

## Service-Learning and White Normativity: Racial Representation in Service-Learning's Historical Narrative

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*Mitchell, Donohue, and Young-Law (2012) observe that in practice and theory, service-learning may be a "pedagogy of whiteness – strategies of instruction that consciously or unconsciously reinforce norms and privileges developed by, and for the benefit of, White people in the United States" (p. 613). In this historiography of service-learning, I examine four scholarly texts and three well-accessed online historical summaries published by service-learning practitioners. I explore how these historical narratives represent people of color, what they include and exclude, and how these representations and inclusions/exclusions may reinforce or challenge White normativity in service-learning. Additionally, I suggest supplemental events, figures, and philosophies that could be considered part of the history of service-learning in order to challenge its prevailing Whiteness.*

In Butin's (2006) article on the limits of service-learning in higher education, he warns that "there is a distinct possibility that service-learning may ultimately come to be viewed as the 'Whitest of the White' enclave of postsecondary education" (p. 482). His observation that Whiteness prevails in service-learning theory and practice is reinforced by other scholars such as Mitchell, Donahue, and Young-Law (2012) who note that "service learning is being implemented mostly by White faculty with mostly White students at predominantly White institutions to serve mostly poor individuals and mostly people of color" (p. 612). They observe that in practice and theory, service-learning may be a "pedagogy of whiteness – strategies of instruction that consciously or unconsciously reinforce norms and privileges developed by, and for the benefit of, White people in the United States" (p. 613). Thus, service-learning may suffer from both Whiteness – a prevalence of White people positioned as leaders/practitioners/servers and "White" ways of thinking and acting dominating policy and pedagogy – and White normativity, which McIntosh (1989, 2013) describes as the idea that those "White" ways of thinking and acting are "morally neutral, normative, and average, and also ideal" (p. 216). By privileging Whiteness, White normativity in service-learning can lead to assimilative, discriminatory, and/or exclusionary practices that reinforce oppressive socioeconomic power dynamics.

While Butin (2006) and Mitchell et al. (2012) critique Whiteness and White normativity in service-learning's pedagogy, in this article I focus my critique on service-learning's historical narrative. Building on Morton's (2011) assertion that "equally important and largely missing [from service-learning's history]

are histories of efforts that have taken place outside the dominant, mainstream culture of the United States" (p. 38), I use historiographic methods to investigate how scholars and practitioners have represented people of color within their general histories of the practice, who and what they have included and excluded, and how this representation and these inclusions and exclusions reinforce or challenge Whiteness and White normativity within the historical narrative. Throughout the article, I also offer supplemental figures and events that, if included, could further challenge the prevailing Whiteness and White normativity. Such a challenge may have implications beyond the historical narrative itself because, as Morton notes, "We need a rich history of service-learning if we are to collectively or independently develop a 'point of view' that will allow us to approach our work more deliberately and with less likelihood of doing harm" (p. 37).

### Introduction to Historiography and the Texts

A historiography's goal is to dissect the construction of a historical narrative in order to illuminate the facts, figures, and events that are included and excluded as well as the reasons for and implications of those inclusions and exclusions. In this historiography, my goal is to explore the representations of people of color within service-learning's "mainstream" historical narrative and to critique the ways that those representations contribute to or challenge the Whiteness and White normativity other scholars (Butin, 2006; Mitchell et al., 2012; Sheffield, 2013) have identified as prevalent in its practice. To compile this "mainstream" historical narrative, I sought documents that

satisfied two criteria: (a) present an overview or general history of service-learning's philosophy/practice and (b) are widely cited and/or readily available to both lay and academic audiences. As Sheffield notes, "full historical accounts of [community service-learning] are relatively few and far between" (p. 20), but I ultimately located one scholarly book and three book chapters that met my criteria.

The first text I selected was Sheffield's (2013) chapter "A Brief History" in his book *Strong Community Service Learning* (2013). Sheffield's stated reason for compiling this history is, through historical understanding, to glean "clues to [the] pedagogy's philosophic muddiness" and to discover "valuable older ideas, while taking account of contemporary context" (p. 20). As such, he chronicles the movement's philosophical roots as well as its practice.

The second text, Stanton, Giles, and Cruz's (1999) seminal book, *Service-Learning: A Movement's Pioneers Reflect on Its Origins, Practice, and Future*, is the result of an interview- and focus group-based study with 33 pioneers (including the authors) of the service-learning movement that seeks to "reflect on and analyze their work combining service and learning" and to "assess existing practice and recommend steps for future policy and practice" (p. xvi). These pioneers were chosen because they began their work prior to 1985 (the year Campus Compact was formed and service-learning became "mainstream") and because a nominating panel considered them to have "had a significant influence on the development of the field" and to represent "the most important, influential strands of service-learning history" (p. 9). The pioneers' quotes are interspersed with the authors' thematic analysis to produce a text that addresses, as with Sheffield, the history of the movement's philosophy and practice.

I located the final text by searching for other works citing Stanton et al.'s book. This led me to Zieren and Stoddard's chapter, "The Historical Origins of Service-Learning in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: The Transplanted and Indigenous Traditions," in Speck and Hoppe's (2004) book *Service-Learning: History, Theory, and Issues*. This chapter chronicles service-learning's practice with a focus on social work's influence on the movement. Also from Speck and Hoppe's book, I examined Rocheleau's (2004) chapter "Theoretical Roots of Service-Learning: Progressive Education and the Development of Citizenship." Because the first two references in Rocheleau's chapter chronicled the history of both service-learning's practice and philosophy, I chose to look at this chapter along with Zieren and Stoddard's practice-oriented chapter in order to have three scholarly accounts of both philosophy and practice. As with the Stanton et al. text, Speck and

Hoppe's book is often cited in other scholarly texts and Web documents on service-learning.

Additionally, at the suggestion of Sheffield's endnote on locating historical accounts of service-learning, I included in this study three Web-published historical narratives authored by institutions practicing and/or advocating service-learning. I located these summaries by searching the Internet for "history of service-learning." The search returned numerous hits, mostly produced by universities, school districts, and service-learning companies and organizations. Some of these Web texts were summaries of the scholarly works that I had already selected. Of the rest, I selected three based on their institutional author's prominence within the service-learning movement and the quantity of information provided.

The first Web text was published by Bright Impact, a leading service-learning software manufacturer ([www.brightimpact.com/history-of-service-learning/](http://www.brightimpact.com/history-of-service-learning/), 2013). For many educators, students, and parents using this software to monitor and assess projects, this "history" may be the first and/or only account they see. Because of this visibility and its potential impact on how service-learning's history is viewed by a more lay than academic audience, I chose to include it. For similar reasons, I selected the "History of Service-Learning in Higher Education" published by the National Service Learning Clearinghouse and presented by Florida State University ([http://www.fsu.edu/~flserver/resources/resource%20files/History\\_of\\_SL\\_in\\_HE\\_FINAL\\_May08.pdf](http://www.fsu.edu/~flserver/resources/resource%20files/History_of_SL_in_HE_FINAL_May08.pdf), 2008) and the Los Angeles County Office of Education's (LACOE) "History of Service-Learning" document ([http://www.lacoe.edu/Portals/0/Curriculum-Instruction/SLHistory\\_doc.pdf](http://www.lacoe.edu/Portals/0/Curriculum-Instruction/SLHistory_doc.pdf), n. d.). I chose the first text because it was produced by the federal P-16 service-learning grant-funder Learn and Serve America, a division of the Corporation for National and Community Service, formed in 1990 to promote service-learning. As a potentially widely disseminated document authored by a government agency, this account provides insight into how government-sanctioned national advocates have constructed the movement's history.<sup>1</sup> The final online document is the first hit in a Google search for "history of service-learning," and as such it also has the potential to reach a wide audience interested in this topic.

In examining these seven histories of service-learning (one book, three book chapters, and three Websites) for ways that they perpetuate or challenge Whiteness and White normativity, I first reviewed the texts for mentions of people of color and/or non-Anglos.<sup>2</sup> How do people of color and non-Anglos enter the narrative? How are they positioned? Given these representations, what is the implication regarding people of color's role in the history of service-

learning's philosophy and practice? Second, I examined how the authors understood the evolution of service-learning, organizing their chronologies into two main threads: the history of service-learning's philosophy and the history of service-learning's practice. Within the thread chronicling the history of the practice, two sub-threads emerged: the history of service-learning within education and the history of service as a social concept, in which service was often conflated with volunteerism. Within these threads, I looked at who and which programs were included and excluded in order to comment on how these histories reinforce or challenge Whiteness and White normativity in service-learning.

### The Representation of People of Color and Non-Anglos in the History of Service-Learning

People of color and non-Anglos do appear in five of the seven documents' historical narratives – only Bright Impact (2013) and Rocheleau (2004) do not refer to people of color at all within their texts – but how they are represented within those narratives can either contribute to or challenge service-learning's Whiteness and White normativity. In this section, I first explore the numeric representation of people of color and non-Anglos in each document and then examine the ways in which those people of color and non-Anglos are described and positioned within the historical narratives and the implications of that positioning.

#### *Numeric Representation*

While five of the documents allude to people of color, only three of the seven historical narratives mention individuals of color by name, and they reference far fewer of them than they do White individuals. Of Stanton et al.'s (1999) 33 pioneers, but only four – Jack Hasegawa, Herman Blake, Greg Ricks, and Nadinne Cruz – identify as people of color. Additionally, one pioneer references Dr. Charles, a 1970s Black service-learning practitioner, by name. Sheffield's (2013) chapter mentions 37 scholars, philosophers, educators, and practitioners whose work has influenced the development of service-learning's philosophy and practice<sup>3</sup>. Of these, Tania Mitchell, Paulo Freire, and José Calderón are people of color and non-Anglos. In the LACOE document, 10 of the 11<sup>4</sup> people mentioned as influential in service-learning's history are White. Zieren and Stoddard (2004) mention 16 people by name<sup>5</sup> as significant in service-learning's historical development. None are people of color. Similarly, in Rocheleau's (2004) chapter on the theoretical roots of service-learning, all twenty<sup>6</sup> of the philosophers, educators,

and commentators mentioned in the text are White; though Freire's critical pedagogy is mentioned as influential, his name only appears in a parenthetical citation. In the Bright Impact document, the four people<sup>7</sup> mentioned by name are White. The National Service-Learning Clearinghouse (2008) references no people of color by name in its historical narrative, though it does allude to them as a group.

The paucity of individuals of color in these histories underlines the overall perceived Whiteness within service-learning. But does this underrepresentation reflect the reality? Have there been so few individuals of color whose philosophies, practices, or views on education could have been considered in the history of service-learning alongside the White individuals presented in these references? I contend that the answer to these questions is a definitive no and will suggest individuals of color and institutions/organizations that could be incorporated into a revised history of service-learning.

But while few individuals of color are directly discussed in the documents, people of color do enter the historical narratives in two ways – through allusions to institutions or movements associated with people of color and through collective or coded terminology. LACOE's document (n.d.) explicitly mentions people of color as part of the history of service-learning in two places. First, they open with a nod toward the “communal ethic” and tradition of volunteerism among Native American peoples (p. 1). They then mention the civil rights movement and Martin Luther King's statement that “everyone can be great because everyone can serve” (p. 1). While the civil rights movement is not restricted to people of color nor synonymous with them, I include it as a reference to people of color because it is a cause directly involving many people of color. Like the LACOE document, The National Service-Learning Clearinghouse's (2008) only allusion to people of color is a reference to the civil rights movement as an example of civic involvement. Stanton et al. (1999) also refer to the civil rights movement throughout their text, as many of their pioneers were active in the movement. In addition to allusions to the civil rights movement, Stanton et al.'s text includes four other references to people of color as a group that I will elaborate on in the next section.

Zieren and Stoddard (2004) allude to Black Americans as a group in three places in their chapter. In their chronicling of social work's impact on the history of service-learning, they mention how “minority” populations were “investigated and their problems incorporated into the social work curriculum” (p. 37). I include this example as a reference because the word “minorities” is often code for people of color. In their discussion of the 1890 Morrill Land Grant expansion,

which I will return to momentarily, these authors also refer to Black Americans as a group, commenting that the expansion's goal was to "include the underserved educational needs of African-Americans" (p. 26). In a third group reference to people of color, the authors briefly mention Black Americans' participation in service-learning-like activities at Highlander during the civil rights movement of the 1960s. But while they repeatedly refer to Myles Horton, Highlander's White founder, by name, they do not mention any of the influential Black Americans who worked or attended there, including Septima Clark and Esau Jenkins, both of whom went on to found Citizenship Schools meant to engage African-Americans in social change.

Institutional representation in the historical narratives follows the same pattern. Many traditionally White (or at least not historically Black) universities and college programs are named and elaborated on as early innovators (late 1700s through early 1900s) of service or civic engagement blended with curriculum, including Harvard, Yale, University of Georgia, University of Virginia, West Point, Rensselaer, Michigan Agricultural College, University of Wisconsin at Madison (Zieren & Stoddard, 2004); University of Cincinnati (Bright Impact, 2013; Stanton et al., 1999; Zieren & Stoddard, 2004); and Dewey's Lab School at the University of Chicago (Rocheleau, 2004). Meanwhile, though the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) founded as part of the 1890 Morrill Land Grant expansion are referenced in Stanton et al.'s timeline and in Zieren and Stoddard's chapter as examples of early service-learning-like programs, none are mentioned by name or elaborated on. The exception is Sheffield's (2013) lengthy discussion of the Penn Normal School, to which I will return momentarily.

By referring to people of color and their institutions and movements predominately as a collective (and only occasionally), and White people and their institutions by name (and frequently), are the authors implicitly advancing the notion that, while people of color have participated in service-learning and its forerunners, no individual person, institution, or specific group of people of color merits name acknowledgement? Moreover, given that individual White philosophers, activists, educators, and institutions whose role in the history of service-learning may have been little more than ancillary are acknowledged, such as Thomas Jefferson (Rocheleau, 2004; Zieren & Stoddard, 2004) and Horace Mann (Sheffield, 2013), are they implicitly advancing a history devoid of people of color?

### *The Positioning of People of Color*

In addition to the paucity of and limited allusions to people of color as a group in the histories, their posi-

tioning within the service-learning construct when they do appear also merits attention. Often White people enter the narratives as providers and leaders while people of color are relegated to the role of "served" or "needy" (or are ignored completely). This positioning reinforces the White normative dynamic that Mitchell et al. (2012) and Butin (2006) warn is too prevalent in our current practice. Sheffield (2011) and Stanton et al. (1999) do challenge this White normativity, representing people of color affirmatively and as leaders and service providers, but the general trend of White leaders/servers over needy recipients of color remains prominent.

In LACOE's (n.d.) mention of Native Americans and in each reference to the civil rights movement, the depiction of people of color is affirmative; people of color in these brief comments are positioned as actors in their community rather than as needy recipients of others' service. However, because these comments are made in passing and do not elaborate on specific contributions to the service-learning movement, they are little more than nods to the traditions of service and activism that run deep in many communities of color (Stevens, 2003).

Zieren and Stoddard's (2004) three previously mentioned references to people of color provide a bit more detail, but in each instance they position people of color mostly as recipients of the service. In one of their references to people of color, Zieren and Stoddard describe service-learning as a way for social workers to better serve "minorities." In this brief and coded reference to people of color, the authors firmly position them as recipients of service-learning provided by social workers. In their second reference, during their relatively lengthy discussion of Highlander, which they call the "epitome of service-learning in action" (p. 34), Zieren and Stoddard state that service-learning-like participation was "one of the key elements in black Americans acquiring the skills needed for difficult tasks ahead in the civil rights movements" (p. 34). The authors' wording could indicate that people of color at Highlander were active participants in service which taught them those skills that they needed. However, because the authors gloss over Black Americans' leadership roles at Highlander and only mention their participation in this one instance (and as a collective), their wording could also imply that people of color were the "needy" recipients of the educational and training "services" provided by Highlander.

But while their positioning of people of color in the Highlander example may be ambiguous, in their discussion of Black Americans and the land grant colleges, Zieren and Stoddard (2004) firmly locate them as recipients. They assert that "the service orientation of the land grant colleges was evident when

they expanded their scope to include the underserved educational needs of African-Americans” (p. 26), implying that the creation of agricultural and technical colleges for Black students was itself a “service” of which the Black students were the recipients. Reinforcing this positioning of Black students in HBCUs as the recipients of the institutions’ “service,” Stanton et al. (1999) postulate that one way institutions of higher education understood “service” was in terms of the school itself providing “access to education...and employment” for “nontraditional populations” (p. 17).

While Zieren and Stoddard solely position people of color as recipients of the HBCUs’ “service,” Stanton et al. (1999) complicate this positioning, providing an additional detail about HBCUs – that they were founded on “principles of combining work, service, and learning” (p. 250). Stevens (2003), whose article “Unrecognized Roots of Service-Learning in African American Social Thought and Action 1890-1930”<sup>8</sup> offers a starting point for challenging the prevailing Whiteness of the other seven historical narratives, elaborates on Stanton et al.’s description, stating that “students who attended black colleges [were] encouraged to participate in community service” (p. 29) and detailing one such program that demonstrated “principles that undergird service-learning pedagogy” (p. 32) and represented “an antecedent to service-learning courses” (p. 30). The program, designed by George E. Haynes at Fisk University, required students to “utilize social science knowledge and skills in field experiences and service in the black community” (p. 30). Given these details from Stevens, Stanton et al.’s reference to people of color vis-à-vis the HBCUs positions them partly as actors (student service providers) and partly as needy recipients of service (from the institution and from those student service providers). But, while these late nineteenth century HBCUs may have had programs that could be considered forerunners of service-learning in which Black Americans such as Haynes played prominent leadership roles and Black students were positioned affirmatively as social actors, none of the HBCUs, their programs, or their participants are named or elaborated on in any of the seven general histories. Thus, while Stanton et al. do position people of color at least generally as actors in the HBCU reference, more specific examples and elaborations on early programs run by people of color similar to the specifics and elaboration provided for programs run by White individuals and institutions are needed to strengthen this affirmative positioning.

Sheffield’s (2011) narrative, while it may numerically underrepresent the influence of people of color in service-learning’s history, does consistently position people of color affirmatively and as providers and

leaders, not just needy recipients, of service. His account of the Penn Normal School (PNS) is the primary example of this inclusion and positioning. PNS was a school for ex-slaves founded in South Carolina in 1862. Sheffield calls it “one of the earliest experiments with community service learning education” (p. 21). While the administrators of the school were White northern abolitionists, the student body was Black, as were some of the teachers, and all were engaged in learning through projects designed to resolve “felt community problems” and “blur the classroom/community line” (p. 22). By including this example, and detailed discussions of José Calderón and Tania Mitchell’s more recent scholarly contributions to service-learning’s development, Sheffield begins to challenge some of the White normativity present in most of the general historical narratives by presenting people of color specifically and positioning them as active leaders and contributors to that history.

By its nature, Stanton et al.’s (1999) first-person narrative history also challenges White normativity by implicitly positioning its four pioneers of color as active leaders in service-learning’s development, though they are vastly outnumbered by their White colleagues. Still, Stanton et al. and their pioneers are transparent about this underrepresentation, evident in two of the four moments within the narrative text that they explicitly mention race. In the first instance, Stanton et al. state that “the pioneers identified a lack of diversity...[and] wondered...if this lack of diversity in service-learning students was due to a similar lack in the population of service-learning practitioners” (p. 203). John Duley elaborates on this lack of diversity and recalls how in 1973, Dr. Charles, “the only Black officer the [Society for Field Experience Education] had,” left the society after having his conference plans rejected in what “felt like” a “racist remark” (p. 203). Reflecting on race in the early days of service-learning scholarship and practice, Duley states “We did not attract many blacks into our membership. Those who were in the university were steering clear of fringe operations” (p. 203). Duley’s comments reflect both the lack of representation of people of color among early service-learning practitioners that Stanton et al. identify and the lack of representation and racism in the academy at large that may have contributed to it.

In the second instance, Kenneth Reardon (in Stanton et al., 1999), echoing Mitchell et al.’s (2012) concern, elaborates on the previously identified early lack of diversity, asserting that it is still an issue today and that it is more than demographics, it bleeds over into practice:

A lot of what we have are individuals from predominantly white, male-run, middle-class, acad-

emic institutions going into lower-income communities of color. The dynamics of reciprocity and partnership need real attention because of our unconscious replication of oppressive ways of working with communities. (p. 220)

His comments critically attend to the ways that unexamined racial assumptions, a prevailing Whiteness among servers, and White normative practices have influenced how, where, with, and for whom we conduct service-learning.

But alongside the criticality evident in these reflections, in these two instances, as in most of the other documents, people of color enter the historical narrative as either largely absent (if the focus is on scholars, practitioners, and students) or as the recipients of service (if the focus is on the service-learning construction itself). The third explicit reference to people of color in Stanton et al.'s (1999) text follows a similar pattern. Joan Schine recalls that her "passion... was largely combatting racism: to convince minority youngsters who were poor and disenfranchised that they could act as citizens and take some control of their lives" (pp. 54-55). Thus, she positions these "youngsters" as the recipients of service even as she implies that the purpose of that service was to empower them as social actors.

The fourth explicit reference to race within Stanton et al.'s (1999) narrative text does challenge the positioning of people of color as needy recipients of service because it involves the recollections of two of the pioneers of color. Jack Hasegawa and Greg Ricks speak about feeling stereotyped as Asian and African American service-learning practitioners, respectively. Hasegawa asserts that "when I emerge differently from [those stereotypes], it creates barriers" (p. 204). Ricks similarly states that he feels "forced into playing a role," and that often he is "the only one at the table, the only one to represent" which is "difficult but also an advantage" because he feels "an incredible sense of responsibility to black people" (p. 204). In this instance, people of color enter the narrative as active contributors to the history of service-learning critically examining the role that their race has played in "creating barriers and challenges not encountered by the white pioneers" (Stanton et al., 1999, p. 203). Despite the low ratio of people of color to White pioneers, the authors clearly position those represented as empowered and important participants in the history of service-learning.

In sum, then, in terms of numeric representation of people of color in service-learning histories, Whiteness prevails. When people of color are mentioned they are often referred to as a collective or through allusions, which may indicate that the authors do not consider people of color or non-Anglo individuals' contributions as worthy of attention as

those of their White counterparts. In terms of positioning, while the four pioneers of color in Stanton et al.'s text are clearly positioned as active and important participants and while Sheffield elaborates on several individuals of color and the PNS's contributions to service-learning's history, most of the historical narratives present people of color as needy recipients of service or do not include or elaborate on their involvement at all. Such positioning and exclusions of people of color, in contrast with how and how many White people enter the narratives, highlight White normativity in service-learning. It reinforces the assumption that, from the earliest influences on what would become service-learning, White people have been the empowered, capable servers and innovators whose contributions are central and important, while servers and innovators of color have been ancillary at best, absent at worse, and most people of color have only received services, not provided them. In the following section I examine the constructed histories themselves for ways that the inclusion/exclusion of certain philosophies, events, people, organizations, and understandings of "service" further contribute to or challenge this White normativity.

### The Construction of Service-Learning's History

In their constructions of service-learning's history, the authors' timelines and discussions can be broken down into two main threads: the history of the service-learning's philosophy and the history of the practice itself. Within this second thread, the narratives follow two sub-threads: the history of service in education and the history of service (often conflated with volunteerism) in general. Each thread reflects the overall Whiteness of representation as I have previously described, but more than a demographic issue, the authors' choices of which events, people, and organizations to include and exclude contribute to the White normativity that Butin (2006), Mitchell et al. (2012) and Reardon (in Stanton et al., 1999) warn against. In other words, by promoting certain historical origins and excluding others, the histories may reinforce the perception that service-learning is designed and practiced by White people on or on behalf of people of color.

#### *The History of Service-Learning's Philosophy*

Sheffield (2011) states that most scholars trace service-learning's philosophical origins to John Dewey and progressive education. Indeed, Rocheleau (2004) also spends the majority of his exploration of service-learning's philosophical roots with a description of progressive education vis-à-vis Dewey, though he also traces the idea that education and civic responsi-

bility/morality go hand-in-hand back to Plato, Aristotle, Jefferson, and Locke's writings on the purpose of education. Both Rocheleau and Sheffield tie the progressive movement to the pragmatist philosophical tradition. LACOE's (n.d.) summary also mentions Dewey first in its list of educational scholars implicitly promoting service-learning, though it proceeds to elaborate on the work of Arthur Dunn, leaving Dewey and the other philosophers listed as influential (Taba, Tyler, Goodlad, and Boyer) with just a name recognition. The Bright Impact Web document (2013) also mentions Dewey, along with pragmatist William James, as the first to philosophically merge experiential learning and service with schooling. While their history is not a chronological exploration nor does it attempt to find one "root" or "founder" for a service-learning philosophy, Stanton et al. (1999) and their interviewees also invoke Dewey, among many others, as providing a philosophical foundation for their practice.

Moving chronologically forward, Sheffield (2011), Rocheleau (2004), and several of Stanton et al.'s (1999) pioneers mention Freire in their discussion of service-learning's philosophical history (though Rocheleau only includes Freire parenthetically, referencing other White critical pedagogues in his main text). Rocheleau and Sheffield both explicitly discuss the impact of critical pedagogues and political theorist such as Giroux, Bellah (Rocheleau; Sheffield) and Esquith (Rocheleau) on service-learning. Because critical pedagogy problematizes hierarchies and oppressive systems in education and society, it may be the theoretical lens most likely to challenge service-learning's "pedagogy of whiteness" (Mitchell et al., 2012). However, none of the online documents mention these or any other more contemporary influences on service-learning philosophy, ending their philosophical history with the pre-1950 progressives. Readers of these texts may be left with a narrow understanding of service-learning's philosophical underpinning, lacking the critical framework necessary for certain analyses of power, privilege, and oppression within service-learning constructions.

These sources present an overall image of the philosophical history of service-learning that is quite White. The only non-Anglo mentioned is Freire, and he is only discussed in any detail in Sheffield's (2011) chapter, just receiving a parenthetical citation in Rocheleau (2004) and a few brief nods from Stanton et al.'s (1999) interviewees. On the other hand, the White progressives and pragmatists, particularly Dewey, James, and Hanna, are presented across the texts as "community service learning's conceptual founders" (Sheffield, p. 20). Given their contributions, these philosophers and educators cannot be discounted, but there may be additional prag-

matist philosophers and educators of color who could also be incorporated into the narrative of service-learning's philosophical history.

Perhaps even more so than the specific philosophy of service-learning, philosophy as a discipline has a reputation for being a White academic enclave (Mills, 1994), so possibly one could argue that the lack of contributions from people of color in these philosophical histories is less due to the White normativity in service-learning and more due to the lack of diversity within that discipline. However, as Stevens (2003) asserts, "philosophical and pedagogical precursors to service-learning [can be] found in African American social thought...observed in most 'Negro' institutions like the church, black colleges, and other civic-minded organizations" (p. 26). At a minimum, in a discussion of pragmatism and education, W.E.B. DuBois, Charles Johnson, and Alain Locke could be included (Glaude, 2007). In addition to Black Americans' philosophical contributions, the work of indigenous, Chicano and Latino, and other non-Anglo scholars should be explored for their parallel and direct contributions to the philosophical and theoretical traditions that influence service-learning.

Furthermore, critical pedagogy should be included consistently in the philosophical history of service-learning. Doing so provides a more complete image of the range of theoretical frameworks at play in the field currently and also allows a point of entry for critically questioning the White normativity-reproducing hierarchies and methods that prevail in much service-learning (Butin, 2006; Mitchell et al., 2012; Reardon as quoted in Stanton et al., 1999). Freire, as a non-Anglo and arguably the most influential critical pedagogue, should feature prominently in discussions of this philosophy's contribution.

### *The History of Service-Learning Practice*

In addition to the history of service-learning's philosophical underpinnings, the seven documents also trace the history of service-learning in practice. They follow two sub-threads: chronicling the development of service-learning within institutions of education (P-12, higher education, and popular education) and the growth of service/volunteerism in general. For each of these two sub-thread sections, I first outline the chronologies that the documents present, referencing the movements, people, organizations, and events that each history includes. I then critique these historical constructions, noting missed opportunities to include the work of people of color and offering alternatives to these prevailing narratives.

*The history of service in education.* Within the discussion of service in education, the documents focus on two schools of thought and practice: education for democracy/civic participation and experiential edu-

cation (which some authors conflate with vocational education). Addressing the relationship between democracy/civic participation and education, the Bright Impact (2013) Web document begins with the Morrill Act's land grant colleges, stating that they were meant to "create citizens who will be 'educated for the betterment of society'" (n. p.). Zieren and Stoddard (2004) also reference the land grant colleges, but begin their chronology with mentions of Harvard, Yale, and the University of Virginia's pre-1800 commitments to producing an "informed electorate" (p. 23). Similarly, Sheffield (2011) devotes his first section to describing the link between service-learning and early American ideals of civic responsibility and education for democracy as promoted by Horace Mann and others (pp. 20-21). Rocheleau (2004) refers to Plato, Aristotle, Jefferson, and Locke as proponents of a link between education and the ability to participate democratically.

With the early connections between education and democracy/civic participation established, the histories chronicle experiential learning and vocational education. The Bright Impact (2013) Web document and Stanton et al.'s (1999) timelines begin again with the Morrill Act. Zieren and Stoddard (2004) also include the Morrill Act in their list, asserting that the colleges and universities founded through the Act represent forerunners to service-learning because of their incorporation of actual work as well as practical and vocational learning into the liberal arts curriculum. The connection between the experiential/vocational learning happening within these colleges and "service" seems to hinge on the idea that the innovation occurring in the colleges was meant to improve farming, manufacturing, and other production which in turn may have improved daily life for others. Zieren and Stoddard also indicate that the colleges themselves were a "service" to those excluded from other institutions of higher education, first the "sons of farmers and mechanics" (p. 26) and later, with the Act's expansion in 1890, to African Americans, as I previously discussed.

Continuing chronologically from the Morrill Acts, the Bright Impact (2013) Web document and Zieren and Stoddard (2004) mention the 1903 Cooperative Education Movement at the University of Cincinnati. Zieren and Stoddard also describe the connection between Rensselaer and West Point's experiential and work-based curricula in the early 1800s and "service." Zieren and Stoddard then turn their attention to popular and "non-traditional" education, mentioning Jane Addams, Mary Richmond, and the Settlement House movement and Harry Hopkins, Aubrey Williams, and the National Youth Administration. Rocheleau (2004), Zieren and Stoddard, Sheffield (2013), Bright Impact (2013), LACOE (n.d.) and

Stanton et al. (1999) then all discuss Dewey's model and philosophy for experiential education as providing, in Rocheleau's words, "a clear basis" for "the pedagogical goals and methods of service-learning" (p. 7). Rocheleau, Sheffield, and Stanton et al. also mention Kilpatrick's Project Method and Hanna's Youth Serves the Community text as other early examples of experiential learning's evolution toward service-learning. The LACOE document also mentions Arthur Dunn's 1916 Social Studies Committee report as a forerunner to modern service-learning practices.

Continuing into the second half of the twentieth century, the documents begin to center on events relating specifically to service-learning within schools, colleges, and universities and the foundations and institutions that begin to form to support this more "official" service-learning (with the exception of Zieren and Stoddard's 2004 discussion of Highlander). Having skipped entirely over the prototypes of service-learning mentioned in the other texts, the National Service Learning Clearinghouse document (2008) begins its historical account in 1969 with the Atlanta Service Learning Conference which involved multiple civic and government organizations and declared service-learning a "policy thrust for the future" (quoted in Stanton et al., 1999, p. 253). Their timeline then skips ahead to the founding of the Campus Outreach Opportunity League in 1984, Campus Compact in 1985, and the 1990 National and Community Service Act which created the Serve America organization to provide grants for service-learning. They conclude their history with the formation of Learn and Serve America in 1993. Stanton et al. include all of these events on their timeline and add many others, including the establishment of folk schools in Appalachia; college work study programs in the 1960s; the 1971 White House Conference of Youth that called for service-learning; the publication of *Experiential Education and Synergist* in the 1970s; and the creation of the National Center for Service Learning in 1979. The Bright Impact (2013) document skips most of these events and picks up with the 1985 creation of Campus Compact, the organization formed by college and university presidents to support the development of service-learning programs. LACOE (n.d.) also skips the mid-twentieth century and picks up with the 1993 National and Community Service Trust Act that formed the aforementioned Learn and Serve America program and also provided a definition for service-learning practice that LACOE quotes in its entirety. Because of its local focus, the LACOE document goes on to describe the development of service-learning in California's schools during the 1990s and early 2000s.



Across the texts, the post-1950 history of service-learning mostly includes moments in which service-learning was institutionalized in some way (as in the formation of Campus Compact) or granted governmental support (as in the White House Conference of Youth or National and Community Service Trust Act). While not inherently linked to race, the increased focus on institutionalized or otherwise “official” service-learning creates a certain narrative that may limit who and what events can be included. For example, while Zieren and Stoddard (2004) do spend several paragraphs describing Highlander and popular education in the civil rights movement, they are the only ones to do so and their account leaves out leaders of color within those movements. Popular education, of which Highlander is an example, is not part of the mainstream history of public or higher education in the U.S., and as such, as service-learning historians narrow their focus to institutionalized examples, these “outside” influences on the practice are lost. Additionally, while many of the pioneers interviewed by Stanton et al. (1999) come from community organizing and political activism traditions, because those fields exist outside of academic institutions, the links between them and the development of service-learning (particularly a more critical, less-White service-learning) may also be lost or at least de-emphasized.

While the post-1950 history of service-learning may omit certain influences because its focus is narrow, the history of service in education pre-1950 may omit them despite casting a wide net in its search for service-learning’s forerunners. Because it seeks to identify possible influences on and prototype versions of a practice that had yet to be named, historians writing about service-learning pre-1950 must make somewhat loose connections between their illustrations and current practices. For example, while service-learning often holds educating for civic responsibility and democratic participation as a goal, the Morrill Act land grant colleges (Bright Impact, 2013; Stanton et al., 1999; Zieren & Stoddard, 2004), barn raisings (Sheffield, 2011), and Jefferson’s education plans (Rocheleau, 2004) are all loosely connected at best to the ultimate development of service-learning. For instance, students in land grant colleges inventing new farm technologies that improve the productivity of farmers once commercially available is a weak association to actual community service. Furthermore, while underpinned by some of the same educational philosophy, vocational education and nineteenth and early twentieth century experiential learning methods can only be loosely tied to current service-learning practices.

I do not critique the inclusion of these loose connections to imply that they played no part in the

development of service-learning. Loose connections are natural when attempting to describe disparate elements that would eventually coalesce and evolve into a new concept. Rather, I describe their looseness in order to make space for a broader exploration of service-learning’s history. In other words, if we are willing to claim a direct connection between the Morrill Land Grant colleges’ vocational/practical education and service-learning, why not Booker T. Washington’s work at the Tuskegee Institute, where his emphasis on industrial education alongside academics sought to provide Black Americans with “a generous education of the hand, head, and heart” (Washington, 1901/1995, p. 41)? If we draw a direct line from Jefferson, Mann, the eighteenth century presidents of Harvard and Yale, and John Locke to the development of service-learning, why not do the same with Frederick Douglass and W.E.B. DuBois who also advocated and embodied civic responsibility and spoke about the link between quality education and the ability to participate in government? Those connections would be equally conceptually strong and were and are sufficiently well-known to be conceivable influences on the eventual pioneers of the service-learning movement in the 1960s and 1970s and its current practitioners. In fact, Zieren and Stoddard (2004) do trace the history of service-learning through contexts not found in other histories, including influences on American service-learning practice from Germany, Russia, and Sweden and from the field of social work. If they can revise the commonly articulated history to include these additional international influences, perhaps space could be made for the work of non-Anglos and people of color as well. Black and Latino and Chicano activist and service traditions as well as Indigenous education traditions, for example, could contribute additional and helpful perspectives that have often been shut out of the mainstream narrative.

Even if scholars hesitate to expand the histories’ scope, the contributions of people of color could easily be inserted into the existing discourse. In their discussions of the Morrill Land Grant colleges, particularly as they mention the founding of the HBCUs after 1890, service-learning historians could chose examples from these institutions for elaboration instead of or in addition to the White institutions that most of these documents’ authors highlight. Why not, as Stevens (2003) promotes, include W.E.B. DuBois’s community-engaged action research-style work at Atlanta University or George E. Haynes’ course at Fisk University? When discussing Jane Addams and Hull House, one could include Anna Julia Cooper and Ida B. Wells-Barnett whose work in settlement house-style programs were “early demonstrations of experiential learning” and early versions

of “action research” in which individuals of color combined education and service to help other people of color become “proactive participants in community and society” (p. 28). In their discussion of Highlander specifically and the civil rights movement in general, service-learning historians could highlight the role that people of color played as both leaders and recipients of popular education movements, including, but not limited to, activist/educators like Septima Clark, Esau Jenkins, Bernice Robinson, and Mary McLeod Bethune. If looking for post-1950 examples of early service-learning practitioners within institutions of higher education, one could include Velia Garcia (2007) whose Chicano Studies students as early as 1972 practiced “activist research in service to the community” which she says “contained all the critical elements of what is today called critical service-learning” (p. 209).

Sheffield’s inclusion of the PNS presents one example of a lesser-known school run for and partly by people of color that used service-learning-like strategies. In addition to PNS, the work of Virginia Estelle Randolph could be considered an early example of service-learning-like pedagogy. In the early twentieth century, Randolph instituted experiential learning programs that blended academics with industrial and home economics work. Moreover, the programs she founded were designed to meet community and school needs and promote self-help (African American Register, 2008).

Overall, the authors of these histories of service in education miss multiple opportunities to include people of color. These omissions not only discount legitimate historical influences on the development of service-learning and valuable examples of early practice that current practitioners could learn from, but they also reinforce the prevailing notions of service-learning as a pedagogy created by White people. When we ignore the significant contributions of people of color to the philosophies that underpin service-learning and examples of its early practice, we deny the agency that people of color have had and continue to have in education and community service, and risk appropriating those practices as exclusively White people’s. In the following section, I continue to examine how the authors’ inclusion and exclusion of certain events, people, and organizations reinforces this White normativity in service-learning. Specifically, in examining how the origins of service-learning were construed in favor of pedagogies/methods that privilege the academy and arise from senses of charity or noblesse oblige, I find support for Mitchell et al.’s (2012) concern that service-learning is often employed in ways that reinforce White cultural/educational norms and power dynamics that privilege Whiteness.

*The history of volunteerism/service as a social concept.* Because service-learning is not simply an institutional or educational practice, these histories also trace the history of service-learning by providing a linear account of the evolution of service and volunteerism in general. As in the previous section, I first summarize the organizations that each history mentions. I then critique the focus on volunteerism and charitable organizations as forerunners to service-learning, examining how this conflation of volunteerism and service-learning may perpetuate the White cultural norms and power hierarchies in service-learning.

The LACOE (n.d.) document mentions a series of organizations founded in the spirit of charity, volunteerism, and civil service, including the Salvation Army, Red Cross, Community Chest, Junior League, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, Rotary, Kiwanis, United Way, Girl and Boy Scouts, the Civilian Conservation Corp, Peace Corp, VISTA, and others. Bright Impact (2013) mentions several of these and includes the YMCA and YWCA. The National Service Learning Clearinghouse document (2008) also lists the Peace Corps and VISTA in their chronicling of the history of service in America. Stanton et al.’s (1999) timeline and first-person narratives include the YMCA, YWCA, Civilian Conservation Corps, Peace Corps, and VISTA.

These organizations, particularly the ones mentioned across documents like the Peace Corps and VISTA, have been foundational to how we understand the value of service, its purpose, and what we can learn from it. As Stanton et al. (1999) make clear through their interviews, many of the post-1950 pioneers of service-learning began their work in and around these programs, particularly the Peace Corps. But as they point out in their work, and as Sheffield (2013) relates in a later chapter, service conceived of as noble obligation, charity, and even volunteerism often reinforces dominant social norms and power hierarchies. As Sheffield notes, “like philanthropy, charity, and noblesse oblige, volunteerism lacks an understanding of democratic community building and connecting” and “ignores the ramifications of history and its impact on the present/future” (pp. 77-78). Given this possible absence of respect for and connection to the community served and the positioning of the servers as unquestionably qualified to “help” or “fix” a community’s “problems” without fully delving into why those problems exist, service framed as volunteerism or motivated by charity or philanthropy is the kind of service that Mitchell et al. (2012) refer to as the “pedagogy of Whiteness” – its framing of “White, middle-class students as automatically and necessarily capable of serving” and of “community problems...as the result of individual circumstances

(e.g., drug addition, dropping out of school) rather than political and social processes” (p. 614).

Histories of service-learning, in order to avoid reinforcing this White normativity, may need to more carefully interrogate the links between volunteerism and current service-learning. While the links are valid, presenting service-learning as part of the longer, broader tradition of civil service, charity, and volunteerism without noting the differences may reinforce White normativity. Such unproblematic linkages may contribute to the common implementations of service-learning as uncritical volunteering and charity work with some curricular connection tacked on that Mitchell et al. (2012), Sheffield (2013), and some of Stanton et al.’s (1999) pioneers critique.

For example, the author of the LACOE (n.d.) document, after his or her extensive list of volunteer and charitable organizations that have inspired service-learning, notes that community service graduation requirements “do little to foster civic responsibility and often conversely foster a negative association with volunteerism” (p. 2). However, the author does not really address why that might be, except to say that the kinds of activities students engage in are “uninspiring” and “mundane” (p. 2) and that students participate because it is required, not because they sense an obligation. The author also uses the phrase “service and volunteerism” throughout the document as a modifier for “proponents” and as the subject of sentences, indicating that he or she considers service and volunteerism to be equivalent. The author discusses that service and volunteerism have value, but does not address what that value is and who benefits from it. The reader is left with the sense that service and volunteerism are essentially the same thing, but without any real understanding of either, and that while there may be some logistical issues with compulsory service and volunteerism, those issues primarily affect the student, not the community members with whom they work. The author’s relatively unproblematic linking of service-learning with volunteerism and charitable organizations could support the kind of White normativity that Sheffield (2013), Mitchell et al. (2012), and some of Stanton et al.’s (1999) pioneers critique within the practice.

Much like the loose connections between service-learning and vocational learning or education for democracy, the histories of volunteerism and service in the U.S. make valid and valuable contributions to our historical understanding of service-learning practice. But rather than present the connections as sequential or equivalent, they could be presented as partial inspirations, and in some cases, as examples of what not to do regarding community work (Stanton et al., 1999). As Stanton et al. note, many of their interviewees have roots in community organiz-

ing and activism, particularly around civil rights. Perhaps a history of service-learning seeking to challenge White normativity could reorient its discussion of service-learning vis-à-vis volunteerism toward traditions of activism and community organizing. Not only would these traditions potentially bring more people of varied races and ethnicities to the foreground as leaders in the movement, but they may also provide more examples of service not motivated by charity and noblesse oblige.

## Conclusion

Mitchell et al. (2012) encourage service-learning practitioners to combat White normativity by checking their own assumptions and reflecting constantly, designing activities that invite thoughtful reflection for students, and teaching and talking explicitly about race with all stakeholders in the service-learning project. Following their lead, in this historiography, I have looked explicitly at race and racial representation in order to reflect on and analyze how these constructions of service-learning’s history may be reinforcing Whiteness and White normativity. I have offered suggestions for challenging the monochromatic version of that history as it has been written in most of the documents I examined. I do this not to encourage tokenism or the decontextualized, “politically correct” inclusion of people of color that too often happens in mainstream textbooks or popular presentations of history. Rather, I suggest that we examine alternatives to the dominant construction of service-learning’s history in the hope that we may find and present meaningful, influential, and empowering examples of people of color in that history.

Those voices exist and Stevens (2004) invites us to consider “how much the academy might have expanded its ideas and knowledge base and been much stronger if the individuals highlighted [in his text] had been included in the mainstream of higher education during their lifetimes” (p. 33). Finding these excluded voices is an important and on-going project. I recognize that within this study, most of the examples I offer to challenge the dominant narrative pertain to Black Americans. To avoid perpetuating a Black/White binary as we pursue a more diverse historical narrative, we must also actively seek the stories of Chicano, Indigenous, Asian, Latino, and other educators/activists/scholars whose work has been marginalized but may be pertinent to service-learning’s history.

In addition to broadening our knowledge base and historical understanding as a service-learning community, challenging White normativity in the “mainstream” historical narrative may help us promote a more diverse membership in that community. As Rob

Shumer, one of the pioneers, reminds us: “There are folks out there who aren’t supportive of service-learning because it’s very, very exclusive...there isn’t broad representation...we have to become more inclusive...” (Stanton et al., 1999, p. 230). A more inclusive and critically reflective version of service-learning’s history could be one step toward creating a more inclusive service-learning practice that challenges its prevailing Whiteness and White normativity.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The Web link to this text is no longer active. I chose to leave my analysis of the Web document in the article because while it is no longer readily available to the public, it was prominently available for the past 7 years. As such, I assert that its construction of service-learning’s history is still pertinent to the mainstream narrative.

<sup>2</sup> I use the term “Anglo” to refer to White individuals of non-Latino heritage.

<sup>3</sup> The individuals referenced by name in Sheffield’s text are: John Dewey, William James, C.S. Pierce, Horace Mann, Rosa Cooley, Grace Bigelow House, William H. Kilpatrick, Paul Hanna, Donald Eberly, William O’Connell, George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, Robert Bringle, Mindy Phillips, Michael Hudson, Jeffery Howard, Timothy Stanton, Benjamin Barber, Richard Battisoni, Joel Westheimer, Joseph Kahne, José Z. Calderón, Paulo Freire, Jurgen Habermas, Herbert Marcuse, Walter Benjamin, Peter McLaren, Henry Giroux, Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, Max Weber, Tania Mitchell, Robert Rhoads, Sam Marullo, Wade, Marilynne Boyle-Baise, and Don Hill.

<sup>4</sup> The individuals referenced by name in the LACOE document are: John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., George H. W. Bush, Robert Putnam, John Dewey, Hilda Taba, Ralph Tyler, John Goodlad, Ernest Boyer, Arthur Dunn, and Bill Clinton.

<sup>5</sup> The individuals referenced by name in the Zieren and Stoddard document are: Thomas Jefferson, Van Rensselaer, Joseph R. Williams, Justin Morrill, Isaac Roberts, John D. Runkle, Calvin Woodward, Charles Van Hise, John Dewey, Eduard Lindeman, Myles Horton, Mary Richmond, Jane Addams, Eleanor Roosevelt, Aubrey Williams, and Harry Hopkins.

<sup>6</sup> The individuals referenced by name in Rocheleau’s text are: Plato, Aristotle, John Locke, Immanuel Kant, John Stuart Mill, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Thomas Jefferson, John Dewey, Charles Sanders Peirce, William Kilpatrick, Paul Hanna, A.S. Neill, Willard Van Orman Quine, Richard Rorty, Jurgen Habermas, David Kolb, William James, Robert Putnam, Steve Esquith, and Ivan Illich.

<sup>7</sup> The people mentioned by name in the Bright Impact document are: Leland Stanford, John Dewey, William James, John F. Kennedy

<sup>8</sup> Stevens (2003) text was recommended to me by other service-learning scholars as an example of a work that

challenges the mainstream historical narrative. He positions his article as a corrective aimed at “illuminating several historical African American perspectives that parallel and closely correlate with service-learning and action research” (p. 33). But because his work does not aim to provide an overview or general history of service-learning, but rather to offer a limited set of supplements to that narrative, I do not use it as one of my primary texts. Instead, I refer to it throughout my argument as a counterpoint to the “mainstream” narratives.

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