue
2. Devise a clear, yet flexible, process for gathering phenomenological material appropriate for the phenomenon under investigation
3. Make a post-reflexive plan
4. Explore the post-intentional phenomenon using theory, phenomenological material, and post-reflexions
5. Craft a text that engages in the productions and provocations of the post-intentional phenomenon in context(s), around a social issue. (Vagle, 2018, 139)

Throughout this chapter I will demonstrate how I have employed four¹⁰⁰ of the five components in this study of reading whitely.

Engaging with Component One: An Overview of Key Information

Context for Data Collection

The research site for this study was two sections of a children's literature course, Literacy Education 3004 (LE 3004), which I taught as a graduate instructor for 15 weeks during the Fall 2017 semester at a large, research-oriented state university in the Midwest. The focus of the course is diversity of formats, genres, and representation within texts. It integrates content instruction about literature for young people, considering diversity of formats and genres, with an emphasis on diverse and inclusive

⁹⁹ The use of the capital M is purposeful. As Vagle notes in both his writing and teaching on PIP, there is the formal reality of the "big M" Method that recognizes the larger conceptual framework, ontological, and epistemological underpinnings, and broad understanding of PIP in its entirety; where "small m" methods are the hands-on ingredients that make up the day to day active research of a PIP researcher. While they are concrete and conceptualized on paper as a linear path to do this method of research, Vagle resists this understanding of the components, suggests that they must be revisited throughout the research, (2018, 139), and encourages a fluidity in any PIP researcher's approach to the method that reflects the post-structuralist conceptions of multiplicity and complexity that are foundational to this research.

¹⁰⁰ The formal written expression of Component One lives in Chapter One but is reflected throughout every chapter of this dissertation as the phenomenon under study. And the entire dissertation exists as the manifestation of Component Five: the crafted text.

representations within those formats and genres. The class is a required course for Early Childhood Education majors and Elementary Education majors and it meets the university's designation as a writing intensive course. Most of the students who enroll in the course plan to pursue their initial licensure in elementary or early childhood education and will eventually become Pre/K–6 classroom teachers.

The two sections of the course for this study were taught in person on campus back-to-back on the same day of the week in the same large classroom and used the same syllabus, course schedule, and online educational platform for course information, assignment submission, and online interactions¹⁰¹. The first section, consisting of 27 students, met in the afternoon from 12:20 to 3:00 and the second section, consisting of 32 students, met in the early evening from 3:35 to 6:00 in the same large classroom. While there was a 35-minute break between the two courses, students often overlapped as they arrived early to claim their seats or asked questions before and after class, though they never formally interfaced in person as part of the course. It was the fourth semester that I taught the course. Most assignments, presentations, and discussions were piloted with students during the three previous semesters of my instruction.

Importance of Research Site

The selection of the research site based in my own university-level classroom was a purposeful choice on my part¹⁰² and was a significant component in the design of this

¹⁰¹ All classes were held in person, excluding classes held online due to the fall holiday and to travel for a conference presentation.

¹⁰² In my circles at the university, none of my doctoral student colleagues, though based in and funded by a curriculum and instruction department with a teacher licensure program, have used their graduate assistantship classrooms as locations of research. Most of my peers have completed data collection in schools and youth organizations within the community, focusing on in-service teachers and/or their students.

study. I believe that reading whitely exists in the world and is a much larger theoretical concept that exists in all readers who are surrounded by the hegemonic discourses of power and dominant discourses that emanate from a society so deeply shaped by white supremacy. Reading whitely could be explored in any setting where readers interact with texts: in classrooms, libraries, bookshops and beyond. Yet, as a committed teacher educator who desires to disrupt pedagogical practices that continue to produce systematic inequality in education for BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, low socioeconomic, working class, or working poor students, and students with disabilities, I wanted to center my research in my work preparing preservice teachers along their path to becoming teachers.

My participants included students who were not education majors and, at the time of the class, were not considering becoming teachers. It is important to me, though that the foundations of the course, its funding sources, and programmatic significance are based in the School of Education. In my initial conceptualization of the study, I had planned to exclude non-education majors from the study, and to focus solely on preservice teachers for the final research. During the semester though, as I collected the phenomenological materials for the study, it was clear to me that this exclusion could potentially limit the depth of the study. The research is situated in the participants' lived experiences of reading whitely and considers how the phenomenon has been produced and reinforced in their lives and through their participation in the course. It became clear that I found the reading experiences of non-education majors to be informative as I came

to understand what it means to read whitely. Thus, I modified¹⁰³ my original plan and did not exclude participants based on their majors.

While Literacy Education 3004 is not a methods course for teaching literature in the schools, I unapologetically hold to the educational foundations of the course and teach it in a purposefully methodological manner, taking up the theory or literary teaching while at the same time modeling pedagogical practices and unpacking “teacher moves” that will benefit the preservice teachers in the class. Yet, I also make sure to recognize the non-teachers in my classes, by framing the class as a valuable space to develop critical awareness of children’s literature, in general and outside of the educational system. While they may not ever be Pre/K–12 classroom teachers, they will support the public-school system through their taxes¹⁰⁴ and will likely be consumers, and perhaps even gatekeepers of children’s literature in their own lives as they interact and support the readership of the young people in their spheres of influence.

Study Participants

For the students of the course, there are three levels of participation in this study: general participation, which consists of all the students enrolled in Literacy Education 3004; featured participation, which consists of students who consented to sharing their

¹⁰³ I submitted a formal modification to the IRB for this change in my study and it was approved with no exceptions. See Appendix C for details.

¹⁰⁴ In fact, I lean into this reality by using the terms *teachers* and *taxpayers* to refer to the students in the class as they think about children’s literature that is shared with children in schools and public spheres. For example, when I ask students to analyze a piece of literature for its value in an educational space, I ask the teachers if they would use it in their classrooms and the taxpayers if they would want to see it in a classroom of a child that they know and love. While I know that teachers are also taxpayers and that I have created a binary through this process, the shorthand of the two terms is simple and easy to grasp. While my students laugh (and sometimes are taken aback) when I first use these distinctions with them, the teacher/taxpayer focus is very helpful to facilitate personal connections that all the students in the class can and should make with children’s literature, regardless of their majors or career paths.

course materials for deeper analysis and/or for being interviewed after the course was completed; and focal participation which consists of the students who were selected from the featured participation and formally interviewed for the study. As the instructor-observer-researcher, I am also a participant in the study and my presence is discussed in the Component Three section of this chapter.

The general study participants consist of 59 undergraduate students enrolled in both sections of the course. For the purposes of this study, the phenomenological materials from the general participants will be looked at more collectively and no pseudonyms will be used to identify specific participants. In Table 1: General Participant Demographic Information, I include the gender identifications¹⁰⁵, race, and academic majors of the general participants¹⁰⁶. As demonstrated by this information, the majority of the participants are preservice teachers, with most participants majoring in elementary or early childhood education.

Demographic Identity Marker		Total	Percentage
Gender Identity	Female	47	79.7%
	Male	11	18.6%
	Non-Binary/Queer	1	1.7%
Race	Asian	10	16.9%
	Latinx	1	1.7%
	White	48	81.4%
Major	Elementary Education, Path to Elementary Education, Post-Baccalaureate Elementary Education Requirements	42	71.2%

¹⁰⁵ It is important to note that I have not included sexuality as part of the demographic landscape of the general participants, though five participants openly shared about their experiences as LGBTQIA+, either with me personally or with their small group. As a cisgender heterosexual female, I recognize that heteronormativity is another dominant discourse of our society and want to formally highlight this reality. As the professor of this course, I did not want to ask students to disclose demographic information about themselves that I would not have been privy to outside of that role.

¹⁰⁶ The percentages in the last column regarding participant's major, have been adjusted slightly. I have chosen to round the percentages one decimal place. Due to the number distribution I have listed the early childhood majors as 11.8% instead of 11.9% to have a consistent overall total of 100.

	Early Childhood Education	7	11.8%
	Other Education/Double Major with Education	2	3.4%
	Non-Education/Undeclared	8	13.6%

Table 1: General Participant Demographic Information

General data collection was based on the course related active designation of IRB process, and focused on gathering the broader phenomenological materials that are common aspects of a semester-long course. These materials include teaching materials created in the planning and implementation of the course, and the general materials of student learning spaces: assignments, reflections, online interactions, activities, and class discussions. With 59 students' weekly learning interactions over the 15-week semester, this created a large and rich set of phenomenological materials from which to study. I made purposeful choices about which phenomenological materials I would select and use for analysis in this study, which are noted below. This was aided by how I crafted the levels of participation on the consent form: general (all students enrolled in the course), featured (denoted as Focused Participation Assignment Share or Focused Participation Interview on the consent form), and focal (participants selected for interview).

There were 49 featured participants who consented to participation of either assignment/materials share and/or participating in an interview after the course. 15 participants consented to assignment review only, one participant consented to the interview only, and 32 consented to both assignment review and interview. Additionally, there were seven participants who gave mixed consent¹⁰⁷ on their forms (see Consent

¹⁰⁷ These students selected boxes that said *I consent to focused participation—either assignment share or interview* and also selected *I DO NOT give consent*. I would redesign the consent forms to help mitigate this confusion in the future. If the number of study participants had been smaller, I would have contacted these participants to verify their intentions.

form Appendix D). Because their intentions were not clear, they have been excluded from either designation.

From the larger group of 33 participants who consented to interviews, seven students were selected to participate at this next level. Six of the students chose to take up this request and participated in the unstructured interviews which served to further illuminate the phenomenon. The interviews, lasting roughly an hour, took place during the summer and fall of 2018 and were conducted on campus.

Participant selection was based on multiple factors. During the semester, I took notes about class interactions, amount of observable participation in the course, and personal communications with participants as part of my post-reflexive journaling process. While taking those notes, I highlighted Allie and Haimanti¹⁰⁸ as potential focal participants, if they consented, because of conversations we had about race, representation, and gender identity. Both took time to speak with me during and after class about how the course was changing their understandings of representation in children's literature. Both also held identity markers that are often marginalized in the mostly white and heteronormative learning spaces of the institution where this research was conducted. It was important for me to give priority to their voices and experiences.

Another factor that played a role in the general selection of participants for interviews was their self-identification as readers/non-readers. It was my goal to balance the representation of participants based on their reader identity, as I feel that could be a strong contributing factor to the productions and provocations of reading whitely. A participant that I observed as a good interview candidate in my post-reflexive notes

¹⁰⁸ Pseudonyms.

during the semester, specifically because of their¹⁰⁹ open conversations and formal writing about being a non-reader as a child¹¹⁰ and how they spoke about representation in the few books that they had enjoyed reading during their childhood. While they had agreed to speaking with me further on their consent form, at the time I contacted participants to set up interviews their level of busyness and current schedule did not permit them to participate further in the study. In the end, I was not able to add the representation of non-readers as one of the focal participants. As you will note below, all of the focal participants identify as readers on some level.

Beyond the notes I took during the semester, for the next phase of my selection process, I completed an initial review of the readerographies for each of the thirty-three participants who consented to an interview. Based on my experiences in previous semesters I knew that this assignment would set the stage for exploring the phenomenon of reading whitely. Each semester, this deeper investigation of their favorite titles reveals how their lists of beloved texts are steeped in a predominance of white cultural norms, regardless of their racial and cultural backgrounds. Utilizing a long conference table, I sorted, reviewed, and took notes using printed versions of their assignment. I used my post-reflexive journal to note the process (see Figure 6: Post-reflexive Notebook Readerography Review Notes), paying close attention to the swells of the phenomenon as I looked across their work and began to explore the titles that they had selected and discussed as their most cherished or influential. I began looking for different influencing

¹⁰⁹ I purposefully chose this gender-neutral pronoun to support anonymity.

¹¹⁰ This identification was especially interesting to me because their dominant reading experiences were also shaped by a strong dislike of reading that was emphasized by their interactions with teachers and librarians as a K–12 student.

factors: emotional/affective connections, reading influencers, text focus considering dominant protagonists, problematic texts, and representation. When I revisited the process a week later, I began a loose coding process to visibly track what I was seeing

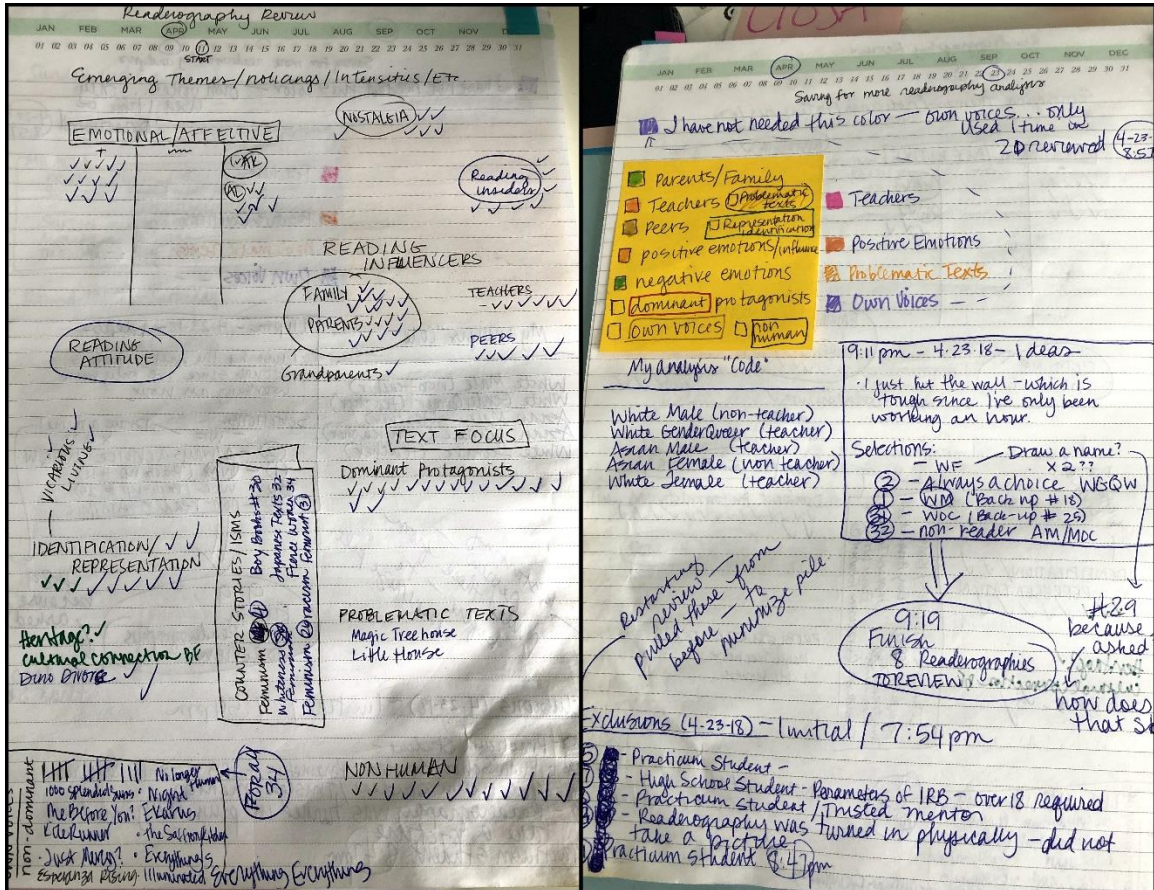


Figure 6: Post-reflexive Notebook Readerography Review Notes

across assignments using different colored highlighters to note these influencing factors as I began to consider how they might be informative to exploring reading whitely.

During the review, I also chose to exclude six participants from the interview process. These participants were excluded for the following reasons: two were students that I was currently supervising in a clinical experience placement; one student was dually enrolled in the course and in high school and was not 18; one student turned in her readerography in person and I had neglected to take a picture so it could not be reviewed;

and with two of the students I had developed a mentoring relationship beyond the course and did not want that connection to skew the process in any way.

I captured multiple images of this process and include them in Figure 7: Initial Readerography Review Process images below.

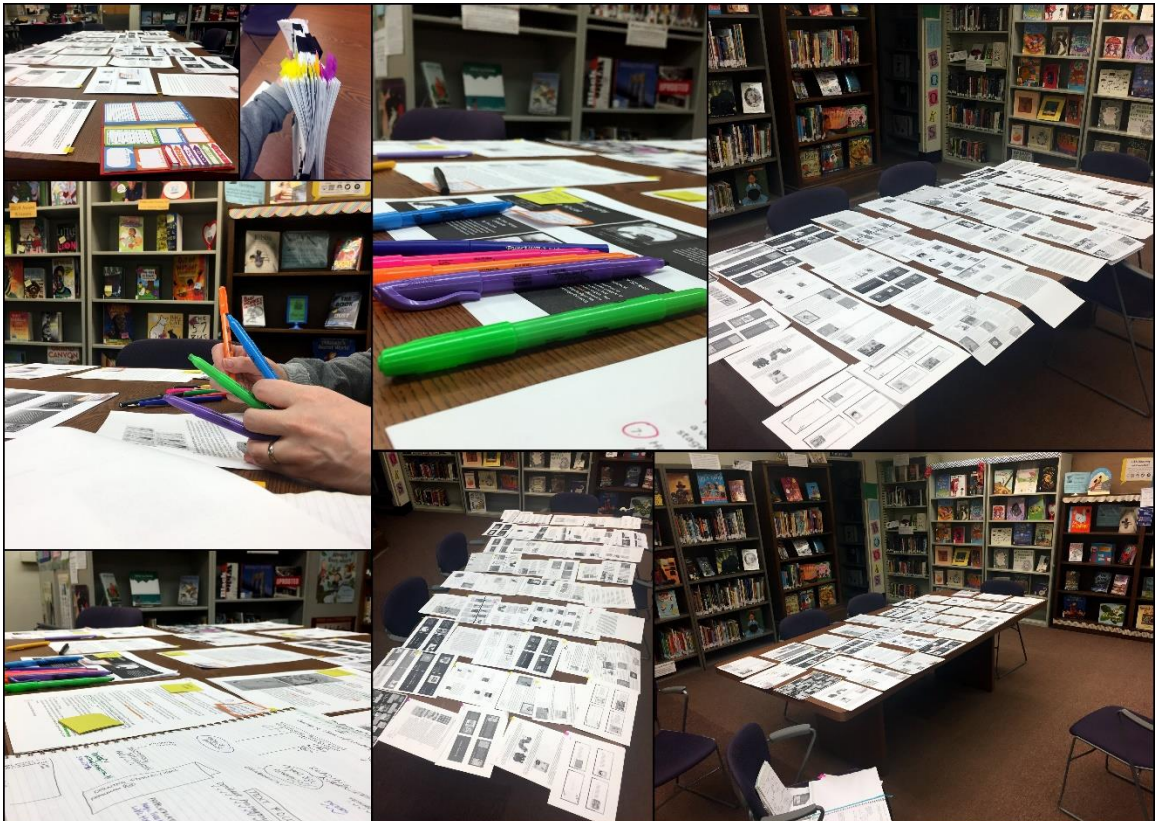


Figure 7: Initial Readerography Review Process

An additional factor that guided my selection was a consideration of balanced representation that was at least partially reflective of the larger group of general participants. This process is also visible in Figure 6: Post-reflexive Notebook Readerography Review Notes, on the second page. While it was a secondary consideration, it was still important for me to make note of this aspect of the focal participant's identities. I considered how I could best make the focal participant group reflective of the overall representation of the enrollment in the course, considering

gender, race, and academic major, and used that as a final winnowing factor. With such a large number of participants willing to be interviewed and knowing that speaking with each of them would be beneficial to the study, this last factor of consideration was very helpful in my decision-making process. While the demographic makeup¹¹¹ of the focal participants is not completely proportional to the enrollment of the course¹¹², I achieved a level of balance in their selection.

Demographic Identity Marker		General Participant		Focal Participant	
Gender ¹¹³	Female	47	79.7%	4	66.7%
	Male	11	18.6%	1	16.7%
	Non-Binary/Queer	1	1.7%	1	16.7%
Race	Asian	10	16.9%	2	33.3%
	Latinx	1	1.7%	0	0%
	White	48	81.4%	4	66.7%
Major	Elementary Education, Path to Elementary Education, Post-Baccalaureate Elementary Education Requirements	42	71.2%	2	33.3%
	Early Childhood Education	7	11.8%	1	16.7%
	Other Education/Double Major with Education	2	3.4%	2	33.3%
	Non-Education/Undeclared	8	13.6%	1	16.7%

Table 2: General and Focal Participant Demographic Information

Through an email invitation sent after the interviews were completed, I asked the focal participants to share their identifying demographic information with me, see Table 3: Demographic Information Requested of Focal Participants for details. As part of my request I asked for additional information about their career plans, reader identity, and an

¹¹¹ As noted above in Footnote 106: “The percentages in the last column regarding participant’s major, have been adjusted slightly. I have chosen to round the percentages one decimal place. Due to the number distribution I have listed the early childhood majors as 11.8% instead of 11.9% to have a consistent overall total of 100.”

¹¹² Which I know is not expected in qualitative research, but I think it still valuable to note.

¹¹³ None of the participants specifically signified that they were cisgender or transgender.

open-ended option allowing participants to share any additional information that they would like me to include. Having the details about their current career pathways allows me to establish and recognize their teacher or taxpayer identities¹¹⁴. Because it connects to the role of reading whitely in their lives, it was important for me to include specific requests for information about their reading identity. All participants who provided responses to these extended questions are included verbatim in Table 5: Focal Participant Extended Demographic Responses. Haimanti and Henry did not provide additional information.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pseudonym you would like used in the study <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Only a first name is needed 2. Gender identity/Preferred pronouns 3. Race/Ethnicity 4. General Economic Status <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This can be your familial economic status/status that you feel has influenced your identity (affluent, upper/lower middle class, working class, etc.) 5. Reading identity before the class: How did you identify as a reader, a non-reader, an alliterate reader who can read but does not due to time constraint/reasons, other, etc. before our time together? 6. Undergraduate Major(s)/Minor(s) 7. Career plans/Career track/Future employment goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If teacher - please include general level: elementary/middle/high school and content area if that applies 8. Other: Any other demographic detail(s) or identity marker(s) you would like to be included the description about you included in the study
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Table 3: Demographic Information Requested of Focal Participants

¹¹⁴ My course roster lists a current academic major, but I often find that these are based on initial degree plans and are not accurate reflections of the paths that students are ultimately working toward.

Pseudonym¹¹⁵	Gender Identity/ Pronouns	Race/ Ethnicity	Economic Status	Undergraduate Major(s)/ Minor(s)
Allie	Non-Binary, she/her	White	upper class / affluent	Environmental Science, Policy and Management: Education & Communication
Emma	She/her/hers	Caucasian	upper middle class	Elementary Education Foundations with a minor in Family Social Science
Haimanti	she/her/hers	Asian Bengali-American	Not provided	Mechanical Engineering: Biomedical Engineering/Pre-med
Henry	he/him/his	White, Jewish	Not provided	Double major: Biology, Society, & Environment BA and Elementary Education
Molly	Woman (she/her/hers)	White	middle class ¹¹⁶	Major in Early Childhood. Minor in Mass Communication
Skyler	She/Her	Asian - Chinese	upper middle class	Elementary Education and Teaching

Table 4: Focal Participant General Demographic Information

¹¹⁵ Added verbatim with capitalization and punctuation the participants shared with me in their response emails.

¹¹⁶ Molly notes: “This one is a tricky part of my identity because I do not identify with either lower or upper middle class and this status has shifted within my family throughout my life. As a young child we were lower middle class but now my parents are in the upper middle-class range and I do reap some of the benefits from it (since high school I have always had a bit of an economic identity crisis). So, I identify as somewhere in the middle of middle class.”

	Allie	Emma	Molly	Skylar
Reader Identity	Avid, active reader. I finish 2-3 books a month, and proud of it!	A reader when I have time (I'm a better reader on summer break 😁)	READER [Capitalization original]	I think I am a bilingual fluent reader. I enjoy reading in free time, but often find hard to finish because of the heavy load of the schoolwork. I do think it is crucial for people to read.
Career Path	I am aspiring to be a middle school natural science or environmental science teacher, I currently substitute in elementary school, all ages	Planning to get my master's in education next fall of 2019, wanting to teach general education elementary school (3rd or 4th grade), I am interested in teaching in a more non-traditional setting like a hospital school	A quote from a journal entry I wrote the other day: "My only plan is to never have a plan." I have switched my major multiple times throughout my college years (I would change it again if it weren't so darn expensive) and I plan to do the same with my future employment. My plan is to not settle down but to work odd jobs around the world while I travel and take in as much diverse culture as I possibly can. I apologize because this makes me difficult to describe in a demographic sense. "Undecided" isn't necessarily valid for my case but feel free to use that description.	I wish to work on international educational setting, whether in school or an educational institute. Preferably working for building the educational relationship between China and the US.
Other	None	I grew up in a small suburban town that was mainly white. I attended private schools from kindergarten until senior year of high school that were (again) mainly white.	None	I am an international student, who grew up in educational background from China, and started to study in an American system in high school. I came to US for college, and this is my third year being here.

Table 5: Focal Participant Extended Demographic Responses

Ethical Considerations:

Institutional Review Board

This study was reviewed by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at University of Minnesota. The IRB determined that this study meets the criteria for exemption from IRB review. According to the IRB notification letter: “this study met the following category for exemption: (1) Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices. (Both the procedures involve normal education practices and the objectives of the research involve normal educational practices.)”. See Appendix C for the Letter of Approval/Exemption or Investigator Manual (HRP-103), 2017) for more details. As noted above, I sought a modification to the IRB when I extended the research to include all participants and not just those who were preservice teachers. This modification was also approved by the IRB.

Protected Consent: Initial Participation Concealment

As the instructor of the LE 3004 who also served as a participant-observer-researcher for the study, I held the greater power dynamic in the course. To protect my students from feeling obliged to participate in the study, or to potentially see their participation as an activity linked to their grades, I chose to add an additional layer of safeguards to the consent process. I was successfully able, at least for aspects of consent and participation, to purposefully separate research participation from the evaluation and grading that was a required component of the course. I adhered to a delineated procedure

of informed consent and concealed the consent form process and participation in the study to build a partition¹¹⁷ between my two roles in the study.

First, I embedded informed consent throughout the course. Beginning on the first afternoon of class, I was explicit about the course serving as the site of my dissertation research. On that day, I gave an overview of the research process, the aspects of the course that served as course-related activity under IRB, and participant anonymity, though I did not formally name the phenomenon under study in this process. I did not want to influence the potential productions of reading whitely as they occur naturally throughout the course. Students were encouraged to participate, but explicitly informed that their enrollment in the course did not mean expected participation beyond course-related activity. The formal consent meeting was held during the fourth class, and the formal details of the study, the levels of consent, and the phenomenon were shared in depth at that meeting. As part of the informed consent process during the semester, I continued to remind students about the course serving as my research site through text included on our online platform and by adding reminders to the presentation slides that I also shared orally during the course of our class sessions.

Secondly, to help support student protection, their consent to participate in the study was concealed from me until after the course had ended. The consent form meeting held in both sections of the class, began in a traditional manner as I reviewed the research details included in the consent form (see Appendix D), the purpose of the study, and allowed for questions. Like final course evaluations, a student volunteer conducted the

¹¹⁷ I recognize that this was a symbolic separation of my roles, as I always remained a researcher/instructor and participant/observer, but I believe that this option provided protective element for my students that gave an ethical separation between my many roles.

formal signing of the consent forms. In each section, the student volunteer collected the forms, placed them in a sealed envelope, and took them to the office of the elementary education student adviser. I left the room for this process to ensure that I did not influence or observe the students' decision. The forms remained in the adviser's office until final grades for the fall semester had been submitted to the university and the spring semester began. Students were also reminded, along with messages about the research process noted above, that had they changed their minds about consent they could alter the consent form at any time during the semester by visiting the adviser's office and changing the form. As the researcher, I did not know who had chosen to participate in the study until after course was complete and my participants were no longer my students.

Component Two: A Clear and Flexible Process for Gathering Phenomenological Materials

Research Questions:

I gathered phenomenological materials while keeping in mind the research questions that guide this study. The primary question was: What does it mean to read whitely? The secondary questions helped to focus my research into the context of my data collection site as a location of teacher education. These include: 1) What role does reading whitely play in the reading experiences of preservice teachers? 2) What does it mean to explore experiences of reading whitely through the context of a preservice teacher training course? 3) What is the experience of exploring diversity and inclusivity in children's literature for those who read whitely? 4) How does that experience seem to change over the progression of a semester-long course that promotes diversity and inclusivity?

Data Sources: A Gathering of Phenomenological Materials

For this study, I used the interactions, discussions, course design materials, instructional pedagogies, specific assignments, and activities as a key source of phenomenological materials. During the study design process, I called on my previous three semesters of experience teaching Literacy Education 3004 to consider which phenomenological materials would best illuminate reading whitely. I also recognize that I personally read whitely and have the data of internal awareness of how that phenomenon has been shaped and manifests in my own life, readership, and work as a K–6 classroom teacher.

The phenomenological materials collected for this study vary from many course related ephemera to the materials created and used during the research process that guided this exploration of reading whitely. They include the following:

- **Course materials:** syllabus, weekly readings from the course text (Galda, Aimonette Liang, & Cullinan, *Literature and the Child*, 9th edition, Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2016), children’s and adolescent literature readings—both in and out of class, supplemental readings, weekly presentation slides, online interface design and template, materials created during the class which include anchor charts, exit tickets, and graphic organizers
- **Assignments:**
 - **Readerography:** Students created a short reading autobiography, reading timeline of their readership, OR a Top 10 list of their favorite children’s literature books/series.
 - **Four Novel Responses:** Students read and responded to four different genre-based novels from a selection provided by the instructor, during the course of the semester
 - **Book Resource File:** Students created an interactive online file to track, review, and log some of the books they read throughout the semester
 - **Two Book Reviews:** Student chose two books to create a Picturebook Book trailer and a Flipgrid Review of a Board Book, Early Reader, or a Graphic Novel
 - **Event Report:** Students attended a children’s literature–related book event and wrote about the experience

- **Book Talk:** Students created a short, enticing, book hook (to hook readers and informally advertise a great book) through Flipgrid (interactive online video platform—that can be set with specific access codes, prompts, and time limits) and suggesting a *must-read* book
- **Critical Analysis Paper:** Students selected and read a children’s literature or young adult novel and prepared an academic and critical evaluation of the book, with extended focus on analysis and argument.
- **Online Course Interactions:** weekly online discussion posts about the readings, required Twitter interactions, and individual student journals created in Google Documents
- **Research materials:** researcher’s post-reflexive notebook/field notes, researcher’s post-reflexive walk voice-memo recordings and transcripts, researcher’s bricolage scrapbook, focal participant interview recordings and transcripts, photographs taken of the research process

Process of Collecting Phenomenological Materials

Data collection took shape in two distinct phases: Phase I was carried out during the semester and Phase II happened after the semester was complete and participant identities were revealed. The majority of the phenomenological materials used in this study are related to Literacy Education 3004 and were gathered during the first phase of the data collection process. In the second phase of data collection, the general materials were winnowed to reflect the levels of participation that students had consented to beyond general participation. Researcher-related materials that include the post-reflexive notebook¹¹⁸ field notes, post-reflexive voice-memo recordings, and bricolage-style scrapbook were created and collected continuously throughout both phases.

Phase I: Fall 2017 During the Semester-Long Course

All phenomenological materials connected to instruction and implementation of Literacy Education 3004 were automatically collected through the online learning

¹¹⁸ In the next sections I will use the verb post-reflex(ing) to indicate the process of writing, sketching, and thinking through the research using this notebook.

platform of the course, interactions on Twitter, and Google Documents¹¹⁹ within the university's G Suite of products through the ongoing process that is associated with those platforms. All assignments were uploaded to the platform as they were due and online discussion posts were also held on the discussion board function of the platform. Except for interactions on Twitter, all other online activities were password protected and held on secure servers with only course participants or individuals having access. The digital copies of course materials that were created by me, such as the syllabus, assignment sheets, discussion prompts, etc. were collected as they were created and saved on a password-protected hard drive. For analysis where needed, I downloaded and printed physical copies of these materials, or pasted images of the work into a Word document for review and consideration. The physical materials for the course, both those created by me and those created by the students in the course (such as anchor charts, graphic organizer notes, etc.,) were also collected by me after each class session and held in a secure location of my home office.

Phase II: After the Completion of Literacy Education 3004

After the course was completed and I had identified at which level the students in my course had consented to participate in the study, data collection shifted. From the larger collection of course related materials, I selected specific phenomenological

¹¹⁹ I created individual Google Documents for each student to use as a journal before the semester started. I created a general template, consisting of a table with dated boxes for each day the course met. While it followed the semester's topics by listing them with the date of the class meeting, the rest of the boxes were blank, so participants could respond to my in-class suggestions, queries, and requests. I then created 59 individual copies of the document, personalized each one with the student's name, and individually shared each one. Only the individual student and I had access to their personalized version of the template. While I did not use these as much as I had planned, due to the regular time constraints of a class and the ebb and flow that responsive teaching brings, I was glad to have them as part of the larger collection of phenomenological materials.

materials, based on student's consent for analysis, that had the potential to reveal productions and provocations of reading whitely. I contacted the focal participants to schedule unstructured interviews. These interviews were designed to be "dialogic, open, and conversational" (Vagle, 2014, p.78) to look more deeply at how reading whitely has been experienced by my participants. This process took longer than expected and the focal participant interview scheduling and completion took place throughout the summer and fall of 2018. I used my research questions and anecdotal notes about each focal participant from the semester as a guide to craft a loosely structured interview map with a few questions and stories that focused on student experiences in the course, but the map was not constructed as a formal protocol. Each interview was recorded using a password-protected laptop, a handheld digital recorder, and a password-protected smartphone¹²⁰. I took informal notes throughout the interview, capturing key words and intensities that I felt during the process. The goal of dialogic interviews is to stay present and engaged, and this informal note-taking process helped me to do that. I also sat after each interview and post-reflexed about the process, the responses, and times during the conversation that I felt produced and provoked reading whitely. The final recordings of the interview were transcribed using Temi online transcription services, and I reviewed the transcripts that I used for analysis both for accuracy and content.

Ongoing Data Collection: Researcher-Related Materials

Like all researchers, I use various processes to capture the research experience, most of these processes are outlined in the next section where I discuss post-reflexion and

¹²⁰ This redundancy served as a backup process in case any individual device failed to capture the conversations. The recordings from the laptop had good audio and were the version uploaded to Temi for transcription.

my post-reflexive plan. Before the semester began, I created a bricolage-style scrapbook to artistically play¹²¹ with some of the ephemera of class as a processing tool centered in arts-based research¹²². While that particular means of data collection was valuable, I did not use it during the semester as much as I had anticipated. During the semester, I focused on capturing my thinking through writing and audio recordings as a way to take field notes, capture noticings, consider participants, and take up my work as a researcher.

This aspect of data collection took shape during the semester slightly differently than I had envisioned while designing the study. In my proposal, had planned to use the 35-minute transition between class sessions to sit and take notes, and then repeat the process after the second class. In reality, those 35-minutes were filled with students from the first section remaining after class to chat or ask questions, and students from the second section coming early to claim their seats or ask questions. The transition time was often just a moment to collect myself, perhaps use the restroom, and reset the class for the second section. Also, I was usually engaged with the students as instructor before the first class began at 12:20 and continued being “on stage” beyond the end of the second class at 6:35. While this was engaging and exciting, it was also exhausting, and I found that I didn’t always have the mental energy to sit and write for an hour after class.

¹²¹ As a person who does not identify as an artist but attempts to see the world artistically, this creative and often embodied mode of processing knowledge is important to me and my work. I engage with this different way of knowing because at “times there appear phenomenological soul-knowings that just will not be put into words, butterflies of meaning dancing away from being pinned down” (Chilton, 2013, 470).

¹²² “Bricolage is the process involving the construction or creation of a work from a diverse range of things that happen to be available. Conceptual bricolage is a critical-activist research and teaching/learning strategy generating the (re)contextualization of knowledge through the appropriation, assimilation, and reconfigured application of available symbols, artifacts, ideas, and remainders” (Rolling, 2011, 125). While I am not entirely comfortable with the use of appropriation and assimilation, I do use the scrapbook to gather, interlace, and reconfigure the materials, images, and symbols, from Literacy Education 3004 and the research process.

Though I had always envisioned using audio recordings to help my post-reflexive and field noting process, they developed into a more powerful tool throughout the semester than I had anticipated at the inception of the research. On the nights after teaching as I walked the 15–20-minutes home from campus, I used the voice-memo recorder on my password-protected smartphone¹²³ to capture my noticings, experiences, and questions from both sections of the class. I found that the cadence and embodied action of walking helped me to more deeply contemplate the day’s teaching marathon. I would often take a longer way home or continue the recording process when I arrived at home and most of the post-reflexive walk recordings are over 30 minutes long. As the semester continued, I also found it helpful to use my post-reflexive walks on my way to campus, as I prepared for my role as instructor-observer-researcher for the day. Like the focal participant interviews, I used Temi to transcribe these recordings before I reviewed them for accuracy. As a person who is a verbal processor, I realized that the post-reflexive walks allowed me to explore the experiences of the course verbally with more speed, agility, and flow in ways that I never could have done in writing. This was a revelatory methodological process that I found to be invaluable.

I continued to use each of these methods to collect researcher-based materials after the course was completed and through the writing of this dissertation. The written post-reflexion and bricolage scrapbooking became more important than the post-reflexive walks, especially after the focal participant interviews were complete and I shifted to writing and analysis.

¹²³ By using headphones with a microphone, I was able to make these recordings as I walked and appear to any passersby that I was engaged in a robust, if not rather one-sided, conversation on my phone.

Selection of Phenomenological Materials for Analysis

While the materials were not formally developed for this study of reading whitely, but as educational materials to support the learning objectives of Literacy Education 3004, I had previous knowledge about how they might be taken up. I have seen how previous students' thinking about their own readership and the imagined future readers of their classrooms informs the assignments and activities of the course. I am aware that certain assignments often produce discussions and reactions that are shaped by dominant white cultural norms, especially the readerography, book selections, and book talks. Before embarking on this research study, I understood that some of these assignments and readings might demonstrate productions of reading whitely more distinctly than others. From that knowledge, I was aware that the following assignments often produce discussions and reactions that are shaped by dominant white cultural norms: readerography, book selections, and book talks.

During the first phase of data collection, this assumption about the phenomenological materials was reinforced by my observations throughout the semester. It was clear, that for the focus of this study, specific course materials had the potential to demonstrate productions of reading whitely more distinctly than others. This experience, my own notes, and the focal scope of the study helped to guide the materials I selected for further analysis. In general, these phenomenological materials collectively helped me to explore the primary research question. For the secondary questions, I compiled Table 6: Secondary Research Questions in Relationship to Phenomenological Materials to demonstrate the specific connections between the research questions and the selected phenomenological materials used for this study. It is important to note that there are

materials collected for this research and from this course that I did not use for analysis due to the large quantity of materials produced during the teaching of the course and the two years of study.

Secondary Research Questions	Phenomenological Materials for Analysis
1) What role does reading whitely play in the reading experiences of preservice teachers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readerography assignment • Written, audio, social media, and video artifacts from the course, class sessions, and the online course interface • Transcripts from the unstructured interviews conducted with focal participants • Researcher’s field notes and bricolage scrapbook
2) What does it mean to explore experiences of reading whitely through the context of a preservice teacher training course?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written, audio, social media, and video artifacts from the course, class sessions and the online course interface • Transcripts from the unstructured interviews conducted with focal participants • Researcher’s field notes and bricolage scrapbook
3) What is the experience of exploring diversity and inclusivity in children’s literature for those who read whitely?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing diversity jigsaw activity • Defining diversity and inclusivity activity • Other written, audio, social media, and video artifacts from the course, class sessions and the online course interface • Transcripts from the unstructured interviews conducted with focal participants • Researcher’s field notes and bricolage scrapbook
4) How does that experience seem to change over the progression of a semester-long course that promotes diversity and inclusivity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written, audio social media, and video artifacts shared during the course, during class sessions and the online course interface • Transcripts from the unstructured interviews conducted with focal participants • Researcher’s field notes and bricolage scrapbook

Table 6: Secondary Research Questions in Relationship to Phenomenological Materials

Component Three: Post-Reflexion Plan

Researcher Positionality

Post-intentional methodology calls for a process of making a post-reflexion plan to account for the researcher’s presence in the study and to help the researcher consider

their intentionalities¹²⁴ throughout the study. With post-intentional work, the researcher's presence is a core component of the study and the post-reflexion plan helps to more transparently capture that presence. The focus on intentionalities "remind[s] us that we are always entering into the middle of things" (Vagle, 2018, 130) and guides the researcher's commitment to recognizing phenomena as shifting multiplicities and entangled entities that are constantly in a state of flux and change while pushing against a natural inclination to essentialize and confine the phenomenon to a single expression. This process has helped me to capture my work, as well as guided me to be phenomenologically open to the ways in which reading whitely has been produced and provoked in my research.

Initial Post-Reflexion Statement

I am a middle-class white cisgender heterosexual female, who identifies as a teacher educator and a reader. My research interests are situated at the intersection of children's literature scholarship, teacher education, white teacher identity studies and culturally relevant pedagogy. I wish to disrupt white supremacy where I can, especially in those fields. I have more awareness of my white identity because of my graduate studies, but I also recognize that my own racial consciousness is still in process. Such ingrained discourses of white supremacy are hard to see, let alone dismantle. My awareness propels me forward to push past my own white identity and do my small part to interrupt the

¹²⁴ Taking up Merleau-Pontian embodied conceptions of intentionality Vagle notes that "threads of intentionality connect all meaning that runs through relations and are constantly being constructed, deconstructed, blurred and disrupted." He continues by noting that "intentionality, then is running all over the place, all the time—at times with clarity, but most often in the gnarliness of life." (2018, 130). In this section he also emphasizes the importance of recognizing the multiplicities of the phenomenological concept of intentionality, making it plural, which is reflected in my similar usage.

practices of white supremacy in my scholarship and my teaching wherever I can. To do this, I feel compelled to consider how the phenomenon of reading whitely has framed my seeing, as well as that of my preservice teacher students. In this study, I plan to use multiple formats to work through this process.

Post-Reflexive Process: Ongoing Journaling about Reading Whitely

As noted above in the section about ongoing data collection, I used multiple processes to help me create researcher-based materials during the study. During the study, the post-reflexive process of the written and audio recordings moved beyond simple field notes that captured the happenings and my researcher observations. The recordings gave me a path to post-reflex about the research process, and I used the writing and post-reflexive walk recordings as a means to center my intentionalities, metacognitively take up my presence in the study, and to think about reading whitely in complex and multiple ways through writing, drawing, mind-mapping, and other visual representations. My post-reflexive notebook became a collection spot for more than just the research experience. It served as a visual assemblage of sorts, for recording on-the-spot analysis, issues that cropped up during the research process, gathering of ideas, and working through problems. In many ways, that was why the importance of the bricolage scrapbook became less essential, though I did still use it to collect and layer together drawings¹²⁵, visualizations, printed images, quotes, and other ephemera of the process.

¹²⁵ I intended this, as noted above, to serve as a way for me to visually capture ideas, lines of flights as they flee and flow, and ways that I interact with the study of reading whitely, but the notebook and the scrapbook will not necessarily serve as final products to be shared formally as part of this text. My emphasis here is on the bricolage process as a method for reflexion and creativity.

Part of my post-reflexive process, especially during the semester while I was the instructor-observer-researcher, included listening to the post-reflexive walk recordings two to three weeks after they had been recorded and thinking about them using the post-intentional foci: connect/disconnect, assumptions of normality, bottom lines, and shocks. Taking up this analytic angle to post-reflection shaped my interactions with the phenomenological materials, students, and activities of the course. It also helped me to connect with the productions and provocations of reading whitely that I saw both during the semester and in my analysis and writing process.

Component Four: Explore Reading Whitely using Theory, Phenomenological Material, and Post-Reflexions

Analysis of Phenomenological Materials

The process for analysis in post-intentional phenomenology, while using the traditional whole-part-whole analysis process that is common to phenomenology, is enhanced with additional means to consider the phenomenon. Vagle's (2018) latest iteration of the methodology brings together three parts of the analysis process: deconstruct the wholes of the phenomenological materials; thinking with theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012); and analyze post-reflexions. While these exist as individual components of the analytic process that have been formally written about in a linear order, in practice they are taken up in a rhizomatic matter that ebbs and flows, builds on intensities, and follows the intertangled path of openness, wonder, and inquiry (Vagle, 2018) that is foundational to this method.

The process begins with a close review of the phenomenological materials as a means to deconstruct the wholes while tending closely to the intensities and swells that

happen as I read. Additionally, I consider what is out of place, what does not fit, what have I retreated from, when am I certain about meaning, where I have made extensions of meaning, and where I have minimized others or played it safe, where am I uncertain. The next layer of analysis brings theory to the exploration to illuminate the productions and provocations of a phenomenon. Using Jackson and Mazzei's model for thinking with theory allows a post-intentional phenomenologist to step outside of themselves and purposefully think with a powerful theoretical concept. This process provides a path for deeper exploration of the phenomenon and how it is being shaped and manifest in the phenomenological materials. The final component of this analytic practice is post-reflexion and an analysis of the post-reflexive writing that has been continuous throughout the research and writing process. Because post-reflexive writing serves as the first place post-intentional phenomenologists capture their initial analytical thinking and stay connected to their intentionalities as researchers, writing serves as a powerful starting place for analysis.

Readerography: Phenomenological Material in Focus

Focusing solely on the readerography as the phenomenological material for analysis provides a rich and fruitful path for exploration of reading whitely as it takes shape in different ways. When specific aspects of the readerography are highlighted and brought to the forefront of the analysis, additional layers of reading whitely are illuminated. The other aspects of the readerography are still present and reflected in the phenomenological material but exist and exert their collective influence in the background. Through this shifting of focus I recognize the readerography as one large cohesive whole that is a collection of smaller wholes vibrating with meaning. For

analysis, I followed this process of looking at the readerography through different lenses, selecting four specific elements of the assignment that would be most beneficial to reveal the productions and provocations of reading whitely as they connected to my analytic foci: assignment, list, pivot, and response.

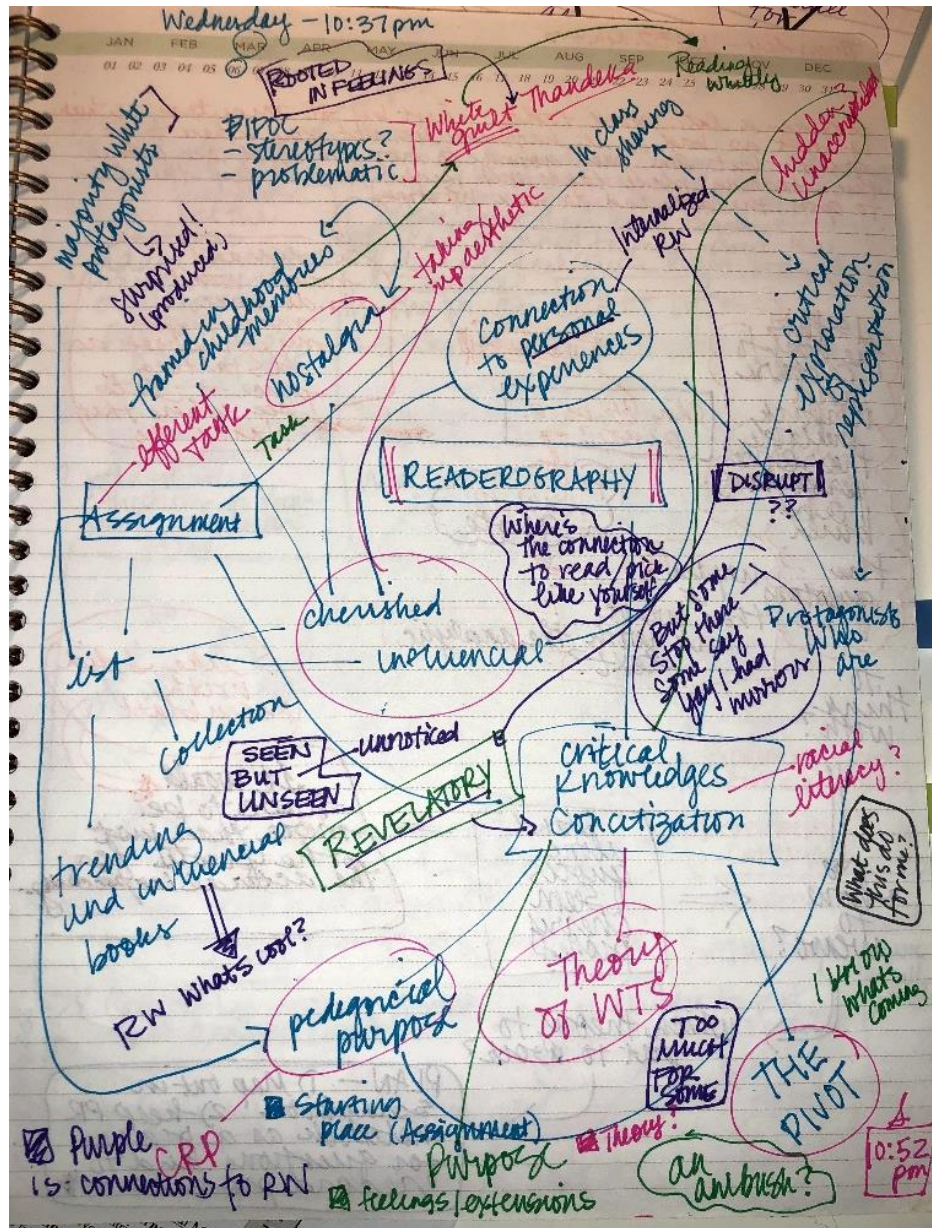


Figure 8: Iterative Mapping Process

It took some time to settle on these four aspects of the readerography for analysis. To start this narrowing, I reflected on the characteristics of the readerography that seemed to be radiating reading whitely. I captured this iterative thinking process in my post-reflexive notebook¹²⁶ (see Figure 8), mapping and color-coding the different aspects of this phenomenological material that would best reveal the phenomenon.

While the format of the analysis chapters follows a linear and structured path (with footnotes attempting to capture the intensities and explosions as they flowed, leaked, and rushed out of this generative process), it is only a static capturing of the analytic process. In the lived-out experience I “played with form, bringing all that [I] have from the phenomenological material, [my] post-reflexion journal, and theories to bear” (Vagle, 2018, p. 160). I wrote and thought through each aspect of the readerography, following the lines of flight and intensities as they tangled and untangled in the iterative process and revealed productions and provocations of reading whitely.

Exploring Reading Whitely: Analysis Matrix

To begin to work through the three-part analysis process, I created an analysis matrix as a path to explore the separate but connected aspects of the readerography. This matrix started as a sketch in my post-reflexive scrapbook after I had settled on the analytic foci from the iterative process demonstrated in Figure 8. It was valuable to take up this process to make sense of my early theorizing and the ways I was beginning to consider which theories could help me dig more deeply into how reading whitely was

¹²⁶ It is exciting to see how this process evolved into the analysis matrix and helped set the stage for deeper thinking about reading whitely. I had been struggling to find my path into analysis. NOTE: I am keenly aware, now of the misspellings in my notebook. My first instinct is to apologize for their presence, instead I will recognize them as part of my process and accept that they are part of the work of capturing thoughts and chasing lines of flight. Note: Thanks for the reminder, PCC.

taking shape. I revisited and adjusted the matrix multiple times as I continued to think and write about reading whitely in a more formal manner. The final iteration of this matrix (Figure 9: Readerography Analysis Matrix) demonstrates the ways in which I engage with the three-part analysis process and each focus area of the readerography. And while each component is visually bounded in this analytic representation, I recognize them as interconnected and constantly influencing the larger whole of the readerography.

Analysis Matrix in Focus

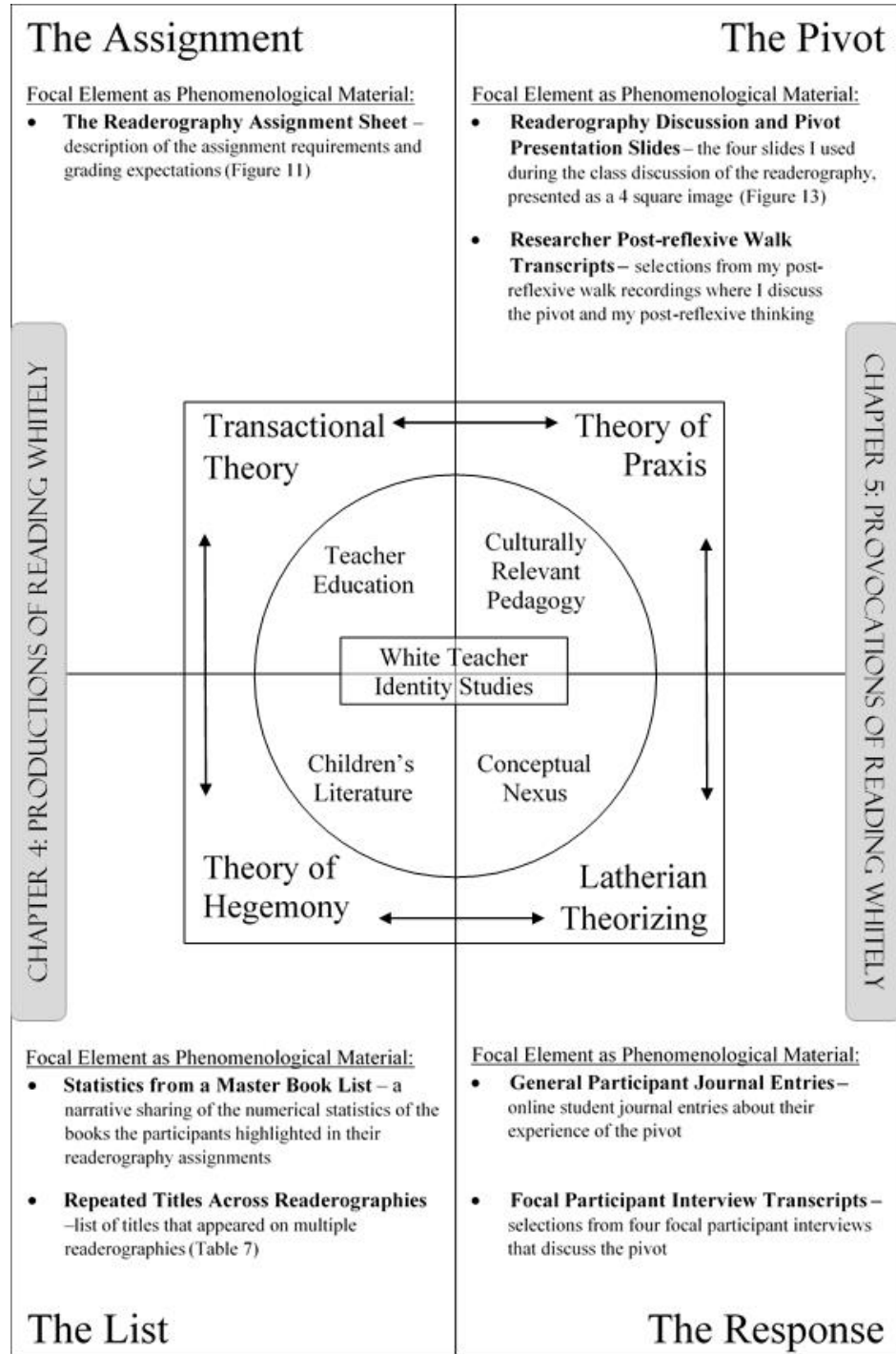


Figure 9: Readerography Analysis Matrix

The matrix includes four quadrants that are organized by the focus of the readerography and include the specific focal phenomenological material that serve as the

materials that I use for each specific analysis process. The central rectangles show the theories that I put to work to explore how reading whitely was taking shape in this study. I have chosen to bring multiple theoretical lenses¹²⁷ to this process. Each of these has been precisely selected and matched to the focus of the outer quadrants as a means to “extend, learn more, and open up [reading whitely] in important ways” (Vagle, 2018, p. 159). The arrows indicate the connections between the theories at work. At the circular center of the matrix are the four components of the conceptual framework that connect back to each individual section in the quadrant and the readerography as a whole.

The matrix both informed and shaped the analytic process as much as the process informed and shaped the matrix. The chapters are organized, following that framework, to include two explorations of reading whitely; Chapter Four: the assignment and the list; Chapter Five: the pivot and the response. Each of these explorations follows a similar organizational format: an overview of the phenomenological materials (deconstruction of the wholes), with description and context, which includes: the conceptual frame that is spotlighted in addition to second-wave white teacher identity studies; an explication of the theory at work and how it illuminates the selected analytic focus; a discussion of how reading whitely takes shape in and through the analytic process, writing in and through specific openings in the phenomenological materials; concluding with the naming of a

¹²⁷ This decision was not made lightly. Throughout the initial phases of writing and analysis, I continued to struggle to find a single theoretical concept that I thought could illuminate the productions and provocations of reading whitely in my study. The phenomenon, like most grounded in systemic discourses and multiplicities of identity, is complex and illusive. After a conversation with Dr. Mark Vagle (one of many angst-filled sessions of worry about this aspect of the analysis), I came to realize that thinking with theories could be a powerful way to move forward and also illuminate reading whitely in unexpected ways. Thus, I have opted to “engage plugging in as a *process* rather than a *concept*, something [I] could put to work” (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, 1, emphasis original) and will embrace multiple theoretical concepts to “incite the provocations to be found in a plugging of theory into data into theory” (10).

production (Chapter Four) or a provocation (Chapter Five) of reading whitely that emerged from this analysis.

Chapter Four Organizational Focus: Productions of Reading Whitely

In this chapter, I put explorations of the assignment and the list together because I see each of these aspects of the readerography as productions of reading whitely. “A production signifies the ongoing ways in which the phenomenon is being shaped over time. That is, the phenomenon is in a constant state of production” (Vagle, 2018, p. 160). Both the assignment and the list were developed over time and are collections of provocations: the assignment was shaped my teaching experiences, pedagogical goals, and the way I read whitely; the list, though compiled by me, is the collected gathering of the valued titles that appear on the readerographies of the participants in the study. Because of the focus on whiteness and white cultural norms I weave white teacher identity studies from the conceptual framework through both explorations.

Analytic Focus: The Assignment

In Exploration One, I theorize and consider the pedagogy of the readerography, taking up teacher education as the central conceptual frame. To contextualize the assignment, I describe its pedagogical purpose and review the assignment sheet that the students followed to complete the task. Transactional Theory (Rosenblatt, 1960, 1978, 1982, 1983, 1988) serves as the theory guiding my writing and thinking through the meaning-making that occurs in the reading transactions that are captured on the readerography.

Analytic Focus: The List

Exploration Two takes up the master list of titles that the general participants shared in their collective readerographies. I completed the list to look at trends in the readership of the participants. Children's literature scholarship helps to conceptually frame this section of the analysis. The list reflects the hegemonic norms of whiteness, with white protagonists predominating the titles. To make sense of this aspect of the phenomenological materials I bring Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony (Gramsci, 1971a, b) to work. By theoretically bringing conceptions about hegemony, especially the way dominance becomes positioned as common sense, I was able to illuminate a production of reading whitely that emanated from this aspect of the readerography.

Chapter Five Organizational Focus: Provocations of Reading Whitely

In this chapter, I take up the moments of the readerography that emerged from our review and analysis process during a class session, the pivot, and the responses. They were actively generated through interactions with peers, during learning processes of a classroom setting, and with my facilitation of a lesson. These moments do not exist out of that context and shared experience. Because of the more active nature of this aspect of the phenomenological materials, I see these as provocations of reading whitely. "A provocation¹²⁸ can be described as more intense, as a catalyst" (Vagle, 2018, p. 160). Each of these moments served as a catalyst that both resonated with reading whitely and for a moment brought it out in the open for the participants.

¹²⁸ Vagle, a member of my dissertation committee and a personal mentor, includes a footnote on this word in the original text, noting a conversation we had about the difference between productions and provocations, so it is rather a delight to have played with these differences in my own work and brought that moment from the past into my writing and analytic process.

Analytic Focus: The Pivot

Exploration Three focuses on the moment in class when I ask students to shift from discussing their readerography titles to critically analyzing them, a moment I call the pivot. As phenomenological materials for analysis, I share my class slides from that moment, a narrative framing of my previous experiences with the pivot, and a short narrativized selection from my post-reflexive walk recording, capturing how the moment was enacted during my study. Because this catalytic moment of realization served as an eye-opening flicker of critical consciousness for many of my participants, I theorize through this provocation using Freire's theories of conscientization and praxis (1970). I pair this with culturally relevant pedagogy as a conceptual frame to unpack the pedagogies of this consciousness-raising activity and recognize the value such work must be given in the preparation of teachers committed to equitable teaching practices.

Analytic Focus: The Reaction

In this fourth exploration I share participant responses to the readerography analysis process. To provide multiple perspectives, I highlight two different responses: general participant journal entries and focal participant interviews. To select the general participant responses, I reviewed their journal entries and looked for general trends that illuminated a production of reading whitely and demonstrated intensities that resonated as openings for analysis, also following the Latherian Theorizing I discuss below. For the focal participants, I reviewed the sections of the interview where we talked about the readerography assignment and the in-class analysis. Henry and Skylar did not have strong memories of the experience of analyzing the readerography in class, so I did not select

their interactions for this analysis. I crafted these responses in a poetic construction that opens this section of Chapter Five and leads with my participants' voices.

As a culminating exploration, I felt it valuable to return to the nexus of the conceptual framework, bringing teacher education, children's literature, culturally relevant pedagogy, and second-wave white teacher identity studies, rather than focusing on one specific component as I did in the previous explorations. The participant responses, reflecting the complexity and multiplicities of their lived experiences, demonstrated aspects of each of these framing concepts. To further open this exploration of the phenomenological materials, I embrace a Latherian approach to theorizing. In this case I shift from thinking with theory to thinking with a theorist, Patti Lather. As I seek to see what frames our seeing (Lather, 1993, 2007), I engage in an analytic process inspired by my readings of Lather's work.

Latherian Theorizing: Seeing What Frames My Seeing

Texts that do justice to the complexity of what we know and understand include the tales not told, the words not written or transcribed, the words thought but not uttered, the unconscious: all that gets lost in the telling and the representing—Patti Lather (2007, p. 13)

Influenced by the note-taking I did while reading Lather's *Getting Lost: Feminist Efforts toward a Double(d) Science* (2007), it became the tool that allowed me to frame my "thinking with Lather" analysis process. As I read each chapter, I opened my post-reflexive notebook to a two-page spread (see Figure 10). On the left (verso) side I created three columns of quotes, revisit/theoretical pulls, and ideas/intensities. On the right (recto) side I jotted down words/concepts, ideas, thoughts that resonated with me as I

read—some came directly from the text, while others were generated as I read— bounding them in circles and boxes as needed. After reading the chapter, and sometimes as I read, I would draw connecting lines between the resonances, which would further my thinking. This twofold process chased the lines of flight as I read and built on the powerful crescendo of my thinking, reading, and theorizing while producing new knowledge. It was an extremely generative process that I felt could be powerful as a theory to think with in the final exploration.

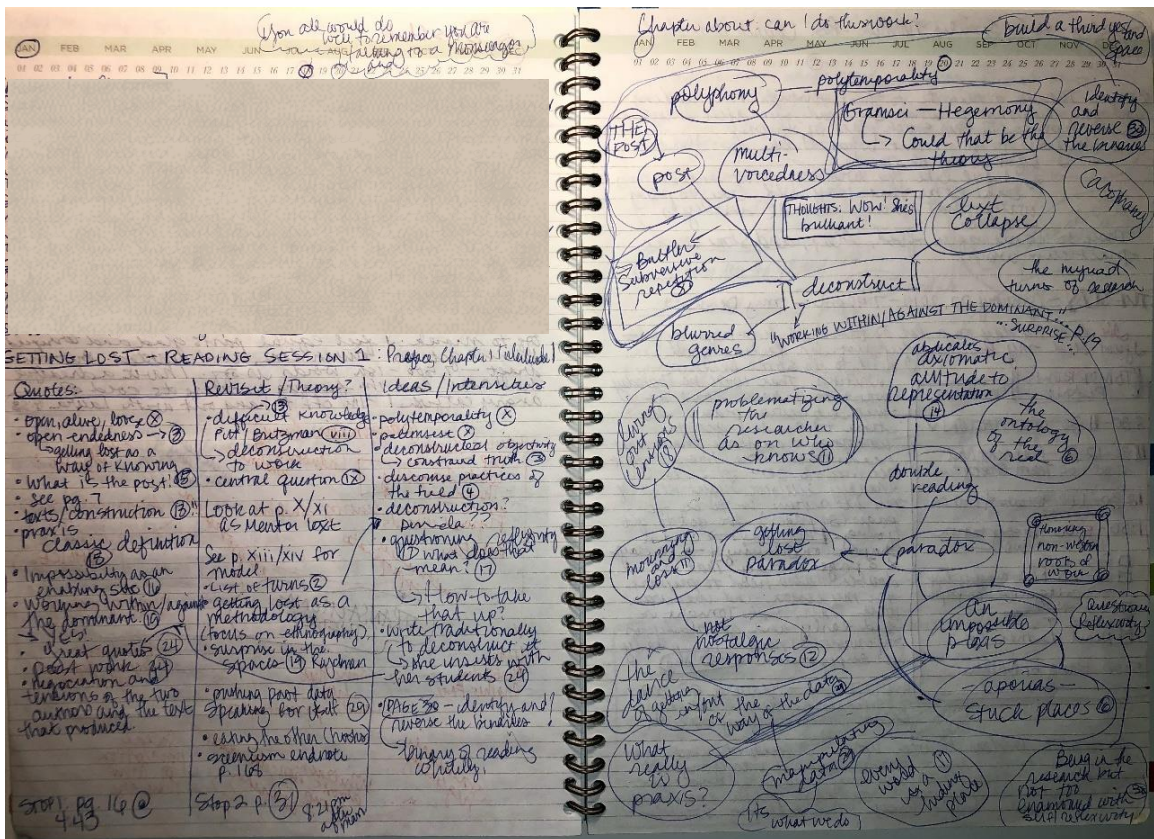


Figure 10: Original Latherian Thinking Process

Adapting my thinking from a note-taking process to analysis, I created a similar format to read and respond to the phenomenological materials of The Response (Analysis Matrix Quadrant Four, discussed in Chapter Five). The left side of the notebook has been altered to fit this phenomenological material and the focus of this study. The three

columns I included for this analysis are noticing, questions that emerge, ideas/intensities. The right side of the notebook functions in the same way as my original Latherian theorizing, serving as a space to capture the resonances that materialize from this practice. I hoped to capture something that might be lost in another text or in another theorization.

Component Five: The Crafted Text

The final task of a post-intentional phenomenological study is to craft a text that engages in the productions and provocations of reading whitely. My completed dissertation manuscript demonstrates the journey of craft—as I have generatively engaged with reading whitely throughout this six-chapter kaleidoscopic¹²⁹ adventure into academic scholarship. My engagement with the productions and provocations of reading whitely unfolds in the next chapters and reveals how the phenomenon takes shapes in the readerography (and the multiple contexts that influence its creation).

¹²⁹ Which I would describe as a multilayered, (un)structured, poetically crafted, storified, playful, serious and challenging dive into the entangled and multiple paths of dissertation writing

Chapter Four: Analysis of the Assignment and the List

In this chapter, I explore the assignment aspects of the readerography¹³⁰—taking up the pedagogical¹³¹ underpinnings of this phenomenological material through a discussion of the assignment requirements, the purpose of the task, and exploring a master list of books that the participants highlighted in their completed readerography assignments. Working through the three parts of post-intentional phenomenological analysis the phenomenological materials, theory, and post-reflexion become a purposefully tangled process that can be challenging to capture in a static text. I have attempted to dive into this jangle in a way that is both easy to follow and reflective of the interconnectedness of the analysis process and the multiplicities of the phenomenon itself.

The first section, Exploration One: The Pedagogy of the Readerography, spotlights the assignment itself, weaving in teacher education from the conceptual framework and adding transactional theory (Rosenblatt, 1960, 1978, 1982, 1983, 1988) as a deeper analytic device¹³². The second section, Exploration Two: The Readerography as

¹³⁰ The readerography is positioned as both a singular phenomenological material and one that is multiple. The goal of this chapter is to illuminate these multiplicities through a focus on one slice of the larger whole that itself is singular but built of multiplicities. I will attempt to demonstrate these multiplicities throughout the analysis process and here in the footnotes. As noted in Chapter One, this process includes explicitly naming the post-intentional foci to help me attune to what was framing my seeing: connect/disconnect, assumptions of normality, bottom lines, and shocks (Vagle, 2018, p. 154). These are listed in all caps throughout the footnotes in the next chapters.

¹³¹ **BOTTOM LINE:** The readerography is an assignment that students had to create for a course. It has delineated tasks, bounded requirements, and received a grade. This is not a neutral phenomenological material because of that original purpose. It is imbued with power structures of the instructor-student relationship. I added layers of agency by providing students choice in the format, yet the creation of it was a performance intended meet the requirements (which I set) and receive a passing grade. As the first assignment of the course, it could easily be said (based on my own experiences as a student) that it also held the added layer of setting the stage for how I would see the student as a learner and was a moment to impress that upon me.

¹³² Transactional theory becomes the formal theory to think with for this section: What does transactional theory reveal about reading whiteness in the readerography assignment?

Hegemonic Mirror, examines a new whole of this phenomenological material: the collective books list “important titles¹³³” that the participants valued enough to include on their final readerography. For this section, I bring in the concept of common sense from Gramsci’s (1971a, b) theory of cultural hegemony¹³⁴, mixing it with scholarship about children’s literature to analyze and reveal this production of reading whitely grounded in dominant power structures. These components of the readerography, the assignment and the pivot, reveal productions of reading whitely in powerful ways. Grounding each of these explorations in the conceptual framing of reading whitely, I entwine the thread of second-wave white teacher identity studies in both sections to further explore the hegemonic discourses of white supremacy¹³⁵ that surround this phenomenon.

Navigating Chapter Four

This chapter follows a more traditional structure while still attempting to play in the tangle of the analytic process. There is purposeful movement between different formalized sections, leading narrative that weaves theory, conceptual frameworks, and analysis with and through the phenomenological materials. Thus, I open the analytic process to illuminate the productions of reading whitely that are taking shape. In addition to the main narrative and formal sections, I include a layering of footnotes to extend the analysis. The footnotes perform as a location for chasing multiple lines of flight throughout this process. They provide a space to explore post-reflexive thinking through

¹³³ This is the formal language of the assignment task of the readerography. See below for more exposition and consideration of this task.

¹³⁴ This serves as another theoretical opening and as a theory to think with for analysis: What does hegemonic common sense reveal about reading whitely from this master list of participants’ cherished, most remembered, important, and/or influential titles?

¹³⁵ BOTTOM LINE: A key aspect of this study of reading whitely is to explore productions of the phenomenon to disrupt it, recognize its influence on preservice teachers and their interactions with children’s literature, and consider the critical knowledges and praxis that is needed to start this work.

considerations of moments of connect/disconnect, assumptions of normality, bottom lines, shocks (Vagle, 2018, p. 154); they add supplemental analysis, points of clarification, and conceptual anchors; and they serve as a platform to complicate the analytic process by injecting the personal into the process.

There are two major sections of analysis in this chapter, corresponding to the analysis matrix shared in the preface to this chapter (Figure 9), that work through two distinctive but connected productions of reading whitely: the assignment and the list. Each section opens with a discussion about the phenomenological material under review, highlighting the specific aspect of the readerography taken up for analysis. Next, I provide a contextual grounding for the process and connect it to the conceptual framework component¹³⁶ that underpins this section of analysis. Following the analysis protocol of post-intentional phenomenology, I then bring theory to work in each section by explicating the component of the formal theories that I take up. As I explore how reading whitely takes shape in the readerography, I write through two different openings into the phenomenon. Each section closes by identifying the production of reading whitely that has emerged from this analysis. I close the chapter with a conclusion that helps to set up the analysis of provocations of reading whitely included in Chapter Five.

¹³⁶ The conceptual framework includes scholarship around teacher education, children's literature, culturally relevant pedagogy, and second-wave white teacher identity studies (Figure 2: Initial Conceptual Framework of the Study). I see these as interconnected in the framing of reading whitely, but found value, as noted in the preface to this chapter, to focus on teacher education and children's literature for each exploration in this chapter. Additionally, I include second-wave white teacher identity studies as a conceptual through line for each section.

Exploration One: The Pedagogy of the Readerography

Like all good assignments, the readerography was created as a pedagogical tool to support the development of my students and evoke specific learning outcomes. Initially the assignment is meant to capitalize on the fact that my students come with a wealth of reading experiences that have shaped them as learners, readers, and people. It is important to acknowledge these funds of knowledge¹³⁷ (Moll and Gonzalez, 2004; Gonzalez, 2005) that have constructed their understanding of books and reading. Whether their reading experiences have been positive or negative¹³⁸, they are rooted in a lifetime of readership and transactions with texts. The readerography also functions to activate prior knowledge¹³⁹ and serves as a starting place to build connections with children's literature as they begin their formal study of the field through LE 3004.

In this first section of analysis, the assignment aspects of the readerography becomes the focus of analysis. By taking up and working through the pedagogical reasoning behind, and enactment of, the readerography as an assignment in conjunction with putting transactional theory to work, I illuminate productions of reading whitely. I further complicate the exploration by weaving aspects of teacher education and second-wave white teacher identity studies throughout this process. Because this research has

¹³⁷ Gonzalez thinks of funds of knowledge as a "processual approach to culture that take[s] into account multiple perspectives that could reorient educators to consider the everyday lived experiences of the students" (2005, p. 41).

¹³⁸ ASSUMPTIONS OF NORMALITY: As I note below, this understanding of a negative reading experience is not one of my own. I recognize, through my experiences as a teacher with children who did not enjoy reading, or for whom reading did not come easily, that not all people identify as readers, nor were all their experiences with texts positive ones. Through my schooling experiences, though, I have been forced to read books that I would have never selected on my own and deeply disliked reading.

¹³⁹ "The starting point for learning is always one's prior knowledge, which must be connected in some way to new learning opportunities" (Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, Grossman, Rust, & Schulman, 2005, p. 399-400).

implications for social change in educational settings, it is important to ground the lines of flight of reading whitely in the conceptual framework. Bringing theory and conceptual framing together positively complicates the complex and intertwined realities of reading whitely.

Readerography as Assignment: Phenomenological Material in Focus


Assignment - Readerography

YOUR TASK: This assignment is intended to help you explore your own identity as a reader and consider which books have been important to you and your reading life.

You will do ONE of the following to share with a small group of your peers:

- create a short reading autobiography
- create a reading timeline of your own readership
- create a Top 10 list of your favorite children's literature books/series

Note: You will need to be able to share your assignment with a small group of classmates, either through digital or physical means during our next class session.



Ideal Bookshelf 488 Kids by Jane Mount
<http://www.idealbookshelf.com/collections/prints/products/ideal-bookshelf-488-kids>

CHOOSE ONLY (1) of the following options:

Readerography	Reading Timeline	Top 10 List
<p>Create a short autobiography of your life as a reader (or non-reader).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write in a narrative prose or poetic form <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Graphic novel form would also be accepted - please ask instructor if you are interested in this format • Create a clear picture of who you are/were as a reader throughout your reading life • Include titles and author of some favorite or influential books • Between 300-700 words 	<p>Create a pictorial timeline format of your life as a reader (or non-reader).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 10 entries on the timeline • All entries should include both words and pictures • Create a clear picture of your life as a reader/non-reader - by your book choices <i>over a span of time</i> • Include both the title and author for each entry • 50- 150 words for EACH ENTRY on the timeline 	<p>Create a Top 10 List of your favorite books from your youth and childhood (up to now, if you wish)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 entries on the list • All entries should include both words and pictures • Include details of why the title you selected is on your Top 10 List • Create a clear picture of who you are/were as a reader • 50- 150 words for EACH ENTRY on your list

Readerography Grading Rubric

Guideline		Well Done (-0-1 points)	Acceptable (-1-3 points)	Poor (3-5 points)
Word Count	Meets the word count of the selected option (300-700 for readerography or 50-150 per entry for Top 10/Timeline) (3 points)			
Requirements	Meets requirements of the selected option (narrative/poetic form, 10 entries, descriptions and pictures) (5 points)			
Conventions	Follows English language and APA conventions for grammar, spelling, punctuation, and citations. (4 points)			
Create a clear picture of your life as a reader (or non-reader, for that matter) over a span of time				
Life Story	Demonstrates a range of your reading life (in some clear way - depending on the selection for the assignment) (5 points)			
Book Titles	Includes titles and authors of cherished/influential books in your reading life over a span of time (4 points)			
Writing Details	Includes details that make the narrative/poetry rich and interesting (Readerography) OR descriptions clear, understandable and interesting (Timeline/Top 10) (5 points)			
Context	Writing and/or image choices make sense in the context of your chosen task. (3 points)			
Total			/30 =	% =

Figure 11: Readerography Assignment Sheet

As noted in the preface to Chapter One and in Chapter Three, the readerography assignment asks students to consider their personal reading experiences¹⁴⁰ by creating a reading biography using a formatting style selected from the options provided on the assignment sheet (Figure 11: Readerography Assignment Sheet¹⁴¹). To bring this phenomenological material into focus, I feel it is valuable to open with the assignment requirements which serve both as the DNA of the readerography and guided the participants' creation of the readerographies that are part of this study¹⁴². In this first formal task of the semester, students are required to include specific titles of influential texts to illuminate their reading experiences over time¹⁴³.

Now, as a researcher I ask myself: What does it mean to task students with an “assignment [that] is intended to help you explore your own identity as a reader and consider which books have been important¹⁴⁴ to you and your reading life” (quoted from the assignment sheet) as their first assignment in a course rooted in teacher preparation?

¹⁴⁰ Many of the readerography assignments created for this class note the reading influencers who guided each reader to the books they share. From nighttime routines with caregivers, to classroom read aloud books, there is often a personal connection that has a familiar and cherished face behind it. Because the book lists are rooted in children's literature and span a reading lifetime, there is also an emotional connection that is rooted in the nostalgic memories of reading experiences from the past. The memories are enhanced by the way that children's literature is taken up in our cultural experiences as value-laden, imbued with nostalgic constructions to create wonder, to engage imaginations and end with an uplifting and tidy conclusion (Clark, 2004; Thomas, Reese, & Horning, 2016).

¹⁴¹ See Appendix B for the evolution of the readerography assignments over time

¹⁴² As an educator who crafted this aspect of the phenomenological material, I think it is important to begin with the requirements and grading expectations that guide this pedagogical task.

¹⁴³ Because I want students to look at their reading experiences over time, I emphasize this aspect of the assignment. It is my goal to have a variety of formats and genres shared in the readerography that demonstrate a span of readership from infancy to young adult or through their current readership, depending on their preference.

¹⁴⁴ CONNECT/DISCONNECT: Though I left spaces in the assignment description for students who identified as non-readers, trying to be sensitive to those who did not enjoy reading in their childhoods, I recognize how this assignment is framed in my own positive experiences of reading and books. I hoped that by using the term important, which still connotes a positive experience in some ways, that I had opened up the opportunity for hated/disliked books to be included on the list. In actuality, this rarely happened. My own identity as a life-long reader and as an instructor with a clear agenda to help students enjoy reading again is at play in the construction of this assignment.

These intensities resonate with me now as I return to this phenomenological material and serve as an initial analytic tool to chase down these lines of flight. As part of this process I will consider how the task's written goals of pinpointing reader identity and influential books illuminates reading whitely. First though, I think it is valuable to recognize the contextual influences of the teacher preparation aspects of this assignment. It is decidedly rooted in my identity as a teacher educator¹⁴⁵ who seeks to build critical consciousness¹⁴⁶ and transformative practices¹⁴⁷ around literature for the preservice teachers who take my classes.

Grounding this Pedagogical Task: Teacher Education Context

The pedagogical reasoning behind this assignment is based on my reading of Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, Grossman, Rust, & Schulman's chapter about the design of teacher education programs. They state that "[s]ome programs begin courses of study in teaching by engaging students in writing and sharing educational autobiographies and narratives, which can assist students in critically examining their

¹⁴⁵ BOTTOM LINE: In her research on teacher educators, Davey (2013) defines this professional identity in multiple ways that I find valuable and that shape my understanding of what it means to be a teacher of teachers. She recognizes that being a teacher educator is a continuous journey of becoming where teacher educators see themselves "as bridges, connectors, links, and embodiments of their own beliefs...seek[ing] not just to teach content in a meaningful way but also to find ways to teach about teaching content *while* and *by* teaching content and process" (p. 170, emphasis original). Additionally, she notes that "...there *are* specific skills and knowledge and abilities involved in being a teacher educator, and to acknowledge that these attributes are not commensurate with simply being a good schoolteacher *or* with being a competent educational researcher, but rather are broader than [each individually] and include both" (p.174, emphasis original).

¹⁴⁶ I believe it is only through explicit and compassionate exposure to the realities of white dominance that preservice teachers will develop racial consciousness to the system that has so formed them. It is only through seeing the system and the role it plays in their lives, and after engaging with such difficult knowledges over time (Britzman, 2000) that they will be empowered to disrupt white supremacy.

¹⁴⁷ BOTTOM LINE: It is essential that teacher preparation programs help preservice teachers build an understanding of how "narrative histories" inform, guide, and are at work in the way that we interact with the world (Johnson Lachuk & Mosley, 2012). Understanding these tacit influences is essential to equitable education and ensuring that their selection, promotion, and utilization of children's literature is diverse, inclusive, and represents *all* their students.

own educational experiences and becoming ready to engage in professional pedagogical thinking” (2005, p. 400). I adapted this concept to LE 3004 and children’s literature, creating the general structure of the readerography before I started teaching the course, while taking a teacher education–focused course for my doctoral program¹⁴⁸. By tapping into their aesthetic¹⁴⁹ reading transactions, through their partner discussion of the readerography during the second class of the semester¹⁵⁰, I was able to engage their affective responses to the books they had loved. I also built community by using this process to get to know fellow readers in the class.

My Reading Experiences: A Bridge to Critical Consciousness

As a child, the authentic reality of representation was easy for me to find. I held the white privilege of looking in a book and seeing myself in the pages. My white identity was reinforced in the books that I read and cherished, and my existence was validated by that representation (Leonardo, 2004). The discursive practices around my understanding of what I considered to be quality literature were shaped by my white identity and the comfort of representation. I unconsciously carried those reading experiences into my professional life as an elementary teacher and I became one of the white gatekeepers of children’s literature for the students in my classroom.

¹⁴⁸ CONNECT/DISCONNECT: In my initial writing about the readerography I wrote: “I am not exactly sure where this assignment came from for me, if I saw something that led to its creation or if it came out of watching a colleague teach LE 3004 the semester before I started teaching the course.” As I revisited, *Preparing Teachers for a Changing World: What Teachers Should Learn and Be Able to Do* (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005), while writing this section I discovered a connection that I had forgotten from the book. I had underlined the citation I included above. Now I marvel how that single sentence, read for a class over three years ago, influenced the creation of this assignment and my subsequent scholarship and research. The assignment, at least in its final iteration, remained relatively similar across the four semesters I asked students to complete it.

¹⁴⁹ See discussion of Rosenblatt’s reading stances below as part of my discussion of transactional theory.

¹⁵⁰ I explore this process in more depth in Chapter Five when I highlight the moment I call the pivot and the way in which it provokes reading whitely.

Without check, my practices as an unknowing gatekeeper of children’s literature unintentionally elevated whiteness as a normalized discourse of representation in my classroom. I never considered how representation mattered in children’s literature, because I was able to “read myself” in the books that were in my life and had always shaped my reading experiences. There were times I chafed against the dominance of male protagonists in my texts, but as my own racial identity was somewhat hidden¹⁵¹, I didn’t stop to consider the racialized identities of the protagonists that I read, though it was very likely that they were all white (or I whitewashed them). Reading whitely was clearly the pattern for readership for me. When you read whitely, the default and dominance of whiteness coats every reading experience. Because of how white supremacy¹⁵² acts in our world (Flowers, 2016; Leonardo, 2004; Mason, 2016; Matias & Mackey, 2016; Sleeter, 2016), in my conceptualization of the term, reading whitely—like the predominance of whiteness—is the norm among white readers.

¹⁵¹ Beyond finding like-minded colleagues, completing the required coursework, and honing my scholarly identity, I am ever grateful that my PhD studies have supported my continued development of racial consciousness as a white middle-class heterosexual cisgender woman. This process has been both a welcome journey and a rather painful surprise. Imagine coming to know, to *really* know in a profound way, that I am a raced human. This critical consciousness of my own whiteness came after 40+ years of being alive in the very white spaces I moved in: my home communities in Idaho and Virginia (and Minnesota, too); my educational experiences as a learner; my professional life in a teaching field, so heavily populated with other middle-class white women like myself; my own upper-elementary classrooms. It is only through the interrogation of my own racialized body that I have come to understand how I am so deeply swimming in the dominance of whiteness and white supremacy. And whiteness, racism, and white privilege cannot be understood outside of a study and deeper understanding of white supremacy (Leonardo, 2004).

¹⁵² As noted in Chapter One, white supremacy is defined here using Leonardo’s (2004) characterization of it stemming from a larger structure of “white racial domination” that is not simply based on white privilege (“white racial hegemony”) but the systematic advantages of domination and oppression. It is important to be clear about the nature of white supremacy being based on dominance, not advantage (though white privilege is a result of that dominance).

Teacher Preparation: A Context of Whiteness

Even if only a small percentage of my students have similar reading experiences to mine, their white-centric children's literature lenses need to be disrupted. I strive to educate the future teachers in my classes with a different way of seeing children's literature and their own possible role as gatekeepers of whiteness¹⁵³ in that world. In the three semesters before I conducted this study that I taught LE 3004, most of the students¹⁵⁴ with whom I worked were unaware of the effects of white supremacy and the default of whiteness that influenced their readership. I believe that racial consciousness specifically focused on the predominance of whiteness of children's literature as well as culturally relevant practices to selecting literature are the central ways to create that disruptive agency for all preservice teachers, regardless of their racial identification¹⁵⁵.

¹⁵³ Because "the knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes that [pre-service] teachers have, then, shape what they choose to do in their classrooms and explain both the constancy and the change that have shaped the core instructional practices that have endured over time" (Cuban, 1993, p. 20). The process, whether in teaching or in text selection, serves to both maintain and reproduce the status quo of reading whitely.

¹⁵⁴ SHOCK: It was somewhat surprising to me that even those who identify as BIPOC were not always aware of this influence. As a white person, and a scholar who has read about the ways that BIPOC communities have created literature that supported young readers in their communities, I thought that the inequality of representation and the predominance of whiteness on their lists would not be as prominent for students who were not white. Matias and Mackey (2016) note that it is not only white people who internalize whiteness ideologies, as they are necessary tools for survival in our society by people of all races. Understanding this reality is a foundational aspect of working to dismantle normalized discourses of white supremacy and provides a balancing factor that builds more capacity to take up antiracist and culturally relevant pedagogies.

¹⁵⁵ As a white teacher educator with these commitments, teaching in teacher training programs with a majority of white students, I do not want to center whiteness, but highlight it as a place of critical knowledge development and disruption. In order to do that I must continually weigh the twofold balance of disrupting the norms of my white students and BIPOC students with internalized whiteness (Matias & Mackey, 2016) while remaining conscious of further otherizing and forcing emotional labor on the BIPOC students in the white dominant spaces of the university. The scholarship of Amos (2016) exploring the challenges that BIPOC students face in academia and Matias and Mackey (2016) discussing the challenges that BIPOC professors face when doing racial consciousness work help me think about this balancing act, while at the same time finding concrete ways to support the very few BIPOC students in my classes.

Theory at Work: Reading Transaction

Louise Rosenblatt's transactional theory of reading (1960, 1978, 1982, 1983, 1988) explores the transactional experience that occurs between the reader and the text. While not defined specifically as a reading identity, in this theory the reader is formed by an intimate transaction with the text, thus impacting their reader identity. Her transactional theory of reading posits that reading is an interaction between the reader and the text and meaning making is built in and through the reading transaction, as noted in this key quote:

The transactional nature of language and the concepts of transaction and selective attention illuminate what happens in reading. Every reading act is an event, a transaction involving a particular reader and a particular configuration of marks on a page, and occurring at a particular time in particular context. Certain organismic states, certain ranges of feeling, certain verbal or symbolic linkages, are stirred up in the linguistic reservoir. From these activated areas, to phrase it most simply, selective attention—conditioned by multiple personal and social factors entering into the situation—picks out elements that synthesize or blend into what constitutes ‘meaning.’ The ‘meaning’ does not reside ready-made in the text or in the reader but happens during the transaction between reader and text. (1988, p. 4)

However, according to Rosenblatt, the transaction is further defined by the ways in which each reader interacts with the text, through the stance that they take up in the interaction. Reading stances are defined along a continuum ranging from

efferent (outward focus, information gathering, retention, task-oriented) to aesthetic (inward focus, literary enjoyment, emotional response, personal connection). She recognizes that any text can be read aesthetically or efferently, though these different stances can easily be placed in opposition¹⁵⁶ serving as binary that moves away from a continuum model she envisioned.

Reading Whitely Takes Shape: Pedagogical Openings of the Phenomenon

In addition to thinking with transactional theory and taking up the concept of reading stances in the following analysis, I unpack the readerography task requirement: “intended to help you explore your own identity as a reader and consider which books have been important to you and your reading life.” (Figure 11: Readerography Assignment Sheet, Phenomenological Material). The readerography serves as a collection of reading transactions that are also meaning making moments for the readers in my classroom. The lists of books, so carefully curated, represent experiences¹⁵⁷ of reading that shaped my students’ understanding of children’s literature and beyond. They shaped how they saw the world, how their realities were reflected in fiction.

Opening One: Identity as a Reader

The reading transaction, with its emphasis on making meaning, becomes central to understand how a reader is shaped by their interactions with texts. I think that these also help to develop reader identities that are built as a collection of reading transactions.

¹⁵⁶ I must be very cautious of my own tendency to do this when I think about the reading stances Rosenblatt discusses. I usually teach transactional theory in LE 3004 as a framing concept and I noticed how I positioned aesthetic as positive and fun and efferent as the boring and less fun opposite and caught my students doing the same.

¹⁵⁷ WONDERINGS/ANALYTIC QUESTIONS: What does it mean to shape these experiences as meaning-making transactions following Rosenblatt’s theory? If meaning making in this transaction becomes the normalized understanding of reading, readership, and protagonist representation, how is reading whitely illuminated by seeing the reading experience as a transaction?

Because “individuals (or subjects to use the post structural term) have been constructed¹⁵⁸ through social and linguistic codes and practices that shape their relationships to texts and how such texts might be defined” (Lewis, Enciso, & Moje, 2007, p. 5), crafting of the readerography is one means to tap into those constructions as they emanate from the reading experiences that shaped, at least on a surface level, the readers who created it. A reading biography centered on texts, as a potential catalyst for understanding the ways that reading experiences have shaped identity development, taps into how my students see themselves as readers¹⁵⁹. And if the transactional meaning making only occurs within texts that are centered on dominant narratives, or only feature protagonists that reflect the majority, that identity development is steeped in dominance.

In a pedagogical way, I created the assignment to capitalize on the meaning making aspect of transactional theory, understanding that dominant narratives might also have lodged in the reading transaction and implicitly influenced the meaning making process. Because the transaction between a reader and a text is both intimate and personal, this assignment works to connect to my students’ reading experiences as they begin to revisit and consider their reading lives through our course. If dominant narratives

¹⁵⁸ In the same preface to their book, the scholars also cite the need for “research that reveals the roles that identity, agency, and power play in the production of knowledge about literacy” (p. 3). While this study examines a narrow aspect of literacy, it recognizes the ways that reading whitely is steeped in normative and dominant discourses that are imbued with power and agency for the gatekeepers of children’s literature.

¹⁵⁹ Each semester’s readerographies reveal a slice of how students experienced reading in their lives as children: the joys and challenges; their current aliteracy due to busy schedules and attention-seeking apps on their phones; the hated books that were forced on them; the beloved books that demonstrated their growth as a reader; the reading avoidance and failures of being labeled a “struggling reader” that remain embarrassing and traumatic enough that I can read their pain between the lines of their readerography text. I rarely unpack and analyze these reading experiences other than for my teaching and to provide student support during the semester. And while further analysis of this aspect of the readerography is out of the scope of this study, my experiences continue to reinforce that the readerography also is a powerful tool for understanding the reading identities of the preservice elementary teachers I am helping to prepare to be literacy educators.

have influenced the reading transaction's meaning making process at its origin, the readerography also provides space for interrogation of the normative interactions that they have had as readers. This is important in a course required for early childhood and elementary education majors because "teacher educators also need to help teacher candidates become aware of their values and belief systems, and how they influence their choices of actions...[to] see how their decisions derive from their values and beliefs is necessary in helping them develop a moral stance" Diez & Murrell, 2010, 12). Because values and beliefs about books that stem from a past reading transaction are tucked into the reading experience and the reader's stance of a "particular reader... [with a particular text] at a particular time in particular context" (Rosenblatt, 1988, p. 4) they need to be unpacked through an explicit process that reveals the implicit meaning making that often fades into the background.

Opening Two: Favorite Books—A Reflection of a Reading Life

Transactional theory, when applied to this aspect of the assignment task, helps to acknowledge the apprenticeship of readership¹⁶⁰ that has been built in the aesthetic and efferent¹⁶¹ connections that the participants had with reading experiences in their past¹⁶². Because this aspect of the readerography task forces the participants to select and highlight titles that they deem to be the most important, they are set aside from all of the

¹⁶⁰ Here I am extending Lortie's concept of the apprenticeship of observation, which I discussed in Chapter Two (1975 as referenced in Hammerness et al., 2005, p. 367).

¹⁶¹ With a variety of genres, formats, and reasons to read I am embracing the reading stance continuum that Rosenblatt envisioned. Many readerographies include books that were required reading for K-12 and college courses that were resonant with my participants in both positive and negative ways (though they most often select books that they enjoyed reading).

¹⁶² I have been told that some participants reach out to their parents for reminders about the read aloud favorites from their childhoods.

other books that they have read or interacted with throughout their lifetimes¹⁶³. They reveal the dominant reading experiences¹⁶⁴ of each individual participant's readership. And while these text selections reverberate with dominant societal, familial, educational, and cultural norms¹⁶⁵, at the most basic level, they represent a micro snapshot of the books that individually were the most influential on each reader's experiences in the moment that the readerography assignment is enacted¹⁶⁶. This assignment provides the opportunity to put a spotlight on these individualized dominant reading experiences and create an opportunity for self-awareness and reflection.

When I considered the titles that marked my readership, the overabundance of whiteness on my own shelves as a teacher¹⁶⁷, and the systemic realities that reflect this predominance in the industry of children's literature (Bishop, 1990; CCBC, 2019; Elliott, 2014, 2016; Lee, 2015; Thomas, 2016), I knew this assignment would serve a larger purpose: to shine a light on the prior knowledge that stems from the dominant reading experiences of my students. As a teacher educator I knew that this assignment could

¹⁶³ WONDERING/ANALYTIC QUESTION: As I wrote through this section I wondered: How does the reading transaction lead to deeming a book as important? How does a book maintain the 'staying power' of remaining with the readers in my study long beyond the reading transaction? What if the readerography forces the reading transactions of a lifetime to funnel all of the reading experiences of a given reader into the titles that are the most rooted? Are these individual dominant reading experiences?

¹⁶⁴ In the initial conceptualization, I envisioned the reading whitely dominant reading experiences as the reading experiences that were influenced by the dominant culture and larger systems of power that influences book selection and reading opportunities. Thinking with theory helped me to open up this micro understanding of dominant reading experiences evoked in the readerography assignment.

¹⁶⁵ I consider the hegemonic influences of whiteness in the next exploration of reading whitely below.

¹⁶⁶ I recognize that a completed readerography captures a static snapshot of the books that my participants deemed to be most important while they were creating their readerographies. But I also know that a book's importance in a person's life and readership are dynamic and ever shifting.

¹⁶⁷ Before I developed more critical consciousness about representation in children's literature, this was especially true. My realization that I did not have a "balanced bookshelf" was a process that began somewhat slowly in my last years as an upper elementary school teacher and K-5 specialist teaching gifted education through a whole-school push-in model and thanks to discussions I was seeing about children's literature on teacher blogs online. My PhD studies helped me to continue this process by undergirding it with scholarship about oppression, white supremacy, and racialization.

serve as a starting place to “confront and use this prior knowledge¹⁶⁸, and to help [preservice teachers] begin to realize that [their] students will learn in different ways and have different experiences and perspectives[.] [M]any preparation programs begin with candidates’ personal experience as a productive way to trigger discussions of beliefs and biases¹⁶⁹ as well as to build more systematic knowledge” (Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, Grossman, Rust, & Schulman, 2005, p. 400). Preservice teachers must begin to look more closely at the books that they value to see how their personal experiences and readership has been shaped, especially if their reading experiences are produced in spaces where reading whitely is the norm. The cycles of dominance are perpetuated without formal opportunities for critical explorations that help preservice teachers realize how dominant reading experiences have influenced the ways that they understand and value texts and reading experiences.

Production One: Reading Whitely is Rooted in Individualized Dominant Reading Experiences Shaped by the Collective

The pedagogical focus of the readerography capitalizes on a belief¹⁷⁰ that the participants will be able to revisit and consider the reading transactions that shaped their connections to books from their past. It is that understanding of the readerography as a

¹⁶⁸ Both positive and negative aspects of the apprenticeship of observation come into play with this process, as noted by the authors in the text, which is why they emphasize both aspects of the actions (confront and use) that can be taken up through this process.

¹⁶⁹ This is listed as bases in the original text. I believe that word biases is a more accurate reflection of what the authors intended and that bases is a typo as it does not make sense in this context.

¹⁷⁰ This belief is substantiated with personal experience as a reader and as a graduate instructor who has observed how the readerography is able to be taken up as location for connection and learning that is supported by engaging the readership of students in a powerful and personal way. Clandinin (2004) in discussion of her work with Connolly, calls this “personal practical knowledge” that is “the person’s past experience, the person’s present mind and body and in the person’s future plans and action. It is knowledge that reflects the individual’s prior knowledge and acknowledges the contextual nurture of that teacher’s knowledge” (p. 122).

learning tool that opens up the possibility of seeing how reading whitely flows out of the assignment task. Exploring these openings in the assignment reveals how reading whitely takes shape and is produced in an individual's normalized and dominant reading experiences.

Reading whitely is thus produced, in part, through the pedagogy of the readerography by reinforcing the titles and reading experiences that dominated each individual's apprenticeship of readership. The authority of this reading experience is rooted in the ways that reading whitely takes shape as a personal and normalized construction of the reading transaction. In part, this is because the reading transaction is a meaning making process and does not exist outside of the interaction between the text and the reader. The selected books and their associated reading transactions serve as an anchor of readership that becomes an internalized connection that potentially defines, at least in part, who each participant is as a reader.

Dominant influences—reading experiences that focus on important books and reading identity—shape reading whitely in this production and reverberate between the individual and the collective. The individual readerography is the personal lived experience of each specific reader and the books that defined their reading experiences, and yet those experiences were shaped by influences of dominance outside of that personal experience. In the next production I will explore how systemic dominance is another production of what it means to read whitely.

Exploration Two: The Hegemonic Mirror of the Readerography

Readerography as Book List: Phenomenological Material in Focus

To explore this aspect of the phenomenological materials, I created a master list of all the titles that were shared in the readerographies¹⁷¹ created by the general participants of this study. It was important for me to create this master list¹⁷² as new phenomenological material that gathered the collective productions of reading whitely as they were evoked in the study through the titles that were selected, discussed, and valued by the participants. To guide this process, I did some informal categorization of the titles to explore the trends of this phenomenological material in more depth. For this portion of the study, the categories that I highlight are the racialized identities of the protagonists¹⁷³. This numerical snapshot of the list illuminates reading whitely in interesting ways:

- 562 total items on the master list
 - 516 works of fiction; 31 nonfiction; 12 poetry; 2 unknown/non-applicable; 1 musical score

¹⁷¹ Due to a technical error, I am missing one readerography from the 59 total readerographies created during the semester. The participant created the document and shared it through our online platform, but the file was unreadable.

¹⁷² As a qualitative researcher I hesitated to make a list, as I worried that it would be too positivistic or quantitative in nature in ways that would not be reflective of my research commitments as a post-intentional phenomenologist. Yet, after a conversation with Mark Vagle about my concerns and working through the list-making process, I feel like this master list gives me insights into the ways that reading whitely is and has been produced in the lives of my participants.

¹⁷³ For my own analytic process, I included categories for general genre, format, gender of the protagonists, author gender and problematic content (these were based only on my knowledge of the titles and included, but were not limited to, explicitly racist depictions of characters, erasure, concerns brought up by BIPOC, etc.). I have not included all these categories here because they are 1) out of the scope of this aspect of the study, 2) would need more exhaustive research to verify that the categorizations were correct for all 561 titles, and 3) did not provide further illumination of reading whitely during this analytic process.

- Protagonists¹⁷⁴: 354 expressly depicted as white (either in text or visually in illustrations); 127 animal¹⁷⁵/inanimate/mythical creature¹⁷⁶; 33 BIPOC/Middle Eastern/Jewish¹⁷⁷; 6 selections have multiple protagonists with differing racial identifications¹⁷⁸; 12 unknown protagonists¹⁷⁹, and 1 racially ambiguous protagonist¹⁸⁰

Contextual Grounding: Representation in Children’s Literature

As noted in Chapter Two, children’s literature as a field has been wrestling with representation and the predominance of whiteness in the field for a long time. As the call for diverse and inclusive representation begins to resonate with the industry more acutely,

¹⁷⁴ 27 books did not have protagonists as they were works of nonfiction, poetry, or other writing that does not feature a protagonist. Additionally, this list includes the repeated characters that appear on multiple lists, like Junie B. Jones and Harry Potter and his crew. I wanted the broad picture of the reading realities of my participants and chose not to remove these repetitions, which are individual reader experiences.

¹⁷⁵ “Once the construct of anthropomorphism has been extended to children’s literature, it could be enlisted to instruct on topics and issues of knowledge and social belief. The talking, thinking, acting animals could provide for children...a buffered engagement with a message of cultural significance. The lively animals would soften the didactic tone and ease tensions raised by dealing with issues not yet fully resolved or social controversial” (Burke, Copenhaver, & Carpenter, 2004, 210). But what if the animals do the same for non-controversial topics and reinforce white cultural norms through this buffered depiction?

¹⁷⁶ These are not officially raced (minus one mermaid who is depicted as white on her human half and many of the characters in *The Hobbit* (Tolkien, 1960) who are mythical races that are often depicted with white racial identities), though some, with more research, could be considered to assume white normative identities. The Berenstain Bears are an example that show up on the list twice and represent a middle class nuclear family that potentially follows white cultural norms. While that representation is out of the scope of this study, it is something I mention to students in class when they say: “but these are animals, there is no bias here.” I believe this is an area where we must always look more closely and see if there are hidden messages of hegemony seeping out of what may seem innocuous on the surface.

¹⁷⁷ This is a broad category of racial and ethnic identities intended to be more inclusive of often minoritized representation in literature. There are 25 distinct titles on this part of the list, with five books appearing on more than one list. Four individual titles on the list are only available in languages other than English and were published outside of the United States.

¹⁷⁸ These include anthologies or books like *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants* (Brashares, 2001) which features four teenage female protagonists, one of whom is biracial with a white father and a Puerto Rican mother.

¹⁷⁹ These books are either unfamiliar to me, or the raced identity of the protagonists was difficult to locate online and in book descriptions. Because this is a qualitative study, I focus more on the general trends and did not feel the need to have an exhaustive categorization for the titles I could not locate with ease. This may be a space for future study as I continue to use readerographies in my work as a means of exploring reading whiteness in my scholarship.

¹⁸⁰ There was much debate online about this character’s racial identity, which was not expressly noted by the white author, and I did not feel comfortable categorizing in any other manner than ambiguous.

it is important to consider the context of representation and considerations made about the authenticity and accuracy of that representation.

Right now, the vast majority of children’s books are written by white authors. If more of those white authors start to write about people of color (and/or LGBT people, people with disabilities, people from different socio-economic classes), that will increase diversity; more books for young readers will begin to reflect the range of different people in our society. But such a move would do nothing to ensure equity within the industry. Equity insists that everyone has an equal opportunity to participate... (Elliott, 2014, para. 4).

The micro context of my research site reflects the macro realities of an industry still considering how best to be inclusive. To illuminate this systemic reality, I share Figure 12: Picture This: Reflecting Diversity in Children’s Book Publishing . Using Rudine Sims Bishop’s metaphor for readership as a mirror of lived experiences¹⁸¹, this infographic visually demonstrates the lack of representation in children’s literature. It is an image that I shared with my students, both in class and on the opening page of our online platform, to help them understand representation in children’s literature. It often served as a powerful tool¹⁸², a visual shorthand for the objectives of the course, and

¹⁸¹ She recognizes that reading books can provide windows, mirrors, or sliding glass doors into experiences that either reflect the reader’s life or allow readers to see into the lived experiences of others—and when the written word is just right—even enter in to that beautiful world (1990, para. 1).

¹⁸² Focal participant Emma referred to this image in our interview stating, “I still remember it and thinking, are you kidding? There’re more animals in books than African American people? What? This has given me more knowledge. Obviously, knowledge is power. And this information has given me avenues to talk to people and like, stand up for certain things around representation too.” (Note: this has been edited to remove verbal fillers)

constant reminder of the reasons why I advocate for them to embrace inclusive texts in their own reading and future classrooms.

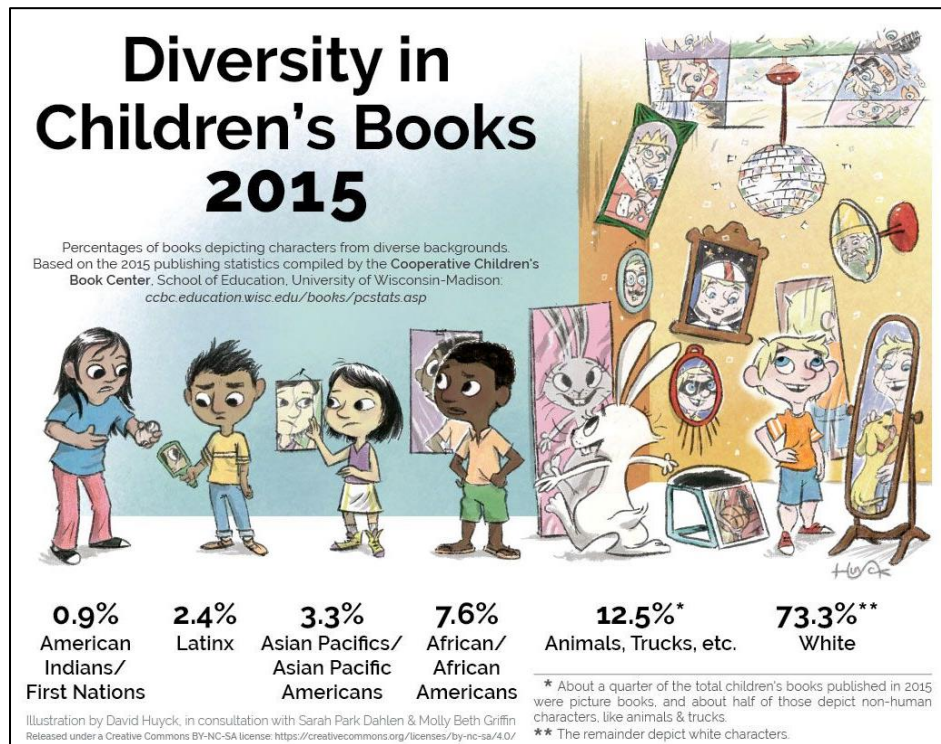


Figure 12: *Picture This: Reflecting Diversity in Children's Book Publishing* (Huyck, Dahlen, & Griffin, 2016)

The List: A Lot of Hegemonic Protagonists

The book list reveals reading whitely in the most clear and obvious way: most of the protagonists are either white or animal characters. The numbers are somewhat astounding: of 561 books on the list, only 33 BIPOC/Middle Eastern/Jewish protagonists¹⁸³ had starring roles. There are books that do not have formal characters (poetry, nonfiction) and some that I did not research to get more detail as I wanted a

¹⁸³ The sheer dearth of non-white protagonists is important, but not the only factor in understanding this production of reading whitely. As Ellison (2003) notes in his writing about representation in literature, “[w]e are interested not in quantities but in qualities (p. 86). For if the word has the potency to revive and make us free, it also has the power to blind, imprison, and destroy” (p. 81). Even as the numbers of books with BIPOC and other non-hegemonic representation increase in quantity, we must also be aware of the quality of that representation—does it revive and emancipate or does it blind, imprison, or destroy?

quick snapshot of the trends of the books, not a deep quantitative exploration. By looking at trends, I see that my students reflect the findings of many years of research. My mostly white participants were able to easily “discover [their] racial identity affirmed in history, literature, and civilization in general” (Leonardo, 2004, p. 137) through the books that they read and remembered. Their reading was influenced by the hegemonic cultural norms of whiteness and white supremacy. Seeing this pattern and recognizing that hegemonic realities are exploding through this production of reading whitely, I find it valuable to think with a theory of hegemony to extend and open up this production of reading whitely.

Theory at Work: Hegemony—a Theory of Dominance

In a relatively short chapter included in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture Reader* (Gramsci, 1971b) entitled “Hegemony, Intellectuals, and the State,” Italian Marxist¹⁸⁴ theorist and philosopher Gramsci unpacks the insidious constructions of cultural hegemony that underpin dominance of one group and the subordination of others. The writing stems from *Selections from Prison Notebooks*¹⁸⁵ (Gramsci, 1971a), a collection of writings created during Gramsci’s eleven-year imprisonment¹⁸⁶ by the Fascist government of Italy (Bates, 1975). He provides a theoretical frame that exposes

¹⁸⁴ SHOCK: There are times that I find it shocking to quote and connect with Marxist theorists and philosophers. There is something about the realities of how Marxism has been lived out through history that fills me with an unresolved tension as one who does not identify as a Marxist in my own philosophical understandings of the world. CONNECT/DISCONNECT: And yet, so many of the feminist scholars and theorists I respect have been influenced by Marxism that it feels very connected to my scholarly lineage as one who wishes to bring social change through my work.

¹⁸⁵ I include this chapter reference, as it is where I first encountered Gramsci’s work in my Elementary Education Colloquium course, where we called it the Hege as a shorthand for our discussions about this theory and how we were seeing hegemony in our work as elementary education scholars. As I have read more of Gramsci’s work, I have read selections from the larger work to consider Gramsci’s concept of common sense.

¹⁸⁶ He was sentenced to 20 years in 1926 and died in 1937 while still in prison, likely from the poor treatment and awful conditions (Bates, 1975).

some of the component parts of hegemony in a way that is complex and at the same time graspable¹⁸⁷. Gramsci's initial explorations of the defining characteristics of hegemony paint a salient picture of the sneaky ways in which it lives and breathes in through power exertion and domination. He explores a core concept that that hegemony is manifested as a twofold thrust of domination of the "undesirables" and "intellectual and moral leadership" of the allies/kindred "...thus creating the hegemony of a fundamental social group over a series of subordinate groups. But the development and expansion of a particular group are conceived of, and presented, as being the motor force of universal expansion, a development of the 'national' energies." (Gramsci, 1971a, p. 86). Cultural hegemony, when framed through this lens, serves as a tool that encourages society to believe that the force of an action is based on the consent of the majority and steeped in common sense¹⁸⁸ understandings that collectively emerge as implicit understandings of normalcy. It also serves to turn the gaze of the allied/kindred classes from the real power brokers in the supreme social group that subjugate those they cannot control through their intellectual leadership.

Intellectual leadership of the culturally superior strata of the hegemony often comes in the form of the unexamined discourses of power that become the unseen but broadly understood norm of the dominant cultural group. Often these discourses are

¹⁸⁷ This theoretical unpacking is powerful tool for meaning making as I attempt to understand the systemic structures of power that reinforce white supremacy as they flow and flee around productions of reading whitely.

¹⁸⁸ In their introduction to *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, editors and translators Hoare and Nowell-Smith, state that "[i]t is not just the ideas that require to be confronted but the social forces behind them and, more directly, the ideology these forces have generated, and which has become part of what Gramsci calls 'common sense'. This last term is used by Gramsci to mean the uncritical and largely unconscious way of perceiving and understanding the world that has become "common" in any given epoch" (1971a, p. 322/625).

imbedded in the larger society as common-sense understandings. Gramsci illuminates his concept of common sense in the following quote:

...the philosophy of common sense, which is the ‘philosophy of non-philosophers’, or in other words the conception of the world which is uncritically absorbed by the various social and cultural environments in which the moral individuality of the average [person] is developed. Common sense is not a single unique conception, identical in time and space...it takes countless different forms¹⁸⁹ (1971a, 769).

Though Gramsci’s reconceptualization and definition of common sense in this form and relationship to power structures renders it as a more complex concept and highlights how it serves as a tool to maintain the status quo of cultural hegemony.

Reading Whitely Takes Shape: Hegemonic Reverberations of the Phenomenon

Opening One: Illuminating Dominance in Reading Whitely

I originally framed reading whitely as the dominant reading experiences that shaped the participants in the study. The reading list demonstrates the hegemonic ways that white protagonists have become the common-sense norms of the participants in the study. The realities of white supremacy and hegemony in the representation of protagonists is clear in the numbers: fewer than 6% of the books shared by my participants included protagonists that were expressly named as BIPOC, Middle Eastern, or Jewish.

¹⁸⁹ “Moreover, common sense is a collective noun, like religion: there is not just one common sense, for that too is a product of history and a part of the historical process.” (Gramsci, 1971a, p. 630)

So, how does the concept of hegemony expand my understanding of reading whitely? Truthfully it doesn't. This reality of dominance is built into my understanding of the phenomenon. I posited that reading whitely is the outcrop of the dominant reading experiences of the participants in this study and beyond. In fact, I recognized in my initial experiences with the phenomenon, that both the hegemony of whiteness and experiences of the dominant group¹⁹⁰ were the norm. There is the importance of common-sense building that the practices of the elite, those in power, become the norm for all the allies of the ruling group. Through the unacknowledged norm, the unseen force, oppression and dehumanization becomes normalized¹⁹¹. In one of the general participant's journal entry¹⁹² responses to the readerography she noted: "I was completely unaware of the lack of diversity as a young girl with a *traditional* family and *normalized* beliefs" (emphasis mine) Gramsci's theories are noted in her lived experience. As a young white girl, it was her family structure and belief systems that were normal and traditional. They fit the hegemonic messages of a white supremacist society¹⁹³. There is no need for diversity in the stratifications of experiences, because it is the norm, the correct, the given. And the

¹⁹⁰ This is usually noted by Gramsci as differing class strata which include the intellectual and economic elite (and other hierarchical groups). Though I believe that the concept is powerful when also expanded to be inclusive of race, ethnicity, and culture.

¹⁹¹ The reality of our world is that oppression is constantly present. This is "*not* a given destiny but the result of an unjust order that engenders violence in the oppressors, which in turn dehumanizes the oppressed" (Freire, 1970, 44, italics original). People are treated as other and are marginalized by the structures of society, leading to their oppression and dehumanization. It keeps them from reaching their full potential and experiencing life in a complete and meaningful manner. The greatest challenge of recognizing oppression is that it has been interwoven as *the* story of humanity. As the dominant story line, it has the power to conceal itself as truth and hide in the recesses of our collective understanding. That is what makes it so insidious. So much of what is oppressive is hidden in plain sight and promoted by the very societal structures that we hold most dear. It is only through disruptive educational practices and moments of internal crisis that oppression can be most thoroughly exposed.

¹⁹² A collection of phenomenological materials analyzed in Exploration Four in Chapter Five.

¹⁹³ Part of what obscures whiteness is simply a byproduct of white supremacy. Because we are so deeply entrenched in these byproducts: racism, silences, implicit bias, and white privilege, it is insidiously disguised in the normal, the everyday, the taken for granted status quo (Flowers, 2016; Leonardo, 2004; Mason, 2016; Matias and Mackey, 2016; Sleeter, 2016). This tacitly bleeds into our reading lives.

secondary message is that diversity is only something for others; for the majority who are valued in the hegemony of whiteness, representation is an omnipresence and is not necessary for white readers.

That is not to say that the participants in my study do not recognize the phenomenon¹⁹⁴ when it is revealed; for many of them it is an eye-opening reality. And yet, I have found that while they recognize their own reading patterns to be steeped in this whiteness, when given the choice to read less whitely¹⁹⁵ many of my students will still choose books with white protagonists. During the semester of this research there was a slight but noticeable change in that pattern, and I noticed that a few more students sought out books by BIPOC authors featuring BIPOC characters.

Opening Two: Reading Whitely is Cool—I Read What Everyone Else Was Reading

When I started looking more closely at the list, I was struck by the repetition of titles that were read by multiple people and appeared on more than one list. I began to think beyond the role of adult reading influencers/gatekeepers in the readership of my general participants and to what was influential because it was cool¹⁹⁶; possibly popular

¹⁹⁴They would never formally name it as reading whitely, but as I will demonstrate in Chapter Five, they feel the reality of their very white reading lists and they are very stricken with the reality that their readership has been so steeped in this hegemonic and systematic valuing of whiteness in their lives.

¹⁹⁵ ASSUMPTIONS OF NORMALITY: This observation has anecdotally held true throughout the five times I have taught LE 3004. In addition to the purposefully inclusive titles I provide for literature circle readings (as a choice—but a limited choice), students have multiple opportunities to select individual texts to read for course assignments. Despite encouraging, but not requiring, diverse/inclusive selections for those free choice books (in an attempt to model the power of choice in regard to reading materials—another BOTTOM LINE of literacy instruction I believe that teachers need to embrace) their selections continue to mostly feature white, animal, or inanimate/mythical protagonists.

¹⁹⁶ ASSUMPTIONS OF NORMALITY: I recognize that my use of the word “cool” to define reading trends might be a bit of a stretch, as reading can sometimes be construed as uncool or not an activity of popularity. I take it up as a term to play with the idea of reading influencers and books that potentially had classroom or societal zeitgeist.

in their classrooms or among friend groups. There were certain titles that were incredibly popular and appeared in larger numbers across multiple readerographies. This is not a surprise to me, as I opened this dissertation with an exploration of gatekeepers in children’s literature, but I had not expressly thought¹⁹⁷ about the ways that popularity and peer trends¹⁹⁸ might also be a production of reading whitely.

Book/Series Title	Number of Readerographies where Title Appears
<i>Junie B. Jones Series</i>	22
<i>Harry Potter Books/Series</i>	22
<i>The Magic Treehouse Series</i>	14
<i>The Hunger Games Trilogy</i>	10
<i>The Very Hungry Caterpillar</i>	10
<i>Twilight Series</i>	9
<i>Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See</i>	8
<i>If you Give a Mouse a Cookie Book/Series</i>	8
<i>The Giving Tree</i>	8
<i>Goodnight Moon</i>	7
<i>The Rainbow Fish</i>	7
<i>Where the Wild Things Are</i>	7
<i>Chicka Chicka Boom Boom</i>	6
<i>Divergent Series</i>	5
<i>Where the Sidewalk Ends</i>	5
<i>Percy Jackson Books/Series</i>	5
<i>Nancy Drew Books</i>	5
<i>Corduroy</i>	5
Most Popular Repeated Titles¹⁹⁹	163
Percentage of All Books on the List	29%

Table 7: Repeated Titles Across Readerographies

¹⁹⁷ CONNECT/DISCONNECT: As a former upper elementary teacher I should have taken this into account as I saw how my students became classroom trend setters and their reading choices often influenced each other’s selections. In fact, I would capitalize on this and had my students giving book talks and making suggestions for peers. Though I also found it challenging when children who were reading at levels below their peers would sit with a large but popular tome that I knew was a difficult read for them because it was what everyone else was reading, not necessarily because it was a book they wanted to read.

¹⁹⁸ This quote from a general participant’s journal entry reflection of the readerography creation and critical analysis reinforces this reality, “Part of me thinks I just read these books because they were what everyone else was reading (I read Junie B Jones because all my friends were reading them, AND my teacher was reading them aloud in class). But also, 95% of my classmates were white. Probably 85% of my classmates had a traditional nuclear family. And 100% of my teachers growing up where white.”

¹⁹⁹ For this table I only included the repeated titles that were included five or more times across readerographies. In total there are 84 titles that appear on the master list more than once for a total of 317 repeated titles. This represents 56.4% of the master list.

When I put Gramsci's theoretical understanding of common sense, especially "the conception of the world which is uncritically absorbed by the various social and cultural environments" (1971a, p. 769) the uncritical absorption of popularity²⁰⁰ in these trends stand out with an intensity that buzzes as a tentative rhizomatic production of the phenomenon. There is a commonality in the book trends of this aspect of the phenomenological materials that resonates as potential marker of reading whitely and the dominance of what become the popular books to read. All of the repeated titles feature either white or animal protagonists, reflective of the contextual framing infographic of Figure 12. The protagonists holding the mirrors, seeing themselves, dominating this list are reflective of the hegemonic norm.

Production Two: Hegemonic Reconstructions—Reading Whitely Reinforces the Dominance of Whiteness

Where Production One was shaped by individual reading experiences, this production is shaped by larger and more systematic influences. This exploration of the readerography list reveals openings into reading whitely steeped in the systemic and pervasive cultural hegemony of whiteness. In general, this analysis of the list reveals that the predominance of whiteness in the publishing industry potentially has a material impact on readers long after they have their interactions with the books²⁰¹ they have read. The dominant reading experiences illustrated by the list also demonstrate that reading

²⁰⁰ Another general participant noted the following, "It's crazy looking back and seeing how little diversity I was introduced to as a child because being a white middle classed female, you are not forced to realize how little diversity are in most popular children books because I am represented in so many of them."

²⁰¹ Most of the participants in this study range from 19–24 years in age. And while they are not as far away from their reading experiences of the books they included in their readerographies, some of them were read 15–20 years before compiling this assignment. The experience, the feelings, the protagonists, the books stayed with them beyond that past reading experience. They were marked as the important books and that long-term connection that they feel to these titles cannot be overlooked.

whitely is steeped in power and hegemony. This production is distinctly influenced by a prevalence of white protagonists and reading trends that reinforce the popularity of dominant protagonists in a way that becomes a common sense understanding that normalizes what counts as valued texts and is constrained, at least in these phenomenological materials, by reading whitely.

This production of the phenomenon is shaped by the hegemony of white supremacy that has insidiously positioned itself in the reading experiences of those who read whitely. Additionally, it potentially means that we read under the hegemonic influence of our past reading experiences. For teachers, especially at the elementary level, who have a lot of control/sway over the reading selections in their classrooms (Gebhard, 2006; Hoewisch, 2000) reverberations of hegemonic norms has a potentially larger impact for reinforcing the *norm*. At the same time, their awareness of reading whitely opens opportunities for confronting and disrupting white normativity in their classrooms.

Conclusion

Using the three-part analytic process of post-intentional phenomenology, I have explored productions of reading whitely through two specific perspectives of the readerography: as assignment and as a book list. In this chapter, I illuminated how reading whitely takes shape in dominant reading experiences and systematic hegemony. I continue this analysis process in Chapter Five, as I consider two additional aspects of this phenomenological material and reveal provocations of reading whitely as they reverberate from that analysis.

Chapter Five: Analysis of the Pivot and the Response

In the previous chapter, I explored the aspects of the readerography that pertained to the more static²⁰² components of the phenomenological materials. Through that writing, I revealed two productions of reading whitely that were shaped by course-related activity outside of course sessions. In this chapter, I shift to an exploration of the provocations of reading whitely that take shape from interactions during the in-class discussions and review process. The components of the phenomenological materials featured in this chapter are rooted in the active engagement with the readerography that develop from the communal and interactive context of a classroom. The provocations of reading whitely take shape in this dynamic experience and are more catalytic in nature. Utilizing a similar organizational structure as the previous chapter, I follow the entangled three-part analysis technique. Reflecting the process visualized in the analysis matrix shared in Chapter Three (Figure 9), this chapter includes the two distinctive but connected provocations of reading whitely: the pivot and the response.

Navigating Chapter Five

This chapter moves through a central text crafted into distinct but interconnected sections that is augmented through the use of footnotes as a formal method to add layers to this exploration process. While taking up theory and the conceptual frameworks that shape this study, I engage with the phenomenological materials and analytic process throughout these sections. As they did in Chapter Four, the footnotes serve as textual

²⁰² Each of these components were created in isolation from the larger classroom community, the assignment guidelines and the compiled list of texts shared by the participants on their readerographies and are a static snapshot of the assignment requirements and the list of books that the participants highlighted. I had a vision for the collective experiences with the readerography that I explore in Chapter Three when I created the assignment, which is lived out in this chapter of provocations.

lines of flight providing an opening into the dynamic and rhizomatic nature of phenomenon that are difficult to capture in a fixed text. I use them to name aspects of post-reflexion: connect/disconnect, assumptions of normality, bottom lines, shocks (Vagle, 2018, p. 154). The footnotes add supplemental analysis, moments of clarification, and conceptual anchors. No less important, they serve as a platform to complicate the analytic process by injecting the personal into the process.

Opening with both a description of the phenomenological materials under review and a contextual framing, this chapter begins by exploring how a critical analysis of the readerography assignment is enacted during a class session. I share the narrative inquiry writing processes as part of the initial overview to accentuate the phenomenological materials through story (Exploration Three) and a poetic construction of participant voices (Exploration Four). The analytic process continues with an explanation of the theory that I think with as a tool for deeper contemplation and study of reading whitely. In Exploration Three: Initializing Praxis—Critical Consciousness and the Readerography, I take up the moment during class when I facilitate the review of readerography titles, which I call the pivot²⁰³. To more deeply think about this aspect of the readerography I use a theory of praxis and conscientization (Freire, 1970) and weave in culturally relevant pedagogy and second-wave white teacher identity studies from the conceptual framework.

The chapter culminates with Exploration Four: The Aha Moments of the Readerography which takes up the ways that reading whitely is taking shape in the

²⁰³ I shared the experience of the pivot in the opening narrative to this dissertation. The change in energy in the classroom during this moment, as I note in that narrative and in the discussion to follow, was so palpable that I shifted to that shorthand term relatively quickly in my descriptions of the moment.

participant responses to the pivot. This final section follows an organizational structure that differs slightly from the other explorations. Following the guidelines that encourage crafting an analytic structure that makes sense and doesn't have to be consistent in the order of the three-part process (Vagle, 2018, p. 160), I engage with theory, phenomenological materials, and post-reflexion following a different path, one that I feel better suits this exploration. In this final section I begin by explicating a theorizing process inspired by Patti Lather as a means to chase the lines of flight that emerge from the response. The theory flows into a poetic construction of participant responses that becomes the phenomenological materials under review.

As I work through the analysis of the phenomenological materials, in both Explorations Three and Four, I write through and reveal openings where reading whitely is taking shape. To close each exploration, I illuminate a production of reading whitely that emanated from this process. Each of these last two subsections, openings, and provocations are intended to be both complete and incomplete—revealing how reading whitely is taking shape in a cogent and cohesive manner, but also demonstrating the partial, ever-changing, and potentially unknowable aspects of reading whitely and all phenomena. In keeping with that dual recognition of how phenomena are at work in constant movement, some aspects of the exploration have been purposefully written in ways that leave questions unanswered and interpretations left to the reader and for future consideration.

Exploration Three: Initializing Praxis—Critical Consciousness and the Readerography

Readerography as Pivot: Phenomenological Material in Focus

To introduce this aspect of the readerography I share the four slides (Figure 13: Presentation Slides: Readerography Discussion and Pivot) that I use during the class session where I guide students to look more critically at their reading lists, an activity I call the pivot²⁰⁴ throughout this section. The entire process, at least the framing of it during class, is captured by these four slides. Slide one initiates the discussion of readerography titles at table groups and slide two shares my visual readerography with the students, which I unpack and explain verbally before shifting to analysis. Slides three and four guide the analysis process and represent the moment of pivot during the class session.

²⁰⁴ CONNECT/DISCONNECT: As I delve further into analysis I will focus on the pivot as a process for initial developing of praxis. Additionally, I recognize the theoretical connection to the pivot that Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain (1998, referring to the term initially extrapolated by Vygotsky) discuss in their research on figured worlds. In exploring the way that children shift into imaginative play they state, “describing how children develop the ability to enter into the imagined world, Vygotsky speaks of a ‘pivot,’ a mediating or symbolic device that the child uses...to pivot or shift into the frame of a different world” (p. 50). They also note that “an important pivot into figured worlds is through discourses” (p. 296). While I do not use figured worlds as a theoretical device in this chapter, I do think that I am using discourse to support my students as they pivot into a different (unseen) world of children’s literature and representation. My thanks to Lee Fisher whose encyclopedic brain reminded me of this sociocultural pivot.

with construction paper and printed book covers. As they take turns sharing these cherished titles, or begrudging reads for the few students who did not find joy in books²⁰⁶, the volume of the sharing increases. There are moments of delighting in the shared titles, the forgotten favorites that another person remembered, the mutual experiences that two relative strangers may have shared in their past reading lives. They connect and swoon and delight in the sharing. This moment is an absolute joy for a bibliophile teacher. The room is loud and gregarious and there is a cheerful feel in the air. As a pedagogue, I revel in the polyphonic reality that unfolds before me. I set this into motion. And yet the tension I feel is also palpable, because I know what is coming next and my students do not. Only I know that I am going to ask them to take a second, more critical look at their lists. I am going to metaphorically yank the rug right out from under them²⁰⁷. I feel that it must be done. I have seen how powerful this yanking of the rug will be—but I know it has the potential to be difficult²⁰⁸ as the awareness of their white identities²⁰⁹ is borne in the process.

²⁰⁶ CONNECT/DISCONNECT: I have noted this elsewhere, but it feels valuable to address again: I do always worry about the students who did not identify as readers. I attempt to build in some “pressure valve” options for those who did not enjoy reading—by being able to include the reads that were not enjoyable, though few do. It is interesting, though, many students who openly identify as nonreaders, tend to choose the narrative structure option and do not include visual images of texts. Regardless, of how they identify as readers/nonreaders, every student has crafted their lists with thoughtfulness and attention to the assignment requirements.

²⁰⁷ BOTTOM LINE: I know, at least from my experience, that the joy will be sucked out of the room and it will be replaced with guilt, surprise, and frustration. So, my joy is also mixed with dread, worry, protectiveness, and a desire to disrupt what frames their reading and build space for critical consciousness.

²⁰⁸ CONNECT/DISCONNECT: I don’t mind diving into this tension. In fact, I think the discomfort can be a powerful component of the praxis-building process but is not something I purposefully seek to engender. “When paired with clarity in purpose and solidarity with the other, where judgment is practiced but one is never judged, discomfort can be liberating because it enables whites and people of color to remove the mask” of self in a classroom space that encourages risk (Leonardo & Porter, 2010, p. 153).

²⁰⁹ If not an awareness of their white identities as racialized people, it was certainly an awareness to the previously masked power of white cultural norms in their own reading lives and the protagonists that most populated their readerography lists.

The first time I asked students to think more deeply about their titles, as I shared in the opening narrative of this dissertation, it was inelegant and clunky. I planned the moment to be an educationally significant activity for my students²¹⁰. Yet, I had not realized, or perhaps completely thought through²¹¹ how the transition from readerography review to analysis would impact my students in the moment. I knew that they needed to look more closely and start their journey to praxis about representation in children's literature—but I burst that bubble of happy chatter about their books with a heavy hammer²¹².

A Narrative Glimpse: Thoughts from a Post-reflexive Walk

During the semester of this study, the collected knowledge gained from these previous attempts at the pivot both informed and changed my practice, helping me guide the process more smoothly. During a post-reflexive walk²¹³ after the second night of class, I captured a snapshot of how the pivot was enacted with students in the afternoon section of LE 3004. While it is my interpretation of the pivot, it demonstrates how I added more scaffolding to the process and illuminates the phenomenological materials

²¹⁰ At that time in my own racial self-consciousness, I was examining my own white identity, and starting to name it explicitly in class, but had not fully shifted to discussion and explicitly discussing my white identity in relation to white supremacy.

²¹¹ SHOCK: Now as I craft this writing, I am surprised at how I didn't scaffold this process more. It was a necessary and important step, but the jarring shift likely made doors close and tensions rise. I didn't think about my own praxis or readership and how it had been shaped by many discussions, readings, and reflective moments over time. I had so internalized this critical consciousness development that I simply overlooked the need to provide more supports for my students.

²¹² Appendix A includes a history of the readerography assignment over time; both the shifting, but relatively static assignment requirements and the evolution of how I guided the pivot during the class sessions of each of the four semesters that I taught this class. That evolution is very present here in the slide three titled An Important Next Step.

²¹³ Because I was not recording the class sessions as a means to gather phenomenological materials during the semester, in part due to the consent process I utilized to protect my student/participants, I used these post-reflexive walk recordings as a way to capture what happened during each class session for posterity and as a form of post-reflexive thinking and field note keeping.

from a different perspective. Here I share a storified version²¹⁴ from the transcripts of that recording, to bring the in-the-moment narrative²¹⁵ of the lived experience of the pivot to add an additional layer to this exposition of the phenomenological materials.

The class had been talking about their books with partners, I had shared my books with the class as well. I started the transition by saying, “I’m going to ask you to do something that may be kind of difficult, but I think it’s really important to our journey into our process of looking at protagonists and books and looking at representation.

We are going to take a minute and actually look at the books on your list. And it is not a denigration of you. It is not a commentary on the values that you hold.

But it is a reflection that we live in a white society²¹⁶, marked by whiteness²¹⁷ [Post-reflexive pause—see footnote 216]. It’s not a value statement on your values or your family’s values.”

²¹⁴ Italics indicate the narrator’s voice and moments of transition in the story. As part of this process I altered the text to make the story grammatically correct, flow with more ease, and remove verbal fillers.

²¹⁵ It is important to name how I have gently shifted the original transcript to build the story. I do not believe this alteration of the original transcript text counts as the more nefarious narrative smoothing done to shift in the “plot” of a research story that renders it as a tidied version that does not reflect the stories that were shared. I believe instead, that this narrativizing process (both here and in Exploration Four) serves to “allow meaning to develop while avoiding the deceitfulness of *narrative smoothing*” (Barone, 2001, p. 162, emphasis original). Clandinin and Connolly note that “[n]arrative inquirers help their readers by self-consciously discussing the selections made, the possible alternative stories, and other limitations seen from the vantage point of ‘I, the critic’” (p. 182). I include footnote 214 as an attempt to make my process clear.

²¹⁶ I pause during my post-reflexive walk recounting this story of the pivot to note here: “*I didn’t say supremacist or just said white—which is maybe a hedge that I probably need to think about. Why didn’t I say white supremacist? [long pause punctuated with a deep sigh] Because it’s true. And so why did I hedge there? I just don’t know.*”

²¹⁷ It has been a long path for me to feel comfortable openly using the term white supremacy in my teaching spaces, conversations, and scholarship. I recognize that this stems from my inculcation into whiteness and my familial practice of not speaking about race (race evasive practices and language, which Jupp and Lensmire (2016) recognize that this term has been complicated by second-wave white teacher identity scholars, though I use it here as a recognition that in my family we openly avoided speaking about race because it was seen as rude) or only speaking about race as an otherized marker of identity (Thandeka, 2007). Then I heard Annie Mason speak at the social justice fair in Minneapolis, Minnesota in the fall of 2016 and she named white supremacy—not racism, not bias, but white supremacy as the issue to fight against. She named it and was clear about her interactions in connection with working to dismantle white supremacy (She also includes a note about this explicit naming in her 2016 piece which I cite multiple times in this dissertation). I started to take a page from her work. After that workshop, I was not initially able to name it, but I shifted in my racial consciousness and speaking about whiteness more openly. I remember when I would use the euphemism “people who look like me” to not name whiteness but imply it. In the last two semesters I taught the class I openly named the influence of white supremacy in children’s literature and that it was a tool to normalized/or did normalize dominant white narratives. There was not euphemistic speaking—I just named it, openly and clearly, following Annie’s model.

Referring back to my second slide and pointing to the space between the Harry Potter series and One Crazy Summer (Williams-Garcia, 2010), I continued, “You can see where my line is, right²¹⁸? When you get to One Crazy Summer, you can see the difference in my readership²¹⁹. This is a hard process that I've gone through and I don't want you to feel judged. I just want you to take a moment and think about the books that you have read.”

Then I moved to the next transition slide²²⁰ as a way of beginning the transition to analysis, “And I think it's important to talk about those beloved books. I think that's really essential to start disrupting²²¹ there.”

I shifted to the next slide with the list of questions to ask about the protagonists in the books saying, “Again, it is not about you, it's not a judgment, it's not about your values. Right?”

If you feel comfortable, you're welcome to talk about these with your elbow partner, but if you don't really want to, you could work through the books on your own.... I closed by asking them to do some reflective thinking in their journals²²² about the analysis process and what they noticed.

²¹⁸ In my post-reflexive walk transcript I also note: “So, I guess the biggest decision I made today, knowing that I'm thinking about reading whitely, was talking about the moment when my own reading practices changed. I've never done that before. My students have never asked for it before either.” The request came in the form of an exit ticket written at the end of the first class. A student asked if I would share my readerography titles, if I were to make one. Sharing my own titles is a great addition to the process. As I will demonstrate, it allowed me to frame the pivot by demonstrating my own inculcation in a readership of whiteness and revealed, in clear visual display, how I read whitely.

²¹⁹ I chose my book list, based on my own reading experiences, but also with purpose (my list is featured on slide two of Figure 13: Presentation Slides: Readerography Discussion and Pivot). “The list, especially in the beginning, is white, white, white, white, white, white, white. And then more recently, protagonists of color.” I continually reinforce that I read whitely.

²²⁰ In the transcript of the post-reflexive walk I note that the slide came from a presentation at Hamlin University. When I presented there, I led a group of strangers through a similar process and knew I would need more scaffolding because it was a one and done interaction that was unlikely to develop long-term relationships. It went well during the conference and I realized it could work similarly in LE 3004. My worries about previous work with the pivot were at play in this moment. I even discussed this concern in my preliminary exams, as noted here: I added that slide “to try to make it a little bit of transition. I just talked about that in my prelims and thinking about how you make that move.”

²²¹ SHOCK: When I relistened to this for this recording for analysis here, I was surprised that I had used that word in my description of the pivot. After some reflection, I believe that while I used that term in the recording of what happened in class, it feels like a reconstruction of the memory of what had happened in the class a few hours previously.

²²² The journal entries from that afternoon (first section) and the class session four (second section) serve as the phenomenological material taken up in Exploration Four below.

Grounding the Pivot: Understand and Critique the Existing Social Order

In Ladson-Billings original conception of Culturally Relevant pedagogy (1995) she named three aspects of the theory: academic achievement, cultural competence, and the sociopolitical consciousness or the capacity to understand and critique the existing social order. Teachers implementing culturally relevant pedagogy need to move beyond lip service or partial enactment and embrace a lived-out commitment to these three components of the theory. In her 2014 revisit of the now widely accepted and oft quoted theory, Ladson-Billings emphasized that in practice, educators often take up static understanding of cultural relevance, noting that they “seem stuck in very limited and superficial notions of culture” (p. 77). She continues with a discussion of how the third aspect of culturally relevant pedagogy is often overlooked in people’s enactment of the theory, stating, “[e]ven when people have demonstrated a more expansive knowledge of culture, few have taken up the sociopolitical dimensions of the work, instead dulling its critical edge or omitting it altogether” (p.77). Guided by this mandate, I seek to provide critical consciousness-raising opportunities²²³ in my pedagogical practices as a teacher educator that were not present in my work as a teacher²²⁴ or the educational experiences I encountered in my own teacher preparation program.

²²³ BOTTOM LINE: As an emerging scholar and a teacher educator who is still honing my craft, this is an ongoing learning process which takes intentional practice and self-reflection. I value creating opportunities for critical consciousness raising, but I also know that my own lived identity as a cis-het middle-class able-bodied white female is always at work in these practices. As second-wave white teacher identity studies continues to reiterate: white racial consciousness is not a one and done process, it is a complex and entangled reality that requires continuous interrogation and reconsideration. In a world steeped in white supremacy that has privileged my very existence, I must continue to seek praxis through reflection and action. I must be vigilant to see where my thinking reverts to racism and normative discourses of the majority, and continually recommit to anti-racist actions and equity-focused practices as a person, educator, and teacher educator.

²²⁴ SHOCK/ASSUMPTIONS OF NORMALITY: I lived in the world for almost 40 years, taught elementary school for more than 14 years, and still I had very little consciousness of my own white racialized identity. As a teacher, I had strived for equity and inclusivity in the books that I recommended,

This moment of pivot is intended to shine a light on the ways in which my students' reading practices have been implicitly and explicitly shaped by white cultural norms and serve as an initial step to build awareness of, and disrupt, that force. I am attempting to build the pedagogical opportunities for preservice teachers to look at their lived experiences through a different lens. Because "in our attempt to ensure that those who have been previously disadvantaged by schooling receive quality education, we also want those in the mainstream to develop the kinds of skills that will allow them to critique the very basis of their privilege and advantage" (Ladson-Billings, 2014, p. 83). In order to embrace inclusive literature, preservice teachers need to understand and critique the current conditions of children's and adolescent literature, both in their own reading lives and the larger field. By coming to see the predominance of whiteness in these two areas, they are more equipped to build new reading experiences that disrupt the status quo and become transformative. This process often begins with a catalytic seeing of what has been previously unseen, or what Freire calls conscientization²²⁵. Considering theories of praxis and conscientization as a disruption of oppression (Freire, 1970) opens the pedagogies and enactments of the pivot as a place of consciousness raising. Through this analysis, the pivot can also be explored as a tool to develop culturally relevant teaching practices where the participants not only critique the current social order of their future

selected, and read with my students, but my unexplored whiteness undermined those goals. I was quite angry, guilty, shocked, and disappointed when I came to understand this lack of consciousness and how it had lived out in my classroom in damaging ways. My assumption of normality is that my students, without consciousness-raising opportunities, will have the same experience as mine.

²²⁵ Freire (1970) calls this conscientização, which is often translated to conscientization. "Humankind emerge from their submersion and acquire the ability to intervene in reality as it is unveiled. Intervention in reality—historical awareness itself—thus represents a step forward from emergence, and results from the *conscientização* of the situation. *Conscientização* is the deepening of the attitude of awareness characteristic of all emergence" (p. 109, emphasis original). I will revisit this concept of emergence from Freire's work as I bring it to my analytic process below.

classrooms, but also seek to change it. In the next section, I explicate this theoretical path, thinking through Freire's concepts of conscientization and praxis as means to understand and disrupt oppression.

Theory at Work: Freirean Conceptions and Disruptions of Oppression

In his seminal work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Paulo Freire (1970) explores the nature of oppression, oppressive educational practices that justify and reify oppression, and liberatory practices that build a path to revolution and freedom. Born out of his work educating poor and illiterate Brazilians, this pedagogical, political, theoretical treatise on oppression and education serves as a model for transformative education. Throughout the world, interactions with this powerful text guide educators to move beyond pedagogies that oppress, to ones that liberate and work to dismantle oppression.

Oppression is maintained in many ways throughout society. It is normalized on a large scale through economic structures and institutions of a nation. It is reinforced in the places people gather: the classrooms, office buildings, workplaces, and places of worship. But it is also present on the small scale of the close relationships we have with each other in communities, families, and friendships. Children develop in both the macro and the micro contexts that surround them, but they take on the discourses that surround them first, the ones that come from their family and then their educational experiences. Freire comments on this, sharing "they almost always bring with them the mark of their origin: their prejudices and deformations" (60). After years of being steeped in these discourses, both at home and at school, children are shaped by these normalized realities that must subsequently be examined and disrupted through reflection and eventual action, which

leads to praxis²²⁶. With many discourses of dominance beginning in the formative experiences of our development into adulthood they slip into the background and become the reality of an unseen normal that has always been present.

It Begins with Awareness: Praxis and Conscientization

The throwing off the shackles of oppression begins with an individual being able to recognize dominant discourses and understand how those discourses are at work both in their lives and in the world. Furthermore, one must come to recognize how the realities of hegemonic dominance have served to marginalize and/or privilege both on a personal and communal level. As Freire says, “they [the oppressed] will not gain this liberty by chance but through the praxis of their quest of it, through their recognition of the necessity to fight for [liberation]. But their perception of themselves as oppressed is impaired by their submission in the reality of oppression” (45). It is the growing of a critical consciousness that is important as an initializing act.

In neoliberal society—where everything, including race, is viewed as private property to be commodified and every person is equated to their measured value (Melamed, 2011)—the white participants in my study certainly are not the oppressed²²⁷. Yet they have been indoctrinated in a society of oppression that they do not see because

²²⁶ Freire focuses on the importance of action and reflection through a footnote that makes them equal and then relates them to the following construction: word = work = praxis (p.87) as a demonstration of his meaning of the word praxis. In the openings for this section of the chapter, I will explore the reflective aspect of praxis, without focusing on action. It is my hope that my work does lead to reflection+ action = praxis for my students in their book selections and in their future classrooms. Though for this part of the study, I am not able to fully access that enacted next step in the phenomenological materials under review.

²²⁷ BOTTOM LINE: Certainly not in the way that Freire writes about oppression and the oppressed in his work. Yet in some ways, they are the privileged oppressed who benefit from the system and are also oppressed by their role as tools to maintain it. CONNECT: When I first read Freire’s work I realized that as a woman I have been oppressed in a patriarchal society that values men more than it does women—but as a white cis-het middle-class woman with all the other markers of the majority I am more of an oppressor than I am one who is oppressed.

they do not want to, because they are naïve, or for any other myriad of complex reasons. In the hierarchy of society, they exist at a realm of privilege and benefit, and act as sub-oppressors, maintaining the status quo of the powerful elite in a white supremacist society, at times remaining negligently unaware of how they uphold and reinforce oppression. As Freire notes, “[e]ducation as the exercise of domination stimulates the credulity of students, with the ideological intent (often not perceived by educators) of indoctrinating them to adapt to the world of oppression” (1970, p. 78). As teachers serving in institutions that perpetuate the status quo and reinforce oppression of minoritized youth, they must have opportunities for praxis, to perceive that which has not been perceived, in order to confront that oppression and adopt truly culturally relevant and liberatory teaching practices.

Because much of the work of oppression is veiled and hidden in the systems of a society, it can be especially difficult to perceive, especially for those whose privilege is obscured and who do not face dehumanization of being minoritized. “And as an individual perceives the extent of dehumanization, he or she may ask if humanization is a viable possibility. Within history, in concrete, objective contexts, both humanization and dehumanization are possibilities for a person as an uncompleted being conscious of their incompleteness.” (Freire, 1970, p. 43). We do not know what is unseen, and we don’t see these normalizing influences because they have fully meshed with the fabric of our lives.

Reading Whitely Takes Shape: A Learning Experience Rooted in Conscientization

An important factor in the facilitation of the pivot during my classes is that I am not asking students to do something that I have not done myself. As a teacher educator

who attempts to model good teaching practice and teacherly ways of being (Davey, 2013), my own praxis around reading whitely reverberates in this phenomenological material. Through the interventions of my doctoral studies, caring mentors, scholars in the field and a growing commitment to disrupt white supremacy I began to realize that I read whitely²²⁸. This initial conscientization was not always comfortable²²⁹, especially as I came to see how I was complicit in the system of oppression, but it was necessary. I needed a catalyst to “emerge from [my] submersion [into dominant reading experiences steeped in whiteness] and acquire the ability to intervene in reality as it is unveiled” (Freire, 1970, p. 109). How could my teaching practices and learning activities, especially the pivot²³⁰, be the catalyst that guided conscientization and praxis regarding children’s literature and reading whitely²³¹ for my students?

Opening One: Emerge from Submersion—A Reflection. I Read Whitely

The task of the pivot is twofold: to interrogate nostalgia through reflection and develop conscientization about the ways that dominant patterns of representation have

²²⁸ BOTTOM LINE: At the time I would not have called it reading whitely, but now I recognize it as the process by which I started to see how dominant reading experiences steeped in whiteness had shaped my reading practices, both in my life and in my classroom.

²²⁹ “When the immensity and depth of the physical and psychological violence continually committed against minoritized peoples is considered, the majority of it by *nice* people, we realize that the cost in suffering and lost lives is too high to keep tiptoeing around Whiteness and trying to appease and placate White people with velvet gloves” (Hayes & Juarez, 2009, p. 742)

²³⁰ In revisiting this question, I also ask: Could the pivot, the act of critical analysis of their beloved books, serve as spark to ignite both aspects of praxis? Could the pivot, a provocation of reading whitely, reveal a reality about something they had experienced but never really distinguished? As I was trying to think with the theories of praxis and conscientization, it was helpful to consider how those concepts could guide the analysis in these openings.

²³¹ CONNECT/DISCONNECT: The new analytic question that emerges from the process as I am plugging in Freirean theory is: How could the pivot help students/participants emerge from their submersion in reading whitely and acquire the ability to intervene and disrupt reading whitely in their own reading practices and beyond? I have wrestled with how thinking with Freire could reveal the ways that reading whitely was taking shape in the pivot. This section was quite challenging as I was crafting, writing, deleting whole sections of thinking through, and post-reflexing. Yet, I knew there was something to grapple with here and kept playing with the theory until I settled on this quote and this aspect of conscientization and praxis that proved to be revelatory for my analytic process.

been lived out in the valued texts that have been included on readerography lists. To explore this “emersion from their submersion” in reading whitely, I focus on slides three and four from Figure 13: Presentation Slides: Readerography Discussion and Pivot where I guide this process as the focal phenomenological materials under review in this opening. By focusing on these two key pedagogical components that guide the pivot, with slide three serving as the pre-pivot preparation and the questions of slide four functioning as the actant that provokes reading whitely, I am able to more deeply explore the ways that reading whitely flows, leaks, ebbs, and is provoked through this opening in the phenomenon.

Taking a closer look at our favorites is central to the process of **being open** to considering literature from many perspectives. It **DOES NOT negate their value**, just adds a layer of **food for thought**. This is essential for our classroom/life practice in a world that is **often dominated by the norms of the majority**. (Figure 13, slide three, capitalized emphasis original, bolded emphasis added)

As noted previously, this purposeful transition to the pivot is a new addition to this process that I used as a pre-emergence preparation. It is intended to guide students to both make a shift in how they think about the books on their lists and prepare them for the reflective work needed to begin a journey to praxis about reading whitely. It gives them a moment of cognitive acclimatization that attunes them, at least initially, to the work that is to come. The content of this slide and the verbal facilitation that accompanies it, discussed below in Opening Two, serves as the interstitial space between the open and unguided conversations

that had filled the room previously and the critical analysis that is to come. While not all students are open to a critical interrogation of their titles, most begin to attune themselves to something that has always been present but has often or always been unseen.

There are two moves at work in this transitional shift, one to gently guide the student/participants to an openness that facilitates a recognition that they are submerged in reading whitely, and the other that is intended to prepare them for the discomfort that they might feel at that realization. This discomfort can reverberate in different ways when they comprehend how white cultural and hegemonic norms have dominated their lists and lead to reading whitely. In my experience, this discomfort is palpable in the room as it is filled with moments of surprise, guilt, defensiveness, avoidance, or sad acceptance²³² as they come to see their favorite books in a new light. When thinking about emergence from contexts in which we have been submerged, they are often the normalized pool in which we have been swimming hidden by their ubiquity and our unseen acceptance of their influence. I use phrases like “being open” and “food for thought” to key them into the processes of reflection that are to come.

²³² BOTTOM LINE: None of the phenomenological materials of this study formally revealed many of these more negative responses of discomfort. Though I would say that I felt them in the room and in the way that the class’ energy shifted during the pivot. This is a limitation of being the instructor/participant/researcher in that I cannot completely step back and explore these emotions beyond my own embodied interactions in the room at the time. In future, I plan to use Lived Experience Descriptions (LED) a phenomenological tool created by Max Van Manen as a means to capture these emotions and reactions in a more concrete manner.

Secondly, I use the phrases, “does not negate the book’s value²³³” and note how our world is “often dominated in the norms the majority” as a bridge to initially minimize potential defensive responses. Picower refers to this defensive response as one of the emotional tools of whiteness “serving to obfuscate the concepts being introduced” and serve as a “tool of protection [rather] than a simple emotional response” one that emerged when preservice teachers in her study were confronted with concepts of racism” (2009, p. 205). I am attempting to create a space for deep thinking and critical self-reflection that is not hampered by defensiveness. This is, in part, why I do not name white supremacy as the place of submergence on this slide, instead using the terms “dominance” and “majority” as the placeholder. This is a purposeful pedagogical choice where I am capitalizing on “the currency of my own whiteness” (Mason, 2016, p. 1047) as a location for disrupting white supremacy. This moment sets the stage for my ability to speak openly about white supremacy in children’s literature in an environment of trust with my students.

As a white teacher educator attempting to dismantle white supremacy, I must also acknowledge this capital based in my white privilege allows me to have both a place in the academy steeped in whiteness and more power to speak about whiteness than others (Matias & Mackey, 2016). In a society where white racialization exploits the fact that whiteness is experienced as the normed and non-raced status for white people²³⁴

²³³ Truthfully though, genuine emergence from reading whitely might render formerly favorite books less valuable for them in the future. At this time, in the reflection aspect of praxis, that promise, while potentially false, gives an opening that can lead to action and emergence.

²³⁴ Leonardo and Porter note that “[p]eople of color already know that whites comprise a racial group, therefore white raciality would not represent a shocking discovery for them” (2010, p. 150). This is often the tension of working with white racial consciousness development—how to do the work without recentering whiteness and further marginalizing and/or damaging the BIPOC who are also present.

(Lensmire, 2017; Leonardo, 2004; Leonardo & Porter, 2010; Thandeka, 1999; Ulysse, Berry, & Jupp, 2016) or the “great unsaid” of unvoiced whiteness²³⁵ (Thandeka, p.3) exudes from the lists of books that the participants have created.

As the pivot is enacted, I move from the bridge of slide three to the guiding questions of slide four. These questions provide the first opportunity for the participants to reflect on their lists and, subsequently, their own readership. Furthermore, the questions present a more formal mechanism to highlight, at least for a moment, their submergence in reading whitely. The questions, then, offer an invitation to begin conscientization by provoking reading whitely. They set the stage for a journey from submergence to emergence, for those who are ready, willing, and able to move forward in this process²³⁶.

*Do any of the books have a **main character** who:*

- Identifies as a cisgender female (not transgender female)²³⁷?
- Is a person of color or is Native/American Indian?
- Follows a religion that is often underrepresented?

²³⁵ Thandeka explores white racialization as the great unsaid through her use of the race game, which she explains in the following way. “I thus believed that if she [the colleague with whom Thandeka was having lunch] drew upon her own experience of being ‘raced,’ she might then be able to see what we had in common. But how could I make her *conscious* of the racialization process to which her own Euro-American community had subjected her? Searching for answer to this question, I invented the Race Game and invited her to play it for a week” (p. 3, emphasis original). The Race Game has one rule: every time you describe a person with Euro-American descent you must use the ascriptive term white, i.e. my white friend Sara; my white husband Shawn, etc. (Thandeka, p. 3).

²³⁶ Not every person who experiences the pivot, who takes a peek out of their submerged reality, chooses to emerge from this submersion or to embrace praxis that leads to enactments of sociopolitical consciousness in their interactions with children’s literature and other classroom experiences. Some will glimpse the reality and then look away, while others will simply stare and take it all in. Racial consciousness work, especially with white people, is a process. The rest of the semester’s work is intended to continue giving clear glimpses into these realities of white supremacy. Some students will be spectators, others will continually look away, and some will not even be able to really understand what they are seeing.

²³⁷ CONNECT/DISCONNECT: The response to this question for many of the cis-female readers in my classes has started to be mostly affirmative. The majority of my students are millennials and Generation Z and I can see the difference in their reading experiences from my Generation X readership, especially with this question. It is much easier to identify agentic and powerful female protagonists on their lists, which demonstrate the way that girl power has lived out in their reading lives. The question is still revelatory for the cis-male students in my classes, who often have been socialized to avoid “girl books” that might more likely feature powerful female protagonists.

- Is differently abled or deals with mental health concerns?
- Is from a low socioeconomic or working-class family or background?
- Identifies as LGBTQ+?
- Has a family structure that is often underrepresented?

As participants begin to revisit their lists and think about representation through these questions, some of what has been unseen in a reader's submergence in reading whitely is stripped away. Each question provides a moment of reflection that has the potential to provoke reading whitely. As the repeated answer to each of these questions is in the negative for most of the participants, they begin to see their list of books quite differently. The unseen markers of the majority on their list suddenly emerge and a new understanding of how reading whitely has been living out in their readership begins to develop. Their readerographies, then, serve as both an actant that gathers productions of reading whitely and as a catalyst that provokes the phenomenon and brings it into view in new way for most participants. They may not be aware of how much reading whitely has produced their lists and is also being produced in their lists. These questions bring a magnifying lens to what would have been painfully obvious for some at first glance. But it seems to have remained unrealized before the pivot for most of the students and participants that I have done this work with over time. The readerography lists reflect white majority norms and include protagonists of the same. Reading whitely is undeniably present, taking shape and provoked and provoking in the readership norms that are shared in the readerographies.

The pedagogical underpinning of the pivot begins with an understanding that unless there is purposeful change in preservice teacher education in regard to white racialization and racial consciousness, the gap between teachers and students will continue to grow wider and will become more impossible to close (Sleeter, 2001). As a

teacher educator, I felt it was important for my students to interrogate the “business as usual” (aspects of text selection that stem from their own experience) and “continue to widen the gap” in representation that reflects the students who will be in their classrooms, especially in light of the continued demographic discrepancy between teachers and students. Based on my experiences of valuing the books I knew and loved²³⁸ as my preferred classroom texts, I knew that teachers often use favorite or cherished texts in their classrooms without thinking more critically about readership outside of their own experiences. This can lead to not thinking more deeply about representation and continuing the status quo of the apprenticeship of readership that does not promote and actively seek out both mirror and window readers for every member of a classroom community.

My implementation of the readerography as a place for critical reflection of the books that shaped readership reflects this reality. I realized that it was important to develop critical knowledges around children’s literature as a culturally relevant teaching practice that worked toward sociopolitical consciousness. It is my hope that these critical knowledges move beyond reflection to embrace action and demonstrate praxis and that the preservice teachers who experienced a moment of emergence from reading whitely

²³⁸ I often remind my students that there is room for sharing, reading, and enjoying these books in any classroom, but if they are the *only* books and if they *only* reflect the majority that absolutely must be changed. When I frame this using another angle, focusing on genre and not representation, it sometimes brings clarity. I have been able to shift student thinking by asking: What if I only had books in my classroom that were my favorite genre of fantasy, would I be meeting the needs of all of my readers or closing reading off for readers who do not enjoy reading the same genre? Most readers have experienced required reading of genres and titles that are outside of their reading preferences. That can be amazing, bringing new discoveries or it can be an odious and hateful activity that is anathematic to their continued enjoyment of reading. While I do not equate preferred genre to the affirmation of being accurately represented in the literature that you read, this discursive move can be helpful for white preservice teachers to be more open to embracing inclusive and nonwhite literature in their classrooms.

through the pivot will enact a commitment to equitable literacy practices that embrace balanced bookshelves (Derman-Sparks, 2013)²³⁹ in their classrooms and learning communities. That the gap in readership, representation, and mirror reads between white teachers and BIPOC students will begin to shrink, one student, one teacher, and one classroom at a time.

So often, children’s literature is positioned as cute, simple, or neutral and free of hegemonic discourses (Derman-Sparks, 2013; Stephens, 1992; Thomas, 2016) because it is crafted for young people. That is when assumptions about children’s literature that have been rendered invisible and normalized in a white supremacist society must be investigated. And while awareness of this reality—conscientization—is a starting place, Freirean praxis, as noted above, takes both reflection and action. Sociopolitical consciousness of culturally relevant pedagogy follows a similar structure: teachers need to be able to understand and critique the current social order. I see the pivot as the initiator of conscientization and a starting place for the reflective aspect of praxis. Through supported reflection and conscientization about their own reading lists, reading whitely is provoked and momentarily made visible in their own reading practices. This initial moment of awareness hopefully serves as the seed that will germinate into full praxis²⁴⁰ and eventually bloom into social change that is the result of both reflection and action.

²³⁹ CONNECT/DISCONNECT: My friend and colleague, Dr. Megan Van Deventer, often uses the term “balanced bookshelf” as a shorthand for Louise Derman-Sparks (2013) work in the “Guide for Selecting Anti-Bias Children’s Books.” Balanced bookshelves are created with a clear focus on anti-bias representation that is lacking stereotype and tokenism and are collections of books that have both mirror and window reads that are equitable and expansive enough to represent all the students in a classroom

²⁴⁰ Because the pivot is centered on that initial moment of conscientization and reflection, the other half of Freirean praxis, action, is outside of the scope of this phenomenological material from the beginning of the semester. I do see students who begin praxis during the semester. Their action that stems from moments of

*Opening Two: The Challenge of Praxis—Moving Beyond the Guilt to Intervene
in Reading Whitely*

Dominant discourses that constitute most institutions of a society establish our understandings of the normal, the correct, the good, and the valuable, also shaping how we perceive the opposite binaries of those experiences. Subsequently, dominant discourses are woven into the stories that are written on us, about us, and/or that we take up. When these discourses are steeped in the hegemonic structures of whiteness, they reinforce and uphold white supremacy and all its insidious mechanisms of oppression. Often it takes a formal disruption of these normalized discourses to begin the seed of awareness. And suddenly like the moment when Dorothy touches down in Oz, we see for the first time that the world is not black and white but filled with color.²⁴¹ Unlike that fictional sweet young Kansan, we are often not the heroes of the story who conquer the evil witches and bring freedom to the land. We are part of the system that is binding the world in oppression²⁴². Discerning that everyday truth of humanity can be a challenging and painful realization.

During class, I verbally guide the students and I am prepared to support this realization. I am ready for the potential discomfort that they may feel as I facilitate the

reflection during the rest of the semester is clear as they consistently select books outside of their normalized reading practices, interrogate the hidden messages of books, are critical about books that are on their lists, embrace inclusive books in ways that demonstrate a new commitment to that practice beyond the requirements of LE 3004. It is difficult to know if that reflection/action = praxis remains with them as they move into their own classrooms. I have noted this as an area for further study in Chapter Six.

²⁴¹ ASSUMPTIONS OF NORMALITY: As I explain this process using a metaphoric turn that is based on the work of a white cis-male author who has known racist ideologies and writings, I am compelled to recognize that reality. This is a very white framing of the racial conscientization process that represents my norm and does not represent a unilateral or monolithic experience. It reflects my own development and the racial consciousness work I have seen in many of my white students.

²⁴² This system capitalizes on the fact that “we know who we are by what is familiar, understandable, usable, negotiable; we know who we are not by what is foreign, opaque, unwieldy, unproductive” (Wenger, 1998, p. 153).

pivot using slides three and four. That preparation is clear in the language choices that I used to describe what I said on the night I did this work with my participants in the first section. These statements from my post-reflexive walk transcript, with bolded emphasis for analysis demonstrate how I was purposefully building bridges to support my student/participants with this work:

- I'm going to ask you to **do something** that may be kind of **difficult**, but I think it's really important to our journey into our process of looking at protagonists and books and looking at representation.
- We are going to take a minute and actually look at the books on your list. And it is **not a denigration of you**. It is **not a commentary on the values that you hold**.
- But it is a reflection that we live in a white society, marked by whiteness. It's **not a value statement on your values or your family's values**.

Because I know that their potential discomfort can either shut them down or serve as a powerful catalyst, I am purposeful about how I guide this process. It is a provocation that has the power to shift our thinking and disrupt reading whitely. My word choice reveals that I expect and anticipate my participants' potential discomfort and attempts to smooth the process slightly to engage with that provocation and empower it to be revelatory and transformative. Looking more closely at the words I used I can see how each is a response to the different modes of students' past reactions, most specifically guilt/shame²⁴³. They are also based on my own experiences of coming to understand my complicity in white supremacy and recognizing that I was a product of that system.

²⁴³ CONNECT/DISCONNECT: I find that Thandeka (2007) complicates my understanding of guilt by noting that it "is a feeling that results from a wrongful deed, a self-condemnation for what one has done..." (p. 13) which can be remedied by making amends or providing compensation. Where shame, she contends, cannot be remedied because it "results not from something one did wrong, but rather from a [deeply private feeling] that something is wrong with oneself" (p. 13). I use the guilt/shame construction to capture that idea and recognize that my students might be feeling one or both of these feelings during this process.

In the past when I guided students through the pivot, just as I experienced in this enactment of the critical analysis process, I always sense a large amount of guilt/shame in the room at the realization of how whiteness and white cultural norms are lived out in their reading lists. There is a moment where everyone²⁴⁴ in the room feels slightly aghast at the reality of their reading lists. They have reveled in the titles and shared reading experiences and it seems like they do the same after they begin working through the questions I provide for critical analysis and begin to experience the pivot. Leonardo and Porter (2010) suggest “[a]uthentic race discussions are violent to whites for the very reason that such discussions would expose their investment in race, their full endorsement of, rather than, flippant regard for it. It speaks to the inauthentic education that whites’ experience” (p. 150). I anticipate that rise of guilt/shame and consider how I might mitigate it to provide a path for my students to remain open, though I recognize that discomfort is often part of the process. By using each of these bolded phrases—**do something difficult, not a denigration of your values, not a commentary on the values you hold, not a value statement on your values or your family's value**—I am attempting to balance the discomfort of shutting down with need to be open enough to interrogate and confront their reading practices and the systems of whiteness that swirl around children’s literature in a way that is not stifling but leads to praxis. I am also attempting to be aware of how this process can negatively impact BIPOC students/participants in white spaces where white consciousness raising work is taking place. It is the tension of teacher

²⁴⁴ I recognize this as an embodied feeling in the room that was hard to capture outside of my lived experience of the pivot and my perception of the way it was taken up in that moment. I will explore specific student responses below. They do not ever formally name their feelings as guilt but more as surprise. BOTTOM LINE: It is important to note that this is the response that I expected, worried about, and experienced myself when I had my personal pivot and my realization that my reading selections were not inclusive. These factors most certainly shape the way I read my participants reactions to the pivot.

educators and teacher preparation programs, as Amos (2016) discusses: to support racial consciousness development for white people in ways that do not reinscribe whiteness, deny a lived reality of racialization and minoritization, and cause further damage and trauma for BIPOC students in the same spaces.

Accordingly, in the DNA of the pivot, in my conceptualization of the readerography assignment, as noted in Chapter Four, is the understanding that I am prepared for students to be uncomfortable being confronted with the realities of their very white and very dominant normalized representation in their reading lists. As noted above, I anticipate them feeling guilt (Picower, 2009; Thandeka, 2007), shame (Lensmire, 2017; Thandeka, 2007), but I must also be ready for moments of possibly white fragility (DiAngelo, 2011) and the feeling that they are not good white²⁴⁵ readers. According to Thompson (2003) “[t]he desire to be and to be known as a good white person stems from the recognition that our whiteness is problematic, a recognition that we try to escape by being demonstrably different from other, racist whites” (p. 4). This is not intended to essentialize the complex experiences, responses, and racialization of the white participants²⁴⁶ in LE 3004, but to recognize that conscientization is often permeated with a complex multiplicity of responses as people come to terms with the ways in which white supremacy is at work in the world and has unknowingly shaped their lived experience.

²⁴⁵ DiAngelo continues by noting that “Not only do such discursive moves shift the blame for racism to more obviously blameworthy whites, but they shift the focus of the antiracist project to whites who *really* have a problem” (p. 4).

²⁴⁶ Or to ignore the fact that BIPOC participants are also steeped in this system of readership that is oozing with reading whitely and may have uninterrogated internalized whiteness around their lists of books and reading experiences.

Because white supremacy is such an insidious force that is always seeking to overtly and covertly maintain the status quo of white racial hegemony, the feelings of discomfort have the capacity to create walls that close off opportunities to open themselves up to conscientization. I anticipate the challenging moment that the participants in my study might have when they begin to understand the manner in which oppression has been systematically enacted in the world.

In order for white racial hegemony to saturate everyday life, it has to be secured by a process of domination, or those acts, decisions, and policies that white subjects perpetrate on people of color. As such, a critical pedagogy of white racial supremacy revolves less around the issue of unearned advantages, or the *state* of being dominant, and more around direct processes that secure domination and the privileges associated with it. (Leonardo, 2004, p. 137).

When they start to glimpse how this system of oppression works, possibly for the first time, it can and should be jarring. It is natural, perhaps, upon coming face to face with this reality that some white students, who struggle to look at the ways in which the system has made them complicit, might enact potentially distancing responses. These may be responses of guilt/shame that are paralyzing, white tears (Accapadi, 2007) that deflect racial trauma and racism and turn it into white discomfort/pain, and/or good white people-ism that continues to claim: I am not like those racist white people, I am a good one (Thompson, 2003). Others might take up additional discourses of whiteness as they see reading whitely for the first time. These might bubble up as colorblind rhetoric of “not seeing color/race” that denies the systemic realities of a white supremacist society

(Crowley, 2016; Kreamelmeyer, Kline, Zygmunt, & Clark, 2016), dialogues of resistance/protection (Picower, 2009), diversity discourses that use the “correct language” and still reinscribe stereotypes and avoid openly speaking about race (Mason, 2016). It is important to complicate these possible responses and not treat them like an essentialized reaction to conscientization, but to be prepared for them as potential reactions that close people off from engaging deeply with racial literacy and consciousness development. And while the pivot and how I facilitate sociopolitical conscientization about children’s literature in this course is the tip of the iceberg of white supremacy, it exudes in a space many do not expect it to live: in children’s literature.

Provocation One: Interrogating Nostalgia, Naming White Supremacy, and Exposing Reading Whitely—The Value of Conscientization and Praxis

In my experience, most readers, whether white or BIPOC, are unaware of the veil of whiteness that overlays their reading experiences: from text selection, characterizations of protagonists, to favorite authors and illustrators and the books that have become their most cherished and nostalgic reads and end up on their readerography lists. Part of what obscures whiteness is simply a byproduct of white supremacy. Because we are so deeply entrenched in the oppressive mechanisms of white supremacy: racism, silences, implicit bias, and white privilege, it is insidiously disguised in the normal, the everyday, the taken for granted, the status quo (Flowers, 2016; Leonardo, 2004; Mason, 2016; Matias and Mackey, 2016; Sleeter, 2016). This tacitly bleeds into our reading lives. We read whitely. And without provocation, the way reading whitely is taking shape in our readership might remain uninterrogated, might continue to unknowingly influence our reading practices, might continue to reinforce white supremacy.

Moments like the pivot are crucial tools that provoke reading whitely as a means to intervene and disrupt racialized understandings of what is normal. Gere et al. (2009) state that “racism is so ingrained in our national social and institutional structures as to be almost invisible, that the experiences of Whites should not be accepted as normative [yet they are], and that racism affects every aspect of education” (p. 818). I extend that concept to include our interactions with literature, whether they are home or school-based experiences. Since white middle-class able-bodied cisgender heterosexual discourses are the de facto norms of dominance, reading whitely reflects the dominant experience and mirrors what is most valued in a white supremacist society. The pivot exposes this influence of white supremacy and provokes reading whitely as a means to reveal its presence.

Reading whitely then, is also based in the long legacy of reading literary texts framed through a lens of white cultural norms. The default characters, authors, and illustrators reflect whiteness and are shrouded in both overt and covert expressions of white supremacy. Readership becomes enshrouded in this implicit valuing of whiteness and white identities and covers all aspects of reading. Whiteness and white cultural norms become the default. Because white cultural rules become set as the de facto norms, all others are positioned as of lesser value. As Mason (2016) demonstrates, developing racial awareness of such realities is not a one size fits all or a one-semester cure all. It is a process of realization, consideration, and eventual action (or sometimes inaction and resistance) that takes time and effort. Awareness of reading whitely requires the same processes, interventions, and support that guides students to look past their feelings of discomfort when reading whitely is provoked and to embrace conscientization. It is only

in true praxis that people who read whitely can more fully understand why we need inclusive books and can work to stop reinscribing the predominance of whiteness in their literature choices and reading practices.

Exploration Four: The Aha Moments of the Readerography

In Explorations One, Two, and Three, I began the three-part analysis process by explaining and unpacking the phenomenological materials and their context(s) as a starting place to contemplate how reading whitely was taking shape. Each followed a similar organizational path flowing from phenomenological materials to theory and conceptualizations that would be put to work as analytic tools. The explorations continued with considerations of how reading whitely takes shape—working through openings into the phenomenon that provided the space to put theory and post-reflection to work in conjunction with the phenomenological materials under review. The parallel structures across these explorations provided a path to analysis that was generative and came together cohesively. In this final exploration, as noted in the introduction above, after engaging with the analysis process for some time, it became clear that following a different order of engagement would be more iterative. Thus, I begin this exploration with the theorizing process and conceptualizations that inform this closing analysis, before I highlight the phenomenological materials and begin the formal analysis process.

Theory at Work: Latherian Theorizing²⁴⁷

In this culminating exploration of reading whitely, I will not be bringing a formal theory to the three-part analytic process. Instead, I take up a “scholar as theorist.”

²⁴⁷ CONNECT/DISCONNECT: I connect very deeply to the work of Patti Lather and tend to think her as a scholarly foremother whose work has supported my development as a researcher. While I have not exhaustively consumed every aspect of her scholarship, the pieces I have read resonate with me in

Lather's approach to research and qualitative work and how I engage with it will guide this section. This is perhaps a different approach to engage with theory, but it values the lived theorizing that I have done about reading whitely and is intended to serve as a place of synthesis of the theoretical and conceptual framing that has shaped this research. To enact this technique, I use two aspects of bringing Lather to work: a quote that allows the provocations of reading whitely to explode and be revealed in the phenomenological materials, and a thinking process that reading her work has inspired.

As outlined in Chapter Three, this process uses a full page spread of my post-reflexive journal with the formalized note-taking structure on the left (verso) side of the notebook and an open process for noting the intensities and explosions that flow out of the reading process on the right (recto) side. See Figure 14: Latherian Theorizing Process below. The dynamic process I share in the figure opens up my thinking and chases lines of flight while capturing them visually on a page. I am able to note the identities of a given text and see how that allows me to jump into the rhizome in unexpected ways. It is also a playful way to engage with an embodied post-structural meaning making and the chasing of lines of flight that underpins post-intentional phenomenology²⁴⁸.

meaningful ways that have altered the trajectory of my scholarly path, especially her work and writing around multilayered texts. This section could also be named Thinking with Lather.

²⁴⁸ By using this method of theorizing, I shifted the structure and writing of this section of the chapter. I was able to "turn myself over to the craft and see what came of it" (Vagle, 2018, p. xiv) and open myself to see how reading whitely was taking shape in these phenomenological materials.

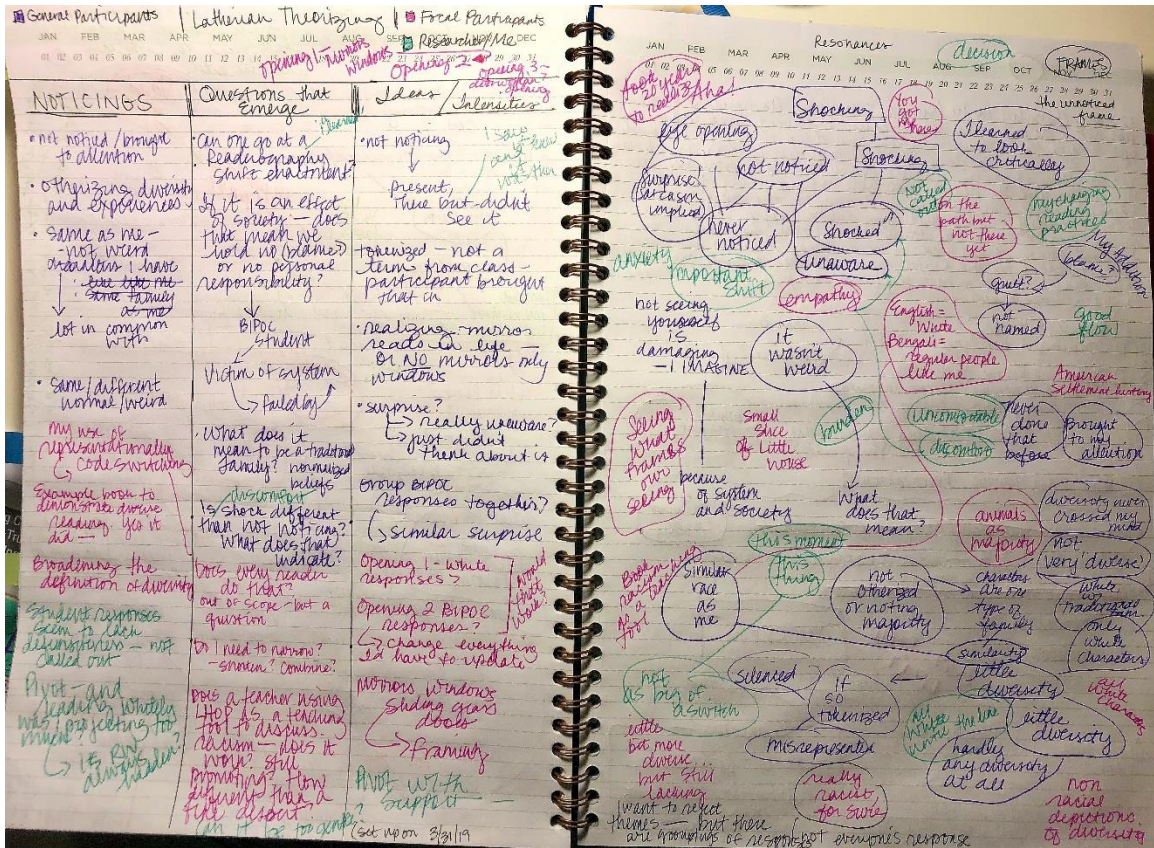


Figure 14: Latherian Theorizing Process

In the last exploration of reading whitely, I employ a quote from Lather’s scholarship about validity in qualitative research and use it as a meaning making path to see how reading whitely has taken shape in the responses to the readerography and the pivot. “It is not a matter of looking harder or more closely, but of seeing what frames our seeing-spaces of constructed visibility and incitements to see which constitute power/knowledge” (Lather, 2007, p. 119)²⁴⁹. Seeing what frames our seeing, as a researcher, is a recognition that we as subjects are always products of the internal and

²⁴⁹ Vagle (2018) points scholars to Lather’s work, adding this exact quote (from the original 1993) to his discussion of post-reflexivity, to emphasize the need for post-intentional phenomenologists to “see what frames our seeing” as part of this approach. He notes that “researchers can learn to pay careful attention to the complex socially-constructed ways in which reality gets framed through our researching and writing as qualitative researchers” (p. 154). I share the quote, citing it from Lather’s later collection of essays, *Getting Lost: Feminist Efforts toward a Double(d) Science*, because it frames the theoretical work of this section.

external structures that consciously and unconsciously impact our meaning making processes. Nothing we say or do is neutral. Bakhtin notes this lack of neutrality in his discussions of dialogic discourse, stating that, “nothing verbal in human behavior (inner and outward speech equally) can under any circumstances be reckoned to the account of the individual subject in isolation; the verbal is not [their] property but the property of [their] *social group* (social milieu) (as cited in Morris, 1994/2003, p. 44, emphasis original²⁵⁰). The way we speak and act in the world is framed by the multiplicities of our identities, social interactions, systems of power, oppressive structures, and the collected realities of our lived experiences. It is a polyphonic conglomeration of our ways of being and knowing in the world. Just as a window frame may fade into the background as we gaze through out the glass, these influences become the normalized structure that is often no longer seen. Unlike a window though, systems of power and oppressive structures, especially for those in the dominant culture, might have never been seen in the first place. It is important to shift our gaze and look more closely at that which has been rendered invisible.

²⁵⁰ I have chosen to render the male pronouns in the original quote gender neutral, as is my practice. Not only is the quote more inclusive, it feels like it is also more representative of the universality of dialogic interactions.

Readerography as Response: Phenomenological Materials in Focus

A Poetic Construction of Participant Responses

In my readerography

the books that I grew up with

the books I chose to read

featured only white characters

most of my main characters
are white, cisgender female

Surprise²⁵¹!

the characters are
either animals
or white children

almost all of the characters were white
and all of them were male

contained 98%
all white characters
with all
the
same
backgrounds

none of them were people of color

not very 'diverse'

main characters were white with
traditional families...
...or animals

I asked you

"What if you just have animals?" ...

...You²⁵² were like:

well, isn't

this

just a

white family? ...

...And I'm like, yeah,

²⁵¹ Written with sarcasm

²⁵² Allie references me here.

you got me there.
You're so right.

It's like [my books] aren't really diverse
because they're just animals.

just how little diversity there was

characters in my book portray
one type of person/family

the little diversity

people in the book look like me
and
have the same family structure as me

it wasn't weird
as a young girl
with a
traditional family
and
normalized beliefs.

I gravitated towards characters
that I had a lot in common with

So that's like one Aha! moment for me...

...the books that were in English,
I saw [the characters] as white...

but the books that I read in Bengali
I saw them as
just
regular
people
like
me.

they were speaking the same
language as I grew up speaking

I knew when I was reading
Esperanza
Rising...

...that I was reading
something that was...

...culturally different
from myself

I think being able to read about
different cultures
backgrounds
religions
[at a] younger [age]...

...I think it would have
made me more curious
open to other cultures...

...especially growing up in
a small
suburban
white
town

while I read books with
people of color...

upon reflecting...

...the books
may have been
falling into the
tokenism
trope

I put Laura Ingalls Wilder
on my list....

...That was the same day we
did the anti-bias thing...

...I was like,
ugh,
you know,
dang
yeah, these are
really racist
for sure...

...it is shocking
to discover...

...just how many people are
misrepresented...

...how many voices
are silenced

I never really noticed this
hardly any diversity at all

before it was brought to my attention

I now realize
a lack of diversity

this process was eye opening

still focused on white protagonists

why is it taking me until
I'm 20 years old
to realize this?

I never noticed

It was really shocking
to realize

I was completely unaware

qualities of diversity
never crossed my mind
back then

made me realize that while mine was
probably a little bit
more diverse than other people's...

...it was
still lacking
in a
lot of ways...

...I was still lacking in understanding
that literature should include
people with disabilities
different sexual identities
and gender identities.

I've never looked at what I've read

I was shocked
at how
similar
all the books were

Now that I think about it...

...I have never read a book
with a main character
that is of a similar race as me and
faces similar experiences that I do...

...this is kind of

because of the
system
and
society
we live in

and that is something that definitely
needs to change.

Never seeing your reflection...

...in the books you read...

...would be quite harmful
for a young child

I imagine.

Reading Notes: A Guide to Experiencing the Voices of LE 3004

The following devices are used in the poem/poetic construction to capture the polyphonic resonance of *14 different* participant reactions to the pivot. The poem is crafted into three columns. These columns serve as visually appealing pathways through the text, at times acting as informal stanzas. In order to provide spaces to consider the way reading whitely is emanating from this phenomenological material, some longer responses span across the three columns. This is indicated by both their consistent font across the columns and by the inclusion of an ellipses to mark the path of the complete response. For the same reason, some of the individual responses have been broken up and separated onto different lines. I use this poetic device to create pauses, emphasize tensions, and provide the reader a different interaction with the voices they are reading. The final lines of this poetic construction are a crafted interpretation of multiple student responses in conversation around the pivot. By shifting the final line to this interpreted conglomeration of responses (both written and overheard in class) I signal that analytic taking up of the pivot. Additionally, throughout the poem, I use two distinct fonts to indicate a change of voice, the shift between different participant responses, as I weave

together different responses. These alternate between Arial (12 pt.) and Courier New (11pt.). All emphasis was added to pinpoint key moments.

Reading Whitely Takes Shape: Seeing What Frames our Reading

Opening One: Sharing the Voices of my Participants—A Poetic Construction

To highlight the voices of my participants, I include selections from different responses to the pivot crafted together in a single text as a poetic construction²⁵³ meant to highlight the polyphony of experiences that these responses represent. Like the list of titles included in Chapter Four²⁵⁴, this new gathering of individual phenomenological materials constitutes a new whole and serves as an opening into provocations of reading whitely echoing in and through this study. I selected responses from two different perspectives: ten general participant responses written in their class journals and focal participants' discussion during the interviews. Taking up these different perspectives helps to illuminate productions and provocations of reading whitely in valuable ways. The general participant responses occurred as reflective thinking and processing during class, directly after the pivot²⁵⁵. The responses are more immediate and captured a

²⁵³ With deep gratitude to Dr. Lee C. Fisher who, though he was deep in his dissertation editing process, helped me work through this idea and validated my theorizing process. We were supposed to be on the phone wrangling with Bakhtin's theories, which Lee takes up in Chapter Four of his dissertation and was editing at the time. He generously "gave me the floor" to talk through the possibility of sharing my participant's voices in this way.

²⁵⁴ This construction/compilation of titles is also featured in the second section of the chapter and is represented on the lower quadrant of the Analysis Matrix. This is a purposeful analytic move that further demonstrates the interconnectedness of the phenomenological materials selected for analysis.

²⁵⁵ Due to some in-the-moment shifting of the schedule, based on the needs of the students in section two (the late afternoon/evening class with more students), I opted to move their pivot discussion to the beginning of class three. It was clear from our interactions through the second class, marked with slumped bodies, tired-looking eyes, and a general malaise, that they would not have the right mental frame to do this more difficult task. Throughout the semester I would shift the order of activities for the second section. Many students in this class had come from at least two other classes and ours was their last of the day. Three-hour classes are often a challenge, and when you add a layer of being the last three-hour class of the day (after more than one other class) and the class's ability to be fully present is diminished. As a

specific moment in time. The four focal participants provide a perspective after the passage of time, as their interviews took place long after the class was completed. The interviews occurred between nine to sixteen months after the pivot had happened in class, depending on the participant. Together, they reveal a resonance of how reading whitely was provoked in their responses and was provoking their responses.

Kumashiro (2002), suggests that the use of poetry in his writing is “an attempt to have my participants and me speak to the reader...The mode of address changes, the audience changes, and, as a result, the reader’s response can also change” (p. 21). By composing a multivocal poem that includes similar but different sentiments about the experience of the pivot, I hope to follow a similar path and demonstrate the ways that reading whitely is resonating in the participant’s lived experiences. Reading whitely is the unit of analysis, not my participants, or how they experience reading whitely. Their response to the pivot, especially when arranged and woven together in this manner highlights the pulsations of the phenomenon and how it has been provoked through the critical review of readerography titles.

It is important to note that the poem is a crafted text that reflects my choices, interpretations, and considerations as its creator. Kumashiro notes this in his own work,

I do not purport to say, ‘this is *the* story,’ or even, ‘this is my participant’s story.’ Rather, I claim only a partial interpretation. Furthermore, I purport neither to give the reader an unbiased window through which to understand my participants’ experiences, not to provide the reader with

responsive educator I continued to adjust the flow of the class throughout the semester to make the learning environment as conducive as possible for the students, often asking for their feedback through that process.

presumably objective data against which ‘claims’ can be tested. Rather, I present a literary lens that I hope will force readers to acknowledge their own interpretive lenses and interpretive labors in understanding my participants experiences (2002, p. 22, emphasis original).

Reading across all of the general participant responses, there were many moments that revealed different ways that reading whitely was taking shape. They were evocative and interesting, but I noticed one major trend that captured my attention and narrowed my selection. The participant responses I selected expressed surprise, shock, or newfound recognition that they had not noticed the lack of representation on their lists. As noted throughout the dissertation, this is not necessarily unexpected when you know the statistics of the predominance of white protagonists across books published for young people (CCBC, 2019; Dahlen, 2017; Thomas, 2016; Welch, 2016)—but most people, in my experience, do not know or underestimate this overabundance of white representation.

The construction of the poem was also informed by the themes that emerged from the Latherian Theorizing process. In many ways, that renders the construction of the poem as means of analysis and a product of interpreting the phenomenological materials through the three-part process. Reading whitely was provoked in the participant responses and radiated intensities that took shape as I unpacked the phenomenological materials and crafted them into the poetic construction. The intensities and explosions of the phenomenon that I captured on the right (recto) side reverberated with similar pulses, and connections were revealed as I worked to deconstruct the wholes of the responses and take them up theoretically. It was through my purposeful clustering of these

intensities and explosions of reading whitely that I wanted to engender a similar experience for my readers. Though, in keeping with my understanding of phenomenon to be partial, made and unmade, and ever changing, I envision that each reader will engage with, sense and make sense of, and experience these intensities and explosions (and others that I could not anticipate) in both ways that I expect and ways that exceed my ability to predict. This is a powerful outgrowth of both the Latherian Theorizing process and the process/product of the poetic construction itself.

*Opening Two: New Noticings, Eye Openings, and Shocks—Readerography So White*²⁵⁶

The pivot and the process of critically examining favorite books was revelatory, eliciting different emotions of newfound awareness, as it provoked reading whitely for my participants. Through this process, at least for the participant responses featured in the poetic construction, reading whitely was brought from the background norm of their readership to the forefront. For white participants, reading whitely exploded into their consciousness in a way that it had not done before. For BIPOC participants, the process revealed a force that had been present but faded to the background through the normalizing discourses of white supremacy. That which was taken for granted in all the participants' readership was now under the spotlight to be seen more clearly and interrogated. It is important to note that the responses from white participants and BIPOC participants both registered new awareness, but this came in different forms.

²⁵⁶ Inspired by the #OscarsSoWhite hashtag created by April Reign, used to highlight the predominance of whiteness in Oscar-nominated films and performances. "Since she cheekily tweeted '#OscarsSoWhite they asked to touch my hair' in response to an all-white slate of Academy Award acting nominees in 2015, Reign has been at the epicenter of the online conversation about representation in Hollywood. Her viral hashtag transformed the way we talk about entertainment..." (Rao, 2017, para. 3)

So many of the white participants registered surprise/a new awareness after working through the pivot. As noted above, this is a function of white supremacy and the fact that often “whiteness remains masked from everyday consciousness, allowing [white people] to be blind not only to their own privileges but also to their group membership (Picower, 2009, p. 198). The revelatory nature of the pivot and how it provokes reading whitely for many of the white participants crescendos into almost obviousness with so many expressions of the blindfold being lifted: surprise, never really noticed, now realize, eye opening, never noticed, shocking, completely unaware, never crossed my mind, shocked. The depth of the reaction ranged from a new noticing to surprise and shock. These gradations of response, though, reveal that, at least for a moment, these white participants had emerged from their submersion in reading whitely. I am ever hopeful that this first moment of reflection, with continued study and confrontation of reading whitely during the rest of LE 3004, will lead to action and true praxis²⁵⁷.

For the BIPOC participants²⁵⁸ in the study, they also experienced eye-opening moments, though they express different reactions to their newfound awareness. It seems the pivot served more as a mechanism to attune them to the presence of reading whitely rather than reveal its existence. These more in-tune moments of awareness are reflected in the following comments:

²⁵⁷ Because LE 3004 is part of a course cycle in a teacher preparation program that is centered on social justice and equity, I also know that racial consciousness work and discussions of white supremacy will continue for the preservice teacher participants in the study. I add my part in dismantling white supremacy to the cumulative and in process work of this program.

²⁵⁸ WONDERINGS: I always wonder if Black, Latinx, and/or Indigenous students would react differently to this process. Though their reading experiences are just as steeped in whiteness, due to a long history of stereotyped and damaging children’s literature featuring Black and Indigenous protagonists, these communities have been creating counter stories as a means to disrupt the damage of that long history of misrepresentation and under representation (Thomas, 2016).

- “Now that I think about it, have never read a book with a main character that is of a similar race as me and faces similar experiences that I do. This is kind of because of the system and society we live in.” (general participant)
- Reflecting a similar experience, a BIPOC participant’s journal ended with “...and that is something that definitely needs to change.” (general participant)
- “So that's like one Aha! moment for me. The books that were in English, I saw [the characters] as white...but the books that I read in Bengali I saw them as just *regular people* like me. They were speaking the same language as I grew up speaking” (Haimanti, focal participant)

Notice there is no reference to shock or surprise in these responses. These BIPOC students seem to be gaining awareness of how dominant reading experiences have shaped them, though it is clear that reading whitely is not as surprising to them as it is to the white participants. In many ways, learning to read and interact with books in a system that centers reading whitely has been extremely damaging to these readers. It has denied them access to seeing themselves in literature, it has forced white protagonists into their reading spaces, it has shattered the possibility for reading mirrors or reinforced funhouse mirror versions of representation that are written by white authors who read whitely.

Each time that I have worked with students and facilitated the pivot, it still slightly catches me off guard that many BIPOC students, who likely have faced racialized narratives that inscribe positionalities, macro and macro aggressions, racism, erasure and silencing, and other harmful mechanisms of white supremacy, are not fully aware of how reading whitely has shaped their reading experiences. Also, knowing that white supremacy is a larger system that creates power dynamics and reinforces racial hierarchies, I am not completely surprised, either. This push/pull of enacting the pivot in white spaces with non-white participants—particularly as a white, cisgender female educator whose embodied identity signifies white supremacy—is something that needs

more consideration. While I have discussed Matias and Mackey's (2016) concept of internalized whiteness, as a white teacher educator, I know that I must approach this work with continued interrogation of my own practices. I believe that I must continue to negotiate this tension in my future research, pairing and thinking with BIPOC scholar(s) about reading whitely. Recognizing and interrogating reading whitely is important for all readers, yet it is important to recognize the complexity of how the phenomenon takes shape for readers of different races.

This opening into reading whitely leads me to more wonderings than it does definitive answers. What happens with shocking/surprising/eye-opening realizations of reading whitely? Do white people who emerge from reading whitely choose to stay emerged and work to disrupt their dominant reading practices? Do they slip back and submerge themselves in the white cultural norms of readership that are the usual, comfortable, and normalized? How is reading whitely experienced differently when one's life has been filled with mirror reads versus window reads? How can a white scholar build spaces where all students can recognize and disrupt reading whitely in ways that don't reinforce white supremacy or do further damage to BIPOC readers?

Provocation Two: The Surprise of Reading Whitely—Seeing What Frames our Reading

In a world where white protagonists are so prevalent, and white supremacy often acts in the background to hegemonically enforce white cultural norms, it is important for people, especially preservice teachers, to look more closely at the books they read. For white readers who have had the privilege of always reading books that were mirrors, this task is absolutely essential as a path to recognize how reading whitely has taken shape in

their readership. Seeing themselves represented in the books they read was the norm. Moreover, this norm shifts to a constant barrage of window reads for BIPOC readers, whose readership is also marked by reading whitely in ways that also bubble under the surface of readership. The repeated message of such experiences is that BIPOC readers are always positioned on the outside looking into the normal, the right, the white experience. Without intervention, without drawing attention to this unseen norm, representational privilege of whiteness will be reinforced, and the white supremacy of readership will continue unchecked.

The pivot, for most of my participants of any racial background, provided a disruption of the norm, offering an opportunity for consciousness raising and a critical exploration of their book lists. It revealed that most of the participants were deeply unaware of how white their readerography lists were. This is not a neutral reality. In fact, “in addition to presenting a fictional world that is increasingly different from the actual world, the pervasive whiteness of children’s literature contributes to the cultivation of racial biases and stereotypes, which are harmful to children of color and to white children” (Welch, 2016, p. 388). Unchecked and uninterrogated, reading whitely is damaging. It takes shape in a lifetime of dominant reading experiences and builds a new discourse of what it means to be a reader and what books are most valued.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have explored two provocations of reading whitely as they take shape in the analytical elements of the readerography: the pivot and the response. The chapter began with Exploration Three: Initializing Praxis—Critical Consciousness and the Readerography. The exploration started with an unpacking of the analytic focus of the

pivot using the presentation slides and narrative construction of the class discussion.

Taking up Freirean concepts of conscientization and praxis, I revealed two openings into the ways that reading whitely was taking shape in the pivot. These openings revealed a provocation of reading whitely that was illuminated by the analytic process. The chapter closes with Exploration Four: The Aha Moments of the Readerography, which highlights participant responses to the pivot through a poetic construction and a storified exploration of post-reflexion. These focal elements of the phenomenological materials when plugged into Latherian theorizing, a thinking with theorist model that I employ in this exploration, reveal two openings of reading whitely. I briefly unpack these openings as a means to see what reading whitely might become. The chapter concludes with the final provocation of reading whitely as it was lived out in this exploration of the readerography.

Chapter Six: Conclusion and Implications

The Opposite of Reading Whitely

I am often asked to define the opposite of reading whitely. In illuminating two productions and two provocations of reading whitely I hope that I have revealed that it is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that should not be reduced to a binary. Is the opposite of reading whitely reading diversely? Reading multiculturally? I would say no. Perhaps as I further develop this scholarship and delve into future studies and additional writing that engages with reading whitely, the other side of the phenomenon will be revealed, though that will not be something that I expressly seek.

Because I see reading whitely as rooted in the hegemonic systems of white supremacy and dominant white cultural norms, I think it is a deceptive force that exudes from that reality. As such, reading whitely is always working at the edges of *any* reading in society that is steeped in whiteness and is producing and provoking internalized reading practices around children's literature that are also radiating with these dominant discourses. I would contend that as a white middle-class woman I will always, to some extent, read whitely. At the same time, I will always be working to dismantle how it is entangled in my experiences as a reader. For me, it is more important to recognize the hidden influence of reading whitely and purposefully work to disrupt it rather than to define its opposite. Building critical consciousness about reading whitely as a means of interrupting its influence, is the closest to an opposite that I envision.

Creating praxis around reading whitely that builds a path for true cultural competence with children's literature is key. Disrupting reading whitely interrogates the normalized discourses of whiteness in children's literature and guides preservice teachers

to racial consciousness and a social justice orientation toward the texts that they select and promote in their classrooms. Disrupting reading whitely centers reading experiences that embrace inclusive literature and take up critical stances toward misrepresentation to ensure that all children experience both mirror and window reads, not just the white ones. Disrupting reading whitely stops to celebrate and fight for Own Voices authors, and listen to BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, differently-abled scholars, authors, and readers when they say a book is offensive, damaging, or wrong. Disrupting reading whitely seeks to extinguish oppressive and damaging educational practices around children’s literature through a radical and transformative embrace of social change that forefronts equity and antiracist ideologies.

Summary: Explorations of How Reading Whitely Takes Shape

“This analysis was highly useful to expand my horizons—I never realized how much my reading growing up centered around a white, cisgender, straight, middle class narrative. As a teacher, this is an important thing to be aware of.” —LE 3004 general participant in response to the pivot

Given the predominance of whiteness in children’s and adolescent literature, the significant presence of children’s literature in schools, and the imbalance of a teaching field that is largely white, yet serving student populations that are increasingly diverse, I became driven to learn more about the ways that dominant reading experiences were taking shape in the lived experiences of readers. I sought to consider how reading whitely was a normalizing discourse of white supremacy, especially for preservice teachers. I wondered if my own steeping in white cultural norms, which had been too long unseen but had nonetheless shaped my readership, had subsequently influenced how I interacted

with children’s literature as an elementary school teacher. I determined that this was a broader phenomenon that could be explored and subsequently disrupted.

As I began to recognize moments when this phenomenon was manifest in my work as a teacher educator and emerging scholar, it was helpful to name the phenomenon and call it reading whitely. This original heuristic that helped me to describe the phenomenon did not begin to capture the complex multiplicities, the twisty and knotted gnarls, the intensities and ever-changing polyphonies of reading whitely. Therefore, my purpose with this study was to look more closely at reading whitely, to explore how it takes shape “is produced and produces, is provoked and provokes—through social relations in the world” (Vagle, 2018, p. 140). My goal was to dive into the entangled, messy and often tacit realities of reading whitely and attempt to glimpse the phenomenon in order to disrupt its influences and create social change around the way that teachers read, select, and promote children’s literature in their classrooms.

To answer my research questions, I used post-intentional phenomenology (Vagle, 2014, 2018). PIP is a methodology that recognizes the multiplicities, the partialness, the connected and interconnectedness, and the intensities of phenomena while also providing a flexible path to study them both with care, and with post-structural ontological assumptions that do not expect a definitive answer. In its evolution as a M/method²⁵⁹, post-intentional phenomenology was envisioned as:

²⁵⁹ I could not help but play with the concepts of “big M Method” and “small m method” here. Vagle (2018) distinguishes these as the “10,000 feet view” of phenomenological **M**ethodologies which are the “broad methodological assumptions, guidelines and logic that guide the study of phenomenon” and the “on the ground view” of the **m**ethods or “techniques, processes, and tools for gathering and analyzing phenomenological material” (p. 5, parenthetical groupings of the actions of the methods description in the quote for clarity and flow).

a philosophical and methodological space in which all sorts of philosophies, theories and ideas are put in in dialogue with one another—creating a productive and generative cacophony of philosophies/theories/ideas that accomplishes something that these same individual philosophies/theories/ideas may not be able to do, in the same way at least, on their own....[if not that, then a methodological space] to play with and among philosophies/theories/ideas to see what might become of such playfulness (Vagle, 2018, p.124).

To jump into this philosophical and methodological space, post-intentional phenomenologists follow a five-component process that guides their playful exploration of how phenomenon take shape. Post-intentional phenomenological studies begin by identifying a phenomenon and locating it in context(s) around a social issue, delineating and clear but flexible means to gather phenomenological materials, and establishing a post-reflexive plan that will be woven throughout the study. As the study shifts from the planning and proposal phase, to enactment of the method, the phenomenon is explored using theory/theories, phenomenological materials, and post-reflections. The study concludes with the crafting of a text that engages with the productions and provocations of the phenomenon, with an emphasis on social change.

My initial conceptualization of reading whitely reflects the research context of an undergraduate children's literature course required for preservice early childhood and elementary education majors. It is thus grounded by a framework of teacher education, culturally relevant pedagogy, second-wave white teacher identity studies, and children's literature. As I started to develop this study and was working to identify and name the

phenomenon under review, it was helpful to make sense of reading whitely through these conceptual frames. I contend that reading whitely pulsates at the nexus of these four distinct, but interconnected, scholarly disciplines. I bring them to work throughout the study as an additional layer of meaning making and a tool to chase the lines of flight of reading whitely as the phenomenon is made and unmade, flees and leaks, and takes shape. Together, the framing concepts inform the review of the literature in Chapter Two and are woven within the analysis process in various ways to further illuminate how reading whitely takes shape.

In this chapter, I synthesize the productions and provocations of reading whitely discussed in Chapters Four and Five and framed in the literature review. I use engagements with reading whitely in this synthesis to develop a working characterization, though incomplete and ever shifting, of what it means to read whitely based on the phenomenological materials under review. Before proceeding, however, I will briefly summarize two aspects of how I took up the three-part analytical process of post-intentional phenomenology (Vagle, 2018). First, I will acknowledge the (un)structure of this crafted and static text and reflect on the way the tensions of crafting an open-but-structured text shapes my analytic process. Second, I will discuss how I explored reading whitely using the phenomenological materials, post-reflexion, theories of reading transaction, hegemony, praxis and a Latherian theorizing process. Combining all these, I suggest, offers a means to open up the ways that reading whitely takes shape in my study and beyond.

Navigating the Sticky and Entangled Web of Reading Whitely: The (Un)Structure of Post-Intentional Phenomenological Analysis

For me, like many post-intentional phenomenologists I know, this analytic process and the crafting of this text, was marked by getting stuck and unstuck, finding new paths and new roadblocks, by chasing lines of flight that seemed more like a roller-coaster ride that exuded the intensities of reading whitely but also required a white-knuckled grasp on the safety bar. It was also marked with moments of insight, joy, and delight as I began to grasp how reading whitely took shape in this complex jumble of multiplicities in ways that I could never have expected. Capturing that beautiful mess is difficult in a static document. It is also a challenging intersection of demands on the thinking/writing/exploration process that needs, at least for me, to both embrace an openness to see what the phenomenon might become and at the same time lean in to the practical needs of crafting a post-intentional phenomenological text with a logical structure and clear, cohesive organization—for both myself and my readers.

Additionally, complicating the process are the tensions of how this (un)structure highlights two aspects of my personality: the one that likes order, perfection and detailed precision, and the other that loves the improvisation and creativity of the unplannable moment. I have attempted to create an (un)structure that appeases both aspects of this push pull; one that has clear, though malleable and interconnected, structures and demonstrates the open chasings of the lines of flight of reading whitely as they have emerged, erupted, and oozed out of my study. The tensions of these aspects of my being are deeply lived out in my experience of writing Chapters Four and Five. These analytical chapters required deep thinking to consider how best to navigate my need for a

systematic analysis process while also balancing an openness to embrace that the phenomenon would reveal “how [it] wants to be studied” (Vagle, 2108, p. 68). There were many false starts, rewrites and revisions, stumbling blocks and eventual surges of analysis that allowed me to glimpse the phenomenon as it was taking shape in my study.

The analysis matrix that I created, visually reflects the (un)structure of the three-part analytic process as I explored reading whitely and wrestled with how best to engage with the phenomenological materials. The graphic capturing of my thinking gave me a path to engage with the complex and entangled realities of phenomenon while I was navigating the tensions of structured openness. While the four-quadrants of the matrix are bounded by solid lines and the aspects of the readerography may appear to be wholly distinct and separate, their lived-out manifestations are interconnected and deeply related.

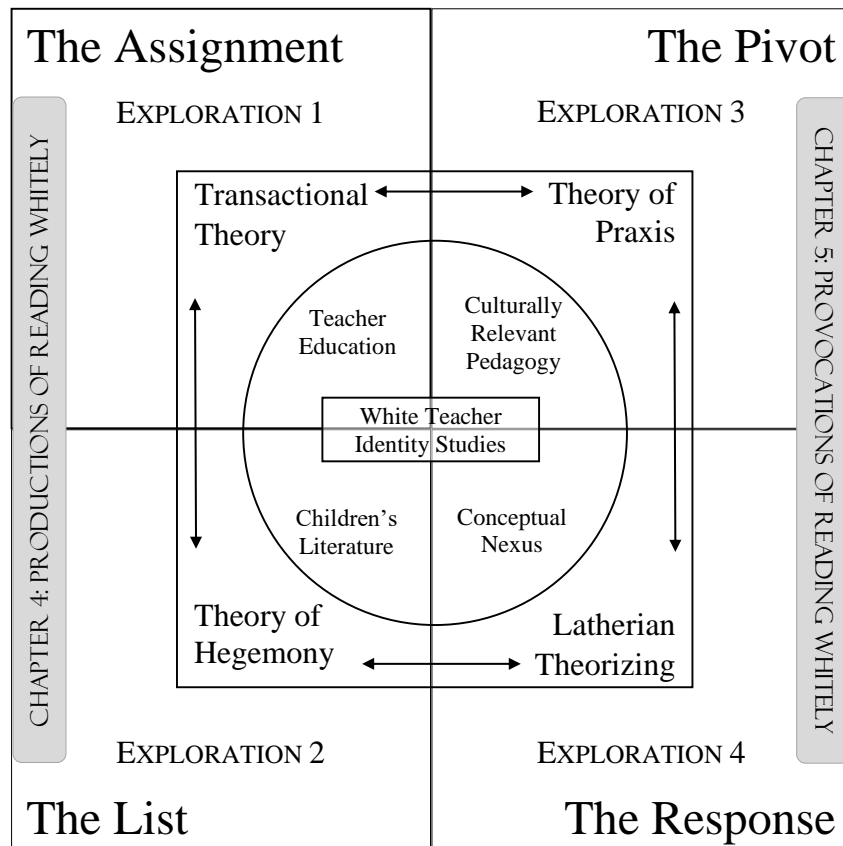


Figure 15: (Un)Structure Analysis Matrix

In each of the explorations below I share an engagement with reading whitely that is interconnected to the rest. While it may be explored in an individual way, it is a momentary pulling of the line of flight from the entangled knot. In the tautness of the string, there is a glimpse at the reading whitely that is revealed by this moment of focus before it snaps back, shapeshifts, and eludes capture.

The Analysis: Bringing the Readerography, Post-Reflection, and Theory to Illuminate how Reading Whitely Takes Shape

Leaning into the tension of (un)structure that shaped my analytic process, I narrowed my analytic focus from the vast quantity of artifacts collected during the study to the single (yet multiple) phenomenological material of the readerography assignment. This focus helped to home in on the productions and provocations of reading whitely in a powerful way. Yet, though I concentrated on the analysis of this single assignment, reading whitely took shape and revealed its multiplicities through the four connected yet also separate foci: the assignment, the list, the pivot, and the response. Each of these slices of the readerography give a different opening into the way that reading whitely is taking shape and being produced and provoked as I brought different theories, theorizing processes, scholarship from the conceptual framework, and post-reflexivity to illuminate the phenomenon.

Taking up the three-part analysis process in similar but different ways throughout the four explorations of reading whitely allows moments of openness in the (un)structure. By pairing each focus with specific theories and conceptual framing that connect/match the aspect of the readerography, different aspects of reading whitely emerge and take shape, revealing productions and provocations in the process. Because whiteness and

white supremacy influences the entire study, second-wave white teacher identity scholarship is woven throughout. Each exploration follows a loose format: the phenomenological material under review is highlighted, the selected theory or theorizing methods are explicated, the theory is then put to work through an analysis process taken up in two openings. The explorations close with a statement of the productions of reading whitely (in Chapter Four) or provocations of reading whitely (in Chapter Five). Although partial, each of them emerged as ways that reading whitely was taking shape and shaping the study. This was a purposeful move that I embrace through the (un)structured crafting of the analysis chapters of this text.

In the explorations of Chapter Four, I take up the aspects of the readerography that happened outside of the research context, the Literacy Education: Diverse Literature for Young People (LE 3004) classroom and were completed individually rather than as part of a communal class activity. With Exploration One: The Pedagogy of the Readerography, I begin the analysis process with a focus on the assignment. I explore the pedagogy of the readerography by taking up transactional theory (Rosenblatt, 1960, 1978, 1982, 1983, 1988) as a means to understanding meaning making in the reading transactions that are explored in the readerography assignment. Because of the pedagogical focus of this exploration, I use the conceptual framework scholarship of teacher education as a means to understand the context of the assignment and further complicate the ways that reading whitely is taking shape. Writing through the process, I explore two openings of reading whitely taking shape through and in pedagogical elements of the phenomenon. Using the lens of both theory and conceptual framework I take up how the assignment capitalizes on participants' identities as readers and

recognize the ways that favorite books serve as a reflection of a reading life. Each of these reveals the productions of reading whitely that take shape in the assignment.

Exploration Two: *The Hegemonic Mirror of the Readerography*, moves from exploring the assignment to considering how the master list of titles that my participants included on their readerographies reveals their reading experiences to be deeply steeped in the predominance of whiteness. To consider this analytic focus, I put Gramsci's theories of hegemony (Gramsci, 1971a, b) and the realities of representation in children's literature to work as analytic tools. Together, through the opening of working to illuminate the way that dominance lives out in reading whitely and the influences of trendy reading, suggesting that reading whitely is cool, I explore the hegemonic reverberations of reading whitely as they take shape and are produced and producing the list of titles.

Shifting analysis from the static, outside-of-class moments, to the dynamic and active moments during class as the participants take up a critical analysis of the readerography, Chapter Five explores how reading whitely catalytically exudes from these communal and in-class based actions. With a focus on building critical consciousness, Exploration Three: *Initializing Praxis—Critical Consciousness and the Readerography*, considers how reading whitely takes shape in the enactment of this analysis, or the pivot, guided during a class session. The theories informing this analysis are Freire's (1970) reflection on critical consciousness and praxis—in conjunction with culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2006, 2014). As a learning experience rooted in what Freire calls "conscientization," the openings reveal an

emergence from submersion and illustrate how a reflective realization of reading whitely is provoked in the pivot.

In this exploration, I have also engaged with challenges that interfere with the move from emergence to intervention and disruption of reading whitely. These challenges are deeply steeped in the oppressive mechanisms of white supremacy and potentially flair up in moments of discomfort as discursive moves that may be barriers to praxis. However, identifying the potential for challenge, recognizing the complexity of developing racial consciousness as a white person or a person with internalized whiteness, and acknowledging the systemic and pervasive impact of white supremacy can help bridge these hindrances. One must also be aware of the impact of this work on BIPOC students/participants in white spaces where consciousness raising work is taken up. This exploration flows into the next, as I share the voices of my participants, for whom reading whitely has been provoked through the assignment, the list, and the pivot.

Exploration Four: The Aha Moments of the Readerography considers how reading whitely is taking shape in participant responses to the pivot. To highlight the polyphonic reverberations of reading whitely that were provoked in the participants' responses, in this exploration I create a poetic construction of 14 different responses to the pivot. This "new phenomenological material" intersplices the voices of participants in a way that intentionally provides a means to have a direct dialogue with the reader (Kumashiro, 2002). Crafting this poem also accomplishes two different analytic tasks; it is both a process, providing a path for interpretation, and a product that reveals the reverberations, intensities, and explosions of reading whitely. The work of Patti Lather (1993, 1995, 1997; with Smithies, 1997) and a theorizing process inspired by her work,

guides the poetic construction and creates a path to openings that engages with how reading whitely was taking shape and produced in participant responses. The openings in this final section provide a means to recognize that white supremacy takes shape in reading whitely. They shed light on how provoking the phenomenon can reveal its operation as the hidden and dominant norm. They reveal, at least partially, how different racialized identities respond to new awareness with reading whitely.

Reading Whitely Takes Shape—Productions and Provocations of the Phenomenon:

What does it mean to read whitely?

At the beginning of this study I started with a seemingly simple but infinitely complex research question: what does it mean to read whitely? Using post-intentional phenomenology, I have started to make sense of this primary research question and named two production and two provocations of the phenomenon as part of this process. Each of these productions and provocations answers the secondary questions of the study, excluding question four, which I have addressed below in the suggestions for future research section. The secondary questions, with summarized responses, are as follows:

1. **What role does reading whitely play in the reading experiences of preservice teachers?** The participant readerographies revealed that their reading experiences were steeped in whiteness. This is specifically addressed in Exploration Two and Exploration Four, though it is present throughout the analysis process
2. **What does it mean to explore experiences of reading whitely through the context of a preservice teacher training course?** This is most revealed in Production Four in the participant responses to the pivot and their newfound realization that reading whitely was an influence on their readerography lists.
3. **What is the experience of exploring diversity and inclusivity in children's literature for those who read whitely?** I begin to respond to this question in Exploration Four through the participant responses. Though this question, like Secondary question four, would be more fully answered by further exploring additional phenomenological materials from this study.

4. **How does that experience seem to change over the progression of a semester-long course that promotes diversity and inclusivity?** Due to the focus on the readerography assignment, which occurred at the beginning of the semester, I was not able to answer this question in this dissertation. For more details see *Extending the Study: Revisiting the Phenomenological Materials from LE 3004* below

As I explored the way that reading whitely took shape and allowed me to consider both the primary and the secondary research questions, it was important to name the productions and provocations of the phenomenon that I was seeing. I state these here recognizing that they are the of-the-moment and in-the-context expressions of reading whitely that emerged from my study. And while they may resonate as complete and fully defined, I push against such a neatly packaged construction and recognize that they are simply the snapshots of the entangled and multifaceted aspects of reading whitely that appear at least partially in and through my post-intentional phenomenological exploration of the phenomenon. Each of these productions and provocations reveals an incomplete but graspable engagement with the phenomenon that starts to form a notion of what it means to read whitely.

Productions of Reading Whitely: Dominant Reading Experiences

Through Explorations One and Two, I name the productions of reading whitely that take shape in the readerography focal elements of the assignment and the list. Each of these phenomenological materials captures the way that reading whitely has reverberated in my participants' reading lives over time. As cumulative collections of the experiences of readership, the assignment (engaging reading experiences through a pedagogical task) and the list (cherished titles of books that formed readership) are both produced by reading whitely and produce reading whitely. These are ongoing moments

that have taken shape as the participants, me included, have read whitely in a world where, as I contend in the productions below, reading whitely is the norm. Reading whitely, in these productions, resonates dominance—both at an individual and a systemic level.

*Reading Whitely is Rooted in Individualized Dominant Reading Experiences
Shaped by the Collective*

Reading whitely takes shape as a personal and normalized construction of an individual's reading transactions. Specific titles, remembered reading experiences, certain types of books (by author, genre, format, etc.) are centered in the transactional meaning making process between the text and the reader. They serve as an anchor of readership, a collection of favorite reading transactions that, to a large extent, define who we are as readers. Therefore, the books that we cherish, hold most dear, remember as favorites become the individualized dominant reading experiences that shape how we read and understand texts. Yet those experiences were also formed by influences of dominance outside of the personal. So, while these memories reflect the books that shaped an individual's reading experiences, they are not neutral or without systemic influence of hegemonic narratives. Rather, the dominant reading experiences are a reverberation between the individual and the collective. Dominant influences of our own preferences and individual book lists are not innately a production of reading whitely, unless they have been produced where reading whitely is the norm. In the phenomenological materials and reading experiences explored in this study, it was clear that the personal reading experiences of the participants were produced by and producing reading whitely. This is an important distinction to emerge from this study.

Reading Whitely is Rooted in Dominant Reading Experiences of Whiteness

This production reveals how reading whitely is steeped in the systemic and pervasive cultural hegemony of whiteness especially in children's and adolescent literature. The predominance of whiteness in the publishing industry, on classroom shelves, in libraries, bookstores, and in reading lives—dominant though changing—creates a hegemonic norm of whiteness. Reading whitely is an outgrowth of this prevalence of white protagonists. It both influences how and is influenced by which characters become centered in popular books and reading trends. Such systemic dominance generates a common-sense construction of readership, producing the phenomenon of reading whitely, steeped in whiteness that normalizes what texts are valued and consumed. Reading whitely is produced by, and reproduces, white supremacy. It creates a dominant and normalized narrative that reverberates and seeps into the background in any reading experiences of those who have read whitely.

Provocations of Reading Whitely

The analysis of the pivot (a turning moment of critical consciousness raising) and the response (the new awareness of seeing reading whitely more clearly) illustrates another way that reading whitely is taking shape. In Explorations Three and Four, the dynamic components of the readerography exude the vibrations of reading whitely as they are provoked from the interactions and active moments of the pivot and the response that occurred during a communal class session. These provocations reveal that reading whitely is a normalized force that must be disrupted through conscientization and awareness building.

Reading Whitely is Hidden in Normalized Reading Experiences: Interrogating Nostalgia, Naming White Supremacy, and Exposing Reading Whitely—The Value of Conscientization and Praxis

This provocation reveals how reading whitely is working in the background of reading experiences, constantly taking shape being produced and provoked in readers as they engage with texts. Because reading whitely becomes the normalized backdrop, most readers are unaware of how it is shaping their reading practices from text selection, favorite protagonists, to preferred authors and illustrators, and the books that populate our lists of favorites. Readership becomes quietly shrouded in the default of whiteness and white supremacy, both of which implicitly and explicitly mold our understandings of texts and reading experiences. We read whitely. However, because we don't realize that we read whitely, the awareness must be provoked to guide readers from a submersion in reading whitely to shaking off its influence. A catalytic moment/jolt/nudge that alerts us to the presence of reading whitely is needed to spotlight the way it is taking shape in our readership. It is only when reading whitely is exposed through critical engagement that readers can begin to move to praxis that interrogates and dismantles how it influences our reading practices.

The Surprise of Reading Whitely—Seeing What Frames our Reading

Seeing what frames our reading, when the phenomenon of reading whitely is provoked into our consciousness, elicits different emotions. They range from the gentle aha of awareness to surprise and shock. It is the moments of provocation that serve to powerfully bring the unseen framing to the forefront. My exploration of the phenomenological materials of the response revealed that most of the participants were

deeply unaware that they were reading whitely. It also revealed how the provocation was an important and powerful move to disrupt reading whitely. The provocation of the pivot—as glimpsed through participant responses—revealed that reading whitely is present for all readers but is experienced differently by white and BIPOC readers. For white readers, whose privilege provided the opportunity to see a mirror of themselves in what they read, the way that reading whitely took shape in their readerography lists was a surprise. In case of the BIPOC readers, for whom reading whitely was working under the surface and influencing their readerography lists, their responses reflected more of recognition of the presence of reading whitely than a surprise at its existence. A world with so many mirror reads for white people, is one of an overabundance of (funhouse) window reads for BIPOC readers and one that always positions them outside of the literary norm. Reading whitely normalizes the representational privilege of whiteness. This provocation reveals how exposing reading whitely, combined with opportunities for consciousness-raising through critical explorations of favorite titles, helps build cognitive positions from which reading whitely can be disrupted

Implications

Theoretical Implications: Dominant Reading Experiences—A Theory of Reading Whitely

When I initially conceptualized reading whitely, I positioned the phenomenon at the nexus of teacher education, culturally relevant pedagogy, second-wave white teacher identity studies and children’s literature. Each of those fields is rich in histories, scholarship, and practical enactments of the theory, and yet I contend that the theory of reading whitely extends this work by positioning the four conceptual frameworks

together and exploring a new theoretical lens to engage with them. Through this study, I have started to explore how reading whitely takes shape as it is produced and provoked in the lived experiences and learning activities of the participants in my study. I believe it has theoretical implications beyond this study, too. As this work has started to answer what it means to read whitely, I have become increasingly convinced that reading whitely is a hegemonic force stemming from white supremacy that shapes reading experiences of *all* readers.

And while the concept of the phenomenon stems from, and is influenced by, the conceptual frameworks, it is an original theoretical concept. Reading whitely, as it has been illuminated in this study, has not been explicitly studied in other scholarship to date. The term creates a platform to begin to dismantle the dominant reading experiences that circulate in the background of our normalized narratives around books and reading. Naming the phenomenon, using reading whitely as a heuristic for dominant reading experiences, is a first step in building a new theory that helps understand the role of reading whitely in maintaining white supremacy.

The theory of reading whitely should inform efforts to promote equity-based literacy pedagogies that center anti-oppressive practices and disrupt white supremacy, to develop teacher education that is dedicated to social justice and extend understandings of why more inclusive children's and adolescent literature is needed. It should also further conversations that guide the education of preservice teachers as they learn to read, use, and promote diverse and inclusive texts in their reading experiences. In the richly diverse classrooms where our preservice teacher will eventually teach, it is crucial to build critical knowledges of reading whitely in order to disrupt its power and help to ensure

that *all* readers will see themselves represented in the books that are valued in their classroom.

Implications for Practice: Recognizing and Disrupting Reading Whitely

When youth grow up without seeing diverse images in the mirrors, windows, and doors of children's and young adult literature, they are confined to single stories about the world around them and, ultimately, the development of their imaginations is affected. –Ebony Elizabeth Thomas (As quoted in Yorio, 2019, para. 4)

Reading whitely—when unchecked and unrealized as a hidden force in the background of readership—is detrimental to readers and the people whom they influence. Because it takes shape in a lifetime of dominant reading experiences and builds new discourses of what it means to be a reader and what books are most valued, it is an extension of the hegemonic norms of whiteness and white supremacy. Reading whitely is produced and provoked and takes shape in this reality, while at the same time it produces and provokes this reality. My work has implications for all readers whose lived experiences are steeped in the systemic influence of white supremacy. Yet, it is especially relevant for the people who serve as influencers to reading experiences and become the gatekeepers of readership, teachers, librarians, parents, teacher educators. They have the most power to disrupt, or reinforce, reading whitely in their environments. As a teacher educator, I focus these implications on teachers and preservice teachers, though I believe they extend beyond that sphere.

Without racial consciousness, without sociopolitical awareness, and without praxis around reading whitely, readers and teachers who serve as reading gatekeepers

lack the tools to truly consider reading whitely with any depth²⁶⁰. For teachers, especially at the elementary level, where they have a lot of control and sway over the reading selections in their classrooms (Gebhard, 2006; Hoewisch, 2000; Souto-Manning, 2009), the reverberations of hegemonic norms have a larger impact. The discourses of white supremacy are such common social and discursive practices that they have been completely established and obvious (Ngo, 2010, p. 10). It takes work to dismantle ingrained discourses around whiteness and reading whitely. Awareness of reading whitely requires the same processes, interventions, and support that guides students to look past their feelings of discomfort when reading whitely is provoked, and to embrace conscientization. This call extends beyond the students in teacher preparation programs, teachers and teacher educators must actively work to disrupt reading whitely. “There is thus increasing agreement—the way by which Whiteness gets enacted is a complex affair—and researchers and teacher educators would do well to incorporate critical analyses of their own racialized identity development as they attempt to move forward in their work with students” (Berchini, 2017, p. 470). On that same page she continues by noting that she has heeded “extant calls for personal, contextual, and paradoxical examination for the purposes of rethinking what it means to work with White teacher education students in the name of antiracism.” I believe this examination should extend to reading whitely as it takes shape and is produced and provoked in the dominant reading

²⁶⁰ This stems from my own experiences as a teacher and unwitting gatekeeper of children’s literature. While I was trying to disrupt the dominant discourses of white supremacy it is clear that without an examination of my own racial identity, gained privilege, and my complicity in the system, I could not begin to disrupt dominance. I realize how many of my attempts at disruption during my teaching years were in fact reifying damaging stereotypes, reinforcing reading whitely, and having my elementary students do the same by my example. Each of these actions served to forward and re-center white supremacy. As a teacher educator, it is important for me to break this cycle. Consequently, I work hard to disrupt that possibility in my future teachers’ emerging identities as children’s literature champions for *all* their students.

experiences of white and BIPOC preservice teachers alike. It is only in true praxis that people who read whitely can more fully understand why we need inclusive books and work to stop reinscribing the predominance of whiteness in their literature choices and reading practices.

In seeking this social change around the dominant discourses of reading whitely, I believe that we must change the curriculum practices that undergird the children's literature and reading/language arts courses that include children's literature at the teacher preparation level. When children's literature courses for preservice teachers focus on racial conscientization and the development of racial literacy within the context of literature instruction, a path opens to see literature for young people with a more analytical and justice-oriented focus. Using the readerography assignment detailed in this study, with the accompanying critical analysis process, is one such curricular change that can be embraced. Without such a purposeful shift in the curricular focus, preservice teachers will continue to be heedless of how race and white supremacy is reinforced and perpetuated in the children's literature used and promoted in their future classrooms. This is a critical knowledge that cannot be overlooked due to the foundational ways that children's literature is taken up in elementary classrooms.

What Comes Next? A Vision for the Future where Reading Whitely is Disrupted

In my preliminary oral exams where I first started formally exploring reading whitely, Dr. Annie Mason asked me to consider: How do I envision the future of children's literature? I believe it is valuable to end this section with that vision. Reflecting back on my journey, I want a world where there is no need for the terms

multicultural literature, diverse literature, or inclusive literature; a world where literature needs no modifier and reflects the complex realities and identities of its beautifully multifaceted audience. A world that is not so shaped by white supremacy that representation of whiteness and white cultural norms are no longer the hidden discourses that are taken up and normalized. I want every child in every classroom to see themselves reflected in the books that are promoted, read, and are sitting on the shelves of their classroom libraries. If every child has books that are beautifully crafted and authentic mirrors, and not just the white, cisgender, heterosexual, middle-class, able-bodied, neurotypical children, then every child will also have powerful windows into lived experiences that are not their own. I can only imagine how that praxis would transform our world. I believe that work begins with interrogating and disrupting the insidious ways that reading whitely transforms white cultural norms and morphs them into the normalized and dominant reading experiences of people in our society.

Suggestions for Future Research

Extending the Study: Revisiting the Phenomenological Materials from LE 3004

There are multiple pathways that I think would be beneficial for next steps in the research. The productions and provocations of reading whitely that emerged from this study are powerful but are also limited to the readerography. As the analysis process unfolded after data collection, I wrestled with which phenomenological materials were reverberating with reading whitely in ways that might help me understand what it means to read whitely. After some time interacting with different phenomenological materials collected for the study, I narrowed the focus to the one phenomenological material with

multiple expressions and analytic openings. This shifted the research process from what I had envisioned was an organic and responsive development based on what was evoked as I engaged in analysis. This change gave me a new path to explore how reading whitely was taking shape and was produced and provoked. Being open to where the phenomenon takes you is an important commitment in post-intentional phenomenology, and it became very clear that the ways that reading whitely took shape in the readerography were powerful and evocative. For future research, I would like to explore beyond this first assignment and look more deeply at the additional phenomenological materials gathered during this study.

Additionally, this focus on the readerography meant that I was not able to respond to the secondary research question four or address the full extent of secondary question three in the scope of this dissertation. Both questions centered on how the experience of exploring diversity and inclusivity in children's literature for those who read whitely seems to change over the progression of a semester-long course that promotes diversity and inclusivity. I certainly gathered phenomenological materials that would speak to this question. The ebbs and flows of reading whitely in my participants' reading experiences over the course of the semester merit revisiting, as a separate study, at a future time.

This research has helped to extend my initial conceptualization of what it means to read whitely. I have started to name and explore productions and provocations of the phenomenon. Because reading whitely is complex, partial, and slippery like all phenomena, this naming/exploring/revealing of how it takes shape is always incomplete and in need of constant revisiting. Phenomena are "always being written *and* rewritten" are not necessarily stable or completely graspable, but "—they *and*, they travel, and they

move in and through intensities” (Vagle, 2018, p. 129). It is in recognition of the connected, messy, nature of phenomena that are always being made and unmade that means that reading whitely must be revisited as a phenomenon of study.

Questions Raised in Exploration Four: Racialized Experiences of Reading Whitely

In the final opening of this section I recognized how the provocation of reading whitely in the participant responses lead me to more wonderings. Each of these questions provides another avenue for study. What happens with shocking/surprising/eye-opening realizations of reading whitely? Do white people who emerge from reading whitely choose to stay emerged and work to disrupt their dominant reading practices? Do they slip back and submerge themselves in the white cultural norms of readership that are the usual, comfortable, and normalized? How is reading whitely experienced differently when one’s life has been filled with mirror reads versus window reads? How can a white scholar build spaces where all students can recognize and disrupt reading whitely in ways that don’t reinforce white supremacy or do further damage to BIPOC readers?

Research Beyond the Readerography: Phenomenological Materials Waiting in the Wings

Praxis and Enactment?: From Teacher Preparation to Teaching

It would also be powerful to follow the participants of my study into their student teaching placements and eventual classrooms to explore the reverberations of the reflective practice of the readerography and the conscientization that occurred around it. Have they embraced the second aspect of Freire’s praxis and taken action that promotes equity and representation in readership? Have they used their understandings of reading

whitely to develop cultural consciousness and embrace sociopolitical consciousness that both recognize and critique the social order of children's literature in their classrooms? These are important questions that additional study could address.

Moving into the school system would add important complications to the study of reading whitely. Berchini (2016) recognizes that educational researchers must consider the context and constraints of the schools and systems where our future teachers will work. She poses a set of thought-provoking questions that would be important to explore in this expansion of my own study:

What are the structures—such as school discourses, curricular demands, and interactions with colleagues and students—that impose limitations on teachers who dare to teach with critical goals? What is the task of teacher education in these fraught processes, particularly when teachers fall back on a hidden curriculum—and larger narrative—of whiteness and, in so doing, validate particular kinds of (racialized) knowledge over others? (p. 1042)

Mapping these onto children's literature and thinking about the barriers that my students will face in their future classrooms opens possible avenues for new study. Through my classes, I expose my students to the hidden curriculum of whiteness in children's literature, but they will likely be entering schools where most teachers may not be aware of this reality. What battles will they face and how can I arm them to be agents of change when it comes to disrupting the favored canon of literature options for elementary students?

How is Reading Whitely Taking Shape with In-service Teachers?

One aspect second-wave white teacher identity study scholars look so closely at is the context of teaching and how white teachers are centered in systems and influenced by dominant discourses. This study is centered in a teacher training program and explores consciousness raising around children's literature, exclusively in that context. One possible area for future research is to conduct similar work, the creation of the readerography and a facilitation of critical analysis with in-service teachers.

Conclusion

“... now that I am aware of [lack of diversity], I will choose books for my classroom that represent a wide variety of people.” —LE 3004 general participant in response to the pivot

As an original theoretical concept in whiteness studies and education, it is valuable to explore reading whitely. Naming the phenomenon, using reading whitely as a heuristic for dominant reading experiences, and studying its productions and provocations is an important first step in this scholarship. This study bridges multiple scholarly fields and relies on the influential work of the scholars that have shaped each discipline. By grounding reading whitely in the conceptual the nexus of teacher education, second-wave white teacher identity studies, culturally relevant pedagogy, and children's literature I was able to see more clearly how it takes shape. In a context where each domain of the conceptual framework is influencing the productions and provocations of reading whitely through both their separate and entangled expressions, this study builds openings for future research in each field.

Understanding how reading whitely takes shape and is manifest in the world builds a foundation for disrupting its influence. This critical knowledge of the phenomenon can be employed to guide preservice elementary teachers to understand how dominant reading experiences shape their literacy practices and text selection. By recognizing and exploring the ways in which readership has become enshrouded in the implicit valuing of whiteness and white identities, it can be used to build transformative practices that center equity and representation. Through this conscientization around reading whitely, preservice and in-service teachers can more fully embrace diverse texts that are beneficial to *all* readers.

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Appendix A: Where the Story Begins: A Partial Tracing of the History of Children's Literature

Since lengthy books exist on the topic, this short essay cannot explore the entirety of children's literature from its inception to today. Nor can it follow a literacy analysis-style tracing of seminal titles that mark the history of children's literature. Thus, I will attempt to trace a small number of foundational moments that mark the history and not include any specific titles of important works. Compiling such a concise history is a challenging endeavor and any author taking up such brevity must be very selective about the important historical moments to include. Additionally, I acknowledge that three major concerns that have emerged for other scholars when compiling a history of children's literature (Lerer, 2008; Nodelman & Reimer, 2003; Stevenson, 2011): a definition of the term itself; the organizational method that comprises the historic moments of the field; and a consideration of when the history begins. I have already addressed my definition of the term, in Chapter One of this dissertation, and will take up the other two concerns before continuing with a deeper discussion of the history itself.

Many scholars have weighed into the debate, positing chronology, genre, seminal titles, format, issue-based, or audience as the better organizational methods to chronicle the history of the field (Lerer 2008; Shavit, 1995;; Stevenson, 2011; Westman, 2013). Most traditional histories focus on a more undisputable chronological unfolding of the development of children's literature and include key titles (Nodelman & Riemer, 2003). To frame her chronological history, Deborah Stevenson (2011) begins slightly differently with an exploration of the sticky issues that often plague such writing, including didacticism, audience, and human nature. Moving away from only using a chronological order, Seth Lerer (2008) considers the lens of reader experience to ground his tracing of history. While Maria Nikolajeva suggests a dynamic semiotic approach that considers how "the history of children's literature can be seen as a succession of changing cultural codes...different than those seen in adult or mainstream literature" (1995, p. 39). By looking specifically at instances where children's code and adult code "converge, diverge, and overlap at various points" in history she provides a distinctive approach for scholars to consider the history of children's literature. Despite the many options, I have opted to follow a chronological approach to the organization of the historic moments I highlight in this essay to share a more concise tracing of the field.

Determining a starting place for this exploration can also be challenging. Various scholars assert that the history of children's literature follows closely with the history of societal conceptions of childhood as a recognized concept (Darton, 1932 as quoted in Nodelman & Riemer, 2003, p. 81; Lerer, 2008; Smith, 1957; Stevenson, 2011). "Before the 17th century, children's books did not exist because children had not yet been invented" (Tunnell & Jacobs, 2013, p. 80). Through this lens young people were seen simply as small adult humans and lived lives reflecting that reality. There was little need for specialty literature to be marketed to the young or their caregivers (Nodelman & Reimer, 2003). Gillian Adams (1998) notably takes umbrage with this view, recognizing it to be based deeply in our modern western and "ideologically colonialist" conceptions of childhood (1998, p. 4). While John Townsend (1996) recognizes that children's literature existed long before more modern understandings of childhood, a time in children's literature history he identifies as prehistory. Other scholars also begin their historical look at children's literature in antiquity (Shavit, 1995; Stevenson 2011).

Regardless of the scholarly stance, it is fair to say that “general agreement among critics regarding the constructedness of the category of childhood complicates our understanding of children’s literature over time because the genre must be defined at the intersection of authorial and publishing intention and actual readership” (Wolf, Coats, Enciso, & Jenkins, 2011, p. 177). I will begin this tracing of the field with the time when the consumable nature of books by the public had increased with more access to printed materials, due to the invention and proliferation of the printing press.

This compilation of historic moments, it must be noted, is grounded in the traditional Eurocentric orientation to children’s literature which is considered to be the foundation of the field. I recognize this origin as hegemonic and based in the dominant discourses that have always determined which history is recorded and valued. While I would rather highlight marginalized histories, it is significant to demonstrate how the field of children’s literature has historically and materially limited authors, illustrators, readers and protagonists not of European ancestry. I believe that these moments best serve to frame the central focus of this essay: the struggle for more diverse and inclusive reading materials for young people.

Early children’s books, published in the 15th through 17th centuries, frequently followed a formulaic pattern and served as didactic tomes to teach clear and concise moral lessons based in religious ideologies and societal norms. Stevenson (2011) also emphasizes that the *Orbis Pictus* (1658), an encyclopedic-style text with entries in Latin and vernacular with woodblock images also emerged during this time as an enduringly popular secular text. While many materials were created to teach religious ideals and societal norms, texts were also created for general educational purposes such as hornbooks to be used in classrooms. “The new educational system both legitimized books for children,” Zohar Shavit claims, “and created a certain corpus of texts and set of norms according to which official books for children had to be written” (1995, p. 29). Though we have now come to closely associate the reading of folklore and fairy tales with childhood, these stories were originally published and marketed specifically to adults. It is no surprise that the “small adults” of this period who were literate consumed and enjoyed the literature that was available to all adults at the time.

A shift in the publishing market, in part initiated by English book publisher John Newbery, began the process of making children’s books that were distinctly different than the materials published for adult readers. In 1744, he started the first children’s-only press and began producing some of the first books specifically marketed to children outside of the educational or religious content that had dominated earlier texts. Because his many publications became instantly popular and remain embedded deeply in the memory of children’s literature, he is often cited as the father of the field (Townshend, 1996; Nodelman & Reimer, 2003; Stevenson, 2011; Tunnell & Jacobs, 2013). Though Stevenson (2011) contends that he should not be considered as the “lone innovator” of crafting books for young people because there were other lesser-known publishers creating materials for children as early as 1702 (2011, p. 183, 188). Nodelman and Reimer further this claim by noting that his publications emerged into a society, with what we now recognize as a middle class, where books for children could be a profitable venture (2003, p. 84). Subsequently, the focus on creating and printing books that were aimed specifically at children, swelled and began to more closely reflect our modern understanding of the field.

Easier printing techniques proliferated, and the eventual emergence of public libraries helped to increase the accessibility of printed literature to families. The industry grew, embracing the new form, and children's literature became an entity into itself. The increased quality and capabilities of the printing industry allowed illustration in children's literature to flourish. This development is often marked by the work of British illustrator Randolph Caldecott who started illustrating children's books in 1878. His vivid and vivacious images demonstrated the powerful new possibilities that bright color, bold lines, and intricate details could add to children's stories (Lerer, 2008; Stevenson, 2011; Townshend, 1996; Tunnell & Jacobs, 2013). Though like Newbery, Caldecott was not the first or even the only illustrator to create such books, he is noted for doing so at the highest level. The possibility of what could be considered as children's literature from format to content options began to radically increase.

Another clear marker of this expansion in children's literature is the emergence of important awards for literature for youth. The first award for children in the world, the Newbery Medal, was established by the American Library Association (ALA) in 1921 by Frederic G. Melcher (Smith, 1957). The award, named after John Newbery, seeks to honor the most distinguished literature for children published in America during the previous year. To this day, the award reflects the vision Melcher articulated in his 1922 speech of formal agreement with the board that authorized the award. Not only does the award honor librarians, but it serves "[t]o encourage original creative work in the field of books for children. To emphasize to the public that contributions to the literature for children deserve similar recognition to poetry, plays, or novels" ("Newbery Medal," n.d., para. 3). The award continues to be prestigious and now includes honor designations for books that are finalists in the process but are not awarded the medal.

The Caldecott Medal, which honors excellence in art in children's picturebooks, was created in 1937. Based also on Melcher's suggestion, the award's creation reflects ALA membership concerns that the artists of children's books were not getting their due recognition (Smith, 1957, p. 30). The award, named after Randolph Caldecott is "to be given to the artist who had created the most distinguished picture book of the year" ("Caldecott Medal," n.d., para. 2). Like the Newbery, the "runner-up" books receive an honor designation. Not only did this award harken back to Randolph Caldecott's original picturebooks, but it added a legitimacy to the types of art and imagery that define the format of picturebooks. Lawrence Sipe demonstrated how the imagery and text of a picturebook coexist together to create a synergistic relationship, because "both the text and the illustration sequence would become incomplete without the other...the total effect depends not only on the union of the text and illustrations but also on the perceived interactions or transactions between these two parts" (1998, p. 989-99). Gold and silver medal stickers forever grace the winners of both these important awards and ensure that they stay in print and on the shelves of libraries, bookstores, and classrooms alike.

The publishing industry responded to the increasing popularity of children's literature with new divisions and imprints that were geared more specifically toward children and young people. Like most industries, at the inception of these divisions and imprints, they were captained by white men of middle class (and higher) means. Due to this influence, the predominance of whiteness as the gatekeeper to the field was cemented, ensuring that white cultural norms continued as the normative discourses, images, and content were embedded in children's literature (Larrick, 1965; Smith, 1957).

Because of its association with children, the industry also became a space of liberation for some. White women began to step into larger roles of leadership as editors and managers, (Smith, 1957, p. 29-30), also becoming authors and illustrators. Like education, librarianship, another area of governance in the field, has traditionally been dominated by white middle class females (hooks, 1994). While that trend has shifted somewhat in recent years, the membership of the ALA continues to be majority white and female. (Kidd, 2007). While some aspects of leadership—from the industry itself, to teachers and librarians—have changed, as I will demonstrate, much of the publishing industry remains predominantly administered by white people.

Another key aspect in the history of children's literature is the economic and market-driven aspect of the field. Even from Newbery's beginning as a specialized publishing house, the industry has always been a business venture. "[I]n America, once public libraries became established, once prizes for children's literature were funded, once children's authors became arbiters of taste and tie-ins," Seth Lerer notes, "children's literature became a public business" (2008, p. 8). Books for young people continue to make up a large share of the profit margins in the publishing industry (Lerer, 2008, Nodelman & Reimer, 2003) This is spurred on by what author Lois Lowry considers as "the major breakthrough in the history of children's literature: the awareness that children would rather laugh and be entertained, than to be instructed and improved" (2011, p. 193). Of course, didacticism has never completely disappeared (Lerer, 2008; Tunnell & Jacobs, 2013), but the content and formats of children's literature have continued to expand. The industry recognizes a need to focus on what appeals to consumers: that which will entertain and engage. From postmodern picturebooks to graphic novels and comics, the field continues to shift as the consumers of books for young people demand more variety and entertainment.

I close this section knowing that it contains a very small snapshot of selected moments in the history of children's literature, while ignoring many others. "Ultimately, the literature isn't a single, fixed organism," Stevenson reminds us as she closes her own tracing of the history, "but a large number of texts grouped together under a rubric, and that categorization is always dependent on the eye of the beholder" (2011, p. 192). And, as this tracing suggests, there are many beholders, stakeholders, and gatekeepers of children's literature, that see this history through many different lenses.

Appendix B: Readerography Assignments Over Time

Readerography Assignment from Spring 2016:

Description and Requirements from the Readerography Assignment Sheet:

General Overview: This assignment is intended to help you explore your own identity as a reader. You will create a short reading autobiography, reading timeline of your own readership, or a Top 10 list of your favorite children’s literature books/series to share with a small group of your peers. (30 points)

The assignment should be turned in to Moodle by 11:00 am on **Class Session 2**. If you are turning in a physical copy during the class session or the format you have selected is not able to upload to Moodle, upload a photo or pdf of your assignment to Moodle as an assignment placeholder. You will need to be able to **share your assignment** with classmates, either through digital or physical means.

You will create **one (1)** of the following items:

Readerography	Reading Timeline	Top 10 List
Create a short autobiography of your life as a reader (or non-reader). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write in a narrative or poetic form <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Graphic novel form would also be accepted - please ask instructor if you are interested in this format • Create a clear picture of who you are/were as a reader throughout your reading life • Include titles and author of some favorite or influential 	Create a pictorial timeline format of your life as a reader (or non-reader). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 10 entries on the timeline • All entries should include both words and pictures • Create a clear picture of who your life as a reader (or non-reader, for that matter) • Include titles and author of some favorite or influential 	Create a Top 10 List of your favorite books from your youth and childhood <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 entries on the list • All entries should include both words and pictures of the book covers you selected • Include details of why the title you selected is on your Top 10 List • Create a clear picture of who you are/were as a reader

Class Presentation Slides Guiding the Readerography Review:

Readerography Share

Named Groupings

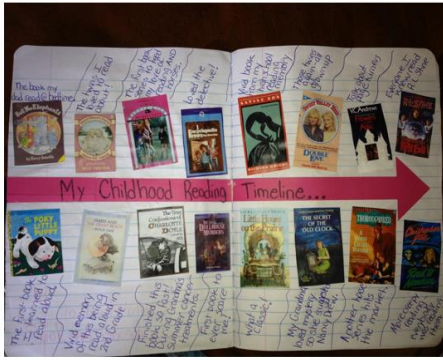


Image from Melissa Leach:
<http://leachteach.blogspot.com/2012/07/readers-notebooks.html>

Readerography Assignment from Fall 2016:

Description and Requirements from the Readerography Assignment Sheet:

General Overview: This assignment is intended to help you explore your own identity as a reader. You will create a short reading autobiography, reading timeline of your own readership, or a Top 10 list of your favorite children's literature books/series to share with a small group of your peers. (30 points)

The assignment should be turned in to Moodle by 12:00 am on **Class Session 2**. If you are turning in a physical copy, turn in at the beginning of class 2 and/or if the format you have selected is not able to upload to Moodle, upload a photo or pdf of your assignment to Moodle as an assignment placeholder. You will need to be able to **share your assignment** with classmates, either through digital or physical means.

You will create **one (1)** of the following items:

Readerography	Reading Timeline	Top 10 List
<p>Create a short autobiography of your life as a reader (or non-reader).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write in a narrative or poetic form <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Graphic novel form would also be accepted - please ask instructor if you are interested in this format • Create a clear picture of who you are/were as a reader throughout your reading life • Include titles and author of some favorite or influential 	<p>Create a pictorial timeline format of your life as a reader (or non-reader).</p> <p>10 entries on the timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All entries should include both words and pictures • Create a clear picture of who your life as a reader (or non-reader, for that matter) • Include titles and author of some favorite or influential 	<p>Create a Top 10 List of your favorite books from your youth and childhood</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 entries on the list • All entries should include both words and pictures of the book covers you selected • Include details of why the title you selected is on your Top 10 List • Create a clear picture of who you are/were as a reader

Class Presentation Slides Guiding the Readerography Review:

Readerography Share

Share with your elbow partner.

Look for commonalities and differences (in format and content).

Hypothesize the why of those observations.




Image from Melissa Leach:
<http://leachteach.blogspot.com/2012/07/readers-notebooks.html>

Digging Deeper: Check Your Favorites

Go through your readerography titles and consider do any of your selected books have a main character who:

- is a girl
- is a person of color
- follows a different religion
- has a disability
- is from a low socioeconomic or working class family
- identifies as LGBTQ+
- has a diverse family make up

Readerography Assignment from Spring 2017:

Description and Requirements from the Readerography Assignment Sheet:

YOUR TASK: This assignment is intended to help you explore your own identity as a reader.

You will do **ONE** of the following to share with a small group of your peers. (30 points):

- create a short reading autobiography
- create a reading timeline of your own readership
- create a Top 10 list of your favorite children's literature books/series

*Note: You will need to be able to **share your assignment** with classmates, either through digital or physical means*

CHOOSE ONLY (1) of the following options:

Readerography	Reading Timeline	Top 10 List
Create a short autobiography of your life as a reader (or non-reader). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write in a narrative or poetic form 	Create a pictorial timeline format of your life as a reader (or non-reader). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 10 entries on the timeline 	Create a Top 10 List of your favorite books from your youth and childhood (up to now, if you wish) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 entries on the list

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Graphic novel form would also be accepted - please ask instructor if you are interested in this format ● Create a clear picture of who you are/were as a reader throughout your reading life ● Include titles and author of some favorite or influential books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All entries should include both words and pictures ● Create a clear picture of your life as a reader/non-reader - by your book choices <i>over a span of time</i> ● Include both the title and author for each entry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All entries should include both words and pictures ● Include details of why the title you selected is on your Top 10 List ● Create a clear picture of who you are/were as a reader
--	--	--

Class Presentation Slides Guiding the Readerography Review:

Readerography Share

Share with your elbow partner.

Look for commonalities and differences (in format and content).

Hypothesize the why of those observations.




Image from Meliissa Leach:
<http://leachteach.blogspot.com/2012/07/readers-notebooks.html>

Digging Deeper: Check Your Favorites

Go through your readerography titles and consider do any of your selected books have a main character who:

- Identifies as a cis-female
- is a person of color
- follows a different religion
- Is differently abled
- is from a low socioeconomic or working class family
- identifies as LGBTQ+
- has a diverse family make up

Readerography Assignment from Fall 2017

Description and Requirements from the Readerography Assignment Sheet:

YOUR TASK: This assignment is intended to help you explore your own identity as a reader and consider which books have been important to you and your reading life.

You will do ONE of the following to share with a small group of your peers:

- create a short reading autobiography
- create a reading timeline of your own readership
- create a Top 10 list of your favorite children's literature books/series

*Note: You will need to be able to **share your assignment** with a small group of classmates, either through digital or physical means during our next class session.*

CHOOSE ONLY (1) of the following options:

Readerography	Reading Timeline	Top 10 List
<p>Create a short autobiography of your life as a reader (or non-reader).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write in a narrative prose or poetic form <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Graphic novel form would also be accepted - please ask instructor if you are interested in this format • Create a clear picture of who you are/were as a reader throughout your reading life • Include titles and author of some favorite or influential books • Between 300-700 words 	<p>Create a pictorial timeline format of your life as a reader (or non-reader).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 10 entries on the timeline • All entries should include both words and pictures • Create a clear picture of your life as a reader/non-reader - by your book choices <i>over a span of time</i> • Include both the title and author for each entry • 50- 150 words for EACH ENTRY on the timeline 	<p>Create a Top 10 List of your favorite books from your youth and childhood (up to now, if you wish)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 entries on the list • All entries should include both words and pictures • Include details of why the title you selected is on your Top 10 List • Create a clear picture of who you are/were as a reader • 50- 150 words for EACH ENTRY on your list

Class Presentation Slides Guiding the Readerography Review:

Readerography Share

Share with your elbow partner.

Look for commonalities and differences (in format and content).

Hypothesize the why of those observations.





Image from Melissa Leach:
<http://teachteach.blogspot.com/2012/07/readers-notebooks.html>

An important next step...

Taking a closer look at our favorites is central to the process of being open to considering literature from many perspectives. It DOES NOT negate their value, just adds a layer of food for thought.

This is essential for our classroom/life practice in a world that is often dominated by the norms of the majority.

A Few Faves/Timeline



Readerography: Take Another Look

*Do any of the books have a **main character** who:*

- Identifies as a cisgender female (not transgender female)
- Is a person of color or is Native/American Indian
- Follows a religion that is often underrepresented
- Is differently abled or deals with mental health concerns
- Is from a low socioeconomic or working class family or background
- Identifies as LGBTQ+
- Has a family structure that is often underrepresented

Appendix C: IRB Approval and Exemption Determination

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Twin Cities Campus

*Human Research Protection Program
Office of the Vice President for Research*

*D528 Mayo Memorial Building
420 Delaware Street S.E.
MMC 820
Minneapolis, MN 55455
Phone: 612-626-5654
Fax: 612-626-6061
Email: irb@umn.edu
<http://www.research.umn.edu/subjects/>*

EXEMPTION DETERMINATION

September 7, 2017

Marek Oziewicz

612-625-3310
mco@umn.edu

Dear Marek Oziewicz:

On 9/7/2017, the IRB reviewed the following submission:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title of Study:	A Post-Intentional Phenomenological Exploration of Reading <u>Whitely</u>
Investigator:	Marek Oziewicz
IRB ID:	STUDY00001187
Sponsored Funding:	None
Grant ID/Con Number:	None
Internal UMN Funding:	None
Fund Management Outside University:	None
IND, IDE, or HDE:	None
Documents Reviewed with this Submission:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HRP 582 Consent Form - Sterner - STUDY00001187, Category: Consent Form;• HRP-580 - SOCIAL PROTOCOL - Sterner.docx, Category: IRB Protocol;

The IRB determined that this study meets the criteria for exemption from IRB review. To arrive at this determination, the IRB used "WORKSHEET: Exemption (HRP-312)." If you have any questions about this determination, please review that Worksheet in the [HRPP Toolkit Library](#) and contact the IRB office if needed.

This study met the following category for exemption:

Driven to DiscoverSM

- (1) Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices. (Both the procedures involve normal education practices and the objectives of the research involve normal educational practices.)

Ongoing IRB review and approval for this study is not required; however, this determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these activities impact the exempt determination, please submit a Modification to the IRB for a determination.

In conducting this study, you are required to follow the requirements listed in the Investigator Manual (HRP-103), which can be found by navigating to the [HRPP Toolkit Library](#) on the IRB website.

For grant certification purposes, you will need these dates and the Assurance of Compliance number which is FWA00000312 (Fairview Health Systems Research FWA00000325, Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare FWA00004003).

Sincerely,

Bri Warner
IRB Analyst

We value feedback from the research community and would like to hear about your experience. The link below will take you to a brief survey that will take a minute or two to complete. The questions are basic, but your responses will help us better understand what we are doing well and areas that may require improvement. Thank you in advance for completing the survey.

Even if you have provided feedback in the past, we want and welcome your evaluation.

https://umn.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_5BiYrqPNMJRQSBn

Appendix D: IRB Approved Consent Form

Title of Research Study: A Post-Intentional Phenomenological Exploration of Reading Whitely

Researcher: Sara K. Sterner

Supported By: This research is supported by the University of Minnesota.

Why am I being asked to take part in this research study?

We are asking you to take part in this research study because you are enrolled in Literacy Education (LE) 3004: Children's Literature²⁶¹, sections 002 and 003 and will be considering diversity texts for young people.

This study seeks to explore the ways in which dominant reading experiences have shaped readership, especially of pre-service teachers, and how that dominant reading experience impacts consideration of books. Initial data collection will be based on course related activity, and all enrolled students in the course are general participants at this level.

Students who wish to participate further will complete this consent form. This form will be sealed, like course evaluations, and held in the office of Annabeth S.²⁶² until January 2018 after the course is completed and final grades for the semester have been submitted to the university. This will ensure that your participation or non-participation in the study will be concealed from Sara Sterner, the researcher, while she is also your instructor. You can change your mind and alter your consent form at any time during the semester by visiting Annabeth's office and changing your form.

What should I know about a research study?

- Someone will explain this research study to you.
- Whether or not you take part is up to you.
- You can choose not to take part.
- You can agree to take part and later change your mind.
- Your decision will not be held against you.
- You can ask all the questions you want before you decide.

Who can I talk to?

For questions about research appointments, the research study, research results, or other concerns, call the study team at:

<p>Faculty Research Adviser: Dr. Marek Oziewicz Telephone Number: 612-625-3310 Email Address: mco@umn.edu</p>
--

²⁶¹ Pseudonym

²⁶² Pseudonym

OR

Researcher Name: Sara K. Sterner

Email Address: stern357@umn.edu

This research has been reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) within the Human Research Protections Program (HRPP). To share feedback privately with the HRPP about your research experience, call the Research Participants' Advocate Line at [612-625-1650](tel:612-625-1650) or go to www.irb.umn.edu/report.html.

You are encouraged to contact the HRPP if:

- Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the research team.
- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone besides the research team.
- You have questions about your rights as a research participant.
- You want to get information or provide input about this research.

Why is this research being done?

Introduction: Since its inception, the domain of literature for young people has been dominated by white gatekeepers and powerbrokers. From authors, illustrators, and publishers to librarians, educators, and booksellers, the people creating and promoting children's literature have been predominantly white. Due in no small part to this dominance, literature for young people has served as a platform that promotes whiteness and white cultural norms. While this phenomenon has started to change, with a few more non-white gatekeepers beginning to exert their influence on the industry, the legacy of exclusion remains. There is still much work to do to ensure that all young readers see themselves and their peers adequately and authentically reflected in the books that they read.

Teachers serve at the frontlines of the field, serving as both promoters and gatekeepers of literature and reading experiences in their classrooms. They often have much sway over what becomes the canon of their classroom and influence the reading selections of their students personal reading outside of the "official" literature of instruction. Thus, the core of my scholarship is concentrated on children's and adolescent literature and how it is taken up by teachers. When teachers do not realize that their own reading experiences can influence their understanding of representation, they may not even be aware that their selections are based on norms that reflect only the majority. Therefore, I believe that that phenomenon often serves as a barrier that keeps teachers from fully embracing the diverse and inclusive texts that would be beneficial to the readership of all their students.

Purpose of the Study: In this qualitative research study, I will consider, explore, and theorize potential productions of the phenomenon of reading whitely (the term I am using to describe the influence of the dominant societal norms on our reading experiences) as it

is manifest in preservice teachers. The primary question of this research is: What does it mean to read whitely? Secondary questions help to focus my research beyond that general focus of the phenomenon into the context of my data collection site as a location of teacher education. These include: 1) What role does reading whitely play in the reading experiences of pre-service teachers? 2) What does it mean to explore experiences of reading whitely through the context of a pre-service teacher training course? 3) What is the experience of exploring diversity and inclusivity in children's literature for those who read whitely? 4) How does that experience seem to change over the progression of a semester long course that promotes diversity and inclusivity.

Significance of the Study: In an educational system that continued to have increasingly diverse student populations, it is important for students to have access to diverse texts that are inclusive and authentically represented their lived identities. In order to support teacher development and promotion of diverse texts for all student populations, it is essential for teacher training programs to investigate how preservice teacher reading experiences based in dominant cultural norms impact their selection, promotion, and readership of texts for young people. I believe that this study is also significant to the field because it bridges multiple scholarly disciplines. It is tentatively produced at the nexus of teacher education, white teacher identity studies, culturally relevant pedagogy, and children's literature. While each of these disciplines has been studied separately, with some scholarship that examine intersections of two of the disciplines, the emphasis on all four is significant. I believe that my findings will move each field forward because of the work of this study.

How long will the research last?

We expect that you will be in this research study, peripherally, throughout the fall 2017 semester while you are enrolled in LE 3004. If you choose to participate further, through a more detailed interview process, this will take place during the spring 2018 semester and will be scheduled at a mutually beneficial time between the participant and the researcher.

How many people will be studied?

With our current enrollment of 59 students will participate in the general data collection process throughout the semester. I expect many students to consent to sharing their course materials after the semester has been completed and about 3-8 people to continue in this study after the fall semester by participating in interviews with the researcher.

What happens if I say "Yes, I want to be in this research"?

There are varying levels of participation in this study beyond the general work product of the course:

- **Fall 2017 - General Course Related Activity:** All enrolled students in the fall semester of LE 3004 sections 002 and 003 are general participants in this aspect of the study.
 - General anecdotal notes, observations, and artifacts of the general course

materials (assignment sheets, posters, notes from whiteboard, etc.) will be collected and considered by the instructor/researcher from each class sessions. This will also include general observations of class discussions, activities, and assignments.

- No data will be collected about specific students, their responses to assignments, or discussions. Though all materials will be anonymized, and any identifying features will be removed, regardless.
- Analysis of the general data would be based on a qualitative analysis process that is specific to post-intentional phenomenology:
 - This process is observational and is based on a note-taking process that includes post-reflexion to consider: wonderings, assumptions of normality, connection/disconnection, bottom lines, and shocks
 - This data would be generalized through this analysis process and would not focus on specific participants, due to the concealed consent aspect of this form (see above).
 - School, course, and program identification will be anonymized with pseudonyms. Any other identifying features of this data will be removed or given pseudonyms.
- **Spring 2018 - Focused Participation Assignment/Materials Share:** Specific assignments and materials from our course sessions during the fall of 2017 will be used for deeper analysis (beyond the general analysis listed above) after the semester has been completed.
 - These include but are not limited to:
 - Class journal
 - Readerography Assignment
 - Novel Responses
 - Critical Analysis Paper
 - All materials will be anonymized, and any identifying features will be removed, where this is not possible pseudonyms will be used
 - As part of the analysis process materials of participants may be directly quoted, considered more deeply, and included in their entirety (though anonymized) in the final dissertation and related publications
 - You will give consent to this level of participation but will not need to be actively involved as all assignments and materials will have been collected through the online platform (Moodle) during the course.
- **Spring 2018 - Focused Participation Interview:** For those who wish to participate further, you may consent to be interviewed by the researcher about

your experiences in the class and with the phenomenon. For those who consent to this level of participation, you will be contacted to participate in 2-3 one-on-one interviews with the researcher during the spring 2018 semester.

- Interviews will be recorded using a digital voice recorder and stored on a password protected device
- Transcripts of the interviews will be anonymized, and any identifying features will be removed, where this is not possible pseudonyms will be used.
- Interviews will be scheduled at a mutually beneficial date and time.
- All research interactions will be through the lead researcher, Sara Sterner.
 - Because Sara Sterner is also the instructor of the course, you may contact Dr. Marek Oziewicz or Dr. Annie Mason if you have concerns or questions that Sara cannot answer, or you feel need to be addressed outside of the instructional context.
- The research will be completed in the classroom space of Education Building²⁶³, Room 355 where the LE 3004 course meets on Wednesdays and through the digital educational platform of Moodle.
 - Additional interviews will be scheduled at a mutually beneficial location, time, and date.
- This aspect of the research will be completed by May of 2018.

What happens if I do not want to be in this research?

You can choose not to participate at the focused participation levels or leave the focused participation levels of research at any time and it will not be held against you. Your participation or non-participation in this study will be concealed from the researcher, Sara Sterner, while she is also serving as your instructor and evaluator.

Reminder: This form will be sealed, like course evaluations, and held in the office of Annabeth S. until after the course is completed and final grades for the semester have been submitted to the university. Consent forms will not be accessed until January 2018 when the spring semester begins.

What happens if I say “Yes”, but I change my mind later?

You can leave the research at any time and it will not be held against you. Consent forms will be held in the office of Annabeth S. and can be changed at any time during the fall semester 2017.

If you decide to leave the research after January 15, 2018 contact the investigator so that the investigator can remove any data, assignment materials, or interview materials from the study.

What happens to the information collected for the research?

Efforts will be made to limit the use and disclosure of your personal information, including research study and data materials to people who have a need to review this

²⁶³ Pseudonym

information. We cannot promise complete secrecy. Organizations that may inspect and copy your information include the IRB and other representatives of this institution.

All data will be store in password protected digital platforms:

- All coursework will be stored on the digital platform of Moodle
- Any downloaded coursework materials will be held on a private and password protected computer.
- Journals and other Google Drive based data will continue to be stored in Google Drive and will be password protected.
- Interview recordings and transcripts will be stored on a private and password protected computer.

Will anyone besides the study team be at my consent meeting?

The consent meeting will take place during a LE 3004 course session. All course participants will be present. The researcher/instructor and any other members of the LE 3004-instructional team will leave the room for the signing of the consent forms. Collection of the forms will be completed by a class member and will be placed in a sealed envelope and taken directly to the office of elementary education adviser Annabeth S. (Education Building, Room 400)

Will I have a chance to provide feedback after the study is over?

The Human Research Protection Program may ask you to complete a survey that asks about your experience as a research participant. You do not have to complete the survey if you do not want to. If you do choose to complete the survey, your responses will be anonymous.

If you are not asked to complete a survey, but you would like to share feedback, please contact the study team or the Human Research Protection Program (HRPP). See the “Who Can I Talk To?” section of this form for study team and HRPP contact information.

Optional Elements:

The following research activities are optional, meaning that you do not have to agree to them in order to participate in the research study. Please indicate your willingness to participate in these optional activities by placing your initials next to each activity.

I agree I disagree

_____ _____ The researcher may contact me in the future to see whether I am interested in participating in other research studies by the principal investigator of this study.

Research Participation:

Please initial which levels of participation that you give consent for as part of this research:

_____ I consent to the **Focused Participation Assignment Share** and will allow my course related materials (assignments, journal, etc.) to be used for further analysis.

_____ I consent to the **Focused Participation Interview** and will allow the researcher to contact me for two (or more) follow up interviews after LE 3004 is completed in the fall.


_____ I **DO NOT** consent to either type of **Focused Participation** (assignment share or interview) but understand that my enrollment in this course classifies me as a general participant in the course related activity aspects of this study.

Your signature documents your permission to take part in this research.

Signature of participant

Date

Printed name of participant



Signature of person obtaining consent

9/27/17
Date

Sara K. Sterner
Printed name of person obtaining consent