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The Avoidance of Race: White Teachers' Racial Identities in Alternative Teacher Education Programs and Urban Under-Resourced Schools

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by

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The Avoidance of Race: White Teachers' Racial Identities in Alternative Teacher Education Programs and Urban Under-Resourced Schools

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DEDICATION

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS iii

DEDICATION iv

LIST OF TABLES ix

LIST OF FIGURES x

ABSTRACT xi

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND METHOD 1
- Introduction 1
- Statement of the Problem 4
  - Racial Mismatch 6
  - Failure to Interrogate Whiteness 7
- Purpose of the Study 11
- Significance of the Study 11
- Research Questions 13
- Theoretical Framework 13
  - Critical Race Theory 14
    - Three Stages of Critical Race Theory 14
    - Interest Convergence 15
    - Critical Race Theory in Schools 15
  - Critical White Studies 16
  - Howard and the White Identity Development of Teachers 18
- Research Design & Methodology 19
- Limitations 23
- Delimitations 24
- Definitions of Terms 26

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE 28
- Introduction 28
- Literature Review 29
  - History of Alternative Teacher Education Programs 29
  - Nation at Risk 29
  - Creation of Alternative Teacher Education Programs 30
    - Achievement Gap 31
    - No Child Left Behind 32
      - Critiques of No Child Left Behind 33
  - Teach for America 35
  - University Consortium for Catholic Education 37
  - Weaknesses of Alternative Teacher Education Programs 39

Dangerous Mismatch Perpetuated 40
Multicultural Education 42
Teacher and Program Quality 45
Color Blindness and White Teachers 46
Failure to Interrogate Whiteness 48
Teacher Attrition Rates 51
Theoretical Framework 53
Critical Race Theory 55
Critical White Studies 58
White Racial Consciousness 61
White Racial Identity 62
White Racial Identity Development 64
Erikson: Founder of Identity Development 64
Helms: White Racial Identity Development 65
Howard and the White Racial Identity Development of Teachers 65
Dimension I: Knowing My Practice 66
Dimension II: Knowing My Self 68
Dimension III: Knowing My Students 70
Rigor, Relationship, and Responsiveness 72
Conclusion 73

CHAPTER 3: METHODS 75
Rationale of Qualitative Study 75
Qualitative Methods 75
Qualitative Study: Stories That Must Be Told 76
Voice as a Form of Justice 77
Participant Selection 78
Participant I 80
Participant II 81
Participant III 82
Participant IV 82
Participant V 83
Program and Site Selection 83
Rationale for Sequence of Method 84
Interviews 86
Journals 90
Observations 93
Focus Group 96
Data Management 99
Transcription and Coding 99
Internal Validity 102
Researcher Bias 104
Conclusion 105

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS 106
Restatement of the Purpose of the Research 106
Introductory Summary of the Findings 107
Researcher Positionality 107
Participant Biographies 109
Question #1: Perceptions of Race and Racism in Urban Under-Resourced Schools 110
Participants' Perceptions: Seeing a Racial Mismatch 111
Participants' Perceptions: Poverty 114
Participants' Perceptions: Culture 117
Participants' Perceptions: Summary 119
Question #2: Perceptions of Alternative Teacher Education Programs' Impact on Racial Identities 120
Lack of Critical Coursework 121
Unprepared Teachers 125
Processing, Personal Cost, and Impact 129
Question #3: Perceptions of Abilities to Deepen Racial Identities in Urban Under-Resourced Schools 135
Howard's Racial Identity Development Model 136
Opinions of Their Whiteness 137
Dimension I: Knowing My Practice 137
Dimension II: Knowing My Self 143
Dimension III: Knowing My Students 146
Lack of Awareness of Racial Identity 149
Participants' Perceptions as Study Participants 152
Gratitude 152
Frustration 153
Data Relationships 154
Conclusion 157

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 159
Introduction 159
Well-Intentioned Educators 159
Discussion of Findings 162
Uneven Perceptions of Race and Racism 162
Deflecting Race: Participants 164
Deflecting Race: Researcher 166
Maintaining the Cycle of Racism 168
Minimal Contact with Racially Dissimilar Populations 168
Unprepared Educators 172
Color Blind Educators 173
Poverty and Cultural Differences 173
Critical Coursework 176
Deficit Mentality 177

Difficulties Processing Experiences 180
Retention 181
A Comparison of Public and Private Alternative Teacher Education Programs 184
Corroborating Previous Scholarship 185
Recommendations for Alternative Teacher Education Programs and Urban Under-Resourced Schools 186
Recommendation #1: Provide Opportunities to Perceive Race 186
Reconceptualize Alternative Teacher Education Programs 187
Increase Involvement with Racially Dissimilar Communities 188
Recommendation #2: Adequate Preparation and Support of White Teachers 191
Provide Critical Coursework and Adequately Prepare Teachers 191
Inclusion of Whiteness Studies 192
Create On-Going and Reflective Support Systems 194
Processing Opportunities 194
Recommendation #3: Implementation of Howard's Racial Identity Development Model 195
Dimension I: Knowing My Practice 198
Dimension II: Knowing My Self 198
Dimension III: Knowing My Students 199
Limitations of Howard's Racial Identity Development Model and Theoretical Race Lenses 200
Recommendations for Future Studies 202
Final Reflection 204
Conclusion 207

APPENDICES 209
A. Informed Consent Form 209
B. Participant Background Information Questionnaire 210
C. Semi-Structured Interview Questions 212
D. Journal Prompts 217
E. Observation Matrix 220
F. Researcher Post-Observation Reflection 224
G. Focus Group Questions 225

REFERENCES 226

LIST OF TABLES

1. Participants' Background Information....80

2. Participants' Third Journal Prompt Titles....92

3. Themes and Sub-Themes....155

LIST OF FIGURES

1. Theoretical Lenses Guiding This Study....54

2. Howard's Achievement Triangle....66

3. Race Continuum....197

ABSTRACT

The Avoidance of Race: White Teachers' Racial Identities in Alternative Teacher Education Programs and Urban Under-Resourced Schools

by

Kelley Marie McCann Miller

Due to the lack of research on White teacher racial identity development and White graduates of alternative teacher education programs teaching in urban under-resourced schools, this study aimed to: examine how White graduates of alternative teacher education programs perceive race and racism in their urban under-resourced schools, explore the impact of their alternative teacher education programs on their racial identities, and evaluate their abilities to deepen their racial identities in the context of their urban under-resourced schools. Critical examination and analysis of the experiences of White teachers, through the lenses of Critical Race Theory, Critical White Studies, and Howard's Racial Identity Development Model, provided insights on how quickly expanding alternative teacher education programs across the nation are failing to adequately and critically address White teachers' racial identity development. Well-intentioned participants recognized a noticeable racial mismatch, did not perceive race or racism in their urban under-resourced schools, lacked exposure to critical coursework, felt unprepared to work with racially dissimilar students, faced difficulties processing their experiences, and showed minimal evidence

of having well developed racial identities. Alternative teacher education programs are recommended to prioritize race issues and racial identity development by providing opportunities for White educators to perceive race, adequately preparing and supporting White teachers, and implementing Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model.

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Introduction

As a White female, I have benefited from White privilege throughout my life.[1] I first became aware of these benefits in my undergraduate sociology classes, and was reminded of them again in my alternative teacher education program. However, it was only after five years of teaching, when I switched schools from an urban middle socio-economic level school to an urban under-resourced school that I started to truly understand the impact of race in our society and in my own life. The seeds of my dissertation have come from my work in this urban under-resourced school, in addition to my personal experience as a graduate of an alternative teacher education program, as I navigated the issues of race, especially White privilege, at the university and in my own classroom.

Four years ago, when I embarked upon my new teaching placement in an urban under-resourced school, I began to realize the significant differences between my educational background and home life and those of the students I taught in my classes. As I compared and contrasted these two diverse experiences more and more each day, it became increasingly apparent that I had a very minimal understanding of my students, their home lives, and their culture prior to entering that school community. The reality I faced was compounded by that fact that I was not a fluent Spanish speaker, was unable to easily communicate with my students' parents and guardians, and looked nothing like the students I was educating.

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[1] In this chapter names of racial groups (such as Whites) are capitalized, in accordance with the standard style of the American Psychological Association, sixth edition. "Capitalizing these terms acknowledges that these labels are proper nouns referring to socio-politically defined groups of people rather than adjectives describing skin color" (Helms, 1994, p. 285).

My experience teaching in an urban under-resourced school was the first time I was seriously challenged to acknowledge my race and to question how it impacted my students, my interactions with their parents/guardians, my involvement in a new community and culture, my teaching strategies and styles, and my understanding of my role as a White female educator. In my first year in the urban under-resourced school community, I experienced an extreme paradigm shift which turned all my understandings of education upside down because I was, for the first time, learning and seeing the effects of race and poverty in our nation through the eyes and experiences of middle school students and their families in an impoverished community. Even now, years later, though I have spent ample time reflecting and processing my experiences, I still continue to struggle to properly address the needs of my students because of this serious racial and socio-economic mismatch on a daily basis.

My experiences as a teacher in an urban under-resourced school caused feelings of intense helplessness, guilt and frustration. They also led to a greater understanding of lived compassion and selflessness, a much stronger appreciation for the family unit and extended family, and a more solid understanding of resiliency. In addition, I came to a truer realization of the actual needs of students in urban under-resourced schools, and a much greater awareness of the incredible potential and significant support of a tightly woven community where there is a common lived sense of belonging to each other. Throughout this time, I have also had tremendous difficulty knowing appropriate ways to address and process the effects of single-parent (mostly female-led) families, poverty, gang pressures, violence, malnutrition, neglect, inadequate resources, unaddressed learning difficulties in students, and serious emotional issues including cutting, overdosing, and suicidal tendencies. The combination of all these factors has

led me to want to understand a world I have not personally known in my own life to more completely address student needs, teach in meaningful ways, walk with students, and effectively support the aspirations of urban students in marginalized communities.

As a teacher, I have repeatedly come to the realization that I was significantly ill-equipped to address many of my students' needs academically, emotionally, and personally in this urban under-resourced school due to my lack of awareness of their realities and, largely, because of my own privileged White background. I needed, and still need, tools and support systems to effectively and productively increase and frame my racial consciousness. I have continued to question the preparation I received prior to entering urban under-resourced school education after graduating from an alternative teacher education program aimed at putting teachers in urban under-resourced schools.

My graduate alternative teacher education program did not challenge me to interrogate my Whiteness or provide opportunities for me to examine White teachers' and non-White students' experiences. This program alleged to adequately prepare me for an urban under-resourced teaching experience, yet failed to address or interrogate race, which has been one of the most influential inhibitors in my students' abilities to succeed in our society. I did not have the scholarship, theory, or practice to inform my daily struggles in the classroom and assist me in appropriately and effectively unpacking, reflecting, and interrogating my experiences as a White middle-class female in the context of the experiences of my mostly Latino low-income students in urban under-resourced schools from inner-city Los Angeles. This experience propelled me to research the experience of White inner-city school teachers from alternative teacher education programs. Thus, this study will examine ways White graduates of alternative teacher education

programs perceive race and racism in their urban under-resourced schools, perceive the impact of their alternative teacher education programs on their racial identities, and understand their abilities to deepen their racial identities in the context of their urban under-resourced schools.

Alternative teacher education programs are programs allowing non-educators with college degrees, "the opportunity to earn a teaching certificate more quickly than going through the full teacher education program. Alternative programs are geared toward mature adults, rather than college students, and vary significantly from traditional teacher education programs" (Duhon-Haynes, Augustus, Duhon-Sells, & Duhon-Ross, 1996, p. 3). These programs vary based on type of program, requirements, level of commitment, and length of program, became popular in the middle of the 1980's and were created to place highly-qualified educators into urban schools needing teachers (Duhon-Haynes et al., 1996).

It is essential, therefore, to examine how the experiences of White teacher graduates of alternative teacher education programs in inner-city schools help inform understandings of racial identity development in teachers and, ultimately, the non-White students they teach each day. This study provides an introspective examination of the experiences of White graduates of alternative teacher education programs and how they perceive race and racism in urban under-resourced schools, the impact of their alternative teacher education programs on their racial identities, and their abilities to deepen their racial identities in the context of their urban under-resourced schools.

Statement of the Problem

This study examines the experiences and perceptions of five White educators, one from a public program, and four from private programs, and their racial identities as graduates of large

alternative teacher education programs in the United States serving urban under-resourced school communities. The public program is the largest national public alternative teacher education program, Teach for America. Teach for America prepares teachers for K-12 urban schools placements. It currently has 7,300 members, 17,000 alumni, impacts 450,000 students annually, exists in 35 regions nationwide, overwhelmingly educates Latino and African American students, and has had approximately 3 million students since it was created in 1989 (Teach for America, n.d.). The private teacher education programs are members of a conglomeration of fifteen programs called the University Consortium for Catholic Education (University Consortium for Catholic Education, n.d.), and exist in thirty-two states. These fifteen alternative teacher education programs prepare educators for non-public K-12 schools throughout the nation. Approximately 400 educators are annually involved in these private alternative teacher education programs and these educators teach in both Catholic and parochial schools in 53 dioceses nationwide (UCCE, n.d.).

Both of these programs desire to educate, prepare, and place highly-educated individuals in urban under-resourced schools. Recent estimates predict approximately fifteen percent of all new teachers are entering schools through alternative teacher education programs (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007). The overwhelming numbers of teachers graduating from these programs and the drastic increase in urban under-resourced school teaching assignments is cause for concern (Darling-Hammond, 2003) and further study. While there is some research on public alternative teacher education programs, there is very little research on private alternative teacher education programs and my study seeks to research and provide insights on both types of

programs. My research aims to address the relationship between private and public alternative education programs and the experiences of White educators who populate them.

Descriptions of alternative teacher education programs suggest that a huge mismatch exists between teachers and students in many schools served by these programs (Hill-Jackson, 2007). In addition, the student population, in general, has experienced drastic changes in the United States over the past few decades with an increase in low-income, non-White, and non-native English speaking students in schools (Bartolome, 1994, p. 264). "Most teachers in the United States are White, monolingual, middle-class females who are teaching a student body that is increasingly diverse in native language, race, ethnicity, and social class" (Nieto, 2009, p. 476). Additionally, the overwhelming majority of educators are White and this has also contributed to the mismatch in alternative teacher education programs.

Racial Mismatch

Currently, a severe problem in education exists because of the racial mismatch between teachers and students, especially in urban under-resourced schools. The racial mismatch has been exacerbated by the fact that alternative teacher education programs, originally envisioned to close the achievement gap, have been created at alarming rates in order to fill teaching positions in failing urban under-resourced schools. These programs have largely filled their programs, and, ultimately, urban under-resourced schools, with mostly White well-educated teachers from middle-class backgrounds and have decreased the gap in some ways (Ladson-Billings, 2000). However, closing the achievement gap continues to be even more difficult due to, "the increasing racial and ethnic diversity among students in the United States coupled with a homogenous teaching population" (Jackson & Wasson, 2003, p. 1).

This racial mismatch poses numerous challenges, especially for urban under-resourced schools where teachers and students have extremely dissimilar racial compositions and backgrounds. Aminy & Neophytos-Richardson (2002) stated,

> Given the deep chasm that divides the experience of most teacher candidates, who are Euro-American, English-speaking, and the unwitting recipients of 'White Privilege,' from the experiences of communities of color, it must be our purpose, now, to challenge stereotypes and to transform the ways we look at each other and ourselves. (p. 3)

Romo (2004) believes many teachers interact with students as if they are from a similar background, yet, in many cases this is not the case.

There has been a call for increased racial awareness of educators to critically address the racial mismatch between teachers and students (Bartolome, 2008). "Fortunately, there is a growing recognition among the educational research and policy communities that one of the key variables related to the school achievement of culturally diverse students is the teacher" (Irvine, 2003, p. 72). The identities of White educators must be challenged for true growth to occur and for students to be more effectively educated, especially in inner-city schools.

Failure to Interrogate Whiteness

The second problem associated with the current racial mismatch between teachers and students in urban under-resourced schools is that educators frequently have an inadequate awareness of their students' cultures and backgrounds (Jackson & Wasson, 2003). In fact, many alternative teacher education programs fail to address and/or interrogate Whiteness and the differences associated with teachers' experiences and students' experiences (Bartolome, 2008). The current education system is not filled with racially aware White educators and few know

how to deal with racial issues in highly effective ways (Marx & Pennington, 2003; Perry, 1997). They know very little about cultures different from their own and are not conscious of different cultural groups throughout history and how race affects our society (Melnick & Zeichner, 1995).

Schools of education are required by law to expose teachers to issues of diversity through multicultural education (Marx & Pennington, 2003). However, multicultural education, as Sheets (2000) noted, has often meant identifying ways teachers educate students in urban under-resourced schools instead of paying significant attention to, and providing suggestions for, ways teacher education programs can improve to address multicultural concerns. Often, schools of education only require one class on multicultural education. If teachers are not well exposed to issues of diversity, they will not be able to critically examine their own experiences and may, "be ill-prepared to either teach their students about diversity or to work in school settings with diverse populations" (Kraft, 2001, p. 9). Most multicultural education classes have focused on reducing prejudice and racism without seriously interrogating racism, leading to an increase in the achievement gap (Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 1995, p. 177). Scholars suggest that it is imperative for teacher education programs to include more than one course on multicultural education over an entire program (Hill-Jackson, 2007; Kraft).

Additionally, even when race is discussed in multicultural education classes, it is frequently addressed from the perspectives of non-Whites (Manglitz, 2003). These classes do not include discussions on the impact of race and are presented from a Eurocentric White perspective and have not led to a greater appreciation of all groups (Gunzenhauser, Adams, & Paulding, 1996; Jackson & Wasson, 2003). By failing to interrogate issues of race, these classes often perpetuate discrimination and stereotypes by overemphasizing celebrations of food, music, and

traditional rituals and practices (Lampe, 1994). A more critical multiculturalism is needed in education to examine the construction of race and, most especially, White racial identities of educators (Manglitz, 2003). Otherwise, as Lampe stated, educators will fail to see their roles in racism and will be unprepared for inner-city non-White schools if they are only exposed to a limited form of multiculturalism that does not include them (Kraft, 2001; Lampe). Due to this multicultural education reality, it has been extremely difficult to provide pre-service educators with meaning-filled multicultural education experiences (Machart, Thompson, Grooters, & Almlie, 1996).

Critical teacher awareness prior to entering the classroom is largely the nationwide responsibility of teacher education programs and schools (Teel & Obidah, 2008). In fact, it has been noted that Whites have difficulty describing their racial backgrounds because they have not been asked to do so previously in their lives.

> The conversations with these White teachers does not center on a discussion of the existence or denial of racism, but rather is a probing of the idea of an unacknowledged existence on the part of Whites being raced, and the inherent social realities (i.e. White privilege) due to the color of their skin as White teachers, just as there are certain social realities (i.e. denial of access) for Blacks and other persons of color because of the color of their skin. (Mazzei, 1997, p. 3)

Quality teacher education programs can assist educators in understanding how to include and address larger questions and inequalities in the classroom (Constantine, Hage, Kindaichi, & Bryant, 2007; Kraft, 2001).

Unfortunately, Whites can support racism without even being aware of ways they perpetuate it each day (Applebaum, 2004). Carr and Lund (2009) found many teacher education programs do not include a critical self-reflection piece to address race. This can lead to difficult experiences in the field of education when teachers are met with school realities they have not been exposed to in their teacher education classes (Ladson-Billings, 2000). Encouraging pre-service teachers to challenge inequity, meritocracy, and marginalization in education could have profound effects on students, especially students from low socio-economic backgrounds, while challenging their own White biases and beliefs (Bartolome, 2004; hooks, 1994; Taylor, 1999). "In doing this it recognizes overt issues of power, privilege, and authority and includes talking honestly about concurrent social issues such as White supremacy, patriarchy, racism, sexism, and homophobia" (Perry, 1997, p. 7). Low expectations, negative views, and ways educator assumptions can negatively impact students because they have not analyzed their own backgrounds and the backgrounds of their students' can be alleviated if universities and colleges encourage racial identity development.

Thus, the problems of the growing racial mismatch between teachers and students in urban under-resourced schools and the failure of alternative teacher education programs to interrogate Whiteness are significant issues to be addressed if a socially just education is to be made available to all students. This study will provide insights on ways alternative teacher education programs develop the racial identities of White educators in urban under-resourced schools. The influx of new alternative teacher education programs within the past three decades makes this even more critical. These programs are the new models of teacher education and this

study will examine and identify ways White teachers and their alternative teacher education programs perceive and address racial identity development.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this qualitative study is to examine White alternative teacher education program graduates' perceptions of race and racism in their urban under-resourced school placements. These issues are critical in education because addressing racial disparities can encourage a more just and equitable educational experience for all urban under-resourced students. A second purpose is to examine White graduates' perceptions of the impact of and evidence surrounding alternative teacher education programs on their racial identities. White racial identity development is important to be examined in the field of education since there is a mismatch between White educators and non-White students in urban under-resourced schools. A third purpose is to examine the White graduates' perceptions of their alternative teacher education programs on their racial identities in their context of their urban under-resourced school placements. It is important to the field of education and, especially, alternative teacher education programs, to identify how White teachers perceive race and the impact of their alternative teacher education programs on their racial identities and its effects on success in their urban under-resourced school placements.

Significance of the Study

First, there have been limited studies on White teacher racial identity development in alternative teacher education programs. Various researchers have studied race in education (Darling-Hammond, 2003; hooks, 1994), alternative teacher education programs (Ackley, Balaban & Pascarelli, 1999; Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007; Duhon-Haynes et al.,

1996; Harriman & Renew, 1996), and alternative teacher education programs and race (Eckert & Bey, 1990; Hulsebosch & Koerner, 1993; Irvine, 2003; Lampe, 1994; Marchart et al., 1996; Taylor,1999; Wayman, 2002). However, a study has not been conducted that has used Howard's Racial Identity Development Model to understand White teachers' experiences as graduates of public and private alternative teacher education programs and their perceptions of race and racism in their urban under-resourced schools, the impact of their alternative teacher education programs on their racial identities, their abilities to deepen their racial identities in the context of their urban under-resourced schools. This study is long overdue in the field of education and will, hopefully, be a stepping stone for future research and for an introspective look into the experiences of White educators from these programs.

Secondly, alternative teacher education programs throughout the nation must be analyzed since these programs are quickly expanding while mostly educating White, middle-class females for positions in urban under-resourced schools predominantly comprised of non-White students (Bartolome, 2008). This study can assist alternative teacher education programs in providing an understanding of some White educators' experiences within their alternative teacher education programs and the process of becoming racially aware because these programs prepare educators for urban under-resourced schools with a majority of non-White students. This data can provide insights for schools of education to assess the impacts and effectiveness of their alternative teacher education programs on the racial identity development of White educators.

Thirdly, it is commonly understood that the most successful teachers understand their students extremely well. Alternative teacher education programs and teachers will be able to use the findings of this study to understand how racial identity development may assist them in being

able to more effectively educate students of dissimilar racial backgrounds. It is important for alternative teacher education programs to describe how they assist teachers with their ever-growing racial identities in the context of urban under-resourced schools. This study will report the evidence describing how alternative teacher education programs address and critically examine their preparations and developments of White teacher racial identities for urban under-resourced schools.

Research Questions

Three research questions guide this qualitative study. They are:

1. How do White graduates of alternative teacher education programs perceive race and racism in their urban under-resourced schools?
2. How do White graduates of alternative teacher education programs perceive the impact of their alternative teacher education programs on their racial identities?
3. How do White graduates of alternative teacher education programs perceive their abilities to deepen their racial identities in the context of their urban under-resourced schools?

Theoretical Framework

This study was created to examine the opinions of White graduates of alternative teacher education programs on race and racism in urban under-resourced schools, identify ways their alternative teacher education programs fostered their own racial identity development, and determine experiences White teachers have had in their urban under-resourced school communities to deepen their racial identities. Therefore, the use of multiple lenses including Critical Theory, Critical White Studies, and Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development

Model will guide this study in order to examine these questions while critically interrogating race and the impact it has had on teacher education and, ultimately, the lives and experiences of White educators and non-White students in urban under-resourced schools. My study is situated in the middle of all three of these theoretical frameworks because they all provide critical lenses allowing me to truly examine the experiences of White graduates of alternative teacher education programs.

Critical Race Theory. Critical Race Theory connects experiences of non-Whites to larger systemic methods of oppression within our society (Solorzano & Yasso, 2001). "Critical Race Theory was developed in response to the shortcomings of Critical Legal Studies in addressing the legal system's perpetuation of racism" (Bergerson, 2003). This theory allows us to see how Latino and African American students experience unequal educational experiences in relation to their White classmates (Solorzano & Ornelas, 2004). It aims to challenge the status quo by interrogating racism in people's lives (Bergerson, 2003). Even though it focuses on the individual's experience, it is essential to validate the experiences of all so we can learn from each other. The prioritization of voices frequently left out of mainstream literature and dialogue will allow everyone in our society to ultimately understand ways our racialized society impacts the lives of non-Whites. Critical Theory breaks down the separation created with an "us" versus "them" mentality.

Three stages of critical race theory. Critical Race Theory guides this study as one of the three main theoretical frameworks. It is comprised of three stages describing racial identity development. The three stages of Critical Race Theory are centering race, color blindness, and merit (Bergerson, 2003). The first stage addresses race and brings it to the forefront of the

conversation to critically identify how it manifests itself within our society. The second stage describes color blindness and the effects of it because Whites in our society are privileged in not being forced to recognize race or the consequences of it on a daily basis. "Touted by many as a positive outcome of the civil rights movement, in reality color blindness amounts to a requirement that people of color become more White" (Bergerson, 2003, p. 53). The third stage examines how understandings of merit affect our abilities to validate the racialized experiences of all people. Due to the fact that Whites benefit from race, it is uncommon for them to be challenged to critically interrogate their own race (Bergerson, 2003).

Interest convergence. As a White researcher, Critical Race Theory requires me to be able to examine my study from a White perspective. It is important to note how the interests of privileged White educators and their desires to understand the experiences of students in urban under-resourced schools converge (Groenke, 2010) and how this convergence can be exposed for the benefit of the students these teachers serve. Although alternative teacher education programs aim to provide quality educational experiences for students in urban under-resourced schools, the White graduates of these programs benefit as well from the ability to take graduate courses while being supported by their alternative teacher education programs and urban under-resourced schools. This study explores interest convergence later in the research.

Critical race theory in schools. Critical Race Theory states that schools reproduce societal inequalities by supporting an unequal classist and racist system (Bowles & Gintis, 1976). "Issues of access and inequality have long overwhelmed the educational experiences of Latina/o and African American students" (Solorzano & Orenelas, 2004). Schools continue to perpetuate systemic racism and increase the achievement gap by not truly addressing issues of racism in

education (Bergerson, 2003). This has been proven because little in our racialized society has changed since the Civil Rights Movement (Bergerson, 2003). Critical Race Theory is essential when analyzing schools because it critically examines the effects of race in our society, challenges issues of race and how non-White students are affected, and exposes discrimination which can then be transformed into a non-racist educational system.

Critical Race Theory acknowledges that White privilege invades our society. However, it does not critically interrogate the White race. Instead, it focuses on and examines the lives of the disenfranchised and oppressed, the experiences of non-Whites, and the ways inequalities are perpetuated in our society (Solorzano & Yosso, 2001). Therefore, Critical White Studies is needed for this study to support Critical Race Theory and to provide a critical lens through which racism and White teachers in alternative teacher education programs can be analyzed.

Critical White Studies

Critical Race Theory largely does not examine Whiteness and expose it or acknowledge the unconsciousness of White actions (Delgado & Stefancic, 1997). Critical White Studies, however, examines White privilege and identifies the importance of studying the significance of the White race. Therefore, this study will be informed by both theoretical frameworks because, "Critical Race Theory and critical White studies remain outside the parameters of most teacher education programs" (Marx & Pennington, 2003, p. 92). White privilege must be discussed and made visible to examine how it affects our society and the education system within it (Wildman & Davis, 1996).

Critical White Studies will add an even more critical racial lens to this study because it encourages an introspective look into White educators, especially in non-White, urban under-

resourced schools. “Studying Whiteness from a critical perspective reveals a lot about the construction of hierarchy and power, insiders and outsiders” (Wildman, 1996, p. 324). Most importantly, use of this theoretical framework will allow for a thorough analysis of how race is examined in alternative teacher education programs and the experiences with race of White educators in urban, under-resourced, and non-White schools because Whiteness is often not discussed or interrogated.

> Their explanations fail to recognize structural inequality built into the social order to link racial inequity to other forms of exploitation. In addition, these explanations, which give considerable attention to black people’s negative characteristics, fail to account for White people’s beliefs and attitudes that have long justified societal oppression and inequity in the form of racial slavery or discrimination. (King, 1991, p. 130)

The overwhelming majority of classes and programs in schools of education focus on oppression and discrimination, not privilege (McIntosh, 1988). As the achievement gap continues to widen, alternative teacher education programs are offering a new way of thinking about teacher education. In order to critically respond and justly address the growing racial mismatch between teachers and students, racial identities of educators must be examined in alternative teacher education programs, especially for White educators.

Using Critical Race Theory and Critical White Studies as lenses for my study will help me critically analyze White teachers’ perceptions of race and racism, ways alternative teacher education programs challenge White teachers to critically analyze their own racial identities, and methods White teachers utilize to deepen their racial identities in the context of their school communities. These two theoretical frameworks will also provide a lens through which

alternative teacher education programs can be interrogated to address issues of White racial identity development. However, a third lens is needed for this study to more specifically address White teacher racial identity development.

Howard and the White Racial Identity of Teachers

Based on his work analyzing various racial identity development models, including Erikson (1950) and Helms (1994), Howard (2006) created a model identifying three dimensions and depicting White racial identity development as an ongoing and reflective process. The goal of his racial identity development model, and the significant reason why his model lends itself to my third theoretical lens, is to support White educators through making sense of their racial identities through a critical interrogation of work for transformation through their teaching practices, their racial backgrounds, and the backgrounds of non-Whites. Unlike other models that do not specifically interrogate race, Howard's (2006) model critically interrogated White race. Howard's triangular model identified rigor, relationships, and responsiveness as supporting White educators' racial identity development by utilizing culturally responsive teaching (knowing my practice), having a passion for equity (knowing my self), and being culturally competent (knowing my students) (Howard). This multi-faceted and triangular approach encompasses three dimensions describing how White educators can become more effective educators of racially dissimilar students in urban under-resourced schools while working for equity and justice.

Howard's (2006) White Racial Identity Development Model is essential for this study because it provides a lens for how to encourage Whites to examine their racial backgrounds. This study strives to understand the experiences of White graduates of alternative teacher education

programs teaching in urban under-resourced schools and this examination will be enhanced by utilizing Howard's (2006) Model and his insights on the dimensions of White racial identity development to work toward racial consciousness. A more detailed discussion of all three theoretical frames appears in Chapter 2.

Research Design & Methodology

This qualitative study examined White graduates of alternative teacher education programs and their experiences with racial identity development. This qualitative study has enabled me to understand how these teachers view the world based on their experiences in urban under-resourced schools (Cortazzi, 2001). Because I am interested in analyzing the meaning of the teachers' experiences, their voices, and the meaningful stories they share, a qualitative study was most important for my study. There has been a large influx of White educators entering into non-White urban under-resourced schools: thus, issues of race and education and White racial identity development in alternative teacher education programs were examined and their stories were told. Merriam (2002) stated that meaning is socially constructed and, therefore, eliciting the experiences of White graduates of alternative teacher education programs and teachers in urban under-resourced schools through a qualitative study allowed me to understand their perceptions of race and racial identity.

Purposive sampling was used for this study because I critically thought about the individuals who would most likely able to describe their experiences with alternative teacher education programs, White racial identity, and issues of race and education in urban under-resourced schools (Silverman, 2006). These participants provided insights on the topic of White graduate teachers of alternative teacher education programs in urban under-resourced schools (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). As the

researcher, I was fully aware this is an extremely sensitive topic and that issues of race are not frequently examined in our society, and because of this, there was very little research on the overwhelming numbers of White graduates in alternative teacher education programs in urban under-resourced schools (Cochran-Smith, 2008). There were three criteria by which I chose each participant. First, each participant needed to self-identify with the White race. Second, each participant needed to be a graduate of an alternative teacher education program. Third, each White teacher needed to be teaching or have recently taught in an urban under-resourced school. Thus, I was very intentional while selecting the participants in order to make sure each participant fit all three requirements for this study.

Participants were also selected based on their characteristics influenced by my professional interactions with each one, and discussions I have had with them about race and education. This study involved five participants because I desired to thoroughly examine their experiences and probe deeply through interviews, journal entries, observations, and a focus group. My conversations with the five participants allowed me to spend more time with and delve more deeply into their experiences than if I had more participants. This study aimed to examine their experiences and focused on five participants allowing me to help them voice their opinions in a comprehensive way. All participants were White teachers who were teaching or had recently taught in urban under-resourced schools. Also, they had all graduated from alternative teacher education programs and were able to provide insights on their teaching experiences as White educators in urban under-resourced schools.

Participants were encouraged and asked to provide input throughout the entire study (Merriam, 2002). Therefore, I provided participants with the opportunity to validate their statements throughout the study (Silverman, 2006). Frequent solicitation of input and critical feedback of

participants encouraged me to correctly understand what was meant when each participant answered interview questions, wrote journal entries, taught and interacted with students during observations, and participated in the focus group. My goal, as a researcher, was to accurately portray each participant and his/her experiences. Johnson and Christensen (2010) encourage researchers to analyze their own bias throughout their studies. This was extremely important in my case because I am a White graduate of an alternative teacher education program and I have taught in urban under-resourced schools.

I used interviews, journal entries, observations, and a focus group as my research methods in this qualitative study. I hoped to liberate the voices of teachers throughout my study by allowing them to share their experiences with me through this qualitative study.

First, participants were asked to give their consent to participating in the study (see Appendix A). They were given all the important information about the study and how to contact me if they had any questions. Also, they were made aware of the fact that they could drop out of the study at any time.

Second, all participants were asked to complete a short informational background demographic inventory describing their years of teaching, subjects taught, credentials and degrees earned, numbers of students they currently teach, schools they have taught in, and contact information which is located in the addendum. Participants were also asked to describe some of their experiences with race and opinions on race in the second part of the form, which was a questionnaire. This data was used to elicit some essential information on each participant prior to conducting the research (see Appendix B).

Third, all participants were asked to give three ninety minute interviews describing their perceptions of race and racism in urban under-resourced schools, the impact of their alternative

teacher education programs on their racial identities, and their abilities to deepen their racial identities in the context of their urban under-resourced schools. Each of the three interviews delved into a different aspect of each participant's life to more thoroughly understand his or her racial identity. Thus, informed by Critical Race Theory and Critical White studies, I used Howards's (2006) tripartite White Racial Identity Model as the interview framework for my study (Howard, 2006; Seidman, 1991). The first interview asked about the participant's background, life experiences, and how he or she knew himself or herself. The second interview asked how each participant understood his or her students and urban under-resourced schools. The third interview focused on how each participant knew his or her practice, career, and understood his or her racial identity (Howard, 2006; Seidman, 1991; Sirna, 2006). These interviews provided opportunities for the experiences of White graduates of alternative teacher education programs to be told (see Appendix C).

Fourth, after being given three journal prompts, participants were also asked to describe their experiences in detail after each interview was conducted (see Appendix D). Furthermore, participants were allowed to view and edit their parts of the final document prior to publication (Seidman, 1991; Silverman, 2006).

Fifth, participants were asked to be observed three times for one hour each and they were informed I would use an observation matrix to collect data at the back of the classroom during each observation. The observations allowed me to view the White graduates of alternative teacher education programs in their classrooms and to further reflect on the observations after leaving their classrooms (see Appendices E & F).

Sixth, participants were asked if they wanted to participate in a focus group. They were informed of the time and location, the fact that they would meet the other participants, and the types of

questions that would build on all participants' interviews, journal entries, and observations. Focus group questions can be found in this document (see Appendix G).

This data can be helpful to White participants in alternative teacher education programs, Schools of Education at colleges and universities, and alternative teacher education programs as I plan to share my findings with each of these constituencies. I will strive to continue discussion about my work and findings and I seek to contribute my conclusions on White racial identity development in urban under-resourced schools to the field of education in as many ways as possible.

Limitations

As the researcher of this qualitative study, I made sure to identify my limitations in order to identify potential biases. First and foremost, I graduated from a private alternative teacher education program and have maintained a very close relationship with the program. My positionality, therefore, informed the study since I speak of my own experiences as a White educator graduate of an alternative teacher education program who taught in an urban under-resourced school of mostly non-White students. However, research states it is acceptable for a researcher to be extremely close to the study's subject as researcher insights are allowed (Silverman, 2006).

As a White graduate of an alternative teacher education program and a definite insider, I was led to this topic due to my own experiences and how they influenced my classroom and teaching experiences (Punch, 2009). Therefore, throughout my research, I frequently addressed my bias and assumptions that informed my understandings, opinions, and analysis of the topic in order to minimize the impact of this bias because it was impossible to be completely objective on this topic (Lichtman, 2010). I also used four types of data collection by using interviews,

journals, observations, and a focus group which helped control my bias (Lichtman, 2010). It was my responsibility to be extremely honest about how I interpreted the data while making sure to acknowledge my bias throughout the study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Silverman, 2006).

There were also other limitations to this study. The study sample size may not have allowed me to see as many connections across the participant experiences as would a larger group. Also, because the scope of the study is confined to one state, I may have been inhibited from completely understanding the situations of White educators in other states' alternative teacher education programs. A further limitation is that I interacted with each participant and gathered data over a three month period. Following each educator for a longer period of time would have allowed me to collect more informative and comprehensive data. Lastly, it was extremely difficult for critical White educators to identify how they perceived their alternative teacher education programs assisting in their racial identity development because they had not ever previously critically interrogated their own personal backgrounds and their experiences as teachers in urban under-resourced schools.

Delimitations

First, I chose to use five participants who were teaching or had taught at four different schools. It was important for me to have five participants, as I was interested in thoroughly understanding their experiences. Letting them share their experiences in depth allowed me to delve into understanding their perceptions as White graduates of alternative teacher education programs in urban under-resourced schools. This participant number also allowed me to delve further into the analysis of every interview, journal entry, observation, and focus group. This allowed for a very critical examination of participants' experiences. Four schools were chosen

for various reasons. I felt it was important to have both a high school and an elementary school represented in this study. In fact, there was one high school (9-12) and three elementary schools (K-8). I also wanted to gain the perspectives of White graduates of different alternative teacher education programs. Therefore, one program was a public alternative teacher education program and the other two programs were private alternative teacher education programs. It was essential for both public and private programs to be examined.

Third, the period of time selected was based on appropriate time frames for the participants and to ensure that I had more than twelve weeks to collect and thoroughly analyze the data. Due to my teaching commitments, it was difficult for me to collect data while teaching full-time. Therefore, the data was collected over three months while I was not teaching full-time in order to allow myself to get as close to the data as possible and to truly let the data speak. All five participants agreed to be interviewed three times, write three journal entries, be observed three times, and participate in a focus group. These four types of data were analyzed and coded thematically to identify the similarities and differences in their experiences as White graduates of alternative teacher education programs in urban under-resourced schools. Therefore, all the data collection and analysis spanned approximately five months in order for the data to undergo thorough analysis and examination. Despite these delimitations, my desired goal and reason for conducting research on this topic was to add to the previous research on this topic in the field of education.

Definitions of Terms

Alternative Teacher Education Program- A teaching program in the United States varying on type of program, program requirements, state requirements, level of commitment, and length (Grossman & Loeb, 2008).

Critical Race Theory- A framework to address issues which draws from a broad race and ethnic relations literature base in law, sociology, history and the field of education (Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 1995).

Critical White Studies- Critical White Studies stems from the Critical Race Theory movement and examines White privilege and identifies the importance of studying the significance of the White race (Delgado & Stefancic, 1997).

Equity- The state or quality of being just, impartial, and fair, distribution of resources based on one's need (Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 1997).

Justice- The quality of being just; fairness, the principle of moral rightness; equity, the upholding of what is just, especially fair treatment and due reward in accordance with honor, standards, or law (Adams et al., 1997).

Racial Consciousness- The characteristic attitudes held by a person regarding the significance of being White, particularly in terms of what those attitudes imply relative to those who do not share White group membership (Rowe, Bennett, & Atkinson 1994, p. 152).

Racial Identity- A sense of group or collective identity based on one's perception that he or she shares a common racial heritage with a particular racial group (Helms, 1993, p. 3).

Racial Identity Development- Racial identity development is conceptualized as a series of stages through which individuals pass as their attitudes toward their own racial group and the White population develop, ultimately achieving a 'healthy' identity (Rowe et al., 1994, p. 129).

Urban Under Resourced School- A school located in an inner-city, lacking resources, and educating students from low socio-economic backgrounds.

Voice- A term related to privileged position and self-disclosure. With self-disclosure comes potential vulnerability of the researcher (Lichtman, 2010, p. 246).

White- A term referring to a person with Caucasian heritage. Capitalizing these terms acknowledges that these labels are proper nouns referring to socio-politically defined groups of people rather than adjectives describing skin color (Helms, 1994, p. 285).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

My research investigated ways White graduates of alternative teacher education programs perceived race and racism in urban under-resourced schools, the impact of their alternative teacher education programs on their racial identities, and their abilities to deepen their racial identities in the context of their urban under-resourced schools. In order to delve into this topic and describe its current importance in the field of education, various areas of scholarship were explored.

First, my review will examine how and why alternative teacher education programs were created. The history of alternative teacher education programs are explored as they relate to the achievement gap, No Child Left Behind legislation, and the creation of two prominent alternative teacher education programs: Teach for America and the University Consortium for Catholic Education.

Second, this review will examine the strengths and weaknesses of alternative teacher education programs because of a dangerous racial mismatch between White teachers and non-White students being perpetuated, the uncritical nature of many multicultural components of teacher education, the failure of many programs to truly interrogate Whiteness, and the high turnover rates of alternative teacher program graduates in urban under-resourced schools.

Third, my study uses a three part theoretical lens in order to critically analyze this topic from the perspective of race, White studies, and racial identity development. A theoretical framework providing a reference point for race and racial identity, and the merging of three

relevant theoretical frameworks, is linked to the research questions and thoroughly described.

Literature Review

History of Alternative Teacher Education Programs

The history of alternative teacher education in our country is a path filled with legislation influencing the ways teachers across the country are trained to teach our children and how state laws impact teacher education programs in each state. As research has been conducted on the gaping holes in our educational system, legislation has been passed in order to work towards making educational experiences more equitable for all students, especially for non-White students in low-income urban schools, yet it has not completely met its intended purposes (Rice, 2010). Many of these pieces of legislation have intended to remedy the racial and socio-economic challenges that privilege some at the expense of others in our education system. In actuality, many of these laws have been written in separate and unequal ways and have been implemented in a manner that does not address the racial differences or socio-economic implications of non-White students (Gold, 2007).

Nation at Risk

One of the first pieces of legislation that affected the nation's education system and thus its teachers and teacher preparation programs, was a document titled, A Nation at Risk, issued by the federal government on April 26, 1983. This report described the failing U.S. education system as one fraught with declining test scores as it became mediocre compared to others countries (Feistritzer & Haar, 2008). Two main recommendations were cited in the document. First, ineffective teacher education programs were identified as being a main force contributing to the educational decline of our nation's low standardized test scores. Second, A Nation at Risk

created opportunities for non-educators to enter open teaching positions (Feistritzer & Haar, 2008). These two recommendations immediately spawned interest in identifying ways our educational system, specifically teacher education, could improve to increase the academic scores of our students and increase the numbers of qualified educators in our schools. Alternate routes for changing teacher education programs and acquiring teachers began to be explored nationally and in each state.

Creation of Alternative Teacher Education Programs

Each state was granted the opportunity to determine its own alternate routes to teacher education and credentialing. "In terms of alternatively certified teacher education programs, each state defines the alternative path to certification" (Heineke, Carter, Desimone, & Cameron, 2010, p. 126). New Jersey took the lead in creating new ways for individuals to become teachers and began working toward certification of liberal arts graduates. Therefore, New Jersey became the first state to offer teaching licenses to educators who had not graduated with an education degree or had experience or training in a classroom (Feistritzer & Haar, 2008). Not long after New Jersey began this process, California and Texas created their own alternate routes to teacher credentialing. Licensure and alternate route programs began filling teacher shortages and attracting even more highly qualified teachers to the field (Feistritzer & Haar, 2008).

Currently, alternative teacher education programs continue to be created and modified across the nation and the effectiveness of these new programs versus traditional teacher education programs has been analyzed (Khmelkov, Power, & Power, 2001). Not all programs are the same because alternative teacher education programs exist all over the nation and vary based on type of program, program requirements, state requirements, level of commitment, and length

(Grossman & Loeb, 2008). Even private groups, organizations, colleges, and universities have created alternative teacher education programs to meet this opportunity (Duhon-Haynes et al., 1996). Since alternate routes to teacher education began to be implemented, there have been two noteworthy related developments in the field of education. First, the achievement gap continues to grow in the United States despite the creation of these alternative routes for teacher education. Second, legislation called No Child Left Behind was introduced to make educational experiences more equitable for all United States students (Hess & Finn Jr., 2004).

Achievement gap. A just and equitable education should be accessible to all people for the betterment of society (Stromquist, 2006). Research suggests the United States educational system's achievement gap, or difference in the academic performance levels of all students, varies greatly for White students and for African American and Latino students due to our racialized and unjust society (Gibboney, 2008; Peca, 2000). Bowles and Gintis (1976) state, "The educational system, perhaps more than any other contemporary social institution, has become the laboratory in which competing solutions to the problems of personal liberation and social equality are tested and the arena in which social struggles are fought out" (p. 5). Thus, despite the rise in alternative teacher education programs to combat the achievement gap, it has continued to widen (Haberman, 2010).

It is important to note that this study examines the racial mismatch between the overwhelming influx of White teachers in alternative teacher education programs and racially dissimilar students (Nieto, 2009). Asian students were not examined in this study. The Center on Education Policy examined the achievement gap in relation to NCLB test results and found, "The Asian subgroup was the only racial/ethnic subgroup that typically outperformed white

students" (Center on Education Policy, 2009, p. 18). Therefore, "racially dissimilar students" and "non-White students" refer to Latino and African American students in urban under-resourced schools and communities in this study.

Educational inequalities and the achievement gap pervading our society have not only been attributed to race, but to socioeconomic class as well because differences in achievement rates have also been noticed between the rich and poor (Ward, 2007). Research overwhelmingly reiterated that students from poor and low socio-economic backgrounds, mostly non-White students attending inner-city schools, face more difficult odds and are denied privileges in education when compared to their middle-class classmates (Gibboney, 2008; Poliakoff, 2001; Prince & Howard, 2002; Rothstein, 2004; Woolley et al., 2008). "The current educational status of students of color in the United States suggests that too many of them are being educated for the underclass" (Gay, 1999, p. 210). Alarmingly, the educational realities for non-White and poor students in the United States are bleak and the achievement gap in U.S. education continues to widen (Gibboney, 2008). The power and privilege given to Whites in our society, especially because the numbers of non-White students continue to rise in urban under-resourced schools, is cause for concern (Banks, 1996; Trainor, 2002). In order to truly delve into this alarming trend and why the achievement gap continues to grow, significant legislation affecting schools, teachers, and students must be examined.

No Child Left Behind. As discussed above, issues of race and education have been at the forefront of educational policy for quite some time due to dissimilar academic achievement rates between Whites and non-Whites (Ladson-Billings, 2000). "Our society's inability to prepare 15 million children from diverse, low-income families to function in American society creates

personal tragedies on a scale that boggles the mind" (Teel & Obidah, 2008, p. 122). The implementation of a strict national education policy, No Child Left Behind in 2002, attempted to increase test scores and graduation rates, improve teacher quality for all students, and decrease inequality by leveling the playing field for all students (Gold, 2007). The actual report stated the purpose of No Child Left Behind is to, "ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and State academic assessments" (U.S. Department of Education, 2002, p. 13). The document continued to list ways this can be achieved. Those most relevant to this study include increasing the number of high-quality assessments, meeting the needs of all students, closing the achievement gap between all types of learners, and increasing the quality of instruction (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). Overall, however, No Child Left Behind has not successfully provided the educational equity promised to all students because, as some researchers claim, it has not truly addressed issues of race and the racial impacts on achievement levels and schools (Boyd-Zaharias & Pate-Bain, 2008).

Critiques of No Child Left Behind. First, No Child Left Behind has put a lot of the educational responsibility on teachers by regulating classroom procedures and qualifications. Although it attempted to appropriately address the achievement disparity, which some largely attributed to race, it has not critically interrogated or addressed issues of race in schools (Carr & Lund, 2009; Lea, 2009). "Rather than creating educational opportunities, as advocates claim, No Child Left Behind's privatization agenda imposes teaching regimes that deskill teachers, corrupt classroom practice, and reduce learning to rote memorization-all factors that contribute to poor academic achievement" (Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2009, p. 361). Experts suggest that

teacher education programs should not be geared toward just meeting No Child Left Behind requirements, instead, they should also be focused on making sure teachers are prepared to actually teach in their classrooms (Starnes, Saderholm, & Webb, 2010). As No Child Left Behind requirements and standards have been implemented differently throughout the country, serious inequalities, especially in urban under-resourced schools, have been perpetuated (Darling-Hammond, 2005).

Second, instead of truly addressing issues of race in education, researchers of No Child Left Behind suggest it has actually widened the achievement gap between Whites and non-Whites, excluding Asians (Center on Education Policy, 2009; Gibboney, 2008). No Child Left Behind has increased, not decreased, low achievement rates because educational experiences continue to drastically vary for poor students in urban under-resourced schools (Boyd-Zaharias & Pate-Bain, 2008). "Rather than support policies designed to reduce poverty and its toxic effects on the ability of children to succeed in school, our lawmakers are pursuing the misbegotten path of penalizing schools in poverty-stricken cities and rural areas for their failure to work educational miracles" (Gibboney, 2008, p. 21). By showing public schools are not competent, this could lead to encouragement of privatization of schools because this legislation did not give the government adequate ways to implement this policy in truly effective and meaningful ways (Gold, 2007).

Third, No Child Left Behind has been praised for identifying highly qualified teachers as essential for improving schools, especially because these types of teachers can make up for many of the disadvantages students from underprivileged backgrounds experience (Rice, 2010). However, Schulte (2009) stated No Child Left Behind has failed to specifically identify the

characteristics of a highly qualified teacher in order to ensure these educators are entering urban under-resourced schools, given the fact that it is difficult to assess teachers. Rice described teacher education programs as being a large part of this problem due to the fact that these programs do not always adequately prepare educators for difficult schools. “High-stakes accountability policies, such as No Child Left Behind, that hold teachers accountable for outcomes that are well beyond their control undermine staffing at low-performing schools with qualified, let alone quality, teachers” (Rice, 2010, p. 171). Therefore, students in urban under-resourced schools are often left with teachers that may not be as experienced (Rice, 2010).

In order to address the reality of the achievement gap which continues to grow and legislation that has not completely made equitable experiences in our schools, it is important to also understand the ways two alternative teacher education programs have been growing and attracting large numbers of teachers to education. Both Teach for America and the University Consortium for Catholic Education specifically target inner-city urban schools in an attempt to decrease the achievement gap and fill teaching positions with highly qualified educators. These highly motivated pre-service teachers commit to two year teaching placements in urban under-resourced schools, work in disadvantaged communities, and strive to learn how to become effective educators. They are often picked from high-performing colleges and universities nationwide and pass through rigorous interview processes in order to be chosen for these programs.

Teach for America. Teach for America, an alternative teacher education program, was started by Wendy Kopp who came up with the idea as a senior at Princeton University (Farr, 2010). Her desire to place recent college graduates in urban under-resourced schools to

positively impact urban schools and decrease the achievement gap was implemented not long after alternative teacher education programs started to increase in popularity. Some believe this alternative teacher education program provides a perfect fit for highly intelligent graduates desiring to enter into urban schools for two year commitments with well-developed and carefully crafted teacher training and support. The program started with only 500 teachers in six locations nationwide and has grown to over thirty-five cities and 7,000 individuals each year (Heilig & Jez, 2010). Being accepted as a member of Teach for America, a public alternative teacher education program, has become extremely competitive due to its popularity and the notoriety the program has received for impacting urban under-resourced schools (Farr, 2010). "Teach for America recruits and selects graduates from some of the most selective colleges and universities across the country to teach in the nation's most challenging K-12 schools throughout the nation" (Xu, Hannaway, & Taylor, 2007, p. 2).

As a public alternative teacher education program, Teach for America, was created to address a growing achievement gap between students from affluent backgrounds and low socio-economic areas (Farr, 2010). Educators participate in an intense summer institute, online support, and a two-year commitment at a high poverty public school (TFA, n.d.). The website for Teach for America states, "We have become one of the nation's largest providers of teachers for low-income communities, and we have been recognized for building a pipeline of leaders committed to educational equity and excellence" (TFA, n.d.).

Xu, Hannaway, and Taylor (2007) suggest that Teach for America teachers have been highly successful in their classrooms. These researchers assert that teachers frequently bring students to grade level and, frequently, above grade level, and are assets to their schools by

injecting new teaching strategies with high energy and a desire to produce results and work to close the achievement gap. Teach for America has been frequently recognized and celebrated for being an alternative teacher education program requiring teachers to meet very high performance standards and achieving test scores which have often been much higher than the average rates for urban under-resourced schools (Decker, Mayer, & Glazerman, 2004). Advocates suggest that Teach for America recruits some of the best students from across the country to teach in extremely challenging schools and continues to grow exponentially (Xu et al., 2007). In fact, Decker, Mayer and Glazerman studied 17 schools across the nation and found most Teach for America teachers produced higher test scores than other educators at their sites and Xu, Hannaway, and Taylor (2007) found Teach for America teachers to be more effective than other teachers in similar schools. However, despite this positive data, significant weaknesses have been noted. These will be discussed in a subsequent section.

University Consortium for Catholic Education. A private alternative teacher education program was also created to address teaching shortages and improve the state of education in Catholic schools nationwide (Pressley, 2002). After witnessing decreased numbers of Catholic students attending Catholic schools since the 1960s and decreased numbers of religious women and men teaching in these schools, a new teacher education model for Catholic schools was created (Watzke, 2005). Priests and faculty at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana tried to identify how Catholic education, especially in urban under-resourced schools could be positively impacted to increase enrollment and provide highly qualified teachers to these often struggling schools (Pressley, 2002). The combined efforts of these people at the University of Notre Dame created the Alliance for Catholic Education and started accepting

teachers for two-year placements in inner-city Catholic schools (Smith, 2007). As the effectiveness of these experiences and successes of these teachers continued to be shown year after year through the ACE program, individuals at Notre Dame identified, discussed, and funded numerous colleges and universities to replicate their program in other cities across the nation (Smith). "Alternative teacher education offers a unique opportunity to rethink the process of preparing teachers for Catholic schools" (Watzke, 2005, p. 482). These programs have created a nationwide network of numerous colleges and universities called the University Consortium for Catholic Education and have significantly impacted Catholic education throughout the country (Pressley, 2002).

Currently, the conglomeration of fifteen private alternative teacher education programs that have been replicated from the original program at Notre Dame, the University Consortium for Catholic Education, continue to place teachers in K-12 Catholic schools in thirty-two states (UCCE, n.d.). The website stated, "University Consortium for Catholic Education is a partnership of university programs joined by the common mission of recruiting and training faith-filled, energetic teachers to strengthen, sustain and serve in Catholic schools" (UCCE, n.d.). These programs vary in their coursework and actual structure, but most of the fifteen are two-year commitments where students earn a Masters in Education degree and collaboration is fostered (Smith, 2007). Currently, University Consortium for Catholic Education has over 1,000 alumni nationwide in urban Catholic elementary schools and is continuing to be adopted throughout the nation in more archdioceses and dioceses each year (UCCE, n.d.). These teachers live in community with each other to focus on the three pillars of spirituality, community, and professional preparation for teaching (Smith, 2007). Furthermore, these teachers have been

described as being highly motivated to achieve results and interested in becoming the best teachers they can become (Ackley et al., 1999; Long & Moore, 2008).

> The University Consortium for Catholic Education's unique response to replicating the tradition [of religious men and women instructing in Catholic schools] has been to recruit energetic recent college graduates who are poised for vocation and ministry and give them the education, skills, and support needed to teach in under-resourced Catholic schools. (Smith, 2007, p. 325)

Smith asserted that these programs boast rigorous graduate level coursework, professional preparedness, and an ongoing collaborative bridge between Catholic K-12 schools and teacher preparation programs (Smith, 2007). However, despite this positive data, significant weaknesses have been noted in these programs as well. These are discussed in the following section.

Weaknesses of alternative teacher education programs. The two most widely known types of alternative teacher education programs, Teach for America and the University Consortium for Catholic Education, state they educate, prepare, and place highly-educated individuals in urban under-resourced schools. Most noteworthy about these alternative teacher education programs is the recent estimate that approximately fifteen percent of new teachers are entering these programs in order to receive teacher education (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007). For some participants, these programs provide gap year experiences between college and "real careers" or are considered "service" experiences which college graduates undertake before they look for career jobs outside of education.

The overwhelming numbers of teachers graduating from these alternative teacher education programs combined with the drastic increase in urban under-resourced school

assignments is cause for concern (Darling-Hammond, 2005). Therefore, "continuing business as usual in pre-service teacher education will only continue to widen the gap between teachers and children in schools" (Sleeter, 2001, p. 96). It is imperative to understand not only the praise these programs are receiving, but also the potential problems that are being created.

First, it is important to address the ways these programs are preparing educators, mostly from middle or upper class White backgrounds, to teach in low socio-economic non-White urban communities with dissimilar students, because a dangerous racial mismatch is being perpetuated. Second, there is an increase in the number of people entering these programs from non-education based undergraduate programs and most are only exposed to one multicultural education class in Schools of Education. This one class may not provide enough support and understanding of these urban under-resourced school communities. Third, teacher and program quality has been questioned due to the minimal coursework and training in alternative teacher education programs prior to teachers entering the urban under-resourced schools. Fourth, some researchers suggest inner-city White educators should be exposed to a White racial identity development model in order to work towards a more just and equitable educational experience for all students, especially non-White students in urban under-resourced schools (Helms, 1994; Howard, 2006). And lastly, the large turnover rates alternative teacher education programs are reporting is cause for concern. The following details researchers' perceptions of the weaknesses of alternative teacher education programs.

Dangerous mismatch perpetuated. The field of education is continuing to experience a drastically different teacher-student make-up within classrooms largely due to the explosion of alternative teacher education programs. Within the past decade these programs have placed an

overwhelming majority of non-White students in urban under-resourced schools. This creates a huge racial mismatch between teachers and students (Hill-Jackson, 2007). In 2002, Marshall stated that approximately eighty-five percent of all educators were White. “Most teachers in the United States are White, monolingual, middle-class females who are teaching a student body that is increasingly diverse in native language, race, ethnicity, and social class” (Nieto, 2009, p. 476). This mismatch poses numerous challenges, especially for inner-city schools where teachers and students have extremely dissimilar racial compositions.

As Perry (1997) described the current education system, “Self-conscious anti-racist White teachers, unfortunately, are not the norm in schools” (p. 5). Furthermore, they may know very little about races different from their own as well as the oppression and discrimination of different cultural groups throughout history and how it affects our society (Melnick & Zeichner, 1995). Due to the fact that Whites are often unfamiliar with conversations about race, when the issue of race is discussed in schools of education, most Whites react in unproductive ways which further distances them from becoming racially aware (Marx & Pennington, 2003, p. 93). The mismatch has serious implications for the field of education and, most importantly, the educational achievement levels for non-White students.

Alternative teacher education programs were originally created to address the achievement gap and racism, but, instead, they have filled urban under-resourced and non-White schools with mostly White teachers who have not interrogated issues of race. Ullucci (2007) suggests that White teachers often have negative beliefs about minority students. Thus, teacher education programs, mostly dominated by Whites, need to understand how White beliefs are impacting students and whether they support social justice (Cochran-Smith, 2008; Sleeter, 2003).

Due to racially dissimilar teachers and students, the ways White educators are taught must be changed (Cockrell, Placier, Cockrell, & Middleton, 1998). Specifically, the racial identities of White educators must be challenged for true growth to occur.

> Given the deep chasm that divides the experience of most teacher candidates, who are Euro-American, English-speaking, and the unwitting recipients of 'White Privilege,' from the experiences of communities of color, it must be our purpose, now, to challenge stereotypes and to transform the ways we look at each other and ourselves. (Aminy & Neophytos-Richardson, 2002, p. 3)

It is vitally important for educators to understand their own experiences and the experiences of their students as sometimes, they have little awareness of this (Jackson & Wasson, 2003). Furthermore, in addition to the mismatch between new White teachers in alternative teacher education programs and non-White students in urban under-resourced schools, pre-service teachers are being exposed to multicultural education pieces which may not be properly preparing them for inner-city placements with non-White students. There cannot be a mismatch between what teachers learn about teaching and what it is really like teaching in their urban under-resourced classrooms (Starnes, Saderholm, & Webb, 2010).

Multicultural education. Teachers must understand that, given the reality of the majority of students coming from non-White backgrounds, teachers cannot educate racially dissimilar students as if students are from their own backgrounds (Romo, 2004). In order to remediate this situation, many alternative teacher education programs began including multicultural education class requirements in teacher development programs to address issues of systemic racism in schools and to identify ways educators can become more culturally sensitive to various cultures

(Ullucci, 2005; Sleeter, 2001; Stables, 2005). This content was included and intended to educate teachers in anti-racist methodologies in order to address racism and the inequalities in education (Lampe, 1994). However, teacher education programs have implemented multicultural education components with varied results.

Research suggest there are flaws in the multicultural element of teacher education programs due to their limited scope (Gorski, 2009; Kraft, 2001; Lampe, 1994; Manglitz, 2003). Grant and Sleeter (2007) described five approaches for appreciating human diversity. These approaches, which some consider to be an appropriate framework for multicultural teacher education, included teaching the exceptional and culturally different, examining human relations, conducting single group studies, teaching multicultural education, and including education that is multicultural and socially reconstructionist. Gorski (2009) analyzed forty-five syllabi from multicultural education classes in teacher education programs and identified how aligned they were to Grant and Sleeter's (2007) education approaches. Of those syllabi Gorski (2009) examined, he found seventy-one percent of the syllabi were not aligned with those approaches. In fact, he found many syllabi describing the course content by referring to certain groups as 'other,' gross homogenization of groups, and stereotypical referencing to group contributions and achievements. This suggests multicultural education classes can fail to interrogate issues of race and perpetuate discrimination and stereotypes by not critically examining White and non-White racialized backgrounds (Lampe, 1994). Gorski (2009) also noted frequent use of extremely conservative language and language suggesting tolerance as an acceptable way of interacting with dissimilar groups. "Notably, none of these syllabi connected a commitment to respecting diversity with eliminating educational inequalities" (Gorski, 2009, p. 314). Few

syllabi were found to focus on educational inequalities due to race. Gorski (2009) concluded, many of the teachers' syllabi fell somewhere in between the two extremes of effectively or ineffectively describing ways they planned to teach multicultural teacher education on their course syllabi which led him to conclude it is not frequently taught in a critical way.

The realities of urban under-resourced schools, which are essential for teachers to be exposed to prior to entering the classroom, are not often addressed in teacher education programs (Grossman & Loeb, 2008). Overall, there is little evidence showing teachers are being well trained for urban under-resourced schools and introduced to the realities that must be examined prior to and during urban under-resourced school placements (Gimbert, Desai, & Kerka, 2010). Research suggests a more critical multiculturalism is needed in education to examine the construction of race and, most especially, White identities (Manglitz, 2003). Various researchers have critiqued multicultural education models in order to address ways multicultural education programs have not effectively decreased the achievement gap. Most multicultural teacher education classes have focused on reducing prejudice and racism without seriously interrogating racism that has increased the achievement gap. Larger questions about the purpose of teaching for diversity in schools of education have been raised. Kraft (2001) asked, "How do we get beyond the mentality that one course in 'multi-cultural education' or 'diversity' will satisfy that need?" (p. 17). It is imperative for teacher education programs to include more than one course on multicultural education over an entire program so they can understand the whole picture more completely (Hill-Jackson, 2007; Kraft, 2001). As Lampe (1994) asserted, educators will be unprepared for urban under-resourced non-White schools if they are only exposed to a limited form of multiculturalism that does not include them by helping them identify their roles in

racism (Kraft, 2001; Lampe, 1994).

Further, frequently, teacher education programs fail to include discussions on the impact of race and are presented from a White perspective (Jackson & Wasson, 2003). These Eurocentric and traditional multicultural education avenues have not led to greater appreciation of all people because most programs are Eurocentric (Gay, 1999; Gunzenhauser et al., 1996). Also, most colleges and universities, where the alternative teacher education programs are situated, are frequently not located in the urban under-resourced communities in which their teachers serve. This does not encourage the programs to address the realities in the urban under-resourced schools or truly understand different communities (Heinke et al., 2010, p. 126).

Multicultural teacher education, therefore, has an obligation to explore all races and not just some (Stables, 2005).

> A truly moral concern for others (whether culturally or similar or dissimilar to ourselves) cannot therefore be based on either dissolving or clarifying differences between 'us' and 'them', but must rather involve a genuine quest to understand the Otherness of all (including, perhaps, ourselves), whatever the degree of proximity of others' cultural practices to our own. (Stables, p. 189)

Due to the fact that this reality exists in many multicultural education components in teacher education programs, pre-service educators are often not exposed to meaningful multicultural education experiences (Machart et al., 1996).

Teacher and program quality. Researchers wonder whether alternative teacher education programs adequately prepare teachers given the fact that they have shortened exposures to coursework before entering the classroom (Heilig & Jez, 2010; Xu et al., 2007).

> In addition to the obstacles faced by traditional teacher education programs, common challenges to alternative teacher education programs include: (a) a condensed prescriptive curriculum, (b) lack of clinical support before becoming the teacher of record, (c) limited opportunities to learn both content and pedagogy, and (d) inadequate preparation for teaching diverse learners. (Berry, Montgomery, & Snyder, 2008, p. 127)

For example, Teach for America teachers who enter the classroom after a five-week intensive program, do not have backgrounds as education majors, and have received very little training on discipline and assessment (Heineke et al., 2010). Teacher education programs state they focus on good teaching, but it is difficult to determine exactly what is being transmitted to pre-service teachers due to the varied designs of the programs. Heilig and Jez (2010) suggest that the common alternative teacher education program length of two years encourages people disinterested in education careers to enter the field for a brief period of time.

Color blindness and White teachers. Alternative teacher education programs must address color blindness because White teachers are, otherwise, able to easily deny and disconnect from the responsibility of addressing race (Gordon, 2005). Pre-service teachers stating they do not see race in their students is unacceptable and perpetuates racism. Although some White teachers say they do not see race in order to be fair, this belief still denied that race matters while assuming the playing field is level for all students (Blaisdell, 2005). Ullucci and Battey (2001) stated color blindness allows us to ignore race by not seeing it and recognizing the ways race impacts people. Gordon (2005) described how failure to see color denies us from seeing the facts.

> As White people we are schooled to ignore and to disavow the advantages of being born White. It is a struggle to keep our privilege within view, even as we understand it in ways intuitive and unspoken. (Gordon, p. 139)

This color blindness continues to uphold racial privilege for Whites and by suggesting everyone is treated the same way. A form of protection against having to discuss or critically interrogate inequality is manifested.

Therefore, teachers must address ways their color blindness affects their teaching and relationships with students. "Despite its shortcomings, many teachers seem to aspire to color blindness" (Ullucci & Battey, 2001, p. 1197). Many teachers, according to Blaisdell (2005), had feelings that resided in between being completely fair or completely discriminatory and this stance ultimately affects their practice. Due to the fact that it is often under the radar, color blindness manifests itself as the "new racism" because it, seemingly, provides a reason to not address it (Bonilla-Silva, 2003). While some teachers may attempt to treat all students equally, they may not address the White curriculum they teach each day (Blaisdell).

In fact, White teachers often become defensive in addressing color blindness and this is the main reason why it often goes unchallenged (Choi, 2008). In fact, Sue, Rivera, Capodilupo, Lin, and Torino (2010) found White teachers had difficult with denying Whiteness, addressing White privilege, discussing race issues associated with color blindness, fears of appearing racist, and as if they did not have a right to dialogue on race. These feelings were often matched with a sense of anxiety, helplessness, and being misunderstood. "Color blind ideology is a product of the pre-service teachers' own socialization in K-12 education through both explicit and hidden curriculum" (Choi, 2008, p. 66). This has led teachers to address and reflect upon their racial

identities in order to confront color blindness (Choi, 2008). The issue of color blindness is multi-faceted and must be addressed with White teachers.

Due to the fact that many teacher education programs do not address White privilege, they are not addressing color blindness, and, therefore, are supporting this form of racism. These programs also need to ensure faculty members support students in addressing race in classrooms, otherwise, their opinions will not be challenged to change (Gordon, 2005). In order to assist students through the process of addressing color blindness, Sue et al. (2010) suggested teachers can validate and discuss feelings by being open and acknowledging the teachers' own biases and feelings. Assisting White students through this process is most helpful and encouraging as there are many feelings associated with tackling issues of color blindness for the first time (Sue et al., 2010).

Structural racism also needs to be addressed, along with color blindness that focuses on individual racism (Su, 2007). It is essential for teachers to learn that structural racism still exists in our society and impacts the lives of non-Whites (Ullucci & Battey, 2001). Not only does it occur on an individual level, but is also thoroughly engrained in our societal structure (Gordon, 2005). "Educational institutions need to focus explicitly on the systemic level of racial oppression so that institutional challenges to existing racist structures can be made" (Gordon, 2005, p. 151). Teacher education programs rarely discuss structural racism (Choi, 2008). Color blindness, a real issue for White teachers and alternative teacher education programs, must be addressed in order to educate White teachers about individual and structural racism.

Failure to interrogate Whiteness. Whiteness, and the privilege it brings, in our country must be interrogated on a large scale, especially in the field of education. Research suggests that,

"capital is intimate with race and a close relationship exists between economic exploitation and racial oppression (Leonardo, 2002). Whites have benefited most significantly from the racial divide in our country and Whiteness is still associated with power and has been normalized in our society as having privilege (Winant, 2004). The White race has gone unquestioned and has remained at the top of the power pyramid in the United States. This status has not been seriously interrogated or successfully forced to address the inequality by non-White groups (Mazzei, 1997; Manglitz, 2003). Furthermore, many people associate White privilege with extremist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan and, therefore, inhibit one's own identification of his/her own role in perpetuating racism (Applebaum, 2004). Howard (2006) suggests, "This privileged isolation is not a luxury available to people who live outside of dominance and, therefore they must, for their survival, understand the essential nuances of those in power" (p. 15). Therefore, interrogating this position of privilege in education is essential because that power manifests itself in alternative teacher education programs and schools. "Because Whiteness continues to function as an unnamed norm, it goes unnoticed, uninterrupted, and safe from critique by Whites" (Mazzei, 1997, p. 11). This is the same for our educational system and schools. Due to the fact that race impacts power and privilege in our society, this must be critically addressed in schools of education and alternative teacher education programs.

Non-Whites are still subordinated, oppressed, and discriminated against in our society and do not experience similar privileges as Whites. Therefore, the field of education, which impacts every race in our country and is situated within a racialized society, should interrogate Whiteness in order to begin to break down the oppression, discrimination, and ways it disadvantages non-Whites as a result. Whiteness must be addressed in schools. Because many

alternative teacher education programs are reporting overwhelming numbers of Whites entering into their programs, the impact on their perceptions of race and racism in urban under-resourced schools, racial identities, and abilities to deepen racial identities in the context of their urban schools is fundamental to studying our current educational system and the relationship between alternative teacher education programs and race (Ladson-Billings, 2000; Teel & Obidah, 2008).

An increased racial identity awareness of educators is needed in order to critically address the racial mismatch between teachers and students. "Fortunately, there is a growing recognition among the educational research and policy communities that one of the key variables related to the school achievement of culturally diverse students is the teacher" (Irvine, 2003, p. 72). Researchers suggest critical teacher awareness prior to entering the classroom is largely the responsibility of teacher education programs (Hill-Jackson & Lewis, 2010). Many White educators do not have an understanding of privilege or racism because they have not been forced to acknowledge it in their lives. They are often unconscious of their race and the implications of being White (Mazzei, 1997). Critical teacher education programs can assist educators in understanding how to include and address larger questions and inequalities in the classroom (Constantine et al., 2007; Kraft, 2001). If these alternative teacher education programs fail to address these realities, Whites can continue to perpetuate racist ways without truly acknowledging their privileges while continuing to benefit from them (Applebaum, 2004). In fact, Carr & Lund (2009) found many teacher education programs do not include a critical self-reflection piece to address race. This can lead to difficult experiences in the field of education when teachers are met with school realities they have not been exposed to in their teacher education classes.

Encouraging pre-service teachers to challenge inequity, meritocracy, and marginalization in education could have profound effects on teachers' students, especially students from low socio-economic backgrounds, while challenging the teachers' White biases and beliefs (Bartolome, 2004; Taylor, 1999). "In doing this it recognizes overt issues of power, privilege, and authority and includes talking honestly about concurrent social issues such as White supremacy, patriarchy, racism, sexism, and homophobia" (Perry, 1997, p. 7). Low expectations, negative views, and ways educator assumptions can impact students because of a lack of knowledge of their own backgrounds and the backgrounds of their students and these negative implications can be alleviated if universities and colleges foster racial identity development.

Critical self-analysis is the key in assisting teachers to expose underlying or hidden assumptions before they enter into classrooms and communities (Peca, 2000). Research suggests ways teacher education programs should be modified to address current educational realities. "It is important for social justice educators to acknowledge that what one thinks is morally good might be what keeps one from seeing systemic injustice and one's role in sustaining it" (Applebaum, 2004). Teacher training programs need to support educators and, ultimately, their students, in naming, exposing, and working towards eliminating racial privileges. Harriman and Renew (1996) recommended a model where the university, school, and teacher identify common goals involving a critical awareness piece from the school community as well. This must be accomplished by challenging the most privileged White teachers and their experiences through White identity development (Leonardo, 2002). Teacher education programs, therefore, can foster White teachers' identity development with exposure to racial identity development.

Teacher attrition rates. Alternative teacher education programs need to analyze how

many teachers stay in education after finishing their commitments with their programs because these teachers are put into needy schools with high turnover rates (Grissom, 2008). Due to these incredible "flight" rates, the lasting impact on urban schools with so many highly qualified educators moving in and out of these schools at an alarming rate is cause for serious concern (Grossman & Loeb, 2008).

> New teachers don't last long in urban schools. From 30% to 50% of them leave these schools within their first five years, and teacher education institutions are trying a number of strategies to change this. One promising strategy is to help new teachers develop a broader perspective of teaching that includes the communities in which their schools are situated. (Gimbert et al., 2010, p. 36)

Alternative teacher education programs often have curriculums that are shortened even more than traditional teacher education programs. They do not have a lot of teacher education exposure prior to being in the classroom. They have extremely limited exposure to teaching curriculum, and lack an inadequate understanding of ways to teach all types of learners requiring varied learning styles (Berry et al., 2008). "This cycle of hire, train and turnover creates a system where many of the neediest students are consistently taught by inexperienced teachers" (Ruth, 2010, p. 49). In fact, "Teach for America makes the two-year commitment clear - validating the conception of teaching not as a profession but a short-term stopover before graduate school or employment in the 'real' world" (Heilig & Jez, 2010, p. 9).

The field of education has responded to differing academic achievement rates of all students in United States schools by creating legislation to mandate schools to improve the teaching of all learners and allow for alternative teacher education programs to fill teacher

shortages and increase the numbers of highly qualified teachers. Heineke et al. (2010) stated,

> When aiming to meet the unique needs to alternatively certify urban teachers education programs need to consider both variables-alternatively certified teachers and urban education environments –when planning, implementing, and improving teacher preparation. (p. 126)

Furthermore, after highlighting two extremely well known alternative teacher education programs, Teach for America and the University Consortium of Catholic Education, it is apparent these programs have many strengths and weaknesses. Most alarmingly, many of the weaknesses identify the need for further research to examine the racial implications of White educators in urban under-resourced schools with non-White students. Due to the call for more research on White teachers in alternative teacher education programs, especially as it relates to racial identity, and perceptions of race, it is essential for my study to be grounded in theories supporting the interrogation of race in education.

Theoretical Framework

Alternative teacher education programs have not properly addressed issues of race in the urban under-resourced school classroom. In particular, they have not examined the mismatch between White educators and their non-White students (Bartolome, 2008). Therefore, using Critical Race Theory and Critical White Studies which are able to critically examine the White race and identify why exposing race issues of Whiteness in our society and the field of education is important. Thus, Critical Race Theory and Critical White Studies must be used as the first two lenses for this study. In addition, White racial identity development models are also needed to include ways researchers can realistically implement these theories with White educators. Thus,

Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model was required as the third lens for this study because Critical Race Theory and Critical White Studies do not offer models suggesting how the White race can be interrogated with White teachers in order to assist them in becoming developing critical racial identities. When combined, these three theoretical frameworks provided the lens through which this study was conducted. This tripartite lens allowed me to examine how White graduates of alternative teacher education programs perceive race and racism in urban under-resourced schools, perceive the impact of their alternative teacher education programs on their racial identities, and perceive their abilities to deepen their racial identities in the context of their urban under-resourced schools (See Figure 1). As a researcher, it was imperative for me to utilize all three theoretical lenses to inform my research.

Figure 1. Theoretical Lenses Guiding This Study

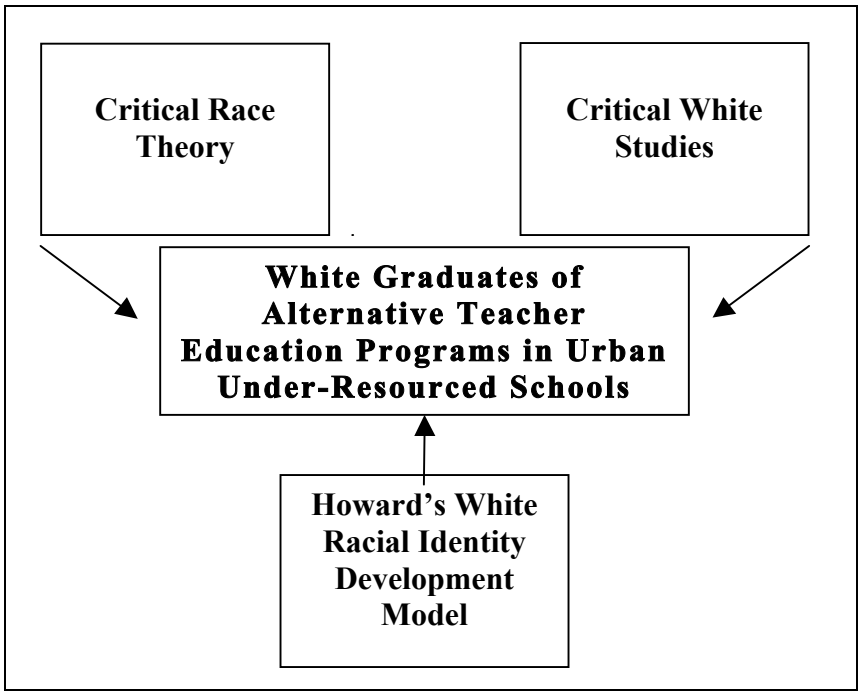

Figure 1. Critical Race Theory, Critical White Studies, and Howard's Racial Identity Development Model guide this study on White graduates of alternative teacher education programs in urban under-resourced schools.

Critical Race Theory

The first theoretical framework used for this study is Critical Race Theory. This theory explicitly acknowledges systemic racism exists in our country and should be addressed in order to work toward eliminating it (Parker, 2003). Critical Race Theory was essential to this study because it interrogated the racial experiences of White graduates of alternative teacher education programs in urban under-resourced schools. This theoretical lens was necessary because it described our racialized society and education system. Therefore, there are racial implications impacting the experiences of racially dissimilar teachers and students.

Originally, Critical Race Theory was part of a legal movement to address racism and segregation in our legal system and has more recently identified systemic racism in areas of our society like schools (Ladson-Billings, 2000). Critical Race Theory interrogates racial discriminatory practices in our country in order to name them and work to eliminate them. In the field of education, Critical Race Theory has been utilized to identify racism in our educational system and create a more equitable education for all students (Taylor, 1999). "Racial theory had to address the persistence of racial injustice and inequality – as well as the embeddedness of racial meanings and identities – in an era officially committed to racial equality and multiculturalism" (Winant, 2004, p. 197). Critical race theory asserts that our society is racialized and racism exists and, therefore, must be thoroughly examined to identify ways it is perpetuated and significantly impacts our society and our interactions with others (Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 1995). "Critical race theory is a relatively recent and, in adult education, infrequently used framework for examining and responding to racism" (Closson, 2010, p. 179). This theory provided a lens which allowed this study to be viewed from the perspective of

oppressed groups in our society and was used to identify ways the field of education can expose racism (Solorzano & Ornelas, 2004). More specifically, it identified White privilege and White supremacy are located at the core of our racialized society and, because of this fact, there is a great need for it to be addressed in order for true social justice to take place (Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 1995).

In the field of education, Critical Race Theory has been used to name the oppressive structures and policies that have prevented non-White students from an equitable education (Parker, 2003). It has also been used to more completely understand how race has negatively impacted our educational system (Taylor, 1999). There are five central tenets of Critical Race Theory in education. Solorzano and Yosso (2001) named these as follows:

1. The centrality of race and racism in their intersectionality with other forms of subordination
2. The challenge to dominant ideology
3. The commitment to social justice
4. The centrality of experiential knowledge
5. The transdisciplinary perspective. (p. 472)

The first tenet, the centrality of race and racism and other forms of subordination, exposes the realities of non-Whites and identifies how they are disadvantaged in our society. Naming realities that exist and giving voice to people that are oppressed is essential to this stage of Critical Race Theory in education (Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 1995). Furthermore, this stage recognizes that racism is embedded in our society, specifically in our institutions. By acknowledging this, we can move to realize the discussions surrounding race should include the

experiences of many (Solorzano & Yosso, 2001).

The second, the challenge to dominant ideology, seeks to recognize that race is used as a form of power, privilege, and self-interest in our society. Accurately identifying our society as racist and examining the implications of racism can provide insights on how to eliminate it. "Critical Race Theory is an important tool for dismantling prevailing notions of educational fairness and neutrality in educational policy, practice, and research" (Parker, Deyhle, & Villenas, 1999).

The third tenet, commitment to social justice, identifies that no one should benefit from race in our society. A transformative response is required. Solorzano and Yosso (2001) stated, "We envision a social justice education as the curricular and pedagogical work that leads towards: (1) the elimination of racism, sexism, and poverty; and (2) the empowerment of under-represented minority groups" (p. 473).

The fourth tenet, the centrality of experiential knowledge, states that the knowledge of students of color is essential to understanding racial subordination in education. This tenet involves critical thinking to address White privilege by understanding the experiences of non-Whites (Roithmayr, 1999). Counter-storytelling is often used to ensure the experience of non-Whites are at the forefront of Critical Race Theory in education (Solorzano & Yosso, 2001).

The fifth tenet, the transdisciplinary perspective, requires critical analysis of race and racism in education throughout history. The fields of law, women's studies, sociology, ethnic studies, and history can inform understandings of race in education. These five Critical Race Theory tenets provide a context through which this theory analyzes and critically interrogates race in our educational system.

Critical White Studies

Our current system of education fails to expose the harsh realities of race relations in our country or critically analyze the impact race relations have had on the achievements of our students. “Rather, racism is rooted in American institutions, American culture, and concepts of self-identity and group identity” (Vargas, 2003, p. 2). Critical Race Theory largely does not examine Whiteness and expose it or acknowledge unconscious White actions. Most of the attention on race in education surrounds multiculturalism, not White studies. Manglitz (2003) suggested, “Efforts to combat racism have almost always addressed the issue from the perspective of the groups affected by discriminatory policies and practices” (p. 119). In fact, most classes in teacher education programs focus on oppression and discrimination, not privilege (McIntosh, 1988).

Critical White Studies examines White privilege and identifies the importance of studying the significance of the White race. Critical White Studies added a critical lens to this study because it encouraged an introspective look into White educators, especially in non-White, mostly urban under-resourced schools. Most frequently, education classes address racism, but only minority groups and their experiences are often described. “Their explanations fail to recognize structural inequality built into the social order to link racial inequity to other forms of exploitation” (King, 1991, p. 130).

Critical White studies encourages Whites to examine their own lives and identify privileges they have experienced because they have not been forced or encouraged to analyze what it means to be White in our society (Gannon, 1999; Lea, 2009; King, 1991; Marrs, 1996). This is important for White teachers in non-White classrooms. Lea and Simms (2008) asserted,

"Whiteness is a complex, hegemonic and dynamic set of mainstream socioeconomic processes, and ways of thinking, feeling, believing, and acting (cultural scripts) that function to obscure the power, privilege, and practices of the dominant social elite." (p. 2). Whites have the privilege of ignoring their race because it is invisible in our society due to the fact that it is the most privileged group. Thus, Whiteness can support injustices through our education system (Lea & Simms, 2008). Multicultural classes in teacher education programs largely focus only on minority groups. Thus teacher education candidates have focused on exposing the harsh, inequitable, and dehumanizing experiences of minority groups without exposing the group that unknowingly perpetuates this situation. Whiteness must become visible and critically examined (McIntosh, 1988).

McIntosh (1988) listed numerous ways Whites unconsciously support White privilege through everyday actions. These privileges have often been invisible and they have been quite frequently painful for students to address. Therefore, it is not often willingly examined critically without support and encouragement (Rodriguez, 2009). It is not easy for White educators in alternative teacher education programs to address White privilege, but if White privilege continues to go unnoticed, left out of discussion, and uncritically examined, it can be perpetuated and unchecked over time (Rodriguez, 2009). A Critical White studies education can expose differences in perceptions of education (Colin & Preciphs, 1991). King (1991) described graduate teacher education students when he said, "My point is not that my students are racist; rather their uncritical and limited ways of thinking must be identified, understood, and brought to awareness" (p. 132).

Development of a new Whiteness, one that does not perpetuate injustice, is necessary to

work towards recognizing the human dignity of each person and treating all people with justice and equity (Manglitz, 2003). A new White identity can be created if Whites critically examine their positionalities in relation to others and do not continue to benefit from their privilege which will lead to a greater awareness of others, especially their minority students and their new communities (Marrs, 1996). This is an ongoing process for all Whites and cannot become a static process (Helfand, 2009). This is why alternative teacher education programs must be modified so they can address racial identity development as an ongoing, life-long process. For example, Gannon (1999) stated,

> As a White educator in the field of multicultural and social justice education, it is critical for me to acknowledge my privileged racial identity and to ask myself everyday, 'Have I done something today to combat racist attitudes, beliefs, and history in my classroom today?' It no longer becomes a choice of whether to confront racism at any level; it becomes a 'have to.' (p. 158)

If Whites are challenged to examine their own Whiteness, they would be required to understand their privilege and make choices about whether to perpetuate the system of privilege or deny it (Leonardo, 2002).

Using Critical Race Theory and Critical White Studies as lenses for my study helped me critically analyze White teachers' perceptions of race and racism, ways alternative teacher education programs challenge White teachers to critically analyze their own racial identities, and methods White teachers utilize to deepen their racial identities in the context of their urban under-resourced school communities. These two theoretical frameworks also provided a critical lens to analyze issues of race in alternative teacher education programs.

White Racial Consciousness

It was extremely important to clearly define the significant differences between White racial identity and White racial consciousness in this study.

White racial consciousness is quite different from White racial identity because it describes the attitudes White people commonly hold (Leach, Behrens, & LaFleur, 2002). "The White racial consciousness approach specifically eschews larger personality abstractions, such as identity or any developmental sequence, and merely proposes that there are various clusters of types of racial attitudes held by White people" (Leach et al., 2002, p. 69). The types of unachieved White racial consciousness include: dependent, dissonant, and avoidant. The four types of attitudes for achieved racial consciousness status are: conflictive, integrative, dominative, and reactive (Leach et al., 2002). Tettegah (1996) stated,

> These attitudes reflect (a) achievement or non-achievement of White racial consciousness, (b) commitment or non-commitment to White racial consciousness, or (c) exploration or non-exploration of that consciousness. (p. 153)

Overall, Rowe et al. (1994) suggested,

> We define White racial consciousness as one's awareness of being White and what that implies in relation to those who do not share White group membership. For some people, this consciousness might be a clear and important part of their sense of identity. Whatever one's position on these matters, behaviors, and related affect, and it is from these observable phenomena that the person's type of racial consciousness can be inferred. (p. 133)

In order for one to move from any of the unachieved statuses to an achieved status, there is likely to be some type of conflict or experience that causes the development of new attitudes. This dissonance creates a different attitude and, therefore, a different status (Rowe et al., 1994).

White Racial Identity

White racial identity, different from White racial consciousness, is related to ego statuses. It is the understanding of different allocations of resources to different races (Leach et al., 2002). This identity is developed over time as one is exposed to different race experiences. Helms (1993) states, "Yet in the United States, of the many collective identity groups to which a person might belong, race is the most salient, enduring, recognizable, and inflammatory" (p. 287). Therefore, it was essential for this study because a thorough understanding of White racial identity is important in determining how a person makes sense of herself or himself throughout a lifetime.

Identity is developed early in life and is greatly influenced by geography, religion, environment, and socio-economic status (Davis, 2007; Rabow, n.d.). Leach et al. (2002) asserted,

> According to this view, when one encounters stimuli that include a racial component, the ego selects the dominant racial identity status to interpret the situation and schemata then responds in a manner that is appropriate to the content of the status. (p. 68)

These identities are interracially negotiated over time (Cooks, 2003). "Identity positions, while having actual material consequences, can also be reworked and rewritten to make visible the constraints themselves" (Cooks, p. 247). Helms (1993) describes White racial identity by suggesting, "the statuses are not assumed to be mutually exclusive or discontinuous" (p. 301).

Therefore, teachers deconstructing White racial identity involve deconstructing the identities students already have and making them racially visible by identifying privileges and responsibilities students give them (Cooks, 2003). Students can develop non-racist White identities and assist other Whites in doing the same (Denevi & Pastan, 2006). The facts surrounding White racial identity also heighten the significance of White teacher identities because they impact each teacher's practices. Merseth, Sommer, and Dickstein (2008) believe,

> Family values and upbringing, prior schooling and community contexts all played roles in defining who these women and men were before they ever set foot in urban classrooms as teachers. (p. 95)

As people experience different life events, their attitudes and parts of their personalities are influenced by racial membership in a specific group (Tettegah, 1996). Rowe et al. (1994) stated,

> Racial/ethnic identity development is conceptualized as a series of stages through which individuals pass as their attitudes toward their own racial/ethnic group and the White population develop, ultimately achieving a 'healthy' identity. (p. 129)

This identity is constantly changing and responding to the ways our society influences and treats racial groups. As one goes through this racial identity development, "One's racial identity development affects the development of racial attitudes toward oneself and others" (Tettegah, 1996, p. 151).

Furthermore, over time and as a person develops, their positions may change based on their experiences. It is important to note that their degree of racial comfort, attitudes toward racial equality, and attitudes toward racial curiosity can adjust as they develop their White racial identity and White racial consciousness. A thorough understanding between White racial identity

and White racial consciousness is crucial for this study because I examined White racial identity development as it related to the experiences of the White graduates of alternative teacher education programs teaching in urban under-resourced schools. This study aimed to examine the development of teachers' White racial identity based on their experiences.

White Racial Identity Development

Critical Race Theory and Critical White Studies emphasize the importance of understanding the impact of race in our society and in people's lives. These theoretical frameworks provided the foundational lenses for this study yet fall short of being able to truly interrogate White racial consciousness by neglecting to offer specific ways to foster racial identity development, especially in White educators. Therefore, although this study was built on looking at how crucial it is to analyze education through a racial lens, it was also vital to examine ways researchers suggest Whites can be exposed to racial identity development through the use of effective models to assist Whites in an on-going understanding of their racial identities. "Theories of racial identity development are primarily concerned with the social, psychological, and political implications of our perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors regarding racial categories" (Howard, 2006, p. 89). Therefore, in order to support the work of Critical Race theorists and Critical White Studies theorists, it was essential to examine researched methods for racial identity development.

Erikson: Founder of identity development. The foundational work of Erikson, a psychologist, who created the eight stages of human development in 1950, also known as identity development stages, has been referenced as being one of the forefathers of identity development theory (Howard, 2006). Many critical theorists and Critical White Studies theorists

criticized Erikson's identity development stages because they did not reference race and how race impacts identity development (Howard, 2006). However, numerous researchers of White racial identity development identified dimensions based on Erik Erikson's development stages (Howard, 2006). These models provide specific ways Whites can be challenged, through an organized, cyclical, and reflective process, to critically interrogate their own racial identities as they work toward becoming racially conscious (Miller & Fellows, 2008).

Helms: White racial identity development. Helms (1994), a critical race theorist, expanded upon Erikson's work by basing a racial identity development plan on his work that specifically includes a racial identity component for Whites. Whites develop their identities differently than non-Whites due to the necessary interrogation of privilege and require varied levels of guidance throughout the process (Sleeter & Bynoe, 2006). Howard (2006), a researcher of White racial identity development models, believes that White identity development must acknowledge White racism in our society, expose and abandon racist ways, and develop a new non-racist White identity.

Howard and the White racial identity development of teachers. Based on his work analyzing various racial identity development models, including Erikson (1950) and Helms (1994), Howard (2006) created a model depicting White racial identity development as an ongoing and reflective process. He stated the importance of White educators knowing their practices, selves, and students in order to be effective educators, leaders, and transformers. His research led him to the creation of an ongoing and reflective process for White racial identity development. Howard's triangular model identifies rigor, relationships, and responsiveness as supporting White educators' racial consciousness through: 1) culturally responsive teaching

(knowing my practice), 2) having a passion for equity (knowing my self), and 3) cultural competence (knowing my students) (Howard, 2006). "To be worthy of our students and to be effective with them, transformationist White teachers must be persistent and passionate in our efforts to create personal connections that work" (Howard, 2006, p. 130). This multi-faceted and triangular approach encompasses three dimensions describing how White educators can become more effective educators of urban school students while working for equity and justice (See Figure 2).

Figure 2. Howard's Achievement Triangle

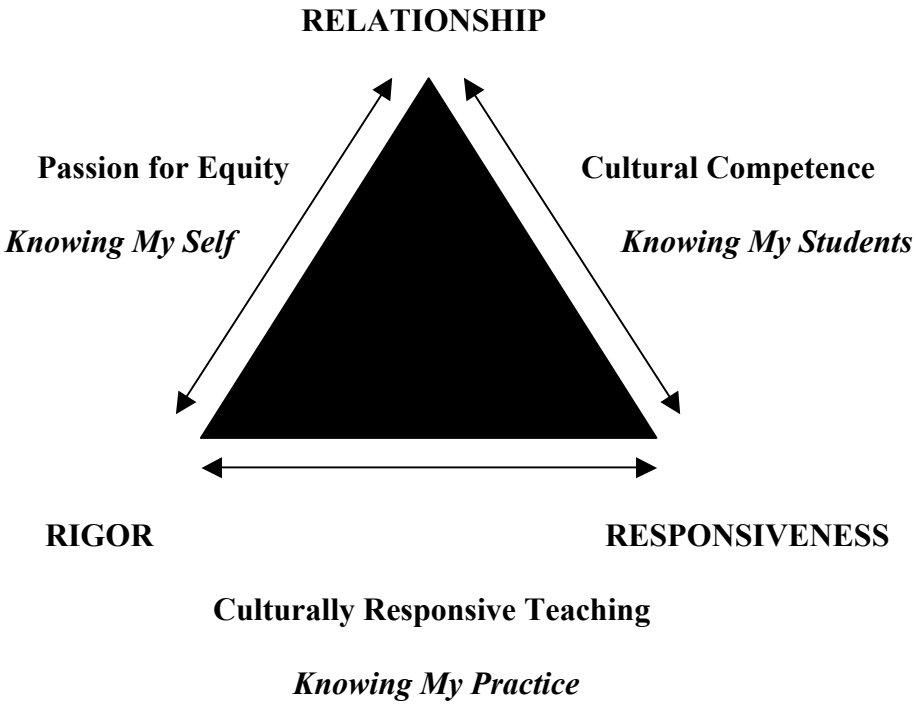

Figure 2. Howard's (2006) Achievement Triangle describing racial identity development (p. 134).

Dimension I: Knowing my practice. The first dimension of Howard's (2006) White racial identity development, the base of the triangle and an extremely important piece of White teacher racial identity development, provides the foundation for the next two dimensions,

"knowing my self" and "knowing my students" (Howard, 2006). In fact, Howard states this is a fundamental part of the racial identity development triangle because "knowing one's practice" is essential to the teaching profession. The awareness of one's practice and life as an agent of change is essential in transforming one's pedagogy and in the development of a critical racial identity (Aminy & Neophytos-Richardson, 2002; Gunzenhauser et al., 1996; Howard, 2006; Hulsebosch & Koerner, 1993; Jackson & Wasson, 2003; Kraft, 2001; Marks & Smrekar, 2003; Perry, 1997; Wayman, 2002). Howard (2006) described this dimension as being the first step in the process of on-going reflection and increased awareness that continues through Dimension II and III as necessary components in the racial identity development of White educators in urban under-resourced schools. Similarly, Goldstein (1995) suggests this critical examination creates a new paradigm as one who is embarking on the process towards racial consciousness. In this dimension, White teachers' new critical race knowledge challenges them to critically modify teaching practices and understand curriculum in the context of race issues. "As individuals confront the realities of racism, their awareness is critical in making conscious decisions about themselves, others and their role in affecting change" (Clark & Zygmunt-Fillwalk, 2010, p. 55). Furthermore, individuals begin seeking ways to change and redefine structures and systems (Bell & Schniedewind, 1987; Hardiman & Jackson, 1997). A desire for change occurs during this dimension of racial identity development allowing individuals who are privileged to not continuously perpetuate and use that privilege to oppress others. Howard (2006) stated,

> Much of what we need to know in these many areas is transmitted through teacher preparation programs, but we must acquire even more on the job, when we are finally forced to step outside the comfort zone of our constructed reality. (p. 127)

This first dimension encourages citizens to become racially aware by making differences in curriculum and as parts of communities (Ibrahim, 2005). As knowing one's practice increases, there are endless possibilities for the collaboration and increased participation of all stakeholders, teachers, students, and parents to work in order to end racism (Sleeter & Bynoe, 2006). In fact, community relationships can be fostered in this dimension to strengthen connections with schools (Harriman & Renew, 1996). "If the school is a community, then the members of the school equally define the community" (Peca, 2000, p. 40). Relationships created as White educators come to know their practices well can lead to greater educational achievements by students (Kraft, 2001; Peca, 2000). This dimension includes becoming an advocate for students as one begins understanding race issues and work towards making educational experiences for all students more equitable and just. Given the new knowledge provided by critically examining teaching practices, White educators are challenged to critically modify strategies and curriculum to address race issues as they work for transformation.

Dimension II: Knowing my self. The left side of Howard's triangle is the dimension of, "knowing my self" (Howard, 2006). He suggested, along with other scholars, that a crucial step in White racial identity development involves White educators analyzing their own backgrounds and selves well in order to teach for equity (Aminy & Neophytos-Richardson, 2002; Gunzenhauser et al., 1996; Howard, 2006; Hulsebosch & Koerner, 1993; Jackson & Wasson, 2003; Kraft, 2001; Marks & Smrekar, 2003; Perry, 1997; Wayman, 2002). Often, Whites do not see themselves as raced individuals because they do not acknowledge privilege and social realities based on skin color (Mazzei, 1997). Irvine (2003) asserted,

Far too many pre- and in-service teachers appear to be not only colorblind but also

> ‘color-deaf’ and ‘color-mute’ when it comes to issues of race – that is, unable or unwilling to see, hear, or speak about instances of individual or institutional racism in their personal and professional lives. (p. 78)

This critical interrogation of Whites’ own experiences can be especially difficult because race is such a taboo subject (Daniel & Benton, 1995; Jackson & Wasson, 2003). Also, it is often left out of teacher education because knowing one’s self involves an ongoing reflective process that is never completed (Howard, 2006).

This dimension of White racial identity development, as identified by Howard (2006), involves critical self-awareness and a critical understanding of White teachers’ realities and ways they are privileged in our society (Stake & Hoffman, 2000). White teachers must examine their own backgrounds to acknowledge their experiences in relation to society. Critical perspective is attained when redefinition occurs (Bell & Schniedewind, 1987). Leonardo (2002) states,

> The costs are real because it means Whites would have to acknowledge their unearned privileges and disinvest in them. This is a different tack from saying that Whites benefit from renouncing their Whiteness because it increases their humanity. Whites would lose many of their perks and privileges. So, the realistic appraisal is that Whites do have a lot to lose by committing race treason, not just something to gain by forsaking Whiteness. This is the challenge. (p. 37)

Creating a lens through which one can critically understand his or her personal place in the world is important to realistically viewing the world. Howard states that a teacher’s unexamined life ultimately affects and is dangerous to each student.

In addition, the responsibility is on Whites to become aware of privilege and to share

their processes for coming to new understandings (Manglitz, 2003). “Racial privilege is the notion that white subjects accrue advantages by virtue of being constructed as whites” (Zeus, 2004, p. 137). Therefore, this racial identity development is especially imperative for White teachers in inner-city schools (Howard, 2006). “Obviously, personal assessment is critical in improving student perceptions of bias, because it is hard to assess perspectives of others when one does not fully understand one’s own perspectives” (Wayman, 2002, p. 7). Aminy and Neophytos-Richardson (2002) suggest we are all able to challenge our own beliefs and make new meanings from them as well. White teachers must reflect on their experiences, realize there are alternative opinions and ways of living they can espouse in order to not perpetuate White privilege in our society (Sleeter, 2001). If White educators do not critically analyze their own backgrounds and opinions, racism will continue to be perpetuated for the benefit of Whites (Mazzei, 1997). Identification of how the White educators in my study perceived race and racism in their urban under-resourced schools allowed for an understanding of how they know themselves and if their alternative teacher education programs assisted with those racial perceptions.

Dimension III: Knowing my students. The last dimension of Howard’s White racial identity development model, the right side of the triangle, involves the White teacher becoming critically aware through “knowing my practice” and specifically analyzing “himself or herself” with non-White others by “knowing his or her students” (Howard, 2006). Researchers have noted the importance of this element in assisting with a greater understanding of others and an increase in critical thinking about our society (Aminy & Neophytos-Richardson, 2002; Gunzenhauser et al., 1996; Howard, 2006; Hulsebosch & Koerner, 1993; Jackson & Wasson,

2003; Kraft, 2001; Marks & Smrekar, 2003; Perry, 1997; Wayman, 2002). One way critical identity development can occur is through critical analysis of White and non-White autobiographies which can lead to an understanding of commonalities and conflicting issues (Hulsebosch & Koerner, 1993). This stage can encourage dialogue to support critical thinking and address educators' beliefs in relation to the experiences of their students (Irvine, 2003; Jackson & Wasson, 2003). Applebaum (2004) believed,

> A call for constant interrogation, uncertainty, and discomfort – this sounds so negative, so critical. Empathy encourages students to ignore the ways in which they indirectly and unintentionally contribute to social justice. Educators must not be tempted to stop there, however. Instead, they must continue to encourage privileged students to interrogate these moral motivations, to complicate the ways in which such students see themselves as good. (p. 52)

Opportunities for challenging the views of others and engaging people with different experiences can be profound and this phase is also extremely complex (Howard, 2006; Nagda, Gurin, & Lopez, 2003).

Citizens who know themselves and understand their own racial identities well can then analyze their own racial identities in relation to other citizens (Nagda et al., 2003; Yates & Youniss, 1996). This critical racial identity development can be nurtured through discussion in groups and with adequate support from teacher educators (Barlas et al., 2000; Tisdell, 2001). Naming these realities can assist educators in increased student connectedness (Peca, 2000). "The more we can know our students, the more we can authentically engage them in the learning process" (Howard, 2006, p. 127). Identification of how the White educators in my study

perceived the impact of their alternative teacher education programs on their racial identities allowed for an understanding of how they have come to know their students and if their alternative teacher education programs assisted with those perceptions of racial identity.

The three dimensions of Howard's (2006) Achievement Triangle clearly identify a model for White educator racial identity development. This race reflection and awareness encourages a critical understanding of our racist society and how racism is embedded in our education system. Stromquist (2006) suggests this racial identity development model could assist White educators in working towards transformation and action in order to create change. "Education, to be transformative, must not only provide knowledge about the condition of one's subordination but also give the emotional support and political skills to visualize and implement social change" (Stromquist, 2006, p. 149). White educators also described their own experiences with race and racial identity development in urban under-resourced schools, alternative teacher education programs, and school communities in this study in order to identify the current relationship between and impact of race and education.

Rigor, relationship, and responsiveness. After a teacher passes through the above-mentioned three dimensions, he or she can also experience the intersections of these three dimensions leading to more intense and intentional action leading to transformative teaching. Rigor is at the intersection of knowing my practice and self. Howard (2006) asserted,

> From this passion grows our commitment to be focused and rigorous in our work, not rigor for its own sake, but a seriousness about our practice that is energized by our deep desire to overturn the effects of injustice and dominance in the lives of our students. (p. 128)

Therefore, the desire to know my practice and know my self is so intense that it leads to a desire to work hard and to make sure students, especially those in urban under-resourced schools, are taught in the most effective ways. These teachers are willing to internalize the new found knowledge by teaching in a more equitable and socially just way.

Second, the ability to know my self allows teachers to then use that knowledge to know students more completely and, therefore, create meaningful relationships with them. "To be worthy of our students and to be effective with them, White teachers [must be] persistent and passionate in our efforts to create personal connections that work" (Howard, 2006, p. 130). These relationships break down barriers and allow for teachers and students to better understand each other which can allow for more effective teaching by a White educator in a classroom with racially dissimilar students.

Third, the ability to know students and one's practice enables teachers to be truly transformationist teachers. The culmination of these three dimensions of knowing my self, knowing my students, and knowing my practice requires being responsive to all the stages to design curriculum and improve teaching while acknowledging our own lived experiences and those of our students. Howard (2006) states, "there is no work more complex, and there is no work more important, than this" (p. 132).

Conclusion

This study aimed to identify how White teachers of alternative teacher education programs perceived race and racism in their urban under-resourced schools, the impact of their alternative teacher education programs on their racial identities, and their abilities to deepen their racial identities in the context of their urban under-resourced schools. "The first idea is that

culturally aware teachers are ‘gate-openers’ as opposed to ‘gate-keepers’” (Hulsebosch & Koerner, 1993, p. 10). Critical Race Theory, Critical White Studies and Howard’s Racial Identity Development Model were used as the three lenses to guide this study on White graduates of alternative teacher education programs, in order to understand how to develop teachers and programs that will be “gate openers” for all students.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Rationale of Qualitative Study

My study consisted of examining how White graduates of alternative teacher education programs perceive race and racism in their urban under-resourced school placements, the impact of their alternative teacher education programs on their racial identities, and their abilities to deepen their racial identities in the context of their urban under-resourced schools. In order to best analyze the experiences of White graduates from alternative teacher education programs, it was essential for me to use a qualitative approach.

Qualitative research believes rich experiences can be comprehensively understood through use of various methods to attach meaning to informants' lives and, therefore, cannot be quantified. "Qualitative research attempts to appreciate human experience in a manner empathetic to the human actors who feel it or live it" (Kincheloe, 2003, p. 190). This study provided opportunities for hearing, seeing, and reading ways participants describe, expose, and narrate experience as White graduates of alternative teacher education programs. "The qualitative method helps educators become more sensitive to factors that affect their own work and their interactions with others" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 247). As a researcher, it was imperative for me to experience the entire data collection process first-hand with the participants which was best achieved with qualitative methods.

Qualitative Methods

This qualitative study included interviews, journals, observations, and a focus group. The interviews consisted of open-ended questions to encourage participants in explaining their

experiences in detail and recalling specific stories supporting their opinions. Also, each semi-structured interview was based on identity development and racial identity research. The journaling component allowed each teacher to express his or her experiences freely after reflecting upon what he or she felt was appropriate and meaningful. Each journal entry had a specific prompt to encourage reflection and analysis. Observations allowed for a visual understanding of each teacher's workspace, urban under-resourced school environment and community, and experiences with students. These observations provided me with opportunities to delve into each participant's workplace realities. Lastly, a focus group allowed me to discuss topics addressed in individual interviews to be more thoroughly examined with a group of participants which allowed for greater depth and clarification.

Qualitative Study: Stories that Must be Told

Each individual has a story to be told and a voice that must be heard. Qualitative research focuses on the experiences of individuals and allows for them to share their voices. Merriam (2002) believes,

> The key to understanding qualitative research lies with the idea that meaning is socially constructed by individuals in interaction with their world. The world, or reality, is not a fixed, single, agreed upon, or measurable phenomenon that it is assumed to be in positivist, quantitative research. Instead, there are multiple constructions and interpretations of reality that are in flux and that change over time. (p. 3)

An understanding of the world as people see it from their points of view is attainable through using qualitative methods and this study was most concerned with a group that is not forced to interrogate itself, White educators. "Qualitative research is conducted through an intense and/or

prolonged contact with a 'field' or life situation. These situations are typically 'banal' or normal ones, reflective of the everyday life of individuals, groups, societies and organizations" (Punch, 2009, p. 117). Varied realities and experiences were identified and exposed through this research method. This research style provided me with the opportunity to learn about White participants' experiences in their alternative teacher education programs and their understandings of their racial identities.

Qualitative research enabled me to hear the stories and listen to the experiences of the participants. Bogdan and Bilken (2007) stated,

> The qualitative approach requires researchers to develop empathy with people under study and to make concerted efforts to understand various points of view. Judgment is not the goal; rather, the goal is to understand the informants' world and to determine how and with what criteria they judge it. This approach is useful in teacher-training programs because it offers prospective teachers the opportunity to explore the complex environment of schools and at the same time become more self-conscious about their own values and how these values influence their attitudes toward students, principals, and others. (p. 245)

An introspective look into the lives of the participants created a better understanding of each participant's world and enabled me to see their experiences from their points of views (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

Voice as a Form of Justice

This research allowed for the stories of the participants to be told and the voices of these White teachers to name their experiences in urban under-resourced schools. "Such syntheses

help unite the interests of marginalized groups and, just as importantly, grant critical qualitative researchers profound new insights from subjugated and historically silenced perspectives" (Kincheloe, 2003, p. 194). The voices of educators were included because they are often silenced and not included, especially the teachers in urban under-resourced schools. This study allowed for a greater understanding of their experiences.

Participant Selection

There were three major requirements for participant selection in my study. First, each participant identified him/herself as a member of the White race. This was essential because my study sought to examine White racial identity development in alternative teacher education programs. Second, each participant needed to be a graduate of an alternative teacher education program. Lastly, each participant had to have been an educator, or an educator who was teaching at the time of the study, in an urban under-resourced school with mostly non-White students. Participants were reminded they could drop-out at any time if it was too difficult or if any problems occurred. As the researcher, I answered all their questions and I was acutely aware of the fact that the study topics were very sensitive.

Professional interactions and personal conversations with all participants led me to determine they would provide valuable sources of data as participants. All participants were also interested in sharing their perceptions on race, understandings of their White racial identities as educators, and descriptions of the perceptions of the development of their racial identities in their alternative teacher education programs. I knew each participant before he or she agreed to participate in the study and these relationships allowed me to ascertain they would be willing to discuss issues of race. Trust had been established with each participant and issues of race and

education had already been discussed with each one. After I identified these individuals would be interested in sharing their experiences in their urban under-resourced schools and communities and that each participant met the criteria for my study through their answers to a questionnaire, I asked each participant if he or she would like to participate. All participants agreed (see Appendix A).

Each participant was required to provide their age, number of years teaching, verification of Masters degree in Education or in degree in progress, current and/or former title(s) at school, grade(s) and subject(s) taught, class size(s), and a brief description about the participant's students. Participants were also asked to briefly describe their reasons for teaching and their philosophies on education. Evidence of student success, a summary of their professional development experiences was also required, and reasons participants desired to volunteer for the study were also collected prior to beginning the study (see Appendix B).

The participants stated they would provide honest and reflective answers. Furthermore, they agreed to three interviews, three journal entries, three observations (if applicable), a focus group (if interested and available), and to provide critical feedback on their transcripts and final draft by editing their sections. Participant names were changed to ensure anonymity and all participants were legal adults living in the western United States. I also answered all clarification questions each participant asked throughout the study. Participants were aware they could remove themselves at any time. I used pseudonyms throughout the study and all participants are not able to be identifiable in any way.

My goal was to liberate the voices of teachers throughout my study. I wanted to allow them to share their experiences as White graduates of alternative teacher education programs in urban under-

resourced schools. I addressed all bias and worked with my chair and committee members to thoroughly analyze the data. Furthermore, I allowed the data to speak to me by making sure I became extremely familiar with it so the experiences of these teachers provided insights on the field of education, alternative teacher education programs, and White graduates teaching in urban under-resourced schools. Participant demographic data is described in Table 1.

Table 1

Participants' Background Information

	Age	**Gender**	**Alternative Teacher Education Program Type**	**Urban Under-Resourced School**
Participant I: Alex	28	Male	Public Program	High School (Enrollment >2,000 students)
Participant II: Beth	31	Female	Private Program	K-8 Elementary School (Enrollment <500 students)
Participant III: Claire	28	Female	Private Program	K-2 Public School (Enrollment <500 students)
Participant IV: Danielle	26	Female	Private Program	K-8 Elementary School (Enrollment <500 students)
Participant V: Erin	26	Female	Private Program	K-8 Elementary School (Enrollment <500 students)

Participants provided information about themselves at the beginning of the study on the Participant Background Questionnaire (see Appendix B). Information is summarized below.

Participant I

The first participant, Alex, is a 28 year old male. He was also referred to me by a graduate school colleague and was found through the snowballing method (Silverman, 2006).He

taught in an inner-city high school located in a low socio-economic area for five years. He has also earned a Master's degree in Education. Alex reported,

> I became a teacher because I wanted to work in an under-resourced community in a position that I felt could help others and expose me to a portion of the country that I was not familiar with. I liked the idea that I would be challenging myself and working with others that sought to help students succeed. (A, Questionnaire, p. 1)

As a teacher, he found strong bonds formed between students and fellow teachers to be very satisfying (A, Questionnaire, p. 2). Alex described his teaching philosophy when he stated,

> Students are the most successful when the teacher in front of them is passionate, dedicated and focused on their success. As a teacher, I strived to support, encourage and engage my students in whatever I was teaching.

He described evidence of his students' success as growth in reading and writing skills during the school year.

Participant II

The second participant was selected based on the fact that I knew her from graduate school. This educator, Beth, a 31 year old, has been teaching for several years and has taught at two urban under-resourced schools in Los Angeles. This educator has earned a Master's degree in Child and Adolescent Literacy and Administration. Her teaching philosophy included a collaborative, inclusive, and shared vision in which parents are understood to be the primary educators (B, Questionnaire, p. 2). Beth stated, "I believe that I am a consistent teacher. Being consistent and fair has helped me be successful in an inner-city school" (B, Questionnaire, p. 2).

She holds students to high expectations. Beth's example of student success was her junior high students' increases in their reading scores.

Participant III

The third participant was self-selected by the researcher based on educational discussions with her since 2008. This female educator has worked in an urban under-resourced school since completing another service program. Furthermore, Claire, a 28 year old, has taught for several years and received a Masters in Elementary Education. Throughout her life she had been involved in service, helping others, and working with kids. As an educator, Claire was, "passionate about teaching in a diverse setting" (C, Questionnaire, p. 1). She strives to "make learning personal" by honoring students' "socio-cultural experiences" (C, Questionnaire, p. 2). Claire's teaching philosophy included assisting students achieving full personal development, constructing knowledge, and preparing students for active and engaged citizenship (C, Questionnaire, p. 2). Evidence of student success included literacy gains and increases in standardized test scores.

Participant IV

The fourth participant, Danielle, was asked to be part of this study based on professional interactions with her since 2008. She has been teaching for several years and is a 26 year old educator. Danielle also has a Master's degree in Childhood and Adolescent Literacy. An international study abroad experience created a desire for her to teach in an under-resourced setting with students of diverse backgrounds (D, Questionnaire, p. 2). Her teaching philosophy included a commitment to, "nurturing the spiritual, academic, social, and emotional development of all my students" as a faithful role model (D, Questionnaire, p. 2). Danielle gauged student

progress and collected evidence of student success through incredible growth in English Language Learners' abilities to read, write, and speak in English at grade level (D, Questionnaire, p. 2).

Participant V

Erin is a 26 year old educator teaching in an urban under-resourced school. She has earned a Master's in Elementary education. Participant IV, Danielle, referred her to me through use of the snowballing method (Silverman, 2006). Erin modifies instruction, accordingly, to best serve the needs of her students. She has worked at the same urban under-resourced school for several years. She constantly strives to make lesson plans that are engaging, differentiated, and culturally appropriate which demonstrated she could provide insights into her experiences for this study. Furthermore, she frequently works in collaboration with other educators to develop their unit plans in alignment with the format she was taught in her alternative teacher education program. Her teaching philosophy includes holding students to high expectations that they can meet and helping them succeed to the best of their abilities. She has noticed student success in her classroom through assessments and data analysis of data which has showed student gains, especially in literacy.

Program and Site Selection

Alex taught at an urban under-resourced public 9-12 high school that was taken over by an outside charter management organization in 2008. The high school enrolls over 2,000 students. The school student body is comprised of both Latino and African American students. This high school is known for significant gang violence, low attendance, low standardized test

scores, and few resources to assist students in achieving their greatest potentials. The surrounding community has a lot of violence and very high crime rates.

Beth and Erin teach in two urban under-resourced overwhelmingly Latino Catholic elementary schools. Danielle teaches at an ethnically diverse middle level Catholic elementary school. All three elementary schools are managed under the Archdiocese of Los Angeles umbrella. In fact, the three schools are smaller schools, but enroll over two hundred kindergarten through eighth grade elementary school students each year. Erin's school is located in a very under-resourced community and most families struggle with their financial situations, gang violence, and single parent families. Beth's school has a slightly more affluent student body than Erin's school, yet is also located in a very urban area. Both schools experience situations with violence. Anna's school draws students from more affluent homes and the overwhelming majority of her students' parents are highly educated.

Claire teaches as a K-2 public school in an urban area. Students in her class are extremely racially, religiously, and economically diverse with a varied range of academic abilities. Her school fully embraces and encourages student created knowledge based on his or her lived experiences. She previously taught Latino students at an urban under-resourced school in a very poor community for many years and had the most exposure to racially dissimilar populations.

Rationale for Sequence of Method

My study involved a very specific sequence due to the fact that I used teachers as participants. First, each participant was interviewed in order to more completely understand each participant. These interviews were essential as the first part of my study because they allowed the participants to delve into the topics of this study. Second, each participant was asked to write

three journal entries describing experiences with race he or she had in his or her background and urban under-resourced school. Third, each participant, if still teaching in a school at the time of this study and if time allowed for each participant, was observed three times in order to more completely understand the experiences of each White graduate of an alternative teacher education program in an urban under-resourced school classroom or school. Fourth, participants who were interested and available participated in one focus group that enabled me to gather more information on their racial identities. This sequence provided me with the opportunity to collect the data from each participant in an organized way over twelve weeks.

It is important to note that although participants agreed to be interviewed three times, write three journal prompts, be observed three times, and participate in a focus group, there were circumstances that did not allow for all of these data collection methods to be used for all participants. Alex, the first participant, was interviewed three times, wrote three journal entries, and participated in the focus group. He was not teaching at the time of this study and, therefore, could not be observed teaching in the classroom. Participant two, Beth, was interviewed three times, wrote three journal entries, was observed twice, and participated in the focus group. I observed her once for two hours as a substitute teacher and another time for two hours when she was working with teachers. Claire was interviewed once, wrote three journal entries, was observed once for two hours, and was not able to participate in the focus group. Although she was extremely interested in participating in this study, her job requirements made her quite busy and we were unable to arrange more times to meet for data collection. Therefore, throughout the findings, Claire's responses did not provide insights on as many areas as the other participants. Danielle, participant number four, was interviewed three times, wrote three journal entries, was

observed one time for two hours, and participated in the focus group. Lastly, Erin, the fifth participant, was interviewed two times for two hours each, wrote three journal entries, was observed once for two hours, and participated in the focus group. All five participants were very generous with their time and very honest when sharing their experiences.

Interviews

Interviews were conducted because each participant had potentially meaningful experiences and opinions to share and it was essential for their stories to be told (Reinharz, 1992; Seidman, 1991). "The interview is the most prominent data collection tool in qualitative research. It is a very good way of accessing people's perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations and constructions of reality" (Punch, 2009, p. 144). Qualitative researchers have identified the need for a good relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee in order to clearly establish ways for the interviewee to feel comfortable during all interviews.

Semi-structured interviews included pre-determined, open-ended questions and spontaneous questioning which allowed for the interviews to venture into important areas identified by the participant to ascertain feelings, opinions, and experiences (Merriam, 2002). A three-interview method form was utilized to conduct all interviews. A balance between the participant and the interviewer allowed for the responses to be discussed more thoroughly. Each interview question provided more information on each research question to be gathered. The interview questions that were used were adapted for this study based on the works of other researchers examining race and education (Cochran-Smith, 2003; De La Puente & McKay, 1995; Ellis, 2002; Kravatz, 2007; Merseth et al., 2008; Phinney, 1992; Sirna, 2006; Tettegah, 1996; Ullucci, 2005; Warren & Hytten, 2004).

These questions were modified to specifically address White graduates of alternative teacher education programs who were teaching or had taught in urban under-resourced schools (Chase, 2010; Howard, 2006; Sirna, 2006). According to Siedman (1991), interviews should be approximately ninety minutes in length and to be conducted at times agreed upon by the researcher and participant. Due to participants' schedules, some participants agreed to do sessions longer than ninety minutes. Therefore, some of the questions were grouped accordingly based on how much time I had with the participant.

Questions for the first interview addressed the first research question about the experiences shaping the racial identity of each participant. These questions examined the stories of the White educators growing up and how they approach the first marker of racial identity model "know your self" (Howard, 2006). The first interview allowed me to more thoroughly understand each participant's life (Seidman, 1991). It largely guided the second and third interviews based on the questions I did ask, the questions I did not ask, and the experiences described by the participant. If some of the questions for the second and third interviews were covered in the first interview, the second and third interviews were adapted to accommodate for this situation. Furthermore, the ability to modify the second and third interviews based on the participants' experiences provided great opportunities to further delve into their experiences. Therefore, the open-ended interview format allowed for the interviews to take a different course and for me to obtain even richer data. As previously stated, participants only available for one or two interviews were asked questions from all three interview question lists to ensure as many topics were covered as possible.

Questions for the second interview allowed me to hear about the participants' understanding of their alternative teacher education programs and how they "know their practices" (Howard, 2006). This interview more specifically addressed their professional lives and graduate educations (Seidman, 1991).

Questions for the third interview addressed the critical thoughts of each participant about his or her racial identity and, more specifically, how he or she had perceived racial identity development by the alternative teacher education program, experiences with students, and the urban under-resourced school community. These questions provided insights on how teachers "know their students" (Howard, 2006). Gallagher (2010) stated,

> In order for whiteness to be demystified and stripped to its political essence, our interviews must generate counter-narratives of whiteness which give respondents the opportunity to rethink the white scripts, those 'unquestioned assumptions' about race that are constantly being written, rewritten, and internalized. (p. 374)

This interview provided information on each participant's teaching experiences as a White educator (Seidman, 1991).

Due to the types of questions I asked, I was extremely mindful of the participants' responses throughout each interview. In one first meeting with a participant, I discussed the study for quite a while and we mutually decided to only interview for about forty-five minutes that time. We made sure the other times we met for interviews allowed for the remaining questions from the first interview to be asked. Also, after reviewing the data, I identified if I still needed to meet with any of the participants for more details or to ask any other essential questions based on what they shared in their previous interviews. Although I was mindful of this,

I did not feel as if any participants needed more interview time. This mindset throughout the study helped me gauge how the participant was doing, if he or she was comfortable, and if shortened or longer sessions were needed for the interviews to respect the participant's time and schedule (see Appendix C).

All interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder and I received consent from each participant (Punch, 2009). I used both a hand-held digital voice recorder and a program I downloaded onto my computer. Both recorders converted the audio into mp3 files and all audio was recorded with very high quality. Reflection notes were written after each interview to include any final thoughts and identify potential modifications to follow-up questions or my interview techniques prior to the next interview. Half the interviews were sent away to a professional transcribing service and I transcribed the other half of the audio files. I personally reviewed all audio files sent to the transcription service in order to ensure accuracy upon return. Then, each interview was coded by theme and sub-theme after thorough analysis of all transcriptions. A full description of coding findings is described in Chapter 4.

I thoroughly examined the works of other researchers when I created my interview questions. Questions from three dissertations were used to craft the interview questions for my study. Sirna (2006) included many questions referencing participants' backgrounds, school experiences with teachers, and experiences with education. Her interview questions also described participants' roles in their schools and in our society as agents of change. I only slightly modified many of her questions because they were so similar to the line of questioning I needed to use for my study. Kravatz (2007) created many questions in her dissertation that described a critical interrogation of our educational system while specifically asking about

teachers' practices, backgrounds, experiences in education with racially dissimilar students, and school environments. All of these questions pertained to my study. Ullucci (2005) examined the experiences of White teachers in urban schools and reviewing her dissertation helped me craft questions examining teachers' development of their racial identities. I found her work to be both insightful and helpful when I determined which questions would be asked for the first, second, and third interviews. The works of these researchers assisted me when I created the interview questions for this study.

Journals

Journals were used as a research method for this study. Journals provided a unique form of qualitative data. Moon (1999) stated, "Journal writing and reflection have separately been associated with the process of metacognition - the process of over-viewing one's own mental functioning" (p. 19). The reflection component embedded in journal writing provided an introspective look into the participants' experiences with race that was different from data collected via interviews, observations, and focus group. They also allowed teachers to describe what they have learned in a way that makes sense to the learner by dealing with situations that are not "straight forward" (Moon, 1999, p. 21). "Some learners are not as able as others at self-expression. Journals provide a means of enabling them to express themselves in an alternative manner" (Moon, 1999, p. 44). Active construction of knowledge takes place with journal writing (Lee, 2008).

Reflection is the key aspect of journal writing. Lee (2005) concluded there are three types of depth to reflection. They are recall, rationalization, and reflectivity. "The highest level of reflective thinking is characterized by the ability to ask not only the 'why' but also the 'so what'

question, with a view to bringing change or improvement to one's practice, as well as a heightened awareness of the influence of various perspectives on one's way of thinking" (Lee, 2005, p. 120). Hatton and Smith (1995) described reflexivity, the highest type of reflection with four levels including: descriptive writing, descriptive reflection, dialogic reflection, and critical reflection. Journaling provided an opportunity for participants to determine which experiences with race have been meaningful. This research method also supported for the voices of these educators to be included as a form of self-expression (Lee, 2008; Moon, 1999).

This assignment gave participants an even greater opportunity to have a voice because they were asked to write about significant experiences they lived as White educators (Richert, 2002; Webster & Mertova, 2007). In fact, participants included thoughts in their journals about experiences not exposed during the interviews or observations because journals offered a different way for participants' experiences to be shared and a way for teachers to express themselves in a more public way (Richert, 2002). Participants' experiences and stories, as told through their journal entries, allowed teachers to share what they do and do not know which can help identify what a teacher truly feels about an experience due to the honesty of the entry and amount of reflection from the teacher (Richert, 2002).

The first journal prompt was, "Please describe what it means for you to be White. This can include an experience you had as a White individual or a time when being White mattered or was important. How did this experience impact you? (Approximately 350-500 words)." This prompt encouraged participants to continue to reflect on their answers to the first set of interview questions. This further reflection provided another opportunity for participants to share their experiences. The second journal prompt was, "Please describe an experience you had with race

in your alternative teacher education program. Then, please describe an experience you had with race in your urban under-resourced school. Please reflect on how these experiences impacted you. (Approximately 350-500 words)." This prompt was given after the second set of interview questions to encourage even more reflection. The third journal prompt was co-created by each participant and myself based on the experiences of the participant. Each participant and I identified an aspect that was addressed during the third interview, which was meaningful, and one that they wanted to reflect upon further in a journal entry. It read, "Co-created with participant based on a topic or experience he or she would like to reflect on more specifically in a journal. (Approximately 350-500 words)." The topic was identified at the end of the third interview and written down by the researcher and participant at that time.

Table 2

Participants' Third Journal Prompt Titles

Participant	**Journal Prompt #3**
Participant 1: Alex	Ways TFA and LMU were effective and ineffective in preparing and educating you on issues of race with regards to the reality of my urban under-resourced high school and how to process it
Participant 2: Beth	Effective Solutions
Participant 3: Claire	Greater preparation for racially dissimilar White teachers in alternative teacher preparation programs.
Participant 4: Danielle	Participant Reflection
Participant 5: Erin	Race and alternative teacher education programs

Due to the differing participant's schedules and number of interviews, some participants were sent the three journal prompts via email throughout the study while other participants were sent

them all at once at the end of the interviews (see Appendix D). Thus, a few participants self-identified a topic that they desired to more thoroughly reflect upon for their final journal entry.

Each participant had over a week to complete the journal prompt in an attempt to make sure the thoughts and reflections from the interviews were not forgotten. An email was sent as a reminder of the deadline. I was available to answer all questions from participants about the journal entries. I began coding each assignment to identify similarities and differences upon receipt of the journal entries. Coding allowed for themes to be identified and analyzed in each of and across the journal entries. Journal coding results are described in Chapter 4.

Observations

Observations, another common qualitative methods research method, allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of the teacher's experiences in his or her workplace (Silverman, 2006). The researcher's job is to describe what happened as the events during the observation take place (Punch, 2009) This research method complimented the interview research I conducted as they both provided details on the experiences of White teacher graduates of alternative teacher education programs. "The goal of observation is to understand the culture, setting, or social phenomenon being studied from the perspectives of the participants. Observers attempt to see the world through the eyes of those they are studying" (Hatch, 2002, p. 72). Each observation was conducted as an "observer-as-participant" observation because each participant was made aware that he or she was truly a part of the study (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Creswell, 2008; Merriam, 2002).

Participants were observed one to three times for at least one hour each in the classroom or participant's workspace. If participants were not in the classroom, they were observed

completing their administration tasks and I observed the work they did at their schools. One participant, who was not teaching at the time of the study, was not observed. The participants who were observed conducted their classrooms according to plan while I remained in the back of the classroom and took notes. The notes were written on the observation matrix (See Appendix E) as this allowed me to collect the data as quickly as possible during each observation. I also brought a pen and paper to each observation in case I desired to include any data in the form of a drawing. While observing the participants, I took notes on the observation matrix allowing me to examine what was taking place in the classroom. The matrix was used as a guideline and I made sure I focused on what was seen and heard, instead of too strictly adhering to the observation matrix.

I followed the advice of Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) and took notes on my beginning thoughts, important events within the lesson, and my personal responses to what was going on around me. When I observed classrooms, I took classroom communication into consideration. Specifically, I took field-notes describing who said what, how individuals and groups worked, the balance between informal and formal communication, and how classroom rights were distributed. An observation matrix assisted me in documenting these forms of evidence as I gathered data. The observation matrix was designed in order to make sure that I took note of specific components of the Dimensions I, II, and III of Howard's Racial Identity Development Model (2006). Dimension I "knowing my practice" observation evidence included how the teacher knew his or her practice by the types of curriculum and pedagogy he or she used in the classroom. Dimension II "knowing my self" observation evidence consisted of how the teacher showed an understanding of his or her race, culture and difference. Dimension III

"knowing my students" observation evidence included how the teacher showed evidence of knowing his or her students through addressing cultures, racial identities, home situations, economic status, personalities, languages, family backgrounds, strengths and challenges of each student, and the uniqueness of each student (Howard, 2006). I also noted evidence of rigor when the teacher exemplified ways he or she was a life-long learner. I also noted the authenticity and effectiveness of teacher-student relationships as well in order to gauge how real the teacher was with students and whether students were learning. Lastly, observations were used to identify teacher responsiveness through culturally relevant teaching, connections with students' lived experiences, and types of learning modalities used. Evidence of this included affirming students, being inviting, creating welcoming classroom spaces, reinforcing students, accommodating different types of learners, managing classrooms well, and creating opportunities for different types of work in the classroom (Shade, Kelly, & Oberg, 1997). Teacher responsiveness can also be observed through the caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction used by a teacher (Gay, 2000). All observed forms of these components were noted in the observation matrix. Furthermore, observation notes supported the information gathered through the interviews and allowed for a more in-depth view into the experiences of the White educators (Hatch, 2002).

After each observation, I made additions to the observation matrix before the end of the observation day. I also completed the researcher post-observation worksheet within two days of the observation to describe the important thoughts I had about the observation after being in the classroom. Questions from the researcher post-observation worksheet encouraged me to summarize my observation experiences in order to understand them more completely (see Appendix F). Throughout the process of observing the White educators and summarizing my

experiences, I positioned myself as a researcher and not as a colleague, friend, or White educator. A detailed analysis of all coded and identified themes can be found in Chapter 4.

Focus Group

A focus group was also used for this study as a fourth type of data collection. Another way to collect qualitative data and allow participants to democratically participate in research, a focus group provides another lens through which I explored racial identity (Bloor, Frankland, Thomas, & Robson, 2001; Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990). The combination of participant observation and individual interviews found in a focus group makes the use of them a very strong data collection method (Morgan, 1997). Overall, focus groups allow for people to co-participate in social science research, can provide opportunities for lay viewpoints to collectively be included, and are a means for gathering public viewpoints (Bloor et al., 2001). Albrecht, Johnson, and Walther (1993) stated,

> Given that focus groups are social events involving the interaction of participants and the interplay and modification of ideas, such a forum for opinion gathering may render data that are more ecologically valid than methods that assess individuals' opinions in relatively asocial settings. A focus group responding to a new product, concept, or idea might generate opinions more like those of the public than would even a large number of isolated respondents. (p. 54)

Focus groups are most notably used in scientific research when a researcher is attempting to capture a range of feelings and ideas people have about a topic, to uncover factors influencing opinions, and when there is an interest in identifying what ideas will emerge from a group of participants chosen to participants (Krueger & Casey, 2009).

Advantages of using focus groups in social research include allowing researchers to obtain larger and potentially more rich forms of data, allowing participants to build upon what others have said, allowing flexibility due to being able to cover many topics, and allowing immediate clarification and further discussion with groups of participants (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990). "It is possible that accounts of reality formation are more likely to be stimulated and to be expressed in greater depth when shared in a group interview format" (Frey & Fontana, 1993, p. 26). Stimulation of new ideas is also very possible due to members' interactions and there is a greater possibility of the focus group resembling everyday life (Frey & Fontana, 1993).

In fact, focus groups create many possibilities for sensitive topics to be discussed. King and Horrocks (2010) suggested,

> Having other people involved, as part of a group interview, can make it more likely that people will agree to participate in research that explores sensitive issues. Also, in a group interview participants can feel less exposed as the conversational focus is shared among the group. Even the most sensitive topics can become easier to discuss when participants are aware of others in the group with similar concerns or opinions. (p. 63)

The addition of a focus group improved my study because it enabled me to gather even more data from my participants to follow-up on common themes identified after the one-on-one interviews. After a preliminary analysis of the interviews and the emergence of their experiences through the one-on-one interviews, the opportunity to go even more in-depth with the participants in a group setting on specific topics was extremely valuable. Furthermore, a focus

group provided an additional lens through which I was able to more completely understand the experiences of the participants.

Limitations of focus groups may include difficulty in recruiting and meeting in a convenient location for all participants, interactions can lead to bias, members may dominate the conversation, and the open-ended nature of questions may cause difficulties in being able to summarize data (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990). Further, the different experiences and backgrounds of participants may play a role, and there may be underlying pressures to conform, and thus the moderator must be aware of how group members can sway other group members' responses (Frey & Fontana, 1993). I worked hard to eliminate these limitations by making sure the location was convenient for all participants, keeping the number of participants in the focus group to a small number, being mindful no participant dominated the group, and by asking open-ended questions to the participants. I also attempted to make sure all four participants who were able to participate felt at ease and comfortable sharing their opinions in respectful ways by encouraging all of them to participate and to be mindful of sharing, respecting, and listening to each other throughout the focus group.

Most researchers suggested having a homogeneous group of individuals that share similar characteristics can be helpful because it can assist the researcher in meeting the needs of the study (King & Horrocks, 2010; Morgan, 1997). "Homogenous groups might be relied upon to spend more time interacting and be more compatible than heterogeneous groups" (King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 66). Also, being able to identify beforehand whether there might be any participant factors affecting positive group interactions can help foster a good focus group

(Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990). Communication is the key component to effective focus groups and it will determine the quality of the data produced (Albrecht et al., 1993).

The focus group was conducted at a central location for all four participants who were able to be involved. They were given directions, refreshments were provided, and they were told the questions would provide an opportunity for participants to share their thoughts in a small group and, therefore, potentially be able to discuss topics more in-depth than they were able to do individually with me. All four participants expressed an interest in being part of the focus group. The conversation we had was very respectful and lasted one and a half hours.

Data Management

Transcription and Coding

Preparing my data for analysis was an essential step that was carefully handled. As a researcher, I worked to, "collect data, prepare data for analysis, read through data and code the data, and code the text for themes to be used in the research report. (Creswell, 2008, p. 244)" Coding the information helped me separate all data from the transcripts into themes (Creswell, 2008). I used a pen and highlighters to code the data into themes. I worked diligently to identify major themes and sub-themes. I sought to find how they were interrelated to other supporting themes. "Describing and developing themes from the data consists of answering the major research questions and forming an in-depth understanding of the central phenomenon through description and thematic development" (Creswell, 2008, p. 254). My goal was to identify what the data was saying and if there were any similarities to what other participants were saying. Therefore, my conclusions arose from themes and sub-themes found from the interviews, journals, observations, and focus group data I collected.

Participants were not identifiable by their real legal name or by other means because only participant numbers were used throughout this study. Then, the participants were given pseudonyms. As the researcher, I was the only one with access to all of the data for this study. My participants only had access to their own data for editing purposes. Three professors, my committee members, were able to view the data, when needed, for analysis purposes or when I had trouble or questions during identification of key themes from the data at various points during my coding and analysis.

The demographic inventory enabled me to describe some of the background information of each participant at the beginning of my findings. It was important to understand the important background information that influenced and impacted the experiences, opinions, and lives of each participant. This information was written up using participant numbers as well. No participant names were ever used on any raw data to keep the confidentiality of all participants.

In order to transcribe the data, I sent half of my interview and focus group tapes to a transcription service. The tapes were copied before they were sent to the transcription service in order to make sure they were saved in case of any problems. Furthermore, these tapes were transcribed by an outside service, but I checked all the tapes next to the printed transcriptions when I received the transcripts. This helped me become even more familiar with the data, enabled me to ensure accuracy of the transcriptions, and allowed me to become even closer with the data for coding purposes. I transcribed the other half of the interviews by listening to the recordings and typing out each spoken sentence. When needed, I would rewind the section to listen again and to make sure I had every word captured correctly. Although this proved to be a very lengthy process, I became extremely close to the data and was able to quickly identify the story of the data. I coded these transcripts by hand in order to analyze whether there were similar terms and phrases being used that were saying the same things but

using different terminology. This is how themes and sub-themes emerged from all the transcribed data from interviews, journal entries, observations, and the focus group.

All data was stored in two locked locations. First, the data was stored in a locked safe in my apartment and I was the only one with the code. Second, the data, including all audio files from the interviews and focus group, was stored on my computer in a password-protected file. Again, I was the only one with the password. It was always my goal to keep all the data completely safe. Lastly, all audio files from the interviews and focus group will be destroyed after the completion of this dissertation.

Coding was an essential piece of my study because it enabled me to get even closer to the data to listen closely to the story the participants told of their experiences. After obtaining all the transcriptions and reviewing them to ensure accuracy, I began sifting through all the data to identify themes and sub-themes. I used the coding techniques from Boyatzis (1998) who described how to identify a "good" code (p. 98). He stated,

> A 'good' code (i.e., a code that is usable and has maximum probability of producing high reliability and validity) should have five elements:
>
> 1. A label (i.e., a name)
>
> 2. A definition of what the theme concerns (i.e., the characteristic or issues in constituting the theme)
>
> 3. A description of how to know when the theme occurs (i.e. how to 'flag' the theme)
>
> 4. A description of any qualifications or exclusions to the identification of the theme
>
> 5. Examples, both positive and negative, to eliminate possible confusions when looking for the theme. (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 98)

This organized and meaningful method for coding and case for making sure a code is "good" made it easy to make sure I truly was identifying the main themes and sub-themes from the data. I completed extensive work by identifying the label, definition, descriptions, and positive and negative examples for each theme and sub-theme. Therefore, I felt very confident stating that the themes and sub-themes I identified were, in fact, what the data was saying and describing to me instead of my bias or assumption of the participants' story determining them. The themes were very clear and are described more thoroughly in Chapter 4.

Internal Validity

Qualitative research is subjective. I strongly desired to conduct a valid and reliable study. I took all necessary measures to conduct a valid and honorable study. It was essential for me to make sure I used ethical procedures. I needed to be cognizant of and constantly reflective of my biases throughout my study to make sure I was not making assumptions. In order to make sure I created a valid study, I took various steps.

First, I used four research methods and, therefore, provided a multi-pronged approach for data collection. This allowed me to collect data from different research methods in order to identify similar themes in my qualitative research (Creswell, 2008) "The assumption is that, if the findings obtained with all these methods correspond and draw the same or similar conclusions then the validity of those findings and conclusions has been established" (Silverman, 2006, p. 291). Correct interpretation of my data was repeatedly checked throughout the study. The qualitative research methods of interviews, journaling, observations, and a focus group provided insights into the racial identity development and experiences of White educators.

Second, I identified three essential characteristics of my participants so I studied the racially identities of White graduates of alternative teacher education programs. They were participants self-identified as being members of the White race, graduates of alternative teacher education programs, and current or former teachers in urban under-resourced schools. These indicators helped me realize I chose educators able to provide insights on their urban under-resourced school experiences. Furthermore, my interactions with each participant solidified their abilities to discuss issues of race as White urban under-resourced school educators and graduates of alternative teacher education programs. All participants were able to provide insights on their experiences and on the topic of White educators, race, and alternative teacher education programs which had not been similarly studied in the field of education.

Third, I believe I used accurate data because all interviews and focus group audio tapes were professionally transcribed or transcribed by myself. Further, I took many notes during observations, I reflected after each observation, I separated my personal thoughts from real observations, asked open-ended questions, and carefully and accurately collected all data over the course of the study.

Lastly, each participant collaborated with me in reviewing all interviews, journal entries, observations, and the focus group in order to make sure all findings were accurate. "Member checking is a process in which the researcher asks one or more participants in the study to check the accuracy of the account" (Creswell, 2008, p. 267). Participants were consulted throughout the entire study to ensure I accurately described each participant and ensured validity of his or her experiences (Merriam, 2002; Silverman, 2006). I was prepared to provide assistance towards finding counseling possibilities

if the questions asked during the interviews or focus group, prompts for the journal entries, or observation experiences were uncomfortable or unsetting to any of the participants.

Researcher Bias

As a White middle-class educator, it was difficult for me to honestly recognize my own subjectivities. My background consisted of growing up in a very small town in rural Connecticut. I grew up with a married mother and father and three sisters. I attended public elementary and middle school and an all-girls private high school. My life consisted of very little diversity growing up in New England and, more specifically, rural Connecticut. I then traveled across the country to attend Santa Clara University for my undergraduate education and moved south to Los Angeles for an alternative teacher education program. After teaching in urban under-resourced Archdiocesan schools for 6 years, I moved to a school in one of the lowest socio-economic communities in Los Angeles. Four years ago, my experiences in education seemed to completely change. I came to the realization that I had not critically examined my own White privilege until the middle of my college career, and, then even more profoundly, just four years ago. I continue to be astounded that I have been blinded to the truth for such a long time and am still needing to work at uncover my "invisible knapsack" on a daily basis (McIntosh, 1988).

As I have worked through the process of identifying my privilege, it has been difficult to realize I am still not completely aware of all of my privileges or ways my experiences impact my decisions and thoughts. In fact, the processing I go through is rarely guided or continuously challenged by anyone but myself. In fact, when discussing this topic and exposing the voices of White educators, I repeatedly found myself to be hesitant to even venture into this very

uncomfortable area. Recognition that there are many facets of being White that I have not yet disclosed or chosen to find has been extremely unsettling and must be recognized.

Conclusion

This qualitative study allowed me to more completely understand the experiences of White graduates of alternative teacher education programs and teachers in urban under-resourced schools through interviews, journal entries, observations, and a focus group. The voices of these educators provided insights into their lived experiences as White educators teaching racially dissimilar students in urban under-resourced schools through this qualitative study. This data will help inform the field of education on the White racial identity development of White teachers in alternative teacher education programs and in urban under-resourced schools.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Restatement of the Purpose of the Research

Currently, there is a nationwide influx of White educators entering alternative teacher education programs and teaching racially dissimilar students in urban under-resourced schools (Nieto, 2009). The research questions for this study which examined the experiences of White graduates of alternative teacher education programs teaching in urban under-resourced schools are:

1. How do White graduates of alternative teacher education programs perceive race and racism in their urban under-resourced schools?
2. How do White graduates of alternative teacher education programs perceive the impact of their alternative teacher education programs on their racial identities?
3. How do White graduates of alternative teacher education programs perceive their abilities to deepen their racial identities in the context of their urban under-resourced schools?

This chapter's exploration of participant data reports the findings of this research. Each theme identified by coding is thoroughly described with excerpts from participants' interviews, journal entries, researcher observations, and focus group participation. Themes and sub-themes are supported by scholarship from researchers who have conducted studies and identified similar themes. Participants told stories of their experiences as White graduates of alternative teacher education programs teaching in urban under-resourced schools and these testimonies have provided evidence describing their perceptions of race and racism in their urban under-resourced

schools, the impact of their alternative teacher education programs on their racial identities, and their abilities to deepen their racial identities in the context of their urban under-resourced schools. After comprehensively stating how the data provides insights into the research questions, the findings are grouped thematically and shown in graphic form to provide further evidence of the commonalities found among participants' responses. Lastly, this chapter concludes with a summary of the participants' stories told throughout this study and provides linkage to Chapter 5 where these findings will be analyzed and provide answers to the research questions.

Introductory Summary of the Findings

A thorough analysis of the data allowed common themes to emerge. The following themes and sub-themes describe the story told by the participants through the data. Themes and sub-themes were identified by repetition of common vocabulary, opinions/thoughts, and similar experiences by the participants across all collected data. Participants' upbringings, education paths, experiences in their alternative teacher education programs, and positions in urban under-resourced schools all informed participants' opinions about race, racism, and how their racial identities have been impacted and deepened through their experiences. Overall, the participants' stories were, surprisingly, much more similar and aligned with each other than I could have imagined and have presented strong evidence to provide answers to the research questions of this study.

Researcher Positionality

It is imperative for me to first address my positionality as the researcher reviewing data in this study. As a White graduate of an alternative teacher education program who taught in an

urban under-resourced school, I can sympathize with the participants in this study. I agree with Pennington (2007) when she referred to the White female participants in her study by concluding,

> My positioning as a White woman studying White women put me at an advantage because of familiarity with my students; most of us shared similar backgrounds. This common ground opened up our discussions and assisted our understandings of ourselves. (p. 111)

I not only shared the same race as the participants, but also grew up in a middle class area and shared similar educational experiences and reasons for entering an alternative teacher education program. I have had had extremely similar feelings and opinions about my experiences as a White teacher of racially dissimilar students in an urban under-resourced school.

I was completely unaware of what my racial identity was, or what being racially conscious truly meant, and it has only been through the research for this dissertation that I have more completely understood my White privilege, institutionalized racism, dominant racial ideologies, and the ways race affects the lives of non-White students. I did not know what I did not know as a White educator in an urban under-resourced school. To this end, I sympathize with the participants because I had not learned through coursework or previous experiences with racially dissimilar populations that this knowledge was missing. The ongoing search for answers to my critical questions created a desire to learn if experiences of other White graduates of alternative teacher education programs and teachers at urban under-resourced schools were similar or dissimilar. My entire awareness of racial identity development models and racial consciousness came from this study. Therefore, it is important for me to be honest about my

positionality because my experiences are part of who I am as a researcher, and are not only the impetus for this research, but informed the lens that I used as I negotiated my time in the field. The participants' experiences are meaningful and their stories are shared by voices that have rarely if ever spoken about issues of race in the world of alternative teacher education.

Participant Biographies

To begin, I will provide a brief biography for each of the teacher participants. It is important to contextualize their life experiences for the reader before discussing the interview and observation findings.

Alex grew up in a suburb outside of a large Western city and was exposed to very little diversity growing up. His college experience was not very different. He participated in an alternative teacher education program in Los Angeles that brought him to teach in a well-known urban under-resourced high school. He indicated that he worked hard as an educator in order to maintain a high expectation for his racially dissimilar Latino and African American students.

Beth grew up in a suburb outside of a different large Western city and experienced some financial difficulties growing up. She recalled being affected by these differences as a child and believes it helped her understand her students more completely as a participant in an alternative teacher education program. She has taught at two urban under-resourced schools and has experienced challenges at each. Beth has now moved into a curriculum position and works with teachers.

Claire spent her early years in a predominantly White Eastern suburb and had a markedly different experience than her peers due to her biracial parents. The awareness this caused for her at a young age has stuck with her throughout her mostly White educational experiences and led

her to teach in inner-city Los Angeles. She also traveled abroad for a service trip and desired to understand the experiences of those lacking resources more completely. As a teacher, she believes she has worked diligently to provide her students with a culturally sensitive education rooted in social justice.

Danielle was raised in a predominantly White Eastern suburb. Her experiences as a child did not expose her to diversity. Instead, she sought out a study abroad opportunity in a predominantly racially dissimilar country that completely opened her eyes to our racially diverse world and spurred a desire to work in an inner-city. Her work with Latino students in an urban under-resourced school in Los Angeles has always been challenging because she has wanted to provide them with the best education possible and to teach in the most effective ways possible.

Erin found her way to Los Angeles through an alternative teacher education program as well. She grew up and attended schools through college that were overwhelmingly White. Initially, she thought her teaching career might be a two-year commitment. Instead, she believes she has found her life-long career and continues to be motivated to teach in a community that is not her own in inner-city Los Angeles.

Question #1: Perceptions of Race and Racism in Urban Under-Resourced Schools

Despite the fact that white graduates of alternative teacher education programs teaching in urban under-resourced schools indicated that their perceptions of race and racism were *not influenced* by their challenging placements in urban under-resourced schools, the answer to this first research question resulted in mixed data. Some participants did not see race as a factor in their experiences in their urban under-resourced school placements, and instead focused on the

socioeconomic issues of students and yet others did recognize race and whiteness, but deflected their responsibility for this onto other factors.

Participants' perceptions: Seeing a racial mismatch

Most interestingly, when specifically asked about race and racism and the effects of race on students, all participants described poverty, socio-economic status, and culture – but not race – as affecting and impacting their students' lives. However, recognition of race and the impact of race are two different things. All but one participant said that they *did* notice the apparent the racial mismatch between themselves and their students

The four participants who did indicate that they recognized racial differences between themselves and their students, did not fully interrogate how this impacted their teaching experience or perception of the children. These participants viewed their Whiteness differently. Alex commented,

> I sort of see White as being more of a conglomeration of bits and pieces that no body really, at least in the United States, is tied to, to identify with, so I don't feel any, I just feel like sort of an absence when it comes to cultures or traditions or customs or history, really. That's me. I know some people have traditions going back to where their ancestors were from or whatever. To me, I think it is just a lot easier to be disconnected from it when I am similar to everybody else (A, Interview #2, p. 1)

His first journal entry was about being White as well and he wrote,

> Being white does not mean much to me, and, in fact, my whiteness may mean more to non-white individuals that it does to me. I always operate under the impression that I am treated in certain ways and have certain experiences because I have earned them either

> through merit or hard work. Although I have never been anything but white, I could see how someone who was not white could view my experiences and interactions entirely differently. I started to become aware of this during college and this impression stayed with me throughout my time in the classroom. In this way, being white changed how I perceived my past successes and experiences and also colored how I thought those who were of a different race perceived me. Once I started reflecting further, I began to question many of the aspects of my life that I always assumed occurred because of what type of student/person I was. Naturally, I had feelings of resignation over this because there was nothing I could do to change the fact that my race afforded me opportunities that were not available to others (A, Journal #1, p. 1).

Beth described her understanding of her White race in the context of her students when she responded, "Definitely the fact that yes, I know I'm a Caucasian" (B, Interview #1, p. 7).

Danielle, a participant who had spent more time in racially diverse settings, described herself as being conscious of being White when she is in the minority. "I never, ever, had been exposed to as much Latino culture in my life and was really conscious my skin was a certain color, I dressed a certain way and I just didn't look like I fit in" (D, Interview #2, p. 2). She further stated, "I have often grappled with the issues of race as there is an obvious racial difference between the students and me and I continuously feel challenged yet intrigued by its potential effects in and out of the classroom" (D, Questionnaire, p. 3). She also commented on her work in an urban under-resourced school.

> Being white meant being the minority. My white skin, my clothes, my appearance and mannerisms were obvious. It was through this experience that being white meant being mindful, respectful and observant of the community I was part of (D, Journal #1, p. 1).

Claire, the other participant who used more racially aware language, stated,

> I notice racial identity in my classroom everyday! My classroom is very diverse. I notice race in the ways that my students naturally group off in social settings (each racial group tends to socialize together, albeit not exclusively). I notice race when my students are intrigued by a peer's lunch, which is very different from theirs. I notice my own racial identity when I do not fully understand a student or parent's concerns or comments (C, Questionnaire, p. 2).

The one participant that stated she did *not* recognize racial differences between herself and her students said,

> I don't see it [race] as an issue, but I never thought of that. I never thought about it growing up. I never thought about it much, and then teaching where I teach, I don't notice how it's just us teachers that aren't Hispanic and all my students are. It's funny how where I grew up was just purely white people, but where I teach now it's the complete opposite but it doesn't faze me (E, Interview #1, p. 2).

No matter whether the participants showed recognition of race or not, the implications of the racial mismatch that these participants revealed was not interrogated. During their teaching experiences, most participants were aware of the mismatch but indicated they did not act upon this awareness. Thus, though the majority of participants recognized visible racial differences, they did not describe race as a major factor or playing a significant role in their lives or their

students' lives when they discussed the alternative teacher education experience. And participants who recognized race also did not comment on racism. Racism was not discussed and participants did not "go there."

Participants' perceptions: Poverty

In contrast to their responses to race, participants readily stated that they perceived that poverty affected their students at their urban under-resourced schools. When asked about ways race affects students' lives, participants were quick to describe it was poverty, not race. They spoke of the appearance of the school and community, the students' lack of supplies and access to higher education, and how the cycle of poverty limited their students from being able to break out of it. It is important to note that there was not a clear difference between the use of the terms "poverty" and "socio-economic status" throughout all interviews, journal entries, and the focus group. Participants used these terms interchangeably. Therefore, in participants' minds, poverty and socio-economic status was not connected to race in their responses. Participants saw poverty and not race as revealed in their answers to questions about race and their urban under-resourced schools. For example, I asked Beth, "Do you think that teachers should play a role in addressing issues of race in schools and if so, what roles do you think those teachers should play?" She responded, "Yes, I do think teachers have a role and I think it's an important one, but one unbiased in teaching about tolerance and acceptance because I think there's so many myths. Every race has a myth. Every culture, all the time, they think white people are rich" (B, Interview #3, p. 5). Her answer to my question about race included references to both culture and economics, and focused only on what she perceived as a misconception about her race. Thus,

though she said that teachers should have a role in addressing issues of race, the only example she was able to deliver was about her own whiteness.

All participants worked in urban under-resourced schools located in poor areas and reported that all of these schools looked drastically different than their schools growing up. Danielle's first two visits to her school instantly made her realize her school was located in an extremely low-income community (D, Interview #1, p. 9). The physical appearance of the school was quite jarring.

> I remember arriving, the first two times and being very unsure of the outside surrounding scene, the trash, the stray dogs, the graffiti, the tagging from the gangs, and just being unsure, scared, questioning safety, wondering what has gone on here, what continues to go on here, and not really knowing what to make of those feelings of the outside (D, Interview #1, p. 9)

Participants also understood that students lacked adequate school supplies, comfortable living accommodations, and access to higher education. They attributed these deficits to their students' poverty, and never mentioned race as a factor in this inequity.

Danielle's experiences at her school really challenged her to think about how she dressed because she wore expensive clothes. She also described her perception of her students by stating, "I think that the bigger issue of poverty completely affects them because they lack the access to experience" (D, Focus Group, p. 13). The students may have lacked the experiences of the participant's dominant culture, but were deeply immersed in their own rich cultural experiences. The participants did not recognize this. Erin also described the lack of experiences her students have had in their lives. "They don't have people to take them to do big things or go places and

that's unfair" (E, Interview #1, p. 15). Alex was also aware of a student's financial situation being a big determiner of the student's life opportunities because of Alex's involvement in helping students with the college process. When he helped them apply for college, he realized they financially would not be able to afford it (A, Interview #2). He stated,

> The socio-economic structure, learning more about that because I was involved in the college process, so that became a bigger issue, much more of a limiting factor. Not just to their ability to move up within educational ranks but also day-to-day barriers there. (A, Interview #2, p. 3)

In addition, Beth learned one student's entire family lived together in a studio apartment and indicated that she had difficulties making sense of that living situation compared to her single apartment in a safe neighborhood (B, Interview #2). Claire stated,

> I think I definitely thought a lot more about socioeconomic status, and also just looking at housing, where my students were living and understanding the role that played in their everyday happenings at school. I think I definitely thought a lot more about that than I did about their race. (C, Interview #1, p. 22)

Participants also saw the cycle of poverty, unconnected to race, when they came to know their students' families and home lives. Some of their students' parents struggled with finances, worked numerous jobs, and lacked a formal education.

Alex stated,

> I would say the biggest challenge came from poverty and the cyclical nature of poverty, and the whole battle that we faced getting the kids to school and getting them to believe that if they do all the steps required of them, that they will achieve said outcome. I don't

> really blame them because you see how it's rigged a little bit, and the outcome is different for different people, so that was a big challenge. (A, Interview #3, p. 3)

Beth similarly described her feelings.

> Minorities really do have less. It's the cycle of poverty. You get angry at them for not doing something, but they can't. How many parents work three jobs and still can't afford something (a residence) outside of South Central Los Angeles, where there's four prostitutes on the corner at 7:00am? (B, Interview #3, p. 10)

Claire also thought a lot about the cycles of poverty and their negative effects on students in her urban under-resourced school (C, Interview #1). She described how their surroundings made it difficult for them to get out of where they were living and that some families were barely able to provide for their families (E, Interview #2). "Even though I am around those students all day and I understand it and I see the struggles they face because of it, I don't see it as a race struggle, but how poor they are" (E, Interview #2, p. 5).

Repeatedly, participants described struggles with poverty and socio-economic status that their students faced in urban under-resourced schools. In fact, this was the most commonly identified perception participants described when identifying what was impacting and affecting students' lives.

Participants' perceptions: Culture

Participants also perceived overt cultural differences, not racial differences, in their urban under-resourced schools. In some cases they used the two terms, race and culture interchangeably. Claire described an experience with a student who was confused after she gave

him a consequence for hitting another student. He did not understand the punishment and started to cry because he was told by his mother to hit back. She said:

> I was very much aware of the differences in culture and the differences in race and knowing that I had to be very sensitive or I had to be very thoughtful and critical in how I reacted to certain situations, knowing that I'm White and in my culture that would not be okay, but I also know that this is a totally different thing or this is a totally different perspective coming from, this kid, so knowing how to sort of handle those situation. (C, Interview #1, p. 11)

Claire realized she could not relate to this student's response because her experiences growing up were very different. She further stated it was not her place to determine if that was right or wrong, but to explain that it was not how students were allowed to conduct themselves at school.

Danielle also described differences she noticed as she learned more about students' families. I asked Danielle, "Were there any similarities or differences you felt with parents because of race?" She answered,

> The first thing to come to mind is that there were overwhelming differences between the parents and me in terms of economic status, level of education, the way I have degrees, the ways they are raising their family, the ways I was able to instruct their children, what they did or did not know about instructing their own child, you know, constant differences. (D, Interview #2, p. 5)

Erin also said that many "cultural differences" were noteworthy because she needed to help parents understand how to help their students. It is important for me to note that the phrase "cultural differences" was used to describe differences between the participant's experiences and

her students' experiences growing up. She described things like checking homework, giving students healthy snacks, making sure there was a routine at home, getting them to bed at a reasonable hour, providing structure at home, and helping students with work as things she has educated parents about throughout her time as a teacher. She noted that this was education her parents did not need to receive from her teachers (E, Interview #1). Erin felt this experience was awkward because, not being a parent herself, she did not feel like she should be giving them advice about parenting (E, Interview #1). She felt like she was imposing on them by telling them to parent just like her parents did for her growing up, and it made her feel uncomfortable. These differences, described as "cultural" by the participants, were referenced when they were asked about the race issues and their students at urban under-resourced schools.

Participants' perceptions: Summary

Thus, despite repeated questioning asking the participants to address issues of race and racism in their urban under-resourced schools, they did not respond by describing race or racism as significant issues. Due to the fact that participants only saw race in the visible differences between themselves and their students and did not see or comment on racism in their urban under-resourced schools, there was, consequently, no expressed need for their non-racialized perceptions to change. Instead, they responded by addressing poverty, socio-economic status, or cultural differences as the significant issues impacting students' lives. Not having had many experiences with racially dissimilar students meant that it was largely off their radars, even though participants did not describe having had experiences with people affected by poverty. Also, when poverty, socio-economics, and cultural differences were used in participants' responses, they were similarly used to address lack of resources and educational differences.

This made it difficult to determine their definitions of those terms based on their responses. Participants repeatedly stated poverty, socio-economic status, and cultural differences were what they perceived as White educators in their urban under-resourced schools. They did not state they felt there was anything wrong or missing by answering the race questions in the ways they did. Even though the questions were worded with race and racism, the use of the words race, racism, or the identification of race issues was not included in their responses. They just stated that they "didn't think it was a race issue." Therefore, race was not perceived as being a contributing factor or preventative barrier in the lives of their racially dissimilar students. Also, by identifying poverty, socio-economic status, and cultural differences as the main factors impacting students' lives, and not race, participants were able to intellectually remove themselves from their engagement with racism, a racist society, or a dominant racist ideology. They did not see race or racism or have racially aware vocabulary to describe their experiences. Because participants were unaware of oppressive race and racism, they were prevented from critically addressing ways they perpetuate racism and White privilege as White teachers in an urban-under resourced schools with racially dissimilar students.

Question #2: Perceptions of Alternative Teacher Education Programs' Impact on Racial Identities

The data revealed White graduates believed the impact of their alternative teacher education programs on their racial identities was negligent. Participants described how they were exposed to minimal critical coursework, felt unprepared as teachers, and faced challenging school realities which led to difficulties processing their experiences. None of these difficulties

were thoroughly addressed or prioritized by their alternative teacher education programs and, therefore, they believed that their racial identities were not deepened.

Lack of critical coursework. Participants stated they were unprepared to enter their racially dissimilar urban under-resourced schools as White educators because critical coursework and discussions about race were minimal, discussion of critical race issues did not occur, and essential knowledge that would have been extremely helpful was withheld from them. Participants described a lack of critical coursework throughout their alternative teacher education programs.

Alex remembered attending sessions on White privilege in his alternative teacher education program, but he mostly recalled them being ill-timed during the first summer orientation program. He described it as "having a negative effect on most White teachers" because there was a long presentation about the information but not much else "to describe what to do about it or how to process the guilt" (A, Interview #2). Beth also described being exposed to some race classes in her alternative teacher education program. She said she learned "that race does affect the classroom." Also, she indicated that teachers were made aware that others were "from different places and backgrounds than your own." She described being taught to "remember to be culturally sensitive, and to recognize your biases"(B, Interview #1). However, she described her coursework as very minimal because the few courses participants did take where race was mentioned briefly were not very critical because they failed to interrogate White privilege or the history of institutionalized racism.

This coursework, therefore because of the minimal treatment of race and race issues, did not impact their racial identities. Although Beth stated she experienced lots of reflection, she

desired her professors take it to the next level. “We did a lot of reflection, but we never did anything with that reflection” (B, Interview #3, p. 7). By talking about it, nothing was ultimately changed. When referring to the talking that occurred, she stated, “That doesn’t change it. It doesn’t change the students, it doesn’t change the school, and it doesn’t bring light to it” (B, Interview #3, p. 8). She felt that support groups would have assisted her instead of a “band-aid approach to teachers who were struggling with their placements.” Lastly, she stated, “I think these programs are good, but I think they could be great” (B, Interview #3, p. 16).

Danielle described her two classes dealing with race and diversity issues by saying, “I left those courses without the understanding and knowledge that I really had expected or had hoped to gain” (D, Interview #1, p. 10). She felt race was minimally addressed in her alternative teacher education program.

> I am sure at some point it was, you know, we were made aware that we would be teaching students of diverse backgrounds in low socio-economic schools, and that was understood by all, but how to relate to them or how to approach going into those schools, no, I don’t think that was ever really addressed at all. (D, Interview #3, p. 1)

Erin’s program split participants into two separate talks based on whether they were teaching mostly African American students or Latino students. This was a two hour session one night “devoted to cultural traditions and important holidays” (E, Interview #1). There was not a lot of talk about the socio-economics or race of the students at the schools. Instead, there was mainly a focus on how to teach which did not provide all the knowledge Erin thought would have been beneficial (E, Interview #2). Erin also said she had a Latina site supervisor who

reminded them to be culturally sensitive throughout the school year. When reflecting back on her experiences and lack of race content, Erin stated,

> Now that I think about it, really our coursework didn't have anything to do with racial differences, which is funny because it was like a bunch of White people going into schools where they weren't teaching White people. But that was never- part of the coursework or a topic in classes. (E, Interview #1, p. 23)

In addition, these courses which alleged to address race were isolated and disconnected at different points over the course of their two-year programs. Also, their perceptions of race issues and their racial identities, as they continued to have more experiences in their urban under-resourced schools, were not frequently addressed, reflected upon, or revisited by their alternative teacher education programs.

Furthermore, Claire felt there was not any critical dialogue, and she sometimes felt there was an unaddressed feeling of entitlement with her predominantly White cohort (C, Interview #1). She was the only participant to question the appropriateness of her program in addressing these issues and she was uncomfortable with race being left out of discussions between new White teachers entering racially dissimilar schools. Her previous experiences and the awareness she had from working in an urban under-resourced school, prior to entering her alternative teacher education program, caused her to question the mentalities of her fellow participants as they prepared to enter their schools. She felt the program emphasized and celebrated how each participant was "giving back by teaching and serving in an urban under-resourced school" (C, Interview #1). She further commented,

> There was a sense of entitlement in the program that I was always uncomfortable with. I felt it was a disservice to the school communities for us to have that perception of our work. I always felt like that attitude only served to separate us, in a sense, from the students we were working with. It only perpetuated a sense of White entitlement, I felt; like we deserved special recognition because we choose to use the fruits of our (expensive) educations on working with under-resourced communities. I encouraged them to shift the focus away from what we would be doing for our students, and more towards an understanding that our working with racially dissimilar populations gave us the experience of understanding cultural diversity. For so many of my colleagues, this program was their first exposure to working and interacting with a large and racially dissimilar community. I always felt that the greatest gift I received from our experiences should be having a deeper understanding of other cultures (C, Journal #3, p. 1).

She also expressed a desire for more dialogue because there was a need and she thought colleagues would have been interested in it (C, Interview #1). Danielle also felt the drastically different backgrounds among participants need to be addressed because people joined the program for varied reasons.

> Some open conversation or course or even just the recognition that this does exist. It exists among teachers in schools but it also exists among teachers within the program. I think there is a major discrepancy between how those two sets of teachers would ever feel in their schools and in the program coming for different purposes. A lot of difference there. (D, Interview #3, p. 1)

Danielle perceived that this race issue within the cohort of alternative teachers was important, but it also was not addressed.

Thus, the participants believed that alternative teacher education programs did not provide an effective or meaningful education through their coursework on racial identity development and the participants described how, in retrospect, it would have been extremely beneficial to have had more coursework and discussions on race as White teachers in urban under-resourced schools with Latino and African American students.

Unprepared teachers. Participants also spoke about how their alternative teacher education programs did not advise them on effective ways to deal with race issues or racism once they were at their schools. These teachers believed their alternative teacher education programs should have anticipated issues they would face in their first two years of teaching, especially since these programs had so much experience with White teachers entering racially dissimilar students. Therefore, participants felt as if they were unprepared for and unaware of what to expect in their urban under-resourced schools because these issues went unaddressed.

For example, Claire and Danielle, who showed evidence of being more able to speak to race issues in their lives and at their urban under-resourced schools, both spoke to their experiences with racially dissimilar faculty members and how there were times when interactions with colleagues were tense. These uncomfortable interactions were not discussed and remained un-interrogated over the course of many interactions together.

> I definitely remember feeling certain tensions around, like, 'Well, that's a very White idea,' or 'That's very much from White culture.' That definitely stands out to me, and feeling mixed feelings around comments like that. I remember feeling a lot of tension in

> those areas and always wanting to be culturally sensitive, but then also having a really collaborative atmosphere of, 'Can we listen to each other's ideas and mull it over? Do we have to identify this as White or can we just say this would meet our students' needs? This is going to prepare them for academics in the future, or whatever. (C, Interview #1, p. 18)

Danielle also spoke of the divide among her faculty in the same way as Claire by stating:

> I often felt there was a divide within the faculty. We are the White teachers who have come from out of state and are doing service and we are the Latino teachers who have lived here our whole lives and are doing our jobs to make money and earn a living. That was always uncomfortable. (D, Interview #2, p. 5)

She continued,

> There was that divide. It wasn't discussed, but everyone knew it was there. It just existed. It was like a pink elephant. It was obvious. It was there. It wasn't talked about. It wasn't received. The faculty that had understood it and went through it, it didn't faze them, and the others would take home this huge weight of question and confusion and curiosity. I guess it seems just so strange that it wasn't ever discussed. It wasn't. And that we all probably had such different expectations and ways of doing things based on why we were there and what we were experiencing there. (D, Interview # 2, p. 5)

Looking back, Danielle believed a conversation could have been beneficial because it would have allowed for an understanding of each other and then enabled them to move forward in a meaningful way. Erin's experiences with racially dissimilar colleagues made her aware of the fact that they did not experience similar preparation in education with regards to planning and

teaching (E, Interview #2, p. 2). She frequently assisted her non-White colleagues in faculty meetings and used her plans as a guide because they were aligned with her White principal's requirements that had similar educational experiences. Alternative teacher education programs did not address these experiences White educators encountered in their schools. Participants believed that programs could have assisted with their preparedness, thus engaging in conversations about their racial identities in the context of their experiences in urban under-resourced schools.

Other information would have also been helpful if participants had acquired knowledge in specific areas prior to entering the classroom. At times, Alex felt like they were "withholding information" that would have made his transition into teaching easier, especially because he was told his 9th grade teaching placement was the third hardest placement in all of Los Angeles (A, Interview #1). As he struggled through his first year of teaching, he felt as if his alternative teacher education program knew the challenges of the school well and, therefore, could have taught him more helpful and necessary information that would have been beneficial in the classroom. Beth felt similarly because she wished she had been told about what would have made her teaching position easier (B, Interview #3). Beth felt a bit like she was prevented from learning about what it would truly be like teaching in an urban under-resourced school and how to process those experiences.

Overall, Beth indicated that she did not feel as prepared as she could have been, though she did learn a lot about unit planning, data-driven research and curriculum from her White administrator but not from her alternative teacher education program (B, Interview #2). Danielle stated,

> I found that in these inner city under-resourced schools, the professional nourishment wasn't there, and so as very passionate, eager, individuals come in wanting to make miracles happen, there's a desire to continue to grow as a professional. Without administration or leadership or that guidance, that's unable to happen. So, I think that opens up the emotional instability of just trying to do it all, to teach it all, to support it all, and you can't. It really shows your limits. (D, Focus Group, p. 3)

She further stated that some schools were not well equipped. These schools did not have administrative support or good mentors to assist new teachers. She also questioned the type of preparation she received from her alternative teacher education program because she did not feel as if she received all the answers and necessary essential knowledge from that institution that arose from her experiences (D, Interview #1). Danielle mentioned that throughout the three years of her alternative teacher placement, "the issue of race within the classroom was one that was obvious, constant, yet never spoken of" (D, Journal #2, p. 2). Also, the reality of her school often made her experiences more difficult than she expected they would be for her as a White teacher in an urban under-resourced school.

> It's probably attributed to the struggle of it and the level of difficulty of being at an under-resourced school with limited resources, limited faculty, diverse populations, behavioral issues that don't have much support, and second language learners. In this school where there is such a fast turnover rate, a fleeting faculty, and a great division between locals who are here to sustain themselves and their families vs. this homogenous population that comes from out of state to be of service, there is very little to turn to that could guide you. (D, Interview #3, p. 3)

Alex recommended his alternative education program make some changes by suggesting,

> I wish they would just be honest about the problems that are facing schools and the problems that teachers are going to encounter and what goals you can realistically set for yourself, and how you do need to take care of your mental health, and how you do need to address things that you're not going to be used to seeing. (A, Focus Group, p. 23)

In his experience, his alternative teacher education program failed to address these issues. Their racial identities, therefore, were not deepened because their alternative teacher education programs did not address these issues during their two-year commitments. Alex further mentioned,

> I was always just struck with the notion that we take the most challenging schools and we put the most unprepared people there, as a way of thinking of education. Yes, they're the most enthusiastic, yes, they're the most energetic, and yes, oftentimes they're the most passionate, but they're also the most unprepared. (A, Focus Group, p. 2)

Besides feeling as if they were unprepared by their alternative teacher education programs, participants also described ways they struggled to deal with their experiences.

Processing, personal cost, and impact. Participants' inabilities to process their experiences, the impact of those experiences, and the personal costs they assumed loomed large in their criticism of their alternative teacher education programs. They suggested many of these problems were exacerbated by a lack of engagement with race and a deepened racial identity. Because they had not been taught about their racial identities or led through the dimensions in their alternative teacher education programs, participants lacked an awareness that would have helped them as White educators in urban under-resourced schools.

Alex described not being able to remember some of his early memories of teaching because he felt as if he was, "hit by a truck" his first year (A, Focus Group, p. 2). "I blocked out a lot of that stuff. I was so sleep deprived, everybody was working so hard because we didn't know what to do" (A, Interview #1, p. 12). He also expressed difficulty in processing what he was experiencing because everything was moving so quickly and feeling, "confident but powerless at the same time" (A, Interview #1, p. 14). There was a lot of frustration in not knowing what he did not know in the classroom and "an internal pressure to do better by being perfect" which caused him to disengage because he was unable to process all of it (A, Focus Group).

> We'd always compare it to being in war, which is a misplaced metaphor, but it was sort of similar because I remember reading stories about people at war saying, when they came back, they'd try to explain what it was like and you just could never really fully grasp the words. It wasn't like that probably my last couple of years, but my first two years definitely, when things were just so crazy and I was so overwhelmed and so over my head, I didn't really have the words to explain to people how it was or what was going on because I couldn't even process it. (A, Interview #3, p. 4).

He further asked, "How do you prepare them [teachers] to learn everything that we thought about society is different than what you thought?" (A, Interview #3, p. 5).

Beth described difficulties processing and questioning her middle-class lifestyle based on her experiences with students. She stated,

> I mean, even just going to the beach. Spending time at the beach. Being able to go on an airplane. A lot of the kids are like, 'I've never been on an airplane. My dream is to go on

> one.' You know? And here I walk into my nice one bedroom apartment with nice furniture. I took pictures for an assignment, they had to describe their rooms, and I showed pictures of my apartment. And they were like, 'Oh my gosh, you're like living the high life.' And to you and me it was very middle class. But I definitely was like, wow, I am privileged. (B, Interview #2, p. 1)

Beth also described driving a student home one night and how the student described where gang members lived surrounding her home. Beth described being shocked. "Knowing that I dropped that girl off, and I went home to my safe neighborhood. I have forgotten to lock my door once or twice, and it was no big deal. I just felt guilty" (B, Interview #2, p. 15).

Looking back, she mentioned she was not ever prepared to deal with learning about some students' harsh realities like seeing bruises on students, learning about parents who were drug traffickers, or having to contact Child Protective Services (B, Focus Group). Furthermore, Beth described a lot of guilt in choosing to leave her school; she was frustrated leaving students "who needed good teachers in their lives that don't leave."

Similarly, Danielle addressed the realities of her school and how those were difficult for her to make sense of as a teacher.

> Working in a place where the emotional components of the students is so severe, the poverty, the family relationships, the community itself. There was such a great need to tackle some of those issues that were not addressed, that we didn't have research on, readings on, or discussions on. (D, Interview #1, p. 11)

She also stated she felt hopeless and as if there were no answers to the systems that needed to be addressed (D, Interview #1). Danielle's experiences were deeply personal and she lacked formal

guidance to deal with her actual experiences. The unexpected differences were also challenging for her.

> I also remember, vividly, very early on, I showed up very professional in slacks and a button down and a Polo sweater. It was Christmas time …and a student commented that the polo horse was a reindeer. I remember feeling so embarrassed that I had probably spent $60 on that, as much as a parent might make in a month, and this symbol that shouts money, White supremacy, was interpreted as an innocent reindeer. I remember from that moment on, I promised myself I would change the way I would dress. I have not purchased a reindeer shirt since. I would just try to even simplify what I was wearing. That was definitely a teachable, memorable moment. (D, Interview #2, p. 4)

Some other significant experiences were addressing the feelings she had as an outsider in her school. Danielle taught at a school that frequently received immersion groups for periods of time. She became extremely frustrated by outsiders regularly coming to view and learn about the community, school, and students. "I questioned for three years whether I was one of those people that were doing it and now that I am no longer there, I left too, just like the rest of them" (D, Interview #2, p. 6). She still questions how these critical questions she has will resolve themselves and how her experiences could have been less difficult with the help of her alternative teacher education program.

Danielle also described difficulties in being a part of the White faculty at her school with non-White faculty members who were there either for a service program or to support their families because they had grown up in a similar community. Often, underlying opinions from all faculty and staff members about this dichotomy would surface during meetings and professional

development days. Furthermore, she described wondering how she could have gone through so much education without truly interrogating these issues.

> I remember thinking to myself, 'I have two degrees and a Masters. How can I be their teacher and not understand the way these students identify themselves? Even worse, who am I if they feel confident in proclaiming it and I can not.' That is when I realized the issue of race IS part of all of us, our children, our world and it must be something to be discussed. But really, how? (D, Journal #2, p. 2)

Erin expressed difficulties in being able to process her experiences growing up when she compared them to those of her students. She frequently reflected on the fact that her students did not have as many "experiences" as she did and she was not sure how to give them those experiences (E, Focus Group).

> I think not until I got into the classroom, not until I realized how much luckier I was when I was little, and how sweet they are, and how sad it made me. College isn't on their radars. I went to college football games when I was five years old, you know. And how innocent and sweet these kids are and to think that they, just because of where they live and the community around them -- it doesn't lend itself to going to college and getting good grades and getting a job in the same way that I knew was going to happen for me. Even when I went to school, you went to college. There was no question about it. (E, Interview #1, p. 14)

The incredible time commitment, the amount that needs to be done to teach students well, and constant feeling that there is always more to be done also contributed to questions about balance in Erin's life, which often left her feeling drained. She said she felt like "I can't just keep

doing this until 10pm every single night" (E, Interview #1, p. 9). Also, the frustration of only having students for one year and questioning the impact she was having on them was also a difficult thing for her to process. "I was so passionate thinking I was going to change every one in my class my first year" (E, Interview #1, p. 15). She further stated, "I'm out here for this job and I love it, but it frustrates me sometimes because I think about all the work I should do to really help these kids and really do everything they deserve is just impossible for one person to do" (E, Interview #1, p.16). She summarized her thoughts by stating, "This experience here is like one big issue, the inner city, the under-resourced neighborhoods, I don't know how to get rid of that" (E, Focus Group, p. 13).

Though students received on the job experience and a Masters degree through participation in these alternative teacher education programs, none spoke of the benefits to their personal situation or career, and all were committed to the urban under-resourced schools. They chose to be there, and felt that they were fulfilling a need. In this way it appeared that the notion of interest convergence by the participants was not strongly at play. Their commitment to their students was clear, and they were glad to be in their urban under-resourced schools, but simply unaware of the physical and mental costs associated with being new teachers and full-time graduate students. All participants stayed on as teachers in their urban under-resourced schools after the requisite two year program commitment. They did not feel entitled to better teaching positions, more well-resourced schools outside of urban under-resourced areas, or the completion of an easy graduate degree. Instead, even though they had anticipated their jobs would be challenging, they did not expect to have such difficult placements and felt like they were just trying to stay above water during their first two years of teaching. These White participants were

highly educated and extremely hard-working and they chose their alternative teacher education programs in order to teach in urban under-resourced schools. The repeated sentiment was that their teaching experiences seemed to be much more difficult than participants believed they had to be and this was a very frustrating part of their jobs. In fact, many of the realities at their urban under-resourced schools can be attributed to high teacher turnover rates, ineffective administrators, and few resources. All participants were happy to be at their schools, but experienced an unrelenting amount of work to be done and ways they could make a difference that seemed overwhelming. They were given the responsibility to teach without, they believed, adequate preparation.

Participants thoroughly described the personal cost, processing, and impact being a White teacher in a racially dissimilar urban under-resourced school has had on their lives. They also repeatedly expressed how they would have liked to have had some assistance in understanding what to do with and how to process their feelings. Their racial identities were not deepened by their alternative teacher education programs because all participants described being exposed to a lack of critical coursework, feeling unprepared, and having difficulties processing their experiences as White educators in urban under-resourced schools.

Question #3: Perceptions of Abilities to Deepen Racial Identities in Schools

Participants' perceptions of their abilities to deepen their racial identities in the context of their urban under-resourced schools were analyzed in relation to Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model. Participants' evidence of deepened racial identities was shown through their subconscious work, which was disconnected from racial identities in their minds, as culturally aware and sensitive educators and as advocates for students in urban under-resourced

schools. Participants provided no evidence that their experiences as White educators in urban under-resourced schools provided the necessary knowledge or tools for them to critically know them selves or their students by deepening their racial identities.

Howard's racial identity development model. As a researcher examining racial identities and the experiences of White graduates of alternative teacher education programs in urban under-resourced schools, it is imperative for me to situate my findings for this section within Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model. This model states that in order for a person to become racially conscious, he or she moves in and out of three specific dimensions over the course of racial identity development, which can last a lifetime. The dimensions for White educators are: knowing my practice (action and transformation through pedagogy and curriculum), knowing my self (as a teacher), knowing my students (racially dissimilar students). It is important to note that Howard suggested these dimensions are not mutually exclusive because they all support each other (Howard). Also, throughout a lifetime and as an individual's racial consciousness develops and his or her racial identity changes and is deepened an individual will continue to develop and grow in each dimension because the model is an on-going and reflective process.

I examined participants' perceptions of their racial identities in the context of their urban under-resourced schools by analyzing data in relation to each phase of Howard's Racial Identity Development Model. Interestingly, participants stated it was the first time they had really thought about these issues because they had not previously been asked about race. My findings indicate that, according to Howard's (2006) model, their experiences describe very little evidence of "knowing my practice" in Dimension I, certainly not enough to conclude participants

had well-developed racial identities, and no evidence of racial identity development in Dimensions II, "knowing my self" and Dimension III "knowing my students".

Opinions of their Whiteness. Also, it is imperative to report participants' opinions of race prior to analyzing them through Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development model. Participants did have a recognition of the fact that they were White and four out of five participants expressed they knew they were privileged. However, the acknowledgement of this privilege did not reflect a thorough and critical understanding of the impact of this privilege. A noticeable disconnect existed between what participants knew and their desires to delve into the responsibility of being privileged. They recognized their Whiteness and the majority were aware of being privileged. There was no reference to the types of benefits they receive based on their privilege or how non-Whites, who are not privileged, are affected by White privilege. Howard (2006) described, "the assumption of rightness, the luxury of ignorance, and the legacy of privilege" (p. 118). He spoke of teachers working through these beliefs in order to become "transformationist White educators" (p. 119). Participants in this study did not verbally express or show evidence through journal entries or observations of fully understanding the breadth of their privilege.

Dimension I: Knowing my practice. Participants showed minimal evidence of having Dimension I characteristics. They described themselves as being culturally aware and sensitive educators and also advocates on a local level. However, even though minimal evidence was shown in support of Dimension I, it was not enough for participants to be defined as racially conscious with well-developed critical racial identities per Howard's (2006) characteristics. However, it is noteworthy that participants acted in these ways because of their experiences in

urban under-resourced schools. They saw a need through their interactions with their racially dissimilar students and began the process towards being White culturally aware and sensitive teachers and advocates.

Howard's (2006) racial identity development model states educators who are in Dimension I are culturally aware and sensitive and possess a knowledge base about students enabling them to truly know their students. Factors identifying a teacher as being culturally aware and sensitive, according to Howard (2006) who referenced the works of McKinley (2005) and Shade, Kelly, and Oberg (1997) include the following factors:

- Demonstrating culturally relevant teaching
- Addressing racial identity/issues
- Knowing students' home situations
- Knowing students' economic status
- Understanding students' personalities
- Knowing students' languages
- Knowing students' family background/lived experiences
- Knowing the strengths of students
- Knowing the challenges of students
- Understanding the uniqueness of students
- Using a Constructivist approach
- Affirming students in their cultural connections
- Being personally inviting
- Creating physically welcoming classroom spaces
- Reinforcing students for their academic development
- Accommodating instruction to the cultural and learning style differences of students
- Managing classrooms with firm, consistent, and loving control
- Creating opportunities for both individual and cooperative work
- Showing a caring attitude
- Communicating well with students
- Providing culturally relevant curriculum
- Having a passion for equity and social justice

The data collected from participants' responses in interviews, entries in journals, observed teaching using the observation matrix, and comments during the focus group provided elements

from Dimension I. The most extensive data depicting participants' cultural awareness and sensitivity as teachers was demonstrated through their observations. They overwhelmingly showed evidence of the McKinley (2005) and Shade, Kelly, and Oberg (1997) factors while teaching their students. Due to the fact the observation data was so extensive and gave so many examples of each factor, highlights of each participants' observed and described cultural awareness and sensitivity has been summarized.

Alex spoke of some of these characteristics because he was not in the classroom and able to be observed at the time of the study. Alex's curricular relevance and culturally relevant pedagogy included analyzing book themes with students by making real world connections to their lives (A, Interview #2, p. 4). He also described teaching students how to think critically and become more aware of how society works by stating, "but if you can just get them thinking and asking the right questions, then later on maybe they'll be more aware" (A, Interview #3, p. 2). He also referred to the importance of, "expressing a broad array of curriculum that is representative of the world we live in" (A, Interview #3, p. 2).

Beth, Claire, Danielle, and Erin all showed evidence of attempts at cultural awareness and sensitivity. Noteworthy examples of data collected have been included to show evidence of the types of teachers they are in their urban under-resourced schools.

Beth demonstrated use of social justice by creating a lesson on the Holocaust, war crimes, and the Rwandan genocide with students and made sure it fit with the curriculum (B, Observation, #1; B, Interview #3, p. 6). She also described teaching students about immigration issues and took them to the Museum of Tolerance (B, Interview #2, pgs. 6-7). "The genocides in Rwanda were really important to me because it brought up racial issues in a non-personal way.

It's not me talking about it, but I can talk about race and what race does through this experience in history" (B, Interview #3, p. 6).

Claire showed evidence of being a culturally aware and sensitive educator as well by describing how students' life experiences need to be supported and valued in the classroom. "A true education honors these experiences and makes learning personal. It is through these experiences that students will come to understand themselves in harmony with others" (C, Questionnaire, p. 2). When describing her teaching she said she wanted to, "make my teaching as culturally relevant as possible" (C, Interview #1, p. 12). She also mentioned she makes sure students' cultures were part of the curriculum. "I think I try to really learn more about their cultures and try to talk about it openly" (C, Interview #1, p. 21). I also witnessed her use a constructivist approach.

Danielle described frequently creating her own materials and accessing resources outside of school in order to make culturally appropriate lessons for her students (D, Interview #2). When describing a lesson on Martin Luther King Jr., she stated, "I researched to find authentic, culturally sensitive literature for the children with meaningful corresponding activities to follow" (D, Journal #3, p. 1). She also makes sure she scaffolds, models, and individualizes content for all students (Howard, 2006). "Daily, I deliver creative, student-centered lessons, incorporating a variety of teaching and learning modalities and differentiating instruction" (D, Questionnaire, p. 2).

Erin's curriculum and instruction were guided by the standards. "Units are based on the standards, unwrap the standards, plan the lessons according to the standards, because the assessment is based off the standards" (E, Interview #1, p. 9). She told her students, "I know

exactly what you need to do and how far you need to get this year and you're going to, it's not a question, you're going to" (E, Interview #2, p. 6).

Each participant extensively demonstrated numerous ways he or she exemplified culturally aware and sensitive teaching characteristics through their observations according to Gay (2000), Howard (2006), McKinley (2005), and Shade, Kelly, and Oberg (1997). However, it is important to note that participants did not connect their involvement in alternative teacher education programs with their abilities to teach in culturally aware and sensitive ways. Instead, they described the low academic levels of students and the realities of students' lives as being the reasons why they needed to adapt and modify their instruction to accommodate all learners. Very few courses or professors were referenced, although there is a possibility that all participants learned some of these ways to teach in their alternative teacher education programs.

It was also very evident that each participant was involved in at least one form of advocacy on a school level that is also a part of Dimension I in Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model. Participants described ways they have been advocates, want to be advocates, or raised questions explaining a need for advocacy based on their experiences in at their urban under-resourced schools.

Alex questioned how his school determined what students would be enrolled in honors classes when he repeatedly noticed more Latino students than African American students in his honors classes. He said he worked hard to advocate for students who should be in the honors classes and faced difficulties with the school. "But I was going out of my way to put kids in there, with success sometimes and with failure other times, but even still, it was nowhere near close to representing the school, the student body" (A, Interview #3, p. 7).

Beth, the inclusion coordinator at her school, frequently advocated for struggling and gifted students to get tested in order to provide a differentiated learning environment meeting student needs (B, Questionnaire, p. 2). She also described being part of meetings to discuss student retention and identifying the real needs of the students to create plans to help the student as much as possible (B, Interview #3). A large part of her work to assist students involves their parents. "I think it starts with our school being transparent with the parents about how they're succeeding. I think parents should be informed. It made me more aware that these people do need advocates and they do need people to fight for them" (B, Interview #3, pgs. 2 & 6).

Claire advocated for her students by modifying the curriculum. "I just kind of tried to understand their culture a lot more and honor that and recognize that and recognize that more than I saw it being honored in the curriculum, the packaged curriculum that we had" (C, Interview #1, p. 13).

Danielle stated, "I absolutely believe I had a major responsibility to advocate for students" However, this proved to be very difficult at her school because, "being in a school with low enrollment and realizing in some cases we don't necessarily have the resources to advocate for them, that surfaced many times" (D, Interview #3, p. 4).

Erin described how she differentiates her instruction by meeting students' needs. "That's differentiation at its best. Making sure every kid is reading on the level that he/she's supposed to be reading" (E, Interview #1, p. 11). She also mentioned tutoring students that need extra support and working diligently to get students to the highest levels they can achieve in a school year.

Participants in this study described their roles as advocates on a local level. However, as research suggests, White teachers must be challenged to advocate on a societal level in order to

truly address systems of institutional racism. The racial identities of participants in this study did not allow them to see the larger issues of race at the systemic level which is encouraged by Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model.

Thus, while participants evidenced some characteristics of "knowing my practice" and made attempts to be culturally aware and sensitive, their disengagement with and avoidance of race realities makes it impossible for them to be considered as having achieved all the markers of Dimension I of Howard's (2006) model.

Dimension II: Knowing my self. Participants described their upbringings, educational experiences, and early experiences with race which allowed me to understand how they identified themselves in relation to the second Dimension of Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model, "knowing myself." Overall, they expressed how they experienced very little diversity growing up and had very limited exposure to and knowledge of race issues. They had also not given much thought to their race and its effects prior to being asked about it during this study.

All participants grew up in predominantly White middle or upper class suburbs lacking racial and economic diversity. Alex grew up in a very White suburb outside of a large South Western United States city. He stated, "It was not mixed race at all" (A, Interview #1, p. 1). Beth stated, "I grew up in a city that was primarily Caucasian. I didn't think much about race and didn't really pay attention to it in my town" (B, Questionnaire, p. 2). Claire grew up in an East coast suburb that was predominantly White, but had some diversity on her side of town. Danielle grew up in a very privileged East coast suburb where, "being White and living the White life was normal, accepted, encouraged" (D, Journal #1, p. 1). She also described it as an extremely

homogeneous place lacking a lot of diversity. Erin grew up in an upper middle class neighborhood in a suburb outside of a large city in the Midwest.

Participants recalled many experiences as children during which they learned about race. Alex remembered recognizing the difference when the city and suburbs became more racially diverse. He recalled learning about race from his parents and the media, specifically television. Claire recalled her parents, a bi-racial couple, teaching her about race when she stated,

> My parents constantly discussed ways to respectfully and responsibly handle these situations with my brothers and I, as well as our teachers. I grew up feeling self-conscious about my mixed racial identity, and did not fully appreciate it until I matured. (C, Questionnaire, p. 2)

She said that her parents, who struggled for acceptance in the beginning of their relationship many years ago, instilled in her a deep respect for everyone, an appreciation for diversity, and encouraged her to treat people well.

Reflecting on race issues in their educational experiences proved to be significant because participants described their mostly White elementary, middle, and high schools and colleges. Alex's elementary and middle schools were not diverse, but his high school was more diverse because students were bussed in from surrounding economically dissimilar neighborhoods. He remembered having only one non-White student in his advanced placement class. College, for Alex, was at an overwhelmingly White school in the Pacific Northwest. Beth remembered being incredibly shocked when, as a senior in high school, she recognized there were a very small number of African Americans in her entire graduating class of six hundred students. She stated, "It wasn't until I graduated that I realized that. So, I wonder if it's just-

somehow I wasn't taught to see race, even though there's controversy in that" (B, Interview #3, p. 14). Claire remembers being the only biracial student in her classes in elementary school, being aware of race in second grade when she had the only African American teacher in the school, and having all White friends in middle school and high school. In college, she took sociology classes and remembers discussing White privilege and critically examining institutions and structures which led to her becoming more critically aware. Danielle described first being aware of racial diversity in middle school because a few students were non-White. However, in high school, the population was much more diverse and she became more understanding of different races. In college, she studied abroad and her understandings of race and racial issues were challenged. Erin described attending a very large high school with over two thousand students. She then attended a large Catholic university in the Midwest and, although it was more diverse than her high school and suburb, it still had an overwhelmingly White student body.

Furthermore, participants had trouble describing themselves in the study because many of the participants did not primarily describe themselves as being White. Instead, they saw other characteristics like gender, class, or their professions as being their main identifiers. For example, Beth said her views on race changed because of her college experiences and teaching in an urban under-resourced school. Both experiences have caused her to question being White.

> It's hard for me to say that I'm better than someone else because I was born as a - I was White, but I do know that there's a reality that as a White person that I do have privilege. (B, Interview #1, p. 8)

Participants' personal understandings of race in their neighborhoods growing up and their educational experiences reveal how limited their experiences with racially dissimilar populations

were and how they were not educated about race issues. All of this information provides evidence that the participants were not able to racially define themselves by articulating exactly what it means to be White in their lives. Beth questioned whether she really was privileged and hesitantly acknowledged this reality.

> In all the books, I can tell you I'm privileged because I'm White. Do I often feel that I'm privileged? No, but I don't know if I would say that I'm privileged. It's a hard word. (B, Interview #1, p. 8)

Participants showed a lack of a thorough understanding of knowing themselves, and understanding their White privilege according to Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model.

Dimension III: Knowing my students. The third Dimension of Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model describes how White teachers know their students. Although not found in all responses in the study, at times, participants used language maintaining the dominant racial ideology. It is important to note the participants seemed to be unaware of using language that could be defined in these ways. Some of their descriptions were representative of and spoke to a lack of racial awareness because they had not critically examined race issues impacting how they know and view their students in Dimension III.

There were descriptions of deficit constructions of students, schools, and communities. Alex described how he knew about South Los Angeles from the media. "There was definitely an awareness of the area as where the riots occurred and the rap that began in that part of the city" (A, Interview #1). Participants also mentioned that they desired for students to have the same types of lives they had growing up. These comments did not include acknowledgement of over-

arching institutionalized systems at play or an awareness of potential negative aspects of those desires. Beth was aware of feeling like she was pushing these thoughts onto her students and it made her feel uncomfortable. “It was hard to not want the best, and hard not to want to help push them towards learning English or getting a better future” (B, Interview #1, p. 4). Beth said that she thought her students lacked both structure and consistency in their home lives.

Erin described how her students’ parents were uneducated, did not help students with their homework, and parented differently than her parents did when she was growing up (E, Interview #1). She also stated, “Their role models aren’t the role models that I had that led me to have big expectations for myself or that people expected of me” (E, Interview #1, p. 15). She described her students’ families by stating,

> Most of my kids have really great parents, just incapable of giving them the structure they need or incapable of helping them with what they need help on. But that’s parents’ and teachers’ jobs to work together to help with that stuff and make sure they get the help at home. (E, Interview #2, p. 7)

None of these descriptions of students’ families identify an awareness of larger systemic institutions at play. Also noticeable in participants’ responses was a desire for the students to have the same experiences they had when they were their students’ ages. These responses described deficit thinking because they placed a higher value on their own upbringings.

Participants also described a lack of racial awareness in their responses which is an essential part of Dimension III “knowing my students.” Beth mentioned not seeing race at her school. Instead, she saw cultural differences between herself and her students “through food and other things”(B, Interview #2). She most frequently described her own experiences growing up

in a family that had financial difficulties because she said she could relate to her students because of her economic situation growing up. She also stated,

> I'm very much in schools where race is a huge issue, yet I never thought about race. Or maybe it just seems taboo to talk about, but it's easier and gentler to talk about poverty. (B, Interview #3, p. 14)

These were all examples of how participants maintained their dominant racial ideologies and White privilege through their responses. Unknowingly, participants used language referring to deficit mentalities and understandings of students, families, and schools as well as White talk and a lack of racial awareness. They explained their views of students' families in ways that described a lack of awareness in understanding the full scope of racial influences on their students' lives. This awareness is a crucial part of Dimension III and was not evident in their responses dealing with how they know their students.

Therefore, this evidence does not reflect a deep understanding of White educators' racial identities' development as measured by Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model because they showed minimal evidence on Dimension I and no awareness of Dimensions II and III. Interestingly, participants seemed to act in ways characteristic of Dimension I without being able to specifically articulate these actions were connected to a thorough or well-developed understanding of race or racial identity. They showed an awareness of race in the initial and foundational Dimension by teaching in culturally aware and sensitive ways and advocating for students. However, they did not describe a need to act these ways because of institutionalized racism. It is commendable that White participants showed some evidence of racial identity development on their own and without well-developed racial identities. However, overall, their

lack of a true understanding of race issues and well-developed racial identities without any race education were evident. White participants had extremely limited critical understandings of their practices, their own racial identities, and their students' racially dissimilar identities throughout the study.

Lack of awareness of racial identity. The participants' responses did not overtly state that they were aware of their lack of racial awareness or racial identity development. They were not aware of what they did not know as a White educator in an urban under-resourced school. However, when made aware of the lack of attention given to, focus on, and awareness of race issues throughout this study, participants did express a desire for their racial identities to have been deepened because it would have helped them as White educators in urban under-resourced schools. If their racial identities had been deepened in the context of their schools, they would have been able to attribute their desire to teach to more than service and social justice, they would have differently described their goals for their students, and they would have had the language and historical knowledge to more easily discuss their urban under-resourced school realities with their families. Furthermore, if they had known about racial identity development, White participants would have known they had minimal evidence of Dimension I and were completely deficient in through understandings of Dimensions II and III.

First, by teaching at their urban under-resourced schools because of their strong desires for a career involving service and social justice, they did not express a need for their racial identities to be deepened. The fact that they connected their teaching roles as forms of service contributed to their lack of racial awareness and its consequences in their urban under-resourced schools.

Participants repeatedly described their reasons for or interest in teaching in urban under-resourced schools as connected to service, altruism, and social justice. They described experiences during which their families instilled a desire to serve, or exposed them to service at a young age. Thus, when participants described reasons why they were drawn to teaching in an urban under-resourced school, they addressed issues of serving and working for social justice. These responses did not address issues of racial identity awareness or a deep and critical understanding of their own positions as White teachers.

Second, participants' experiences at their schools continued to influence how they viewed their schools, jobs, colleagues, and students. Participants described needing to help their students, but these reflections, again, were not rooted in a well-developed racial identity. Beth stated, "So I got the best, so why don't these people deserve the best because if I want to help make a difference in the future, I think these people are going to need me more than anyone else" (B, Interview #1, p. 9). Claire described her experience and reason for being in education as largely attributed to liberation. "Education liberates our individual gifts and faculties, as we come to understand ourselves living in citizenship with others" (C, Questionnaire, p. 2). Danielle described her teaching and a big part of it being her encouragement of students to guide them, "to be loving agents to transform the world" (D, Questionnaire, p. 2). Erin said her desire to teach in her school becoming even stronger once she met the kids. She stated, "I think that's when I thought, I need to help" (E, Interview #1, p. 14).

Third, a deepened racial identity at their schools would have helped participants with the difficulties they faced in discussing their urban under-resourced school realities with family

members and friends. Their school experiences made it difficult for them to even share their perceptions because they came from mostly conservative families.

Alex expressed difficulties in talking about his experiences with people from home because his experiences have been drastically different than others in his family (A, Focus Group). Beth has also faced challenges in talking about the realities with her family. For instance, she did not tell her family that there were gunshots outside the school and lockdowns for safety because they did not want her to work in an unsafe area (B, Interview #1). She also avoids talking about race with her conservative family because they know Beth "will disagree with them based on her teaching experiences" (B, Interview #1). Claire similarly mentioned it is difficult for her to have conversations about race with her own conservative family members because there was a lot of racism within her dad's family growing up (C, Interview #1). Danielle also struggles to talk about her experiences with her family. She stated,

> My family has definitely not taught me more about it, in fact, I think they're really set in their own ways and their own beliefs and would completely disagree or disregard anything that I were to bring up. They would respond with a very White supremacist attitude. So, I often find I live in two different worlds. The world of my family and the much larger world outside of them. (D, Interview #2, p. 2)

These participants struggled to share their experiences and perceptions of race and racism in urban under-resourced schools with their families. They expressed discomfort in navigating these difficult conversations because they struggled to make sense of their experiences.

Although participants subconsciously took it upon themselves to act as culturally sensitive and aware educators and advocates for students, elements of Dimension I, they did not

convey a thorough understanding of Dimensions II and III. These actions and work for transformation suggests that part of their racial identities were minimally deepened by their experiences at their urban under-resourced schools. This awareness occurred on a subconscious level because they still did not use the vocabulary and language associated with a critical and comprehensive understanding of their racial identities. However, according to Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model, these White educators would not be categorized as having well-developed racial identities or being racially conscious.

Participants' perceptions as study participants. The discussions and thoughts unearthed by the interviews, journal entries, observations, and focus group led to mixed feelings among the participants. Participants divulged that they felt both grateful and frustrated by the fact that this study raised critical race issues they had not previously addressed or reflected upon in their teaching careers at urban under-resourced schools.

Gratitude. Beth described being thankful for being able to tell her story anonymously in hopes that it would help future teachers, alternative teacher education programs, and urban under-resourced schools (B, Questionnaire, p. 2). She was also thankful to be able to speak her mind on issues throughout the study, go through the progression as she was asked to share her thoughts, and to make connections (B, Interview #1). Lastly, she stated,

> I found it challenging because I never think about it, but it wasn't uncomfortable. It was kind of like, even that last question, I've even reflected. It made me think. I enjoyed the journey because I enjoyed the connections I never made. (B, Interview #3, p. 14)

Danielle felt intrigued by participating in the study. She said,

> I was unaware of the deep self-reflection that would evolve from simply participating in interviews and focus group discussions. Through the process, I found myself becoming more intrigued by the research. I was quickly captivated and constantly thinking about race. It seemed like each day I would reflect on a memory or an experience. In addition, I was aware of it in my current day-to-day experiences. (D, Journal #3, p. 1)

Erin stated that she enjoyed participating in the study. "I enjoyed the journey because I think it helps me comprehend what I experience. I think it helped me verbalize it because I don't talk about it with most people" (E, Focus Group, p. 18).

Frustration. Alex expressed frustration about the personal questions that were raised for him by his participation in this study.

> I definitely thought about it more, and I guess I never put that much emphasis on race and the racial implications of my teaching, how it impacted me. So, I've thought about that a lot more. I'm still unsure as to where it left me, and I guess this is the way with most things in teaching; I always end up with more questions than I did answers. (A, Interview #3, p. 10)

Beth was unsure what to think about how not addressing or seeing things as clearly before her participation in the study. "It's kind of funny just talking about the things that I had no idea I covered up" (B, Interview #2, p. 18). She also expressed how it was difficult for her at times because she did not have the answers (B, Interview #3, p. 14). In fact, during the focus group, Beth mentioned the difficulty of identifying what role race issues played because she had always seen them as financial and socio-economic issues affecting her students, their families, and

schools (B, Focus Group, p. 12). Danielle expressed that her participation has enabled her to realize the truth. She mentioned,

> That is a challenge to know that there is a world out there that every child is part of and every teacher is dedicated to and there are questions looming that are not answered and are leaving teachers without the answers that they need to do their jobs. I find great confusion in why a field as important as education lacks those. (D, Interview #1, p. 12)

She further stated,

> Yet it is an area that is sensitive because it is not talked about. As a 25 year old educated female, it is embarrassing that I do not feel confident, comfortable or equipped to discuss race or racial issues with myself, my family, my peers or my students. (D, Journal #3, p. 2)

Lastly, Erin described how she was shocked that it had not been addressed at some point in her alternative teacher education program (E, Interview #2).

The gratitude and frustration expressed by participants was noteworthy because they so openly shared their thoughts on how participating in this study challenged them to address issues of race they had not previously entertained or reflected on within the context of their urban under-resourced schools.

Data Relationships

Data collected through interviews, journal entries, observations, and the focus group, was analyzed across all participants' responses. Data was organized into themes and sub-themes based on similarities in what was said, written, and observed. Then, themes and sub-themes were grouped based on what data provided insights on or answered which research question. Some

unevenness in participants' responses occurred due to the fact that some participants frequently commented on certain themes and sub-themes, while other participants only briefly mentioned similar opinions about their experiences. However, all qualitative data is meaningful and has been reported in this study because all data informed my understanding of how White graduates of alternative teacher education programs perceive race and racism in their urban under-resourced schools, the impact of their alternative teacher education programs on their racial identities, and their abilities to deepen their racial identities in the context of their urban under-resourced schools.

Many themes and sub-themes were identified from the data. All of the data responses based on similarities of what was said, written, and observed. It is important to note that even responses only mentioned by one participant have been included. Table 3 includes the identified themes and sub-themes.

Table 3

Themes and Sub-Themes

Participants' Personal Understandings of Race Throughout their Educational Backgrounds
Participants' Personal Understanding of and Race Growing Up
Participants' Understanding of Service, Altruism, and Social Justice
Alternative Teacher Education Program Challenges
Recommendations for Alternative Teacher Education Programs Based on Participants' Experiences
Participants' Understandings of Student Realities
Participants' Understandings of Realities They Experience as Teachers
Participants' Understandings of Their Realities Working with Colleagues
Participants' Understandings of Their Own Difficulties Talking about Their Experiences with Others
Participants' Questioning Race in His/Her Own Life
Participants' Questioning Race as a Teacher Based on Experience at Their Urban Under-Resourced Schools
Culturally Aware, Sensitive, and Racially Aware Educators

Advocacy with Students, Parents, and Colleagues at Their Urban Under-Resourced Schools
Participants' Feelings on Personal Cost, Processing, and Impact of Teaching in Urban Under-Resourced Schools
Participants' Understandings of Their Experiences with Race Growing up in Their Home Towns/Suburbs
Participants' Understandings of Learning about Race Growing Up
Participants' Current Understandings of Race
Participants' Education and Exposure to Service, Altruism, and Social Justice by Family
Alternative Teacher Education Programs' Requirements
Education on Race Issues in Alternative Teacher Education Programs
Advantages and Support in Alternative Teacher Education Programs
Demographics of Participants' Urban Under-Resourced Schools
Participants' Perceptions of Poverty in Their Urban Under-Resourced Schools
Participants' Perceptions of Socio-Economic Status in Their Urban Under-Resourced Schools
Participants' Perceptions of Culture in Their Urban Under-Resourced Schools
Participants' Questioning of Race and Awareness of Privilege
Participants' Advocacy at School
Participants' Advocacy with Colleagues
Participants' Advocacy with Education System
Participants' Deficit Construction of Schools and Families
Participants' White Talk and Protection of Whiteness
Participants' Lack of Racial Awareness
Participants' Expression of Gratitude
Participants' Expression of Frustration and Uncertainty
Participants' Understanding of Race and Awareness of Privilege
Participants' Advocacy Through Leadership and Mentoring
Participants' Advocacy in School Neighborhood
Participants' Advocacy with His or Her Own Family and Friends
Participants' Advocacy in Alternative Teacher Education Programs
Participants' Descriptions of Difficulties Being an Advocate
Participants' Personal Cost, Processing, and Impact Recommendations for Colleagues
Participants' Future Career Plans in Education
Participants' Maintenance of Dominant Racial Ideologies Through Life Experiences as an Outsider
Participants' Background Information and Reasons for Participating in Study
Participants' Level of Comfort Discussing Race
Participants' Openness in Being Observed

Analysis of the data, by grouping participants' similar responses together, allowed me to further understand the story participants told to me through interviews, journal entries, observations, and the focus group. Their stories emerged from the data and answered the research questions.

Conclusion

White graduates of alternative teacher education programs teaching in urban under-resourced schools provided data for this study through interviews, journal entries, observations, and a focus group. Their insightful responses depicting their experiences as White teachers with racially dissimilar students informed and answered the three research questions.

First, participants did perceive visible racial differences between themselves and their students. However, participants did not perceive race or racism as inhibitors in their students' lives at urban under-resourced schools. Instead, they strongly perceived and described poverty and cultural differences between themselves and their students. They did not critically perceive ways race was part of their experiences at urban under-resourced schools. Participants' awareness of the implications and effects of race as a White educator teaching a racially dissimilar student population at urban under-resourced schools went unnoticed and, therefore, unexamined.

Second, participants described the impact of their alternative teacher education programs on their racial identity development as being negligent. They expressed how they were exposed to very little critical coursework dealing with race issues, felt unprepared as new teachers, and have struggled to process their experiences in urban under-resourced schools. Participants also suggested they would have greatly benefited if this crucial knowledge had been prioritized and critically addressed by their alternative teacher education programs.

Third, participants perceived their abilities to deepen their racial identities in the context of their urban under-resourced schools as minimal. In fact, they showed minimal evidence in Dimension I of having a developed racial identity. However, participants seemed to

subconsciously help students in various ways. Teachers did what they were capable of doing and deemed necessary for students to improve their lives. In addition, there was no evidence describing the participants as acutely aware of knowing them selves or their students per the criterion in Dimensions II and III of Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model. Therefore, participants were found to be critically unaware of their racial identities or of a desire to become critically aware by developing their racial identities. The stories and experiences told to me by the White participants did not suggest their understandings of race and racism or their racial identities had been deepened in the context of either their alternative teacher education programs or their urban under-resourced schools.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This study found that stories told by White graduates of alternative teacher education programs teaching in urban under-resourced schools provided extensive evidence of their lack of racial identity awareness and critical awareness of race issues. This is particularly significant given the fact that the number of White educators in alternative teacher education programs continues to grow (Nieto, 2009). In order for alternative teacher education programs to effectively train and prepare teachers to educate racially dissimilar students, White educators must 1) be critically educated on race issues in order to prevent the maintenance of the cycle of racism, 2) acknowledge race and its consequences, and 3) become adequately prepared for teaching placements in urban under-resourced school classrooms. Furthermore, in order to remedy the fact that these White educators appeared devoid of critical racial awareness, I strongly recommend alternative teacher education programs provide opportunities for White teachers to see and understand race, provide necessary support systems to process their experiences, and implement Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model. Critical Race Theory, Critical White Studies, and Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model all provided theoretical lenses through which the data has been analyzed.

Well-Intentioned Educators

Despite their lack of racial identity awareness, all of the participants were extremely well-intentioned and passionate educators. They were excited to work hard and do as much as they could for their racially dissimilar students and urban under-resourced schools. All the White

educators in this study were deeply committed educators, hard working, and sensitive educators of racially dissimilar students. In addition, they were extremely honest when describing their practices, upbringings, and experiences with students and families in urban under-resourced schools.

Participants' true desires to provide the best possible education for their students was remarkable and commendable given their lack of awareness and knowledge of race issues. A lot of their actions were self-identified, self-initiated, and taken on without anyone else's insistence or assistance. Participants also described how they acted in ways they thought were best and most appropriate for students. Alex, for example, chose to choose more challenging curriculum for his high school students that was more similar to what students nationwide and not in urban under-resourced schools were reading. Beth worked diligently to make sure all students who needed testing were signed up for evaluation. Claire ensured students' cultures were validated and represented in her classroom. Danielle utilized various outside resources in order to teach in culturally sensitive ways. Erin ensured she provided students with materials that were appropriate for their developmental and academic levels. All participants described making their own modifications inside their classrooms to meet the students' needs of their students in urban under-resourced schools. Yet, despite this good work, and good intentions, participants' lack of racial awareness was evident.

Interestingly, it was very apparent that the two participants who had spent more time with racially dissimilar populations and had been exposed or personally interested in seeking out answers to race questions on their own, had more well-developed racial identities. Support, therefore, for more time with racially dissimilar populations and critical race coursework, leads

me to believe the incorporation of Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model would be effective in assisting alternative teacher education programs with the education and guidance of White educators towards racial identity development and racial consciousness.

However, all White participants were *unable* to speak of the extensive breadth, impact, and effects of race on racially dissimilar students in urban under-resourced schools. Race, even if mentioned as a factor at play in our society and in students' lives, was not described by any participants in ways that represented a firm understanding of institutionalized racism or race issues in urban under-resourced schools. I, too, do not have a well-developed racial identity and am not racially conscious due the fact that I have had very little formal exposure to critical race content outside of research for this study. The participants and myself have extremely limited understandings of race because of our White privilege and lack of exposure to critical race content.

Therefore, it is essential at the outset to firmly state that the goal of this study was not to point fingers at the White participants or to make any judgments based on their open and sincere responses and opinions. These participants were negligent in their thorough understandings of race because our society constantly conditions Whites to remain blinded from critically examining or questioning race. As Whites, we have not had to address issues of race because we benefit from an institutionalized racism that continues to be perpetuated. White participants' voices can critically inform alternative teacher education programs which can equip future White teachers entering urban under-resourced schools with greater racial awareness as they begin the process of life-long reflective racial identity development.

Furthermore, as Critical Race Theory, Critical White Studies, and Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model all suggest, a well-developed understanding of race along with its privilege, limitations, and effects is an on-going and life-long process. This does not happen overnight and must be understood in a realistic timeframe. Therefore, it is inappropriate to believe participants or I, as the researcher, could have already been at a level of well-developed critical race consciousness. These theories, which have provided the theoretical lenses for this study, are embedded throughout the discussion of the findings in order to critically contextualize the findings on White educators from alternative teacher education programs teaching racially dissimilar students in urban under-resourced schools.

Discussion of Findings

Analysis of all data from this study identified evidence of White graduates' of alternative teacher education programs perceptions of race and racism in their urban under-resourced schools, the impact of their urban under-resourced schools, and the impact of their alternative teacher education programs on their racial identities. Examination of findings and existing research on similar topics in the field of education has provided insights on this study's findings.

Uneven Perceptions of Race and Racism

Participants unevenly perceived race and racism through analysis of their spoken, written, and observed data. Participants did notice racial differences between themselves, Whites, and their students, African Americans and/or Latinos. They recognized the visible and apparent racial differences based on their dissimilar skin colors between themselves and their students.

However, participants did not perceive race as positively affecting their own lives or negatively inhibiting their non-White students' lives. For example, Alex described his Whiteness

as being a, “conglomeration of bits and pieces that no body, at least in the United States, is tied to” because he did not feel a strong identity associated with his race (A, Interview #2, p. 1). He further stated being White does not mean that much to him as, “there was nothing I could do to change the fact that my race afforded me opportunities that were not available to others” (A, Journal #1, p. 1). There is an expressed lack of racial awareness expressed in his opinions. He felt powerless and helpless in addressing race realities. This clearly speaks to the fact that participants did not feel the need to interrogate race. In fact, all participants did not describe race as weighted, inhibiting, privileging, or requiring of critical interrogation. Also, they did not describe knowledge of institutionalized racism or a deeper understanding of critical race issues and their complexities.

Furthermore, due to the fact that participants only perceived the visible race differences between themselves and their students and that knowledge of critical race issues was not expressed, participants did not perceive racism. They were frequently asked about race and racism, but did not think of their own race as needing more interrogation, and thus, did not comment on racism or feel that it was an issue. Leonardo (2004) states, “Since very few whites exist who actually believe they are racist, then basically no one is racist and racism disappears more quickly than we can describe it” (p. 144). They definitely did not describe themselves as being racists, by using racist terms, or as contributing to racism because of their White privilege. In fact, one participant indicated, “there was nothing I could do to change the fact that my race afforded me opportunities that were not available to others.” Racism, therefore, was not discussed because they did not feel race to be an issue worthy of critical interrogation in their own lives or students’ lives. Throughout the interviews, journal entries, observations, and focus

group, participants did not express or perceive a deep understanding of race or racism. This evidence exemplifies the need for White teachers to have an understanding of the power of race and racism in our society. A critically internalized and well-developed racial identity could have a significant impact on White teachers educating racially dissimilar students in urban-under resourced schools.

As Critical Race theory states, systemic racism in our society needs to be addressed in order to create more equitable educational experiences for all students (Parker, 2003; Taylor, 1999). Education should expose racism and it must be named in order for social justice to occur (Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 1995; Solorzano & Ornelas, 2004). Critical White studies encourages the examination of White educators teaching in non-White schools in order to make race visible to this privileged group (King, 1991). Race must be perceived and it needs to be embedded as an ongoing process for Whites (Helfand, 2009). Howard's Dimensions encourage Whites to introspectively and critically examine their own lives and privilege in relation to their students in urban under-resourced schools. This model can assist White teachers in perceiving the complexities of race in our society, in their lives, and in their students' lives. This deep excavation of white identity had not happened and was not likely to happen to the participants of this study. They received neither the curriculum nor the tools to begin this process.

Deflecting Race: Participants

Participants saw poverty and culture as being significant inhibitors to student success, and deflected conversations about race onto these other factors. In addition, alternative teacher education programs were identified as not having assisted them in becoming race conscious. Blaming became a way that teachers dealt with their lack of racial awareness. Participants placed

responsibility for failing to have addressed race issues on alternative teacher education programs. This deflection onto alternative teacher education programs evaded further discussion and reflection on participants' personal thoughts about their responsibilities to critically address race. It allowed participants to avoid reasons why race issues were continuing to be deflected.

Only one participant questioned participation in an alternative teacher education program. It was interesting that more participants did not raise questions of themselves involving their participation in these programs. They willingly deferred to the programs, as I did, without speaking up for the inclusion and prioritization of race issues. In retrospect, participants had little difficulty identifying how their alternative teacher education programs failed to adequately educate them about race issues. However, while they were in their programs, it was not on the radars of four out of five participants. There was no impetus for the majority of participants to address this issue while in their programs.

As Whites, we are able to strategically deflect race whenever we want and not address race issues. We are able to ignore the ways White privilege manifests itself and benefits us each day. As McIntosh (1988) states, Whites carry around "invisible knapsacks" full of privileges and are rarely challenged to explore our privileged situations. Furthermore, we are socially encouraged to not question or discuss race. Participants stated and knew they were part of the White race, but were not aware of the extent of White privilege. While their few comments on race described a minimal awareness, participants did not use racially and critically aware race language or provide evidence of a well-developed racial identity. More specifically, references to race issues or the impact of race were not embedded throughout their responses and there was very little depth to their comments on race. I spent hours with each participant and asked

numerous questions about race and racism. Throughout all that time, participants minimally described race. Also, racially aware language, language that demonstrates a developed racial identity or a growing racial consciousness, is different than what was shared through interviews, journal entries, observations, and the focus group.

In this study, participants' privilege remained unquestioned in their lives until they were asked to describe experiences with race. Then, upon further reflection, poverty and culture alone did not fully provide the complete story or all the answers to questions raised as White teachers of racially dissimilar students in urban under-resourced schools. The ability of White teachers to ignore race issues without consequence is detrimental to the students they teach. Deflection of race by lacking ownership and the responsibility to take action continues to benefit White teachers and oppress non-White students in urban under-resourced schools. However, a key factor in this study was the positionality of the researcher in the interrogation – which perhaps allowed participants to continue their deflection of race onto other external factors.

Deflecting Race: Researcher

As I continued to reflect on my findings, I realized something deeper was going on in me, as together, for the first time, the participants and I explored this new terrain by discussing race. As a White researcher, I did not pressure them to delve more deeply into their understandings of race issues or personal responsibility. I neglected to continue questioning them about why they did not comment more frequently on race or actively seek answers to obvious racial differences for themselves. Instead, I now realize, I unknowingly went right into asking them about their alternative teacher education programs without probing them to more critically and deeply reflect on their experiences, race issues, or personal accountability. Therefore, as the researcher, I

enabled them to deflect race because this had also been my experience and this lens, my White privilege, allowed for this to occur without question.

It was my responsibility, as the researcher, to bridge this now apparent gap in the research. Due to my own lack of a fully developed racial identity and as one who benefits from race, it was overlooked and participants were not further questioned on their personal involvement in perpetuating racism. The teachers and I did not have the ability to see race, its implications, or our responsibilities due to our White privilege. Conveniently, this encouraged blaming and made me complicit in that "blaming" construct.

My White privilege enabled me to deny the personal responsibility associated with being White. We all, the participants and I, noticed racial differences the moment we entered our urban under-resourced school communities, yet we all failed to actively seek out honest answers to racial questions, frustrations, overwhelming feelings, and differences we saw. We all could have read articles, informed ourselves, or demanded alternative teacher education programs address race issues. None of us took the next step. Consequently, we all benefited from the privilege of not having to "go there." Neither alternative teacher education programs, graduate coursework, administrations at our urban under-resourced schools, nor our undeveloped racial identities forced or challenged us to seek out answers to the glaring racial dissimilarities between ourselves and our students. Both the participants and I were all able to label other reasons besides race without consequence.

It is evident that few White teachers are going to critically address race issues and seek answers on their own. Without this necessary introspection, critical examination, and

development of their racial identities, White educators will continue to blindly avoid race issues with racially dissimilar students in urban under-resourced schools.

Maintaining the Cycle of Racism

Findings from my study demonstrated that participants unknowingly perpetuated and maintained the cycle of racism as White educators in urban under-resourced schools. This occurred for various reasons. It is essential to note that participants were unaware of the ways they supported institutionalized racism. Perpetuation of White privilege and racism is an extremely common occurrence that is repeatedly not interrogated in our society (Mazzei, 1997). Minimal contact with racially dissimilar populations, color blind understandings of their experiences in urban under-resourced schools, a severe lack of critical coursework, and difficulties processing their experiences were part of the White participants' experiences and are all elements which can perpetuate and maintain the cycle of racism. These elements will now be explored in detail.

Minimal contact with racially dissimilar populations. Participants expressed their limited contact with non-White racially dissimilar populations numerous times through all forms of data collection. They all grew-up in predominantly White suburban communities and attended schools, high schools, and colleges that were not racially diverse. Also, their predominantly White experiences did not provide them with opportunities to understand the experiences of African Americans and Latinos throughout their lives that made their teaching experiences more difficult than they had anticipated. There was a plethora of evidence describing ways participants did not critically understand their own racialized upbringings. They did not meet the criteria for Dimension II of Howard's (2006) Racial Identity model, "Knowing your self." The evidence

detailed in Chapter 4 suggests that White participants of racially dissimilar students in urban under-resourced schools were not racially aware of their own lives and were unconscious of being White and what that means in our society (Mazzei, 1997). The participants in my study exhibited many difficulties because they had never been challenged to critically examine their own selves and backgrounds. This was evident in participants' responses. White participants did not feel "privileged" and were reluctant to talk about race with their students. It was clear that the participants of the study were not equipped to deal with race issues in their schools. Self-conscious and racially aware White teachers are not the norm (Perry, 1997). In order for participants to be able to understand and work to address race issues with their students and urban under-resourced schools, they must have a thorough and critical understanding of their experiences and their roles in perpetuating racism. My participants did not. Solomon, Portelli, Daniel, and Campbell (2005) assert:

> The continued over-representation of white, female, middle class and heterosexual bodies within faculties clearly belies the increased minority representation in the schools. Therefore, it becomes increasingly important to have teacher candidates explore their personal attitudes and understandings of the ways in which their racial ascription and social positioning inform their actual practices and interactions with students. (p. 149)

My research supports the notion that it is extremely important for White teacher candidates to explore their personal attitudes toward race and this is not currently occurring in alternative teacher education programs (Carr & Lund, 2009).

Further, White teachers were not aware of the lived experiences of racially dissimilar populations because they had not needed to learn about them throughout their lives. The

evidence detailed in Chapter 4 suggests that White educators were not racially aware of their racial identities with regards to how they described their experiences with and knowledge of their students. White teachers experienced difficulties understanding students' lives in their urban under-resourced schools and, as that understanding developed, it often lacked a critical understanding of our racialized society. In fact, teachers wanted students to have the lives and experiences that they had enjoyed as children, dismissing the rich cultural heritage and racial identity which their students already possessed. Gordon (2005) corroborates this finding by suggesting that White teachers perpetuate White privilege by teaching in the ways they were taught (Gordon, 2005). And because of this lack of racial consciousness, White teachers resort to teaching students to attain White "standards" (Bergerson, 2003; Berry et al., 2008).

Participants described their experiences in urban under-resourced schools as quite shocking due to the fact that these experiences were extremely dissimilar to their own experiences growing up and in education. Student experiences must be understood (Jackson & Wasson, 2003) and students' and schools' realities repeatedly posed challenging questions for these White participants as they struggled to understand their teaching experiences that were drastically different than their own lives. Participants' experiences also included difficulties processing the appearances of school communities, understanding safety concerns, and students' home lives. This disconnect with their students' lives is, in part, responsible for these White educators maintaining the cycle of racism.

Participants were largely unaware of how to respond given the overwhelming, and drastically different student and school community experiences they were exposed to as White educators. Therefore, these racial differences and issues, issues that are the least acceptable to

discuss in our society, remained unsettled because there were no answers provided from their alternative teacher education programs or urban under-resourced schools. Failing to see institutional racism as a factor in students' lives prevented White teachers from addressing the real issues. Vaught and Castagno (2008) assert, "Unable to recognize that White racial power permeates every institution, teachers fail to understand how race and racism inform low student achievement, among other factors" (p. 101). The dangerous mismatch, between White teachers and racially dissimilar students, continued to be perpetuated without any critical understanding of racism.

Furthermore, this lack of awareness perpetuates the cycle of racism because race is such a weighted issue in our society. Personally, not ever having been challenged to address issues of race in my own life or in students' lives, I was acutely aware of being thought of as a racist if I attempted to "go there" in conversations, especially about racially dissimilar students. At no time in my alternative teacher education experience was I challenged to engage in that conversation or to develop my racial identity as a White teacher. I definitely had a fear of what others would think or say and because of that feeling, critical race issues at play in my urban under-resourced school and interactions with racially dissimilar students went unaddressed in my alternative teacher education program even though I had such little contact with racially dissimilar populations throughout my life. The participants in my study had surprisingly similar experiences. The fact that White educators are teaching racially dissimilar students in urban under-resourced schools, or that this is such a glaring race issue in need of being critically addressed, is not an integral part of alternative teacher education programs.

Unprepared educators. Participants also expressed the fact that learning this "essential knowledge" about their racially dissimilar students "on the job" was infuriating because their alternative teacher education programs knew these realities existed and would drastically impact their teaching. It did not have to be as difficult of an adjustment for White teachers or, most importantly, for their racially dissimilar students who had unknowledgeable teachers who lacked a realistic understanding of their home lives, neighborhoods, and experiences.

Participants felt they could have been more prepared if alternative teacher education programs had prioritized discussions on race in their own lives and in students' lives. In fact, some participants believed information that could have easily been shared based on other White educators' experiences was actually "withheld" from them. Urban under-resourced school realities and teachers' racial identities should be exposed and interrogated through a comprehensive and critical examination of the impacts of race on students, families, communities, and the systemic reasons behind the achievement gap prior to and during participants' entry into these schools, especially since there is evidence these White educators are being inadequately prepared for urban under-resourced schools (Berry et al., 2008; Grossman & Loeb, 2008). Alternative teacher education programs cannot withhold this knowledge from participants while they focus on effective teaching strategies.

Authentic and real-world interactions with racially dissimilar populations could enhance teachers' abilities to critically understand their own lives and the lives of their students. Meaningful time spent with racially dissimilar populations could provide White teachers with the added knowledge of students' realities and schools' realities prior to entering urban under-resourced schools. These teachers must be well equipped to enter into racially dissimilar

communities with well-developed and critical understandings of their racial identities so they do not perpetuate the cycle of racism.

Color blind educators. Participants also described the lack of critical race coursework in alternative teacher education programs. Due to the fact that participants were not exposed to White studies classes and race issues were not prioritized in participants' alternative teacher education programs, they did not perceive race issues in their urban under-resourced schools as a significant factor, and adopted colorblindness as method of addressing race. Gordon (2005) suggests that Whites have the ability to remove themselves from having to address race and are prevented from seeing the facts. Irvine asserts that white teachers do not "see, hear, or speak" of race in their experiences (Irvine, 2003, p. 78). The White participants in this study corroborated these assertions. They were color blind, and this blindness led to negative consequences for the teachers such as having difficulties understanding student realities. These difficulties included not understanding students' late homework, parent difficulties attending meetings, students' disruptive home lives, and communities negatively impacted by violence and gangs.

Poverty and cultural differences. Participants knew they were racially dissimilar from their non-White students, but did not see race as an impediment or negatively affecting their non-White student populations. Race was not on their radars. Instead, they saw a lack of resources, the effects of poverty, and cultural differences as inhibitors to students and their families. These included students' financial difficulties, lack of access to resources, crowded living accommodations, and single parent families. Other factors they attributed to student deficits included parents who only spoke Spanish, had minimal education levels, worked multiple jobs, and had difficulties being available to teachers. Some teachers described parents who exhibited

different forms of child rearing, and different goals for their children than their parents had for them, not recognizing that they were using their own life experience as a template for their expectations of their students. The failure of participants to identify race as an inhibitor to students and their families, continues to maintain the cycle of racism because they continue to reinforce the existing power difference between White teachers and racially dissimilar students. The racial mismatch between White teachers and non-White students was evident because participants expressed desires for their students to have the experiences they had had growing up.

In addition, poverty and cultural differences were easier and safer for participants to see and name because they were so prevalent in urban under-resourced schools and are far more acceptable to discuss in our society. These White educators entered urban under-resourced schools without being challenged to "go there" by critically addressing race issues. Participants did not believe they were contributing to existing race systems by neglecting to see race in their urban under-resourced schools. Vaught and Castagno (2008) similarly found,

> Because culture was used in place of race in part to individualize the structural problem of racialized achievement and cast it as the isolated struggles of individual teachers working with 'different' students, the racialized structural barriers that informed, maintained, and entrenched individual practice went unnoticed. Focusing on culture provides a way to deflect power. (p. 103)

Without being able to actively identify race as an oppressive and discriminatory factor in the lives of their students, White teachers both removed themselves from being responsible for their part in supporting racist systems and failed to honestly see the true reasons contributing to

students' low academic achievement and such drastically different non-White life experiences. Solomon et al. (2005) corroborate this as well when they assert that,

> The continued failure to implicate Whiteness in discussion of societal change enables the teacher candidates to effectively remove themselves from the change process, thereby re-entrenching the normalcy and centrality of Whiteness and White reality systems. This enables White privilege and dominance to remain unchecked and unchallenged. (p. 159)

Racism, therefore, can be perpetuated when White teachers fail to address race issues. It is unacceptable for White teachers to be silent on issues of race because silence fails to recognize and value students' lives (Lipman, 1998; McIntyre, 1997).

> Such an attitude, however well-intended, fails to recognize the radically different lived experiences of others who know first-hand the realities of inequity and racism. Teachers who adopt a colour-blind philosophy are doing a disservice to their students by ignoring the political and historical forces that shape educational access, opportunity and advantage. Adopting such a position may feel comforting and safe, but denying local and global histories of oppression and exclusion ultimately serves to perpetuate existing inequities. (De Freitas & McAuley, 2008, p. 431)

Participants played it "safe" as De Freitas & McAuley (2008) suggest above, and thus race was not critically interrogated in the participants' classrooms or schools. Moreover, race was not critically addressed in their alternative teacher education programs, and these programs have extremely large numbers of White educators entering non-White urban under-resourced schools. White educators are not able to come to the realization that this critical race awareness is needed as a teacher in an urban under-resourced school due to their own upbringings and lack of

exposure to White studies (Choi, 2008). These White teachers represent the exact population most in need of racial awareness through racial identity development and most in need of the ability to critically address race. Denying race assumes an equal playing field for all students, which is clearly not the case (Blaisdell, 2005). The failure of participants to see the implications of our racialized society and their intricate link to the lives of racially dissimilar students is unacceptable and should be the job of alternative teacher education programs to remedy.

Critical coursework. Study participants also indicated that they were not exposed to coursework that would have equipped them with an understanding of critical race issues. In fact, they took minimal coursework exposing them to race issues and these courses were sporadically located within their two-year coursework. No participants described entire courses addressing White privilege or White racial identity development. In addition, courses mentioned that described race at some point did not build upon each other by reinforcing content learned in previous classes or critically address their experiences in urban under-resourced schools. Also, participants did not frequently discuss race issues and were not challenged to reflect upon their experiences with race throughout their alternative teacher education programs. They described their discussions with me as one of the only times that they had been asked to address race issues. Race issues must become part of the dialogue by being prioritized and embedded into every aspect of the alternative teacher education program in order for White participants to break the cycle of racism. A lack of critical coursework on race issues maintains existing racialized systems because they are not unexamined in graduate school classrooms. Effective teacher preparation must include exposure to critical race issues in the context of racially dissimilar students and urban under-resourced schools. Moreover, White educators must be exposed to

critical race awareness prior to entering the classroom and this is the responsibility of alternative teacher education programs (Hill-Jackson & Lewis, 2010).

Deficit mentality. The racial awareness language and knowledge needed was not evident in participants' responses. Instead, racially dominant language was used and supported existing racial constructs without participants even knowing they were speaking in hierarchical ways. Participants were unable to critically examine the impact and weight of their responses and were unaware of having a deficit mentality. Furthermore, participants' language included references to their own backgrounds and experiences they had growing up. There was a desire for White teachers to "give students the experiences they had" and to "bring them up to their level." These blaming comments described a deficit mentality and suggested ways to bring students up to a higher academic and proficiency level because teachers believed that students' experiences, families, and urban under-resourced communities were deficient. McIntyre (1997) states,

> Oftentimes, their [White teachers] discussions resonate with an ideology of separateness and a perspective that intimates that 'difference is deficient.' The conversations that took place in our group sessions suggest that these participants have had very little-if any-opportunity to 'talk *with*' the Other. (p. 135)

Unknowingly, participants used language referring to deficit understandings of students, families, and schools as well as White talk, characterizing their students as "Other." White participants expressed frustration with parents who had dissimilar parenting skills from their own parents and school communities were identified as not having many good role models for students. Participants lacked a realistic understanding of their students' lives and the urban under-resourced communities, and a lack of exposure to critical coursework was in part

responsible for this outcome. This lack of understanding led to blaming and criticism of parents and communities. Picower (2009) affirms this finding:

> Because the perception was that the problems the students faced were situated solely in their presumably problematic home lives, rather than in institutional racism, there would be no need for teachers to examine the ways in which race may be playing a role in students' lives or their own complicity in the cycle of racism. This allowed participants to continue to construct people of color as deficient and to place the blame of educational failure on communities of color rather than on the institutions that are inequitably serving them. (p. 198)

I found many similarities between participants' experiences and my own. I, too, was exposed to very little critical coursework that contributed to my unknowing perpetuation of the cycle of racism as a White teacher. I made comparisons between my students' upbringings and my own upbringing while definitely attributing a higher value to mine. On many occasions, I taught in ways that were similar to my educational experiences in an attempt to do what I thought was correct which was to bring students to a "higher" level – my level – of educational expectations and standards. Without being able to name institutionalized racism or my role in perpetuating it prior to my research, I resorted to naming factors drastically different than my own, such as differences in parent involvement, as the culprits and contributing factors to the difficult realities students faced. I was completely unaware of my racial identity or the deficit mentality I used to answer the questions I had about the differences I noticed. This is the situation that the participants in my study faced as well. Pennington (2007) similarly had a participant state that,

> Our identities as privileged teachers did not force us to explore the role we played in the institution of the school that mimicked the roles we played in the larger society. Roles were designed to maintain our position of power that lacked any mechanism for empowerment of the families and children. Our ritualistic attention to narrating their lives in reference to our own was not disrupted at all in the school or during the university coursework experiences. (p. 99)

Participants had the same experiences because they were not required to address institutionalized racism, identify their roles and racial identities that were formed to perpetuate it, or act within their alternative teacher education programs or urban under-resourced schools to dismantle it.

Unknowingly, my actions and those of the participants were completely devoid of a critical understanding of White race, the impact we were having on racially dissimilar students, or a thorough understanding of our inherent support of hierarchical race relationships. Ultimately, White educators are at fault for not having critical race awareness and true understandings of the effects of race. However, in many cases, White educators have walked blindly into urban under-resourced school teaching positions with racially dissimilar students without necessary, honest, and critical race knowledge. McIntyre (1997) noticed similar findings because her White participants became very confused and anxious when they realized they did not have a critical understanding and know everything they should know about their own lives and students' lives. She describes her participants:

> They saw themselves as committed individuals, having good parents, good values, a good education, and a good sense of what is expected of them as teachers. In contrast, they saw students of color as not having - as somehow deficient. These perceptions provoked

> unsettling feelings for the participants that further reinforced the notion that the remedy for fixing racism in the classroom was to 'share the wealth'. (p. 121)

Participants in my study felt exactly the same way. They felt that they had had good parents, good values, and a good education. With all good intentions they wanted for their students what they had experienced; they did want to "share the wealth." And they honestly did not know they lacked a thorough understanding of race issues or a deficit mentality that should have been critically interrogated by critical coursework in alternative teacher education programs.

Difficulties processing experiences. Due to the fact that White participants did not have previous extended experiences with racially dissimilar populations and were not exposed to critical coursework on race issues, they had very difficult times processing their experiences in urban under-resourced schools. Not having the vocabulary to correctly identify what they were witnessing, an understanding of the implications of institutionalized racism, or an awareness of their roles in being able to work against perpetuating racism, they frequently felt overwhelmed and unable to process their feelings. In fact, numerous participants said questions addressing race asked during this study marked the first time they had been asked about their opinions on these issues. Similarly, participants in McIntyre's (1997) study said they had never before been asked about being White, what it meant to them, or how to respond. "Subsequently, the participants' encounter with their racial identities contained elements of surprise, concern, frustration, and resistance" (McIntyre, p. 79). These questions conjured up lots of participants' feelings and emotions they had blocked out for long periods of time. Participants realized they had not ever been asked to describe their experiences because they were overworked, lacked time for reflection on these issues, and their alternative teacher education programs did not require them

to address these issues. Even years after they entered their urban under-resourced schools and graduated from their alternative teacher education programs, participants remained unable to come to terms with their experiences because they were so difficult, trying, and overwhelming. They did not have opportunities to process the guilt through adequate support systems.

Retention. It is important to note that four out of the five participants either chose to change schools or take a break from education since being placed in their first urban under-resourced school by their alternative teacher education programs. Their experiences demanded countless hours and huge commitments to meet the needs of their academically struggling students. Furthermore, participants expressed difficulties processing their departures from their urban under-resourced schools. Pennington's (2007) study participants also had negative feelings about the difficulties they encountered opening up about race issues. White participants described how leaving their schools caused a lot of guilt and frustration but they felt burnt-out or needed a change. Furthermore, these departure rates are cause for concern, especially since large numbers of teachers leave within five years (Gimbert et al., 2010; Grossman & Loeb, 2008). Again, there were no on-going and reflective support systems or spaces for dialogue provided by alternative teacher education programs, even though participants had already graduated from these programs.

Also, participants in this study described being grateful, frustrated, and uncertain about what to do with their new reflections on the topics this study raised. This range of emotions, experienced by White teachers, is important to understand and should not be devalued or remain unaddressed (Solomon et al., 2005). It was definitely apparent White participants did not previously have opportunities to discuss race issues. In fact, as I went through this study and

addressed participants' inabilities to process their experiences, my experiences and difficulties processing my own came flooding back. I am still attempting to fully understand them and identify what I can do differently in the future as a White educator in an urban under-resourced and racially dissimilar school because it was such an intense experience.

As an educator, I remember being so overwhelmed and overworked by my teaching position and advocacy for students at the school, that it was impossible for me to think of acting for change on a systemic level, especially since I did not have the critical coursework challenging me to use my agency and education to act for students on a policy level. These White educators can be great resources for urban under-resourced schools and should be encouraged to fully accept the responsibility to act for change on a systemic level. Their overall impact and ability to affect change and impact the lives of their racially dissimilar students could be significantly increased. McIntyre (1997) similarly found White participants were unable to understand that their roles as advocates were tied to social structures upholding racism. Overall, participants did not describe themselves as advocates on a systemic level by addressing the education system.

The experiences of White participants in this study were very similar to my experiences, which was the impetus for this study. Their openness and honesty regarding their experiences as White graduates of alternative teacher education programs in urban under-resourced schools was commendable. Participants' inabilities to critically examine race in the context of their experiences in urban under-resourced schools is not solely their responsibility. Their experiences should impact and guide alternative teacher education programs welcoming new White teachers each year into their two-year programs. It is unacceptable for White educators to blindly be

welcomed into schools without honest understandings of student experiences, community realities, and an overall awareness of what to expect. Instead, teachers, as the participants described, learn on the job at the expense of racially dissimilar students.

Alternative teacher education programs should be responsible for providing White educators with: 1) opportunities to see and understand race, 2) adequate preparation and support, and 3) racial identity development guidance through Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model. Teachers must be challenged to address their White identity development (Leonardo, 2002). These programs prepare hundreds of White teachers for urban under-resourced school teaching positions with racially dissimilar students each year. Alternative teacher education programs must be required to assist White educators in dismantling White privilege by developing their racial identities, critically challenging institutionalized racism, and identifying ways they can act for transformation of the education system in order to decrease the achievement gap. Further reflection about the lack of consciousness about race brought me to a new realization regarding both the participants' and the researcher's ownership of responsibility in this difficult realization.

Furthermore, the cycle of racism will be perpetuated unless theoretical race lenses are used to critically analyze the implications of this maintenance by White educators. Participants showed evidence of minimal contact with racially dissimilar populations, felt unprepared as educators, were color blind, perceived poverty and cultural differences as inhibiting factors affecting students' lives, were not exposed to critical coursework, had a deficit mentality, found difficulties processing their experiences, and the majority of participants decided to leave their urban under-resourced schools. Critical Race Theory states that White educators must understand

how race negatively affects our education system (Taylor, 1999). This understanding could prevent the maintenance of the cycle of racism (Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 1995). Critical White Studies recommends the recognition of structural inequality to challenge Whites to examine race and the prevention of education system injustices (Lea & Simms, 2008). White educators must learn to critically examine race in order to actively make choices to not perpetuate it (Leonardo, 2002). Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model exposes and examines a White teacher's knowledge of his/her practice, self, and students in order to identify race realities and prevent the maintenance of the cycle of racism. White educators and alternative teacher education programs can play a significant role in deconstructing our racialized society and education system by increasing contact with racially dissimilar populations, being more prepared educators, seeing race in their classrooms, identifying race as an inhibitor, learning through critical courses, understanding the realities of students and not viewing them as deficits, providing opportunities for experiences to be adequately processed, and preventing burn-out by keeping effective, critical, and racially aware White teachers in urban under-resourced schools.

A Comparison of Public and Private Alternative Teacher Education Programs

Though not the focus of this study, findings unique to this research can also identify similarities between graduate participants of the public (TFA) and private (UCCE) alternative teacher education programs. Although only one participant was from a public alternative teacher education program and four were from private alternative teacher education programs, strikingly similar responses and experiences were found between the two contexts. Although the missions of each program are slightly different, they do both strongly believe in educating teachers for

inner-city school teaching placements. This unresearched area of alternative teacher education, has never addressed the distinctions between the racial consciousnesses of the teachers from these two programs, and, again, while not the focus of this study, this research suggests that neither participants from the TFA program, nor the UCCE program, had a thoroughly developed racial identity. Furthermore, both blamed poverty and culture as the most significant inhibitors to racially dissimilar students. In addition, as recently mentioned, when participants were asked to interrogate race, they identified their alternative teacher education programs and the inadequate preparation, lack of critical coursework, and failure to provide sufficient support systems, as reasons why they had not interrogated race. There was no difference in participants' efforts or known responsibilities as White teachers in further examining race issues in the context of racially dissimilar students in urban under-resourced schools.

Thus, while these two types of programs, public (TFA) and private (UCCE), are thought of as being very different, participants from these programs were found to be similarly deficient in their understandings of their racial identities, and their willingness, or need to blame other factors for the lack of racial consciousness. One may think that participants from the UCCE program with its Catholic context and adherence to the principles of social justice would produce teachers who were slightly more aware of the issues of race discussed in this research. However, this was also not the case.

Corroborating Previous Scholarship

Lastly, before the recommendations are developed, it is important to note that this study strongly corroborates previous scholarship around the issue of the effects of alternative teacher education programs on White educators. The glaring racial mismatch between White educators

and racially dissimilar students exists and racial identities fail to be appropriately and critically addressed. This, in itself, is an important finding. Today, in 2012, the issue of White teachers' racial identities neglecting to be addressed or deepened in alternative teacher education programs continues to be unacceptable. Recommendations for alternative teacher education programs to alleviate this alarming lack of race prioritization will now be detailed.

Recommendations for Alternative Teacher Education Programs and Urban Under-Resourced Schools

Findings from this study necessitate numerous recommendations for alternative teacher education programs and urban under-resourced schools. Due to the fact that these are so intricately linked, it is imperative that alternative teacher education programs and urban under-resourced schools work collaboratively in order to most effectively educate White teachers for placements with racially dissimilar students. It is most likely the main responsibility for implementing these changes will fall on alternative teacher education programs due to the amount of early preparation time they have with White educators along with the fact that they are more able to impact the graduate education courses, discussions, and emphasis of the program. However, together, they can assist White educators as they learn to perceive the impact and effects of race, adequately prepare through critical coursework, utilize reflective support systems, and develop the racial identities of their teachers.

Recommendation #1: Provide Opportunities to Perceive Race

This study found White teachers did not perceive race or racism in the context of their urban under-resourced schools. In order for White educators to perceive race in their urban under-resourced schools, alternative teacher education programs must be reconceptualized and

an increase in community involvement must be prioritized. These two recommendations will now be explored.

Reconceptualize alternative teacher education programs. Alternative education programs need to be modified in order to prioritize and critically teach about race. Racism needs to be put front and center of alternative teacher education programs by transforming structural, curricular, pedagogical, and faculty perceptions of race (Ukpokudu, 2007). If these programs are reconceptualized, White educators will receive a thorough understanding of race issues prior to entering the classroom, make them more prepared, and much less likely to be color blind with non-White students. Furthermore, prioritizing race issues in alternative teacher education programs would also shift the "problem" from non-White students to White teachers (Hytten & Adkins, 2001).

As previously stated, White educators showed evidence of being color blind in their urban under-resourced schools. In fact, participants overwhelmingly saw and named poverty and cultural differences as inhibitors to students' lives. It is imperative for race to be embedded into the framework of alternative teacher education programs. If race is prioritized in reconceptualized alternative teacher education programs, it will provide opportunities for teachers to critically know themselves, their students, and their urban under-resourced communities through racial identity development. Instead of the information on student and school realities being withheld, this critical race knowledge will be at the forefront of what is taught. White educators will be far less likely to enter an urban under-resourced school classroom color blind and lacking a critical race awareness of students, families, and urban under-resourced school communities. Also, there will be a significant impact on decreasing the

dangerous mismatch that has been perpetuated by White educators who have gone through alternative teacher education programs without a focus on race. McIntyre (1997) suggested,

> It's distressing to think that we are educating young White teachers and failing to 'teach' them that racism is a form of injustice and that we, as White educators, must redress that injustice-whether it's *convenient* for us to do so or not. (p. 55)

White teachers must be part of this reconceptualization process, by honestly sharing their difficult experiences with racially dissimilar populations with alternative teacher education programs, in order to ensure race issues are critically examined in alternative teacher education programs before and during teaching placements. These programs will only be able to ensure they are adequately and critically reconceptualizing their programs to meet White teachers' racial awareness needs if they access the wealth of knowledge possessed by educators who have worked in urban under-resourced schools and had challenging experiences. This can assist in the prevention of color blindness with racially dissimilar students in urban under-resourced schools.

Increase involvement with racially dissimilar communities. A greater significance must be placed on White teachers' experiences with racially dissimilar communities. Increased interactions with racially dissimilar populations will occur if White educators are provided with meaningful experiences in urban under-resourced communities. These experiences will also lead to a greater understanding of race issues by providing opportunities for White educators to see the implications of race in urban under-resourced school communities.

Three out of five participants did not have extensive exposure to racially dissimilar populations throughout their lives. Involvement in their urban under-resourced school communities prior to teaching could assist them in becoming more racially aware (Lampe,

1994). These community interactions could be long-term learning and teaching experiences that expose White teachers to the lives of non-White students while providing opportunities to establish positive relationships. Picower (2009) recommended,

> Student teaching placements in urban schools should become opportunities for multicultural inquiry. These sites typically are used only to learn to teach lessons, but they should also be used to develop relationships with children and families that can challenge pre-service teachers' relationships. (p. 212)

In addition, sustained involvement in racially dissimilar communities could assist White educators in learning about how to sensitively enter a community and engage in long-term relationships. The three participants who had not spent extended periods of time with racially dissimilar populations would have benefited from these interactions and by validating the vast knowledge sets of locals that exist in urban under-resourced communities. Picower (2009) further suggests,

> Because student teachers often fulfill placements in a variety of schools (resourced, under-resourced, diverse, segregated), guided inquiry into the ways in which children are differently served in these placements could allow students to observe educational inequity first hand, potentially serving to shift blame from children to families to the school systems that provide differently for children of color. (p. 213)

Alternative teacher education programs must provide opportunities for White educators to become involved in urban under-resourced school communities. Relationships forged through sustained interactions can increase White teachers' understandings of race issues in racially dissimilar communities. These meaningful interactions with racially dissimilar populations will

be difficult to add for already packed two year alternative teacher education programs. However, the potential for White teachers' increased racial awareness through immersion experiences and apprenticeship relationships could significantly impact the ways White teachers educate racially dissimilar students. In addition, the reconceptualization of alternative teacher education programs to address race issues necessitates the prioritization of these relationships between White educators and racially dissimilar urban under-resourced school communities. These changes are essential because many White teachers have not had sustained interactions with racially dissimilar populations prior to entering their teaching placements.

White educators will be encouraged to acknowledge race if alternative teacher education programs are reconceptualized to prioritize race issues and meaningful urban under-resourced school community partnerships are embedded into these programs. The dangerous mismatch currently being perpetuated due to the lack of White teacher racial awareness can be significantly decreased and the cycle of racism can be stymied.

If given opportunities to truly perceive race, as Critical Race Theory suggests, White educators will be able to more adequately understand the realities of oppressed groups and name oppressive structures inhibiting the lives of non-White students in urban under-resourced schools (Parker, 2003). They will be able to honestly understand the truth of institutionalized racism in schools and how Whites are privileged at the expense of non-Whites. Combined with the Critical White Studies exposure of White privilege, White educators will be able to perceive and, therefore, critically examine race in their own lives, alternative teacher education programs, and urban under-resourced schools. This development of a new Whiteness can assist educators in becoming more effective educators by using Howard's Racial Identity Development Model to

know their practices, selves, and students in the context of race in our racialized society. White educators must make race visible in order to ensure equitable educational experiences for all students

Recommendation #2: Adequate Preparation and Support of White Teachers

Findings from this study also concluded that White participants were not exposed to critical coursework, felt unprepared, and had difficulties processing the personal cost and impact of their experiences in urban under-resourced schools. Recommendations to address these issues will now be examined.

Provide critical coursework and adequately prepare teachers. In order to more effectively prepare White educators to teach racially dissimilar students, they need to be exposed to critical coursework throughout their alternative teacher education programs. Critical race coursework, which includes exposing, guiding, and supporting White educators through Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model, provides a lens that can only assist White teachers in being more effective educators of racially dissimilar students. Critical race content should be taught, discussed, and reflected upon inside the graduate classroom, not in White teachers' urban under-resourced school classrooms. Adequate preparation of White teachers through critical coursework can decrease the likelihood of racially dominant language being used, prevent blaming of students, parents, and communities, and eliminate hierarchical relationships between White teachers and non-White students. Critical coursework is essential for White teachers in order to provide a just and equitable learning environment for racially dissimilar students who suffer from the widening of the achievement gap. This on-going critical

race education of White educators needs to constantly be prioritized, supported, and embedded in alternative teacher education programs. Picower (2009) corroborates this:

> The traditional model of depending on one semester in one course to interrupt a lifetime of White supremacist reinforcement is woefully insufficient in the attempt to prepare White educators to teach in urban settings. With the likelihood of the teaching force remaining overwhelmingly White, examining and interrupting the Whiteness of teaching remains one of the most vital tasks for those concerned with improving educational opportunities and outcomes for students of color. (p. 213)

Therefore, comprehensive critical race coursework in alternative teacher education programs should include Whiteness studies, non-Eurocentric curriculum, and drastic modification of current multicultural education curriculum. Furthermore, critical coursework would address the historical and social underpinnings of urban under-resourced schools and structural inequalities in education which would provide White educators with necessary critical understandings (Murrell Jr., 2001).

Inclusion of Whiteness studies. Whiteness studies is an essential component of critical coursework for White teachers. The population of White teachers entering alternative teacher education programs continues to grow and it is imperative that Whiteness studies be incorporated into the coursework of these programs (Nieto, 2009). I agree with McIntyre (1997) who said,

> Whites need to take responsibility to educate ourselves about 'the Other' which means reading about people of color-their histories, their lived experiences-*in their own words*. It means *not* relying on people of color to teach us about themselves, or about ourselves, or about racism and the impact of racism on their/our lives. That's *our* responsibility and

> it's been my experiences that if we take that responsibility seriously, then, and only then, will there be opportunities for 'emotional bonding' with members of other racial groups. (p. 139)

The inclusion of Whiteness studies into the coursework of alternative teacher education programs would remove the use of dominant racial ideologies while ensuring critical race issues are at the forefront of what White teachers are learning in their graduate studies. White teachers would more thoroughly understand their own racialized positionalities and those of their students and systems of institutionalized racism affecting their urban under-resourced schools if exposed to Whiteness studies.

In order to support the inclusion of Whiteness studies, non-Eurocentric curriculum must also be incorporated into critical coursework in alternative teacher education programs. Eurocentric curriculum needs to be exposed, especially to White teachers who have been socialized to not question curriculum throughout their lives (Gay, 2000). Accessing non-Eurocentric curriculum would challenge White teachers to re-write the history of race and Whiteness (McIntyre, 1997). Unveiling these non-Eurocentric histories, within the context of their alternative teacher education programs, will support the critical education of White teachers about their own histories and those of their racially dissimilar students.

Lastly, the prioritization of Whiteness studies means the current ways multicultural education courses are structured and taught would need to be drastically altered. Multicultural education classes, if critically modified to include White privilege by thoroughly interrogating race issues, can assist White educators in developing a greater awareness and sensitivity towards diverse students (Lampe, 1994). Honestly addressing non-White student realities in urban under-

resourced schools is the responsibility of alternative teacher education programs in order to effectively prepare White educators for teaching placements in urban under-resourced schools.

Create on-going and reflective support systems. Participants expressed they would have benefited from having on-going and effective support systems to assist them with processing their experiences as White teachers in urban under-resourced schools. They also cited that there were inadequate support systems in their alternative teacher education programs to help them cope with the new teaching and student realities they experienced.

Processing opportunities. Reflection components that occur before, during, and after White teachers enter teaching positions in urban under-resourced schools should be implemented by and are necessary components of alternative teacher education programs. Participants expressed gratitude for having been asked about their experiences and frustration that their programs did not provide appropriate services. On-going reflective opportunities could have assisted White educators in describing their feelings in the context of critical race issues during their alternative teacher education programs. As McIntyre (1997) suggests, "examining whiteness can then be viewed-not as something to be endured or mastered-but in a very real sense, as a continuing discourse and struggle to enact liberation and justice" (p. 140).

In order to provide needed spaces for reflection, alternative teacher education programs must work in collaboration with Schools of Education, professors, and community members who have had experiences in urban under-resourced schools. New White educators should not be left alone to struggle with their experiences. They need to be guided through appropriate ways of processing their experiences. The wealth of knowledge and ways to process the experiences of

White teachers educating racially dissimilar student populations in urban under-resourced schools should be frequently shared and expanded upon in safe reflective spaces.

Adequate support and preparation must exist in order for White educators to critically examine the central tenets of Critical Race Theory. Alternative teacher education programs must embed ways to address the "centrality of race and subordination, challenge dominant ideology, commit to social justice, understand the centrality of experiential knowledge, and provide a transdisciplinary perspective" (Solozano & Yosso, 2001, p. 472). As Critical White Studies suggests, White privilege is not willingly examined without support (Rodriguez, 2009). Alternative teacher education programs have the abilities to provide this necessary encouragement and to begin the life-long process of racial identity development towards racial consciousness. Howard's Racial Identity Development Model provides a way to address these realities with White educators in order to more adequately prepare and support them in alternative teacher education programs.

Recommendation #3: Implementation of Howard's Racial Identity Development Model

Participants in my study did not show evidence of having developed racial identities per the tenets of Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model. This model should guide alternative teacher education programs' plans for reconceptualization as they begin the process of prioritizing and embedding race. Incorporation of this model can assist White teachers in becoming racially aware by critically developing their racial identities. White educators need this critical race awareness the most because they are the ones being entrusted with the education of non-White students in urban under-resourced schools.

Due to the fact that the White participants did not express a critical understanding of their privilege, it is essential for a racial identity development model to acknowledge where the participants are in their awareness of race and privilege.

Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development model describes teachers working through, "the assumption of rightness, the luxury of ignorance, and the legacy of privilege" (p. 120). Although I completely believe the White participants in this study would be willing to engage in and enter into the path towards a deepening racial identity, they seemed to be aware of the fact that they were privileged, but not having an awareness of their assumptions of rightness, luxuries of ignorance, or, most importantly, legacies of privilege. They described growing up in affluent White suburbs, but not the implications of that upbringing in our racialized society where institutionalized racism exists. Howard's (2006) model begins with an understanding and desire of participants to delve into issues of rightness, luxury, and privilege. Based on my findings throughout this study, I believe his model must be extended to include White educators, like those in this study, that do not yet have a desire to "go there". Most of the White participants in my study recognized themselves as being White and knew they were privileged, but did not critically understand the weight of that privilege. Therefore, I suggest the recognition as a member of the White race and of a privileged state because of being White must be included before a White teacher enters into Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model to accommodate for where the teachers in my study and I were situated. In my experience, this stage occurred before I even became aware of my responsibility to deepen my racial identities. A new model, as presented below in Figure 3, would include an understanding of where White

teachers are before being able to acknowledge racialized realities in our society through knowing their practice, selves, and students.

Figure 3. Race Continuum

Recognition of Race	**Understanding and Desire to Critically Examine Race**	**Racial Identity Development**			**Racial Consciousness**
Member of the White race and privileged --->	Understanding of assumption of rightness, luxury of ignorance, and legacy of privilege --->	Dimension I: Knowing my practice --->	Dimension II: Knowing my self --->	Dimension III: Knowing my students --->	

Figure 3. The race continuum for White participants in this study toward racial consciousness.

Based on the responses of the White participants, Howard's (2006) model is correct in stating that these stages need to be passed through. However, participants in this study showed evidence of not being fully ready, as was I, to acknowledge or fully understand the breadth of the assumption of rightness, luxury of ignorance, or legacy of privilege because they only acknowledged privilege as a member of the White race. They were not yet able to begin the process of racial identity development by entering into Dimensions I, II, and III and work towards racial consciousness. I would recommend the acknowledgement of where teachers are, even before being able to acknowledge the realities of being White and desiring to delve into race issues, as the first step and recommendation for White teachers in alternative teacher education programs. It is only then that White educators can be encouraged to challenge the "assumption of rightness, luxury of ignorance, and legacy of privilege" (Howard, 2006, p. 120).

Furthermore, in order to assist White educators in becoming racially aware through a deepening of their racial identities, further recommendations for the implementation of Dimensions I, II, and III are included below.

Dimension I: Knowing My Practice. Participants in my study did show some evidence of Dimension I because they showed evidence of being culturally aware and sensitive educators. Alternative teacher education programs can ensure their White educators are receiving a thorough education on these components in their coursework. Urban under-resourced school administrators can assist White teachers in using these components in the classroom with racially dissimilar student populations.

Moreover, participants also showed evidence of being advocates on a local level. This seemed to be instinctual as they worked hard to make sure students were advocated for within their classrooms and urban under-resourced schools. Alternative teacher education programs can foster a greater understanding of advocacy on a systemic level, especially for highly-educated and extremely motivated White teachers who are able to advocate and act for transformation in their urban under-resourced schools and beyond. White educators will be able to advocate on a systemic level if they are exposed to critical race knowledge.

Dimension II: Knowing My Self. Dimension II involves White educators knowing themselves well. It is imperative for alternative teacher education programs to understand each participant's situation and background experiences and to provide an individualized education. The backgrounds of White educators must be critically interrogated from a race perspective in order for them to be able to understand their students' experiences. White educators need to thoroughly, introspectively, and critically examine White privilege in their experiences growing

up and throughout their educational experiences. The racial awareness gained through critical personal awareness is essential in effectively preparing White educators to become racially aware. This critical self-awareness provides a comprehensive and critical understanding of educators' own lives and a foundation for understanding their racially dissimilar students' experiences. Space to gain this awareness can be provided in alternative teacher education programs.

Dimension III: Knowing My Students. White educators can be challenged to develop greater understandings of their students in urban under-resourced schools by learning more about the communities within which they will teach. Alternative teacher education programs can assist with this necessary knowledge by including a residency or apprenticeship model in order to increase White teacher exposure and work in urban under-resourced schools. Furthermore, alternative teacher education programs should work in collaboration with urban under-resourced schools by providing opportunities for White teachers to become involved in racially dissimilar communities.

Critical Race Theory and Critical White Studies support the implementation of Howard's Racial Identity Development Model in order to address systemic racism in schools, critically examine oppressed groups, interrogate White privilege, and provide an ongoing process for racial identity development (Helfand, 2009: King, 1991; Ladson-Billings, 2000; Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 1995). This model can assist White educators in naming privilege in the context of knowing their students, selves, and students more completely and critically in order to be more effective educators in urban under-resourced schools.

Recommendations for alternative teacher education programs and urban under-resourced schools are the result of findings describing participants' inabilities to acknowledge race, reflections about feeling unprepared, and lack of racial identity awareness and development. These recommendations include: reconceptualization of alternative teacher education programs to prioritize race, increase in urban under-resourced community involvement, incorporation of critical coursework and Whiteness studies, creation of on-going and reflective support systems, and assistance in helping White educators obtain deepened racial identities through Dimensions I, II, and III.

Limitations of Howard's Racial Identity Development Model and Theoretical Race Lenses

It is important to note the limitations of both Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model and the theoretical race lenses used in this study. Howard's Racial Identity Development Model was identified as a way to support White educators in understanding and developing their own racial identities that can assist them in becoming more effective educators of students in urban under-resourced schools. This model has been included in this study and recommended for use in alternative teacher education programs because, based on my research, it appears to be the most comprehensive and thorough way for racial identity development to be introduced, critically examined, and reflected upon by White educators teaching racially dissimilar students in these programs. Also, as previously mentioned, this model did not account for where the White participants in this study were with regards to recognizing they are White and knowing they are privileged, but not having critically examined that privilege or knowing exactly what it entails in our racialized society. However, this model is only one possible avenue for alternative teacher education programs to increase the racial awareness, develop the racial

identities, and work towards racial consciousness of their White teachers. Therefore, this study is limited by the fact that only one Racial Identity Development Model was highlighted and suggested as a recommendation for alternative teacher education programs. Ultimately, the decision to choose the best way to address racial identity development with White educators teaching in urban under-resourced schools resides with each alternative teacher education program.

Also, identity is not monolithic or homogenous. It is messy and cannot be developed through just one method. For example, the participants were all White, but all had very unique experiences that have informed their individual understandings of their racial identities. The participants and I all had differing levels of racial identity development. They were all aware they had a different race than their students, but each participant viewed this reality differently. Davis (2007) and Rabow (n.d.) describe how identity is influenced by geography, religion, environment, and socio-economic status. Merseth, Sommer, and Dickstein (2008) further state how family, schools, and communities throughout one's life significantly impact one's identity. Howard's (2006) Model includes dimensions that are constantly being informed and it is impossible for all White participants in an alternative teacher education program to be at the exact same point, especially since identities are negotiated and formed over time (Cooks, 2003).

Therefore, a "one size fits all" approach to White teacher racial identity development would be impossible and in no way do I recommend such an approach. White teachers must be met where they are and supported in their personal life-long and reflective journeys as they develop their racial identities. Again, alternative teacher education programs must determine what is most appropriate for their programs and participants. Howard's Racial Identity

Development Model was included in this study as a possible guide for these programs. More research on racial identity development models needs to be conducted in the field of education. One way for data to be collected and analyzed would be for an alternative teacher education program to implement this model and track the effects of it on White teachers. As previously stated, this study was limited because only one model was referenced and is not the sole approach to the messiness and uniqueness of racial identity development.

Furthermore, three theoretical lenses were utilized for this study. Critical Race Theory, Critical White Studies, and Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model, the three theoretical lenses, are all race lenses. I found this study to be limited by using race only theoretical lenses in my analysis. The inclusion of other theoretical lenses could have provided a different vantage point for analysis of data and conclusions. Most notably, race and class issues are tightly interwoven and institutionalized in our society. A theoretical lens providing a class perspective could have strengthened this study. Race and class realities are not mutually exclusive, especially for students in urban under-resourced schools significantly affected and inhibited by both race and class. Therefore, it is essential for me to report that this study was also limited by the utilization of race only theoretical lenses.

Recommendations for Future Studies

In order for alternative teacher education programs to address the growing numbers of White educators entering their programs and teaching racially dissimilar student populations in urban under-resourced schools, it is imperative for more studies on this topic to be conducted in the near future. Further data collected from White educators about their experiences could continue to inform alternative teacher education programs as they reconceptualize their programs

in order to close the achievement gap. Therefore, a larger population representative of White teachers from both public and private alternative teacher education programs nationwide should be studied. In order to more specifically identify if experiences are varied across a larger participant pool, it would be beneficial to listen to the voices of White teachers before, during, and after their two-year alternative teacher education program commitments. In addition, following these teachers over the course of their two-year programs could provide additional information on their exact needs in urban under-resourced schools. This adjustment in the length of study would also allow for more extensive data collection through interviews, journaling, observations, and focus groups. It would also provide the opportunity for both public and private alternative teacher education programs to be compared and contrasted based on their practices in order to further identify the most significant components in the preparation of White educators for racially dissimilar students.

Future studies should also access the knowledge sets of directors of alternative teacher education programs. It is important to incorporate alternative teacher education programs and to acknowledge ways they currently address race with White educators. Also, contributions to future study designs should be made by entire Schools of Education, administrators in urban under-resourced schools, White graduates of alternative teacher education programs, and urban under-resourced school community stakeholders to elicit their points of view. Alternative teacher education programs cannot be solely responsible for the racial identity development of White educators. White participants must be challenged to describe their thoughts on White responsibilities to address issues of race. Also, numerous professionals at universities and colleges, including psychologists to assist with processing, should engage in discussions that

influence and guide future studies. Their lenses are essential in determining how they can best identify necessary modifications in order to assist in the development of White educators' racial identities, especially as these teachers continue to occupy teaching positions with racially dissimilar students in urban under-resourced schools.

Lastly, the most significant way to address the conclusions found in this study and a unique recommendation emerging from this research would be to implement Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model into various alternative teacher education programs, which is aligned with the theoretical lenses and critical aims of Critical Race Theory and Critical White Studies by exposing and preventing the perpetuation of White privilege and racialized oppression of non-Whites in education. A future study using this model as a program intervention would be beneficial to the field of education and, most importantly, alternative teacher education programs. Also, studying the inclusion of a well-developed, sustained, and meaningful immersion of White educators into racially dissimilar urban under-resourced school communities prior to the commencement of their teaching positions would also be illuminating. Findings would provide information to critically examine the impact of the modifications, gauge White educators' experiences compared with the ones in this study, and more accurately identify how alternative teacher education programs can assist with White teacher racial identity development in urban under-resourced schools which would guide how alternative teacher education programs.

Final Reflection

The impetus for this study was my experience entering an urban under-resourced school after having taught for five years and graduating from an alternative teacher education program. I

quickly became acutely aware of what I did not know and felt extremely uncomfortable learning so much on the job at the expense of racially dissimilar students deserving the best possible education. It was at this point that my race became extremely noticeable to me and I wondered if other teachers, having been similarly trained and educated, had similar experiences.

As a White researcher, my Whiteness significantly affected every part of this study. Throughout this study, I examined White participants' experiences, issues of race and racism, racial identity development, alternative teacher education programs, racially dissimilar African American and Latino populations, and urban under-resourced schools. It was more difficult than I had imagined to keep my White privilege in view and at the center of my study in order to disrupt racism and I was shocked by the inner struggles I had with the risks and benefits of confronting it (Bergerson, 2003; Gordon, 2005). Upon further reflection, it is evident there were times when I was unaware of my own blind spots (Gordon, 2005). As Bergerson (2003) noted, "I believe that white scholars have an important role in creating an environment that recognizes the need to ask difficult questions and challenge traditional notions in our personal lives as well as our work in education" (p. 61). Overall, not a lot of attention has been given to White researchers in education (Gordon, 2005). White researchers will fail to acknowledge their own privilege throughout their work if it is not prioritized and required in the field education. My own experience with this study highlights the need for White researchers to be challenged to further examine their own privilege while conducting research that counters unjust structures (Peterson, 2008).

Moreover, the entire process of studying this topic and continuing to deepen my own racial identity, was incredibly powerful. The participants' responses challenged me to revisit all

of my experiences while being amazed at how strikingly similar their experiences were to mine. Hearing their experiences provided a safe space in which I was able to openly and honestly discuss race issues with White colleagues, something I had never done prior to this study. The realization that I am not the only one to have had difficulties due to missing information and a lack of racial awareness has made me even more passionate about this topic. And understanding my own complicity in allowing participants to "blame" rather than "own" responsibility for their own racial consciousness has been humbling. It has also caused me to ponder appropriate next steps for the participants and myself, given that we have all expressed a need to continue processing our experiences by developing our racial identities. Currently, there are no identifiable services to assist with this process. This research aims to promote awareness of public and private alternative teacher education program deficiencies in the area of White teacher racial identity development. My hope is that the needs of alternative teacher education students will be met to create more just and equitable educational experiences for racially dissimilar students in urban under-resourced schools.

These findings have also challenged me critically to think about the nationwide magnitude of these findings as the racial mismatch between White teachers and racially dissimilar students increases without adequate racial identity development in alternative teacher education programs. More research on this topic is necessary based on my experiences and participants' experiences that were so generously shared throughout this study. These necessary changes in alternative teacher education programs are vital in order for the achievement gap to be closed and for racially dissimilar students being taught by White educators to reach their fullest potentials.

Conclusion

This study concluded White graduates of alternative teacher education programs did not perceive race and racism in their urban under-resourced schools, did not perceive that their alternative teacher education programs had an impact on their racial identities, and did not perceive that their alternative teacher education programs deepened their racial identities in the context of their urban under-resourced schools. Critical Race Theory, Critical White Studies, and Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model provided a tri-partite theoretical lens through which the data was critically analyzed.

Race is important. Given the achievement gap between White and non-White students in our country and the influx of White educators entering alternative teacher education programs and, therefore, teaching placements in urban under-resourced schools, this study found great cause for concern.

White educators must be exposed to critical race content enabling them to critically know them selves, their students, and their practices with well-developed racial identities. Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model was identified as a way alternative teacher education programs can assist White educators in developing their racial identities. It is the responsibility of these programs, White educators, and all other stakeholders to understand the significance of and prioritize racial identity development. Critical White Studies can also aid in White teachers' acknowledgement of White privilege in order to assist them in being able to challenge it in their lives and classrooms. Identification of unconscious White actions and an emphasis on White studies, not multiculturalism, can encourage Whites to understand what it means to be White in our society. Furthermore, Critical Race Theory provides a critical examination into our racialized

society, specifically institutionalized racism which privileges some groups at the expense and oppression of others. All White teachers should be exposed to education curriculum rooted in critical race issues.

As the number of White educators is projected to increase (Bartolome, 2008), it is essential for Howard's (2006) Racial Identity Development Model, Critical White Studies, and Critical Race Theory to be put front and center in every aspect of alternative teacher education programs to address White race issues. These programs must expose and critically examine race issues in the context of White educators teaching racially dissimilar students in urban under-resourced schools in order to increase racial identity development and close the achievement gap.

Appendix A

Informed Consent Form

Loyola Marymount University School of Education

I hereby authorize Kelley M. Miller to include me in her research study on White graduates of alternative teacher education programs in urban schools. I have been asked to participate in this study that is designed to determine the perceptions of race, experiences of these White educators in urban under-resourced schools, and the development of their racial identities in alternative teacher education programs and urban under-resourced school communities.

I understand that if I agree to participate, I will be audio-taped in the process of these research procedures. It has been explained to me that these tapes will be used for teaching and/or research purposes only and that my identity will not be disclosed. I agree that the tapes shall be retained for research and/or teaching purposes for an indefinite time. I understand that I have the right to review the tapes made as part of the study to determine whether they should be edited or released in whole or part.

I understand that I have the right to refuse to participate in, or withdraw from this study at any time without it affecting my professional activities. I understand that circumstances may arise which might cause the investigator to terminate my participation before the completion of the study. I understand that no information that identifies me will be released without my separate consent except as specifically required by law.

I understand that Kelley M. Miller, Principal Investigator, can be reached at (707) 849-8153 and will answer any questions I may have at any time concerning details of the procedures performed as a part of this study. In signing this consent form, I acknowledge receipt of a copy of this form.

_____ _____

Signature Date

_____

Witness

Appendix B

Participant Background Information Questionnaire

1. Age: Participant #:

2. Total number of years teaching:

3. Teaching history:

School:	**Position & Years at school**
a.	
b.	
c.	

4. Reasons for teaching in each school:
a.

b.

c.

5. Education history:

Degree	**Institution & year completed**
Undergraduate:	
Master's Degree:	
Other Graduate Degree:	

6. Title at current school:

7. Grade levels and subjects taught and class sizes:

Grade	**Subject and Type of Class**	**Class Size**

8. Please provide a brief description of your students.

9. Please briefly identify why you became a teacher.

10. Please briefly describe your teaching philosophy.

11. Please write a short statement about yourself as a teacher.

12. How did you learn about race?

13. Please explain ways you are frequently made aware of your race and notice race.

14. Please describe evidence of student success you have experience within the past year of teaching.

15. Please list your professional development experiences.

16. Are you willing to be interviewed 3 times, write 3 journal entries, be observed 3 times, participate in a focus group, and provide your insights on your transcripts and your parts of the final draft for accuracy and clarification purposes?

17. Why are you willing to voluntarily participate in this study?

Thank you for taking the time to provide this background information.

Appendix C

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Semi-structured Interview Questions
Interview #1: Focus on life experiences & perceptions of race (90 minutes)

Family/Upbringing

1. Please describe what it was like growing up in your hometown. Would you say it was a diverse area? Why or why not?
2. In your own words, how do you describe yourself racially?
3. Between the ages of 5 and 15, what type of area did you predominantly live in: large city, small city, suburban area, rural area?
4. Between the ages of 5 and 15, did you live predominantly in a: predominantly White community, mixed racial community, predominantly non-White community?
5. Between the ages of 5 and 15, which of these terms best describes your family's socioeconomic background? Poor, working class, lower middle class, middle class, upper middle class, weathy. What causes you to define your family's socioeconomic status in that way?
6. What was the racial composition of your elementary school, junior high, high school, and college? predominantly White, racially mixed, predominantly students of color.
7. Please describe your understandings of your race growing up. Have those thoughts stayed the same or changed over time? Why or why not?

Being White

8. In your own words, how would you describe what it means to be White.
9. In your own words, how would you define your White Racial Identity?
10. What is your understanding of racial identity development? How would you describe yourself with regards to racial consciousness?
11. Are you aware of being White? If yes, in what situations do you think about being White? If no, why not?
12. Have you ever spent time learning more about your cultural and history of your racial group?
13. Please describe your membership in that racial group and what it means to you.
14. How do you think being White is similar and dissimilar to other racial groups?
15. What is the most important characteristic that defines a person's race?
16. Is there anything else you want to say about your racial identity growing up?

Teaching

17. What led you to become a teacher?
18. Did you always want to teach? Why or why not?
19. Please describe what led you to desire to participate in an alternative teacher education program? What led you to apply to the one in Los Angeles?
20. Why did you decide to join?
21. How did you choose the urban under-resourced school where you taught?

22. Please tell me about the school and community, in terms of race, economics, and resources. Please describe the community within which your school was located.
23. What attitudes and attributes did you first associate with this school and community? Did those attitudes and attributes change or stay the same?
24. What influenced your attitudes toward students from different racial groups?
25. Did you consider yourself to be a part of the same community as your students?

26. Do you have any additional thoughts regarding the topics we covered today that you have not yet mentioned that you would like to add?

De la Puente & McKay (1995), Ellis (2002), Kravatz (2007), Phinney (1992), Sirna (2006), Tettegah (1996), Ullucci (2005), and Warren & Hytten (2004).

Semi-structured Interview Questions

Interview #2: Focus on professional life as graduate of an alternative teacher education program and educator in an urban under-resourced school (90 minutes)

Alternative Teacher Education Program

1. Please describe the structure and requirements of your alternative teacher education program. Please describe the coursework you were exposed to in your alternative teacher education program.
2. What were the requirements regarding race issues, if any?
3. Did you take classes that addressed race issues? If yes, how many?
4. When did issues of race come up and in what context?
5. In what ways were issues of race incorporated or addressed in your alternative teacher education program?
6. Did your race ever positively or negatively impact your participation in the alternative teacher education program? If yes, how? If no, why not?
7. In what ways did your alternative teacher education program do a good job preparing you for teaching in an urban under-resourced school? Do a bad job?
8. Have your experiences in an alternative teacher education program deepened your understanding of race issues? How?
9. Describe 2 experiences with race you had in your alternative teacher education program.

Education & Race

10. Please tell me a bit about your perspective/philosophy on teaching in an urban under-resourced school as a White educator?
11. What is the racial breakdown of the students you teach? Did this impact your teaching? If so, how?
12. Did you ever talk with your students about issues of race?
13. What are some of the successful and unsuccessful strategies you used in your lessons? Why? How have you assessed the results of these teaching strategies?
14. Did race play a role in this urban under-resourced school?
15. How do you think your race impacted your teaching, your students, and your classes? Did you feel there were any similar or different racial experiences between yourself and your students?
16. What supports and barriers exist for you at this urban under-resourced school as a White teacher? Did you talk with anyone or do anything about the barriers?
17. Did issues of race impact your teaching? How or how not?
18. How was your race an asset to your school, your teaching, and your students?
19. Did you feel there are any drawbacks, limitations or divisions between you and your students due to your racial identity?
20. In what ways has your alternative teacher education program supported or not supported you with racial issues in the classroom?
21. What are any changes you have noticed related to race that have occurred at your urban under-resourced school while teaching at your school?
22. Describe 2 experiences with race you had in your urban under-resourced school.

23. Is there anything else you would like to say about your experiences in your alternative teacher education program or urban under-resourced school?

24. Do you have any additional thoughts regarding the topics we covered today that you have not yet mentioned that you would like to add?

Ellis (2002), Kravatz (2007), Sirna (2006), and Ullucci (2005).

Semi-structured Interview Questions

Interview #3: Focus on educational career reflections, impact as a teacher in an urban under-resourced school, and perceptions on abilities to deepen understandings of race in the context of urban under-resourced schools (90 minutes)

Urban Under-Resourced Educator

1. How would you describe yourself as an effective urban educator?
2. How would you describe your professional racial identity as an urban educator?
3. What do you think describes a teacher as being racially conscious? Would you say you fit or do not fit that description? Why?
4. What role do you think teachers ought to play in addressing issues of race in schools? What role do you thinks schools ought to play?
5. To what extent do you think you have the capacity to influence students from urban under-resourced backgrounds? Did your capacity change due to involvement in your alternative teacher education program? Urban under-resourced school?
6. What values and beliefs were most important for teaching in an urban under-resourced school? Where these the same or different from what you learned in your alternative teacher education program?
7. To what extent did/do you see yourself being able to influence your urban under-resourced school? Community? Education on a systemic level?
8. Has your understanding of race stayed the same or changed since participating in an alternative teacher education program? An urban under-resourced school?
9. What are your lasting impressions of your alternative teacher education program with regards to race and education? What should stay the same and what could be improved for future White teachers in urban under-resourced schools?
10. Would anything have helped you as a White educator in an urban under-resourced school?
11. What are three very important things your alternative teacher education program taught you?
12. Has your understanding of race changed since teaching in an urban under-resourced school?
13. How do you believe issues of race will impact your teaching in the future?
14. What are your future plans in education?

15. Do you have any additional thoughts regarding the topics we covered today that you have not yet mentioned that you would like to add?

16. Can you please reflect on this process and describe your thoughts on being part of this study?

Cochran-Smith (2003), Kravatz (2007), Merseth et al. (2008), Sirna (2006), and Ullucci (2005).

Appendix D

Journal Prompts

Journal Prompt #1

Please describe what it means for you to be White. This can include an experience you had as a White individual or a time when being White mattered or was important. How did this experience impact you? (Approximately 350-500 words)

Journal Prompt #2

Please describe an experience you had with race in your alternative teacher education program. Then, please describe an experience you had with race in your urban under-resourced school. Please reflect on how these experiences impacted you. (Approximately 350-500 words)

Journal Prompt #3

Co-created with participant based on a topic or experience he or she would like to reflect on more specifically in a journal. (Approximately 350-500 words)

Topic:

Appendix E

Observation Matrix

Participant #

Subject: Date: Time:	Type of class:
Description of lesson/content:	
Number of male students:	Number of female students:
Racial diversity of classroom:	

Lesson/Activity observed:

Resources utilized:

Individual Pair Small Group Whole Class

Teaching strategies/Learning modalities:

Pedagogy notes:

Curriculum notes:

Tone/mood of classroom:

Teacher behaviors:

Student behaviors:
Describe teacher relationships with students:

Authenticity (being real)

Effectiveness (students learning)

Evidence of:

Cultures/culturally relevant teaching	
Racial Identities/Issues	
Home Situations	
Economic Status	
Personalities	
Languages	
Family Background/Lived Experiences	
Strengths of Students	
Challenges of Students	
Uniqueness of Students	
Constructivist Approach	

Participant #_____ Date:_____

1. Affirming students in their cultural connections
2. Being personally inviting
3. Creating physically welcoming classroom spaces
4. Reinforcing students for their academic development
5. Accommodating our instruction to the cultural and learning style differences of students
6. Managing classrooms with firm, consistent, and loving control
7. Creating opportunities for both individual and cooperative work
8. Caring
9. Communication
10. Curriculum
11. Instruction

Time	Brief description of what is observed in classroom: Date:

Appendix F

Researcher Post-Observation Reflection

1. What do the teaching strategies used and the physical layout of the room suggest about the type of teaching going on inside the classroom?

2. Briefly describe any observations about teacher and issues of race in the classroom.

3. Describe the teacher's interactions with the students.

4. Describe the students' interactions with the teacher.

5. How did this observation expand the researcher's understanding of the participant with regards to issues of race and education?

6. Final thoughts and reflections from the observation:

Appendix G

Focus Group Questions

(90 minutes)

1. Let's first start with briefly describing the reasons why you all feel or felt compelled to work in urban under-resourced schools.

2. In what ways can your experiences assist other teachers in urban under-resourced schools? What tools and resources would have helped you be even more helpful to you as a first and second year teacher?

3. Would there be any other tools or resources that would have made it possible or would continue to make it possible to stay in these schools long-term?

4. Issues of sustainability and balance came up in many interviews. Could programs your alternative teacher education programs have assisted with those things? If so, in what ways?

5. Would you say your perceptions of race and racial identity development have been deepened by your participation in an alternative teacher education program? Your schools?

6. The issues of poverty came up many times when talking about race. How do you see these two terms as being connected?

7. Did any of you find talking about issues of race uncomfortable? Were reflections you had after our meetings or discussions with others? Any interesting after-thoughts?

8. Many of you described not having to answer questions about or think about race before? Was this shocking, interesting, what did it make you think of? Do you think it is a program issue? School issue? Larger education issue?

9. Many of you described processing your experiences as something these programs could have assisted with…what would that look like in an ideal world? What would have been helpful? For those of you still in teaching, would it still be helpful?

10. How would you want to assist these programs and other teachers?

11. Are there any final questions, comments, or concerns that you would like to mention at this time?

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