"Uhh, You Know," Don't You?:
White Racial Bonding in the Narrative of White Pre-Service Teachers

By Kenneth J. Fasching-Varner

Kenneth J. Fasching-Varner is the Shirley B. Barton Endowed Assistant Professor and director of the Teaching in Chile Study Abroad Program in the College of Human Sciences and Education at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Introduction

How prepared are pre-service teachers to deal with themselves, let alone think through the realities of their students? How prepared are White teachers to meaningfully examine the ways in which their Whiteness replicates White supremacy with potentially harmful effects for students? This article explores how White pre-service teachers used a semantic move (Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000; Bonilla-Silva, 2001, 2002, 2006; Mortensen, 2005; Van Dijk, 1985, 2000), specifically the deployment of the phrase "you know," to represent racial bonding. In using this semantic move, participants revealed racialized beliefs likely to have an effect on teacher and student interactions. Bonilla-Silva and Forman (2000) suggest that semantic moves have become "common for Whites to use" (p. 50), particularly since the civil rights movement, an era that is increasingly noted for its political correctness. When discussing

semantic moves, however, the emphasis is almost always on the linguistic strategies used to avoid, hide, or mask racialized beliefs within that politically correct discourse (Fairclough, 2003; Bonilla-Silva, 2002, 2006). There are "...numerous tools available to Whites to restore a color-blind image when Whiteness seeps through discursive cracks" (Bonilla-Silva, 2002, p. 61). This article represents a shift from this traditional understanding of semantic moves. I argue that racialized beliefs are always already (Kant, 1996; Ricour, 1991) present within the narratives of White people, and in this case specifically teachers. The presence of a racially contextualized semantic move is evident when the person sharing is attempting to bond racially (Sleeter, 1990). The presence of racialized belief systems necessitates careful attention to the ways in which the linguistic serves to represent internalized beliefs beyond the words being used.

I examine how the phrase "you know" was deployed by participants to demonstrate White racial bonding within a larger study of White pre-service educators' racial identity (Bell, 1993, 1995; Sleeter, 1994). Racial bonding speaks to the linguistic, emotional, and felt acts undertaken by White people to show affinity and alliance with each other (Sleeter, 1994). One may tend to only think of this bonding in large-scale virulent racism such as the KKK, gang affiliations, or other racial pride groups. In only understanding White racial bonding from that limited perspective one misses the opportunity to understand everyday racism and the bonding of those implicated by Whiteness. As a result, Whiteness is too often "...an uninterrogated space" (Nkayama & Krizek, 1995, p. 293). Sleeter (1994) suggests that educators committed to multicultural education must work at identifying the manifestations of the bonding in order to diminish the bonding's effects. The rigorous study of the narratives of White teachers is one way to address the problem of how pedagogical beliefs and practices of teachers are shaped and influenced by race. Gay (1984) suggests that the role of identity has implications for educators' work in schools and classrooms. Implications of identity are embedded in the personal narratives of an individual (Cook-Gumperz, 1993; Fairclough, 1985, 2003). White racial bonding, demonstrated through linguistic and metalinguistic markers, plays a principal role in the maintenance of White privilege and subjugation of racial others as a manifestation of action/s linked to identity.

To begin I present a brief overview of the current educational demographic landscape to highlight why studying the narratives of White teachers (both pre-service and in-service) is necessary. With that landscape in mind I provide a brief theoretical framework as well as extant literature related to this work. I also articulate what I perceive to be gaps this research fills, as well as some of the methodological considerations of the larger study. With those pieces in place, I present how White racial bonding was evidenced using the semantic move "you know" embedded in the narratives of White pre-service teachers. Finally I discuss this finding and speculate about the implications for teacher education.

Educational Landscape

In the wake of the initial election, and now subsequent re-election, of President Barack Obama there came to be a national discourse of post-racialism that went something like 'now that we have a Black president we have overcome the segregation and oppression that has marked much of United States History' (Fasching-Varner, 2012). These sentiments are not only untrue generally, but they grossly misrepresent the educational landscape nearly 60 years after the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court case specifically. According to the Civil Rights Project at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), students of Color attend increasingly segregated schools, a move which has been facilitated by federal court decisions that have all but walked away from the *Brown v. Board* cases of the 1950s. The Pew Center for Research (2007) suggests that upwards of 60% of students from minority groups attend schools with nearly all minority populations. The question of segregation is not simply a question of outcomes for minority students; more than 70% of White students attend schools with a minority population of 5% or less. Both White and Black students learn significant messages about the state of racialization as they enter the doors of their schools. There are real consequences for how what one believes potentially shapes their actions. The recent verdict in *Florida v. Zimmerman* begs the question of what influence teachers and other adults had in the life, beliefs, and identity construction of George Zimmerman that motivated his profiling, stalking, and ultimate shooting of Trayvon Martin.

According to Freitser (2011), approximately 84% of the teaching force in the United States is White and female with increasingly less teaching experience than in years past.[1] According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2012) from 1990 to 2010 the percentage of White students attending public schools decreased from 67% to 54%, while underrepresented minority groups (for purposes of this article defined as African, African American, and Latino) comprised 38% of the public school populations by 2010, up from 29% in 1990. The simple takeaway from these statistics is that increasingly diverse school populations in U.S. public schools are being taught by overwhelmingly White, female, and inexperienced teachers. As students are taught by those less similar to their own identity, demographic disconnects between and among teachers and students are created. Given the realities of this educational landscape, there is a need for closely examining pre-service teacher narratives to identify the ways in which their beliefs, particularly about race, manifest. Once manifestations of these beliefs are identified, commonalities across narratives can also be identified; once identified, these commonalities can be used to better understand the phenomenon of how Whiteness operates. This understanding may help to work against White privilege in preparing teachers to educate all students, particularly given that disconnects are likely to remain between teacher and student identities.

Critical Race Theory (CRT)—Whiteness as Property

It has been nearly 20 years since Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) first introduced Critical Race Theory (CRT) to the field of education. Since CRT was introduced to education, a number of educational scholars and researchers have used CRT to analyze the ways in which race impacts educational outcomes and opportunities (Chapman, 2007; DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Delgado Bernal & Villapando, 2002; Dixson & Rousseau, 2006; Duncan, 2006; Fasching-Varner, 2009, 2012a, 2012b, 2013, Jennings & Lynn, 2005; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002; Tate, 1994; Tate & Rousseau, 2002; 1997; Taylor, 2000; among others). CRT serves as a theoretical site by which scholars and practitioners may examine the narratives of White people to better understand and disrupt Whiteness. Such a theoretical lens provides scholars a way to explore how semantic moves are used to negotiate the value of Whiteness among White educators. In other words, when the property value of Whiteness is established, the narrative of a White person serves as a type of capital that can be privileged and serve to privilege as well.

Harris (1995) outlines the conditions by which Whiteness can be constructed as property identifying that inalienability, or absoluteness, exists relative to Whiteness. Whiteness is often falsely understood at the level of phenotype (Hall, 1997; Montague, 1997; Winant, 2000). In addition to the automatic privilege(s) associated with the racial identity characteristic, Whiteness as a concept also speaks to phenotype, social privilege, and mobility. In the case of race, the identity characteristic is one that the possessor does not earn nor create. While not having created the identity, the possessor significantly benefits from Whiteness—even if just as a passive or un-conscious recipient. Harris (1995) outlines four elements important in understanding the value of Whiteness for this article:

> 1. *Use and enjoyments*: Whiteness, having certain privileges, is enjoyable for those who possess it as they can benefit from the privileges in everyday ways and interactions.

> 2. *An absolute right to exclude*: Because of the rewards, use and enjoyments, and reputation of Whiteness, White people use an absolute right to exclude 'others' while including fellow White people so as to maintain the power and privilege associated with the other aspects.

> 3. *Disposition*: Whiteness presents rewards based on certain behaviors associated with Whiteness.

> 4. *Reputation and status*: Given the nature of the benefits and privileges of Whiteness, Whiteness necessarily has a reputation and status that needs to be maintained.

Harris (1995) points out that common applications of property value typically preclude or diminish the capacity to have property value when absoluteness is demonstrated. Those vested in the value of Whiteness often experience a high personal sense of value associated with their Whiteness, allowing Whiteness to

serve a unique property value function. In other words possessing Whiteness is an absolute such that even one element of non-Whiteness (for example, the one drop of blood argument) would preclude one from the full benefits of Whiteness. Whiteness' property value reaps a higher value than other racial identities because through its absoluteness, Whiteness need only define what it is not and never suffers from having to define itself. White peoples capitalize on the value of Whiteness for purposes of enjoyment, perceived reputation, benefits, and significant capital value (Harris, 1995). Whiteness also excludes because White peoples are never obliged to define Whiteness and can implore floating signifiers (Hall, 1997) to simply define what Whiteness is not, demonstrating its ability to protect, exchange, and negotiate the capital of Whiteness. When defining what is not White, all whom are deemed to not possess Whiteness are simply and summarily excluded (Morrison, 1992). These four elements will be revisited later in the discussion.

Pre-Service Teachers and Race

The extant literature on the experiences and racial identity of White educators too often focuses on how the participants come to know racialized others and not on the nature of the emerging teachers' own Whiteness. Various studies examine particular initiatives and studies of pre-service teachers relative to said pre-service teacher's Whiteness. Merseth, Sommer, and Dickstein (2008) examine pre-service teacher identity narratives with Ivy League students who want to teach in urban areas, a phenomenon that has surged in the United States during this first decade of the 21st century. They suggest that investigating identities is important for how a pre-service teacher gains a nuanced understanding of working in diverse settings. Merseth et al. (2008) fail to address, however, the ways in which the White racial identity of the participants manifests, instead of focusing on how White teachers will approach teaching racial others.

In her study, Wong (2008) suggests that pre-service teachers' experiences in multicultural courses highlights the need for field-based components to provide "...pre-service teachers with a culturally diverse experience" (p. 32). She discusses pre-service teacher identity in conceptualizing the project. The discussion, however, focuses more on promoting methods and experiences to help said teachers learn how to work with racial others than in examining pre-service teachers' Whiteness.

Lee and Dallman (2008), as well as Adams, Bondy, and Kuhel (2005), discuss how White teachers might work with students who are racially other relative to the teacher. Lee and Dallman (2008) explain that they believe "understanding is the most important thing in diversity" (p. 36). Despite this articulation, they use understanding with pre-service teachers to look at how to work with students when there is a race mis-match rather than examining the teachers' lives and how their coming to terms with Whiteness might serve as a means of bridging potential racial mis-match between students and teachers. Adams, Bondy, and Kuhel (2005) similarly examine the frame of helping White pre-service teachers learn what to do

in "an unfamiliar setting" (p. 41). Here, growth relative to Whiteness was linked, unfortunately, to how positive the teacher's experience was with students who were not White. The phenomenon of wanting to focus on how "we" teach "them" is easy to understand given the teacher and student demographic differences mentioned previously. The pathway forward is not, however, to avoid teachers doing their own self-homework about who and how they are (Fasching-Varner, 2012a). While not critiquing the need for looking at similarities and differences, I, along with colleagues, take exception to overt focus always placed on students in an othering manner and not on the teachers themselves (see Fasching-Varner, 2012a, 2012b, 2013). Reversing this trend may ultimately prove more fruitful in working to bring about positive, equitable, and socially just change in the engagement of students in public schools.

Gordon (2005) uses autobiography to examine her own particular experiences as a White female teacher educator working with pre-service teachers, but she is unable to situate her work within the larger scholarly discussion on racial identity. Marx and Pennington (2003), on the other hand, examine racial identity with White pre-service teachers in relation to their own orientation within the scholarly discussion. Their work engages in a self-congratulatory discourse of being "brave enough to undertake this kind of controversial work" (p. 107) when referencing the examination of Whiteness and White racial identity. The discourse of bravery reveals the authors have not sufficiently problematized their own benefits and privileges associated with Whiteness and racism. For People of Color, race has never manifested as a 'brave enough' conversation. All too often race manifests in disparate schooling and life experiences, prejudice, exclusion, and a lack of equitable resources often controlled by dominant majority groups. A final concern with Marx and Pennington's work is that Black children are conceptualized as 'our children of Color.' Such a framing demonstrates a White liberal perspective entirely consistent with Harris's conceptualization of the property value of Whiteness—ownership of children as property. A liberal savior attitude for those not 'lucky' enough to possess the worthy property of Whiteness is established. Marx and Pennington (2003) do not focus on pre-service teachers critically understanding the implications of their own race.

While the literature demonstrates certain problematic areas, there is some work that helps to support the studying of pre-service teacher narratives as a means of assuming responsibility for their beliefs and the connection of beliefs to actions in the classroom. Gay and Kincaid (2003), for example, explain the necessity for pre-service teachers to develop "cultural critical consciousness" (p. 186). They conclude that White pre-service teachers benefit when they are forced to move beyond conversation and toward "actually engaging [in] real life experiences" that prevent escaping "the intellectual, emotional, psychological, moral, and pedagogical challenges inherent" in the work of being a teacher (Gay & Kincaid, 2003, p. 186). Levine- Rasky (1998) similarly suggests that teacher educators demonstrate and commit to "issues of equity and difference in a way that" helps teacher candidates understand "their [un]consciousness and motivations" relative to race and White

identity (p. 108). Levine-Rasky (1998) calls on teacher education programs to stop waiting for faculty of Color to magically appear to do the work of addressing pre-service teachers' sense of White racial identity and understandings of multi-culturalism.

The literature has remained significantly and depressingly silent in terms of White researchers and educators willing to implicate their own Whiteness in authentic ways. Editors of journals at times appear hesitant to publish the work given both a certain discomfort in what seems impolite in the United States. Furthermore, as a reviewer of an earlier draft of this work points out some "who do Whiteness studies, and even to an extent CRT, have posed a problem for doing a kind of Whiteness studies that seek the abolition of Whiteness" creating a "paradigmatic problem" for the field (personal communication). Obama-era post-racialism conceptualizations of race are no better today in many ways, despite much explicit scholarly attention in recent years, than they were right after *Brown v. Board* (Faching-Varner, 2012). The research presented in this article seeks to join the calls to move beyond the silence or the hiding (Bonilla-Silva, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2006) and demonstrate through the use of teacher narratives the importance of teachers coming to terms with their own Whiteness before they enter the profession and have the opportunity to socialize Black, Brown, and White children.

Methodology

Leonardo (2002) suggests that White people must begin "by naming White-ness" as a means of better coming to understand that who they are, and how who they are, is often based in privilege (p. 45). In order to name Whiteness, this study used an oral history approach through semi-structured testimonial interviews. Such an approach builds snapshots of participants through their actual language, help-ing to warrant assertions made through the actual participants' voices. The larger research project was aimed at understanding the perspectives and racial identity communicated through narratives of White pre-service teachers. The focus is im-portant given the demographic composition in the teaching force that reveals the larger majority of teachers are White and consequently have a racial identity that they may not fully or deeply understand. The larger study suggests that current understandings of racial identity (Frankenburg, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2005; Helms, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1997, 2003) may not be sufficient in helping pre-service teachers grapple with who they are and how who they are influences pedagogical decisions (Fasching-Varner, 2012a).

I was interested in studying a population of White pre-service teachers that attended a teacher education program where explicit articulated commitments to social justice were made. I chose Lilly College (a pseudonym) in the Northeast area of the United States. Interesting for this study is that Lilly articulates in their pre-service teacher programs an explicit commitment to diversity and equity. Can-didates were required to take a course in which they explored issues and concepts related to equity, diversity, and social justice in education. While the commitment

was programmatic only that single course's syllabi expressed a commitment to these issues.

The larger study drew participants using a purposive sampling technique that focused on White pre-service teacher participants (Patton, 1990). Lilly College, at the time of the study, enrolled approximately 4,000 students at the bachelor, master, and doctoral levels. Lilly College is nestled in a wealthy suburban setting near the medium sized urban area of Lilac. This study required potential participants to be candidates that had already taken the required diversity and social justice course, who were White, and who were going to begin their student teaching the following semester. An email call was sent out to all eligible potential participants with 10 individuals agreeing to come to an informational meeting. Each of these participants was given an overview of the study along with IRB-approved consent forms at the informational meeting. Of the 10 individuals that expressed interest, nine actually participated in the study. At the time of the study, Angela, Barbara, Bob, Brian, Cathy, Pat, Sierra, Steven, and Todd (all pseudonyms) were candidates in the Bachelor of Arts in Education pre-service teacher education program at Lilly College. Table 1.1 highlights the participants' ages, gender, and home community type.

Data Collection

Participants were engaged in two interviews using a testimonial life history approach (Wieder, 2004). As oral history, testimony rejects "modernist notions of rational autonomous subjects, totalizing discourses, and foundationalist epistemologies," instead intending to move past privileging Whiteness through the act of deconstructing it within particular narratives (Tierney, 2003, p. 294). An added benefit of data derived from an oral history testimonial approach is that the data not only serves as the analytic lens, but does so by providing readers with participant voices in order to make their own evaluations and judgments given their own experiences and understandings. Testimony helps to create on-record transcripts so that researchers, readers, and the participants themselves might better understand the epistemologies that either help or hinder participants' understanding and, in

Table 1

Participant Backgrounds

Name	Age	Gender	Home Community
Angela	20	Female	Rural
Bob	20	Male	Rural
Brian	20	Male	Suburban
Cathy	20	Female	Rural Suburban
Steven	20	Male	Small Town
Barbara	21	Female	Suburban
Pat	21	Female	Suburban
Todd	21	Male	Suburban
Sierra	26	Female	Small Urban

this case, their use of a semantic move to engage in White racial bonding (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Sleeter, 1994; Tierney, 2003).

During the first interview participants were asked questions about general life experiences, including information about where they grew up, their family and friends, the types of schools they attended and teachers they encountered, and their choices about school and career. They were also asked questions about why they chose to be educators to prompt a telling of their major life history events (i.e., school, friends, family, career choice, pedagogical decisions, etc.). Participants were free to testify and respond to the interview questions; follow up questions were asked to clarify information. After interviews were transcribed and participants had the opportunity to check their transcripts, the second interview followed the same trajectory but with racialized language inserted into the questions. In the first interview a participant may have been prompted with "tell me about the children you went to school with," and in the second interview they may have been prompted with "tell me about the racial makeup of the children you went to school with." In both cases, the follow-up questions encouraged participants to explain or to clarify what they said.

Data Analysis

After both testimonial interviews were conducted, transcribed, and given an initial reading, an open coding system was used to highlight patterns and constructs that were apparent across cases. These coded data were then looked at against a variety of extant theory and literature. The analytical categories, or emergent themes, that derived from the coding were explored and findings identified. Participants used a variety of rhetorical or discourse constructions throughout the interview narratives to talk about race. Of the rhetorical constructions, a pattern emerged with the phrase "you know." Emphasis rested in the "you" either through raising or lowering the voice when saying the word. The "you know" response revealed itself as a discourse strategy to talk about particularly problematic aspects of race. Eight of the nine participants invoked the phrase "you know" during the interview process. Each of the participants attempted to accomplish a slightly different linguistic end with their deployment of "you know," however all of the uses ultimately centered back on establishing in the discourse what was believed by them to be shared knowledge about race and Whiteness, representing the idea of racial bonding.

Whiteness as property, previously discussed, served as a theoretical aid in understanding the particular use of "you know" (Fasching-Varner, 2009, 2013; Harris, 1995; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1994). "You know" served not only as a linguistic means to represent White racial bonding, but the phrase also indicated the maintenance of Whiteness property value. Fairclough (2003) asserts "social practices are inherently reflexive—people interact, and at the same time they represent to themselves" the value of their identity (p. 22). Understanding these linguistic utterances as purely representational of White racial bonding would ignore that the perceived value of Whiteness is also communicated through the social practice of

communicating racialized perspectives. The Whiteness as property argument will be examined in the discussion.

White peoples may not be inclined to talk on-record (Brown & Levinson, 1987) to a general public about race, yet it became apparent in this research project that participants possessed a sense of Whiteness leading them to bond with me, whom they believed share their same value of Whiteness (Harris, 1995). Given that the interviews were conducted one-on-one, the setting further contributed to a perception of the comfort and safety of Whiteness' shelter. In other words, not only were participants comfortable, but this comfort led to a process of linguistically including or linking what they believed to be 'shared' beliefs between themselves and me, a fellow White person, through the phrase of "you know".

This was not the first experience I had where this phenomenon revealed itself to be true. In a study of culturally relevant pedagogy (Fasching-Varner, 2008), White participants responded distinctly to the White and Black researchers when given parallel interviews. When speaking with Black researchers, the teachers were more guarded in what they said and never revealed through language patterns that they shared insights with the researchers. When the same teachers were interviewed by White researchers on the team the narrative responses were longer, eye contact was more sustained, and more problematic elements of race as they related to teaching were discussed. In that project we were not focused on the bonding element and consequently bonding was not a part of our analysis, but I share this to say that in my experiences teaching courses, conducting research in a variety of settings, and in this particular study, the physical, emotional, and linguistic elements of bonding do appear (Bell, 1993, 1995; Sleeter, 2005).

In order to dismiss the concept that Whiteness might have an effect on a teacher's ways of teaching, Brian used the phrase "you know" to specifically assert that Whiteness does not play a role in students' lives. Brian says that it (his perception that Black and Brown students do not do well in school) is about "where they grew up, you know." As noted in the field notes, Brian's voice raised on "you" and his eyes then directed toward me. Brian continued saying, "I mean, you know, it's just different where you grow up like us." In the second instantiation Brian couples his use of "you know" with "us" to establish that we must have had a shared experience growing up that is different from what Black and Brown students experience. Brian grew up in an affluent suburb, whereas I grew up in an urban center and attended schools with significantly varied racial identities. Brian's joining of our experiences is false. In both instances, however, Brian attributes difference to geography rather than to one's Whiteness, and established that I must or should know his statements to be true.

Bob uses the phrase "you know" to establish bonding around his discomfort with what White people should call other groups, stating, "the first time I ever saw, uhh, you know (dip in voice starting on "you" and slightly raised but still fairly muted on "know") African-American students (voice raises back up), you know." Bob's dip in voice highlights an awareness that what he was implying in how to frame his first experience with students from different racial backgrounds is likely less than

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politically correct and consequently only suitable for sharing with someone else who would share his perspective. Through his use of "you know," Bob attempts to establish that I would understand the difficulty in framing those from other racial groups. This was not the only instance where Bob attempted to establish a shared value of our perceived unity in Whiteness. In a different part of the interview Bob stated "when I go to these schools, I mean 'you know' (articulated casually and comfortably with his left hand pointing in my direction) how it is like impossible with them." Bob was referencing his field placements in a large urban district, the same district I actually attended school and taught in as an elementary teacher, a fact he did not know. The use of "these" schools coupled with the idea that I would know "how it is with them" reveals that Bob has thoughts about Black and Latino students (them) being impossible to work with. Bob finishes that part of the interview by saying "the teacher says just do what you can, anything is better than nothing, and of course, ya know (slight pause) I get it." The 'you' in this case was shortened to 'ya' and said quickly; during the pause both hands came in toward his body with palms up consistent with 'what can you do.' In this last statement the bonding occurs with the articulation that I must know there really is nothing you can do with a primarily Black and Brown population. Bob not only attempted to bond with me, but he also revealed how he has bonded with his mentor teacher, a White female. This bonding is disturbing in that through his relationship with the mentor we see that his socialization to teaching is replete with the idea that teachers have marginal effects in urban settings.

Todd, Bob, Sierra, and Angela all articulated a common idea around not understanding what it is like to be non-White. Todd, for example, said "You know, it's not like we could ever know what it means to be Black." Bob, on the other hand, said "its just what can you do, I mean you know, if you aren't Afro American how can you really get it." Similarly Sierra said, "I just can't get the experience, I mean, you know, we are different." In each case the participant articulates the idea that neither of us are Black, we share Whiteness, and consequently share that experience which precludes us from understanding the difference experience. At some level this conceptualization is true yet we have had very different experiences with communities of Color, which contributes to how well we might empathize or work toward understanding the experiences of other people.

Angela uses "you know" to express this same concern of not understanding others' experiences. Like the participants above, Angela's use of "you know" helps to establish that as a White person I would understand her dilemma. Angela says, "I will never have the experience of being a Black racial person minority or majority or anything, well you know." When Angela said you know, her voice deepened and became firm and direct on the word you. While the emphasis started with you, the utterance occurred faster than the rest of her words. Like all the participants above, Angela establishes that I too am White and consequently will never have the experience of being non-White. From her perspective we had a means of bonding

about this ambiguity of this experience. While I am White, I do believe that had any of these participants been interviewed by a researcher of Color the "you know" would not have been present as there would be no basis for establishing that the researcher of Color would not know what it is like to have this experience of being White and contemplating a setting where people have different racial identities.

Cathy bonds based on the lessons of parents. When asked what she learned about other groups of people from her parents Cathy proudly asserted, "You know, don't judge anyone till you get to know them." While Cathy does not know me her assumption represented in the use of "you know" is aimed at how we might share the socialization of being non-judgmental as a taught value from our parents—as White people, we are taught the politically correct discourse of whiteness and it is shared (Fairclough, 2003). While my parents articulated similar wording, they in fact modeled a different set of attitudes in their actions that sat in conflict to what they articulated. So even at a young age I learned not to talk about my judgments to other people. I knew that I could have judgments but I simply needed to learn how to manage these judgments in public settings. An example of this semantic managing to nuanced racism might include a feature like "but"—I like everyone BUT I don't like it when [insert group] does [insert behavior]. These approaches are consistent with the types of semantic moves that have been commonly reported when researching White narratives (Bonilla-Silva, 2001, 2002, 2006). Cathy also followed this sentence up with "but it is hard to not have opinions and ideas, you know what I mean, right?" Cathy not only reveals the start of the contradiction consistent with the claim not to judge, but attempts to establish that I would know how hard it is to really not judge.

Todd claims, "I know some of the kids didn't have the best parents, you know." Todd is not alone as many of the participants used what they believed to be a shared value that parents of minority students were not the best parents. Todd's particular use of "you know" helps establish what he thinks is a shared understanding of poor parenting that does not in fact connect with my own belief system despite Todd's articulation of "sharedness."

Similarly, when talking about parent involvement at her practicum site, Cathy says "my parents were always there for me unlike, well, you know, a lot of these kids." I am not really sure what Cathy means in saying her parents were always there for her or how she knows or understands the actual interactions of parents in a practicum where she spends only a few hours a week. I suspect that a combination of master-narrative tellers have contributed to Cathy's understandings. For the purposes of this article, I am intrigued that Cathy does not simply express her own misguided idea of parent involvement but also works in that I should know that in urban settings, which she was discussing, it is common knowledge—not just to her but also to me—that parents are not always there for their kids.

Continuing with the home life and parenting conversation, Pat also deploys the use of "you know." Pat began describing her understanding of "bad kids" in schools and said, "more now that I have taken education classes, you know, it's home life."

Although the diversity course at Lilly does not equate negative student behavior with home life, Pat believes that she learned this concept in her diversity course and she also believes that as a fellow White person I too would believe that student behavior is linked to home life. What Pat does not know is that I taught a similar class at the graduate level and do not frame home life within deficit lenses.

Another instance of the phrase "you know" occurred when I asked Todd if he had teachers from racial groups other than his own. Todd said, "I don't think twice about it and it's not something that I take into account and if you see the teacher's Black I'm not like ohhh, and I am not, you know I had Jones and Smith (both Black faculty), and I don't have any preconceptions of them." The answer Todd provided did not relate directly to the question asked, but did establish that Todd wanted to share a bond whereby I would understand that he did not judge a teacher's race or that somehow the race of his teacher does not enter his consciousness. Interestingly, Todd did not finish the statement, indicating that I must already understand what he was saying and the meaning of his response, therefore creating no necessity to continue his response.

Finally Sierra also used the phrase "you know" to establish judgments about groups that must be shared knowledge among White people. Sierra asserts that her home town "...is becoming more diverse, uhmm, there are two maximum security prisons, and, you know how prison populations are mostly Black." Sierra assumes that I would recognize prison populations to be mostly Black, and that the population of prisoners is what establishes her community as diverse. Sierra is asserting that her and I share a common (problematic) definition of diversity, and the definition rests with communities being diverse where there are large criminal elements, which by her account are mostly Black. This definition is markedly different from my own, but the way in which language is used to represent shared affinity is fascinating and problematic all at once.

In the first iterations of data analysis I was concerned that perhaps the use of "you know" was simply a language filler. I was careful to attend to the possibility that participants may have used the phrase as a non-significant marker of nerves or uncertainty with answering a particular question. When documenting the cases of each participant as layers of data analysis, the phrase of "you know" does not overwhelm or dominate any one participant's narrative. After reviewing the data multiple times, and closely examining the occurrence of "you know" within the context of the interviews across participant cases, a pattern emerged. Participants used "you know" directly before, during, or after directly loaded language and/or descriptions relating to race and commonly seen as less than politically correct or polite (Fairclough, 2003).

Critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1985) is helpful as it suggests that we should carefully attend to the totality of the data set and not merely rely on individual instantiations *per se*. When looking across cases for the whole study, specific "local" (those said by an individual) utterances give way to larger more "global" (across the whole) ideas (Fairclough, 2003). The phrase "you know" becomes analyti-

cally interesting because its occurrences appear as a tool used to establish affinity and bonding between White participants. We grew up in very different class and geographic backgrounds but do share the appearance of Whiteness. Consequently, the idea that knowledge being discussed could be a shared value seems to indicate a relative connection premised on our race. White racial bonding, demonstrated through the linguistic and paralinguistic markers presented above, plays a role in the maintenance of White privilege and subjugation of racial others. The use of "you know" is much more than a semantic move used to express bonding.

Discussion

White racial bonding as manifested in the narratives of participants gives them both "extra room" to move around and through discussions of race, as well as a mechanism to identify and capitalize on Whiteness' property value. Through their language act participants "…can represent or imagine interconnected webs" through which they share perspective centered in the benefit of Whiteness (Fairclough, 2003, p. 23). The extra room created through bonding allows participants to make known ones' beliefs without really having to articulate the specifics and substance of beliefs. The semantic moves of racial bonding adds an interesting dynamic to the larger corpus of studies of color-blind racism, which suggest that when participants are asked to talk about race they use language to minimize, engage in 'now-you-see-it-now-you-don't' approaches, and naturalize what they see as racial differences (see Bonilla-Silva, 2001, 2006, as examples). In this study, like the work of Bonilla-Silva (2001, 2002, 2006), conversations about race are omni-present. The data presented here helps to open up an avenue to think through the nature of how pre-service teachers come to understand themselves, particularly if we "… understand the dialectical internalization of discourse" which enacts through action particular types of discourse (Fairclough, 2003, p. 22). Fairclough (2003) provides an example relevant to this article when he says "the way a teacher teaches is an enactment of particular representations, particular discourses, of teaching—maybe even developed 'theories' of teaching" that can be located at the intersections of ones beliefs and discourses" (p. 22).

The deployment of a semantic move like "you know" demonstrates White people feel safe in revealing ideas that they believe non-White groups may see as problematic. To that extent the White teachers in this study were able to construct what they believed was a protection of the property value attached to whiteness by drawing back to Harris' (1995) original ideas about Whiteness' property function. The articulation of "you know" only makes sense given participants' perceived affinity to a fellow White with similar capital. If participants had perceived me to be non-White, or not valuing Whiteness' property value as a race-traitor (Ignatiev, 1995), it is likely their narrative responses to questions would have discounted my ability to share in the same personal property affirmed to White.

When considering the meaning of White racial bonding, a natural connection exists to the CRT tenet of whiteness as property presented earlier. The concept of Whiteness as property suggests that Whiteness, an absolute with a certain level of

inalienability, carries values to those who possess it (Harris, 1995). The high sense of value attached to Whiteness promotes Whiteness' property function. A key idea behind property value becomes how White people negotiate the maintenance of said value, particularly given that to possess Whiteness is also believed by those who possess it to have an absolute and inherent goodness (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004).

Harris (1995) asserts that White people capitalize on Whiteness for the purposes of socializing and enjoyment. White racial bonding among and between White people helps White people to solidify and share in the high value placed on the reputation of their Whiteness. Consequently White teachers in this process develop and refine mechanisms to (1) protect their Whiteness value, (2) to dismiss children and families who do not possess said value, and (3) to promote, whether consciously or not, the persistent gaps in achievement between White and non-White students. One of the functions of Whiteness' property value is its "absolute right to exclude," and within the educational system it is telling to think about those who have been most excluded from the opportunities and promise of a free public education (Harris, 1995, p. 282).

Earlier I presented the following four elements or considerations for Whiteness as property (Harris, 1995):

1. *Use and enjoyments*: Whiteness, having certain privileges, is enjoyable for those who possess it as they can benefit from the privileges in everyday ways and interactions.

2. *An absolute right to exclude*: Because of the rewards, use and enjoyments, and reputation of Whiteness, White people use an absolute right to exclude 'others' while including fellow White people so as to maintain the power and privilege associated with the other aspects.

3. *Disposition*: Whiteness presents rewards based on certain behaviors associated with Whiteness.

4. *Reputation and status*: Given the nature of the benefits and privileges of Whiteness, Whiteness necessarily has a reputation and status that needs to be maintained.

I now return to each of these elements to understand how the participants' use of the semantic move "you know" communicates White racial bonding.

The first evident characteristic is the use and enjoyment of Whiteness. If participants' Whiteness was bad, overt and covert privileges would not be possible. In establishing bonding, participants framed controversial or problematic ideas throughout nuanced and implied means using "you know" to assist in that process. Participants created some distance from irrational White racists, seen as people who jeopardize the enjoyment of Whiteness through their outward racism. While being able to communicate their views participants are still likely to hold on to the idea that they are not racist. There is a great need to distance oneself from anyone or anything that may ultimately threaten value. The use and enjoyment of Whiteness can be received without being responsible for the negative aspects of racism. White racial bonding was demonstrated by participants' willingness to share in

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the nature of whiteness and establish beliefs in the comfort of being with another White. Whatever a participant said consequently could protect their Whiteness from outside threats so long as they establish a shared meaning that is implied but never fully "said."

The second evident characteristic is Whiteness as property value has the absolute right to exclude. The White racial bonding that occurred in this study has been presented to show how bonding connects White people to fellow White people. Like any concept, I would argue that the counter-concept is also necessary to fully understand what is in place. Whereas the bonding is inclusive of White people, the bonding is anti-inclusive of those who are not White or would not be perceived to share the knowledge and privilege of Whiteness. I strongly believe that had I not been White or had I been perceived as a race traitor, the racial bonding expressed in language would have been absent. I based this in my experiences working as a teacher educator in predominately White settings. Having co-taught courses with faculty of Color I have experienced students actively seeking to speak with me and not with the faculty member of Color. Similarly, I have worked collegially with faculty of Color on research teams where interactions of White participants varied significantly between researchers of Color and White researchers. In bonding and claiming affinity, a White person not only bonds with the other White person, but s/he helps establish that anyone who is not White will not be included in the bond and consequently the absolute right to exclude is executed.

The third evident characteristic centers on the participants' use of White racial bonding to establish particular types of behaviors consistent across the narratives. In consistently engaging in the act of racial bonding, participants established the nature of disposition. That is, the participants understood the behaviors of Whiteness that confer rewards and benefits. Further, participants used discourse in modeling the coherent behaviors of Whiteness, and attempted to confirm shared meaning of those dispositions through the bonding move of "you know."

The fourth and final evident characteristic is the reputation and status of Whiteness. Racial bonding, as a type of semantic move, helps maintain the reputation and status of Whiteness because it can only be shared with other people who are perceived to be like each other. Whiteness would not benefit from a situation that might damage Whiteness. The danger, of course, is that Whiteness is not universal. In fact, participants' perception that they are bonding may be a poor assumption (as was the case between them and me) dependent on who participants are sharing their thoughts with and what that person's orientation and beliefs may be.

The conversation of how White racial bonding is demonstrative of Whiteness' property value is far more than a theoretical conversation. In understanding how the semantic move was used by participants to represent the value of Whiteness we also have a window into the way in which White people use their privileged position to shape their epistemological standpoint and understandings of others. If we understand property as intellectual material, as Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) have suggested, teachers' decisions about how to approach their craft will inherently

privilege the property and property value that they possess. Consequently, there exists a possessive investment and interest in Whiteness to protect the nature of the intellectual materials that form how White people, and in this case White teachers, see the world. The view of self and others directly affects how White teachers shape their craft and how they value students who either possess or do not possess their similar property value expressed in race.

The deployment of White racial bonding here is suggestive of the need teachers have to maintain the value of their Whiteness. The semantic move is in fact a defensive face-protecting posture by which the core value of Whiteness can be defended (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The literature suggests that White people draw from "stock stories" (Delgado, 1993) serving as master narratives. These master narratives socialize White people to the meaning of Whiteness at the very same time that they exclude those not possessing Whiteness. Those excluded are too often students and families in urban communities without access to the privileges (socio-economic, political, historical, and social) of Whiteness. Consequently master narratives are a type of ammunition in the deployment of semantic moves such as White racial bonding. Teacher educators like myself must do more to challenge or bring awareness to pre-service teachers' attention before they leave our programs.

It is likely that these teachers would not admit or acknowledge the role of White racial bonding, as calling attention to such approaches necessarily opens the opportunity for Whiteness' value to be weakened. Without more specific attention paid to the narratives, pedagogical techniques, practices, and approaches are able to develop parallel to these problematic racial beliefs, significantly impacting the types and opportunities of instruction students receive. While the individual teachers have responsibility to growing with their own beliefs, teacher education programs bear responsibility to work with students and ensure that a pre-service teacher entering the classroom has developed a critical sense of their own identity and privilege. As a simple example, if I call a student a "free-and-reduced lunch student," whatever values I attach to that socio-economic marker impact how I might approach teaching the student. Because discourse makes sense of actions and actions shape the discourse (Fairclough, 2003), teacher educators have a responsibility to help candidates link thought to action back to thought. I, along with a colleague (see Fasching-Varner, 2012), have recently suggested that what results from this cycle of beliefs and pedagogy is "free and reduced teaching," preventing an authentic engagement with culturally relevant (Ladson-Billings, 1994) pedagogical approaches.

Conclusion

Given the demographics presented earlier, the teaching force has remained White and female over time and there is nothing that would suggest that demographic reality is shifting or changing. Similarly, the population of public school students, particularly in urban areas, has continued to be more complex and varied since *Brown v. Board of Education*. Demographics suggest children of Color are likely to continue being taught by predominately White teachers, and White teach-

ers will continue being the primary schooling socializer for students of all racial backgrounds. These demographics highlight what has already been discussed as teacher/student racial mismatch. It is imperative that teacher educators make sense of the narratives of pre-service teachers and how such narratives might be useful to disrupt Whiteness in the predominantly White pre-service teaching force.[2] I believe, consequently, that a concerted effort needs to be made to help teachers break through socialization cycles in order to provide more culturally responsive, congruent, and effective pedagogies (Fasching-Varner, 2008; Ladson-Billings, 1994). White teachers, furthermore, can develop a better understanding of how to productively and meaningfully work with students who are different from them only when they can acknowledge their own limitations with race and be open to understanding the privileged mechanisms they use to discuss race (Fasching-Varner, 2006, 2008, 2012).

Teacher decisions about where to work, how to teach, and what/how to socialize children are not theoretical considerations. These considerations are naturally motivated, albeit oftentimes subconsciously, by various intersections of identity and experiences in the teachers' own lives. Thinking about the role of a teacher's identity, and in particular a teacher's racial identity, is not solely to benefit students from historically underrepresented groups. 70% of White students are likely to have a K-12 school experience with less than 5% of their peers being of a different race (Fry, 2007). This datum suggests that White people, too, are learning from their primarily White teachers important messages about what it means to be White within the current school system. White educators teach White children much about the experience of being White, furthering cycles of privilege and marginalization, as they teach these messages to students of Color.

Note

[1] In 1986 approximately 76% of teachers possessed 10 or more years of experience with only 16% possessing 6-9 years and 8% possessing five or less years of experience. By 2011 nearly 26% of teachers possessed less than five years of teaching, with 16% possessing six-to-nine years and 56% possessing 10 or more years.

[2] Take my own institution and program for example. Over the past two years in a Master of Arts in teaching program leading to initial certification I have taught 67 students all of whom were female, with one African American student, and three Asian American students, representing a 94% White student body and with only the one African-American student (1.5%) coming from what we might identify as underrepresented population in higher education.

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