
Becoming Teachers of Inner-City Students: Identification Creativity and Curriculum Wisdom of Committed White Male Teachers

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Abstract

Broadly speaking, this reflection approaches the on-going concern of capacitating an overwhelmingly White teaching profession for effectively teaching inner-city students attending *de facto* segregated schools. Using professional identifications, this reflection presents narrativized understanding of respondents' *becoming* committed teachers of inner-city students through identification creativity driven by alternative masculinity. Respondents' professional identifications, articulating identification creativity, provide an understanding of curriculum wisdom for teaching in inner-city schools that includes race visibility, difference within difference, and relational-experiential pedagogy. Last, this reflection urges researchers toward a *second wave* of White teacher identity studies based on directions emerging in this research.

Keywords

culturally relevant pedagogy, minority academic success, race, White teachers

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Introduction

Lead-in. David McGrady¹, a White teacher with 14 years of experience working with inner-city students, provided the following reflections on race:

Int: Tell me about being a White teacher?

McG: One of my goals is to be a White man in their [students'] lives, older, straight [Al Anon] again because I went straight, uh, who's not a cop, a lawyer, a bill collector, a probation officer, a guard, a salesman, uh, what other jobs can I think, you know, the banker, lawyer, uh yeah, whatever, that I'm their teacher and I've gotten better and better at it over the years . . . I mean I think not recognizing race as a fact or an issue is discounting the values and experiences of what the kids bring to the classroom. Uh . . . And what I bring to it. (Interview 6b, pp. 1-2)

Emerging in McGrady's pedagogical narrative, we see race-visible understandings of his professional identity. Furthermore, McGrady's pedagogical narrative recognizes students' and his own racial experiences as valuable in working with inner-city students. Emblematic of respondents' pedagogical narratives, this clip representing McGrady's race-visible professional identity provides a lead-in for our research reflection on professional identities, or as we will elaborate below, professional identifications of committed White male teachers of inner-city students.

Overview. Working with pedagogical narratives from respondents like David McGrady, this reflection approaches the on-going concern of capacitating an overwhelmingly White teaching force² for better serving inner-city students attending *de facto* segregated schools (Kozol, 2005). We write this reflection, it follows, with the aims of capacitating and constituting progressive professional identifications, developing identification creativity among White teachers, and narrating curriculum wisdom forged in committed White male teachers' professional practices with inner-city students.

With these aims in mind, this reflection (a) emphasizes the research's autobiographical orientations; (b) critiques existing literatures on White teacher identity for essentializing representations; (c) develops notions of professional identifications and identification creativity for understanding respondents' narratives; (d) discusses methodology including pedagogical narratives, sampling, data collection, and analysis; and, (e) presents respondents' pedagogical narratives revealing respondents' identification creativity and curriculum wisdom that emerged in working with inner-city students. Finally, this reflection

urges researchers toward a *second wave* of White teacher identity studies based on new directions emerging in this research.

Autobiographical Orientations

Jim Jupp. I worked as a White teacher and curriculum worker in Mexican-language academies and U.S. rural poor and inner-city public school settings for 18 years. While living and teaching in México, South Texas, and finally, inner-city Central Texas, I learned the Spanish language and Mexican cultures along with how to work with students who were different from me, leveraging students' experiences, interests, and cultural resources (Dewey, 1938/1997; Ladson-Billings, 1995). All of this was a long journey from the White privilege (Feagin, 2001) of West Houston and Central Texas University where I grew up and studied. From my experiences, I had to see and reevaluate the White culture scape (Dyer, 1988; Hall, 1981; West, 1993), and paradoxically, I couldn't deny this culture-scape's importance for students' achievement in schools (Delpit, 1986). I also had to understand my students, almost all Mexican American or Mexican immigrants, where they stood and thought and lived rather than declaring their "oppression." Although earning respect and sometimes love of students, colleagues, and communities, I refuse a facile "victory narrative" (Cary, 1999, p. 414) as the work is always messy, unfinished, and "partial" (Lortie, 1975, p. 132). Nonetheless, my lived experiences provide an important epistemological backdrop for articulating "the grind" (Jackson, 1968, p. 1) of working in inner-city settings.

Patrick Slattery. I am a White male teacher who received an education and also worked as teacher and principal in the segregated schools of Louisiana; nonetheless, I consider myself to be an antiracist critical educator with a strong advocacy for gender and sexual equality, economic justice, and ecological sustainability. What is responsible for my shift in consciousness over my lifetime?

First, I believe being a gay man has allowed me to understand the horrors of prejudice autobiographically. Navigating homophobia and living in a heterosexist world have been an invaluable asset in the formation of my consciousness.

Second, studying liberation theology for my masters degree in California and participating in many social justice projects in my 20s and 30s informed my critical pedagogy. I joined a Catholic religious order and was involved in sanctuary churches, social services for the poor, and antideath penalty efforts at Hope House in New Orleans with Helen Prejean, author of *Dead Man*

Walking. Ironically, it was being gay and Catholic that also challenged my White and male privileges (Feagin, 2001).

Third, my mother's simple resistance to a racist petition made for a long-standing memory. Growing up in segregated New Orleans, I was culturally trained to think of Blacks as inferior, dirty, and dangerous. As part of White reactions to Ruby Bridges' enrollment in a White public school, three White women approached our house and asked my mother to sign a petition to "keep the Negroes out of our schools." White families were under intense pressure to sign the petition, and resistances often carried severe consequences. My mother did not sign the petition, and her act of resistance had an enormous impact on the thinking of my 7-year-old consciousness.

Our autobiographical positionalities as White male teachers provide sensitized backdrops for complex-ifying, not reifying, White male teachers' professional identifications.

White Teacher Identities and Interventions

Contrasting with respondents' professional identifications in our research, literatures on White teachers articulate respondents' race-evasive identities. Foundational in this discussion on White teacher identities is Christine Sleeter's (1992, 1993, 1995, 2002) research. Sleeter (1993, 1992), who used ethnography to describe multicultural staff development interventions in the late 80s, summarizes respondents' race-evasive identities:

. . . the White teachers I studied responded in patterned ways. Many simply refused to "see" color. . . . Discussing race or multiculturalism meant discussing "them" [people of color], not the social structure. (p. 168)

Sleeter's research (1992, 1993) drives toward the conclusion that White teachers fail "to provide a convincing framework for thinking about racial inequality" (1992, p. 22).

Alice McIntyre's (1998, 2002) research affirms Sleeter's (1992, 1993) findings on White teachers' race-evasive identities. McIntyre (1998), who conducted interventionist action research with White female preservice teachers, reports partial successes in consciousness raising interventions. Nonetheless, McIntyre (1998) emphasizes, by-and-large, respondents' persistent race-evasive "white talk" (p. 45) as obstacle to critical race consciousness. McIntyre (1998) reports that respondents' White talk distances Whites from responsibility for racist attitudes, beliefs, and actions.

More important, nonetheless, is the overarching narrative that McIntyre's (1998, 2002) research provides for other interventionist researches on White teachers, many of which used preservice teachers as respondents. McIntyre's action research provides an overarching narrative identifying (a) respondents' naïve or "false" consciousnesses, (b) instructors' critical White studies interventions, (c) respondents' challenges or evasions, and (d) respondents' partial critical conversions. Other interventionist researches on White preservice teachers (Berlak, 1999; Marx, 2004; Marx & Pennington, 2003) and White teachers (Henze, Lucas, & Scott, 1998) overlap with, develop, and continue McIntyre's (1998) overarching narrative.

What emerges from researches on White teacher identities, conducted predominantly with preservice teachers, now represents a well-worn pathway. Gary Howard (2006), president of *Respecting Ethnic and Cultural Heritage* (REACH),³ codifies and legitimizes this well-worn pathway in summarizing REACH's interventionist staff development slides urging White teachers and corporate staff to take the "journey." In the present moment, we find this well-worn pathway on White teacher identities as fixed, static, and essentializing regarding White teachers' professional identities.

Our reflection, which emphasizes respondents' professional identifications through pedagogical narratives, provides quite a different understanding of White teachers' identities. We believe a different view, one that goes beyond reporting on critical consciousness raising and insisting on pedagogical "conversion," is important for developing and proliferating progressive White teacher and other White identities in the present historical moment (Giroux, 1998; Kinchella & Steinberg, 1998). An understanding of professional identifications and related concepts provides for a careful, noninterventionist reading of respondents' pedagogical narratives that, we hope, will serve to capacitate ample (Pinar, 2009) and varied (West, 1993) progressive White identifications.

Professional Identifications and Related Concepts

Landscapes. Professional identifications draw on pragmatic notions of teacher identity in professional knowledge landscapes (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995, 2000) and then move toward broader understandings of cultural identity. Within understandings of professional knowledge landscapes (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995, 2000), reflection-in-action (Schön, 1983), pedagogical content knowledge (1987), and teachers' practical knowledge (Clandinin & Connelly, 1988; Schwab, 1978) represent central concepts.

Donald Schön's (1983) *reflection-in-action*, approaching the topic of professional identity, theorizes medicine, engineering, public administration, teaching and other professions as emphasizing moral commitment, technical and professional knowledges, social and institutional resources, immediate practical contexts, and experiential tacit knowledge for effective professional practice. Lee Schulman's (1987) *pedagogical content knowledge*, now moving toward teachers' professional identity, theorizes teaching as an amalgamation of subject-area content knowledges, students' backgrounds and abilities, teaching models and methods, and social milieus in creating on-going effective professional practices. Joseph Schwab's (1978) *practical knowledge*, also describing teachers' professional identity, emphasizes teaching as an on-going form of professional inquiry worked out through personal, social, and institutional deliberative processes best understood through narrative (Clandinin & Connelly, 1988).

Building on professional reflection-in-action (Schön, 1983), pedagogical content knowledge (Schulman, 1987), and practical knowledge (Clandinin & Connelly, 1988; Schwab, 1978), teachers' professional knowledge landscapes (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995) show that teachers' professional identities emerge as narratives within "the importance of everyday life, personal history, social history, and the moral role of other teachers" (p. 27). In this reflection, respondents' pedagogical narratives articulate the intertwining of personal, social, and historical narratives as indicated in professional landscapes (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995).

Defining professional identifications. Following the landscape metaphor (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995), we supersede the notion of landscapes by moving professional identity toward professional identifications. Professional identifications, unlike discussions on teachers' professional identity above, take pragmatic professional identity (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Schön, 1983; Schulman, 1987; Schwab, 1978) squarely into discussions of teachers' cultural identity with an emphasis on race for our purposes here.

Professional identifications, as taken up here, neither assume color-blind or race-transcendent positions,⁴ nor assume, as mass media sources felicitously proclaim, that we live in a postracial society. Instead, professional identifications, articulated through respondents' pedagogical narratives, seek to recognize, engage, and at times, critique whiteness (Dyer, 1988; Hall, 1981; West, 1993) and White privilege (McIntosh, 1988) without recurring to essentializing understandings of respondents' White identities. Professional identifications, in recognizing, engaging, and critiquing, provide for possible recoding and reshaping of White positionalities in relation to whiteness and White privilege. Overall, we take up professional identifications, defined in the next paragraph,

as a means of moving the discussion on White teacher identities beyond *always already* uncovering White research respondents' race evasion and ideological complicity. Although our respondents recognize racialized identities and landscapes, our work with professional identifications takes the discussion on White identities in a different direction, toward producing, constituting, and capacitating complex and race-conscious professional identifications.

Professional identifications, by way of definition, refer to respondents' narratives of professional self-authorship within discursive contexts. This notion of fluid, dynamic, and nonessentialized professional identifications provide direction in general discussions of professional identity, but professional identifications are taken up here in particular reference to interventionist literatures reviewed above. Professional identifications, drawing on understandings of identity as self-authorship (Bruner, 2002; Hall, 2003; Pinar, 2009), eschew understanding identities as equivalent to social-historical "backgrounds." Instead, professional identifications, rejecting essentialized identities, understand identities as on-going social activity and engagement with socially located cultural resources. Professional identifications, in understanding identities as activity, understand "selves," not as static, fixed, or essentialized states of *being*, but rather as social and historical processes of *becoming*. Professional identifications, emphasizing processes of becoming, recognize the centrality and importance of respondents' identities, especially status identities like race or gender. Nonetheless, professional identifications emphasize respondents' ability to reflect, rethink, narrativize, and recode what—in common sense terms—are understood as professional "lives."

Professional identifications, articulated with an ethic of developing and proliferating progressive White identifications (Giroux, 1998; Kinchella & Steinberg, 1998), support and develop the move in life history and narrative research from understanding respondents' experiences (Bruner, 1985; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Cole & Knowles, 2001) toward *both* understanding experiences *and* constituting identities (Bruner, 2002; Pinar, 2009; Polkinghorne, 1988).

Creativity and curriculum wisdom. Of particular importance in this discussion of respondents' professional identifications are the notions of identification creativity and curriculum wisdom. *Identification creativity* refers to developing individuals' capacities to negate and affirm changing identities, to rethink and imagine new yet historically bounded subjectivities, to engage in on-going agentive processes of self-authorship. Following Butler (1999), we argue for identifications that allow for creative subversion and contestation.

Identification creativity informs our understanding of respondents' professional identifications. In reference to respondents' identification creativity, we detect an *alternative masculinity* (Connell, 1995; Tolson, 1975) as driving force. Similar to Connell's (1995) male feminist identity, committed White male teachers of inner-city students maintained heterosexual identity but reshaped and recoded other hegemonic positionalities. In our reflection, identification creativity, driven by respondents' alternative masculinities, took the form of critical politics (Zinn, 2003), alternative media (Frith, 2003; Hebdige, 1979), and process spirituality (Suzuki, 1956/1996; Watts, 1971/2007), especially in relation to respondents Mike Taymes, Jack Springman, and Bennett Ferris whose pedagogical narratives are featured below in the section on identification creativity. Emerging from White and male privileges with our respondents, identification creativity, of course, provides exercises in the same privileges; nonetheless, we think respondents' identification creativity provides an important lived progressive ethics that reshape and recode but do not negate White and male privileges.

In relation to respondents' classroom practices, identification creativity takes the form of "curriculum wisdom" (Henderson & Gornik, 2007, p. 11). Following Henderson and Gornik (2007), *curriculum wisdom* refers to professional identifications that combine self, social, conditions, and subject-area understandings. Curriculum wisdom, bringing self, social, and subject-area understandings together in practice pursues curriculum development as complicated conversation (Pinar, 2004; Slattery, 2006) with democratic ideals. In our reflection, we use curriculum wisdom (Henderson & Gornik, 2007) first as the curriculum component of respondents' creative identifications and then as a heuristic to describe respondents' patterned insights on curriculum work with inner-city students. Respondents' patterned insights, termed *curriculum wisdom*, include race visibility, difference within difference, and relational-experiential pedagogy.

Discursive contexts. Discursive contexts emphasize broad discourses as reflective and constitutive of respondents' professional identifications. This reflection, which understands professional identifications as social and historical processes of self-authorship, strives to contextualize respondents' professional identifications within discursive contexts. *Discursive contexts*, by way of definition, refer to institutional, social, and historical narratives that reflect and constitute, in a material sense, respondents' identifications.

Discursive contexts emphasize the materiality of institutional, social, and historical discourses that constitute and reflect respondents' identifications. Although professional identifications emerge in respondents' pedagogical

narratives, discursive contexts constitute and create, in material ways, longer term historical and professional narratives that shape respondents' professional identifications.

First, historical inequalities and persistent segregation in American schooling (Kozol, 1992; Tyack, 1974) provide one discursive context. Respondents' inner-city Central Texas schools reflect Kozol's (1992) descriptions of educational inequality in San Antonio, Texas. Kozol (1992) describes "Cooper Middle School, where 96 percent of the children qualify by poverty for subsidized hot lunches and where 99.3 percent are of Hispanic origin" (p. 224). Respondents' schools reflect, predominantly, these circumstances with slight attendance changes because of White gentrification.

Second, discourses on school failure provide a discursive context. The Fordham Foundation report (Thomas B. Fordham Foundation Staff, 2006) provides a boiler plate example of this discursive context: "The states' grades for student achievement [of the most needy] are dismal. Of course, these are . . . desperately low numbers, hardly worth celebrating (p. 13)." The report examines race, class, language, and cultural differences without references to historical inequalities and persistent segregation. Respondents' schools drift between academically "acceptable" and "unacceptable" classifications.⁵

Third, the National Commission on Excellence in Education's (NCEE) *A Nation at Risk* (1984/1994) provides a discursive context. *A Nation at Risk* (NCEE, 1984/1994) casts a long shadow over the Bush administration's No Child Left Behind legislation at the forefront of day-to-day concerns at respondents' schools. *A Nation at Risk* (NCEE, 1984/1994), reframing educational discussions around state (now national) standards, school choice, accountability, high stakes testing, performance pay, and other "marketizing" measures, articulates the educational agenda of the Conservative Restoration.

Fourth, racially charged community discourses provide a discursive context. Jim Jupp, during his last year teaching in 2008, collected this reflection from Nubia Mortiz. The reflection emerged, not in a discussion on undocumented workers, but rather within a curriculum on critical readings of U.S. primary documents.

No we [Mexican immigrants] are really not free in the U.S. It's a big lie . . . Our [immigrants'] inalienable rights include Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of happiness yet here in Texas alone, hundreds have those rights taken away in a matter of minutes . . . Not a hint of freedom there. (Researcher Journal, p. 37)

In an inner-city school with only a few White students out of 800, racial consciousness, far from naïve or “false,” becomes sharpened, and community members and students articulate these understandings in lessons and in learning resistance.

Methodology: Topical Narrative Research

Fit. Topical narrative research provided a unique fit for studying professional identifications of becoming. Understanding professional identifications as narratives of professional self-authorship within discursive contexts, we read respondents’ pedagogical narratives as collaborative performances of professional identifications. That is, we understood respondents’ pedagogical narratives collected in data gathering as reflecting experiences and professional identifications.

Pedagogical narratives. Emerging from life story and narrative interviews along with focus group meetings, this reflection developed respondents’ pedagogical narratives. Pedagogical narratives, by way of definition, referred to respondents’ narratives on race, class, cultural difference, and pedagogy. In working with pedagogical narratives, we provided a “categorical content perspective” (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zibler, 1998, p. 112) in developing a “topical life document” (Plummer, 2001, p. 26). In focusing on respondents’ pedagogical narratives, we took up a categorical-content perspective. A categorical-content perspective provided for the selection of emergent subtexts within life story and narrative interviews for special analysis. In using a categorical-content perspective, we sought to develop a topical life document that focused on respondents’ developing professional identifications with inner-city students.

Data collection and analysis. We used a snowball sample that started with Jim Jupp’s public school colleagues and moved toward respondents’ selections. In total, we interviewed seven respondents and added Jim Jupp’s piloted responses after the interviewing for a total of eight respondents. Sampling criteria included being White and male, teaching inner-city students in majority “minority” schools, having at least 4 years experience with inner-city students, and choosing to teach in the inner-city settings as part of professional identification. The snowball technique resulted in a sample of inner-city teachers from Central Texas School District. As a note, all respondents except Jim Jupp continue to work in inner-city schools 3 years later as this article goes to press.

In reference to the first two criteria (White and male), these criteria reflect the research’s autobiographical orientations coupled with an ethics of reflexivity

regarding our backgrounds and life stories. In reference to teaching inner-city students, this criterion required respondents work in majority “minority” classrooms, in downtown Central Texas City schools, and in schools with greater than 65% of students receiving free-and-reduced lunch. In the sample, respondents came from two Central Texas City middle schools: one with a 99% “minority” and 90% free and reduced lunch populations, the second with 85% “minority” and 67% free and reduced lunch populations. In reference to years of experience, this criterion provided a sample that ranged from 6 to 18 years and, in part, reflected our concern with commitment, effort, and an ethic of sticking with it. This commitment of effort and time eliminated many, many teachers who do not function, get exhausted, leave in frustration for higher education, or simply do not stay more than a year or two. In reference to choosing to teach inner-city students, this criterion also articulated commitment in that respondents continued to teach in inner-city settings, though, as teachers with experience, several had job offers from nearby suburban schools that had recently begun confronting “problems” of inner-city schools. Choosing to teach in inner-city settings, as a sampling criterion, showed an inner-city professional identification that differs from those who ascend, leave, or move on to easier job assignments. When taken together, these four criteria provided a sample of committed White male teachers who, at the time of research, had 6 to 18 years of experience and who had developed an identification as teachers of inner-city students. Subject areas included language arts, social studies, special-education inclusion, and special-education emotionally disturbed.

Interviewing provided initial data whereas the focus group meeting, peer debriefings, and researcher journals allowed for reflexivity, diverse perspectives, and reflection on emergent topics. Jim interviewed each respondent at least twice. The first round of interviews elicited respondents’ life stories (Atkinson, 1998; Cole & Knowles, 2001), and the second round focused on the teachers’ professional lives (Cole & Knowles, 2000; Goodson, 1992). Follow-up interviews were scheduled as needed to round out the first interviews. The focus group meeting, which took place after interview transcriptions, sought reflexivity and served as a second data source. Peer debriefings with colleagues of color sought diverse perspectives on emergent findings and provided a third data source. These debriefings, not always referenced directly, nonetheless, changed the direction of the research.⁶ The researcher journal, in which Jim wrote down reflections and copied in relevant texts, provided further reflexivity and a fourth data source.

Data analysis began by identifying and separating respondents’ pedagogical narratives into separate files. After separating and identifying pedagogical

narratives as new content universe, data analysis unfolded dialectically throughout the process drawing on cultural studies and educational literatures, transcripts, discursive contexts, and the researchers' personal experiences. Data analysis continues through to the present moment as revisions require continued forays into literatures and interview transcripts.

Identification Creativity: Three Pedagogical Narratives

Complexifying. Respondents' professional identifications, which emerge in pedagogical narratives on race, class, cultural difference, and pedagogy, serve to complex-ify rather than reify White teachers' identifications and, in particular, provide examples of identification creativity.

A gift. When Mike Taymes was 3 months old, his Dad left his mother and him stranded on the side the highway in San Antonio. As Taymes recounts,

I was born in Dallas, Texas. My father left when I was three months old, left my mom and I stranded in San Antonio, took her car, drove it back to Dallas, said he didn't want to be a part of the family. So they were soon divorced and he gave away all parental rights so I did not meet him until I was in college, and that will come later. (Interview No. 1a, p. 1)

This hardship, sending his mom and him into rural poverty, provides the central and recurrent theme of Taymes' professional identification.

Taymes', living in his grandfather's house, recalls "happy days" (Interview No. 1a, p. 2) growing up in a rural conservative family. His family, influenced by White supremacist rural Texas, used "the N word quite frequently, and you know it was always, a put-down" (p. 5), and his grandmother kept a framed "picture of Ronald Reagan up in her bedroom" (Interview No. 1a, p. 6). He recounted, for the greater part, being happy and oblivious to his family's poverty and internalizing their racism. Overtime, his mom became a reading teacher, and she remarried. Taymes had a mixed relationship with his step father that "because of some alcoholism, you know, often would escalate into physical altercations" (Interview No. 1a, p. 2).

With his mother as an educator, Taymes was successful in school and labeled gifted and talented. Additionally, he received rewards and recognitions from peers and teachers including a trip to Washington, DC in middle school. Nonetheless, in high school and early college, he started to realize his values and beliefs "did not mesh with the [family's] status quo" (Interview

No. 1a, p. 6). He recounted befriending Black peers because he “was really into hip hop, had always been” (Interview No. 1a, p. 5), and he reported, in the university setting, developing a progressive outlook based on veganism, green politics, critical revisionist history, and liberation Buddhism. Nonetheless, he majored in business according to his family’s original expectations and his limited funds. Although he reported wanting to switch majors to science education, Taymes could not afford “starting over . . . financially” (Interview No. 1a, p. 10). Taking his last electives before graduation, Taymes took a course on human sexuality, and when the professor read a short story about rape, Taymes flashed back to when he was “sexually molested [by an older step cousin], . . . and all of a sudden it all came flooding back to me. And it was very difficult for me to deal with” (Interview No. 1a, p. 11). Beginning to recode his rural conservative and White supremacist backgrounds along with coming to terms with sexual abuse of his childhood provide the bases of his professional identification.

Graduating in the late 1990s, Taymes received lucrative job offers from Sears and Bacardi but turned them down with the intention of trying to give back. He began a series of jobs working with emotionally disturbed children including a therapeutic wilderness camp, Houston ISD’s experimental program for juvenile offenders, and eventually, halfway houses in East Texas. In these settings, he came into contact with predominantly poor White and Black youths in which “there’s one or two White kids for every six [Black kids] on probation, whereas it’s the exact opposite in foster care and the sexual abuse that we were seeing” (Interview No. 1a, p. 21). As he began his career trying to give back, he found himself feeling “almost guilty for getting paid because of the therapy” (Interview No. 1a, p. 18) that he was receiving, especially in the years of the Wilderness Camp program.

In narrating his present inner-city work setting, Taymes describes the emotionally disturbed class he teaches:

I’m just gonna talk about my current class. Intro Scene: it’s about 75 percent African American in a school that’s about 20—well, I guess, roughly 20 to 30 percent African American [with 80 to 70 percent Hispanic], so again there’s a disproportionate number of African American students in our [emotionally disturbed] class as opposed to the outside population. (Interview No. 1b, p. 5)

Conscious of the racial composition, Taymes’ refers directly to the disproportion of African American students, reflecting discursive contexts of continued inequality and segregation.

In narrating his teaching, Taymes draws on his involvement with hip hop to critique its commercialized trajectory.

Yeah, definitely cultural factors come into lesson planning in regards to the—the—the readings that we do, the pieces that I bring in, you know, I—I like to introduce metaphors by bringing in this rap record or rapper from Chicago, and he sings this song and—and you think it’s about a woman and then at the end you find about that it’s really a song about a critique of hip hop and how it’s commercialized, but he’s—but he’s personified it and so there’s—there’s a lesson on personification and metaphors. (Interview No. 1b, p. 3)

We see the integration of Taymes and the students’ cultural resources both for critiquing hip hop, “how it’s commercialized” (Interview No. 1b, p. 3), and for approaching academics, “personification and metaphors” (Interview No. 1b, p. 3). Reflecting Henderson and Gornik’s (2007) notion of curriculum wisdom, Taymes works at the intersection of self, social, and subject-matter understanding in developing pedagogical content (Schulman, 1987) for involving students.

Taymes’s identification creativity, as it emerges in pedagogical narratives, is not *only* cultural relevance for academic success. Taymes, although he works with his own and children’s backgrounds to make learning relevant, also critiques and reconstructs, professionally, the identifications represented in his life story:

Well, I almost look upon, you know my father walking out, also the abuse almost as gifts because I know first hand, I didn’t have to read a book to learn how this affects you. I lived it every day. And then when I’m working with these students whose fathers are incarcerated or who have endured some kind of abuse and you know they’re displaying these behaviors that I used to see in myself, especially in regards to the African American men, and that kind of you know, just being so tough and you know, not letting the world get you down, you know having to be put in positions where they’re the man of the house and they’re thirteen years old, and I can relate. I was there. I’ve been there, can relate, in many ways. And so that was, you know my, my biological father, that was a gift that he gave me. . . . (Interview No. 1b, pp. 28-30)

In Taymes’ pedagogical narratives on race, class, cultural difference, and pedagogy, we see a personal reconstruction as interwoven within his identification

creativity that recodes his rural, conservative, and White supremacist background. For Taymes, the personal therapy, which publically works on self-actualization with his students, represents the foundation of his commitment.

Separateness. Jack Springman, English and media studies teacher, recalls growing up in conservative Orange County, in retrospect, as “very difficult” (Interview No. 5a, p. 1). From a conservative middle- to upper-middle-class background, Springman narrates prescriptive and narrow value hierarchy of achievement, pop culture, and sports that, “if you were at all different in any way, you were basically shunned” (Interview No. 5a, p. 4). In narrating this prescriptive and narrow-value hierarchy, Springman recounts that his family insisted he study “to be a doctor or some other professional degree,” and that when he wanted to be anything else, “It was not, to them, it was not success” (Interview No. 5b, p. 14). Several times during the interviews, Springman identifies this prescriptive and narrow-value hierarchy as “White” (Interview No. 5a, p. 4) or “White-centric” (Interview No. 5a, p. 19; Interview No. 5b, p. 1). In recalling high school, Springman recounts “I think there was one African-American in my high school, like *one*” [respondents’ emphasis] (Interview No. 5a, p. 4). With Springman, the discursive contexts on historical inequality and persistent segregation provide him with White privilege. Elaborating on this value hierarchy, Springman explains:

The literature that we read in our schools in an English class, the history, the laws of our government were enacted by dead White guys so, you know, the White-centric attitudes that . . . the White man is the top and everything trickles down from him. (Interview No. 5b, p. 1)

In narrating this prescriptive and narrow hierarchy, Springman contextualizes it, semiotically, with White-centric understandings combined with *trickle down* Reaganomics of the Conservative Restoration as discursive context. In Springman’s narrative, we begin to understand respondents, paradoxically, who renegotiate White privileges but do not negate or evade race. We think this paradox is important in understanding committed White male teachers’ identification creativity, and further, other progressive White identifications.

In later high school, through college, and continually, Springman seeks to broaden this prescriptive and narrow value hierarchy through engagement in “alternative” (Interview No. 5a, p. 7) music, literature, and film. Springman narrated, at length, his engagement in alternatives. Springman, in pedagogical narratives, discussed a profound youth engagement with alternative music, literature, and film that drove an oppositional identification creativity (Frith, 2003). Springman’s identification with the alternative provides an experiential

rite-of-passage that expands “the narrow shell that I thought was just the norm” (Interview No. 5a, pp. 4-5). Springman, ultimately, credits his engagement with alternative media that led him to a masters in film production as “kind of . . . [making] me who I am today” (Interview No. 5a, p. 5). Springman’s identification creativity, countering the White-centric value hierarchy of his youth, tie in directly with his professional identifications.

Springman, through his engagement in alternative music, film, and literature, becomes intent on recognizing and extending different perspectives, not only in his life, but also through his teaching.

I try to express this to my kids that, you know, there are other viewpoints, the female and then there’s diverse people’s viewpoints that, you know, the non-White folks have different cultures and in some regard I try to, I guess I try to highlight those, you know, like in the media studies class more often than not I try to present perspectives of no, you know, try to show that that was made by a woman . . . then there’s also . . . gay perspectives. And especially in middle school, you know, because the kids are developing their outlooks and their sexuality and other aspects. (Interview No. 5b, pp. 1-2)

Springman, narrating a broadening of students’ perspectives in his teaching, seeks to reflect and extend students’ understandings as well, evinced here in representing gay perspectives to predominantly heterosexist Hispanic middle school students. The personal theme of broadening his own perspective during his youth translates into his professional identification as teacher that, as articulated below, finds expression in subject-area lessons.

In relation to engaging his students, Springman emphasized, in pedagogical narratives, “adaptability” (Interview No. 5b, p. 3) and students’ “personal experience” (Interview No. 5b, p. 3). Springman narrates:

I can think of one a couple of years ago in one of my regular language arts class in 8th grade. . . . They were kind of making fun of the book as they were reading it that, you know, *Charlie* [on exceptionality], the main character who is mentally retarded, they, the students were acting like the other characters in the play. And I kind of began to point out, you’re behaving like these people who were cruel to Charlie. You should think about that. And then, you know, I figured out, specifically, but in an important part of the play, I tried to bring in their personal experience of discrimination. And that led into a discussion on race, and neighborhood, school, and teachers. (Interview No. 5b, pp. 4-5)

In Springman's lesson, we understand his adaptability as articulating reflection-in-action (Schön, 1983) and developing contextualized pedagogical content (Schulman, 1987). As broadening of narrow perspectives ties into his lessons, we find Springman, like Taymes, working the intersections of self, social, and subject-matter understandings consonant with curriculum wisdom (Henderson & Gornik, 2007).

In member checking, we returned to the theme of alternatives that predominated Springman's pedagogical narratives. In making this return, Springman intimated that, for him, teaching inner-city students *was* the alternative life path for him.

So I decided to follow this path [of alternatives] down to its logical conclusion, wherever that leads me. And it led to teaching children, diverse groups of children. And talking about the issue of this job, I really value it because it's a way to sustain a living without being completely beholden to other forces or power, like the corporate conglomerates. I value this career, not for the money, but because it's the right job. It provides a sort of separateness from the norm, and I value that. (Interview No. 5b, p. 14)

For Springman, his identification creativity seeks to broaden narrow perspectives, starting with his own and extending on to those of his students.

Activist stance. Bennett Ferris, whose father was an itinerant worker, grew up moving from place to place following his father's work opportunities. Specifically, Ferris recalled moving from place to place as "a double edged sword" (Interview No. 4a, p. 2):

Growing up was . . . both, ah, difficult and, um, at some points very exciting. The difficult part was that . . . my family moved around often. And so just when I would start to, um, feel settled in one place, the family would—would take off and—and that, as you can imagine, created some difficulties in terms of, I don't know, feelings of stability, ah, feelings of, um, long-term relationships. Ah, the flip side to that was that there was a part of me that really enjoyed the—the moving about. (Interview No. 4a, p. 2)

Ferris experienced instability and newness as part of his working class childhood, but it is a class sensitivity, from these early experiences, that creates a through line, thematically, in his identification creativity.

Ferris recalled his early schooling as enjoyable. He found enormous pleasure in reading, which led to success in a number of areas. He recalled reading, avidly, *The Hardy Boys* series, *Tom Sawyer*, and *Huck Finn*. These adventure novels, which paralleled his itinerant experiences of moving, served “as a metaphor for my childhood” (Interview No. 4a, p. 3). He recalled, during his childhood, playing sports and exploring with his brothers whom he was “pretty solid, [even] into adulthood” (Interview No. 4a, p. 3). Ferris recalled doing well in all school subjects, especially language arts, history, and geography. Ferris now teaches sixth-grade language arts at South Middle School’s magnet program in Central Texas District.

Although doing well through elementary, middle, and even the beginning of high school, Ferris dropped out in tenth grade. In describing dropping out, Ferris recalled that “I wasn’t feeling like I was getting a whole lot from the high school experience” (Interview No. 4a, p. 4). After having followed his father’s work for many years, he found little connection with the high school traditions and routines, and consequently, he found it easy to cut his ties with the high school he was attending. However, even as he was dropping out, he planned to take his love of reading and writing to community and junior college settings. As Ferris reported, “What I wanted to do was to . . . drop out of high school and start taking college classes, and that’s exactly what I did” (Interview No. 4a, p. 4). Like many students of itinerant families, Ferris dropped out of high school and eventually found his way to higher education through community and junior college routes.

As Ferris’ family continued to move around, he took junior college classes in Oregon, California, and Connecticut. After having maintained a high GPA and transferred hours from one institution to the next, he won a scholarship to West Tech University in Modesta, Texas. Regarding West Tech, he commented:

Ah, I saw people around me at West Tech . . . who had a lot of money, very, very wealthy and that, you . . . that didn’t bother me . . . I was just happy to be there, I was very happy to be going to school on a—on a—on a scholarship. (Interview No. 4a, p. 6)

Ferris, evincing on-going class sensitivities, sees the privileges of West Tech and represents himself as just “happy” (Interview No. 4a, p. 6) to have a foot in the door.

During his time at West Tech, Ferris studies language, literature, and communications developing a critical perspective regarding power relations. In discussing his learning at West Tech, he recounts:

I—I started looking more closely at power structures. Um . . . The power of the—of the federal government, um, and what the federal government is doing at the Supreme Court level, those—those kinds of—of discussions . . . We also talked about, um, power of interpersonal relationships . . . So my sensitivity towards—towards, um, towards these relationships of power certainly, ah, developed and—and increased while I was in that program. (Interview No. 4a, p. 14)

The university experience at West Tech reshapes his class sensitivities with a critical language.

Ferris' critical perspective, emerging from class sensitivities, flowed into a swirl of critical discourses including corporate structures, green politics, process spirituality, and veganism. Ferris' critical discourses intertwine as he discusses his conversion to a vegetarian life style:

I had read a lot of material, ah, about the—about the health component to a vegetarian diet . . . And then once I—once I started reading more of the literature and actually started practicing the—vegan, ah, diet, the other constellation of—of arguments started to—started to come into my consciousness, the—arguments for, ah, environment, for example, um, the argument for animal rights, um, those—those arguments started to coalesce for me—then it was for the environment and the animal rights, um, ah, arguments as well. . . . Um, politically, um, I was looking at relationships between, um, between food producers and, um, well, I was looking at relationships of—of agribusiness and—and the average consumer and—and what—what happens along that food line and what that—that is about. . . . A—another argument that I became aware of, too, was the—was the . . . spirituality argument to—to veganism and I think this argument rest[s] primarily with some of the Buddhist, ah, and—and the Hindu, ah, philosophy, which is to—which is to not harm others, including—including animals And—and living in Modesta . . . I helped to, um, create . . . an organization called the Vegetarian Society of Modesta. (Interview No. 4a, pp. 14-17)

In the narrative following this selection, Ferris elaborates on working with local restaurants on creating vegetarian menus, developing the society's local activist agenda, and bringing in speakers to support the group's vegetarian vision. Ferris' critical perspective, developed during his time at West Tech,

finds material expression in activism, a stance that will be echoed in the broad vision of his work below.

Central to his narrative, Ferris' identification creativity comes straight into his classroom teaching with magnet and comprehensive school students. Ferris' classroom practices include units on religious scriptures including Lao Tsu's *Tao*, using martial arts exhibitions for instruction when appropriate, discussions of animal rights and vegetarianism in a philosophy elective, and sponsoring a martial arts club to develop relationships with students. Additionally, Ferris talked at length about connecting with students at a "genuine level" (Interview No. 4b, p. 2). Elaborating at length on genuine teaching, Ferris described the importance of teachers' vocation, using students' experiences, and developing relationships with students.

Embodying vocation, relationships, experiences, and a critical perspective, Ferris recounted a unit of study for his sixth-grade magnet classes based on Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* called "South Middle Tales." This unit sought to integrate students' experiences and social relationships with critical discussions of social class and other identity groups, including race, at the school level. Ferris explains:

And going back to that, ah, "South Middle Tales" lesson, the students brainstorm the different levels of or the different types of, ah, groups at South Middle, um, and—and then they also look at not just the—the levels of—created at South Middle by the school system, but they look at the different groups that the students created amongst themselves, so there—they—they often talk about the skater group; they often talk about, um, the punk group; um, they often talk about the schoolboy group; ah, they talk about the rappers; um, and—and sometimes—sometimes their discussion or their—their—their listing, ah, goes along of racial lines, they talk about the—the Black group, they talk about the White group, they talk about the Hispanic groups, um, so this lesson allows the students to—to—to look at the structures created, um, within the school system, by the school system, but also by the students themselves. And once—once they create, once we—once we put all of this on the board, um, we—we lay out all these different—different types of—of groups and—and structures at South Middle, then the task becomes to—to characterize these groups such as Chaucer did in his *Canterbury Tales* and, um, what—what I like the students to do is to, um, is to pick two or three of these groups specifically and—and to—to create like Chaucer did, ah, ah, rhyming couplets, and characterize these groups in rhyming couplets. (Interview No. 4b, p. 11)

Ferris, in having students write in “rhyming couplets” (Interview No. 4b, p. 11), reconstructed students day-to-day relationships and experiences in ways that made school hierarchies visible for comment, understanding, and academic work. Again, as with Taymes and Springman, we understand Ferris’ pedagogical narrative as contextualized pedagogical content (Schulman, 1987) working intersections of self, social, and subject-area understandings (Henderson & Gornik, 2007).

In discussing the big picture of his teaching, Ferris discusses a race-visible activist stance toward the magnet program he works in:

Well, it’s—it’s not [racially] colorblind . . . I see a certain group of—of children and—and—and those kids are Hispanic and African American and I—and I want to emphasize that they get into the program, so—so in that—in—in that sense I’m—I’m reaching out to—to this segment of—of the population. . . . I think it’s an activist step that I’m taking. So I—I feel a—a need, um, I’d even say, um, I’m taking an activist stance on—on trying to pool kids from the—from the East Side into the program. (Interview No. 4a, p. 3)

Ferris, whose class sensitivities are critically reconstructed at West Tech, narrated creating lessons in which that experience is reconstructed with his students in subject-area lessons. He also narrated race and class sensitivities in his lesson and regarding recruitment.

Alternative masculinity. Reading these three pedagogical narratives as a whole, we detect, emerging in respondents’ professional identifications, identification creativity driven by alternative masculinity through critical politics, indie or alternative media, and process spirituality. In Mike Taymes’s pedagogical narratives, his childhood identification with hip-hop culture serves to reshape his family’s rural, working class, White supremacy, and his hip-hop identification carries directly over into his teaching practices along with other personal practices including engaged Buddhism and reading critical history. Similarly, Jack Springman’s engagement with alternative media and indie music and film serve to recode his “White-centric” (Interview 5a, p. 19; Interview No. 5b, p. 1) family and youth experiences, and as he narrates, his identification creativity moves along the same lines toward broadening students’ understandings and creating his own lived alternative stylistics. Finally, Bennett Ferris’ class sensitivities take on a critical political voice that spills over into discussions of political power, food consumption politics, veganism, and Eastern process spirituality. In each of the respondents’ narratives, we detect an alternative masculinity, special and idiosyncratic to respondents’ identifications, that drives identification

creativity and related curriculum wisdom. Though speculative at this moment, we see this alternative masculinity as an understudied gender component of progressive male teachers' professional identifications that, like feminist caring (Goldstein, 1997; Noddings, 1984), could make a significant impact on how male teachers' morally approach their work.

Narrative Patterns: Wisdom and Frustrations

Definition. Pedagogical patterns refer to patterned professional identifications that emerged, to differing degrees, in respondents' pedagogical narratives. All respondents provided the following narrative patterns that correspond, broadly, to curriculum wisdom's (Henderson & Gornik, 2007) self, social, and subject-matter understandings.

Race visibility. I'm know I'm White. My students know I'm White. It's not a secret. (Rudy Smith, Interview No. 2b, p. 1)

I teach English, so a lot of the stories we'll read will be about young adults and so there'll be young adult black female and a young adult Hispanic male stories kind of stuff. And you can see that people [editors] are going out of their way to be sure that students don't feel divorced from the curriculum. And I think that's important especially in an English class where a lot of the canon of high brow literature is dead White men (Rudy Smith, Interview No. 2b, pp. 7-8)

It's just, it's just lingering, many, many years worth of repression by White people on minorities and it's all the fault of . . . Europeans. I don't know, it's pretty obvious; I don't need to go into that, do I? It's just the way it is. The truth is that probably more than 99% of children identified special are minorities. (Gene Johanson, Interview No. 3b, p. 2)

First, race visibility emerged as pattern in respondents' professional identifications. Respondents see race in themselves and in their students. Respondents also see race in community and society along with along with racial representations in curriculum. Though respondents spoke of race at an experiential level, in racially sensitive schools. Five of eight respondents mentioned race as playing an *obvious* role in day-to-day interactions and relationships. All respondents confirmed race visibility in students and themselves, and none of the respondents took a color-blind or race-evasive stance. Respondents' professional identifications, enmeshed with discursive contexts

of historical inequality and failing schools, cannot take refuge in (typically White) color-blind or postracial understandings of race. Race visibility emerged as a patterned professional identification in respondents pedagogical narratives consonant with *self understanding*.

Difference within difference. Even though we're 90% Latino [and 9% African American], there's the jocks, there's the nerds, there's the burn outs, there's the gangsters. It's interesting all within its own little you know, cliques within a culture . . . (Trent Cowens, Interview No. 7b, p. 6)

. . . I know a Black kid is Black and I know a Hispanic kid is Hispanic. But to some kids, the culture, the language, the background means different things to them, you know, and you have to take that into account. You know, one kid wants to be called Monica, and the other kid wants to be called *Mónica* [Spanish intonation]. (Ron Johnston, Interview No. 2b, p. 1)

Second, an understanding of difference within difference emerged as patterned professional identification in respondents' pedagogical narratives. This understanding of difference within difference requires teachers to work within and beyond minority difference categories. Predominant representations of difference (e.g., Johnson, Musial, Hall, Gollnick, & Dupius, 2007) present minority difference categories that reflect static and essentialized ethnic nationalisms often tend toward the promotion of stereotypes. Difference within difference requires subtle understandings of and interactions with students' lives in social and historical contexts of teaching and learning. These subtle understandings and interactions recognize the importance of students' cultures and lived experiences but also understand that students inhabit identities in historically and socially specific ways. For example, in discussing his students, David McGrady articulates that "Hispanics" (Interview No. 6b, p. 11), for example, come from different social and historical backgrounds: "[There are] Hispanics who've been here since say the Mexican Revolution of 1910 versus the Hispanics that have been here since last summer. They *are* and *aren't* [participant's emphasis] the same group" (Interview No. 6b, p. 11). Respondents cannot assume that minority difference categories represent "cultures" traveling neatly through time and space. As respondents' life story interviews articulate, notions of "student cultures" so important in multiculturalism and culturally relevant literatures serve as social resources for teaching and learning but nonetheless prove themselves to be approximations when entering into specific engagements with students. As respondents' professional identifications articulate, students' experiences do not fit neatly into minority

difference categories—students' experiences are more complex than that. Discursive contexts of racially and culturally charged communities, also enmeshed in respondents' day-to-day interactions, enter into respondents' patterned professional identifications on difference within difference. Difference within difference emerged as a patterned professional identification in respondents' pedagogical narratives consonant with *social understanding*.

Relational-experiential pedagogy

. . . if there's not a good relationship between a student and a teacher you can tell when you go into the teacher's classroom . . . Some kids will be just out and out disrespectful or disruptive. (Rudy Smith, Interview No. 2b, p. 9)

It—it's—it's—it's extremely important to relate to the students, ah, experiences. (Bennett Ferris, Interview No. 4b, p. 10)

And then, you know, I figured out, specifically, but in an important part of the play, I tried to bring in their personal experience. (Jack Springman, Interview No. 5a, p. 15)

Third, a relational-experiential pedagogy emerged as pattern in respondents' pedagogical narratives. In correspondence with respondents' race visibility and understandings of difference within difference, all respondents narrated pedagogies emphasizing personal relationships and students' experiences. Respondents stressed the value of relationships with their students as fundamental in maintaining functioning classrooms. Respondents also focused on adaptability of subject-matter lessons to students' experiences as necessary in creating lessons that worked with inner-city students. This relational-experiential pedagogy aligned, most closely, with understandings of reflection-in-action (Schön, 1983) and specific pedagogical content knowledge (Schulman, 1987). As a note, this experiential-relational pedagogy emerged with little or no formal theoretical discussion on teaching and learning, and instead, respondents narrated their insights as practical problem solving (Clandinin & Connelly, 1988; Schwab, 1978). From respondents' narratives, personal practical knowledges focusing on students' experiences and relationships with students emerged as key in delivering *subject-area lessons*.

Frustrations

Let's go with Charles Dickens' *Tale of Two Cities*. It was the best of times. It was the worst of times. And I think I literally have both extremes. Uh. It's weird like about the testing thing and I'm talking about all that accountability bullshit. (David McGrady, Interview No. 6b, p. 4)

[N]ot feeling supported by both your co-workers and uh, administratively . . . we have a one-size-fits-all accountability program from downtown. [They ask] Why are you not looking the same, exact way as the schools on other sides of the city. I want to say look at our schools, we do an excellent job given our circumstances, you know, it's frustrating. I accepted it, it's a necessary evil. We are an institution. (Trent Cowens, Interview No. 7b, p. 13)

In fact, it almost feels like I'm overstaying my welcome in this profession right now. (Gene Johanson, Interview No. 3b, p. 20)

Continuing frustrations, though dissonant with self, social, and subject-matter understanding outlined above, also emerged in respondents' professional identifications. Respondents' pedagogical narratives, rather than providing redemptive victory stories (Cary, 1999), recounted narratives of partial successes with on-going frustrations. Frustrations with discipline, colleagues, administration, and career paths all emerged as on-going concerns.

In the focus group meeting, respondents engaged at length on these concerns. Rather than expressing multicultural transformation or felicitous pedagogical pilgrimage from ignorance to enlightenment, respondents narrated a continuing institutional "grind" (Jackson, 1968, p. 1) with increasing administrative pressures from accountability. Two teachers, both special-education resource teachers, expressed a sense of failure, and one told of a need to move away from the special-education assignment to teaching art: "I have come up with what I would like to do [with my life] and this [teaching special ed] is not it. Maybe if I could teach art . . ." (Gene Johansen, Focus group meeting, p. 26).

Gene Johansen, still working in inner-city settings, now teaches in an inner-city fifth-grade classroom rather than in special education.

Respondents' frustrations reflect discursive contexts related to historical and social inequality understood as educational "problems" or achievement "gaps" in discursive contexts on failing schools. Differing from other pedagogical literatures, respondents' pedagogical narratives, all told, did not provide a feel good "victory narrative" from which others might infer "best practices" or "principles" of inner-city teaching. Rather, respondents' pedagogical narratives expressed continuing frustrations exacerbated within discursive contexts. In reflecting on this professional identification with another higher education colleague with extensive experience in inner-city settings, he commented on the relationship between his current research and his previous role as a teacher that very much reflects our moral position here:

We *have to* ask the hard questions and provide the difficult conditions [in research] because the work [inner city teaching] is hard. So, when I take up thinking, I make the thinking difficult, because you can't just say "I have the solution now," like too many multicultural education and critical theorists do. (Researcher Journal, p. 39)

We think that on-going frustrations represent another type of wisdom, a wisdom inherent in pragmatic professionalism (Henderson & Gornik, 2007; Schön, 1983; Schulman, 1987; Schwab, 1978) that understands that "answers" to question of practice are continually remade and that deliberative processes (Schwab, 1978) represent, in fact, power struggles between unequal participants.

A Second Wave of White Teacher Identification Studies

Reconceptualizing. In this reflection, we seek to reconceptualize and influence research on White teachers' identifications for better serving inner-city students. We critique interventionist research on White teachers identities (Berlak, 1999; Henze, Lucas, & Scott, 1998; Marx, 2004; Marx & Pennington, 2003; McIntyre, 1998, 2002; Sleeter, 1992, 1993) as fixed, static, and essentializing. That is, we think that critical interventionist research on White teacher identities present a project, ultimately, of limited scope and value for our ambitions that seek to capacitate and constitute progressive identifications. Moving beyond critical interventionist projects, we seek a second wave of White teacher identification research that focuses on professional becoming, identification creativity, race consciousness, and constitutive representations.

Professional becoming. A second wave of White teacher identifications focuses on respondents' professional becoming. Respondents' professional becoming, represented in pedagogical narratives here, provides for identifications' unfolding through time. Professional becoming, as its allows for this time-unfolding, provides a changing, dynamic, unfixed view of respondents' developing identifications. We consider this view—a view of *becoming*—perhaps most important for capacitating committed White teachers' identification creativity as well as other progressive White identifications. In reference to our respondents, we find that becoming committed teachers of inner-city students, rather than following the trajectory of education course work, internships, licensure pathways, or staff development, emerges through lived autobiographical or *self-understanding* reconstructed socially and made available

for subject-area lessons. Mike Taymes' experience of neglect and abuse drives his commitment to serve children who are in similar circumstances. Jack Springman's uses of alternative media to recode narrow White-centric value hierarchies of his middle-class youth and education drive his desire to broaden inner-city students' perspectives. Bennett Ferris' class sensitivities drive his development of a critical perspective including class and race activism, vegan diet and politics, and engaged Taoist practices that enter into his teaching. Becoming committed teachers of inner-city students, as revealed in respondents' pedagogical narratives, emerged narratively as personal experiences and understandings made social through teaching. Respondents' pedagogical narratives show that *professional commitment* represents finding the personal in the social practice of teaching. We think that this understanding of professional commitment, one that works from within, provides an important direction for humanistic teacher education and staff development that too often works in the reverse direction through prescribed initiatives from "experts."

Identification creativity. Next, a second wave of White teacher identification studies moves from studying White teacher identity toward studying White teachers' identification creativity. Identification creativity, as articulated above, represent and constitute professional identifications that allow for study of White teachers' motivations, change, growth, and coming-to-know students, contexts, subject matter, pedagogy, and themselves. Identification creativity, we think, corresponds with and extends professional reflection-in-action (Schön, 1983), pedagogical content knowledge (Schulman, 1987), teachers' practical knowledge (Clandinin & Connelly, 1988), and curriculum wisdom (Henderson & Gornik, 2007) into fluid understandings that intersect with teachers and students' cultural identities. This extension of pragmatic professionalism, we think, will help to capacitate preservice and professional teachers working with inner-city students as they develop sophisticated professional identifications that understand curriculum wisdom, race visibility, difference within difference, and relational-experiential pedagogy. In relation to our respondents, alternative masculinities, an important component of committed White male teachers' identification creativity, provides a new direction for understanding White progressive identifications with significant potential for informing male teachers' moral understanding of their work and professional aspirations.

Race consciousness. Furthermore, a second wave of White teacher identifications emphasizes respondents who are experienced in negotiating race, class, cultural difference, and pedagogy. Critical interventionist research (Berlak, 1999; Henze, Lucas, & Scott, 1998; Marx, 2004; Marx & Pennington, 2003; McIntyre, 1998, 2002; Sleeter, 1992, 1993) on White teacher identities emphasized,

predominantly, White preservice teachers' identities. We raise the question: Why are we studying predominantly preservice teachers' identities (Berlak, 1999; Marx, 2004; Marx & Pennington, 2003; McIntyre, 1998, 2002), especially if those are the identities we want to change? The second wave of White teacher identifications studies should, through purposive sampling, research professional identifications of teachers experienced in working through difference. In short, the second wave of White teacher identification studies should articulate, in positive representations, sophisticated and progressive identification as it drives curriculum wisdom.

Constitutive. Finally, a second wave of White identifications understands research as constituting and capacitating progressive White identifications. Critical interventionist research (Berlak, 1999; Henze, Lucas, & Scott, 1998; Marx, 2004; Marx & Pennington, 2003; McIntyre, 1998, 2002; Sleeter, 1992, 1993), in articulating what it desires to abolish, reifies the static categories it ostensibly seeks to do away with. To a degree, this explains resistances to critical interventionist research by participants of color (Berlak, 1999; Henze, Lucas, & Scott, 1999) who find the intervention offensive and side against the professor with White students. Nonetheless, we propose a second wave of White teacher identification studies that understands research as both representing experience *and* constituting identifications, the creative identifications we seek to develop. In this way, we see a second wave of White teacher identification studies as constituting an archive of surplus identification creativity for constituting the professional identifications we seek to create in a complex present toward more sophisticated understandings in the future.

Let the second wave commence that emphasizes professional becoming, identification creativity, race consciousness, and constitutive understandings of research practice . . .

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Notes

1. All respondents and places' names are pseudonyms.
2. According to the National Center of Education Statistics (2004), the combined public school elementary and secondary education teaching force remains 88.6% White.

3. Gary Howard's REACH conducts interventionist multicultural staff development and training for schools and corporations.
4. Professional identifications neither assume teachers ability to transcend race, nor take up race transcendent "look alike" such as White abolitionist or race traitor positions.
5. In the spring of 2008, when East Central Middle School eked out an acceptable classification after having slipped into an unacceptable one in the spring of 2007, administrators and teachers celebrated *en masse*. Unfortunately, Central Texas City District's office staff reflected, greatly, the attitude of the Fordham Foundation report (Thomas B. Fordham Foundation Staff, 2006). We had earned a D. Understandings like the one represented in the Fordham Foundation report (Thomas B. Fordham Foundation Staff, 2006) constitute and reflect administrative identifications.
6. Peers of color influenced the direction of narrative interpretation. For instance, Jim Jupp, early in the research process, shared narratives of teaching as subversive activity. Because of peers' of color incredulity before this narrative pattern (combined with insufficient support in data), we dropped this finding.

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