

Facilitating Dialogues About Racial Realities

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by [Stephen John Quaye](#) 2014

Background/Context: *Facilitating dialogues about racial issues in higher education classroom settings continues to be a vexing problem facing postsecondary educators. In order for students to discuss race with their peers, they need skilled facilitators who are knowledgeable about racial issues and able to support students in these difficult dialogues. Yet previous research on difficult dialogues has largely focused on students' experiences in these dialogues and the outcomes they gain from participating in them with little knowledge about the roles of facilitators of these dialogues.*

Purpose: The purpose of the present study was to examine how postsecondary educators facilitate racial dialogues.

Research Design: In this study, I employed case study methodology and conducted semistructured individual interviews with 22 participants, as well as examined participants' syllabi to see how they structured their courses.

Findings: Findings reveal the practical strategies educators used to facilitate classroom-based racial dialogues, including utilizing group discussions, using various practical resources, developing ways for learners to apply racial concepts and theories to their lives, and providing ample space for students to debrief at the conclusion of the dialogues.

Conclusions/Recommendations: Major conclusions and recommendations from this study include the importance of White educators facilitating these dialogues, educators conceiving of knowledge differently, the importance of paying attention to the institutional and classroom cultures for these dialogues, fostering collaborations between faculty and student affairs educators to enable students to grapple with racial issues in classroom and cocurricular settings, and connecting racial dialogues with other historical forms of oppression like sexism and classism.

Many postsecondary institutions espouse the appreciation of diversity as one of their chief aims. One reason for this diversity-related goal is evidence from researchers that structured engagement with differences provides students with educational benefits (Milem, 2003), such as increased perspective-taking skills (Chang, 1999), a reduction of stereotypes (Allport, 1954), academic and social self-confidence (Hurtado, Dey, Gurin, & Gurin, 2003), and the development of intercultural maturity (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005), to name a few. These outcomes notwithstanding, there has been criticism of the methods higher education institutions employ to foster these benefits. In the 2003 University of Michigan affirmative action case *Grutter v. Bollinger*, Gurin argued that a more racially diverse student body provides educational benefits to students (mostly White students), thus making diversity a compelling interest. This interest, Gurin contended, is compelling because it enriches students' opportunities to engage with those who are different from them, thereby levying important educational outcomes, such as those mentioned at the outset of this article.

Critics of the *Grutter v. Bollinger* decision assert that the court upheld the importance of using affirmative action policies to increase racial diversity in its law school, although the school's admissions policy was too narrow to achieve its desired effect (Raines, 2006). These critics also argue that the educational benefits of racial diversity place an unfair burden onto students of color to educate their White peers about their racialized experiences, and thus, the benefits are not accrued equally among racial groups. In other words, White students benefit more from cross-racial interactions with students of color than do students of color. Because students of color likely will have already had exposure to White students prior to their enrollment at the University of Michigan, the benefits they gain from the school's affirmative action policy do not enable them to experience the same educational gains. As Kow (2010) wrote: For students of color, who are valued for the novelty their race presents to white students underexposed to racial diversity, the compelling interest provides little to no direct benefit (p. 190). Kow's comment underscores the difficulty of determining the compelling interest of this diversity. He goes on to ask:

If there are educational benefits that flow from diversity, then one must ask for whom the benefits flow. Do they flow for everyone, from everyone, as a function of a diverse student body? To pose the same question in the

negative: Without student diversity, who is deprived of the educational benefits that would otherwise flow from a diverse student body? (p. 163)

To paraphrase these important questions, at whose expense are these benefits? If White students benefit more from exposure to racial diversity, do the gains these students experience outweigh the potential negative harms to students of color or the fact that students of color may not receive similar benefits from this exposure?

Although these are important questions to consider that arise from treating diversity as a compelling interest, the focus of this article takes a slightly different turn. I concentrate on the nature of students' interactions across racial differences. I am concerned about dialogues that occur between students when there is not a strong representation of racial diversity present during these dialogues (Hurtado, 2001). For example, two of the unresolved questions in the *Grutter v. Bollinger* case are: (1) What constitutes a critical mass of underrepresented students for meaningful learning about differences to occur, and (2) what, specifically, is happening when students engage across racial differences that might facilitate educational benefits? Given that the topic of this article is on racial dialogues and the roles of educators¹ in facilitating these dialogues, I focus on the nature of these dialogues and students' experiences within them when a critical mass is not present. Another unsettled issue, which admittedly was not the purpose of Kow (2010) and Raines (2006) studies but is nonetheless important, is the extent to which educators are prepared to handle the presence of racial diversity within their courses. Little evidence exists that the majority of educators are adequately equipped to facilitate these dialogues when there is racial diversity in their courses or even when working with a more racially homogeneous group of students. Therefore, a complementary aim of this article is to focus explicitly on the strategies educators use to facilitate these dialogues. Garcia and Van Soest (2000) summarize this vexing problem:

Faculty must develop comfort with discussing issues related to diversity in order to demonstrate how to place perspective on heated and strained interaction. . . . In the midst of class interaction on diversity, faculty need to feel free to share their impressions and insights and yet maintain focus on the learning needs of students. (p. 35)

Managing the necessary emotions that result from racial dialogues, learning how to balance sharing one's knowledge, and facilitating the process of learners articulating their own perspectives on racial issues are other issues with which educators must grapple. The shortage of empirical research on these matters underscores the

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- Stephen Quaye
Miami University
E-mail Author
STEPHEN JOHN QUAYE is an assistant professor in the Student Affairs in Higher Education Program at Miami University. His research explores the process and outcomes of students engaging in difficult dialogues as well as the roles of facilitators in these dialogues. Recent publications include Quaye, S. J. (2012). Think before you teach: Preparing for dialogues about racial realities. *Journal of College Student Development*, 53(4), 542-562, and Quaye, S. J. (2012). White educators facilitating discussions about racial realities. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 45(1), 100-119.

importance of the present study.

Because Mayhew, Grunwald, and Dey (2005) found that an institutions ability to achieve a positive climate for diversity is indeed reflected by the faculty's commitment to incorporate diversity-related issues into their academic agenda (p. 408), focusing on the ways that educators treat racial issues during dialogues about diversity is an important issue to examine.

Educators must learn how to respond effectively to the racial diversity that they will face within their courses. This includes considering how to address the topic of race within classes composed of racially homogeneous groups. They must employ culturally responsive pedagogical practices (Gay, 2000, 2002) that move beyond asserting that racial diversity is a compelling interest to specific strategies that respond to that compelling interest in ways that are attuned to the varied backgrounds and experiences of students. Otherwise, the likelihood of students experiencing the aforementioned educational benefits will be lessened.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to ground my article in relevant literature, I divide the literature review into two major sections. First, I concentrate on building a case for racial diversity as a compelling interest and on one educational intervention used to address racial diversity in higher education intergroup dialogues about race. Next, I discuss literature pertaining to strategies for responding to racial diversity in higher education classrooms to stress the importance of educators developing culturally competent pedagogical strategies to support students in these dialogues given the potentially diverse racial backgrounds represented in dialogues about race. The two sections of this literature review ultimately highlight some broad areas to consider in moving racial diversity from a compelling interest to tangible approaches to help students achieve the educational benefits that are accrued from structured exposure to racial diversity.

RACIAL DIVERSITY AS A COMPELLING INTEREST

In their study using a sample from the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP), Chang, Denson, Sáenz, and Misa (2006) found a positive correlation between students who engaged in dialogues with their peers

about racial issues and gains in cognitive development, self-confidence, and openness to diversity. A surprising conclusion was that even students who report little or no interaction will also likely benefit from institutional efforts to sustain positive race relations (p. 451). This finding establishes the importance of institutional efforts (e.g., faculty facilitating racial dialogues in their courses, intergroup dialogues) targeted at concrete ways for students to engage racial diversity, which might be one avenue for maintaining positive race relations (Chang et al., 2006). The fact that the authors found that students gain these outcomes builds one strong case for racial diversity as a compelling interest. Yet these benefits are not the same across all racial groups (e.g., Chang, Astin, & Kim, 2004). Although I would not expect students to experience benefits in the same ways in part due to students unique backgrounds, experiences, developmental readiness, and openness to engaging racial diversity some have argued that it is potentially problematic when White students gain more from racial diversity as it places an unfair responsibility onto their counterparts of color for educating them (e.g., Kow, 2010; Raines, 2006).

One educational intervention for making racial diversity as a compelling interest more explicit and moving beyond just exposure to racial diversity is intergroup dialogue. These dialogues bring two groups of students together that have a history of conflict to explore the sources of conflict, learn from their personal experiences, and strive to bridge differences and form alliances to tackle social injustices in society (Zúñiga, 2003). Intergroup dialogues are cofacilitated with each facilitator representing the social identity present in the dialogues. For example, a dialogue on race is usually cofacilitated by a White person and a person of color. The point is for the cofacilitators to mirror the social identities of the participants so that students see themselves represented among the cofacilitators.

Although intergroup dialogues are intended to foster open and honest dialogues about difficult topics (e.g., race) among a racially heterogeneous group of students, attending to *race* and *space* within these dialogues is critical to gaining a nuanced understanding of what happens when educators endeavor to facilitate dialogues between students who likely have varied experiences engaging race in classroom spaces. First, consider the classroom space. Various norms exist within classrooms the educator is usually seen as the authority figure or expert who transmits knowledge to students through what Freire (1970) referred to as the banking concept of education. Emotions and speaking from ones personal experiences are also marginalized, as objectivism and truth are the common forms of knowledge that are privileged (Dewey, 1938; hooks, 1994). Classroom spaces are also filled with evaluation, as students connect the classroom as the place where educators give them grades. In certain fields, students of color are also underrepresented within these spaces and thus might feel the need to represent their race or speak for all members of their racial group (Tatum, 1997). Thus, the classroom *space* is consistent with Mitchell, Wood, and Witherspoons (2010) analysis of race and space, in which they write:

Higher education institutions need to change so that they value and support culturally diverse discourses. Addressing these issues requires more than simply increasing the number of advisors of color; rather educators must possess critical understanding of race and space in the history of schooling in the US. (p. 305)

Given the aforementioned norms of the classroom space, educators who wish to facilitate racial dialogues must consider students preconceived notions about what forms of knowledge are worthy in classroom spaces as well as accept that even talking about race is challenging a dominant ideology, an ideology that asserts students are to remain silent about race (Solórzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000; Villalpando, 2004).

Dovetailing with Mitchell et al.'s (2010) discourse on race and space is one of the central tenets of critical race theory recognizing the importance of the experiential knowledge of students of color, that is, knowledge that draws from their personal experiences (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 2000). Critical race theorists contend that due to the ways in which students of color might experience their racial identities (e.g., feel oppressed, have a sense of pride), they have important knowledge to contribute that is grounded in their experiences. An important caveat is necessary critical race theorists are not asserting that students of color have valuable experiential knowledge merely because they are students of color. Rather, they must reflect critically on their racial identity and be able to draw larger implications from these reflections, thereby recognizing the importance of this experiential knowledge. This point is similar to what Mitchell et al. (2010) claimed: The epistemic nature of this recommendation means that it is not the physical identifiers of race that provide the groundings for these valuable understandings (p. 305). For example, Black students do not have valuable knowledge simply because they are Black; rather, given the multifaceted ways in which these students may have experienced their Blackness, they may possess experiential knowledge that would be different from the knowledge of White students. Thus, Black students telling their stories in classroom spaces can serve as counternarratives (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001) to the dominant ways in which race is (or is not) talked about in the classroom. Consequently, inviting these students stories during racial dialogues is counter to the dominant norms that persist within classroom spaces and can provide experiential knowledge from which others can learn (Stanley, 2007; Tate, 1997).

When readers consider the intersection between race and space, they see a more nuanced vision of racial diversity as a compelling interest by grounding this compelling interest in tangible ways to respond to racial diversity in classroom spaces through structured dialogues. Classroom spaces are contested (Foucault, 1995); thus, the introduction of racial dialogues within these spaces will always be negotiated terrain with multiple students speaking from their experiences, and those experiences being seen as counternarratives when students of color speak. The contested nature of these spaces also enables readers to think about the use of experience as sources of knowledge among White students. Because White students seem to benefit more from racially diverse spaces (e.g., Chang et al., 2004, 2006; Kow, 2010), what does it mean when they speak from their experiences? Critical race theorists contemplate the importance of experiential knowledge from students of color; but, within racial dialogues, students of color are not the only students speaking from their experiences about race. White students also speak from their experiences, yet these experiences are not treated as counternarratives, as they are coming from those with dominant racial identities. Applebaums (2008) work is instructive here, as she problematizes what it means for White students to speak from their experiences. Applebaum noted that during dialogues about social justice, where students experiences naturally enter the dialogue, White students often report that their experiences do not matter in the same ways as their peers of color. In addition, facilitators of these dialogues struggle with recentering Whiteness when White students speak from their experiences (Applebaum, 2008), especially when these experiences are not connected to larger institutionalized systems of oppression, power, and domination. It would seem that as long as white students are willing to engage in critical reflection around the frameworks through which they make sense of their experiences, Applebaum contends, educators should make room for their voices in the classroom (p. 412). This suggestion offered by Applebaum seems consistent with Nashs (2004) point about the importance of drawing larger implications from ones personal stories. Experiences are mediated by systemic issues of power, privilege, and domination (Goodman, 2011; Johnson, 2006), and connecting experiences to these concepts enables students to understand the contested nature of particular experiences, especially when they voice those experiences in classroom spaces that are also contested, negotiated, and constantly renegotiated (Foucault, 1995).

RESPONDING TO RACIAL DIVERSITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION CLASSROOMS

Knowing that racial diversity is a compelling interest for higher education institutions in helping students achieve educational benefits does not mean educators are adequately prepared to leverage this racial diversity in their classrooms. Consequently, undergirding this discussion is another critical component—knowledge and skills about how to respond to racial diversity when it is present in ones classroom. When students from various racial groups enter higher education, they bring with them different backgrounds and experiences that must be attended to in order to best maximize their outcomes (Mitchell et al., 2010). Educators must employ pedagogical methods that are culturally responsive to students diverse needs as well as respond to racial diversity in appropriate ways. In this section, I review literature that illuminates some helpful directions for thinking through these challenges. I start with research on culturally responsive pedagogy and then shift to considerations of identity, institutional structures, and norms that make engaging race in classrooms a difficult, but necessary, undertaking. I illuminate that although diversity is a compelling interest, often institutional norms and practices contradict the same goals that institutions espouse.

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Culturally responsive pedagogy (also called culturally relevant, congruent, reflective, centered, sensitive, mediated, synchronized, and contextualized) was borne out of Gays (2000) work of preparing teachers to be effective educators of African American, Asian American, and Latino/a students. Gay contended that students were capable of learning if educators provided learning environments, pedagogical methods, and curricular content that were reflective of learners particular identities, backgrounds, norms, and values. Culturally responsive pedagogy attended to diverse educational approaches that treated learners as competent and capable of meeting high standards. Four key tenets comprised culturally responsive pedagogy: learning communities, cross-cultural communication, and instruction. Although each of these components is interwoven and builds upon each other, I discuss them briefly in isolation for ease of understanding. In so doing, I demonstrate how culturally responsive pedagogy and curricula inform the present study.

Gay (2000, 2002) argued that an essential component of a culturally responsive learning environment was the active incorporation of readings, assignments, engagement activities, and other materials that reflected the different cultural backgrounds and heritages of learners. This demanded that educators pay attention to the contributions to knowledge from students from varied backgrounds not just during Black or Womens History Months, for example, but throughout the entire academic year. These educators should not merely expose students to the popular examples of which most are accustomed to hearing (e.g., Martin Luther King Jr., Harriet Tubman, Susan B. Anthony, and George Washington Carver) but should instead transform curricular content in ways that do not tokenize people of color and their involvement in society.

Gay (2002) noted that learning communities provided cultural scaffolding that incorporated the voices, knowledge, and experiences of students to enable them to succeed academically. Learning communities provide opportunities for students to engage with their peers who hold differing opinions and identities, thus building camaraderie and respect (MacGregor & Smith, 2005). As Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, and Gurin (2002) maintained, students more often discussed race in informal out-of-class settings. With learning communities, the classroom environment could be constructed in ways that mirror the spaces in which students more regularly discussed racial issues, while utilizing purposeful pedagogical approaches to help students interact about these issues (Gurin et al., 2002).

Culturally responsive pedagogy is attuned to the importance of creating numerous sustained spaces for students to engage in constructive dialogues with their peers across cultural lines and about issues that differentially affected persons of various racial backgrounds, such as discrimination, power, privilege, academic achievement, social integration, and media representations (Gay, 2000, 2002). For learners to become comfortable with racial differences and not view such diversity as abnormal, they needed to speak about racial matters routinely and in multiple structured classroom contexts (Perry, 2006; Zúñiga, 2003). Otherwise, cross-cultural communication would be seen as unusual and peripheral to the common dominant approaches that occurred (Gay, 2000, 2002). As stressed by Mitchell and Rosiek (2005): potential conflicts can arise between different cultural discourses in an educational setting [given the] multi-layered power dynamics that operate through those discourse conflicts (p. 103).

The final element of culturally responsive pedagogy concerns instruction. This component encompasses the previous three as it relates to how educators utilize pedagogy to facilitate desired learning outcomes. Educators who employ culturally responsive practices are attuned to the ways in which different students learn and the specific pedagogical approaches necessary to maximize student learning (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Because engaging in dialogues about race is uncommon in most classroom environments (Gurin et al., 2002), educators who sought to help students constructively engage racial realities grappled with the dominant modes in which students had been socialized in classroom contexts: passive receivers of knowledge, individual merit, competition.

and avoidance of racialized matters (Freire, 1970; Perry, 2006).

Identity, Institutional Structures, and Norms

The previous discussion of culturally responsive teaching practices points to the importance of considering the diverse backgrounds of students in classroom settings. In order to do so, it is important to consider how institutional structures and norms make this attention to diverse backgrounds difficult among some educators given their own social identities (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability). Although Mitchell and Rosieks (2005) study focused on culturally responsive academic advising, a line from their work is particularly instructive in this section.

Many educators will acknowledge that students of color experience institutional racism in some form, but this notion remains an abstraction to them. The particular forms such institutionalized racism takes, and the kinds of feelings it evokes, remains unknown to most of them. When such moments are described by persons of color, the content and emotion of the description often comes as a surprise to majority educators. (p. 104)

Similarly, Goodman (2011) and Johnson (2006) claimed that White privilege often made it difficult for White educators to understand their roles in engaging race, and even the most well-intentioned White educators often struggled to see the reach of their privilege and connect individual acts of racism to larger institutional structures that reinforced racist assumptions and practices. Therefore, racial diversity may be important to postsecondary institutions, and they may even use concrete educational interventions, such as intergroup dialogues, to help students meet this institutional commitment to racial diversity, but their best efforts are often constrained by the presence of many White educators who do not regularly consider their own racial identities (Johnson, 2006). Another challenge is when educators do not weigh students different developmental places in exploring racial diversity (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005; Quayle & Baxter Magolda, 2007). White norms, assumptions, and practices are often grounded in the very same institutional structures that espouse the importance of racial diversity. As Dancy (2010) claimed: students argue that colleges and universities have more work to do in aligning missions they espouse and missions they practice as these missions involve diversity and evolving student realities (p. 1).

Part of the difficulty in moving racial diversity as a compelling interest to institutional practices that encourage and sustain this commitment pertains to the malleability of institutional culture (Museus & Harris, 2010). Kuh and Whitt (1988) defined culture as: collective, mutually shaping patterns of norms, values, practices, beliefs, and assumptions that guide the behavior of individuals and groups in higher education and provide a frame of reference within which to interpret the meaning of events and actions (pp. 1213). Given the permanence of this culture, Museus and Harris (2010) argue that it is often difficult to change this culture. Johnson (2006) noted that many people from racially privileged groups find the problem of racism so large that they often feel unable to change the cultural norms, assumptions, and practices that undergird racist beliefs. But those norms, assumptions, and practices must be challenged to facilitate the kinds of racial dialogues called for in this article.

Earlier, I discussed Mitchell et al.s (2010) article on the relationship between race and space. Babers (2010) work complements Mitchell et al.s by highlighting how spaces transform into places when people participate in spaces to add meaning, values, and beliefs within these spaces. For example, a higher education classroom is a space with common items such as desks, chairs, tables, dry-erase boards, projectors and projector screens, laptops, books, paper, and writing utensils. When students and educators enter this space, their individual and collective meaning making of the material transforms this space into a place that contains norms, values, assumptions, and beliefs, whether these are recognized by all or just a few. When these spaces become places, they are not neutral places. The presence of meaning making means students and educators establish contested, subjective, value-laden norms. Given the institutional norms that exist that are often grounded in Whiteness within predominantly White higher education institutions (Baber, 2010), it is important to note that this meaning making will often perpetuate White dominant modes of learning and functioning, which may be inconsistent with the culturally relevant strategies discussed above. What can happen, then, is in an effort to engage race through dialogues, educators operating from these dominant norms can unintentionally marginalize students of color. As Baber wrote: if individuals encounter an identity of place which clashes with personal identities, identity of place becomes a source of marginalization and detachment (p. 227). The challenge, then, is for educators to support students in filling places with meaning that are attuned to the diverse identities of participants in order to challenge institutional structures that privilege White modes of functioning (Johnson, 2006).

SUMMARY OF THE LITERATURE

Much of the empirical work on racial diversity as a compelling interest focuses on college students and their outcomes; thus, comparatively little is known about facilitators/educators, their experiences, their approaches, and challenges. This is the gap addressed by my study. The literature reviewed herein provides a basis for understanding how educators might facilitate dialogues about racial issues in the classroom as a means to concretize racial diversity as a compelling interest. Furthermore, this literature review provides some possibilities for understanding critical features to consider in order to maximize outcomes during these dialogues. I provide data from participants in the Findings section to exemplify the strategies they used to facilitate these dialogues. Their examples will illustrate the unique contribution of this study in enhancing readers abilities to explore in-depth what happens during these classroom dialogues on race. Prior to doing so, I describe the theory, methodology, and methods used to frame and conduct this study.

THEORIZING RACE

I employed a critical race case study methodology for this study. Prior to discussing this case study methodology in the next section, I discuss the core tenets of critical race theory (CRT) to center race, because it is the central component studied in this research. Theorizing race will also help readers understand why race is an important concept worth studying. The first tenet of CRT is the permanence of race (Ladson-Billings, 2000; Solórzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000; Solórzano & Villalpando, 1998). Critical race theorists assert that racism is still a persistent problem in society. Because racism is embedded in institutional norms and structures and occurs everyday from more subtle innocuous insults (i.e., microaggressions) to more overt actions, educators implicitly teach race even if they do not ever mention the word in their courses (Harper & Antonio, 2007; Solórzano & Villalpando, 1998). From how they perform their social identities (Abes & Kasch, 2007), assumptions they hold of what constitutes knowledge and whose voices carry weight in the classroom, and the norms they hold of learners from different backgrounds, educators teach about race implicitly by what they say but also more often than not by what they do not say (Giroux, 2001; Tatum, 2007).

Given the ubiquitous nature of race and racism, critical race theorists also assert that it is important to challenge dominant ideologies, one of which is to remain silent on racial matters (Ladson-Billings, 2000; Solórzano & Villalpando, 1998). Facilitating racial dialogues is one way to challenge this dominant ideology because participants explicitly discuss race and how it is embedded in systems, such as postsecondary institutions. A

complementary tenet of CRT, discussed previously, is the importance of having students of color share their counternarratives during dialogues to demonstrate the importance of subjective value-laden knowledge based on ones experiences (Delgado Bernal, 2002; Solórzano et al., 2000). Intersectionality, another CRT tenet (Abes, Jones, & McEwen, 2007; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001), means that even though CRT centers race, its proponents recognize that human beings are not just racial beings, but that the intersection of their other social identities (e.g., ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation) means that multiple layers of privilege and oppression always exist within people (Abes et al., 2007; Johnson, 2006).

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

I explored the following research question in this study: How do educators engage students in constructive dialogues about racial realities in postsecondary classroom settings? To answer this question, I grounded my study in qualitative inquiry, operating from a constructivist paradigm. I subscribed to the notion that multiple realities are present when working with diverse persons and privileged the voices of participants in my study (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) to learn directly from them how they engaged race in their classrooms.

One of the essential features of constructivism is its reliance on the varied interpretation of truths. Constructivists maintain that there is no universal truth in the world waiting to be discovered by researchers (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Patton, 2002). Rather, there are multiple contested truths, or interpretations of the social order, that exist, and what counts as true in one instance can be redefined and renegotiated depending on the perspectives and experiences that a group of people share (Crotty, 2003). Constructivists support a relativistic stance; however, this does not mean all perspectives are equally meaningful and true (Baxter Magolda, 2001). Operating from a constructivist paradigm in the present study meant I expected and sought various examples of facilitating racial dialogues given the different college and university classrooms in which participants taught. My research approach provided space for participants to challenge my interpretations of their facilitation strategies and vice versa in order to garner alternative and shared accounts of unique facilitation approaches for exploring racial realities.

A critical race case study methodology guided this study. Because I described CRT above, I will not reiterate those points here but focus, instead, on the case study methodology portion and then summarize the interplay between CRT and case study methodology. In this study, I endeavored to select participants (i.e., cases) who illustrated the process of facilitating racial dialogues. Exploring these educator cases was helpful in illuminating the philosophies, behaviors, practices, and engagement activities that were conducive to learners discussing racial realities. My goal was to portray constructive pedagogical practices for racial dialogues from the vantage points of those who addressed racial realities in college and university classrooms.

Because I focused on individuals as cases, I employed a psychological case study, as defined by Merriam (1988):

The focus of the individual as a way to investigate some aspect of human behavior is what characterizes the psychological case study. In education a case study of an individual, program, event, or process might well be informed by a psychological concept. (pp. 2526)

Using the psychological case study, readers could learn about facilitating racial dialogues based on an in-depth exploration of one person or looking across the individual cases. For the present study, I looked across the cases to describe participants approaches to facilitating classroom-based exchanges about race and racism. Even though the individual served as the case, the combination of the multiple cases yielded knowledge about related strategies for facilitating racial discussions in postsecondary classrooms (Creswell, 1998; Merriam, 2002).

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The primary site for data collection was the 2007 National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in American Higher Education (NCORE). NCORE is an annual conference focused on addressing racial issues in higher education settings, organizations, and society. Given the focused attention to racial issues of NCORE, I deemed this conference an ideal venue in which to recruit and interview participants for my study. I selected participants by reviewing the 20042007 NCORE program booklets. From the program guides, I identified people who had presented on a topic that was similar to my researchfacilitating dialogues about racial issues in classroom settings. I selected 26 workshops from the 2004 NCORE, 33 from 2005, 32 from 2006, and 3 from 2007 that met the aforementioned criteria. I then sent an email to those people, provided information about my study, asked if they would be attending the 2007 meeting, and invited them to participate in my study. Based on participants

availability and ability to attend the 2007 conference, I conducted face-to-face semistructured interviews (Patton, 2002) with 17 of the 22 participants at NCORE in San Francisco, California, and interviewed the remaining five participants via telephone. Participants taught in different fields; most were situated within predominantly White institutions, and they reflected different races, ethnicities, and genders. When I asked participants to identify their race or ethnicity, all of the White participants used the term White, except Paige, who said, Caucasian. However, when she responded to questions during interviews about the role of her racial identity during the dialogues, she used language that referenced her Whiteness. Table 1 provides further details about the participants in the study.

Table 1. Participant Demographic Information

Participant	Race/Ethnicity	Gender	Years	Position	Discipline/Field	Courses	Composition
Calista	White	Female	3	Program Director	N/A	Sustained Dialogue	N/A
Corrine	White	Female	21	Professor	Conflict Studies Womens Studies Social Justice Studies	Role of Conflict in Social Change Women, Conflict, and Social Change Women and Madness	77% White
Cynthia	African	Female	10	Associate	Psychology	Psychology of	84% White

	American			Professor	University	Drugs and Behavior	
Dalton	White	Male	10	Assistant Professor	Philosophy	Philosophy of Race and Racism	80% White
Danielle	African American	Female	20	Professor	Music	University Gospel Choir	86% White
Dolores	White	Female	15	Associate Professor	Public Health	Community Organization Womens Health	74% White
Ines	Black	Female	11	Instructor	Multicultural Affairs	Diversity Issues	85% White
Kaden	African American Hispanic	Male	8	Assistant Professor	Visual Arts	Sculpture 3D Design	86% White
Kaela	Lebanese American	Female	15	Assistant Professor	English Womens Studies	Approaches to Womens Studies Comparative Womens Experience: Brazil and U.S.	75% White
Karl	African American Hispanic	Male	8	Assistant Professor	Art	Sculpture Ceramics	79% White
Keely	White	Female	15	Associate Professor	Student Development	Diversity 101	59% White
Laurel	Black	Female	15	Director	Institutional Equity and Diversity	Freshman Seminar	84% White
Lois	White Jewish	Female	20	Adjunct Professor	Human and Community Development	Ethnicity and American Communities	36% White
Mae	African American	Female	10	Assistant Dean & Co-Director	Intergroup Relations	Social Psychology in Community Settings	66% White
Malcolm	White Jewish	Male	40	Professor	Sociology	Training Processes of Intergroup Dialogues	66% White
Paige	Caucasian	Female	16	Associate Professor	Special Education	Introduction to Exceptional Children	75% White
Raymond	White	Male	22	Professor	Philosophy	Worldviews (White Privilege)	66% White
Sabrina	White	Female	20	Associate Professor & Director	Womens Studies Difference, Power, and Discrimination Program	Systems of Oppression in Womens Lives Hate, Resistance, and Reconciliation Women and Sexuality	74% White

Samuel	African American	Male	17	Director & Lecturer	Human Development and Educational Foundations	Development of Ethnic Identity Cross-Cultural Issues in Human Development	92% White
Savanna	White N/A	Female	26	Associate Professor & Director	Service-Learning Behavioral Sciences Psychology	Cross-Cultural Psychology	21% White
Teva	White	Female	4	Instructor	Child Development and Family Studies	Child, Family, and Community	23% White
Trinity	Asian Pacific Islander	Female	4	Program Director	N/A	Sustained Dialogue	N/A

Note. All participant names are pseudonyms; race/ethnicity is how participants self-identified; years refers to the number of years the participant has taught college students; composition refers to the percentage of White students at the participants institution. These data were taken from NCES (2007); Calista and Trinity were not employed at a college or university. However, they facilitated dialogues about racial issues with students in classrooms and in cocurricular settings and collaborated with faculty members who wanted to engage in this process in their own courses.

Based on my research question that related to how educators facilitated these dialogues, during interviews, I asked participants to describe their meanings of race and racism, their teaching philosophies, the courses in which they addressed racial issues, how they facilitated racial dialogues, their motivations and reasons for facilitating these discussions, the challenges they faced in their facilitation efforts, and how their teaching approaches changed over time. I also requested that they describe a typical class session and what I would see them doing if I was a student in one of their courses. I concluded each interview by asking participants to offer advice to others wishing to facilitate these dialogues in their own courses. Participants welcomed the ability to discuss their experiences engaging in these exchanges, as they noted that they rarely had the opportunity to talk about facilitating dialogues about racial issues. Each interview was digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. Because case study research requires the use of multiple data sources, I also drew upon participants course syllabi and artifacts that reflected campus climate (namely, newspapers) (Aguirre & Messineo, 1997; Hodder, 2000). The syllabi served as background information in order to provide more context for their courses. For instance, syllabi were useful for identifying the kind of assignments facilitators used in their work with students and enabled me to see the weight they assigned to various learning activities, which helped me understand their values and philosophies for learning. Campus newspapers, too, seemed appropriate for locating information about campus racial incidents that may have occurred during the time of my study. However, because I was not present on participants campuses, I struggled to see how these climate issues bore on their facilitation approaches. Thus, knowledge about the campus climate was limited and did not bear on the findings of this study. This shortcoming is discussed further in the Limitations section.

DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

I coded and analyzed all data using the NVivo® Software Package for Qualitative Research. With NVivo, I reviewed all transcripts line by line, highlighted relevant phrases and passages, and inserted a relevant code word to describe participants facilitation experiences. I coded all instances of participants defining race and racism, the type of course in which they facilitated racial dialogues, how their backgrounds and identities

influenced their facilitation approaches, their teaching philosophies, challenges to facilitating dialogues about racial issues, and advice they would offer to others engaging in this process. For example, the code word teaching referred to participants general teaching philosophies and practices, one of which was experiential providing opportunities for students to learn based on experience. The code word teaching race referred to participants teaching philosophy and practices regarding race, one of which was marginalized teaching about voices from people of color who have been marginalized and silenced in society. In sum, the coding process yielded 224 code words that reflected participants facilitation approaches.

I then performed convergent and divergent thematic analyses, as well as cross-case analysis. When researchers use convergent analysis, they look for repeated patterns in the data ideas or experiences shared by multiple participants. When convergence occurred, it meant this particular experience was important to most participants (Patton, 2002; Yin, 2003). However, I also searched for those experiences where participants offered a different perspective (i.e., divergence). I then looked across the individual cases to search for relevant patterns and themes in participants facilitation efforts (cross-case analysis) in order to build abstractions across cases . . . and to maximize and to minimize differences in the phenomenon of interest (Merriam, 1988, p. 154). Throughout the Findings, I will note those instances in which outliers existed or only one or a few participants mentioned a particular point.

TRUSTWORTHINESS

Guba and Lincoln (1989) detailed important steps in order to conduct a trustworthy study through member checking, using peer debriefers, reflective journaling, and triangulation. First, I utilized member checking by sending all participants a full copy of their transcript and my developing themes from the data and invited them to comment on whether my interpretations made sense. Although most participants did not respond to my member-checking request, I was able to develop further understanding of my interpretations (specifically regarding the use of lecturing described below) based on comments from those who responded indicating the believability of the findings. However, I acknowledge the limits of my lens and realize that other readers would likely draw other reasonable conclusions from the data. In addition, I arranged peer debriefers who responded to the research design of my study and offered their reactions on my interpretations of the data. I also kept a reflective journal

throughout the study in order to note my assumptions, biases, developing interpretations, lingering questions, and insights. This journal helped me keep track of how I was reacting to the data throughout the study and also made me aware of my assumptions and expectations prior to data collection and analysis. Lastly, I used triangulation to understand participants facilitation approaches through different lenses. The combination of semistructured interviews, myself as a researcher, peer debriefers, and participants enabled me to check the data and my interpretations in multiple ways (Creswell, 1998; Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Stake, 1995).

ROLE AS A RESEARCHER

In the previous section, I mentioned the use of a reflective journal to document my developing insights, assumptions, biases, and expectations of what I would find during the study. In this journal, I also noted my role as a researcher in this study. Given my identity as a Ghanaian/American man, I have experiences with race and racism that lead me to view race through a certain lens. I see race as one of the most difficult and painful topics to discuss openly and honestly; yet it is a topic that warrants attention. I concur with Ladson-Billings (2000) and also ask: Where is race in the discourse of critical qualitative researchers (p. 272)? I summon others to pose and answer this same question. The research described herein is not neutral but has implications for how educators conduct their courses and treat race in the classroom. As a critical race qualitative researcher, I believe every student is capable of learning but that some have not because of pedagogical practices that deny the existence of race and subtly and overtly reinforce silence on racial matters. My purpose was to organize for readers the distinctive ways that participants facilitated racial discussions, the advantages of doing so, and the challenges they encountered in the process. In so doing, I put race squarely in the research discourse.

LIMITATIONS

Even though I performed the aforementioned steps to execute a trustworthy study, there were limitations in my methodological choices that warrant attention. First, because I only interviewed participants who attended NCORE previously, my sample is limited to those people familiar with NCORE. There are educators unfamiliar with or unable to attend NCORE who facilitate racial dialogues in their courses. In addition, although participants represented different genders and races, most of the participants of color identified as Black with no one identifying as Native American and a lack of other participants of color (e.g., Asian Americans). Thus, I am not able to make claims along the spectrum of diverse racial identities. I also conducted these interviews outside participants institutions, meaning I was not able to note relevant aspects of the campus climate or culture that might have influenced their abilities to facilitate these dialogues. I asked participants to talk about institutional structures, but I missed important aspects of these cultural norms due to not performing an extended study of their campuses. Future studies that occur on site at various campuses are needed to deepen knowledge and understanding of the issues at hand in this article. This limitation also relates to the lack of observations for this study. I relied exclusively on self-reports from participants; observing their approaches would have added another lens through which to interpret their facilitation strategies. Finally, the educators in this study represent disciplines where one would expect to find racial dialogues facilitated. Not including science, technology, mathematics, and engineering fields might limit the transferability of these findings to those fields. However, as seen throughout the findings, the participants demonstrated behaviors that were not necessarily discipline specific. Readers should find these examples encouraging in their own facilitation efforts but should exercise caution and judgment in translating the findings of this study to their own settings.

FINDINGS: FACILITATING THE DIALOGUE

Based on the analysis of data from the present study, I developed knowledge of how participants facilitated dialogues about racial issues among students in their courses. In this section, I concentrate on documenting the practical approaches upon which participants relied to engage learners in dialogues about racial issues. In a previous article, I focused on the preparation needed to facilitate these dialogues (see Quaye, 2012). I focus on concrete strategies for facilitating racial dialogues in this article. Participants facilitated racial exchanges through using different engagement activities: (a) group work and discussions, (b) integrated assortment of resources, (c) application of racial concepts and theories, and (d) debriefing.

GROUP WORK AND DISCUSSIONS

Educators noted the importance of enabling students to collaborate with their peers through group work and group discussions. Because participants strived to build communities that fostered open dialogue about racial issues, they believed that a central aspect of community building was providing learners with opportunities to discuss issues together with a small group of their peers. Dalton (all names are pseudonyms), a White man teaching a Philosophy of Race and Racism course, said:

I use small groups to promote a degree of honesty and a level of participation that I cant get with the whole class. Often, they engage with the material and each other in a different way that I find useful in getting them to reflect more carefully about the issues. I want them to challenge each other to think more deeply and to justify what theyre saying. I encourage that through group work. That way, Im not standing up there lecturing and telling them what they need to think.

Group dialogue was a concrete way to make a large class feel smaller, which increased students comfort with addressing racial realities. Because learners were not accustomed to challenging each others opinions during class, using small groups helped them start this process and realize that their experiences and perspectives were important components of the course that enhanced the learning of other members. Every participant used small group dialogues before engaging the whole class. After students had spent time reflecting on racial issues and sharing their opinions and experiences with their peers in smaller clusters, they reported back to the larger class. Educators found that the smaller group provided a sense of comfort for students to process racial realities before articulating their viewpoints to other class members.

Although every participant used small group work and discussions, Paige was the only one who stressed the importance of using a specific number (i.e., three) of students within each group to facilitate discussion. She talked about this point when describing her Special Education course:

I have students doing projects, and they work together in a cooperative fashion. I divide the students into groups of three. Youd see a certain amount of lecture, but then youd see students talking with one another, collaborating together, [and] working together on big projects. You would see dialogue and hands-on-type things.

By working and talking together in groups of three, students could participate in these dialogues in ways that were more meaningful, as opposed to only facilitating dialogue among the entire class. Group dialogues were central to the courses in which educators addressed racial realities. In courses with a large number of students (for example, one of the participants, Lois, taught a course with 130 students), participants sought ways to make the class feel manageable to students; assigning learners into small groups was one successful approach. Facilitating dialogues on racial realities necessitated sustained opportunities for learners to engage race and

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racism, and group work and discussions were ways to do so.

INTEGRATED ASSORTMENT OF RESOURCES

In addition to group work, participants thought creatively and used several resources to facilitate racial exchanges. As they became more experienced in facilitating these dialogues, they also became more adept at figuring out which resources to use to engage learners. However, each time a new combination of students entered the classroom, they could not simply rely on old formulas but had to treat this group of learners differently and figure out what would enable them to participate in the interactions. Educators incorporated lecture, readings, reflection, and various multimedia in their facilitation methods.

Lecture

While most participants viewed and described lectures with a hint of disdain, a few lectured, although it was not their primary pedagogical method. Even those who utilized lecture as a primary tool sometimes used what they called mini-lectures to highlight key concepts for students. Dalton talked about why he lectures at times:

One of the things when I'm teaching about race that I have come to discover is that students don't really understand the history of race and racism in the U.S. They don't understand the very real sociological racial disparities that continue to exist so I always begin my courses or my discussion by talking about that and giving a fair amount of time to history and sociology.

Dalton was one of a handful of participants who used lecture in his courses. Most, like Corrine, chose not to use this strategy. In justifying why she does not lecture, Corrine noted: You would never see me lecture. I can't. I know there are students who love it, but I just feel like I don't know enough to lecture. Lecturing was not aligned with Corrine's philosophy even though she believed most students had been socialized to value lecturing, as that was the most common approach with which they were familiar.

Corrine's reason for not lecturing (i.e., feeling like she did not know enough) was not consistent with the reasons others offered for not lecturing. For example, Raymond, in teaching courses focused on White privilege, discussed his guide on the side approach to teaching that did not favor lectures.

I don't lecture at all. I am committed to experiential learning to having every student in the class talk at every class meeting. I break them up into groups where I am a guide on the side to facilitate a discussion on some of the material we are reading. Although I assign books, students prepare the questions that we are going to use to discuss the reading. I believe in empowering students to help determine what content we discuss and what material is deemed important, so that it is not just coming from me.

Raymond shared that during his doctoral training in philosophy, he learned that he was the bearer of knowledge and that he was supposed to give students his knowledge. In his interview, he provided examples of how his teaching philosophy evolved in that he now actively chose not to lecture and instead used activities where students had ownership over the learning process. The knowledge no longer only came from him; rather, he developed knowledge in partnership with learners. In order to be an asset to learners during racial interactions, participants favored facilitation over lecturing. They needed to enable students to feel empowered by becoming meaningful contributors to the process of learning about racial realities.

Although Corrine and Raymond highlighted their rationales for not lecturing, a few lectured when they saw students struggling to understand concepts and theories or to supplement dialogues with necessary information. For example, Kaela said:

I usually do a lecture that's related to the readings. While I'm doing a lecture, I have questions within that lecture, so that everybody's participating. We have discussion. I keep it structured. We'll do group work where they have a certain amount of time with questions that they need to answer and then report back to a larger group. You'll see some of that and lots of discussion booths.

In her Women's Studies courses, in an effort to complement class material with her own knowledge, Kaela lectured on topics related to course readings. She suspected that doing so provided students with supplementary information that helped them make sense of readings. Although she lectured, she still incorporated other facilitation tools into the learning process (e.g., discussion, group work, questions) that prompted students to understand racial realities. She did not solely rely upon learners discussing course material from their own vantage points but also offered additional perspectives as necessary that helped them gain deeper knowledge of the effects of racism on their lives.

In her Drugs and Behavior course, Cynthia utilized a comparable approach as Kaela to engage learners in racial dialogues. She noted:

You would see during the lecture a slide with the question, Why is there a difference in jail sentences for the use of these drugs? I ask that question to the class and give a few minutes to think about why that would be. After we have had some discussion, you would see a new slide with the statistics and the demographics of the sentencing differences. Then, I tell the group to break up into small groups. There would be time to debate the facts and figures, and then, I would ask, What did your group discuss? Each representative person from all over the class would have the time to say what their group said.

Cynthia wanted students to understand the composition of various drugs and, more importantly, racialized prison sentencing for the use of certain drugs. Akin to Kaela, Cynthia incorporated questions and group discussions and did not solely rely on lecture but used it when necessary to help students grapple with racial concepts and statistics. Both educators deemed lecturing as one component of a larger array of methods they employed to facilitate exchanges about racial realities.

Readings

Assigning readings that were relevant to students' lives was the resource most frequently cited by all 22 participants. Samuel's courses tended to focus on cross-cultural issues. He shared the following in his interview:

They [learners] essentialize race, so I give them Shelby Steele [1990] *The Content of Our Character*. They think he's White. When they realize he's Black, they give all these explanations for why a Black person would hold these views. Then, I give them Claude [Steele] to read and say, This is his identical twin. So, if you've essentialized that it's because of his class and his education, alright, here's the other brother who's also a Ph.D. and has an entirely different view. Here's his stuff on stereotype threat. How do you explain these twins now? You can't play the genetic card here. [I am] trying to provide both challenge and support. [I am] also trying to facilitate them talking to

each other as much as they're talking to me or talking to the authors.

Using authors who held varying positions about race in America, Samuel stressed the importance of challenging students when they essentialized race and treated members of racial groups as monolithic. Because most of the students in the participants' courses identified as White, the participants needed to use readings that White students would not immediately resist. In Samuel's case, he wanted students to see the differences among individual members of racial groups. In so doing, he worked to make issues of race personal for White students, in particular, so that they learned to see themselves as racial beings and how people of the same race could have drastically different stances on potential solutions for racial inequities. He evinced how purposeful selection of readings combined with meaningful dialogue about them was a means to improve students' understanding of racial realities. Both had to be integrated and sustained throughout the course to improve learning.

A careful collection of readings not only enabled learners to wrestle with race and racism, but participants also used relevant readings to focus on the intersections between the multiple parts that comprised one's identity, such as race, ethnicity, gender, class, ability, and sexual orientation. When students connected race with other social identities, they were less likely to essentialize issues of race. Teva, a White female educator who taught mostly adult learners, stated:

We read Sonia Nieto [1999] chapter Culture and Learning from *The Light in Their Eyes* book. It puts culture in the context of power relationships, which is really important. It talks about how culture is multifaceted, and sexual orientation, gender, and class are included. I use a multiple identities approach, an intersectionality approach. There is a good article that is an interview with Cornel West called Heterosexism and Transformation. We talk about racism within the LGBT [lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender] community. The LGBT community that is presented in the media is usually White, upper-class, gay men and some women. It doesn't usually include the transgender folks. That was another way that I intentionally and specifically bring up the dialogue about race and other isms.

In an effort to ensure that learners observed the relatedness of racism to other isms (e.g., classism, sexism, and heterosexism), Teva used readings that focused on intersectionality. She expected that students would read about the multiple factors that comprised culture and connect that knowledge with other readings about differential treatment by gender, class, and sexual orientation. Two other participants (Corrine and Sabrina) also identifying as White believed that when students developed an intersectionality mindset, facilitating these dialogues would be more productive, as learners disclosed how racism influenced other facets of their lives. The aforementioned accounts offer readers an understanding of the complexities of facilitating racial dialogues and the importance of one's choices in readings.

Reflection

Although not all participants discussed reflection during their interviews at length, every participant at least referenced the importance of structured reflection activities in these dialogues. Two notable examples are from Keely and Malcolm. They reported that students developed the ability to make sense of the racialized themes and concepts in the readings because educators designed and implemented purposeful reflection exercises to help students sort out their feelings and perspectives on the issues. During each class period, educators expected that students had not only read the material but, more importantly, that they considered the relevance of the readings to their own and others' lives. The combination of questioning and reflection led to richer classroom exchanges and understanding of concepts. Keely taught a Diversity 101 course that exposed students to diversity issues, many of whom for the first time. She said:

As a facilitator, I would be reflecting, staying in tune with the dynamics of the classroom. What's going on here or there? Whos talking? Whos not talking? I would get the students talking more than me. If I'm not getting a lot of response, I have them do a silent writing activity. That [silence] says they're not feeling safe. I'll take it down a notch and have them silently reflect individually that usually gets them to open up with the dialogue.

Keely employed active reflection to gauge students' comfort with the material and to consider why some might be silent on certain issues. Rather than inserting her voice when there was silence or believing that students did not care about these issues, she waited patiently and linked the hesitancy to talk to issues of safe spaces. Expecting and developing comfort with silence was a skill that participants used to analyze nonverbal signals. When she noticed that learners were not engaging with each other, Keely paused and invited them to reflect on their reasons. This action demonstrated to students that she cared about their participation in the course by using a method of individual reflection that made students feel safer.

Although Keely interpreted students' silence as discomfort with engaging race, another participant, Corrine, inferred students' silence as them not having previous experiences engaging race so openly in classroom settings. Corrine stated that one of her colleagues frequently questioned her efforts to engage race in her courses and recounted a conversation in which he stated: Oh, my God. I just can't believe anybody would teach about that stuff [race]. Why would you ever make yourself so vulnerable in front of students? In response, Corrine remarked: If more of my teachers had been willing to do that [talk about race] it wouldn't be so risky for people now. Although Keely and Corrine made sense of silence in different ways, they both addressed silence through asking students to reflect on their hesitancy or discomfort with engaging race. Malcolm, on the other hand, utilized a corners exercise to help students contemplate racial issues.

I will ask a question like, We ought to have an amnesty program in immigration or racial profiling is a very common experience. People will go to the corner of the room, which represents their view. I might say, For next week, I want you to keep a diary of all the instances where you see Whiteness being expressed on campus. I might say, Go to the [student] union and take a look at all the pictures of people or all the presidents over the last 150 years and tell me what that tells you. We will talk about what different people saw, what it means to them, how they felt when they were seeing that, and what that tells them about institutional racism in the university.

Because Malcolm recognized that most students visited the campus student union on a regular basis, the reflective questions he posed were anchored in learners' actual experiences. Rather than having them consider some arbitrary example of institutionalized racism, he invited them to imagine what student union symbols conveyed about particular students' experiences at the university and whose voices were overlooked in that process. Therefore, he witnessed that learners began to see racism as relevant in today's society rather than as a belief system and practices of the past. Malcolm not only provided students with reflective exercises during class to consider, but he also connected students' out-of-class encounters with in-class dialogues to help them make sense of racial realities with their peers.

Multimedia

In order to help students concretize racial concepts and theories, participants learned that they often needed to include various multimedia (e.g., speakers, videos, and music) to supplement racial dialogues. As one of few

African American men with a position in studio arts, Kaden shared his reasons for including speakers in his courses.

It's a fair thing to bring in speakers, artists to talk about it [racial realities]. If you're coming from a White perspective, then you might come with misconceived perceptions. [It is important] to have visible people, instead of dragging out the same books. I remember in school dragging out the same Black history book. There are contemporary people out there right now that [sic] are living it, driving it, or educating. Students need to see that.

Kaden's point was especially true for the 12 White participants in the study, who all spoke about the overrepresentation of White students in their courses. When students observed successful members of their race in the careers to which they aspired, they learned that they, too, could achieve in those fields despite the shortage of people with whom they could racially identify. Moreover, as Kaden noted, speakers shared stories of how they thrived in a racist society and strategies students could emulate to do the same. These examples provided material for learners to discuss with each other during class and enabled them to develop potential solutions for improving the racial climates of their own institutions.

When describing their teaching philosophies, most participants grounded their philosophies implicitly in different learning theories. Samuel, however, was one of few participants who explicitly tied his philosophy to a specific theorist. His teaching philosophy was rooted in the work of Gardner (1993), as he believed in the importance of tailoring his facilitation to the multiple intelligences of students. Therefore, to make students more willing to engage in racial dialogues, he used multiple methods that addressed the different needs of students.

I believe in multiple intelligences, so trying to do things that address more reflective learners and more visual learners. I use songs, whether it's Bruce Hornsby or Johnny Clay. I have students bring in more recent stuff since I don't keep up on some of the more modern music that talk about [racial] issues, as well as have them read the theoretical pieces in terms of identity development. Recently, I've started using Def Poetry Jam. There are some really good poems and presenters who raise these issues from a different medium.

Not all educators used multimedia as frequently and creatively as others. For instance, Samuel used Def Poetry Jam, but as seen in Kaden's example, other participants used only more traditional multimedia, such as inviting speakers to their classes. Although Samuel was the only participant who mentioned using Def Poetry Jam, his valuing the importance of multimedia was consistent with the other 21 participants. Realizing that learners needed different aids to help them make sense of racial realities, Samuel assigned songs that addressed the circumstances of different people in society. Equally important, he invited students to integrate the music that they listened to a recognition that he was not the sole holder of knowledge. He even incorporated Def Poetry Jam featuring performances by different poets, in this case, poetry related to exploring racial realities. All of these methods demonstrated that Samuel was attuned to the needs of learners and sought creative ways to help them make sense of racism.

APPLICATION OF RACIAL CONCEPTS AND THEORIES

When educators asked learners to relate course readings and dialogue content to their personal lives, they knew that absent of broader application, students would not move beyond a localized understanding of racial issues. They needed to invite students to step outside their own circumstances to examine racial realities in other contexts and communities with which they were not as familiar. Consequently, participants needed to find ways for students to apply what they read, watched, listened to, reflected on, and discussed. Although space prevents me from discussing every strategy employed by participants for supporting students in seeing the influence of racism on campus and the larger society, some notable examples include service learning (two participants), role plays (one participant), case studies (four participants), and asking students to conduct interviews (three participants).

Service learning, an application approach cited by educators, entailed students actively taking part in projects within the communities that surrounded their campus environments. By definition, service learning combined essential components of intentional reflection with action. Although he ultimately saw the benefits of service learning, Dalton pointed out its difficulties.

[Service-learning] could challenge students' perspectives [and enable] them to see that race does make a difference in their lives. I want them to see that students of color face certain barriers that they, as White students, didn't face growing up. Even though I try to talk about this in the classroom and give them some reflection assignments, I still worry that the White students go into a community of color and see themselves as helping these poor kids of color. I don't want them to have that helping attitude. I worry about service-learning just reproducing certain stereotypes, so I haven't found a way to do it really well yet.

Dalton's careful assessment of service learning illustrated the potential benefits and harms of service learning. Even though he realized that service learning could improve students' understanding of racism as a structural system and not just as individual attitudes and beliefs, when educators did not employ service learning with caution (particularly in predominantly White classes), it could reinforce stereotypes and a helping attitude about people of color by White students. Service learning had the potential to enable White learners to become educated about racial realities in different communities while simultaneously contributing to them reinforcing their privileges by believing that they had all the answers for resolving racialized problems within communities that were different from their own.

A different conflicting example from Dolores further illustrates the efficacies and complexities of service learning.

We do activities, and they are more service kind of activities. I do one where I have them actually immerse themselves in an urban community, where they have to ride the bus, and they have to go to different spots. A lot of these kids have never come from a bigger city. I just think immersion and experiencing working with people [makes] the difference not in a helping manner, just in a conversation.

Again, the notion of helping was reinforced in the sentiment from Dolores. She noted that when students became immersed in a culture different from their own, they experienced life from another person's vantage point. Stressing that the point of service learning was not for students to help others but to have a conversation with them, she believed these discussions facilitated an understanding of diversity and made a difference in learners' lives. Educators could use service learning as a tool to facilitate interactions about racial differences, as opposed to a charitable situation where students felt the need to help those less capable than themselves.

Service learning was only one experiential activity utilized to help students apply racial concepts and theories. In addition, participants employed case studies, role plays, and interviews. I include one example of each below.

I use case studies in the Conflict Studies and Womens Studies courses. I write versions of things that happen either on campus or in the community or that are in the newspaper and ask the students to apply the theories that they have learned to these case studies. Corrine

I do simulations and role-plays. I do switching of roles, which is not always easy because they can't always play the other role. Let's imagine you were born in a different [racial] category than what you are now. How would life be different? They have to come up with how that might be. Dolores

I had them go out and interview people. Some of them interviewed their parents. They asked dad, who was a police officer, when were you aware that you were White? How do you experience Whiteness? His father looked at him like he had two heads, like he didn't know what he was talking about. Students had an experience of feeling like, I know something that mom and dad don't know. That's really kind of cool. I could teach them. Raymond

These three quotations provide possibilities for considering practical activities that could aid in students' efforts to make sense of abstract theories and concepts. Discussing with their peers systemic racism, the different experiences of people of color compared to White people, racism within campus, and Whiteness with their peers could be difficult for learners (and likely those who facilitate such dialogues) due to their previous lack of exposure to racial realities. Anticipating this potential challenge, some participants wrote case studies that helped students discuss and propose potential solutions to racial incidents that were grounded in theories; developed role-play exercises in which students considered life from the vantage point of someone different than them; and designed interview assignments that enabled students to reflect on their upbringing and how that influenced their current conceptualizations of racial realities. According to these participants, these application assignments proved fruitful, as learners became more comfortable making sense of the theories read and engaging in dialogues with each other about them and their relevance to their lives. These application exercises pushed students beyond their own reflections and enabled them to examine racial disparities in the communities that surrounded them.

DEBRIEFING

Representing a variety of disciplines, the educators in this study mentioned an array of critical issues they and students discussed: racial identity development; racial disparities in housing; the intersections between race, class, sexual orientation, and gender; racism in their campus environments; and White privilege, to name a few. All participants noted that these topics often incited a range of overwhelming emotions, including anger, pain, frustration, embarrassment, guilt, and cynicism. Students often developed a sense of disillusionment, a lack of hope that society could be repaired, or lingering questions about the issues that surfaced during class. In order to address adequately these emotions and concerns, participants provided space for class members to debrief at the conclusion of each session.

Sabrina, one of the White participants, incorporated many of the facilitation activities described in this article. Specifically, she asked students to participate in group dialogues where they responded to questions about the readings and articulated related information based on their own experiences. She described the purpose of debriefing as such:

Whenever we do the activities, we also have debriefing time. We go around, and we talk about what happened here, and what did you observe, what did you learn, how does this connect to the readings, how does it connect to our theories, what difference does it make in the real world, and that sort of stuff.

The debriefing in which Sabrina engaged was multifaceted. She not only asked students to comment on what they observed in the readings, but she also wanted to know what they learned and how the issues outlined in the readings applied to events occurring in the world. She used debriefing as an opportunity to help students organize and synthesize the issues discussed during class.

The most common activity employed by participants (i.e., eight mentioned it) to gauge students' knowledge and emotions near the end of each class was a one-minute memo or quick write. I provide two examples below.

At the end of class, I do a one-minute memo where I say, Which of these [ground] rules are working to support your learning? Which of these rules is not effective and give us some examples? Then, I feed that back to the class at the beginning of the next session. I eventually want everybody to share responsibility for maintaining the climate. Corrine

If I feel it is emotional in class, I say, Let's stop; I am feeling some energy in the room; let's do a quick write. They can write whatever they are feeling, and we can talk about it. Teva

One-minute memos and quick writes were relatively brief but meaningful ways for educators to understand areas of confusion for students and their reactions to the racial exchanges. They used debriefing exercises to return to the ground rules they and learners generated on the first day of class. Doing so reminded students that educators took the group agreements seriously and valued students' input and efforts in not only espousing but also enacting the agreements. Participants did not mention one universal debriefing exercise, but they all referred to the importance of debriefing in whatever way an educator and students deemed best. Participants helped learners manage their emotions through intentional mechanisms for students to process their feelings about racial content. Despite differing terminologies for debriefing, educators shared a mutual goal of not just ending class and leaving lingering questions unacknowledged. Although they appreciated the complicated and messy nature of interacting about racial realities, they equally saw the importance of trying to help students make sense of these issues and organize some level of coherence between issues. Debriefing provided a structured and purposeful way to reflect further on one's feelings and unresolved issues and synthesize racial concepts and theories explored in multiple class sessions.

DISCUSSION

Researchers who have studied racial diversity as a compelling interest have largely focused on students. Because little is known about educators' facilitation strategies to engage students in racial dialogues, the present study explored this important gap. The contribution this study makes is providing tangible ideas for facilitating dialogues about a difficult topic: race. The 22 participants in this study learned that in order to encourage learners to participate actively in these dialogues, they needed to utilize several different engagement activities that aligned with students' varied learning styles and preferences. They structured group discussions and work that invited learners to work with their peers in small groups prior to conversing in the larger group and utilized an integrated assortment of resources that included readings, lecture, reflection, and multimedia. Equally important, they wanted students to not just grapple with abstract racial concepts and theories but to internalize what they learned and apply these concepts and theories to their lives; therefore, they used service learning, case studies, role plays, and interviews to accomplish this goal. Given that these dialogues were challenging and often surfaced emotions, participants ensured that they invited students to debrief at the conclusion of each dialogue session by reflecting on their emotions and processing any lingering questions. The data from this study fill an important gap in understanding the concrete strategies that educators employ in facilitating racial dialogues and inform related research on this topic.

Although they did not use this language, participants efforts engaging race responded to the racial diversity as a compelling interest rationale. Because White students tend to gain more from exposure to racial diversity than do students of color (Chang et al., 2004, 2006), structured dialogues about racial issues may be one way for White students to problematize their own histories, stories, and identities during these dialogues (Applebaum, 2008; Bergerson, 2003) in order to remove some of the onus from students of color in educating their White peers (Tatum, 1997, 2007). Participants grappled with supporting the White learners in their courses in making sense of their Whiteness often through readings that responded to their identities or helping them move beyond seeing racism as individual acts promulgated by bad White people to understanding the systemic issues involved in maintaining this racist system, even if one did not actively contribute to oppressing others (Johnson, 2006). Perhaps one way to lessen the reliance on students of color in educating their White peers is to support White students in reflecting on their own Whiteness and inviting White students to encourage their White peers to do the same. White educators are likely better positioned to support White students in reflecting on their Whiteness and thinking about what it means to speak from their experiences in these dialogues (Applebaum, 2008; Bergerson, 2003).

Connected to this notion of considering the implications of racial diversity as a compelling interest for higher education institutions is the second strand of the literature review, which looked at institutional structures, identity, and norms. As noted in the Limitations, I was not able to ascertain how participants institutional climate and cultures influenced their facilitation of racial dialogues. Despite not having these kinds of data, the findings from participants emphasized how their strategies often challenged dominant ideologies (a CRT principle) within their institutions. For instance, Raymond talked about eschewing his doctoral training, which encouraged him to consider himself an expert and the holder of knowledge. Instead, he wanted to learn with students and not abdicate his responsibility in the classroom, but to find ways for students to see their own knowledge as well. Other participants talked about students having ownership over some of the course content and using experiential learning to draw on students stories and experiences. They also had to consider their own intersected identities and use readings that reflected the mostly White students in their courses. These practices underscored the importance of paying attention to ones institutional and classroom cultures and the norms these cultures subtly or explicitly reinforce about addressing racial issues (Museus & Harris, 2010). Given the prevailing silence on racial issues, intentionally facilitating these dialogues is one way to enact espoused commitments to diversity and challenge institutional norms and prior socialization of faculty members that do not prepare them to engage race adequately in their courses.

Race, space, and place were important concepts also discussed in the review of literature. To briefly reiterate, Baber (2010) contended that space becomes place when people infuse meanings and values within these spaces. Relatedly, critical race theorists consistently note the permanence of race even though many people refuse to see racism present in certain places that are deemed to respect diversity (e.g., higher education institutions). The participants in this study moved their empty classroom spaces into places when they added meaning based on their desire to facilitate dialogues among students. By inviting students to speak from their experiences during group dialogues and reflect and debrief on racial occurrences, together with students, they imbued their classrooms with new meaning about race and made race no longer silent (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 2000). However, it is important to problematize the meaning fostered within these places given the mostly White educators and students in this study. According to Mitchell and Rosiek (2005):

We believe that the greater competence of advisors who are insiders to the culture of their students is the result of a kind of knowledge that is born of shared understanding and internalization of certain cultural discourses. These discourses are, no doubt, more readily learned as an insider, but they are not out of the reach of members of other communities who are willing to work hard, listen, and question their own taken-for-granted worldviews. (p. 106)

Participants encouraged students to see the interplay between their various social identities and wanted diverse identities represented. Yet, given racial differences between some participants and students, Mitchell and Rosieks point about the willingness to examine ones worldview is especially important in this study.

Generally self-reflective, educators contemplated race and endeavored to find ways to engage the learners in their courses. If racial diversity is a compelling interest for higher education institutions, and if faculty of color continue to be underrepresented in these institutions, then finding this shared understanding and insider perspective (Mitchell & Rosiek, 2005) will continue to be difficult. However, as seen throughout the findings, learning effective strategies for facilitating racial dialogues is conceivably one way to demonstrate ones willingness to work hard, listen, and question taken-for-granted worldviews (Mitchell & Rosiek, 2005, p. 106).

Participants believed they were not the sole experts during dialogues but that learners also had insights to share to enhance the knowledge of other class members. To demonstrate this principle, they structured their courses differently. For example, they used group discussions to counteract the educator in front of the room conferring knowledge upon students. They also situated learning in students experiences (Baxter Magolda, 2004) by asking them to engage in debriefing, apply racial concepts and theories to their lives, and respond to questions about racialized issues within their campus communities. Because these facilitation practices made racial content relevant to the pressing issues affecting learners, they were willing to participate actively in the interactions. To enact their educational philosophies, educators co-constructed knowledge with students. Educators decided on necessary activities (e.g., lectures and readings) to engage learners in thinking about racial realities but also provided opportunities for students to determine course material and activities aligned with their current struggles, knowledge, and experiences aspects reflected in Gay (2002), Mitchell et al. (2010), and Mitchell and Rosieks (2005) culturally responsive strategies. Chang et al. (2004) found that students interest in promoting racial understanding was one factor that affected their abilities to discuss racial issues. Seen in the approaches of participants was the recognition of Gay, Mitchell et al., Mitchell and Rosiek, and Chang et al.s research participants understood the need to enable students to contribute in meaningful ways to classroom interactions that aligned with students diverse backgrounds in order to increase learners investment in racial realities. Educators were attuned to the racial dynamics in their courses, and thus, used specific strategies to engage the mostly White students in their classes; indeed, their methods were culturally responsive to the students with whom they worked.

Throughout the dialogues, participants included readings that helped students explore various intersections between identities and move beyond essentializing race; provided structured opportunities for learners to participate in cross-racial dialogues; and used facilitation practices that were attuned to learners different backgrounds, prior knowledge, and experiences. Their facilitation methods were emblematic of some of the themes outlined in the literature review on culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2000, 2002). They structured dialogues in ways that responded to learners backgrounds and current knowledge but prompted them to think about previously unexplored issues in the assigned readings, service-learning activities, and discussion questions. The findings extend research on culturally responsive pedagogy by providing cues as to how facilitators might structure the learning environment to enable students to discuss racial issues. For example, finding numerous, sustained ways to include students knowledge as integral during dialogues can enable learners to deem their ideas about race and racism meaningful. This might be especially important for White

students who sometimes believe that they have nothing to contribute during racial dialogues (Bergerson, 2003; Wahl, Perez, Deegan, Sanchez, & Applegate, 2000) given their dominant racial identities.

Participants encouraged students to get involved in their local communities and engage in service learning in order to apply racial concepts and theories. Using service learning as a facilitation strategy dovetailed with the work of Marullo (1998), who incorporated service learning in a race relations course to help students think about broad systemic factors of racism in society. He found that students developed an increased awareness of race and ethnicity when service learning was a required component of the course. Although educators in the present study saw the benefits of service learning, they underscored the difficulties of using it due to the helping attitude that some students developed of people in less-privileged positions. Learners sometimes viewed the people of color with whom they worked as powerless and needing their help to thrive. Unlike in the Marullo study, service learning was a problematic method for which few participants found workable solutions.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE AND FUTURE RESEARCH

As the findings of this study suggest, those who are interested in facilitating dialogues about racial issues must develop different beliefs about what constitutes learning. Educators should invite and expect multiple sources of knowledge in classrooms settings. For instance, participants spoke of the importance of asking students to reflect on their personal experiences and including that knowledge in their courses. For these classroom-based racial exchanges to be productive, it is vital that educators introduce opportunities for learners to connect academic content with their personal experiences. Educators should ask students to reflect on their upbringings, their prior exposure to racial differences, and their White privilege, as well as the source of their hesitations for participating in the interactions.

Those who work with students in cocurricular settings, such as student affairs educators, can also benefit from this research. Holistic learning implies that students not only focus on in-class experiences but that they find ways to make sense of their out-of-class learning. Thus, it is necessary for both faculty and student affairs educators to collaborate and contribute to racial dialogues so that students engage these dialogues in various venues throughout their college careers. This academic and student affairs partnership means students will find opportunities to engage race in various places within the college setting. To return to Keelys story from earlier, staying in tune with the dynamics of the group is critical to promote learning. Facilitators should be cognizant of who is contributing during dialogues and find avenues for inviting varied voices to have space during these dialogues. More importantly, facilitators should not see silence as problematic but should develop comfort with silence, normalize discomfort about engaging racial issues, and pay attention to dynamics within the group that suggest uneasiness about engaging racial issues. This recommendation applies not only to educators who work with students in the classroom but is also an important strategy for those working with student groups and striving to support learners in discussing racial topics.

One important point that deserves further attention is the notion of connecting the exploration of racism with sexism, classism, and other historical systems of power and privilege. Some facilitators in the present study wanted to help students grapple with the intersections between various identity facets and systems of oppression. This point was not explored fully in this study. Future researchers should examine the intersections between racism, sexism, classism, and the like during dialogues about differences and see if focusing on these connections during dialogues is useful for those participating. Furthermore, examining how these dialogues might occur in different disciplines, such as the natural sciences and engineering, would enable educators in these fields to understand the efficacy of including racial dialogues in their courses.

CONCLUSION

In this article, I focused on the practical strategies employed by educators to facilitate discussions about racial issues in the classroom. They did not rely upon one source but utilized various engagement activities to encourage learners to contribute to these dialogues. They acknowledged that facilitation was different than teaching and, as such, strived to help students converse with their peers about racial concepts and theories by focusing on different strategies that responded to students preparedness, previous knowledge and experiences, and willingness to discuss racial issues. They also made time for students to reflect on the class at the end of each session. The findings from this study provide possibilities for concretizing racial diversity as a compelling interest by considering how postsecondary educators can facilitate racial dialogues in their courses.

Notes

1. I use the term *educators* as a more inclusive term to encompass tenure-track, tenured, and adjunct faculty as well as those who do not hold the title faculty but teach college-level courses.

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