
Theses, Dissertations, and Projects

2016

"You have to know whether or not you can really compassionately hold White folks" : perspectives of instructors on White MSW student engagement with race and racism course material

Eleanor H. Broh
Smith College

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.smith.edu/theses>



Part of the [Social Work Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Broh, Eleanor H., ""You have to know whether or not you can really compassionately hold White folks" : perspectives of instructors on White MSW student engagement with race and racism course material" (2016). Masters Thesis, Smith College, Northampton, MA.
<https://scholarworks.smith.edu/theses/1717>

This Masters Thesis has been accepted for inclusion in Theses, Dissertations, and Projects by an authorized administrator of Smith ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@smith.edu.

Eleanor Hochschild Broh
“You have to know whether or not you
can really compassionately hold White
folks”: Perspectives of Instructors on
White MSW Student Engagement with
Race and Racism Course Material

ABSTRACT

This qualitative, exploratory thesis explores the perspectives of instructors of courses on race and racism in social work masters programs. It looks at how these instructors are teaching race and racism content and how White students in their classes engage with the content. In doing so, this study addresses a gap in the social work literature on pedagogy for race and racism, which often fails to address the particular dynamics of teaching this material to White students in the United States.

Through qualitative, semi-structured interviewed with eleven instructors, this project describes the many ways White students engage with this material, identifying patterns of White students who are “doing the work” or “not doing the work” of being open to transformation and commitment to lifelong anti-racism practice. Drawing on concepts from the interdisciplinary literature in critical Whiteness studies, this study suggests that White MSW students’ habits of Whiteness cause them to misunderstand, misrepresent, evade, and deceive themselves about the unearned advantages given to them by structures of White supremacy. The findings also show that instructors are deeply committed to this work and use a variety of techniques and skills to engage students with anti-racism, and that both the explicit and the implicit curricula affect White student engagement.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that White MSW students be given supplementary education on race and racism, that social work educators teach anti-racism

in ways that directly counter habits of Whiteness, and that social work schools deeply and critically engage with the ways they perpetuate and teach White supremacy.

**“You have to know whether or not you can really compassionately hold White folks”:
Perspectives of Instructors on White MSW Student Engagement with Race and Racism
Course Material**

A project based upon an independent investigation,
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Social Work.

Eleanor Hochschild Broh
2016

Smith College School for Social Work
Northampton, Massachusetts 01063

Acknowledgments

My path to conceiving and completing this thesis was laid and smoothed by my parents, Jennifer Hochschild and Tony Broh. Thank you for teaching me some first lessons on race and racism, and for supporting me in so many ways through my education.

Thank you to Raphael Broh, for being brave and seeking out the life you wanted. You're a role model to your big sister.

Thank you to Henry Hochschild for your chill, your openness, and your infectious happiness. I love being your family.

Thank you to my advisor Fred Newdom for your supportive flexibility and confidence that I would get this project done, and done well. It has been an honor and a pleasure being advised by you over the past two years.

Thank you to Jean LaTerz for stepping in to advise me at the last minute. I appreciate your relaxed guidance in helping me complete this project.

Thank you to my partner Aaron Jaffe, for calming me down when I was anxious, and for pushing me along when I was procrastinating, and for all the encouragement and support in the in between times. Happy bird day, and I love you.

Thank you to Jenna Mellor, my chosen family since that day we walked out of the dining hall talking about feeling sad. We've talked about *all* the feelings, ever since, and I mean it when I say I could not have become a social worker without our friendship.

Thank you to my incredible friends Emily Tyler and Elyse Seltzer for being there for me since high school, and for your wonderful spouses and adorable babies. You bring so much joy into my life.

Thank you to my Safe Horizon folks, Jessy, Brenda, and Jasmin, for getting through all the nonsense together. Thank you to Kimmi for letting me grow into myself as a social worker and modeling social work with honesty, integrity, and love. In memory of Rudy.

Thank you to family who have passed. In memory of Grandpa, Melissa, Mimi, and Papa.

Thank you to my Smith College School for Social Work classmates who have gone through this gauntlet with me, and who have talked about anything and everything, hugged, cried, sat in silence, stressed at the library, and normalized and validated the stuffing out of me. I am continually awed by the beauty and brilliance and wisdom of my cohort.

Thank you also to everyone in our cohort who started at Smith together, and who have gone in another, hopefully better-for-you direction, often because of institutional racism and structures of White supremacy. You are marvelous, and your absence is felt.

Thank you to the many amazing teachers I've had at Smith, and to the clients who have let me into your hearts, minds, and lives.

Finally, and most importantly, thank you to every instructor who spoke with me for this project, who gave your time, your histories, and your wisdom. Thank you for your profound commitment to racial justice, and to doing the work with hope in the face of incredible barriers and obstacles. Speaking with each of you has inspired and changed me, and I am so very grateful.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	i
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iii
CHAPTERS	
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
II. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	10
III. METHODOLOGY.....	63
IV. FINDINGS.....	71
V. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	119
REFERENCES.....	151
APPENDICES	
Appendix A: Approval by Smith College Human Subjects Review Committee.....	165
Appendix B: Protocol Change Approval by Smith College Human Subjects Review Committee.....	167
Appendix C: Recruitment email sent directly to faculty.....	168
Appendix D: Recruitment email sent to listservs and posted on Facebook.....	169
Appendix E: Interview Guide.....	170
Appendix F: Informed Consent Form.....	172
Appendix G: Instructor Descriptions of Course Content and Teaching Philosophies on Race and Racism.....	176

CHAPTER I

Introduction

“I don't think there's a magic super sensitivity or a magic experience, I think it's really how do we create an environment where somebody makes room to be willing to acknowledge racism? Because for me at least the minute that room is made, it's like there is an elephant that is polka-dotted that has been sitting in the room with me this entire time. And I just, somehow I had polka-dotted wallpaper and it blended and I didn't see it or something. But it's everywhere” (Professor G)

Context of the research

Social work in the United States exists in the context of pervasive, structural racism and White supremacy. Sociologists and critical race theorists widely hold that race is socially constructed, and Omi and Winant (2015) conceptualize *race* as “a master category—a fundamental concept that has profoundly shaped, and continues to shape, the history, polity, economic structure, and culture of the United States” (loc. 2759). Allen (2012) traces the historical evolution of the racial categories of “Black” and “White” through laws enacted in the early days of the United States as a British colony. These racial categories and the relations of dominance, exclusion, and exploitation of people of color that they signify are maintained throughout this country's history (Omi & Winant, 2015). While over the past century there have been significant shifts in the ways racism is manifested in law, politics, culture, and the economy, Bonilla-Silva (2013) shows that White supremacy persists in a new, colorblind form.

Today's racism, however, is covert, expressed and reproduced through coded language, laws, and policies that are *de facto* White supremacist, but do not declare it (Alexander, 2010; Bonilla-Silva, 2013). White people in the United States today continue to materially benefit from White supremacy (Lipsitz, 1995), but most of us do not openly acknowledge racist beliefs. We often fail to perceive how political, economic, and social structures advantage us over people of color (Sullivan, 2014). Sullivan (2014) notes that all people racialized as White in the United States are implicated in this system: "in this historical moment, whiteness is compulsory for white people; it is not a club that they can simply leave" (p. 72). This is a state of affairs that Bonilla-Silva (2013) calls "racism without racists," and he suggests that "blacks and other minorities should fear less the angry men with white hoods and their traditional discriminatory practices than the men with suits and their 'smiling discrimination'" (loc 1571).

Sullivan (2006) and MacMullan (2009) suggest that White people who grow up in the United States learn habits of Whiteness including White privilege, transparency, superiority, emptiness, goodness, purity, individualism, and negative affects from a very young age (Kivel, 2011; Martinot, 2010, p. 44; Sullivan, 2014). Habits of Whiteness are a set of predispositions of how to be, act, perceive, and interact that "constitute an organism's ongoing character" in a stable, yet malleable structure (Sullivan, 2006, p. 23). These habits may be understood as related to Whiteness in that they can be traced to historical conceptions of White superiority (MacMullan, 2009, p. 88). Habits of Whiteness help White people function in a White supremacist world, but they also harm us, as they require "the burial of one's own identity...The unquestioned embrace of

Whiteness alienates one from others, non-Whites and Whites alike, and from oneself.” (Haney López, 2006, p. 130).

Mills (1997) writes that White supremacy depends on “white misunderstanding, misrepresentation, evasion, and self-deception on matters related to race” (p. 19). When White people are confronted with issues of race and racism, our habits of Whiteness may be activated to help preserve this misunderstanding, misrepresentation, evasion, and self-deception. White people often respond to race and racism content with color and power evasiveness (Frankenberg, 1993), strategies to maintain the self-image as morally good (Sullivan, 2014), and intense affect (DiAngelo, 2011; Srivastava, 2005), all of which function to maintain misunderstanding, misrepresentation, evasion, and self-deception about race and racism. However, Sullivan (2006 and 2014) and others suggest the development of White anti-racism that I conceive of as countering these habits of Whiteness, by developing White people’s aware.

The *Code of Ethics* of the National Association of Social Workers makes a clear commitment to cultural competence, social justice, and social action in its core values: service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence (NASW, 2008). However, it does not recognize race as the “master category” Omi and Winant (2015) describe, and the *Code* leaves vague social workers’ ethical obligations around race and racism in social work practice. In recent years, official groups within the field have elaborated on the profession’s role and obligations, calling for attention to structural racism in social work practices (NASW, 2007; Social Work Policy Institute, 2014), and directing White social workers to

acknowledge and challenge White privilege (NASW, 2007). These documents argue that social work practice is not living up to social work values.

Social work expresses commitment to deconstructing structural racism, and aspires to bring its anti-racism practice into alignment with its core values. However, social work has historically practiced White supremacist social control, and Park's (2008) research suggests this is inherent to our "dual role as deliverer of social policies and defender of those affected by them" (p. 449; see also Hornung, 2012; Jeffery, 2005; Longres, 1972; Pewewardy, 2004). Social workers hold supporting and sometimes leadership roles in most of the social institutions that perpetuate and enact institutional racism: schools, prisons, courts, police, hospitals, non-profits, public benefits programs, politics and policy creation, housing programs. We enforce these institutions' policies and facilitate their work, and as such sometimes, despite our good intentions *we are* Bonilla-Silva's (2013) "men with suits and their 'smiling discrimination'" (loc 1571).

Social work education is the entry point to the profession, making social work schools the gatekeepers. Schools of social work train the field's newest practitioners and help shape their values and practice, including orienting them towards social change work (Haynes, 1999; Mizrahi & Dodd, 2013). Over the past forty five years, social work education has increasingly incorporated content on race and racism as part of its core teaching (Jani, Pierce, Ortiz, & Sowbel, 2011), with the intention of teaching anti-racism social work practice in accordance with the stated values of the profession (Nagda et al., 1999). Even so, White supremacy has manifested in schools' very attempts to teach students to counter it, through the theoretical frameworks used and in the institutions themselves (Abrams & Moio, 2009, p. 253; Bowie, 2003; Pon, 2009). Research suggests

that both the implicit and the explicit curricula affect students' learning about race and racism (Deepak, Rountree, & Scott, 2015; Dewees, 2001; Grady, Powers, Despard, & Naylor, 2011).

Statement of the issue

The predominantly White demographic makeup of the profession (Center for Health Workforce Studies, 2006, Chapter 2, pp. 4-5; NASW Practice Research Network, 2003) means that schools of social work are orienting predominantly White students towards anti-racism social work practice, as required by the Council on Social Work Education (2015). However, the extensive literature on social work education on race and racism contains little specific research on how White social work students in the United States engage with this material. Educators and researchers who write about teaching race and racism content make frequent references to how White students engage and disconnect from this material (Garcia & Van Soest, 1997; Garcia & Van Soest, 2000; Hyde & Ruth, 2002; Pewewardy, 2007; Phan et al, 2009) . Literature in other fields provides information about the particular needs and behaviors of White students in race and racism education, but there is little in social work (Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004). What there is often does not draw on the large body of knowledge about Whiteness and White people in critical Whiteness studies (Abrams & Gibson, 2007; Abrams & Moio, 2009).

Tatum (2003) says that “there is a lot of silence about race in White communities, and as a consequence Whites tend to think of racial identity as something that other people have, not something that is salient for them. But when, for whatever reason, the silence is broken, a process of racial identity development for Whites begins to unfold.” (p. 94). For many White social work students the silence is broken in social work

classrooms that engage White students with material on race and racism. This project will research what unfolds with White students in these classrooms.

Research question and purpose

This project investigates the following questions: How are courses on race and racism being taught in graduate social work programs? How do the instructors of these courses perceive White student engagement with course material on race and racism? What factors might affect the ways White students engage? The purposes of the research are 1) to understand ways some White MSW students engage with course material on race and racism; 2) to explore why White student may engage in these ways; 3) to understand how some race and racism courses are taught in social work programs; and 4) to suggest areas for further study on teaching race and racism material to White MSW students.

This project uses qualitative methods, using semi-structured interviews to solicit the experiences and perspectives of eleven instructors of courses on race and racism in MSW programs. It uses the wisdom and experience of these instructors, as well as concepts from critical Whiteness studies and from the research and pedagogy of social work education on race and racism to paint a picture of how some White MSW students engage in these classes. In so doing, this project expands the knowledge in social work education about how White students engage with classes on race and racism, and addresses the gap in the social work literature on White student engagement. It does so in hopes of pointing the way towards further areas for research and hopefully strengthening the ability of race and racism education to orient White social work students towards a lifelong social work practice that challenges White supremacy.

Language

A note on language: throughout this thesis I have chosen to capitalize the word White, as is consistent with APA formatting and style, and reflective of the social force and reality of these categorizations. I acknowledge that capitalizing White is often associated with overt advocacy for White supremacy. As discussed throughout this thesis, I hold that all White people have internalized habits of Whiteness and benefit from White supremacy, even without recognizing this or identifying as White. As such, I take a both/and stance: Whiteness is a social construction with social reality, and Whiteness exists and should not exist. I have chosen to capitalize the word to emphasize its reality as a category of domination and exploitation. In quotations from the literature, I have left the capitalization as is.

I will also use the terms “White” and “people of color,” with the understanding that these, as all racial categories, are social constructions. I acknowledge that using these terms risks reifying Whiteness as the norm and lumping many ethnic, national, cultural, linguistic, religious, and other groups into a singular group “of color.” I also acknowledge that I use these terms because they are commonly understood and improve on outdated terms like “Caucasian” and “minorities,” not because I think they are correct or desirable. I recognize that, as discussed throughout this section, the language used in the United States to talk about race reflects the history of the social constructions of race, in which “White” is defined in opposition to and superiority over “not-White.”

Motivation

In my experience many White people enter social work from a desire to care for and help others. Because we care, and because of the ways that White supremacy

encourages us to see ourselves as benevolent, pure, innocent, and helpful (Jeffery, 2005; Todd, 2011), it may be hard for White social workers to acknowledge our complicity with structures that do violence to our clients of color (Deepak, Rountree, & Scott, 2015, p. 110; Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004, p. 366) and ways in which we have internalized White dominance. It is hard for White people even to see Whiteness, because of the habit of White transparency (Sullivan, 2006), even though it is all too apparent to people of color. Even so, Pewewardy (2004) asserts that “while all people have a role in challenging white privilege and racism, whites must shoulder the bulk of this work in social services professions” because White people are the majority of social workers, and because White people propagate and perpetuate racism (p. 58). This is a task that requires vigilance and ongoing, lifelong effort (Davis & Gentlewarrior, 2015, p. 202; Pewewardy, 2007, p. 76).

Pewewardy and Almeida (2014) offer that:

Life requires nourishment. No one expects to be sustained by one meal. We see white supremacy as a parasite in organizational and interpersonal professional interactions. Expanding a knowledge base that supports resistance to white supremacy is like taking in new sources of fuel; it is imperative for ongoing sustenance and for purging the parasite that leaches resources faster than they can be replaced. The ongoing pursuit of knowledge must be coupled with working alliances that unsettle entrenched white supremacy (p. 249).

This research project is, for me, a form of nourishment. Through reading, listening, thinking, and writing I have learned so much about Whiteness, and about how Whiteness shows up in social work. I cringe each time I see myself in my participants’ descriptions of White students who over-eagerly raise their hand every chance they get,

with certainty of being called on and heard; or who demand more precise statistics and data from instructors of color than from White instructors; or who defend their social justice credentials, claim to already have “done the work,” and distance themselves from other White people who are elsewhere in their development. I could see the very dynamics of Whiteness my participants talked about in the interviews themselves, when I answered questions about my feelings and experiences with intellectual concepts and theories. There is, in fact, a deep irony in my doing an academic project to learn more about my own White identity, since instructors I spoke with described how White students want to stay cognitive about race and racism, and not engage with difficult or painful emotions.

I come to this project, though, to social work, to my life, with a deep conviction that a world that is structured to arbitrarily hurt people is not OK. Through my social work education I am learning more about the systems that cause these wounds; through my self-reflection, therapy, and relationships I am learning more about how these systems wound me and my loved ones. I am profoundly grateful to have had the opportunity in doing this research to engage with both theories and concepts of Whiteness and White supremacy, and with the ways in which White supremacy saturates me, all the way down. I also cannot express enough gratitude to the eleven social work instructors who shared their experiences and wisdom, inspiration and frustration, and hopes with me. This is my commitment to continuing to do the work.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

In this chapter, I will review literature from critical Whiteness students and from social work education research and pedagogy, in order to explore some considerations and concerns for teaching race and racism content to White students. First I elaborate on concepts around race, racism, and Whiteness in the United States. Then I develop the concept of Whiteness as a system of dominance, exclusion, and exploitation through a brief review of the social and political construction of Whiteness. I use this history and the work of Sullivan (2006 and 2014) and MacMullan (2009) to explore the concept of Whiteness as a set of internalized habits of White people. I suggest that White anti-racism may look like countering these habits of Whiteness.

In the second section, I review social work's location in the structures of White supremacy that pervade this country. I explain the ambivalent relationship of social work and social work education to structures of White supremacy, that both institutions are committed to challenging racism while also being complicit in and perpetuating it. I explore some curricular and pedagogical issues and considerations, including the concept of explicit and implicit curricula as conceptualized by the Council on Social Work Education. Finally, I review the scant literature on teaching race and racism content to White social work students in the United States and demonstrate that there may be unique and particular issues that arise in teaching White students.

Concepts: Race, racism, and Whiteness in the United States

This section draws on literature from critical Whiteness studies in history, sociology, philosophy, political science, legal studies, psychology, education, and American studies to conceptualize terms and concepts of race, racism, and Whiteness.

Race. *Race* is conceived of in this project as an ideological set of socially-created categories based on real and perceived physical attributes and ancestry, that generally pre-determine the access to power and resources of people placed into those categories, and shape their sense of self, identity, and options (Haney López, 2006; Mills, 1997; Omi & Winant, 2014). Omi and Winant (2014) consider race to be the “fundamental schism in U.S. society” (locs. 3351). It is “a master category—a fundamental concept that has profoundly shaped, and continues to shape, the history, polity, economic structure, and culture of the United States” (loc. 2759). While United States history is often taught as a story of progress towards equality, and opportunity for all, in fact “race is in no way an ‘afterthought,’ a ‘deviation’ from ostensibly raceless Western ideals, but rather a central shaping constituent of those ideals” (Mills, 1997, p. 14). It is important to note that “race is not about difference; it is about the meaning a society assigns to difference, in this case the superficial differences of physical appearance” (DiAngelo, 2010, p. 8). The creation and maintenance of race was foundational to the United States, and it saturates US ideology, policy, economy, and social structures (Mills, 1997; Omi & Winant, 2014).

In creating race, bodily attributes and ancestries were given social meaning, which “while originally only ideas, gain force as they are reproduced in the material conditions of society” (Haney López, 2006, p. 10). The basis of race in physical appearance is important, since “[b]odies are visually read and narrated in ways that draw

upon an ensemble of symbolic meanings and associations. Corporeal distinctions are common; they become essentialized” (Omi & Winant, 2014, loc. 2855-2874). Races are often described using colors, but although these are generally more symbolic than literal (Martinot, 2010, p. 18), racialized descriptions still shape the ways that people’s bodies are seen and read (Jacobson, 1998).

Because race is located on the body, it has proved a convenient means of rule, a political technology through which power can be both exercised and naturalized. As a means by which power can be “made flesh,” race has gained an enormous hold on North American political culture (Omi & Winant, 2014, loc. 6213).

Race has meaning only in social context, and “cannot be discussed, cannot even be noticed, without reference—however explicit or implicit—to social structure” (Omi & Winant, 2014, loc. 3206). Race “is strategic; race does ideological and political work” (Omi & Winant, 2014, loc. 2855) by differentiating social groups and shaping their power relations, group interests, and conflict within a society (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 11). The creation of race is the creation of a hierarchy of domination and exploitation, and both race and those relations of domination and exploitation are maintained and reproduced through violence (Haney López, 2006, p. 85; Jacobson, 1998, p. 11; Martinot, 2010). Race penetrates and shapes individuals, families, communities, and institutions of the state and the economy (Omi & Winant, 2014).

Independent of immediate conflicts over power, race shapes the self, relationships, culture, and identity (Haney-López, 2006, p. xvi). It is “a phenomenon that organizes our behaviors, thoughts, and experiences of the world both consciously and pre-consciously” (MacMullan, 2009, p. 75). Race penetrates us to our cores, and

...composes the very bodily and psychical beings that humans are and the particular ways by which humans engage the world. Like gender and sexism, sexuality and compulsory heterosexuality, disability and bias toward ability, class and class oppression, and other characteristics of contemporary human beings, race and white privilege are constitutive features of human existence and experience as they currently occur (Sullivan, 2006, p. 24).

Racism. Racism in this thesis is defined as a system of laws, social structures, cultural norms, and institutional and individual behaviors that “glues” together the racial system (Bonilla-Silva, 2013, loc. 5313; Tatum, 2003) and that “creates or reproduces structures of domination based on racial significations and identities” (emphasis in original, Omi & Winant, 2014, loc. 3299). The existence of race necessitates racism in the form of political, social, and economic forces exercised by the state on behalf of those in power, to maintain their domination over those being exploited (Omi & Winant, 2014, loc. 3116).

Racism is intrinsically political, “a particular power structure of formal or informal rule, socioeconomic privilege, and norms for the differential distribution of material wealth and opportunities, benefits and burdens, rights and duties” (Mills, 1997, p. 3). The formation and maintenance of races requires racism, which “lumps” ethnic groups together into a race through “exclusion, discrimination, violence against them” overpowering “different cultural orientations and sometimes long-standing antagonisms” (Omi & Winant, 2014, loc. 1266). Racism is “something that one group of people does to others,” the first group using the power of the state to create other groups and force

them “down to subordinate levels in a dehumanizing process” (Martinot, 2010, p. 11).

Racism is relational, it is violent, and it is intrinsically tied up with the state.

Individual and structural racism have changed over time in response to culture and politics and to movements by exploited racialized groups. However, even as racism has changed dramatically, “racial hierarchy remains in the material interest of very many in our society.” (Haney-López, 2006, p. xvi). The individual, institutional, and social actions that are “relentlessly channeling rewards, resources, and opportunities from one group to another” maintain domination of one racial group over others (Lipsitz, 1995, p. 381).

As with structures, individuals may also be racist in complicity with, perpetuation of, and benefit from systems of racial dominance. “Racism is infused in every part of our society, our beings, and our perspectives. It is reinforced every day in countless and often subliminal ways” (DiAngelo, 2006, p. 56). Racism is ideological, and people in dominant groups internalize racial dominance deep in their sense of self and identity. Racism also targets the minds and worldviews of targeted groups, and “as an ideology needs to be understood as aiming at the minds of nonwhites as well as whites, inculcating subjugation” (Mills, 1997, p. 89). People from exploited groups internalize racial oppression, also deep in their sense of self and identity. Racism is insidious and, in distinct ways, infiltrates everyone in a racist society.

Whiteness. *Whiteness* is challenging to define--it is slippery, mutable, and often invisible to its beneficiaries. It is not a thing in itself, but a social relation of dominance over those defined as outside it, and “a constellation of processes and practices” including beliefs, culture, values and worldviews (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 56). Although Whiteness,

like all racial categories, is nominally connected to the body there is no clear biological basis for the existence of a “White race” (Frankenberg, 1993; Jacobson, 1998; Martinot, 2010; Mills, 1997). Rather, Whiteness is created and maintained through political processes, and is “contingent, changeable, partial, inconstant, and ultimately social” (Haney López, 2006, p. xxi). As a category it expands and contracts according to power dynamics and politics (Jacobson, 1998; Martinot, 2010). As a culture, Whiteness “generates norms, ways of understanding history, ways of thinking about self and other, and even ways of thinking about the notion of culture itself” (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 231). In individuals it becomes a set of habits (MacMullan, 2009; Sullivan, 2006) and its expression is inflected by personal history and by other identities such as nationhood, gender, and class (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 233). For Haney López (2006), ultimately “‘white’ is common knowledge. ‘White’ is what we believe it is” (p. 76). This is not, however, to discount the violent and deadly reality of Whiteness, which harms both the people it exploits and those who benefit from that exploitation, although in radically different ways. As a racist ideology, Whiteness dehumanizes everyone it touches.

Whiteness as system of domination. Whiteness can be conceptualized as an ideology and system of domination created around five hundred years ago as Europeans began to colonize the rest of the world. Mills (1997) calls the creation of Whiteness for purposes of colonization and exploitation a *Racial Contract*. The Racial Contract is a political project which “establishes a racial polity, a racial state, and a racial juridical system, where the status of whites and nonwhites is clearly demarcated” (Mills, 1997, pp. 13-14). The Contract performs multiple actions: it establishes Whiteness as a race common to European colonizers; it legitimizes White dominance and exploitation of

land, resources, and bodies; it racializes and subjugates the people whom Europeans exploit; and it creates violent ideologies and systems that maintain racial categories. The Racial Contract benefits all people racialized as White by creating “a world in their cultural image, political states differentially favoring their interests, an economy structured around the racial exploitation of others, and a moral psychology...skewed consciously or unconsciously toward privileging them” (p. 40). The Contract is not fixed, but is “*continually being rewritten* to create different forms of the racial polity” (emphasis in original, Mills, 1997, p. 72).

Whiteness under the racial contract is a category of exclusion and of exploitation. Whiteness is exclusive, “constructed precisely by the way in which it positions others at its borders” (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 231). Haney López (2006) writes simply that “Whites exist as a category of people subject to a double negative: they are those who are not non-White” (p. 20). Exclusionary Whiteness does political work by coalescing all who are *not* excluded around shared goals and interests, where they might otherwise have conflicted based on ethnicity or class interests (Allen, 2012; Lipsitz, 1995, p. 370).

Whiteness is dominant and exploitative, since “the whole point of establishing a moral hierarchy (and juridically partitioning the polity according to race) is to secure and legitimate the privileging of those individuals designated as white/persons and the exploitation of those individuals designated as nonwhite/subpersons” (Mills, 1997, p. 32-33). European colonizers constructed their own Whiteness to maintain social control, to permit themselves to own Black slaves as chattel, and to commodify and seize American Indian lands while committing genocide against both groups (Mills, 1997). In the process, property too became racialized: Black slaves *were* property, and American

Indians had no legal *right* to property, while White people (men) could claim ownership of both Black bodies and so-called unowned land (Harris, 2007, p. 77). Throughout US history this White advantage and exploitation continued to be institutionalized and is now expected by Whites “as part of the natural order of things” (Harris, 2007, p. 85).

People of color continually challenged White dominance, and movements in the 1950s and 1960s “opened up a broader prospect for radical democratic transformation in the United States” (Omi & Winant, 2014, locs 385-404). The movement ended the legally authorized White supremacy of Jim Crow, and outlawed discrimination and segregation. In response, however, fifty years of backlash and reactionary racial politics reasserted and maintained the national reality of White supremacy (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 232; Omi & Winant, 2014, loc. 404). New political ideologies express racist concepts in coded ways and develop policies that differentially but silently favor White people and target people of color; White supremacist ideology and systems of White advantage and exploitation of people of color, built up over centuries, remain undisturbed (Alexander, 2010; Haney López, 2006; Omi & Winant, 2014).

We have, as a country, arrived at a strange time of colorblind racism, or “racism without racists,” characterized by “the increasingly covert nature of racial discourse and racial practices; the avoidance of racial terminology in racial conflicts by whites; and the elaboration of a racial agenda over political matters...that eschews direct racial references” (Bonilla-Silva, 2013, loc. 894). Increasingly, White people fail to see White supremacy, located as it is in the political and cultural subtext, rather than in the text itself (Mills, 1997, p. 73; Sullivan, 2006, p. 190). Colorblindness “forms an impregnable yet elastic ideological wall that barricades whites off from America’s racial reality—an

impregnable wall because it provides them a safe, color-blind way to state racial views without appearing to be irrational or rabidly racist” (Bonilla-Silva, 2013, locs. 7552-7571). Perversely, some White people have come to see themselves as racially *targeted* (Haney López, 2006, pp. 159-160).

Contrary to the dominant narrative that racism is disappearing, these authors suggest that the current system is in some ways worse than what preceded it. Inadequate and unenforced civil rights measures have “served to ratify and reinvigorate the underlying racial regime” (Omi & Winant, 2014, loc. 385). While people of color may be better off than at other times in US history, because they still experience “systematic discrimination and remain appreciably behind whites in many important areas of life, their chances of catching up with whites are very slim” (Bonilla-Silva, 2013, loc. 1941). It remains true that “the term ‘whiteness’ signals the production and reproduction of dominance rather than subordination, normativity rather than marginality, and privilege rather than disadvantage” (Frankenberg, 1993, pp. 236-237).

Whiteness as habit. Even under colorblind racism the “racism of years ago lives on in the unconscious desires, fears, and beliefs of well-intentioned white people today” (Sullivan, 2014, pp. 71-2). MacMullan (2009) and Sullivan (2006) use the work of John Dewey and of W. E. B. Du Bois to conceptualize Whiteness as a habit. Whiteness as habit is a set of predispositions of how to be, act, perceive, and interact that “constitute an organism’s ongoing character” in a stable, yet malleable structure (Sullivan, 2006, p. 23). These habits may be understood as related to Whiteness in that they can be traced to historical conceptions of White superiority (MacMullan, 2009, p. 88). Whiteness as habit is both conscious and unconscious, and sometimes at odds with the person’s values and at

times “actively blocking the self ’s attempts to transform itself for the better” (Sullivan, 2006, p. 44). MacMullan suggests a gap between “the conscious good intentions and desire for justice that I think the overwhelming majority of white people hold in their hearts and the unconscious habits that are bred into to the bones of these very same people” (p. 4). The history of White domination gives contemporary White people habits that obscure, reinforce and reproduce White domination, even those of us with good intentions.

White people learn habits of Whiteness including White privilege, transparency, superiority, emptiness, goodness, purity, individualism, and negative affects from a very young age from parents, teachers, and media (Kivel, 2011; Martinot, 2010, p. 44; Sullivan, 2014). Parents “pass down habits of whiteness through their conversations and silences, their bodily gestures and facial expressions, their unconscious desires and unspoken fears (Sullivan, 2014, pp. 115-116). Children are often “shushed” if they ask about race, and learn that even noticing race is taboo (Tatum, 2003). Habits of Whiteness are reproduced through racial segregation, since in “segregated environments (schools, workplaces, neighborhoods, media images and historical perspectives), white interests and perspectives are almost always central” (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 58). Lack of relationships with people of color reinforces habits of Whiteness (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 111), which reproduces segregation, since “whiteness as a lifestyle fosters whiteness as a choice for friends and partners” (Bonilla-Silva, 2013, loc. 4225).

Whiteness and White supremacy as systems of domination unequivocally harm people of color with horrific past and present subjugation and exploitation. The literature reviewed here shows as well that, while White supremacy tremendously benefits White

people, we are also dehumanized and damaged by it. White children learn White privilege and transparency in childhood through a traumatizing process of “gaslighting children into a state of constant cognitive dissonance” (Norton, 2014; see also DiAngelo, 2011, p. 66; Matias & DiAngelo, 2013). Cognitive dissonance helps White people function in a White supremacist world, but at the cost of mistrusting our feelings and observations, and of silence and ignorance about our histories and complicity in oppression (Norton, 2014; Sullivan, 2014, p. 91; Tatum, 2003). Learning habits of Whiteness requires “the burial of one’s own identity...The unquestioned embrace of Whiteness alienates one from others, non-Whites and Whites alike, and from oneself.” (Haney López, 2006, p. 130). Our habits make us afraid and awkward, distancing us from ourselves, other White people, and loved ones across racial boundaries (Tatum, 2003, p. 14).

Privilege. A core White habit is both having and being unable to see our unearned social, political, economic, and psychological advantages over people of color, which result in day-to-day and lifetime-to-lifetime benefits accruing exclusively to White people. “White privilege is best understood as a constellation of psychical and somatic habits formed through transaction with a racist world.” (Sullivan, 2006, p. 54). White privilege may look like *freedom to* be comfortable in and access any space; to commodify, appropriate and accumulate resources, knowledge, and culture; to feel generally safe and have desires satisfied; and to have one’s cultural norms be the dominant ones (Frankenberg, 1993; Sullivan, 2006; Sullivan, 2014). Privilege may also look like *freedom from* oppression, surveillance, and violent social control; from unsafe living and working conditions; from having to think about race and racism at all

(Frankenberg, 1993; Pewewardy & Severson, 2003; Sullivan, 2006). White privilege is not universal across White people, but is intersectionally impacted by other social identities, including class, gender, age, religion, sexuality, and ability (Tatum, 2003, p. 12). It is an unconscious habit that “actively works to disrupt attempts to reveal its existence” (Sullivan, 2006, pp. 1-2). Privilege saturates White people’s experience of the world, living “not just ‘in the head.’ It also is ‘in’ the nose that smells, the back, neck, and other muscles that imperceptibly tighten with anxiety, and the eyes that see some but not all physical differences as significant” (Sullivan, 2006, pp. 188-189).

Transparency and normativity. The transparency of Whiteness is a habit codependent on White privilege. Whiteness is defined by domination and by exclusion of whom/what it is not, (Bonilla-Silva, 2013, loc. 3973; Frankenberg, 1993, p. 17), and “existing at the center of racial relations, Whites very rarely find themselves burdened by race in a manner that draws this aspect of identity into view; their Whiteness therefore remains unexamined, shrouded in background shadows” (Haney López, 2006, p. 111). Whiteness in the United States is “the unmarked category against which difference is constructed” (Lipsitz, 1995, p. 369). As a habit, White transparency was strengthened when White supremacy was written out of the laws, since

...whiteness now maintains itself by convincing white folk that it isn’t there, and that they, like all decent human beings in the aftermath of the civil rights movement, are not racist. The invisibility of white supremacy is such an intractable problem because it enables white folk to perpetuate white supremacist values while simultaneously decrying them. We are able to pay lip service to the

ideal of anti-racism in a way that leads us to believe that racism is over
(MacMullan, 2009, p. 143).

Under colorblindness Whiteness “becomes transparent, a protected status which one either has or does not have, but about which one need not think” (Haney López p. 112-113).

Superiority. Superiority is a habit of Whiteness, in that Whites are at the top of the racial hierarchy, and come to “unconsciously believe that we are more important, more valuable, more intelligent, and more deserving than people of color” (DiAngelo, 2006, p. 54). White superiority is taught by dominant culture (DiAngelo, 2011), as Whites are positioned as the “superior opposite to non-Whites” (Haney López, 2006, p. 121). Superiority arises from and supports White privilege, normativity, and transparency, in that “it can be easy to think that if others do not have these “advantages,” then it implicitly is because they have done something to forfeit them—it is their fault that they are disadvantaged” (Sullivan, 2006, pp. 50-51).

Emptiness. Whiteness is invisibly normative, but at the same time seen as “dull, empty, lacking, incomplete and meaningless” (Hughey, 2012, p. 170), “boring, but nonetheless definitive” (p. 197). White people may have learned the habit of emptiness through the cultural loss “that started when whiteness as a cultural identity supplanted older, more particular cultural identities based on ethnicity and place that offered richer, more life-affirming cultural traditions and practices” (MacMullan, 2009, p. 18). In contrast, the lives, beliefs, practices, and cultures of people of color are painted as “more alive,” “more natural,” “more spiritual,” “exotic,” “carnal,” and “soulful” (Frankenberg, 1993; Hughey, 2012). White people feel justified, through habits of White privilege to

objectify, commodify, and try to accumulate these qualities through cultural appropriation and through appropriative relationships with people of color. This maintains the dehumanization of people of color and the racialized duality of White and not-White with White as the ideal (Frankenberg, 1993; Sullivan, 2006).

Purity. As an exclusionary category, Whiteness is concerned with marking and maintaining its boundaries (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 231; Haney López, 2006, p. 20). This has meant that Whiteness is threatened by those boundaries being breached, so that “historically, miscegenation and immigration—the mixing of white and nonwhite ‘blood’—probably have served as the two greatest “threats” to the purity of whiteness” (Sullivan, 2014, pp. 30-1). Whiteness has protected its boundaries through laws and other forms of racialized violence (Haney López, 2006; Lipsitz, 1995), and over time, purity has become a habit of Whiteness. Under colorblindness, this means that “we see race as operating when people of color are present, but all-white spaces as ‘pure’ spaces – untainted by race vis a vis the absence of the carriers of race (and thereby the racial polluters) – people of color” (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 62).

Individualism. Whiteness as a category of domination has reserved for White people the expectation of being understood and treated as an individual (Sullivan, 2014, p. 73). Individualism as a habit

allows whites to view themselves as unique and original, outside of socialization and unaffected by the relentless racial messages in the culture. Individualism also allows whites to distance themselves from the actions of their racial group and demand to be granted the benefit of the doubt, as individuals, in all cases (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 59).

Individualism as a habit of Whiteness means that White people are expect not to be defined by group membership (Sullivan, 2014).

Negative affects. Sullivan (2014) suggests that White people “have long been constituted by negative affects it’s probably safe to say that negative affects are what gave (and continues to give) birth to whiteness in the first place” (p. 125). Our “ugly thoughts, emotions and motivations—many of them unconscious” (Sullivan, 2014, p. 13) and our history of domination create “perpetual malaise, insecurity, guilt, shame, and uncertainty” (Pewewardy, 2004, p. 60). White people are “a people who overwhelmingly are composed of hatred, jealousy, and greed but who loftily and deliberately (mis) understand themselves as noble, civilized, and kind” (Sullivan, 2014, p. 13). In all, “love has not been the dominant affect that characterizes white people” (Sullivan, 2014, p. 125).

Fear and hatred as habits of Whiteness are “crucially linked to essentialist racism, or the idea that people of color are fundamentally Other than white people: different, inferior, less civilized, less human, more animal, than whites” (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 60). Fear may manifest in White people being afraid to talk about race in case they, “make an offensive remark that will provoke the wrath of the people of color around them” (Tatum, 2003, p. 194). White people may also fear losing connection with other White people if they stray from acceptable Whiteness by noticing or questioning White supremacy (Sullivan, 2014; Tatum, 2003). White fear can manifest somatically, since “even if white people don’t consciously think of themselves as afraid of black people, their bodily reactions and habits often reveal that they are. And their fear is not innocuous: it tends to

result in significant harm to black people and other people of color” (Sullivan, 2014, pp. 126-7).

Guilt and shame are also habits of Whiteness, as White people may feel “very guilty when they face up to their racial history of degradation, violence, and death, and they struggle with how to respond to ongoing racism” (Sullivan, 2014, p. 127). This guilt is about connection with past perpetrators of racial violence and ongoing complicity with White supremacy; it is related to what one’s ancestors, family, and oneself have done to perpetuate racism. White people may also feel shame, as if association with Whiteness means that one is fundamentally corrupted. Shame may lead to “the passive-sounding conditions of depression, despair, and feelings of worthlessness,” or to “very aggressive and even violent reactions toward others.” Both White guilt and White shame tend to freeze White people from working against White supremacy, and may lead us to lash out, sometimes violently (Sullivan, 2014, p. 134).

Whiteness and intersectional identities. Authors widely agree that Whiteness looks and acts different in relation to the many social identities any person holds, since “Whiteness is contingent, changeable, partial, inconstant, and ultimately social” (Haney López, 2006, p. xxi). Whiteness is “inflected by nationhood...Similarly, whiteness, masculinity, and femininity are co- producers of one another, in ways that are, in their turn, crosscut by class and by the histories of racism and colonialism” (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 233). Race, ethnicity, class, religion, nationhood, sexuality, and gender inflect and mutually determine and reproduce each other in highly complex and varying ways. Race is a template for power distribution, a fundamental social cleavage that defines who one is in society and politics (Omi & Winant, 2014). However, intersectionality means

that we all hold many identities, and thus that White people may have both dominant identities and oppressed ones. DiAngelo (2006) writes that we need to grapple with both our oppressed and our dominant identities to understand internalized White supremacy (p. 54).

Whiteness and engagement with race and racism. The literature reviewed here makes a clear case that White supremacy is a system of domination and exploitation, and that the history and structures of White supremacy inculcate habits of Whiteness into White people. These very structures and habits of Whiteness conceal themselves, meaning White people fail to understand how our actions and views on race are shaped by and uphold White supremacy (Bonilla-Silva, 2013, loc. 7492). In failing to see our benefit and complicity, White people support White supremacy “by following the normal customs and practices that help keep the system in place” (Bonilla-Silva, 2013, loc. 4433).

Mills (1997) writes that “white misunderstanding, misrepresentation, evasion, and self-deception on matters related to race are among the most pervasive mental phenomena of the past few hundred years, a cognitive and, moral economy psychically required for conquest, colonization, and enslavement” (p. 19). White supremacy continues to silently advantage White people over people of color, but thanks to habits of Whiteness, we fail to see it. Because, as a society under colorblind racism, we agree that racism is morally wrong, when we are confronted with evidence of this system, “our abhorrence of racism coupled with a superficial conceptualization of it causes us to be highly defensive about any suggestion that we perpetuate it.” (DiAngelo, 2006, p. 57). In a moment of being forced to notice White supremacy, “when confronted with the falsity

of White identity, Whites tend not to abandon Whiteness, but to embrace and protect it. The value of Whiteness to Whites almost certainly ensures the continuation of a White self-regard predicated on racial superiority.” (Haney López, 2006, p. 24).

Habits of Whiteness result in failure to see our complicity with White supremacy, and the ways we cause racist harm even as we insist we are doing right.

We benefit from Whiteness and are invested in it, so we use many mechanisms to maintain our misunderstanding, misrepresentation, evasion, and self-deceptions.

More politically progressive White people, who may be committed to social justice work, “may still insulate themselves via claims that they are beyond the need for engaging with the content because they ‘already had a class on this’ or ‘already know this.’ These reactions are often seen in anti-racist education endeavors as forms of resistance to the challenge of internalized dominance.” (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 55). This is important, because it suggests that White people who are politically on the left, and who care about racial justice, still have and act out habits of Whiteness, just in a slightly different form than other White people.

If we are to deal with a social machine composed of people who can invert justice, fairness, democratic procedure, and the ideals of human sanctity, which they rationalize on the basis of a concept of race, we have to be clear that the people who function in that machine, who speak and act as parts of its destructive operations, think they are doing the right thing. That is the big problem with racism and white supremacy (Martinot, 2010, p. 6).

Color and power evasiveness. Frankenberg (1993) describes two tendencies in thinking and talking about race: color evasiveness and power evasiveness (p. 14). With

the rise of colorblind politics, White people avoid thinking or talking about race and power (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 15; Haney López, 2006, p. xviii). *Color-evasiveness* ignores race, making claims to common humanity like “I don’t see race, I just see people” (Sullivan, 2006, p. 191), and that it doesn’t matter if someone is “Black, green, yellow, or pink” (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 38). These are discursive strategies for avoiding talking about race, on logic that talking about racial difference is itself racist (Sullivan, 2014, p. 85). But in a world where racialized difference *is* important, this makes race into a shameful, taboo secret. In color evasive discourse, “people of color are ‘good’ only insofar as their ‘coloredness’ can be bracketed and ignored,” suggesting that “‘color,’ which here means nonwhiteness, is bad in and of itself” (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 145-147). Color evasiveness upholds White transparency and normativity as the standard of humanity.

While some White people avoid talking about race at all, others talk about it as identity or culture, but evade talk about power (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 152). *Power evasive* discourse may look like interest in or celebration of multiculturalism, with attention to

those differences that make the speaker feel good but continuing to evade by means of partial description, euphemism, and self-contradiction those that make the speaker feel bad. The latter, as I have shown, involved the naming of inequality, power imbalance, hatred, or fear (Frankenberg, 1993, pp. 156-157).

A power evasive discourse on race leaves the racialized power differences that maintain White supremacy unnamed. This unspokenness of racialized power “fuels habits of white privilege by creating a social, political, and psychological atmosphere of racial

invisibility in which white privilege can thrive” (Sullivan, 2006, p. 191). A “key element of color and power evasion is the production of a white self-innocent of racism” (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 188). Color and power evasiveness help White people maintain habits of superiority and transparency and avoid awareness of White supremacy.

Good White people, or middle-class White liberalism. In a similar vein, Sullivan (2014) describes the “good White person,” who may speak anti-racism, but “at the heart of this anti-racism, however, is not necessarily an attempt to eliminate racial injustice—which, to be successful, might involve strategies or tactics that don’t make white people look or feel morally good—but a desire to be recognized as Not Racist” (Emphasis in original, Sullivan, 2014, pp. 4-5). Good White people are often White middle class liberals, with higher education living in cities. They are able to “recognize Whiteness as something that is significant and that operates in society, but to not see how it relates to one’s own life. In this form, a white person recognizes Whiteness as real, but as the individual problem of other ‘bad’ white people.” (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 59). Good White people establish racism as someone else’s problem by blaming “bad White people,” who tend to be poor “White trash”: “*those* white people (the lower class) are racist; we middle-class whites are not like them; therefore we are not racist” (emphasis in original, Sullivan, 2014, p. 145).

Good White people’s deflection of responsibility for race and racism “sometimes can interfere with, rather than aid struggles to end white racism” (Sullivan, 2014, p. 146). Good White people speak and act about racism, consciously and unconsciously, to maintain their “moral reputations, rather than recognize or change their participation in systems of inequity and domination” (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 64). If “racism is systemic, this

view of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ whites distorts reality” (Bonilla-Silva, 2013, loc. 4433).

Sullivan (2014) writes that

It’s true that white supremacists, as well as white trash...think, say, and do viciously racist things. But so do good middle-class white people, and that is the point. There are no saints to be found here. White liberals are just better at pretending that there are. (p. 57).

White feelings. Many authors agree that White people tend to have intense emotional responses when we are confronted with issues of race and racism. DiAngelo (2011) calls these intense responses “White fragility,” and suggests that it may result from the racial stress of having habits of Whiteness challenged. *White fragility* is a set of defensive moves including “outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium.” (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 57).

Srivastava (2005) describes how White people who are challenged on their own or an organization’s racism may “speak in an emotional manner about their commitment, hope, solidarity, complicity, guilt, lack of complicity, failure to understand, disbelief, hurt, and anger that they have been accused; tears are the most commonly described reaction” (p. 42). The problem with these intense affective responses is that conversations about racism “become derailed by emotional protestations that one is not a racist” (Srivastava, 2005, p. 42), which may be “a way of tempering white women’s feelings of desolation and of protecting them from anger and criticism by women of color” (Srivastava, 2005, p. 46). When a conversation about racism stops because a

White person feels uncomfortable or unhappy, it reinforces that the White person's feelings matter more than the harm done to people of color by racism.

White anti-racism. *Anti-racism* can be defined as the set of efforts and practices that “undo or resist structures of domination based on racial significations and identities” (Omi & Winant, 2014, loc. 3319). White people can engage in anti-racism, and doing so means recognizing and challenging habits of Whiteness and ways we benefit from and are complicit with White supremacy. This is risky work of unlearning what we learned as children, and possibly developing different views and politics from our families. But we gain too, since anti-racism practice is “also liberating, opening doors to new communities, creating possibilities for more authentic connections with people of color, and in the process, strengthening the coalition necessary for genuine social change” (Tatum, 2003, p. 113). Still we must be cautious, since “it is all too easy for white people's good intentions to address racism in responsible, antiracist ways to reenact the very white privilege that they wish to undermine” (Sullivan, 2006, p. 167). Our habits of Whiteness are deeply ingrained and we must be vigilant for how our habits subvert even our attempts to do anti-racism work.

Challenging color evasiveness: Race cognizance. In opposition to color blindness and color evasiveness, White anti-racism work requires recognition that “race makes a difference in people's lives and that racism makes a difference in U.S. society” (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 159). Race cognizance means understanding race as “something that white people and white society ‘do,’ through a system of social practices for which they are to be held responsible” (Martinot, 2010, p. 26). It necessarily includes acknowledging White racial identity, since “a self-conscious recognition by Whites of the

relevance to their lives of racial identity and racial privilege is an important, even an essential first step in any effort to alter the racial meaning system tying White and Black identity together” (Haney López, 2006, p. 121).

Challenging power evasiveness: Power cognizance. In opposition to power evasiveness, White anti-racism work requires us to see racialized power, and to identify “how (but not if) racism is manifesting--morphing and adapting--in any given context” (Matias & DiAngelo, 2013, p. 5). In particular for White people, this requires us “to see [our] hegemony, [our] dominance, [our] pretense to privilege through the eyes of those who suffer from it. This is not a question of guilt, but rather of seeing who one is, and who one is made to be, by one’s position, one’s role, and one’s complicity” (Martinot, 2010, p. 185). As White people we “will receive the social privileges of being white whether [we] want them or not,” and we must acknowledge this reality to be able to work against it (Sullivan, 2006, p. 159). Frankenberg (1993) writes that

explorations both of dominant practices and of the incorporations and exclusions that produce the dominant may, I believe, enable us to engage in anti-racist work from a more complex standpoint and to enter into more radical, transformative relationships with white racial and cultural identities (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 235).

Challenging the “good White person”: *Collective support and accountability.* In opposition to the urge to seem like a “good White person,” White anti-racism requires White people to work together to make visible and challenge our Whiteness. Rather than accusing, “learning to reckon with and critically accept rather than quickly dismiss white people whom one finds objectionable is a way to live one’s whiteness in a way that supports racial justice struggles” (Sullivan, 2014, p. 61). Sullivan (2014) also suggests

“radical inclusion that involves white people of all classes—the ‘bad’ white people as well as the ‘good’ ones—in racial justice movements” (p. 26). In all, “cleaning up the unhealthy crap between and among white people is one of the best ways that white people today can live their whiteness as an identity that challenges racial injustice” (Sullivan, 2014, p. 162).

Challenging White guilt and freezing: Anti-racism praxis. In opposition to the freezing effect of White guilt, White anti-racism requires praxis in understanding and working against systems of White supremacy. Anti-racism White people must engage in “a political praxis to eliminate the system that produces racial inequality” (Bonilla-Silva, 2013, loc. 7612) and seek to “dismantle race as a system that correlates to power and privilege” (Haney López, 2006, p. xvii). Pewewardy (2004) suggests that “white people can begin to liberate ourselves from the guilt, shame, and denial that are symptomatic of our collective soul wound by looking honestly and unflinchingly into white history and learning how to make reparations” (Pewewardy, 2004, p. 63).

Challenging White purity: Committing to lifelong engagement with Whiteness. In opposition to the White insistence on purity, White anti-racism requires commitment to a lifelong process of learning and countering habits of Whiteness. A “white person’s relationship to her whiteness must always be a critical one. This means that the process of creating a white allied identity necessarily will be ongoing and capable of improvement” (Sullivan, 2014, p. 11). Sullivan (2014) warns that “the attempt to be racially pure that characterizes white supremacy is manifest in non-supremacist white attempts to be perfectly pure of racism” (p. 113), and advises that “good white people also are flawed

human beings, complicit with rather than hovering apart from white domination”

(Sullivan, 2014, p. 64).

Challenging the negative affects that comprise Whiteness: Learning self-love. In opposition to the negative affects that comprise Whiteness, White anti-racism may involve learning to love ourselves. Sullivan (2014) writes that White people should “stop trying to flee their whiteness and that white racial identity should not be based on the toxic emotions of guilt, shame, and betrayal” (p. 151). This is “a call for [White people] to nourish their positive affects with regard to whiteness so that a different kind of political and interpersonal action on their part will be possible” (p. 148). By learning to love ourselves, good White liberals might “challenge the narcissistic self-loathing at the heart of white people’s racial quest for moral goodness,” and be able to do the work of challenging Whiteness rather than expending energy on *seeming* non-racist (p. 151). We might be able to approach other White people with loving, rather than competitive criticism, which may be less threatening and open up space for reflection and change (pp. 161-2). We might also “become spiritually healthy enough that they do not poison other races when interacting with them but instead reciprocally nourish each other” (p. 148). Overall, perhaps,

a white ally is a person who is constituted by a loving affirmation of herself that exercises and strengthens her positive affects regarding race and thus allows her to digest, rather than resentfully fester over, impotently avoid, or evasively deflect her and other white people’s roles in racist institutions and histories (Sullivan, 2014, pp 147-8).

Challenging exclusive emphasis on the brain: Thinking about the body. In opposition to the prevailing conception of a split between mind and body, White anti-racism may require engagement with the unconscious, somatic aspects of White habits.

A person's psychological disposition toward the world can be found throughout her body, in her physical comportment, sensations, reactions, pleasures, and pains, just as her bodily (dis)functionings help constitute her mental tendencies and proclivities. And all of this, including the "properly" bodily aspects of white privilege, can function unconsciously. The body, in fact, often serves as a prime site of non-reflective resistance to the transformation of habits of white privilege. It can actively thwart conscious attempts to dismantle a psychosomatic sense of white superiority." (Sullivan, 2006, pp. 188-189).

Unlearning habits of Whiteness and coming to see the structures of White supremacy may require White people to engage with our bodies and our minds together.

Teaching Race and Racism in Social Work Education

Social work practice and race and racism. Social work as a profession seeks to enhance well-being and to fight oppression on an individual, community, and social level (NASW, 2008), but in its practice often reinforces and perpetuates racism (Longres, 1972; Miller & Garran, 2007, p. 34). A review of the profession's history reveals persistent tension between working for social change and maintaining social control (Abramovitz, 1998; Potocky, 1997). Social work evolved to help new European immigrants, but did so by "diagnosing their situations and acculturating them to participate in capitalist values and economic transactions" (Pewewardy & Almeida, 2014, p. 234). In the early twentieth century, under Jim Crow laws in the south, social work

training and practice were racially segregated, without apparent opposition by White leaders in the field (Kayser, 2005); later in the century, social workers formed anti-racism movements (Abramovitz, 1998, p. 517; Bowie, 2003, p. 6), and social workers of color have protested and resisted racism throughout the profession (Abramovitz, 1998; Hounmenou, 2012; Kayser, 2005; Longres, 1972, p. 36). Social workers facilitated Japanese incarceration during World War II (Park, 2008). Social work is inextricably tangled with other racist capitalist systems as well, in its move towards professionalization and reliance on the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual and health insurance reimbursement to diagnose and treat (Hornung, 2012, p. 194; Longres, 1972, p. 40; Nylund, 2006, p. 39). Park (2008) suggests that the chronic social change/control tension may be due to the profession's mutually exclusive "dual role as deliverer of social policies and defender of those affected by them" (p. 449).

In a White supremacist system, maintaining social control means reinforcing White dominance. Empirical research shows that White social workers hold similarly racist beliefs as other White people in the United States. McMahon and Allen-Meares (1992) found in the social work literature a colorblind understanding of race and racism which "treats all clients the same without regard to their specific needs" (p. 537). White social workers in Loya's (2011) research were unaware of White privilege and their "lack of understanding about the impact of race in the United States may, in fact, leave social workers blaming the victim, or avoiding serving diverse clients at all" (p. 210). Green, Kiernan-Stern, and Baskind (2005) found that White social worker subjects almost unanimously supported equality for people of color in the workplace, but were reluctant

to support affirmative action as a means to achieving that equality, and were hesitant about close relationships with people of color.

Even White social workers with some structural power analysis who intentionally engage in anti-racism practice may unintentionally reinforce White supremacy through their very attempts to challenge it. We may seek the *status* of good White person, or “ally” by accumulating enough knowledge or taking enough workshops or acknowledging privilege loudly enough (Todd, 2011), rather than understanding that “being an ally is an ongoing process. It is a verb rather than a noun, and past behaviors do not compensate for subsequent and ongoing indiscretions” (Pewewardy & Almeida, 2014, p. 243).

Social work exists within White supremacist structures and employs racist people in a profession that upholds White dominance (Longres, 1972, p. 34); the same can be said of any institution in the United States (Omi & Winant, 2014). But unlike many professions and institutions, social work has a *Code of Ethics* which commits us to service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence (NASW, 2008). The *Code*, though, is vague on anti-racism, and recently the national Social Work Congress (2005) called on the profession to “continuously acknowledge, recognize, confront, and address pervasive racism within social work practice at the individual, agency, and institutional levels.” A report from the National Association of Social Workers (NASW, 2007) insists on social workers’ responsibility “to recognize that structural racism plays out in their personal and professional lives and to use that awareness to ameliorate its influence in all aspects of social work practice” (p. 3). White social workers are called specifically to

“acknowledge that by the accident of history, they are in positions that give them advantages over others” (p.10) and to “take leadership in helping other white colleagues understand the implications of white racial identity, white privilege, and the effect of racism on white people” (p. 20).

White social workers’ racial attitudes matter in this predominantly White profession (Center for Health Workforce Studies, 2006, Chapter 2, pp. 4-5; NASW Practice Research Network, 2003). While newly graduating social workers are increasingly people of color, the field remains disproportionately White compared to the U.S. population (Center for Health Workforce Studies, 2006b, p. 3). Pewewardy (2004) asserts that “while all people have a role in challenging white privilege and racism, whites must shoulder the bulk of this work in social services professions,” due to our majority and power (p. 58). Challenging White dominance in social work requires learning, vigilance, and ongoing, lifelong effort (Davis & Gentlewarrior, 2015, p. 202; Pewewardy, 2007, p. 76).

Social work education on race and racism.

Institutional commitments. Social work schools are the doorways and gatekeepers to the profession and charged by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) with preparing students for ethical social work practice. The CSWE first required content on diversity in the 1970s, and as CSWE mandates have evolved over time, so too have the field’s theoretical concepts, curricula, and pedagogies for race and racism education (Horner & Borrero, 1981; Jani, Pierce, Ortiz, & Sowbel, 2011; Matsushima, 1981; Swank, Asada & Lott, 2001). In the past fifty years, the evolving CSWE standards for race and racism education have increasingly recognized the

structural foundations of racial oppression and its roots in U.S. structures (Jani et al., 2011, pp. 292-293). In the same time, “the field of social work education has increasingly shifted from a teacher- centered to a student-centered model and was challenged to move from a monocultural, Eurocentric curriculum to a more inclusive, multicultural curriculum” (Varghese, 2013, p. 56).

The CSWE’s current Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards, which all schools of social work must meet to maintain accreditation, require that schools teach students to “understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power” (CSWE, 2015, p. 7). CSWE also recognizes that learning is influenced both by the content of the courses students take and by field education, together called the “explicit curriculum” (p. 11) and also by the structures in which courses and field education occur, called the “implicit curriculum.” The implicit curriculum can include the institution’s “commitment to diversity; admissions policies and procedures; advisement, retention, and termination policies; student participation in governance; faculty; administrative structure; and resources” (p. 14).

In preparing students for a values-driven profession, social work education aims to inculcate social work values in students and to help students grow in self-knowledge and effective use of self to challenge oppression (Haynes, 1999; Judah, 1979; Reupert, 2009). Mizrahi and Dodd (2013) found social work values education somewhat effective in increasing student commitment to social change work, and suggest that a school’s curriculum and institutional culture, as well as student experiences in the classroom and

in field placement all help to shape the development of social work values, in combination with students' prior knowledge and experience (p. 593).

Institutional racism. Social work as a profession has an ethical commitment to service, social justice, and dignity and worth of the person (NASW, 2008), and several central institutions of the profession have explicitly called for challenging structural racism and White supremacy in social work practice (NASW, 2007; Social Work Congress; 2005). Social work education has a mandate to teach students about racialized power, privilege, and oppression and to prepare students to practice social work as the “quest for social and economic justice, the prevention of conditions that limit human rights, the elimination of poverty, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all persons, locally and globally” (CSWE, 2015, p. 5).

However, several authors suggest that the link is not always successfully forged in social work education between conceptual understanding of racism and commitment to engaged, lifelong anti-racism social work practice (Daniel, 2008; Garcia & Melendez, 1997; Nagda et al., 1999). This may be in part because when an institution is not engaged with challenging White supremacy throughout both implicit and explicit curriculum, this is manifest to students, and impacts students' critical engagement with the material (Deepak, Rountree, & Scott, 2015). As a requirement for accreditation, schools of social work teach race and racism content but many fall short in the will, dedication, knowledge and ability to fully realize a commitment to challenging White supremacy in the institution and curriculum (Daniel, 2011, p. 251). Black graduates of predominantly White social work schools observe that race and racism education “appears in many cases to resemble minimal attempt at ‘public relations’ or institutional

(CSWE) appeasement, as opposed to widespread and meaningful curricular integration” (Bowie, 2003, p. 18).

Curriculum. The CSWE (2015) standards are “thresholds for professional competence,” but schools of social work have wide flexibility “to use traditional and emerging models and methods of curriculum design” (p. 5) to meet these standards. This means that curricula around race and racism vary significantly across schools. In a relatively recent review, Miller, Hyde and Ruth (2004) found several key common values and principles many courses on oppression and multiculturalism hold:

1. Oppression is both a reality that is encoded and embedded in social arrangements, ideology and institutions, and also a set of values and attitudes that are internalized;
2. None of us, neither teachers or students, are neutral or objective when it comes to studying multiculturalism, oppression and social justice;
3. Social injustice and oppression do not sit at the doors of the academic institutions (or agencies), but are part of the classroom experience;
4. The goals of teaching multiculturalism are not to simply understand but to challenge, change and dismantle oppression and unearned privilege;
5. Learning must include experiential components that lead to self-awareness and social action strategies that go beyond the classroom (p. 411).

In addition to the content and values, schools of social work have flexibility to make decisions about where race and racism content lives in the curriculum, including whether to have a designated course or to infuse it throughout the curriculum (Bronstein & Gibson, 1998; Deepak et al., 2015). Neither approach is clearly successful: a

designated course may be perceived by students and faculty as secondary to the “real” education (Hornung, 2012, p. 186; Mindrup, Spray, and Lamberghini-West, 2011, p. 34; Vodde, 2000, p. 141), and if required, may generate resentment and resistance from students (Plionis & Lewis, 1996, p. 182; Swank et al., 2001, p. 100). However, an infusion approach also risks race and racism content being presented as an add-on or taught by faculty untrained in and uncomfortable with the material (Deal & Hyde, 2004, p. 82; Osteen, Vanidestine, & Sharpe, 2013, p. 113). Schools also make decisions about timing and student development--infusion may be preferable for first-year students, while a focused class may be better for second-years (Deal & Hyde, 2004, pp. 82-83).

Educators propose various models for infusing race and racism education into education on clinical practice (Basham, 2004; Davis & Gentlewarrior, 2015; Varghese, 2013); human behavior and the social environment (Bowie, 2003); community practice (Todd, 2011); and in general (Miller et al., 2004a; Mishna & Bogo, 2007; Sowers-Hoag & Sandau-Beckler, 1996). Educators also recommend that designated courses on race and racism be co-taught by a racially diverse team of faculty (Abrams & Gibson, 2007, p. 157; Daniel, 2011; Garran, Aymer, Gelman, & Miller, 2015; Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004, p. 362; Miller, 2004a, p. 387), but this requires institutional commitment, and schools may be reluctant to pay multiple instructors.

Curricular considerations for cognitive, affective, and spiritual engagement. The literature on race and racism education stresses both affective and cognitive engagement. Genuine change in racial attitudes seems to require personal sharing, self-reflection and introspection, and talking and learning about emotions including guilt and frustration (Garcia & Van Soest, 1997; Garcia & Van Soest, 1999, p. 163; Gutierrez, Fredrickson, &

Soifer, 1999, p. 410; Miller et al., 2004b, p. 419; Rodenborg & Boisen, 2013, p. 572; Van Soest, 1994, p. 25). Experiential exercises are recommended for promoting affective engagement (Garcia & Melendez, 1997, p. 27; Miller et al., 2004b, p. 411). However, classes should be grounded in historical and structural analysis of race and racism and clear definitions of terms to minimize “uninformed opinions, ignorance, and unexamined prejudices” (Shine, 2011, p. 56).

There are many teaching models for race and racism; this is a very brief sample of a few. Plionis and Lewis (1996) describe consciousness raising, in which students attend a provocative lecture and discuss their thoughts and feelings in response in small racial affinity groups (p. 180). Nagda et. al. (1999), Rodenborg and Boisen (2013), and Werkmeister Rozas (2007) write about intergroup dialogues, multiracial discussion groups that incorporate experiential exercises, reflection, and dialogue. Wong (2013) proposes integrating mindfulness, finding that “for some racialized students, it was a powerful experience of decolonization” (p. 271) and for one White student the mindfulness practice helped her understand and accept her White privileges and intersecting oppressions (p. 279).

Racism within the curriculum. The insidious nature of White supremacy means that both explicit and implicit curricula in social work programs often end up reproducing rather than challenging racism. Unsurprisingly, this has been the case for a long time: Longres (1972) describes Black social workers challenging racism in social work education in 1968 (p. 36), and despite fifty years passing and many changes, social work programs often still silently hold Whiteness as standard (Loya, 2011, p. 202). In the assessment of students of color, “the social work curriculum keeps Eurocentric

hegemony alive and promotes a politics of difference that produces and reproduces social inequality” (Daniel, 2008, p. 20).

In the 1980s and 1990s race and racism content was often taught using a multicultural conceptualization which emphasizes tolerance and celebration of diversity (Jani et al., 2011, p. 293; Saleh, Anngela-Cole, and Boateng, 2011, p. 252), but which “obscures the ways in which white racism assigns values and consequences to certain kinds of differences” (Nylund, 2006, p. 40). In the 1990s and 2000s social work education often taught cultural competency, which teaches value for cultural diversity and difference (Ronnau, 1994, p. 33) and for the social worker learning about herself and the cultures and communities where she practices to provide empathic and appropriate services (Allen-Meares, 2007; Haynes & Singh, 1992; Poole, 1998; Ronnau, 1994, p. 33). But here too, the normative social worker is White (Varghese, 2013, p. 77), and White culture, White privilege, and Whiteness as a form of dominance that benefits from racial oppression go unexplored (Abrams & Gibson, 2007, p. 148; Bowie, 2003, p. 14; Jeffrey, 2005, p. 418) while the violence of structural and individual racism are underestimated (Abrams & Moio, 2009, p. 253; Pon, 2009, p. 60; Potocky, 1997, p. 319). More recently race and racism instruction has incorporated critical race theory, which “seeks to analyze, deconstruct, and transform for the better the relationship among race, racism, and power” (Abrams & Moio, 2009, p. 250). However, it is important to maintain vigilance for White supremacy, since the racialized “embodied and historical differences of students and teachers” (Redmond, 2010, p. 8) bring White supremacy into the room. Wong (2004) suggests that critical education is lacking an integrated “mind-body-

emotion-spirit engagement” and as such will not successfully engender anti-racism practice in students.

In the implicit curricula, when institutions are predominated by White students and faculty, students of color may feel isolated and tokenized in the classrooms, while White students may get the message that critical engagement with racism is optional or unimportant (Deepak, Rountree, & Scott, 2015; Dewees, 2001; Grady, Powers, Despard, & Naylor, 2011). Faculty may be uncomfortable or unwilling to address issues of race and racism as they relate to social work practice, or as they arise in the classroom itself (Vodde, 2000). In particular, White faculty often fail to engage in uncomfortable classroom discussions on race and racism if or when it arises which may imply issues of race and racism are taboo and external to usual social work practice (Daniel, 2011, p. 255; Hyde & Ruth, 2002). Teaching and studying race and racism content may not be seen as prestigious, and “the marginalization of race and racism issues may reflect the lack of interest in the topic among those who are most likely to publish in social work: European-American male social work faculty at large Research I universities” (Schiele, 2007, p. 89).

Instructors. Curricular decisions shape the form of race and racism education in social work schools, but faculty actually engage with the material and students. In teaching race and racism, faculty must manage racism in the institutions, in the curriculum, in the students and group dynamics, and within themselves. Miller, Hyde, and Ruth (2004) emphasize that teaching race and racism content is extremely challenging, and

faculty teaching such courses do so at their own peril in most institutions, which may explain why pedagogical methods have been slow to develop. Most professors ‘take on’ this content out of a commitment to social and racial justice, not because it will earn them a lot of respect or an easy semester. (p. 415)

The “perceptions, concerns, and the experiences of delivering social justice and diversity content are racialized” (Deepak et al., 2015, p. 110) and all faculty teaching this content may experience students questioning their credibility (Garcia & Melendez, 1997, p. 29; Pewewardy, 2007, p. 46). Students may perceive White faculty as uninformed, inauthentic, and illegitimate to teach about race (Miller et al., 2004b, p. 411), while they may see faculty of color may as self-interested, bitter, unprofessional, emotional, and overly political (Deepak et al., 2015; Le-Doux & Montalvo, 1999, p. 47; Phan et al., 2009, p. 328), but also legitimate to teach the material (Bronstein & Gibson, 1998). On the other hand, students may see White instructors as authoritative, objective and scholarly, and give them more benefit of the doubt (Le-Doux & Montalvo, 1999, p. 47; Phan et al, 2009, pp. 327-328; Vodde, 2000); they may see faculty of color, especially women, as “incompetent,” and give little margin for error (Gutiérrez y Muhs, Niemann, González, & Harris (Eds.), 2012).

The literature stresses that faculty teaching race and racism material need a critical consciousness about race, racism, and power (Garcia & Van Soest, 2000, p. 32; Singleton, 1994, p. 10) and must get to know their own identities, histories, relationships, values, privileges, oppressions, biases, and feelings (Garcia and Van Soest, 1997; Mildred and Zúñiga, 2004; Miller et al., 2004b, p. 417; Varghese, 2013). Instructors should also be aware of their teaching “triggers, self-doubts about anxiety and

competence, and need for student approval” (Deepak et al., 2015, p. 116). Miller et al. (2004b) suggest that understanding racial privilege is particularly critical for White instructors (p. 413).

Pedagogy. Instructors of race and racism content are making choices in planning and in the classroom about how to teach.

Classroom atmosphere. Instructors of race and racism bring social work knowledge and skills to teaching. The literature emphasizes facilitation skills, including managing group dynamics and timing, attunement to students’ multiple needs, managing intense affect and conflict, and attention to process and content (Deepak, Rountree, & Scott, 2015; Garcia & Melendez, 1997; Mishna & Bogo, 2007, p. 532; Nagda et al., 1999).

The literature on race and racism education suggests the classroom atmosphere should feel confidential and fair, open and approachable, supportive and challenging. It should promote inquiry and dialogue, support direct interactions among students, and normalize each student’s starting point while developing critical consciousness (Daniel, 2008, p. 34; Garcia & Van Soest, 1997; Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004; Phan et al, 2009; Rodenborg & Boisen, 2013). Basham (2004) draws on clinical concepts, conceptualizing the classroom as a “holding environment” where “difficult emotions and conversations are encouraged yet contained and ‘held’” (p. 300).

Several authors discuss the concept of classroom as a “safe space,” and while some see a safe space as a goal (Garcia & Van Soest, 1997; Plionis & Lewis, 1996, p. 183), others question whether talking about race and racism in a White supremacist country could ever be “safe” (Hyde & Ruth, 2002, p. 253; Mishna & Bogo, 2007, p. 535).

Holley and Steiner (2005) suggest that instructors strive for, instead of “safe” space, a “safer” space (p. 61), and Redmond (2010) calls for adoption of a “pedagogy of discomfort.” Phan et al. (2009) write that for students of color,

scarring experiences of racism and oppression can inhibit conversations just as witnessing majority group denial can prove so agonizing that it can be difficult to participate. Creating a climate that acknowledges this reality, notably from a faculty of color, encourages students to overcome this barrier. (p. 328)

To create an atmosphere that encourages engagement, the class might mutually establish group agreements for how to have hard conversations (Deepak et al., 2015, p. 114; Holley & Steiner, 2005, p.61; Miller et al., 2004b), although other authors stress that racialized power dynamics remain as students of color may follow “invisible rules about who speaks, when and for whom” to avoid being perceived as aggressive by White peers and instructors (Daniel, 2011, p. 256; see also Redmond, 2010, p. 6). Instructors are advised to state the purpose, expectations, and standards of success in the course (Garcia & Melendez, 1997, p. 31; Phan et al., 2009, p. 328). It may be useful to review social work values, the *Code of Ethics*, and students’ presumably shared commitment to fairness and equality (Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004).

Instructors do a complex dance in both assuaging student anxieties, and also normalizing discomfort, intense affect, controversy, and conflict within the course (Deepak, Rountree, & Scott, 2015; Mishna & Bogo, 2007; Rodenborg & Boisen, 2013). Instructors may state that disagreement and tension are normal and expected, and that practicing difficult conversations helps students learn and grow as social workers (Garcia and Melendez, 1999, p. 32). Shine (2011) suggests specifically encouraging White

students to “become comfortable about being uncomfortable when it comes to questions of race, racism, and privilege” (p. 58).

Use of self and modelling. The literature shows instructors’ complex use of self in teaching race and racism, especially in a critical approach that uses self-disclosure, reflexivity and transparency (Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004, p. 368; Pewewardy, 2007, p. 68). Race and racism activate intense feelings, and instructors manage their own responses, those of students, and the group as a whole (Matsushima, 1981, p. 221). An instructor may use herself to model working through an emotional and mental process about race and racism (Deepak, Rountree, & Scott, 2015; Garran, Aymer, Gelman, & Miller, 2015). The instructor also uses herself in any self-disclosure, both deliberate sharing of history or experience, and unavoidable disclosures of visible identities, often including race and gender. White instructors may disclose their Whiteness to introduce core concepts (Nylund, 2006), and may model exploration of privilege and accountability as a core social work practice (Miller et al., 2004b, p. 412; Shine, 2011, p. 57).

Teaching race and racism content to White social work students. The literature refers to student emotional responses to race and racism including anger, challenge, complaints, indifference, withdrawal, silence, fear, guilt, shame, accusations, conflict, blame, receptiveness, support, and transformation of worldview (Miller, Hyde, & Ruth, 2004; Singleton, 1994). However, although most social workers are White, and although empirical evidence shows White social workers hold racist views, and although the literature portrays the profession’s complicity with White supremacy, and although the literature describes students pushing back against race and racism education, *there seems to be little in the United States social work literature specifically about teaching*

race and racism content to White social work students. The impression left is of a phenomenon widely recognized and sometimes spoken, but less researched and often not explicitly named. It is suggestive of the operation of White normativity and White transparency in the literature on social work education on race and racism.

The conceptual framework of Whiteness discussed in this chapter, together with the empirical research and pedagogical recommendations on social work education, suggest that White social work students may have particular learning needs and patterned responses to race and racism material. There is some evidence supporting this in the social work literature, as research has found that White students from racially homogenous backgrounds may take longer, need more support, and struggle more to integrate learning on White identity and privilege (Anderson, Hayashi & Frost, 2009, p. 263; Miller et al., 2004b, p. 418; Saleh, Anngela-Cole, & Boateng, 2011, pp. 251). It seems as well that social work education on race and racism may sometimes be successful in pushing White students toward “deeper self-examination” (Miller, Hyde, & Ruth, 2004, p. 414). Mindrup, Spray, & Lamberghini-West (2011) found that social work students were more aware of White privilege than clinical psychology students (p. 31), suggesting that White social work students were engaged more than other graduate students in understanding Whiteness. However, they also found that awareness of White privilege did not always correlate with greater “multicultural knowledge,” suggesting that there are many aspects to White racial awareness, all of which need to be considered and taught in social work education. The remainder of this chapter reviews what literature there is on teaching race and racism content to White social work students.

Intense affect. Race and racism content provokes intense feelings (Garcia & Van Soest, 2000; Pewewardy, 2007, p. 28), and educators describe a pattern of emotional responses from White students. These are not always an obstacle to engagement, (Shine, 2011) and race and racism education should create space for feelings. However, intense affect may derail a class or block engagement or transformation (Harris, 1997; Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004), at times harming the instructor or other students (Phan et al, 2009).

Common feelings White students experience may include:

- Discomfort: “students experience heightened anxiety or distress when contending with issues of power, oppression, and cultural identity” (Hyde & Ruth, 2002, p. 252).
- Grief and loss: White students’ colorblindness or belief in meritocracy may be overturned (Garcia & Van Soest, 2000; Pewewardy, 2007), and education “should involve helping students grieve for the world they thought they lived in and for the person they thought they were” (Garcia & Van Soest, 1997, p. 127; see also Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004).
- Fear and anxiety: White students may fear seeming racist or ignorant, or offending the instructor or other students, or of “messing up” (Bronstein & Gibson, 1998; Deal & Hyde, 2004; Garcia & Melendez, 1997; Harris, 1997; Miller, Hyde, & Ruth, 2004; Pewewardy & Almeida, 2014; Phan et al, 2009). Students may avoid engagement because they fear alienating family and friends (Garcia & Van Soest, 1997). “Most white students have no real conception of how they feel about race other than feeling fear” (Shine, 2011, p. 56).

- Guilt and shame: Recognizing bias, privilege, and White supremacy can provoke guilt and shame (Garcia & Melendez, 1997; Harris, 1997; Miller, Hyde, & Ruth, 2004; Pewewardy & Almeida, 2014; Phan et al, 2009), and “feelings of disappointment in oneself, embarrassment, guilt and helplessness” (Plionis & Lewis, 1996, pp. 181-182).
- Anger, resentment, hostility: White students who feel forced to learn race and racism content may give instructors “a backlash of resentment” (Swank, Asada & Lott, 2001, p. 100). Students may feel content/instruction is unfair, “anti-White,” irrelevant to social work, or biased (Garcia & Melendez, 1997; Harris, 1997; Miller, Donner, & Fraser, 2004; Miller, Hyde, & Ruth, 2004; Pewewardy & Almeida, 2014; Phan et al, 2009).
- Shock and confusion: White students may feel confusion or shock at what they didn’t previously know (Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004; Miller, Donner, & Fraser, 2004; Shine, 2011).

White student struggle. The literature that mentions White students describes them as struggling with race and racism material. This is often referred to as “resistance,” although there is no clear and consistent definition of this term. For Abrams and Moio (2009), resistance means “that students tend to deny their own role in occupying privileged or more powerful social identity positions, and it may even take the form of outward anger, resentment, or an overwhelming sense of guilt” (p. 248). Resistance may become problematic when it “results in a closed posture to the material or a denial of existing problems concerning racism” (Abrams & Moio, 2009, p. 254).

Even White students interested in or willing to engage with race and racism content may struggle. Garcia and Van Soest (2000) write that “even when the opportunity to learn diversity content is welcomed, the process often proves to be more difficult and painful than expected” (p. 36). Deal and Hyde (2004) describe “students who indicate a willingness to learn the content, but fear exposure. In order to protect themselves, they are likely to be silent or to withdraw. They have a preference for ‘learning by just listening.’” (p. 75). Or students will acknowledge privilege, White supremacy, and structural racism, and feel that they have completed their work, and “accomplished” being an “ally” (Jani et al., 2011; Jeysingham, 2012; Todd, 2011).

I have chosen not to use the term resistance, because it seems to imply a one-way force or wall against race and racism education, while in the definition offered above, it seems that White students’ distress may not prevent them from learning and growing with the material even as they struggle. Educators describe responses that seem like White students struggling with material, characterized as active or passive (Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004). They may be conscious or unconscious (Deal & Hyde, 2004; Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004), and can provoke conscious or unconscious responses in other students and the instructor (Deepak, Rountree, & Scott, 2015; Shine, 2011):

- Denial: “Denial of important differences in identities and power differentials can lead to a lack of authenticity” which may “negatively affect group cohesion and adversely influence the group’s ability to work productively” (Miller, Donner, & Fraser, 2004, p. 382; see also Singleton, 1994). White students may be entrenched and “unwilling to adjust their perspective(s) on the basis of new information” (Daniel, 2011, p. 254).

- Challenge: “Educators should expect challenges from majority students who might think that White privilege does not exist” (Abrams & Gibson, 2007, pp. 156-157). “Discussions about differences can lead class members to challenge and/or distance themselves from people who are different” (Miller, Donner, & Fraser, 2004, p. 380).
- Complaint: Instructors often receive low course evaluations (Deepak, Rountree, & Scott, 2015; Garcia & Van Soest, 1999). “Sometimes white students would complain about being made to learn content about racial oppression, often taking their complaints about faculty of color to white faculty members” (Singleton, 1994, p. 213), or complaining to administration, or even creating protests, petitions, and demonstrations (Miller, Hyde, & Ruth, 2004).
- Silence and absence: The course “...has exposed significant anger, fear, guilt, and denial in some European-American Students...Many immediately fall mute” (Phan et al., 2009, p. 327). Students stay silent from fear of being seen as racist (Deal & Hyde, 2004), or fear of offending (Bronstein & Gibson, 1998), or “not being prepared, shyness, or believing the topic too personal” (Deal & Hyde, 2004, p. 81). After a confrontation, students are seen retreating, “glaring at the professor for the rest of a course without speaking” (Miller, Donner, & Fraser, 2004, p. 380).
- Disinterest: While students support multicultural education in general, most “did not see a pressing need to enhance their personal multicultural knowledge base” (Swank, Asada & Lott, 2001, p. 96). Students may deny “the relevance of diversity issues to social work practice, refusing to acknowledge any need for

self-reflection around these issues, and/or consciously or unconsciously sabotaging classroom activities that address them” (Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004, p. 360). Students may say “I’m in this program because I want to go into private practice; why do I have to study all of this stuff about poverty and Black folks?” (Singleton, 1994, p. 12).

- Blame: White students accuse other White students of racism, so that the conversation is “organized by students’ discomfort, their own suspect notions, and the wish to externalize it onto another person” (Garcia & Melendez, 1997, p. 32). “Whites often deal with their own unresolved racism by attacking other whites who are less self-aware and less ‘advanced’ in their understanding of racism” (Miller, Hyde, & Ruth, 2004, p. 416).
- Being good: “Students resist being pushed to question themselves in a way that disrupts their identity as a 'good person' and requires them to draw connections between themselves and the social inequities” (Jeffery, 2005, p. 418). Students may feel they have “done the work” by acknowledging privilege, rather than continuing to explore internalized White supremacy (Abrams & Gibson, 2007, p. 155).

Why are White students struggling? Educators offer several theories and observations about White student struggles. Rodenburg and Boisen (2013) use aversive racism theory to conceptualize White racism in social work, but state this has not been empirically researched. Abrams and Gibson (2007) understand resistance as a stage in racial identity development, but Jeysingham (2012) questions this and suggests that White struggle may actually be resistance to a reification of Whiteness (p. 679). Miller,

Donner, and Fraser (2004a) describe colorblindness (p. 379), and several authors describe cognitive dissonance resulting from White students' feeling of threat to egalitarian self-image (Garcia & Van Soest, 1997, p. 121), or sense of self as a "good" person (Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004, p. 366). White students may experience dissonance from a challenge to their view of the world as fair (Van Soest, 1996). White students may push back when they feel White people are threatened by people of color (Matsushima, 1981; Swank et al., 2001) and when they perceive White privilege education as anti-White (Abrams & Gibson, 2007). Davis, Mirick, and McQueen (2015) suggest that "white female students might feel skeptical or betrayed by white female instructors' persistent focus on issues of privilege" (p. 304; see also Miller et al., 2004b, p. 412). White students who have experienced oppression based on other identities may not see themselves as privileged (Garcia & Van Soest, 1997). White students may push back because knowledge of racism is painful and engenders hopelessness (Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004, p. 367). They may also experience unconscious or conscious anxiety or threat from a racially different professor of color (Garcia & Van Soest, 1999, p. 159; Le-Doux & Montalvo, 1999, p. 47).

Educators agree that struggling is part of development for White students in race and racism education (Hyde & Ruth, 2002, p. 243; Miller et al., 2004b, p. 418; Mishna & Bogo, 2007), and understandable in the context of a system of White supremacy (Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004, p. 367). It may be part of the development of any learner, not specific to race and racism education (Deal and Hyde, 2004), or may be a group formation process (Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004, p. 365), or a result of more typical concerns about a class, such as lack of clarity about expectations or disjunctions between teaching and

learning styles (Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004, p. 365). White students may struggle in reaction to content *and/or* process (Deal & Hyde, 2004, p. 74).

Teaching the struggle. When a White student is struggling, the instructor should assess if it is “a normal part of the learning process or group process, a sign of student engagement or disengagement, a potential source of growth and learning, or a potential problem that needs to be addressed” (Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004, p. 371; see also Miller et al., 2004a, p. 418; Mishna & Bogo, 2007; Shine, 2011). In teaching White students, educators emphasize prevention including ground rules and creating a holding environment (Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004, p. 369). When a White student’s struggle disrupts the class--what Garcia and Van Soest (1999) call a “critical incident”--educators call for working with the process “to help students move through the distress to a deeper understanding” (Garcia & Van Soest, 2000, p. 36; see also Garcia & Melendez, 1997, p. 32; Miller et al., 2004b; Mishna and Bogo, 2007). Harnessed this way, White students’ struggles may be a catalyst or energy source, leading to deeper exploration and understanding; negative outcomes include stagnation, unresolved conflict, and student disengagement (Garcia & Van Soest, 1999, pp. 156-157; Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004). Other recommendations noted by Mildred and Zúñiga (2004) include validating students’ right to resist; normalizing discomfort and conflict; changing pace; taking a “time out” or changing to smaller groups or individual reflection; allowing silence; expressing interest and care rather than judgment and blame; and referring back to core texts and concepts.

Instructors are not always able to harness student struggle, and “the educator must anticipate that various degrees of conflict and perhaps disruption to the learning process

will inevitably occur,” and that they will “miss, avoid, and mishandle some situations that arise” (Mishna & Bogo, 2007, p. 538). At times, a student may be unmoving, and

in the interest of the group, instructors can try to strike a bargain with ‘total’ resisters and ‘cut their losses’ because, as most authors agree, it is as important to know when to contain behavior and move on as it is to know how to intervene” (Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004 p. 373).

Impact on instructors. The literature widely agrees that teaching race and racism content is uniquely challenging (Abrams & Gibson, 2007, p. 156; Garcia & Van Soest, 2000, p. 37; Le-Doux & Montalvo, 1999), and also rewarding, draining, and can leave instructors feeling powerless (Deepak, Rountree, & Scott, 2015, p. 115; Garcia & Van Soest, 1999, p. 162). Instructors may move from feeling “excitement to dread to exhaustion to anger to relief to hope” over an entire course or even a single class (Shine, 2011, p. 60). Faculty may be profoundly changed by teaching this material, in development of critical consciousness, connections with other instructors and students, and deeper commitment to anti-racism; or in increased self-doubt, complicity with White supremacy in the classroom, burnout, and recoiling from teaching the content in future (Garcia & Van Soest, 2000, p. 22; Pewewardy, 2007; Singleton, 1994; Van Soest, Garcia, & Graff, 2011, p. 54). Faculty open to ongoing learning may experience less burnout (Pewewardy, 2007, p. 27). Teaching this content may do professional harm to instructors, since race and racism teachers are often evaluated poorly, and tenure-track faculty may shy away from teaching this material (Deepak et al., 2015, p. 115; Garcia & Van Soest, 1999, p. 164; Hyde & Ruth, 2002, p. 254).

White transformation? The hope is that in spite of, or through using the energy of White students' struggles, in spite of habits of Whiteness and the structural racism that pervades social work, White students will begin a transformation, leaving the course with knowledge, a critical analysis, and commitment to lifelong anti-racism practice (Miller et al., 2004b, p. 420). This kind of transformative learning may happen when students are both challenged and supported (Lee & Greene, 2003, p. 24), and even the discomfort of learning and changing brings "the positive aspects of growth--excitement, mastery, and growing intellectual rigor" (Garcia & Melendez, 1997, p. 34). Discomfort and pain may strengthen White people for anti-racism, since there may be "no better way for people to develop the skills and determination to interrupt white supremacy than to be unsettled by anger, fear, and/or guilt" (Pewewardy & Almeida, 2014, p. 231).

Shine (2011) hopes that White students leave the race and racism course with "a radical revisioning of who they are as racialized people, how racism structures every aspect of our society, how they must now work to dismantle these systems of oppression and privilege, and how this work is not only socially just but can also be personally liberating" (p. 58).

Shine proposes a theory of White student development that goes:

1. Fear
2. Bewilderment
3. Anger
4. Frustration
5. Transformation into action
6. Making peace with the never-ending journey (pp. 59-60).

The final stage of this process, “making peace with the never-ending journey,” circles back to Pewewardy’s (2007) recognition that “acknowledging White privilege and developing consciousness of how it is sustained through unquestioned assumptions requires vigilance” (p. 76). It is a lifelong effort under White supremacy, difficult and painful for White people since White privilege gives us the option of remaining oblivious and unaccountable (Pewewardy & Almeida, 2014, p. 241). Several authors reference the ambivalence of anti-racism practice for White people, as we continue to benefit from White supremacy (Deepak et al., 2015, p. 110). Even if we wish otherwise, “practice is always haunted by unresolvable histories and unintended effects” (Todd, 2011, p. 131).

Claiming the role of ally, or loudly taking leadership in teaching about White supremacy can build our “professional and personal capital,” and preserves our good White people image. This benefits our grandiosity and assuages our guilt even as we reproduce relations of dominance and reinscribe White supremacy (Pewewardy & Almeida, 2014, p. 242; Todd, 2011). White social workers must continually relinquish the White supremacy-induced urge to save, let go of the certainty of our own benevolence and innocence, stay vigilant, nourish and love ourselves and each other, and *do the work* of promoting “equity in all spheres of influence” (Pewewardy & Almeida, 2014, p. 243).

Summary

This review of the literature draws on concepts from critical Whiteness studies to conceptualize Whiteness as a system of exclusion, domination, and exploitation. I explicate the concept of internalized habits of Whiteness, a set of predispositions of how to be, act, perceive, and interact that “constitute an organism’s ongoing character” in a

stable, yet malleable structure (Sullivan, 2006, p. 23). Habits of Whiteness include privilege, transparency and normativity, emptiness, purity, individualism, and negative affects. Using the literature, this chapter shows how habits of Whiteness function to maintain White people's misunderstanding, misrepresentation, evasion, and self-deceptions around issues of race and racism. This chapter theorizes White anti-racism as needing to counter habits of Whiteness.

The second part of this chapter reviews the social work literature on teaching race and racism to social work students. I demonstrate social work's ambivalent history of complicity with and resistance to White supremacy, and review both social work education's commitment to teach anti-racism and the ways this effort actually reinforces racism. I review the literature on race and racism education, including considerations of the explicit and implicit curricula, instructors, and pedagogy.

Finally I demonstrate a gap in the social work literature, which only rarely explicitly addresses teaching race and racism content to White social work students, and almost never considers White student struggles as being related to habits of Whiteness and White supremacy. Through a review of what literature exists, I suggest that White students may have particular needs in race and racism education, and may struggle with and push back against the content. Successful race and racism education for White social work students may initiate a transformative process of lifelong commitment to social work practice that challenges White supremacy. There is little literature in social work to discuss what White student struggle and White student transformation may look like. This research project therefore investigates White student engagement with race and

racism content to address this gap in the literature, and will consider how White student engagement is related to habits of Whiteness and structures of White supremacy.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

This project investigates the following questions: How are courses on race and racism being taught in graduate social work programs? How do the instructors of these courses perceive White student engagement with course material on race and racism? What factors might affect the ways White students engage? The purposes of the research are 1) to understand ways some White MSW students engage with course material on race and racism; 2) to explore why White student may engage in these ways; 3) to understand how some race and racism courses are taught in social work programs; and 4) to suggest areas for further study on teaching race and racism material to White MSW students.

This is an exploratory, qualitative study, intended “to become familiar with a new phenomenon or to gain new insights into it” (Steinberg, 2004, p. 45). There is extensive qualitative and quantitative research and theory on Whiteness and on pedagogy for race and racism in social work. The literature recognizes White student struggles with race and racism education, especially with the concept of privilege, and also shows White student transformation and connection with long-term anti-racism through learning. However, despite widespread acknowledgment of the phenomenon, there is little research in social work specifically on how White MSW students engage with this material. The project uses qualitative, semi-structured interviews, drawing on the first-hand experience and wisdom of instructors to learn about White MSW student engagement. Seeking knowledge from experts is an exploratory method (Steinberg, 2004, p. 44), and instructors have experience of *how* they teach, *how* some White MSW students engage,

ideas about *why*, and knowledge of the *impacts*. Semi-structured interviews allow exploration, with flexibility to follow the participants' lead resulting in depth, richness, and nuance of understanding (Rubin & Babbie, 2011).

This research takes an inductive, and constructivist approach, drawing on concepts from grounded theory. I worked from the data collected through semi-structured interviews to develop a set of themes and concepts common across multiple interviews. In general my approach to interviewing and data analysis acknowledges that my participants and I are located in a social context. Our perceptions of each other and the information and opinions they offer are intrinsically shaped by identity and context (Charmaz & Bryant, 2008, p. 376).

Sample

A non-probability, purposive sample was used for this research, with participants who have taught or are currently teaching a course incorporating significant content on race and racism in a graduate social work program. There were no other criteria for inclusion (Rubin & Babbie, 2011, p. 448). I interviewed eleven participants in March, April, and May 2016.

Recruitment

This research protocol was submitted for review and approved by the Smith College School for Social Work Human Subjects Review Committee (HSR), and approved on February 18, 2016. (Appendix A). A protocol change was also submitted for review and approved by the Smith College School for Social Work Human Subjects Review Committee (HSR) on March 9, 2016 (Appendix B), in order to use a second recruitment email (Appendix C). Recruitment involved purposive sampling, in that I

recruited participants whom I believed could help answer my questions, and snowball sampling methods, in which I asked participants to connect me with other possible participants (Rubin & Babbie, 2011, pp. 446-448). Because of the short time frame I emailed instructors no more than twice: an initial contact and a brief follow-up email several weeks later.

I used the following recruitment strategies:

- 1) Emailed current and former faculty members at Smith College School for Social Work who had taught the course “Racism in the United States” (Appendix C)
- 2) My adviser, Fred Newdom, a professor at Smith College School for Social Work, forwarded my email to acquaintances at other social work programs (Appendix C), and posted on his personal Facebook page (Appendix D).
- 3) Emailed the Radical Social Workers listserv, an email list I belong to of social workers and social service providers, mostly located in the New York City area (Appendix D).
- 4) Emailed social work students involved with the Undoing Racism Internship Project, an anti-racism organizing coalition of MSW students in New York City, to which I belong (Appendix D). I requested students provide contact information for professors at their schools, or asked that they put me in touch somehow. If the student provided contact information I emailed the professor directly (Appendix C), or I waited until the student connected us via email.
- 5) Posted the request for participants on my personal Facebook account, where it was visible to “friends” around the country and in several other countries as well (Appendix D).

- 6) Posted the request for participants in the following Facebook groups: “MSW Students for Undoing Racism,” “Social Work and Social Justice,” “Social Workers for Racial Justice” and “Radical Social Work Group.” (Appendix D)
- 7) At the end of each interview, I asked participants to connect me with any other possible participants, and emailed contacts they provided (Appendix C).

Once I had made contact with potential participants we arranged an interview date and time with participants. I emailed my interview guide (Appendix E) to all participants before the interview. I also emailed the informed consent form (Appendix F) to all participants. For phone interviews (n=9) participants signed the informed consent form and emailed a digital copy to me in advance. For interviews in person (n=2) I brought a hard copy of the consent form for them to sign. At the start of each interview, I verbally reviewed the purpose, risks, and benefits of the research. I informed participants that they could choose not to answer any questions, could stop the interview at any time, and could withdraw from participation by notifying me. The interview did not begin until these steps were completed.

Ethics

Storage and retention of data. Nine interviews were audio recorded and transcribed in full. Two interviews were not recorded due to the participant’s preference, and I transcribed them immediately after based on my notes and memory. I took written notes during all interviews, which were digitized after the interviews were transcribed, and the hard copies destroyed by shredding. The recordings, transcripts, and notes were all stored as digital files in a password-protected file. The data will be stored in a password-protected file for three years, after which they will be destroyed. In the event

that materials are needed beyond the three year period, they will be kept secured until no longer needed, and then destroyed.

Confidentiality. Participants were recruited through multiple means as described above, which helps to keep confidential the identities of participants. I transcribed each interview in full, and stored the audio recording (if any), the transcript, and my notes in a password-protected file. Their name was removed and each participant was assigned a letter (Professor A, Professor B, etc.) used in the titles of the transcript, recording and notes. The key, connecting each participant with their number, is stored in a separate, password-protected file. Participants were referred to by their letter in the Findings and Discussion chapters, and any identifying information, such as institutional affiliations and geographic location is not included. The institutions are described by geographical location, such as “an MSW program in the Northeast.” I did not include references to identity not relevant to the findings. For example, if a Black participant stated White students were more resistant to her than her White colleague, I included the race.

Risks of participation. In general, the risks of this research were low and were outlined in the informed consent form and were also reviewed verbally at the start of the interview. To mitigate the risk to participants of potential professional damage should critical opinions of students or institutions be made public I used multiple recruitment strategies and removed identifying information. To mitigate the risk of difficult or distressing feelings, I explained the research in my recruitment email, provided the interview guide in advance, reviewed risks and benefits at the beginning of the interview, and informed them they could choose not to answer questions and could pause or stop at any time. Finally, I provided a few minutes at the end to check in and for participants to

offer me any suggestions or feedback. Several participants asked that I not publish certain comments or observations, and I did not include any interview material that participants asked me not to in this writeup.

Benefits of participation. Benefits of participation were outlined in the informed consent form and were also reviewed verbally at the start of the interview. A benefit was the opportunity for participants to share and reflect on their teaching experiences with an interested listener. Participants also contributed to research about how White MSW students engage with this course material, which could benefit the field and inform future pedagogy and teaching strategy.

Data Collection

This study used semi-structured qualitative interviews based on an interview guide (Appendix E) which allowed for both flexibility and depth of exploration (Rubin & Babbie, 2011, p. 466). Participants received a copy of this guide before the interview.

I conducted eleven interviews which lasted between forty-five and sixty minutes. Two interviews were conducted in person, and nine were conducted by phone. The structure of the interviews was as follows:

- 1) For the first five minutes I explained the purpose, risks, and benefits of this research. I also built rapport by telling participants about myself and by answering any questions they had.
- 2) For the next thirty-five to fifty minutes I asked questions from the interview guide. Because of the complexity and nuance of this topic, I followed the lead of the participant, asking for clarification or elaboration

as needed. At times I was more directive, to cover the elements of the guide.

- 3) For the final five to ten minutes, I provided time for feedback or suggestions. I also checked in with each, asking “how was this for you?,” recognizing that this is an emotionally-activating topic.

In general, I stayed quiet while the participant spoke, speaking to ask for clarification or to pose a question. In general I followed participants’ lead, spending more time on the topics that seemed most compelling to them.

Nine interviews were audio recorded. Seven phone interviews were recorded using the iPhone app TapeACall. Two were recorded in person using the iPhone app Voice Recorder Pro. I transcribed each interview completely. Two interviews (both by phone) were not recorded at the wish of the participant, and I transcribed them afterwards based on my notes and memory. I took written notes during each interview on in-the-moment impressions, questions, and points that seemed important or significant.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted after each interview and continued after the interviews were complete. I used a process of coding drawing on the memoing and reviewing techniques of grounded theory (Charmaz & Bryant, 2008; Rubin & Babbie, 2011). In initially transcribing each interview I was alert to important concepts and themes, and I memoed these initial impressions and my reflections. I then used the memos to develop a set of categories, which I used to re-read each transcript and set of notes from the interview again. I added to and modified the categories as needed, and went back and forth between the categories and the interview transcripts and notes until

the set of categories was stable. I then worked with the categories to find direct quotations that illustrated them from the interviews. From this point I returned to the literature to analyze how the categories do and do not align with existing theory and research.

CHAPTER IV

Findings

Instructors of Race and Racism Classes

Who are instructors? I interviewed eleven MSW instructors who teach courses specifically on race and racism, or courses with significant content on race and racism. Participants self-determined what “significant content on race and racism” meant. Participants have taught race and racism content at a total of thirteen schools of social work, located in the following regions of the United States: south (one school), midwest (one school), Great Lakes region (one school) mid-atlantic (five schools), northwest (one school), and northeast (four schools). The instructors have a cumulative total of more than seventy years of experience teaching race and racism content, with the person who has taught the longest having done so for twelve years, and the person who has taught the shortest for three semesters. All hold an MSW, and six hold a PhD as well, in social work or a related field. Three of the participants are full-time, tenure-track faculty members at social work schools, while the remaining eight are adjuncts or lecturers. Those who are adjuncts or lecturers also work doing consulting, training, clinical practice, policy work, non-profit work, or research, and many hold full-time or part-time jobs in addition to teaching. Three of the participants teach only at one school, while the remainder taught in the past or currently teach at multiple schools. Participants’ race, gender, sexuality, class, religious/spiritual, and all other identities are included in this chapter only as they relate to the content.

Why do they do this work? Participants are deeply committed to teaching race and racism content in MSW programs, for interwoven political, professional, and personal reasons. Several describe teaching this as part of their anti-racism work, since “if we’re gonna make any headway in the world, people need to be educated on racial justice” (Professor H). Professor F states that “it’s important to embrace a really deep and critical politic around race and racism in this work, and so I try to embody that in my day to day teaching.” Professor J says simply that “racism can be undone. We can unlearn it. That can be had, despite it being difficult and uncomfortable.” Professor C sees teaching race and racism as “a formal way of doing solidarity work as a White person,” and Professor K agrees that “we have a lot of responsibility as White people for what’s happening right now in this country. So that’s my main motivation, I’m in it for me! [laughs].”

Professor B spoke about the importance of understanding race and racism for good social work practice, since
good practice means engaging race and racism and other social identities and oppressions in our work. We need to be aware of ourselves and our social locations, we need to be aware of our clients and where they are sitting, standing, running, walking.

Participants described personal commitments to this material, since “I have a child of color [who] interfaces with social services. I want someone to treat me, treat my son like they’re one of theirs” (Professor B). For Professor G, growing up “experiencing what it was like to live in a home that wasn’t safe, and to kind of not trust people in general, I think was something that I could really relate to.”

Participants' goals for their students reflect the depth of their motivations for teaching. Many participants want students to develop a "commitment to lifelong learning and activism" (Professor K), and an understanding that "they need to be working on it from now, until, well, forever" (Professor H). Professor A hopes students take accountability for ongoing learning, to "go from a space of wanting me to teach them, to a space of asking questions and teaching themselves." Professor B says "I want people to be aware of themselves and others, I want them to be aware of assumptions they bring in the room and how that impacts the work they do." Professor C hopes students will be "willing to take risks, and to stretch outside of their comfort zones, and are willing to sit with discomfort." Professor F emphasizes that "I do what I can to make sure there are really really dope students of color coming out of these programs that are going to transform the profession because they want to serve their communities." With disengaged students, Professor A wants them to at minimum understand "why social work as a profession wants us to have this conversation," and Professor J hopes to get these students from "where you are plus one."

Teaching Race and Racism Content in Social Work

All participants incorporate elements of critical race theory into their teaching. Course content includes: defining race and racism; race as a social construction; interpersonal and structural racism; history of racialization and colonialism; Whiteness, White supremacy, and White fragility; racism in social work and ways social work perpetuates racism; racial identity development; intersectionality; microaggressions; internalized oppression and dominance; dynamics of working with particular racialized groups; power analysis; policy; self-reflection; and organizing and social change work.

Most participants teach courses that look broadly at privilege and oppression and use intersectionality theory to teach how race interlocks with class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, etc. These courses fall into practice, human behavior and the social environment, community organizing, and policy sequences within social work schools. Participants developed their teaching philosophies based on critical race theory, feminist theory, Black feminism, post-colonialism, anti-racist pedagogy, clinical social work practice, popular education, transformative learning, trauma-informed practice, positive development, racial identity development, and reflective and experiential learning. Please see Appendix G for a more detailed description of instructor's course content.

What are instructors doing in classes?. Participants described a wide range of intentions and endeavors for their classes, while expressing how complex and demanding it is to teach race and racism content. In this section, instructors are talking about teaching *all* students in their race and racism classes, including White students. All describe their classes and institutions as predominantly White, and several taught race and racism content to caucus group-style classes of White students only.

Connecting. Instructors try to connect with students, with the belief that these classes are “all about relationships, it’s all about building trust and having people feel that you care enough about them to even engage” (Professor K). Professor J starts with “finding a shared identity, we don’t yet enter through difference,” and commonality with women who offer “lots of comments on what I wear, how I wear it.” Professor F references pop culture, since “I’m close in age to a lot of my students, and so we’re able to relate on that level. Relevance is so important--people think policy is really dry and there's nothing to learn and it’s all gonna be boring.”

Participants build relationships between students, framing the class as a common endeavor, “a process for all of us. I don’t know everything. We are developing some shared commitments and we have a shared humanity” (Professor J). Professor F has students speak about their experiences to “facilitate a really rich environment where there's collective expertise that's able to be demonstrated and where everyone can learn from one another.” Professor E holds that “when we give a group of people an opportunity to flexibly think together, we can transform both our understandings of ourselves and also what’s in the space,” and uses class time “to have conversation and be together...[and] to have White students in particular see each other and talk to each other.” Professor K describes a class struggling with a White student who criticized immigrants, where the White student’s views shifted as classmates were “in a position to maybe be able to point out different thoughts, different facts and things. But the relationship had to come first.”

Instructors try to connect students with their own histories and identities.

Professor H wants students to consider

...what they know, what they know about others, what they’ve learned about others, how and when they learned that. I think especially that White people tend to think that there is an objective reality. They don’t know that there are other realities, other experiences, and sometimes they’re really shocked to learn that.

Professor K believes that with race and racism, “you have to live it to understand it in some way, which is why for me the emphasis on doing experiential exercises” in class.

Professor J expresses the importance of students’ connecting with, rather than ignoring

painful feelings, even when it is a “slow unravelling. They are asking, have I made the wrong career choice? If they engage with that, that’s a success.”

Finding entry points to race and racism material. Participants help students engage with race and racism material by finding entry points to the content. Professor D incorporates multiple media to open up for different learning styles, “so videos and websites, and writing and talking and small groups and big groups, and lots of different ways of getting at the material.” Professor D recalled a student who had felt inadequate and stupid, but realized through watching a video in the classroom that she actually understood the content, just not the academic language. Professor I and Professor A use fiction, poetry, and memoirs, to offer a variety of voices and develop students’ connection with the authors and characters. Professor I’s students “love the characters, they laugh, they hope that they fall in love, so they really relate to them. And then you start to see their own perceptions change.” Professor J uses “pieces of commonality” with women students to approach race and racism, starting with Black feminism and intersectionality, so that “there’s no way not to talk about race.” Professor G tries to develop White students’ personal stake in resisting White supremacy, speaking about how

White supremacy really puts White people at a disadvantage as well. Like that there may be some really nice slices of the pie that were used to getting but we’re also expected to be perfect, we’re also expected to know everything about everything. So what would it be like in general to help some of this system fall?

Participants create space for students’ multiple identities and experiences, so that students feel their whole self is allowed into the room, in order to focus on race and

racism. Professor J has students do a “life map” of their path to social work school, and connects structural oppression with individual experiences of tragedy or trauma.

Professor G uses a “social identity pie” exercise to have students share their identities, and as they share feels a “softening,” a sense that “oh, I belong here too because I'm transgender, I belong here too because I am Mormon, I belong here too.” Professor B does a “cultural share” in which students bring objects that represent racial identity and other aspects of themselves. This conveys that

you never bring in all your identities, but it's not like, OK, we're gonna talk about race and racism, you're gonna leave your gender, you're gonna leave your class, you're gonna leave your sexual orientation at the door. It allows them to bring it in and hold all of them, some of them and then say we're gonna focus on race and racism

Holding accountable, with compassion. Participants in this study describe approaching students with care for wherever they are, and with challenge to engage with the material. Like clinical work, Professor B talks about the classroom as a “holding environment,” and Professor J tries for “an environment that allows for opening.” Professor H says that “I really value each student, even the students that are feeling pretty guilty, pretty uncomfortable. I want to embrace them all. But I also want...to pull back the curtain, so they can see how things actually work.” Professor F focuses on the students of color, since as a person of color, “I don't know that it [pushing White students] is really my responsibility in the same way. I do push students of color, for sure, and I question the ways in which--or just support their process, because I want them to be running stuff.” Professor B tries to convey that even in conflict, “I can be angry

with you and still be in relationship with you. Or I can say I'm angry and don't want to talk to you today, and it doesn't mean that you're bad." Professor C is "coming from my Buddhist perspective and upbringing. And I truly hold everyone in this class with compassion. And what does a fierce and accountable compassion look like?" These instructors try to maintain emotional connection and care through students' disagreement, disconnection, and resistance, pushing them to engage.

Modelling and making use of self. Many participants described making use of self in their teaching. Professor A says that "when I teach this course on race and racism I end up sharing quite a bit, probably more so in these classes than in other classes," and while this is draining, "the few times I've tried to teach it without sharing as much of myself, and being much more academic in the tone, the point does not get across at all." Professor G uses self-disclosure to create an inclusive classroom:

I come out to them as not just White and female but as being lesbian and as being a survivor of an eating disorder, and as being temporarily able-bodied, and as being the child of alcoholic parents, and so from the very beginning the message...is "all of you are welcome here."

Instructors also use themselves and are used in involuntary ways, since "some things you can't choose to bring in [laughs] like, I'm brown-skinned, read as woman, read as feminine, so yeah" (Professor B).

White instructors described modelling engagement with Whiteness specifically for White students. Professor C says "I always name my Whiteness. I name it early, I name it often, 'as a White person I have found blah blah blah,'...as a tactic of just normalizing the fact that Whiteness is an identity." Professor C co-teaches with an

instructor of color, and “oftentimes we’re strategically like I’ll be the one to respond to the White students [laughs] saying some crazy White shit!” Professor D notes that White people are not used to

...putting yourself in a vulnerable situation where you can be hurt, where you can have pain, where you can feel other people’s pain, that’s the place that we need to be. And be willing to experience that. And so that’s another piece for the White students that I really want to teach. And the other part is, I want to show and teach and model resiliency and resistance...So I try to teach at this meta-level where we’re talking about the ideas, but also how I’m doing things is modelling those ideas too. That’s how I try. [laughs] But it doesn’t always happen

Multiple instructors use mistakes, meaning “ways I may have thought, believed or acted based on White supremacy, patriarchy, etc.” (Professor B, via email, 3/14/2016) to model for students that everyone is imperfect when it comes to talking about race.

Professor A uses intentional “mistakes,” like when “I was very very deliberately having trouble using the right terminology. I was like ‘is it Latino? is it Hispanic? what’s the right one to use?’” in order to spark a conversation. Professor A, a Black woman, also uses unintentional mistakes, like when “I confused the names of two Black students...And we unpacked that some...And so it was a good conversation and incredibly horrifying and embarrassing.” Professor B says “I use my own examples ‘stepping in it’ to illustrate how learning about race and racism is a lifelong process” (via email, 3/14/2016).

Professor I describes sharing racial identity and an experience of internalized oppression:

I always talk about how I look White, like my skin is very light. So I can fit in in a White group and no one will ever know that I have a different experience. I always tell them a story about how I totally thought this man on the plane next to me was a terrorist [laughs] because he was Middle Eastern. And I always tell them the story and then I say “I’m Middle Eastern! And I thought this!” I do that on purpose to help them feel comfortable sharing what makes them uncomfortable. Because I think they feel so bad, they feel so much shame and guilt when they realized they have biases and privilege. So I purposely try to share stories with them to help them understand that it’s OK, it’s not your fault. It’s your responsibility but it doesn’t mean that you are a bad person

Navigating their own stuff. As instructors are teaching race and racism courses, they are also dealing with their own feelings. Professor B says that,

It’s like a mantra in my head, ‘It’s not about me.’ It’s not about me, and it is about me. Because we teach about race and racism, and your body is in the room. But I try to draw on my pedagogical training. And I think part of it is also, I really care deeply about this material and teaching and doing well.

Professor H warns that “I know some people get pretty frustrated and angry with students, and I feel like, you can go home and be frustrated and angry - but not in the classroom. It’s not productive in the classroom.” Professor C feels frustration as well because the stakes are high: “I can be really self-righteous, I’m like ‘get it together! [laughs] You’re trying to be a social worker!’ And my clients tell me stories that they were fucked up by White social workers.”

Instructors live, as do students and the profession, in White supremacist systems, and internalized dominance and oppression may be activated by teaching about it.

Professor E identifies as Chicana and “benefits from White skin privilege,” and describes how White students seem to want to “claim” Professor E as White:

I think for me that's gonna probably always be my point of personal work to do. Stay clear about who I am even when that's happening. Cause I could quickly believe, and I did in a couple different early courses I taught. I could very quickly collude with my own internalized oppression, start to really believe “Oh yeah, I am totally a part of this White culture!” and it's actually not true. But it can get generated really quickly, very very quickly in a space that's White-dominated.

Professor K describes the allure of stopping teaching, since, “If you're doing other things it's very easy to be White and take your attention away from this, because that's the norm.”

Teaching this material is both draining and stimulating. Professor C says that “students want a lot from us, is how it feels...it makes me feel bad and then I feel like I have to sort of disconnect a little bit. I'm like, we're adjuncts. We do this during our work hours.” Professor A finds that teaching introductory courses, “as a Black queer woman, gets tiring. Because they are so performative.” On the other hand, teaching an advanced elective,

It's a completely different level of conversation - people have done a different level of work by the time they were allowed to take that class. So those courses, no problem. I don't get tired from those courses, I get stimulated.

Professor C adds that “I don’t think that there’s an easy answer, like ‘teaching is better than community organizing,’ I don’t think it’s that simple, but I guess I just do wonder about what would I have room for if this wasn’t taking up this space for me?”

When they go well, Professor A says that “what I love about teaching these courses is that it gives me hope for everything.” Professor D, too, says that “I get really excited about the work when I see people developing their own ideas and their own ways of coming to understanding,” but also describes the teaching work as “tiresome” and discouraging. Professor B has seen race and racism education “change the kind of practitioner they are, it changes how they raise their children or where they live, so. So, I so believe in this work. And it really inspires me.”

Learning. Instructors managing all of this in a classroom do a lot of learning, and this motivates them to keep doing this work. Professor G describes a years-long process of coming to see racism as a different, more core type of oppression than others in the United States. Being challenged by a co-instructor, a Black man “probably opened a door in me to thinking about it that no one had ever confronted me on that before, on there being a hierarchy of oppression in some ways,” and continuing to teach the material made it so that “I was open to seeing what was already there, and that’s really all that was happening. It’s that, if you want to face the truth, the truth is everywhere.” Professor B says that “I learn from students...that students’ knowledge and experiences with race, racism and White supremacy that they bring in the room helps me grow and that is why I have kept on teaching” (via email, 3/14/2016). For Professor C, “I also learn a tremendous amount. I think it makes me a better person, just a better human. And it’s also really exhausting, and every year I’m like can I do this again?” Also, for Professor

C “some of the learning is around my own limitations and that I’m not gonna magically inspire everyone or make everyone feel like they want to do this work.”

Instructors’ thoughts on institutions and faculty

Participants in this research see that their teaching is impacted by the institutions where they teach, and by fellow faculty members. Professor A contrasts two schools, saying that at one northeast school for social work,

there was really no priming of students at all there. And what I found challenging there was that students were really really frightened. So while teaching at [second northeast school for social work] had its own unique challenges teaching the course at [first northeast school for social work] was significantly harder.

Students really have no consistent groundwork at all. There was not a consistent message conveyed by the school around being an expectation of graduation. Students’ engagement was impacted by the school’s messaging and culture around the course.

Participants in this research see their schools as not being fully engaged with anti-racism throughout their various offices and programs. Professor F says that schools committed to anti-racism should think about

...from recruitment to admissions to field placement to core curriculum, to faculty etc, like how to shift an entire institution, that institution being the school, around the question of what does upending White supremacy in this field look like. From a practice perspective, like “who do we admit? How much money do we give them to come here? What does real access look like? What’s the core curriculum focusing on?” Not just problematizing but really thinking about solutions. I think

that's the plan, we have to be able to present an alternative. And when schools say "oh we're already doing this" it's like "no you're not! [laughs] you're totally not! Because this school does not look anything like the community that you're serving or the community that we're even situated in.

Professor C says that "I mean it should be a part of all admissions to get into social work, without a doubt. Even if it's just a question of, like, what is social justice in the broadest sense. And then someone needs to read their answers. But I think the admissions process is where a lot of problems are."

Professor E sees slow moving university bureaucracies and the short time frame of a social work degree as barriers to change, causing "reinvention of the wheel every two years." Professor E also notes that "in an institution like a university setting you're continually asked to continue working with people who hold positions of power who are not insightful and are not changing." This results in "the same conversation over and over again. And it's exhausting" and harmful to students and faculty of color (Professor E). Professor F agrees that schools "make a lot of excuses in this field for why they can't do stuff. But people are doing it regardless, but it's not being embraced writ large by the field or by the institutions that hold power."

Participants observed that many of the instructors on race and racism content are adjuncts and lecturers, which has both disadvantages and benefits. Adjuncts "don't really have the authority to change the material" (Professor D) to reflect their style or experiences, and are paid for time teaching, not for extensive out-of-class planning, preparation, and student support work (Professor C). Professor E says

I spend more time talking about the work and planning for the class and troubleshooting and intervening and writing responses about professional comportment in the classroom than I do giving face to face time with students. So that's the symptom, though, that's not the problem, that's a symptom of the capitalist culture of learning and the irony is that we're talking about structural oppression [laughs].

On the other hand, adjuncts may have more flexibility or freedom. When a student threatened to complain to administration, Professor C felt "I have a full time job, so that's fine. You can go talk to the dean, and it'll be a bummer if I don't do this anymore."

Professor F says that "I kind of say straight up in my classes that I teach social work from an anti-racist frame and if that doesn't vibe with folks then they should find a different professor [laughs]. And I can say that because I'm an adjunct and it doesn't matter."

Several instructors note that many White social work faculty are not engaging with issues of race and racism. Professor E trains social work faculty on race and racism, and says that in the training many White faculty are visibly uncomfortable, and some disclose that they've "never felt comfortable talking about or interrupting racism in their classroom." Professor F says that "there aren't a lot of White faculty that weren't, at least to me weren't really visibly pushing White students to do that deeper work." Professor F adds that

I implore White faculty to do that work, because they aren't! They certainly aren't visible doing that work. You know, all the people who are pushing, questioning some of the more origin types of questions that I pose for our field, and that other faculty are posing, they're mostly folks of color

What happens with White students in these classes?

White student engagement. Participants in this study see teaching race and racism content to White students as presenting particular challenges. For Professor H, the primary question for White students is “can you open yourself to hear other experiences than yours, other people’s experiences?” Professor C frames the class to students as “an opening for growth and you can either decide to sit in the fire and see what happens and what transformation can occur, or you can shut it down and you’ll stay where you are.” White students who do open themselves to other experiences, and to transformation, and to sit in the fire are conceptualized here as “doing the work” of engaging with Whiteness, while White students who are closed off from transformation or from sitting in the fire are conceptualized here as not “doing the work.” Based on the observations of instructors, I have developed four categories of White student engagement with race and racism material: 1) those who are doing the work; 2) those who are not doing the work because they are occupied with seeming non-racist; 3) those who are not doing the work because they are tuning out; and 4) those who are not doing the work and have intense affect or are pushing back against the instructor and course.

Instructors note that there are many things White students don’t know about race and racism, meaning that for Professor K, “I think there’s remedial work that needs to be done for some White students coming in.” Professor H notes what is not taught in school, namely that “most people, especially if you went to public school, you haven’t learned the history of the U.S. as it actually happened,” but rather a sanitized and White supremacist version of history. White students often don’t understand racialized power structures or privilege, and Professor I says “they don’t realize that they actually do have

prejudice. They have been raised to think that they are on the right side of racism.” Students may get stuck in shock at what they don’t know, or become overwhelmed by race and racism content and shut down their learning. Professor I also notes that White students can’t see and don’t understand privilege, and that they get to the “end of the semester and they’re still like ‘I don’t think I’d have a whole lot to lose, I think I’d gain everything because we’d have equality!’” Professor E sees White students struggle with “this false idea that they don’t have culture and they don’t have identity,” creating a lack of belonging and rootedness, and producing some of the pushback in Professor E’s classes. Professor I also observes that housing segregation means that White students “do not get a lot of exposure to the communities [of color] unless they sought that out,” and White students may not connect with race and racism content as a result.

On the whole, White students tend to struggle with and are challenged by course content on Whiteness and structural racism. Professor J says that White students “haven’t done this [talked about race and racism], it’s not something they think about and talk about,” and many don’t know how. Professor E notices that White students avoid feelings: “they want to stay in their heads about it and theorize and critically analyze language use and kind of keep a distance from the actual relational or somatic or emotional component of it.” White students enter the classes from many backgrounds, with differing knowledge of race and racism, and with a range of levels of willingness to dig into the material or to be transformed by it. These complex dynamics may all show up in the same class. Professor D has experienced

...everything from, what you might imagine, incredible resistance, to the White student who comes in who knows everything, they’ve done all the social justice

training in the world and they could teach the class, to someone in the middle who's very transformed by the class. Starts to see things in a different way, that they've never really understood things before. And usually I have all of those, those kinds of experiences in the same class together. Which, again, makes the classes frequently pretty challenging to teach

Professor A thinks that overall a lot of White students are very confused by race and racism material:

I think the majority are--if I sat down and took out a list of all my classes, I think it would be the minority of them that would have a strong extreme element to it. I would say the majority there was mainly a lot of fear and anxiety and confusion. And when we do this historical piece of the course, a lot of surprise, like "how could I not have known this? I don't understand, why am I just learning this now?" And that seemed to be a consistent theme in all of the classes.

Professor C estimates that

out of twenty students, five to ten are probably gonna be great, five are gonna be good enough, and then five I'm like, "What the fuck are you doing? I don't want you to work with one of my clients!" And even though fifteen of those students again are great to find, those five students break my heart, and make me so enraged. I have a mentor who's done a lot of anti-oppressive work, and I talk with her about this fairly often. She's been like, "Yeah you have to know whether or not you can really compassionately hold White folks." It's like, they're not gonna grow from hating any of them.

What doing the work looks like. Instructors have found that some White students come to courses on race and racism, “not a lot but a significant number of them, ready to do the work” (Professor J). White students who are doing the work may feel and show hesitation or confusion or intense feelings, but there is an overarching openness to the material and to changes it may produce. They are engaging critically with the material, making connections between personal and the structural elements of racism, and reflecting on the meaning of this material in their lives. Professor C says

more and more that every year there are some students who are so thirsty for this. And that’s a really beautiful thing. Some of those students are ones who I think maybe are bringing some analysis. Sometimes it’s students where maybe they’ve had these emotions without knowing, almost an unconscious feeling about “oppression! What’s this about? What is it?” But no language, and I think a sense of deep gratitude for like, “Finally I have a way to talk to my family about these things,” or “I have a way to understand what’s happening.” And some students who, I remember one time we had a student who at the start of the class pretty much said “I had not realized I was White” and I was quite concerned about how she was gonna do. And by the end of it she’d made tremendous growth and had really, she just had grown a ton.

Professor E describes a current class as “a really joyous great experience” in which White students are saying “I really appreciate this class because it's making me think about things that are really painful and I know this is gonna benefit me as a practitioner, I appreciate how patient you’re being,” and “I really like the style, I feel like I can show up

to class more myself and there's nobody here penalizing me for that.” Overall “their guard is up a lot less than what I'm used to.”

Instructors witness White students in moments of realization within the class and after it ends. Professor B says that “I see in the moment in terms of ‘ah has!’ people have about their own lives or connections they make, or meaning-making about their identity.” Professor I sees these moments as part of “a process, it’s a slow, almost a slow chipping away. Every week they read something else and they’re like ‘oh my gosh, I didn’t realize.” Students follow up with instructors after the course ends to affirm ongoing impact. “I have several that always come back to me and talk about how important this class was for them. And some of them I see going on and being activists in different ways, bringing it, continuing to learn” (Professor K). Professor A says “I still occasionally get an email from a White student who’s like ‘Oh my gosh, this just happened to me, I just got this,’ and I’m like ‘great!’ So, I do get these random, out of nowhere emails from White students, and that’s really nice when they have that ‘ah ha’ moment.”

These moments of realization or connection may come after (or precede) pushback or disengagement from the course material as well. Professor H recalls seeing a White student “break down” over a realization that White privilege had allowed them to be silent in the class until that point. Professor E says that

I do get a lot of emails from students saying “Hey, I know I acted this way in your class, and now it’s been a year and I’m really sorry I did that” [laughs] so I get some big apologies, actually that are really interesting. “I'm really sorry I wrote what I wrote in your evaluation. I now realize that was me being really, really

self-preserving, and here's what happened this year in my practice, and it woke me up to the fact that I need to deal with this.

Students doing the work face challenges from socialization in a system that throws up barriers to White people doing the work. Professor H notes that for White people, recognition of Whiteness and White supremacy is "hard to hold onto," and recalls a student who'd taken a class on race and racism, and was engaged with the material, who said it was "like a language she learned in the previous class, the terms and everything. But if she's not using it she forgets it. That it all came back and she can speak the language and do the analysis but not when the class is over, she forgets it."

Professor C describes White women who

Are, I think, really taking up this work, in a very genuine way, like at whatever level they're at but really trying to do it genuinely, I've seen a lot of [pause] what's the word I'm looking for? Hesitancy. Again in naming anything or expressing a different of opinion, I think that's something I actually often have seen as a really positive marker to me throughout the class development, students in the class developing their voice and their willingness to disagree with each other. And I think it, I mean it does make me sad sort of how timid people are, and I don't mean timid like "Oh, you should be yelling at each other," at all, I don't think that's very helpful for learning, but this work is life and death. And people are so scared of hurting each other's feelings or having their feelings hurt, and that in and of itself is such a privilege. To be so worried about feelings. Versus, like, physical safety.

What it looks like to not do the work: Seeming non-racist. According to participants, some White students in courses on race and racism seem to be looking at the material, but are not doing ongoing, internal and reflective work. White students who've learned about race and racism may come into the class feeling they "already know it." Professor H notes that "occasionally there may be someone who comes in with a really sophisticated analysis. But it's not just about the didactic; it's about interacting with people - which is not always pleasant." Having previously learned race and racism content does not mean the student knows how to do anti-racism social work practice. Professor B has had multiple White students try to get out of a required race and racism by claiming they were too knowledgeable or advanced, which is

...always a cue that people need to do more work when they say they've done the work. I've been doing the work; I'm a person of color. The work is never done. There's so much to learn, and it's up to you as a learner, if you don't feel pushed, to figure out how you can push yourself.

Claiming to have already *done* the work, in this case, is a way of evading responsibility for *continuing* to figure out what more work there is to do, and then actually doing it.

Professor K also notes that White people who have had exposure to race and racism content "can also use it as a way to feel superior to other White people. And that actually contributes to brokenness and contributes to what we've got going on right now." White students may avoid other White students who don't say the "right" things about race and racism: "I think it's easy for White students to write that person off. Rather than engage in, like 'Yeah, that's stuff I've thought about too!' Or 'Yeah, when I was growing up I was told that.' We tend to write that person off." (Professor K)

White students may be very eager in a race and racism course to demonstrate their knowledge. Professor G describes students who “suffer from a kind of foot-in-mouth disease and kind of overshare all the time,” who are “very often White, and very often used to getting her hand called on when she raises it.” These White students may get in the way of other students in the class speaking. Professor G also describes “real firebrands in my class, who are...so eager to be in the fray to end racism that they end up needing to learn how to pull back and not defend all the time or speak up for, or Whitesplain...for students of color in the class.” Professor A describes students who are “so hyped up by the time they got to the class that it shut some white students down, whereas other white students were eager to demonstrate how they were not white racists in the class and were just sort of bleeding to get into the class to demonstrate that that didn't apply to them.”

Some White students may be saying the “right thing” in a race and racism class but not deeply engaging with the material. Professor C describes the “ally fail,” where “I’ve learned the vocabulary of an ally, and I’ve learned to use all these fancy words, but I actually didn’t practice it.” White students may also be very cautious, nice, and polite in a race and racism course. Many of Professor I’s White students “don't actually think about anything. They just say all these really nice things that social workers say about race,” and “all these wonderful things about equity.” Professor I notes that students’ comments in class are very different their weekly reading responses: “the bullet points are much more honest. And they’ll say ‘I always thought Black people were this way’ or ‘I don't think certain people should get certain benefits.’ Like they’ll say that in their bullet points but they won’t say that in class ever.”

Professor A describes White students being surprised sometimes because I was Black, and I would teach the class and I would say things very explicitly. They were sometimes thrown off by that. But it felt like everybody was being so polite and so restrained that if I didn't say things directly we never would get anywhere with conversations.

These White students may recognize the existence of racism, but they are not delving into doing the messy, ugly, painful work.

What it looks like to not do the work: just getting through the class, shutting down. Some White students may be simply trying to get through the race and racism class and leave it behind. Professor G feels that “it’s hard for them to really remain clueless, but they kind of get to the end of the class and are like ‘all right that was tough and challenging, and let’s go on to Clinical Practice with Groups.’” Professor C describes White students who are “somewhat open to it but also maybe more interested in rules on ‘how to not fuck up.’” These students may be afraid of being seen as racist and don't want to do harm, but don't want to do the deeper work of

how are you benefitting? That’s a really difficult place for a lot of White students. Like they can get to the “I can see,” and we talk about this in the class all the time, it’s really comfortable in our dominant identities...It’s a lot easier for us to talk about how these people over here who are oppressed, or don't have my privileges, but when you start talking about, so what do I have that I don’t deserve? What are the assumptions that people make about me being naturally smarter because English is my first language? Or because of my class upbringing I have a vocabulary that’s considered more impressive. When we start to think

about those things, I think that's where some White students start to jump ship a little bit more [laughs] and just like disconnect in class, zone out, or like just do whatever they might want to not be present to it.

These White students may be engaging with the class content on structural oppression, but not recognizing privilege or ways they benefit from White supremacy.

Some White students who are just trying to get through the class may sit in silence. Instructors have a hard time understanding what is happening with silent students, and Professor G wonders: "Are you saying la la la in your mind and doing grocery lists so you don't have to hear this or take this in? Or are you taking it in and you just happen to be someone who is more of a passive learner?" Some White students may engage with the material in written work, but not during class discussions, and Professor B says "I think for a lot of students they're just trying to make sense of it. They want to make sense of it in a place where they don't feel [pause]. Like it's individual, private. Not private, but that's where journals are useful." Some White students "think they don't know anything about race, don't have anything to say. They just sit silently in class" (Professor H). Others may be silent to avoid difficult or painful engagement. Professor E describes a student

...right now who's shutting down, he's not participating in class, he's sad a lot, he's telling me he doesn't know what to do with himself. He's saying 'please let me not speak up in class because I don't know what to say this week' So he's asking for permission to check out.

Professor G has come to see that students make choices that instructors often can't influence: "I really can't arouse passion and rage and concern in students who, for

whatever reason, are not, are choosing not to go there.” Professor C, too, recognizes this, that “there are choices people make as students about whether or not to engage, and I sometimes have influence on that and sometimes I don’t know how to influence it.” But when White students are not doing the work it is often frustrating and upsetting for instructors who care deeply about this material and about instilling in students a sense of urgency and commitment to anti-racism work. Professor J has students listen to a podcast about school segregation and racial inequality in education, and wonders “how can you listen to that and not give a damn? You’re in the wrong profession.”

What it looks like to not do the work: Pushing back and intense affect. Some students may push back more intensely against a professor or the material they are teaching. Professor B describes what it looks like when White students aren’t doing the work:

It could be vocal in terms of pushing back, or challenging the reading or what you know. It could be less overt and covert - maybe it’s conscious or unconscious. Eye rolling, arms crossed, side conversations, no affect, resistance in papers, like difficulty moving beyond marginalized identities to understand the relationship between one’s racial identity and their gender or other identities.

Professor H teaches a course on oppression more broadly, and some White students may express “resistance to why do we spend so much time talking about race?” White students may reject content about Whiteness, saying “I don’t agree with this course, I don’t think I should have to learn about this, I came here to this class to learn about people of color” (Professor E). They may feel a “real need to express how much they do not agree with the power analysis or really challenging it and saying that they

don't really understand why we're looking at this, it seems disconnected from the practice” (Professor E). White students may also

...try to derail conversations, try to talk about reverse, well not necessarily reverse racism, they know that's a little too obvious, but the ways in which now, “White people have to be so sensitive to things, isn't that horrible?” Or “I had somebody who was mean, a person of color who was mean to me when I was a kid so I understand what racism is. A lot of oversimplification, a lot of speaking for everyone kinds of things” (Professor C).

Professor A describes one student who was utterly unwilling to change her conservative viewpoint on race and racism. “I mean she drove me crazy, but she could take the course material and use it to make a point about her conservative position in an incredibly salient way. More than any student I have ever ever worked with.” The student left the course with her position unchanged, but Professor A was impressed with and somewhat horrified by her ability to engage the material and use it to support her positions. Professor E also has experienced many White students “who really wanna come in as race blind and that's their stance, and they're not moving from it. So they're not really willing to be transformed by the learning.”

Pushing back may be directed at the instructor. Professor H says students “have hated me together. I'm the messenger. Sometimes they hate the assignments, they hate the readings. People are not always happy with me. But that's OK, it's all grist for the mill.” Professor E describes White students at a private social work school in the Northeast as condescending,

...wanting to tell me what they think I should have done differently. Questioning, why didn't we talk about this reading? We should have talked about it. Really, not coming from a place of gentle kind of "Hey, I was excited to talk about this reading, I brought some questions, is it ok if we make time for that?" Like, that's a strategy. It's more like "you're not doing your job, and I see that you're not doing your job" and I've had some pretty threatening comments made about "Well, you know, we might need to talk to people about that." In this way that kind of automatically seeks a position of power, not a position of trying to inform a collective process

Professor E also describes White students criticizing Professor E's way of being in the classroom. In general Professor E tells students to "show up messy, it's OK. There's nothing about us that says we have to show up perfect," but finds that "White students have big reactions to that. Because they are paying for professional faculty to teach them, they're not paying for someone who is transparent and maybe tired or frustrated too." Professor E says that White students often want a "highly structured environment where they can know that what they're doing is good or right, and if they can't tell that then they immediately get scared and lash out as though I'm setting them up for failure."

White students may express intense feelings in a race and racism course, which may disrupt the class or block the students' engagement. Professor G describes a class where

...almost the entire class was White, and there was more White fragility and White protectiveness and White tantrums around "I'm obese and so I know what

it's like to be Black," literally. "I'm Jewish, I know what it's like to be Black, I'm not White." And when that got confronted, tears, like hysterical tears. And then also an enormous amount of anger, and some really really really really passive aggressive...very very very aggressive disrespectful stuff.

Professor B describes once "I literally had a student yell at me. And that, like, unnerved me. It was a shocking moment. That was one of those moments where I had to look at my--like, when someone yells at you it's stunning...And later on she apologized, but it just stunned me, changed my way of being with this particular student."

White students may also push back in race and racism courses through administrative avenues including course evaluations and complaints. Professor C describes disparate evaluations, where "sometimes the class is saying 'this is the best class I ever took!' And then certain White male students who've been like '[Professor C] is unfit to be a teacher,' threatening to report me for being biased against White people."

Professor D has students complete self-evaluations, and found that

...students tended to rank themselves as really working hard and doing the work and making progress. And yet ranking the professors as lower than they ranked themselves. And so I thought that was a really interesting discrepancy, right, because, what it's saying is that, basically that students got this material all by themselves [laughs].

White students push back by discounting the professor's work, threatening to get them in trouble, and accusing them of being "inappropriate and unprofessional" in evaluations.

Even so, some White students will who push back will change over time.

Professor E recalled,

I fought really hard last year with a couple White male students to really keep them engaged, and it worked. One of them emailed me six months later to say “I really appreciate everything you did” which I didn't expect! But I really do believe that everyone deserves a place in this conversation.

What patterns might there be?

Intersectionality. Instructors note several patterns of White student engagement with race and racism material linked with students’ intersectional identities, background, and knowledge coming into the course. Professor D describes students who vocalize pushback in class:

Sometimes they’re men, but I’ve, they’re almost always, almost always people who’ve had class privilege. A lot of times they’ve been women, they’re almost never queer. Not, you know, not, I’ve never had a student like that who I’ve seen, who has had a visible disability, they have disabilities I don't know about. So they tend to be pretty, I think come in with a fairly privileged experience - which protects them in some ways, to be able to voice the resistance. But then also makes them, like a target in a lot of ways.

Professor E, too, finds that “the White male privilege, White privilege, class privilege, kind of a fatal issue when it comes to how I need to prepare myself for teaching.”

Professor E, on the other hand, also describes White students doing the work, critically engaging with the material and each other:

They're mostly raised-poor working class White folks...they're a lot from the midwest and the south, so they have other identities that I think are actually giving them a leg up. A lot of them are identified queer, a lot of them are mothers,

so they're thinking about their children's lives. And they reflect a lot on what they want for their children. So there's a way that they're bringing something to the discussion that's about thinking forward. Almost like "I'm gonna have to push myself because I'm a parent, and what I do now is gonna matter in the future" so that's a new lens on this too that I hadn't really experienced so much of before." These White students' intersectional identities help them open to material on race and racism. In general, Professor J has found that students with "identities that have been marginalized," or who have experienced trauma, may be more open to race and racism content.

White student engagement and relationships with people of color. White students who've had relationships with and lived close to people of color may be more open to race and racism material than those who have mostly been with other White people. Professor A says that "Poor White students who grew up in majority Latino or African American or Asian spaces were way more open to the material than White students who hadn't grown up in those areas." Professor A spoke about a

...conversation with a student yesterday who was raised in South Texas and lived in a majority Mexican town on the border. And she--there's a lot of things that she gets and her peers just don't. And, you know, she doesn't talk about it very openly but it certainly informs a massive part of her perspective and experience. And I wish there were just more narratives like that, out there, of White students who've been in majority people of color spaces, or can draw on that experience to explain some of the concepts.

Professor B emphasizes the importance of friendships and relationships across racial lines. White students who only interact with people of color in clinical social work practice, “where they’re at their worst place, that’s such a dehumanizing experience. You never get to go hang out with them and eat food, so that to me it’s about doing the work, but it’s also about human relationships.” Professor B warns, though, about the urge to find “a Black friend” that White students encountering race and racism content may feel.

White student engagement and exposure to race and racism material.

Participants in this research widely agree that White students come into classes with varying knowledge about race and racism. Professor E understands this in terms of identity development,

So some people it's their first point of contact, they've never talked about race and racism before. And some White students are coming in with years of training, and education, and they come from progressive households where their parents talked to them about being White, or they have other identities, like their class background, their religious background, that give them a leg up in the dialogue. So it's balancing all of that, and I just think that sometimes that balance is easy to strike, and sometimes it's really challenging.

Professor D agrees that having students with very different understandings in the same class is extremely challenging, and wonders “Why is there not a way to show some, to have our students show some understanding of this material, and have different levels of this class?”

Instructors find White students with awareness of race and racism content very helpful and even necessary to teaching. Professor A describes a handful of White

students in most classes “who have either prior to this class, or intuitively understand how to engage the theoretical frameworks and apply them to the practical everyday experiences of understanding their privilege of Whiteness.” These students “play a massive role in terms of leadership. If there was a way to give the students extra credit for essentially co-teaching the course, I would appreciate it,” and they are “almost necessary for a successful class.” Professor C says that “some people have been on this journey a long time, which is so helpful [laughs] to have some of those folks with different levels of woke-ness, it’s appreciated! [laughs]”

On the other hand, some White students with previous knowledge of race and racism content use it to avoid doing the work. Professor B sees previous race and racism knowledge or experience as different from race and racism education for social work practice. Professor B says “when people are like ‘I’ve already done this work’ I’m always like ‘oh you got a Masters already in social work?’ Because it’s not about just race and racism, it’s about race and racism in terms of clinical practice.” Professor H stresses that “this work is lifelong. There’s always more to read, always more to learn.”

Professor E describes almost a holding of breath at the start of a race and racism class, waiting to see where students are coming from and how they will relate to each other:

There are some students who are just coming in at a 400 level, and as a faculty I’m just praying that they can hang with it long enough to be able to gently guide another student, so that that work isn’t just on me. And then there’s students coming in, they’re terrified, it’s their first time, their defenses are up. And again, praying that they can look around the room and see that their peers are not their

enemies in that dynamic, that they're actually there to support each other and they're open to that.

Professor K, too, acknowledges that “it’s very hard for both students who are White who have done more of this material and work to sit patiently with that, even though they need to, even though that’s kind of their job to do that.”

How do White students relate?.

How do White students relate to instructors?. Instructors see connections between their identities and White students engagement. Several White instructors commented that White students don’t overtly challenge them as they do challenge instructors of color. Professor K says “There’s a hell of a lot more vulnerability sometimes for the instructors of color. I don't think they get enough support and I think White students can really minimize them and challenge them in ways that they might not with me.” Professor I says, “I get good course evaluations. I know that if I were a minority faculty member my evaluations would not be as good.” Professor I has “friends who have stopped teaching this class because they are faculty of color and they're tired of having bad evaluations. And they say the students are more combative with them, they just, they don't, they’re done teaching it.”

Several instructors of color commented on how their racial identity and presentation may be experienced by students as comforting or threatening. Professor F says that evaluations are generally positive and “I think about why that is. Like, is it me? Is it that I'm [pause], as a South Asian person am I not threatening them in a particular way?” Professor B makes use of racial identity as a South Asian woman to question White students’ conceptions of race as a Black/White dichotomy. “As a South Asian

woman...I might say to students, what are your assumptions about who is qualified, and who can talk about race, and who has an authentic racial experience?" Professor E identifies as Chicana and mixed, and describes

...thinking about what it means for a group of White students to be taught by someone who also benefits from White skin privilege, yet also I have a very strong cultural heritage and community that is not White. So I think a part of what I've noticed to be a struggle with some students is that there's a moment, where there's a way that they see me as someone who "gets" them, will probably take care of them, and for lack of a better word, is on their side. And that's just an initial meeting; these are the first two weeks of class. I get a lot of White women in particular, so excited to be in my class, very sweet, but genuine feedback. Like "Yay I'm so happy to be here with you!" And then there's this turning point, as I'm sharing more of my mind or I talk about my lived experience, or I start to really challenge people. Even if it's a gentle challenge, as I start to actually deconstruct there's a moment where people feel like they are abandoned. There's a moment of, like, "You have duped me. You have tricked me, you have made me comfortable" and it's, "You have done something to me that I don't agree with, which is you made me feel like I could be myself here and now you're telling me I need to change." And that's not actually what I'm doing, but I think it's the way that it's experienced. And so I struggle with the false safety that I bring to a conversation.

Professor E also describes a relaxed classroom style and how “it’s read in the academy as unprofessional, it could be read as lax. It’s read as not rigid, and it’s also read as not White, truthfully,” which makes White students uncomfortable.

White instructors described ways in which, while co-teaching with an instructor of color, they may be criticized or challenged more than their co-instructor. In a class where there was a lot of pushing back and White fragility, Professor G wonders if students were aiming challenge and critique at her because of “how my co-teacher and I divided the work. He was much much more of a hard lecturer, and he was also a man of color, and so I was in some ways maybe an easy target.” Professor D says that White students may resist and distance themselves from White instructors “simply because of the way that it’s really hard for White students to hold the mirror of a White person saying all these things about race and racism, and saying ‘hey, we’re racist!’”

Professor C, who is White and teaches with a Black co-instructor, describes a complex set of dynamics with their White students. White students seem to assume that Professor C is the senior faculty member and has a heavier hand in grading, and that the co-instructor is junior faculty, even though the co-instructor has a PhD and Professor C does not. Professor C describes White students accusing her of bias, stipulating that while “[Professor C] clearly had a bias against me, [co-instructor] was perfectly professional and I have no criticisms of her.” Professor C interprets this as the student’s attempt to reassure herself that “if the White person is threatening to me in some way, threatening my racial identity, then if I really like the Black professor, and I think the Black professor is so nice and everything, then I still must not be racist.”

Professor C and several other professors describe White students looking to instructors of color for caretaking and protection. In her class, Professor C describes a White male student being upset by an article about White male privilege, and after class going to talk with Professor C's co-instructor about it. When Professor C approached to join the discussion, "he got really upset, kind of almost started crying, got choked up, and was like 'I was talking to [co-instructor], I was not trying to talk to you!' and was really upset." Professor C understands this situation as one where "he wanted to talk to her and have her assuage his upsetness as a White man." Professor J, who is Afro-Latina, describes a White student who made emotional demands to engage and connect in and outside of class, perhaps thinking "There's this woman I think is dynamic, I want to learn from her, I want to enter into a particular type of relationship with her." This student expresses colorblind views, and seemed to assume Professor J would give the desired attention. Professor E, too, who is Chicana describes White students requesting "to meet after class, and hear them out and people really wanting to share their process, people really being angry at my [White] co-instructor. Like really angry. And I was like 'wow this is really interesting' because we're not doing that much differently."

How do White students relate to other students? Instructors described emergent group dynamics in race and racism courses that may be hard to predict or modify.

Professor D describes "a push-pull that happens, that really is about kind of, I'm not sure we can, I'm not sure we as a group can hold what this person is telling us." There is a sense of group movement, and as the instructor, "at times it's like 'oh yeah, yeah, we're with you, we're with you.' And then it's like 'no, no, we're not with you!' And it really does feel like a group, not just an individual." Professor D has noticed individuals get

caught up in the group dynamic, and don't recognize complicity with White supremacy in the classroom. "It's the rare student who is able to kind of push against that and say 'hey!' Like 'wait a minute! Let's think about this!' And that doesn't always happen." At times Professor D sees a single student, often with multiple privileges, who will "voice the resistance for the entire class." This student will often

...end up being the catalyst for a lot of conflict, and I think they feel isolated, because other students won't support them. But they know that other students do support them because outside of the class other students are like "Yeah I totally like, that was great, I'm glad you said that." But then in the class no one will do anything. So it ends up being the professor who's saying "blah blah blah, hey, what about this, what about that?" And then that student is trying to voice, again, this resistance that is not coming up from other people. And so the conversation gets stuck in this moment between professor and student.

Several participants mentioned that White students in their classes don't often accuse each other of racism, or call each other out in a confrontational way. Professor I says that students who disagree will "say like 'that doesn't really fit with my experience' and then they'll say something different. But I've never had those classes where they're like "You're wrong, you're a White male!" That doesn't happen." Professor D also notes that conflict in class between White students "can look like actively arguing with them in class, or it can, I mean sometimes it looks like pettiness, like outside of class - like not talking to that person. I mean, it can get really ugly."

Several participants discussed White students behaving differently based on the racial composition of the class. Professor J has noticed that White students take more

risks around disclosure and asking questions, when the class is composed only of White students and Asian student, “like they don't expect that Asians will be riled up.”

Professor A has also found that “certainly when the classes were all White it was a lot easier for students to ask questions.” Professor J notes that when there are Black students in the class, White students are “more thoughtful, more cautious. They’re slower to engage. Maybe more self-conscious,” and “they are thinking hard about what they’ll say and how to say it.” Professor I says that “last year my human behavior course was all White. It was awful in terms of teaching about diversity.”

On the other hand, in some classes White students engage with each other to facilitate learning and growth. Professor E describes a class that’s going well, where White students are really catching themselves, there's a lot of mutual aid in the space where they are actually challenging each other to do better or different. So I used the term “people of the Global Majority” the other day meaning people of color. And a White student raised her hand as identifying with that group, and another White student said “I think you're assuming that you're the majority, but actually the term she's using is referring to people of color. Isn't that interesting how we always think that we’re the ones they're talking about?” So it was a way they turned that moment into an instructive opportunity to challenge each other about their own assumptions, how they’re so used to being the majority all the time that they didn't even catch that. So there's like mutual aid happening, there's support for each other happening

For Professor A, “I don't think that any person who teaches a course on race and racism does it alone. There is a certain dependency and faith you have when you teach these

courses, on having White students who get it. Who help the students who are really struggling to understand the material.”

Impact on students of color. This study focuses on how White students engage with course material on race and racism, but of course White students are not the only students in the classroom. Participants made very clear that White MSW student behavior in race and racism classes harms MSW students of color. Professor A describes two students of color who were in a class on race and racism with an outspoken racially conservative White student:

It was really really hard for the two students of color in the section. Because they knew that they were basically getting a really different experience than students who, because they couldn't be vulnerable, they couldn't be in any way--if they shared anything about their life, they often got back “well what about this example here, da duh da duh dah.” It was brutal... It was awful. Awful, awful situation.

Students of color may feel a need to comfort or protect White students, as Professor C describes: “dismissing the potential harm of the comment, and sometimes it's more sort of an alliance, in a way where it's like ‘Oh yeah, I also do that.’ And the reason why it strikes me as false and sort of more like internalized stuff, is because they're also saying things like, directly counter to what that White student has said.” Professor H says that “it's very very difficult for students of color to be in classes with White people. I just advise them to lay low, they don't have to show White students the way.”

The ways that White students push back and disengage with race and racism material mean that social work education becomes centered on the needs of White

people. Professor K says that “the students of color have complained about this, the course is structured way too much for White students. And there’s a truism in that, and it’s hard to meet both needs in the same room.” Professor D says

The folks of color in my classes really need to have their experiences centered.

You know, queer people need to have their experiences centered. All of this needs to be centered, and yet a lot of White people who are in those classes have never really been challenged on this. And they are in crisis, they’re in genuine crisis. And so, they I think these classes can sometimes be really really a mess.

Professor A says that “I have seen students, definitely students of color really struggle with their White peers in these courses - which is probably my biggest argument for why I think the caucus groups are so important.”

Context and White student engagement. Instructors note that the school of social work creates the frame for race and racism classes. Professor G describes a school’s message about a required race and racism course as “You have a course on racism, which is, it’s not diversity, it’s not gender/sexual identity, or ethnicity but racism. This is what we are prioritizing and putting forward and we are saying that this is what is most important.” Professor G felt that this message primed White students to be particularly resistant to the class, out of feeling that their whole selves and experiences of oppression were not being acknowledged due to the exclusive focus on racism. Professor A also observes that “Sometimes students were so hyped up by the time they got to the class that it shut some White students down, whereas other White students were eager to demonstrate how they were not White racists in the class.” Both of these attitudes may translate into disengagement and not doing the work.

Professor E points to a shift in the atmosphere and economics of universities. It's a business climate, and we're steadily corporatizing, even the small schools, to stay afloat. And part of that corporate model is "the customer is right" so it's challenging when students are coming in because they're being taught by the university before they even step in the classroom that they are right.

For Professor E, White student entitlement, especially White students coming from owning class backgrounds, is supported by this message from the schools that they are paying customers. This may translate into students overtly challenging the instructor in a race and racism course, or demanding the class be taught in particular ways.

Professor I stressed the importance of geography in shaping student conversations about race and racism:

The influence of the cultural geography is huge. I grew up in the north, I grew up in the rust belt, I'm in the rust belt now. And seeing the way that race is talked about in the south is very different, and very different from what I had been told it was in the south. In some ways I prefer it. I think every day I teach...I wish I was still teaching it in [southern state] with those students, because they would, they were willing to have real conversations. And I think it's because they can't escape it. I just went to a former student's wedding in [southern state] and it was a lesbian wedding on a plantation. And you can't deny what happened. It's so easy up here to pretend like we're all just good and we don't have racism. Or if we do it's structural and it's not our fault, it's policy's fault.

Race and racism are understood and talked about in different ways in different parts of the country, and location helps shape what happens in the classroom.

Multiple participants mentioned that there has been a shift in national politics and awareness of issues of racial justice. Professor K says that

August of 2014 when Black Lives Matter exploded, everything in the classroom changed. Now it's also has gone back down like underground, the students that year were overtly riding high on everything with each other and participating. And now things have gone, it's almost like people are putting their heads in the sand with the level of despair, powerlessness. Everything going on with Trump right now, I think, has magnified this feeling of powerlessness, driving towards a cliff and not able to put the brake on or something. So I have noticed a radical shift in my students, between the 2014/2015 school year and now.

Professor F agrees that the "political moment is different," but has observed that "the political moment has shifted people's--or maybe just the students who are coming into the field, why they're here, what they want to do, etc." This has, for Professor F, meant more White students are engaging in doing the work in race and racism classes.

White supremacy and White student engagement. White students may disengage from or push back against race and racism content out of self-protection. Professor D sees that White supremacy has students "staying silent, or protecting our vulnerabilities, or, I think White fragility is such a great example of the ways that White supremacy works. And so that comes up all the time in classes." Professor G see White students come into the race and racism course "very protected, very defensive, I think very afraid in some ways that they are going to be attacked and have something kind of ripped away from them." Professor H agrees that White students disengage because "people don't want to let go of whatever it is they feel like they're protecting. They feel

threatened.” For Professor E, “I don't believe in resistance. I actually think it's self-preservation, I think people are really scared and they are just trying to protect themselves.” Professor K sees White people doing the work as “a constant kind of unravelling,” “and I can understand White people who put their toe in enough to see the waters and then they start running backwards! [laughs] Because it does require such a radical level of change in how you see the world.”

White supremacy also leads White students to center Whiteness, even in attempts to engage in anti-racism. White students may jump to address racism in the classroom, including defending students of color, and “Whitesplaining.” Professor G explains that while the intention is to engage in anti-racism, “It is still White supremacist in its actions, is still putting myself at the center.” Professor E describes how “White folks really want me to be White, and White people really want everyone to be White. Like, proximity to Whiteness is real, and the Whiter you are the more people want to claim you.” White students are often excited about Professor E as instructor, and then come to feel tricked or betrayed when they realize Professor E is not White, resulting in more pushback and disengagement in the classroom. Professor H describes how, while White people do have responsibility for resisting White supremacy, White students often rush to action without consideration or collaboration. This is because

White people are taught, we learn by osmosis that we can solve problems. So when we encounter the problem of racism, it's a big big problem. And we have so much power, so much agency that we think we can just fix it. It's such a White privileged stance. You think you can just talk to White people and racism will be

solved. That stance centers Whiteness again, it centers White people fixing the problem.

Professor C discussed how White supremacist norms of femininity may affect White social work students' disengagement:

I think that social work becomes a stand-in for women...White women are deeply trained, on all levels, socially, for generations, to protect Whiteness by being sort of the folks who get protected. So it's like, we're the trope of, this is why Black folks were being lynched was to protect White women, historically....But I think there's something in it that's such a deep unlearning, where it's like, what protects me as a White woman is to just allow these things to happen, and to not comment on them and there's a sort of, I mean there's always a race traitor piece to, as the White person regardless of your gender identity, speaking out against it. But I think that because of how femininity is constructed, how womanhood is constructed, where it's like, again, White womanhood is like you don't have conflict, you don't fight, you're not mouthy, you're not this [laughs], you're like "Yep these things happen." So I think it's just a lot of conditioning to unlearn.

Students, especially White women students may be so afraid of conflict in the classroom and the world that they disengage from issues of race and racism, which are inherently conflictual.

Instructors' overall analysis

Overall, participants in this research agree that teaching race and racism content to White students in MSW programs is hard, that it is important, and that as practiced, it is deeply imperfect. Instructors describe a dizzying set of intentions and endeavors in

classrooms, including connecting emotionally with students, connecting students to each other, caring about students and pushing them to do the work, using themselves, and navigating challenging institutional dynamics. Instructors are, as Professor E explains, “in a position of power and you're supposed to be grading people, and you're supposed to stay on people's good side and you're supposed to make people happy, and they're also supposed to learn.” All of these tasks are complicated by manifestations of the same White supremacy instructors are trying to teach students about undoing.

Participants in this research agree that White students do learn from these classes, both during and after. Even if White students are disengaging or pushing back in the class, Professor D finds that it is sometimes the case that “there's a lot of learning happening but there's just a lot of resistance because they're being pushed up against something that's hard and scary and new?” Professor E recalls struggle with a White male student to keep him engaged, and he “emailed me six months later to say ‘I really appreciate everything you did’ which I didn't expect!” For Professor E this experience shows that all White students can be taught, and that “everyone deserves a place in this conversation.”

Instructors note that the stakes of this education are high, both for resistance to structural White supremacy and for micro practice of social work. Professor C says that

This is not just like an English paper, where it's like OK, your analysis is poor, but that's unfortunate for me to read it. You're taking these perspectives out into the world where you have a tremendous amount of power over real people's lives, and typically, particularly in social work, we're usually talking about agency-based work where most of the clients are going to be marginalized in multiple

ways, and have less economic power, less racial power, all these things where it's like [pause] this is real!

Instructors also see the stakes as being high for White people, since Professor K says,

There's a lot of work that we need to do as White people, to understand our peoplehood so to speak with each other, and our responsibility to each other to deconstruct what's been done to us...we need to get into doing this work with each other and listening to each other and understanding the pain that we're going through. And learn to speak from our own experiences around that in a way that doesn't make other people feel like we're talking down to them or we think less of them.

However, this education in social work is happening within very flawed institutions, and professors are often not set up to succeed. Professor D notes that "Education's been set up in this country to be this, to be not a competition but to be [pause] where the professor, the teacher and the students are set up as antagonists." Within this conflictual structure, race and racism material "makes it more antagonistic. And I know that's not the way we're gonna get through this together, to have it be an antagonistic space." Professor E says "we're starting from this baseline that there's this shared culture and value about doing no harm, but the structure under which we're trying to do that teaching and learning is doing harm." Professor B describes how vulnerable students feel: "no one wants to feel like they don't know everything, or like they're still learning. It's a really risky place to be." Professor C notes that "giving people a grade

for this process is really problematic. And very counter to a lot of what we're trying to talk to them about, like alternatives! And liberation!" Overall, Professor D says that

I usually feel pretty ambivalent going into teaching these classes, because I don't, I usually don't feel like, oh, this is gonna be, this is well-situated. Like this is really well-situated for these students to have a great experience. I don't usually feel like that.

CHAPTER V

Discussion and Recommendations

Key findings: Comparison with the literature

White social work students need supplementary education on race and racism. This research suggests that White students may need supplementary education on race, racism, and White supremacy, and on their own White identities, privileges, and complicity with racism in order to practice anti-racism social work. Many White social work students come to classes on race and racism lacking basic knowledge about the history and structures of race and racism in the United States, meaning they need what Professor K calls “remedial work.” Instructors interviewed describe a wide range of knowledge and skills that White students lack. These lacunae of knowledge seem to echo habits of Whiteness including privilege, transparency/normativity, superiority, and fear (Frankenburg, 1993; MacMullan, 2009; Sullivan, 2006; Tatum, 2003). These may contribute to maintaining students’ “white misunderstanding, misrepresentation, evasion, and self-deception” about race and racism (Mills, 1997). According to instructors, White social work students seem to demonstrate habits of Whiteness:

- Privilege: they have but don’t recognize their privilege or prejudice; they don’t know how to talk about race and racism and have never had to; they can’t remember or internalize race and racism information;
- Transparency/normativity: they don’t know they are White; they never learned a non-sanitized version of U.S. history; they don’t recognize structural racism; they don’t know what they have learned about the world and where and how; they don’t understand that there is no “objective” reality;

- Superiority: they don't know how to not know something or to be unsure; they want to be in positions of control and power over instructors;
- Goodness: they are afraid of being seen as or seeing themselves as a "bad person."
- Purity: they can't or won't "show up messy" or make mistakes or risk seeming racist;
- Fear: they don't know how to be vulnerable or feel other people's pain or experiences; they can't or won't connect with their feelings and somatic experiences of race and racism.

Professor A described how much easier and more enjoyable it is to teach an advanced class on racial identity than the introductory class, because "people have done a different level of work by the time they were allowed to take that class. So those courses, no problem." White students in this advanced course have already taken an introductory class that gives them the kind of remedial education discussed here. It is true that this class is an elective, so students may self-select in if they are coming with commitment to do the work. However, Professor A makes clear that students who take the advanced class are prepared to engage with race and racism material in a different and more productive way because of already having been exposed to race and racism material and already having started doing the work.

When White students don't get supplementary education, it harms students of color. White students' pushback to race and racism material can be very harmful to students of color (Bowie, 2003; Daniel, 2011; Matsushima, 1981; Miller et al., 2004a; Phan et al, 2009). Participants in this research spoke strongly about how difficult it is for

students of color to be in classes with White students. Students of color may need to stay silent, or may feel the need to emotionally protect the White students, even if they way they do so is contrary to their beliefs or values as previously expressed in class. When White students are being confronted with race and racism material for the first time, Professor D notes that “they are in crisis, they’re in genuine crisis” and the class may become centered around their emotional needs, as Srivastava (2005) describes happening in non-profit settings. Or the class may be shaped around convincing White students that racism is a problem and that they need to engage with Whiteness, leaving students of color to “lay low” and get through the class. Either way, White students are and remain centered in the class, while students of color are marginalized. Several instructors note the importance of caucus group work to provide students of color a space where their learning is primary. This research suggests that White students may need additional time and education to engage with issues of White supremacy, if they are no longer to be the primary focus of race and racism classes to the exclusion of all the other students present.

Some White social work students are “doing the work.” As discussed in the literature on social work education (Miller et al., 2004b; Lee & Greene, 2003; Pewewardy & Almeida, 2014; Shine, 2011), instructors see that White students who open themselves to and engage with race and racism content may be transformed by it. This process is individual: White students may experience moments of revelation (the “ah ha!”) moment during or after the course, or they may experience more of a slow, gradual process of peeling back a lifetime of education and socialization in White supremacy and habits of Whiteness. White students’ motivation coming into the course vary: some White students who are doing the work come into the class committed to the work and

with excitement about the content, “thirsty for this,” and others may come with hesitancy but open themselves to it anyway. White students doing the work come with different sets of knowledge: some students may have a great deal of prior knowledge and help facilitate peers’ learning, others may have an intuitive understanding of oppression based on life experiences, especially with marginalization or trauma, and still others come with no consciousness of race at all. Pewewardy (2007) suggests that a person’s critical consciousness determines their willingness to engage with White supremacy, and this consciousness as well as an openness seem to be the common threads among White students doing the work.

Doing the work, unsurprisingly, causes White students to experience painful feelings of guilt, shame, regret, and sadness, suggesting the habit of negative affects that constitute Whiteness. White students also seem to struggle with the habit of White transparency, which causes them to forget or lose track of the material, even if they are open to and learn from it. However, multiple instructors mentioned students who follow up after the class to apologize, or explain a new understanding, or when they have a moment of connection and realization; this speaks to the potential of this material to be genuinely transformative in students’ lives and practices. Professor B and Professor K specifically mention seeing this material change White students’ life choices and the kind of activism and social work they do. This is, according to the CSWE and NASW, what social work education is supposed to push White students to do.

Some White social work students are not “doing the work.” Mills (1997) describes the necessity of “white misunderstanding, misrepresentation, evasion, and self-deception” (p. 19) about race and racism to maintain systems of White dominance.

White students in social work classes with race and racism content are often faced with information that challenges their worldview (Pewewardy, 2007; Garcia & Van Soest, 2000). These classes threaten their ability to maintain misunderstanding, misrepresentation, evasion, and self-deception, and habits of Whiteness seem to be implicated in the ways White students evade doing the work.

Color and power evasiveness. White people seem to at times respond to issues of race and racism by being color and power evasive (Frankenberg, 1993). In general, instructors described only a few White students explicitly espousing colorblindness. There seem to be, however, many students who don't recognize White as a racial identity, or who don't think they know about race because they are White. This is a form of color and power evasiveness maintained by the habit of White transparency, in which White people cannot see that our racialized identity places us at the center of dominant culture, norms, and systems. White students may also protest spending "so much time talking about race," or not understand race as relevant to social work practice.

Many students also seem to be power evasive. They may see themselves as being without prejudice, "on the right side of racism," or may not understand that privilege means that they have more power and access than people of color. Other White students may want to learn the right vocabulary to be an "ally," but don't critically engage with thinking about or working against racist structures of dominance and oppression. Professor I described White students who "don't think about anything" and don't understand that racial justice would mean White people lose unearned advantages over people of color. This is a failure to understand White dominance. Some students seem to come into race and racism classes being color and power evasive, but shift over time to

become more color and power cognizant; others do not, and remain saying “nice things” about diversity and equality without engaging with White supremacy.

White students who push back verbally and in other ways in class may also be engaging in color and power evasiveness. Several instructors described White students who don’t see race and racism content as important or relevant to social work practice. White students who cannot engage with White supremacy because they want to talk about their other, marginalized identities instead, also show power and color evasive tendencies. Saying, as Professor G describes, “I’m obese and so I know what it’s like to be Black,” or “I’m Jewish, I know what it’s like to be Black, I’m not White” means misunderstanding and misrepresenting their benefits from White dominance.

White students may also be color and power evasive in relationships with peers and instructors in the classroom. Several instructors noted that White students behave differently when the class is only White students, versus when there are Black students in the class. This suggests that White students are aware of and impacted by the race of those in the room on some level, but may not be talking about it openly. Instructors of color describe White students being condescending and yelling at them, and also looking to them for comfort and caretaking, apparently without recognition of the racialized power structure in which White people have controlled and abused people of color’s bodies, minds, and emotions for centuries. On the other hand, White students seem to feel let down or betrayed by White instructors, perhaps because these instructors’ talking about Whiteness challenges the habit of White transparency.

Intense affect. White people who are confronted with race and racism issues, as happens in social work classes with race and racism content, often respond with intense

expressions of emotion (DiAngelo, 2011; Garcia & Van Soest, 2000; Shine, 2011; Srivastava, 2005). These intense affects seem to preserve White people's misunderstanding, misrepresentation, evasion, and self-deception about issues of race and racism, and may also reflect the negative affects that help comprise Whiteness (Sullivan, 2014). Instructors describe White students experiencing and expressing: fear, anxiety, overeagerness, worry, self-doubt, confusion, shock, hesitancy, timidity, superiority, hatred, condescension, anger, passive aggressiveness, impatience, discomfort, guilt, shame, a sense of betrayal, a feeling of being threatened, defensiveness, self-protectiveness, combativeness, and antagonism. In response to these feelings, some students may experience a "breakdown" or an "ah ha" moment, while others may go silent or disengage from the class; some White students may put a lot of energy into showing themselves as morally good and on board, while others may push back against the material or retaliate against the instructor (often in a racialized way). It should also be noted that some White students at times experience gratitude, passion, rage, appreciation, cooperativeness, and commitment to work against racism. The questions instructors have are whether the student is willing to open themselves to painful and difficult feelings, and whether they can learn to experience and express them within a color and power cognizant framework.

Good white people. Sullivan (2014) writes about "good White people," middle class liberal White people who are more committed to *seeming* anti-racist than to engaging in anti-racism or understanding internalized White dominance. This might look like White students "bleeding to get into the class" on race and racism, in order to show that racism was not a problem for them, or White students so eager to confront racism

that they speak for and speak over students of color. It might also look like the “ally fail” and niceness noted by Professor C and Professor I, that White students want to know the right things to say about race and racism, and don’t engage or wrestle with the ugliness in all White people. It seems to be in part a performance of niceness for other students, since some White students seem to say “the right things” in class, while their written material reflects more authentic reflections about their own internalized dominance.

With politically progressive students, as DiAngelo (2011) discusses, a sense that they “already know” the material means that White students may not engage with the material. Multiple instructors referenced White students with past exposure to race and racism content seeming to feel superiority over other White students. This may mean that White students get impatient with or look down on peers who are newer to the concepts or who are more openly struggling or exploring internalized dominance. When this happens, White students who know the material are failing to support fellow White classmates in exploring and learning, and are instead judging and accusing them of ignorance. More knowledgeable White students may try to get exempted from the class. This helps the more knowledgeable White person feel good about themselves, but it does not contribute to the collective work of White conscientization and anti-racism. White people who feel they have “already done the work” are also not engaging with their own depths of internalized White supremacy and habits of Whiteness. Professor K suggests that White people feeling superior to other, less-knowledgeable White people “actually contributes to brokenness” and to persistence of White supremacy.

Multiple instructors described students’ reluctance to confront or conflict with each other, even in moments of disagreement and engagement. White students, perhaps

especially middle class White female students, seem hesitant, polite, restrained, and worried about conflict or hurting each other's feelings. Professor C suggests that culturally, social work may be a stand-in for White femininity, with its need for benevolence, goodness, and innocence. Even with students who are doing the work, good White person responses may still create barriers to deeper engagement. White students may also be cautious around each other's "good White person" needs, not wanting to hurt each other's conceptions of themselves as morally good even as they engage with race and racism.

Silence. Several authors describe White student silence in the classroom as a response to race and racism content (Bronstein & Gibson, 1998; Deal & Hyde, 2004; Phan et al., 2009), and instructors in this study were often unsure what silence meant or how to manage it. Some White students may be silent because they are thinking deeply, and others may be checking out, as Professor G says, "saying la la la in your mind and doing grocery lists so you don't have to hear this or take this in." Even these students may disagree with the content, or may not care, or may feel they don't know anything about it, or may just be confused and overwhelmed. Of course, some students are simply uncomfortable in the classroom, and several instructors referred to silent or quiet students being more engaged in their written material. On the other hand, some students sit with crossed arms, roll their eyes, and make it very clear that they disagree with what is happening in the class. Instructors struggle to understand student silence, since as a behavior it may reflect so many underlying causes and concerns.

White student engagement shifts over time.

Several authors discussed in the literature review have developed theories of White racial identity development as a nonlinear, long-term process (see Abrams & Gibson, 2007; Tatum, 2003). Shine (2011) in particular proposes a development model for White social work students in race and racism classes that includes stages of fear, bewilderment, anger, frustration, transformation into action, and “making peace with the never-ending journey” (pp. 59-60). Instructors interviewed for this project describe students in all of these stages. Their observations also stress White student movement back and forth between my categories of doing and not doing the work. White students are described having “ah ha!” moments of breaking through White transparency to see White supremacy after an extended period of not doing the work, sometimes even after the class has ended. On the other hand, students who are doing the work may be impeded by their need to maintain a good White self, or by aversion to conflict and hurt feelings. Habits of Whiteness seem to reappear through student responses to this material, affirming how deeply they are rooted in White people.

Teaching race and racism in social work programs is hard, and sometimes rewarding. In the literature on social work education on race and racism, authors stress that teaching this content is extremely challenging (Deepak, Rountree, & Scott, 2015; Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004; Shine, 2011), and instructors interviewed for this project agree. Instructors describe students coming to these classes from many different racial backgrounds, educations, life experiences, and intersectional identities, and that juggling all of these is difficult. Instructors are also making use of themselves, their experiences, and mistakes in service of the class, and this seems both draining and also necessary to get students to engage and connect with the content. In all this, instructors are managing

their own feelings and those of individual students and of the group, and they are dealing with ways that the world outside the classroom, both in personal lives and national politics and discourse, impact the class. Instructors used analogies to clinical social work practice, also a complex and taxing practice which requires time and support to develop mastery.

Several authors discussed in Chapter II characterize teaching race and racism content in social work programs as particularly or even uniquely challenging, but at the same time suggest that the courses may be a source of hope and inspiration when they go well (Hyde & Ruth, 2002; Miller, Hyde & Ruth, 2004). Multiple instructors referred to teaching these classes as demanding, inducing frustration and anger, tiring, draining, discouraging, and causing “burnout.” Multiple instructors describe wondering at the end of the class whether they can teach the course again. While this research did not specifically compare the difficulties of teaching race and racism courses to those of teaching other courses, several instructors described teaching this material as significantly different from other classes they teach. Professor A described teaching an introductory-level class where students may be encountering race and racism content for the first time, as uniquely draining. However, Professor A also describes teaching the more advanced course as stimulating and says it “gives me hope for everything.” Other professors agree that teaching this content can be exciting, inspiring, and even joyous when students are genuinely connecting and engaging with the material.

Instructors put a lot of themselves into this work. Instructors of race and racism content in social work programs are described in the literature as making use of self through self-disclosure, reflexivity and transparency (Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004, p.

368; Pewewardy, 2007, p. 68) in order to model accountable engagement with anti-racism analysis and practice (Mishna and Bogo, 2007; Nylund, 2006). Instructors interviewed in this thesis describe using voluntary and involuntary self-disclosures of racial and other social identities and related experiences. These self-disclosures of identity and experience help instructors to find commonalities with students, to demonstrate concepts like intersectionality, to normalize talking about race, and to model resistance and resiliency. Using themselves to model beliefs and behaviors came up frequently, and several White instructors specifically model engaging with and challenging Whiteness for White students. Multiple instructors stressed making use of intentional and unintentional “mistakes,” behavior influenced by White supremacy, to model that everyone is impacted by systems and ideologies of White dominance. At times these “mistakes” were embarrassing or distressing, but instructors discussed prioritizing student learning over their own sense of comfort or authority.

Instructors are described in the literature as being deeply committed to teaching this material, despite its challenges (Miller, Hyde & Ruth, 2004), and this was apparent in my interviews. Instructors stressed that the stakes are high in teaching this material and in pushing students to really engage with it. Instructors noted the power that social workers have over the lives of clients of color. Several White instructors consider teaching a form of accountability in resisting White supremacy, and referenced ways that White supremacy hurts White people as well as people of color. Many instructors, both White and of color, described personal relationships with loved ones of color as a strong motivation for teaching. Professor F specifically described a focus on teaching and supporting students of color, in wanting social workers of color with an analysis of

structural racism to be “running stuff.” Instructors’ commitments were both personal and political, which may be indistinguishable, since as Professor B says “it’s not about me, and it is about me. Because we teach about race and racism, and your body is in the room.”

Instructors use a range of methods to engage students. The literature on race and racism education extensively describes curricular and pedagogical considerations and techniques for teaching race and racism content (Deepak, Rountree, & Scott, 2015; Garcia and Melendez, 1999; Garcia & Van Soest, 1997; Plionis & Lewis, 1996; Werkmeister Rozas & Miller, 2009; Wong, 2013). Instructors interviewed in this thesis also described a range of theoretical approaches to this work and pedagogical choices. Most of the instructors were working with a syllabus developed by the school where they taught, though some had been involved in this development process, and others had leeway to create their own (see Appendix G for an overview of course content taught by each instructor). In general, instructors focused on pedagogical choices they make in planning, and in the classroom. Instructors describe juggling a huge number of tasks in the classroom, including teaching the content, attending to group dynamics, and creating a “holding environment” that “allows for opening.” Instructors stressed the need to see the class as a group process, and discussed balancing relationship-building and processing with the need to cover content. Several instructors emphasized pushing students to connect with feelings and their histories and use experiential exercises and personal sharing to promote this. They also discussed self-disclosure and modeling as strategies to engage students in learning.

Group dynamics matter. As discussed in the literature, the race and racism class functions as a group, with group dynamics (Deepak, Rountree, & Scott, 2015; Garcia & Melendez, 1997; Mishna & Bogo, 2007, p. 532; Nagda et al., 1999). There seems to be some quality of class and group dynamic that is more or less conducive to White students' doing the work, as many instructors described having harder and easier classes, which were respectively more and less draining, and in which White students did the work more or less. Balancing the disparate needs of all White students in the class and trying to create a group is sometimes easy and sometimes challenging. Professor E describes a class in which White students are both pushing and supporting each other, and engaging with the concepts in a way that creates a "joyous great experience." This dynamic may be influenced by many of the White students' identities as working class, queer parents, in that they have experienced marginalization and are thinking about the future in the form of their children. Professor K also describes a White student being pushed by classmates to reconsider racist views, and emphasizes that this was possible only because of the students' relationships with each other in the classroom.

On the other hand, Professor A describes a White student with a powerful conservative point of view who convinced most of the other White students in the class of her perspective, in a way that was deeply harmful to the students of color in the class. Professor D describes the felt sense that the group as a whole cannot tolerate race and racism content, and notes that often one student with multiple intersecting privileges both voices the group's collective resistance and also becomes a scapegoat. The other students in the class may disavow the scapegoat's pushback, even if they agree, and may physically and socially separate themselves from the scapegoat both in and outside of

class. This dynamic resembles the “good White people” strategy of distancing and blaming poor White people for racism, maintaining their own White purity and goodness through disconnecting from and disavowing overt racism.

The implicit curriculum influences White student engagement. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE, 2015) recognizes that both the implicit and explicit curricula influence student engagement with race and racism content, and research bears this out (Deepak, Rountree, & Scott, 2015; Daniel, 2008; Grady, Powers, Despard, & Naylor, 2011). Instructors interviewed for this project brought up instructor identity, classroom composition, school structures and institutional racism, and the sociopolitical context as aspects of the implicit curriculum that impact how White students engage.

Racial makeup of the class: Identities of students and instructors. The racial identities of students in the class affect White student engagement with the material. Professor J (who is Afro-Latina) noted that White students are more cautious and self-conscious when there are also Black students in the class. Professor A (who is Black) also says that “when the classes were all White it was a lot easier for students to ask questions.” It seems White students’ habits of fear were activated when Black students were in the class, although, apparently not by the instructor being Black or Afro-Latina. Interestingly, Professor J felt White students were less nervous when the class was composed of White students and Asians, many of whom are international students. Professor A describes White students being “surprised sometimes because I was Black, and I would teach the class and I would say things very explicitly. They were sometimes thrown off by that,” perhaps expecting talk about race to be more coded and subtle. On the other hand, when classes were all White simply because of the student body (and not

because they were caucus groups), Professor I suggests that it contradicts and undermines the explicit curriculum about diversity and interracial relationships.

Several instructors stressed that having White students in the class with past exposure to concepts of race and racism is very helpful with engaging other White students, and Professor A even wishes for “a way to give the students extra credit for essentially co-teaching the course.” On the other hand, some White students with past exposure to the concepts “can also use it as a way to feel superior to other White people. And that actually contributes to brokenness and contributes to what we’ve got going on right now” (Professor K). The knowledge and critical consciousness of students in the classroom impact each other, and the instructor, and it seems sometimes to move the class along to have a mix of White woke-ness, and sometimes to create a more difficult, divided, and divisive class.

Racial identities of instructors also matter for White student engagement. White instructors noted that instructors of color receive lower course evaluations, and may face more explicit and intense pushback from students. Professor B, who is South Asian, described being yelled at by a White student in a class, and Professor E, who is Chicana, notes that a relaxed classroom style is read as “not White” and makes White students uncomfortable. As a result of the poor evaluations and intense pushback, some faculty of color may stop teaching this class, according to Professor I. These behaviors in White students may emerge from the habit of superiority, as White students seem to “automatically seeks a position of power” (Professor E). White superiority may also be showing up in Professor D’s observation that White students ranked themselves as working harder than their instructors, as if they were learning all on their own.

In some cases, on the other hand, it seems White students may feel White instructors are “safer” targets for their anger. Professor C, who is White, describes White students being upset with grades and assuming that she was responsible for the grade, even though Professor C grades together with the co-instructor, who is Black . Professor G felt targeted by pushback from White students, and wonders if this is because the co-instructor was “much much more of a hard lecturer, and he was also a man of color, and so I was in some ways maybe an easy target.” Professor C, who is White, describes how a White student complained of bias against him, but specified that the co-instructor was great, as if to say “I really like the Black professor, and I think the Black professor is so nice and everything, then I still must not be racist.” These are only a few observations, but they seem like efforts by students to maintain their perception of themselves as good White people, displacing feelings related to the content onto White instructors in order not to have their sense of themselves as non-racist challenged. White students’ habit of transparency may also be challenged, as Professor D suggests that White students may distance themselves from White instructors “simply because of the way that it’s really hard for White students to hold the mirror of a White person saying all these things about race and racism, and saying ‘hey, we’re racist!’”

Similarly, some White students seem to feel betrayed by White instructors, and some apparently respond by turning to instructors of color for comfort and reassurance of goodness. Davis, Mirick, and McQueen (2015) note that “white female students might feel skeptical or betrayed by white female instructors’ persistent focus on issues of privilege” (p. 304), and Professors C and E note this as well. Professor E, who is Chicana, describes getting emails from students about their intense anger with the White

co-instructor even though “we’re not doing that much differently.” Professor C describes a student who became upset and approached Professor C’s co-instructor for comfort after class, and when Professor C approached, “he got really upset, kind of almost started crying, got choked up, and was like ‘I was talking to [co-instructor], I was not trying to talk to you!’ and was really upset.” Professor C understands this situation as one where “he wanted to talk to her and have her assuage his upsetness as a White man.” Professor J, who is Afro-Latina, too, describes a White student who expressed colorblind views and seemed to expect that Professor J would develop a close relationship with him, without considering that Professor J might not want that. Habits of White superiority and emptiness may mean that some White students feel entitled to the energy, time, attention, and soothing of instructors of color.

Institutional structure and culture. Schools of social work and their faculty, as described by the participants in this research, are not fully engaging with anti-racism across the institution, reflecting the critique in the literature (Bowie, 2003; Daniel, 2011; Deepak, Rountree, & Scott, 2015). Schools may claim to be engaging with race and racism throughout the institution, but Professor F notes that schools “make a lot of excuses in this field for why they can’t do stuff.” Professor E critiques how schools of social work are increasingly commodifying social work education and treating students as customers, reinforcing habits of Whiteness including superiority and individuality. Both Professors E and F note that effective anti-racism work is being done outside of these institutions, while inside universities schools of social work are not doing the work.

Issues around faculty position arose in several interviews. Several instructors described feeling somewhat precarious and vulnerable to student backlash as adjuncts,

while others noted that having other jobs and income sources freed them to take more risks or decide to work only at schools that support them. Multiple instructors suggested that, as discussed in the literature (Schiele, 2007; Vodde, 2000), White faculty may be less likely than faculty of color to teach race and racism content in their classes, or to engage with issues of race and racism when they arise. These instructors called on White faculty to specifically engage with White students.

The admissions office shapes the makeup of a social work program, and admissions practices are part of the implicit curriculum (CSWE, 2015, p. 14). In making decisions about who will comprise a school's entering class, the admissions office is not only helping shape the profession, it is also helping determine the dynamics and experience of courses on race and racism. White students' patterns of engagement with race and racism content are classed and gendered, and influenced by sexuality and ethnoreligious identity. White student engagement is also influenced by life experiences with people of color, and by past exposure to race and racism concepts and material. Some White students seem to have an intuitive racial analysis, perhaps based on their own experiences of oppression or trauma, or on close relationships with people of color, or on being a parent and being orientated towards the future. Professor F pointed to admissions as one place where schools are not engaging in analysis of institutional racism, and Professor C specifically brought up admissions as a place where "a lot of the problems are" with White students.

The institutional message about the course seems to matter for White students: Professor G and Professor A described White students pushing back more against a required course that addresses race and racism only. Instructors suggest that the

messaging around the class matters, and that White students seemed very “hyped up” coming into the course. It may be that White students interpreted the focus on race and racism being a *primary* oppression as a message that race and racism is the *only* oppression that matters. Professor G suggests that White students may disengage from the material because they feel their intersecting oppressed identities are being dismissed, and describes students responding with tears, rage, threats, and “passive aggressiveness” in and outside of class. This description suggests that these White students’ habits of White privilege, transparency, and individuality were activated by the exclusive focus on race and racism. They may have failed to recognize Whiteness as dominance due to privilege and transparency, and felt they were being lumped into a group in a way that threatened their sense of themselves as individuals.

Sociopolitical context. Instructors also noted the importance of the sociopolitical context, which is largely absent from the literature reviewed here. Several instructors noted a shift in the feel of their classroom as the Black Lives Matter movement gained national media coverage, and suggested that that the presidential election with Donald Trump as a candidate has shifted classes as well. Several instructors felt that White students are more open and ready to talk about race and racism since Black Lives Matter, perhaps because race is part of the national media and mainstream conversation.

Instructor I also raised that White student engagement with race and racism content varies by region. Having taught at social work programs in several regions of the country, Professor I notes that White students in the south are more open and explicit about race and racism, while White students in the north seem to speak more in racial

generalities and don't engage with the subject. I have not come across social work literature on this question.

Instructors teach White anti-racism. Most of the instructors interviewed for this project teach race and racism content to multiracial classes. A few have taught classes of all White students, either because of the school's predominantly White demographics, or because the school offers a racial caucus group option. However, across the instructors interviewed here, their pedagogical and curricular choices generally address several elements of the White anti-racism tenets laid out in Chapter II. This research did not specifically assess whether and to what extent instructors are teaching these tenets, but some general impressions emerge from the data.

All instructors understand race and racism as social constructions that do tremendous violence, and some mentioned how White supremacy both benefits and harms White people. These conceptions are formative for instructors' sense of the possibilities in their classes: Professor J's motivation for and goal in teaching is simply that "racism can be undone. We can unlearn it. That can be had, despite it being difficult and uncomfortable."

Challenging color evasiveness: Race cognizance. Instructors named their own racial identities and modeled talking about race "in a casual way," as "something people do" (Professor A). Instructors pushed students, especially White students, to recognize, name, and develop their sense of racial identity.

Challenging power evasiveness: Power cognizance. Instructors want students to develop a "deep and critical politic around race and racism" (Professor F) including analysis of power, structures, national history, and of their own internalized dominance or

oppression and personal history. They also emphasize teaching Whiteness as a category of dominance and exploitation.

Challenging the “good White person”: Collective support and accountability.

Instructors emphasize building relationships between and among students in order to generate collective support and accountability, and “to have White students in particular see each other and talk to each other” (Professor E). Instructors try to create group dynamics of gentle challenge, so that White students feel less defensive about proving goodness, and maybe more open to growth and transformation and to experiencing their own and other people’s pain.

Challenging White guilt and freezing: Opposing racism. White students experience “shame and guilt when they realized they have biases and privilege” (Professor I). But Professor G pushes students, saying “to sit there and feel guilty about it [White privilege] is narcissism, it’s navel-gazing. What am I going to do about that?”

Challenging White purity: Committing to lifelong wrestling with Whiteness.

Professor B and Professor H stress that learning about racism continues over a lifetime, and Professor K tries to develop in students a “commitment to lifelong learning and activism.”

Challenging the negative affects that comprise Whiteness: Learning self-love.

Several instructors noted that White students are often afraid of their own and others’ pain, or of anger and conflict. Professor D tries to “show and teach and model resiliency and resistance” as an alternative to getting bogged down in negative affect about the self and about race and racism.

Challenging exclusive emphasis on the brain: Thinking about the body.

Professor E in particular uses a trauma-informed approach to teaching race and racism content, and ensures coming into the class calm and relaxed. Professor E maintains awareness of students' being activated both somatically and emotionally by the material.

Instructors see this work as important. Instructors stress that teaching race and racism material, especially to White students, is important. Instructors recognize that social work is White-dominated and that social workers have great power over our clients of color. Professor C calls teaching race and racism to White students an issue of “life and death.” White instructors describe this work as a part of their racial justice work, and express commitments to it based on personal experience of oppression, care for clients, family and loved ones of color, and the urgent need for White people to work in relation with each other against White supremacy. Professor G and Professor K mention that White supremacy harms White people too, and try to teach this concept to generate a personal stake for White people in overturning it. Instructors of color also describe political commitment to social justice, and the ways that White social workers have or might harm clients, family, and loved ones. Multiple instructors, both White and of color spoke about racism, and in particular, segregation, in the places where they grew up as an impetus toward doing this work. All instructors expressed a long-standing and long-term commitment to racial justice.

Instructors question whether this is where to focus. On the other hand, several instructors question both their capacity to keep teaching this material and also whether they want teaching social work students to be the core of their anti-racism work.

Professor C wonders what other racial justice organizing work “would I have room for if

this wasn't taking up this space for me?" Professor F, as a person of color, maintains focus on developing the capacities and analysis of "dope students of color" who "are going to transform the profession because they want to serve their communities," and feels that it is the job of White faculty to challenge and push White students. Professor F and several other instructors of color referred to the importance of more social work faculty teaching this material, especially White faculty.

Structural racism within schools of social work frustrates instructors as well. Several referred to the slowness and conservatism of university bureaucracy, and how much more nimble and radical anti-racism education and organizing is taking place outside of schools. The constraints of capitalism mean that universities may be increasingly treating students as customers; White student may use this as an escape from engaging with race and racism content, since they see themselves as paying for a service, not engaging in a process, and they can use the machinery of the school to complain about and retaliate against instructors. Social norms in classrooms are often White and middle class, and university structures build in conflict between instructor and student as each evaluate the other. Several instructors suggest that giving grades for self-reflection and exploration is, as Professor C says, "is really problematic. And very counter to a lot of what we're trying to talk to them about, like alternatives! And liberation!" In general, the university setting is often not conducive to or even inhibits the teaching of this material and White student engagement.

Implications for Social Work Practice

Based on the exploratory research conducted for this thesis, I offer a set of recommendations for social work schools, social work educators, and White social work students.

Recommendations for social work schools. The literature reviewed in Chapter II and the data presented in this research make it clear that both the implicit and the explicit curricula affect White social work students' engagement with race and racism material. Schools of social work should work to identify and challenge manifestations of White supremacy within the institutions.

1. Mandate additional, focused education for White students on race and racism.
2. Require courses on race and racism, and offer a consistent and insistent message about integrating race and racism content throughout the explicit curriculum.
3. Facilitate White students' learning and unlearning process by offering social supports including accountability groups, readings, and counseling.
4. Consider alternate ways of teaching and integrating race and racism content outside of graded courses.
5. Prioritize hiring and tenuring faculty with a critical consciousness on race and racism.
6. Compassionately challenge faculty, especially White faculty, through training, personal work, and mutual support, to develop knowledge, skill, and comfort addressing issues of White supremacy in social work practice and as they arise in the classroom.

7. Provide institutional support and backing to adjuncts who are targeted by students pushing back against race and racism content. In particular, support faculty who hold targeted identities, and who may be more vulnerable to student retaliation.
8. Analyze what it would take to incorporate anti-racism throughout the institution, “from recruitment to admissions to field placement to core curriculum, to faculty etc. Like how to shift an entire institution, that institution being the school, around the question of what does upending White supremacy in this field look like” (Professor F).
9. Emphasize admitting students with a critical consciousness and a commitment to social justice.
10. Prioritize admitting, funding, and supporting students of color to reflect the population social work tries to serve.

Recommendations for social work educators. Social work educators who teach race and racism content do extraordinarily challenging work. The literature reviewed in Chapter II and the data presented here affirm that instructors are bringing so much of themselves into the classroom and into the learning; and that they are deeply committed to and also exhausted by teaching that material. I offer several recommendations to instructors of race and racism content who are teaching White students.

1. Teach Whiteness as a racial identity, a culture, a system of domination and exploitation, and a set of habits.

2. Teach White anti-racism as a counter to habits of Whiteness and to White “misunderstanding, misrepresentation, evasion, and self-deception on matters related to race” (Mills, 1997, p. 19).
3. Develop relationships and a sense of groupness between and among students, and in particular between and among White students.
4. Encourage critical consciousness in students through reflection, conversation, relationships, readings, and experiential work.
5. Incorporate experiential and somatic work to help White students tolerate and open themselves to painful feelings and experience and to help soften habits of Whiteness.
6. Do caucus group work by race or class whenever possible.
7. Notice and use your own “mistakes” in order to model that it is all right to be imperfect in talking about race, and that everyone engages in ongoing learning about race.
8. Model anti-racism and liberatory social work practice. White educators in particular should model alternatives to Whiteness as dominance and exploitation.

Recommendations for White social work students. White social work students are the focus of this research, although not the focus of much of the social work literature on race and racism education. Many White social work students come to this work with deep commitment to social justice, and with convictions of our own benevolence. We also come with habits of Whiteness and struggle to see these in our classes and our practice. White social work students have a great deal of work to do in learning about

race and racism and about our own identities and histories as they relate to White supremacy.

1. Develop your White racial identity and explore what it means in terms of power and dominance.
2. Educate yourself on United States history told from a non-White normative perspective.
3. Educate yourself on the history and practice of social work that has supported White dominance, as well as the history and practice of liberatory anti-racism social work.
4. Learn to notice mental, emotional, and somatic habits of Whiteness as they show up in classes and in social work practice.
5. Learn to sit with these habits, and perhaps, over time, to alter them.
6. Build relationships with other White students, even those with whom you disagree with or from whom you want to distance yourself.
7. Develop your self-love and ability to providing caring critiques to White classmates, colleagues, and loved ones.
8. Acknowledge your humanness and imperfection, and ways that you exist in a system and as part of a group.
9. Talk with children, both your own and those who are your clients, about race, rather than silencing them because of your discomfort.
10. Open yourself to other people's experiences and pain around race and racism.
11. Listen to and believe people of color when they speak about their experience and history.

12. Develop, slowly and with caution and accountability, an anti-racism practice in your paid and unpaid work and within your family and friendships.

13. Be vigilant for habits of Whiteness even, perhaps especially when you have good intentions. Be vigilant for systems of White supremacy that saturate United States institutions.

Recommendations for future research. This project was an exploratory study, generally aimed at examining and describing instructors' perspectives on how White MSW students engage with their classes. It points to many other avenues for future research, including the questions that follow.

1. Does race and racism education in social work education generate long term transformation, lifelong learning, and engagement with anti-racism social work practice?
2. What explicit and implicit curricula are most effective in helping White students do the work?
3. What would supplementary education for White people look like? How could it be most useful and effective?
4. How can awareness of physiological stress responses and the somatic nature of habits of Whiteness be incorporated into teaching White people?
5. What are the qualities of groups that facilitate White students' doing the work?
6. Why do some students follow up with instructors after classes end? What do they say when they follow up?

7. What are some distinctions between White students who engage with doing the work and those who do not? What causes White students to shift between doing and not doing the work?
8. What happens during White students' "ah ha" moments? What sparks the realization? How does it impact the student's perspective and practice?
9. How do the university-as-capitalist-entity and student-as-customer paradigms affect White students' engagement with or pushback to race and racism content?

Limitations and biases

I used qualitative methodologies for this exploratory study, judging that interviews would best help me answer my research questions. However, as all research methods, qualitative methods are limited, yielding rich but narrow data (Rubin & Babbie, 2011, p. 450). As a result of the small sample size and purposive, non-probability sampling, my findings are not generalizable, though they suggest patterns and areas for further research.

This research methodology, including purposive sampling, has potential for bias. Participants opted in, and may have done so because of interest in or strong opinions about the subject, wish to help an MSW student, a professional relationship with me preceding the research, curiosity, or other personal reasons. None of these invalidate my findings, but they result in findings that may vary from those of a probability sample. The data may also have been influenced by social desirability concerns. I share a professional field with and recruited participants who had taught or plan to teach at the Smith College School for Social Work, the institution I attend for my Masters in Social Work. Participants may have been concerned about my judgment, or worried about

repercussions should confidentiality be violated. To mitigate this, I explained the measures I took to maintain confidentiality. I also tried to maintain a nonjudgmental mien, while making clear my normative commitment to anti-racism.

Researcher bias is also a concern in qualitative research. Grounded theory methodology and semi-structured interviews rely heavily on my judgment and instincts, which are definitionally subjective. I have taken steps to reduce the researcher bias inherent to qualitative research by using an interview guide to be sure to cover the same ground with each participant. Interviews were all transcribed in full, and most were recorded, so that a record exists of the work done for any subsequent researcher to audit.

I note as well that because the United States is profoundly racialized, my White racial identity and subjectivity affect the ways others relate to me, and my perceptions of interactions. White dominance and habits of Whiteness including privilege, transparency, superiority, and purity are an integral part of me, as of any White person socialized in the United States. These likely affect my perspectives and relationships in ways I am unable to anticipate or perceive. In order to be sure instructors who chose to participate in this research were aware of my racial positionality, I disclosed that I am White in the recruitment emails (Appendices C & D). In order to mitigate the distortions Whiteness may cause, I have created a record of the work I did through audio recording, transcribing in full, and hand written notes so that future researchers may review my work.

A feature of the research--its deep exploration of experiences and opinions--is also a limitation. This research recruits participants as auxiliary observers of a phenomenon that is challenging to observe. While on one hand this means that I have

access to far more observations than I could make on my own, on the other hand those observations have been filtered through participants' minds and bodies. People's memories, perceptions, and interpretations are influenced by many things, including our positionality, past experiences, education, values, politics, etc. Participants' disclosures in the interviews are not treated as "objective" truth, but as a version of truth that provide views of a phenomenon and point the way for further inquiry.

References

- Abrams, L. S. and Gibson, P. (2007). Reframing multicultural education: Teaching white privilege in the social work curriculum. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 43(1). 147-160.
- Abrams, L. S. and Moio, J. A. (2009). Critical race theory and the cultural competence dilemma in social work education. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 45(2), 245-261.
- Abramovitz, M. (1998). Social work and social reform: An arena of struggle. *Social Work*, 43(6), 512-526.
- Alexander, M. (2010). *The new Jim Crow: Mass incarceration in the age of colorblindness*. New York, NY: The New Press.
- Allen, T. W. (2012). *The invention of the White race, volume one: Racial oppression and social control* (Second edition, Kindle edition). Retrieved from Amazon.com.
- Allen-Meares, P. (2007) Cultural competence: An ethical requirement. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 16(3-4), 83-92.
- Anderson, W, Hayashi, R. & Frost, C. J. (2009). Measuring the diversity awareness of social work students: The dual perspective inventory. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work*, 29(3). 258-270,
- Basham, K. (2004). Weaving a tapestry: Anti-racism and the pedagogy of clinical social work practice. *Smith College Studies in Social Work*, 74(2), 289-314.
- Bonilla-Silva, E. (2013). *Racism without racists: Color-blind racism and the persistence of racial inequality in America* (Fourth edition, Kindle edition). Retrieved from

- Amazon.com.
- Bowie, S. L. (2003). Perceived diversity and multi-culturalism content in HBSE courses: An integrative methodological survey of African American MSW graduates from predominantly White institutions. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 8(1). pp. 1-23.
- Bronstein, L & Gibson, C. (1998.) Student perceptions of content on oppression: The good news and the bad. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work*, 17(1-2), 155-167
- Center for Health Workforce Studies (2006). *Licensed social workers in the United States, 2004*. Washington, DC: National Association of Social Workers.
- Retrieved from: <http://workforce.socialworkers.org/studies/fullStudy0806.pdf>
- Center for Health Workforce Studies (2006b). *Licensed social workers in the United States, 2004: Supplement, chapter 2 of 5, who are licensed social workers?* Washington, DC: National Association of Social Workers. Retrieved from: http://workforce.socialworkers.org/studies/supplemental/supplement_ch2.pdf.
- Charmaz, K. & Bryant, A. (2008). Grounded theory. In L. M. Given (Ed.), *The SAGE encyclopedia of qualitative research methods* (pp. 375-376). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) (2015). *Educational policy and accreditation standards*. Retrieved from: <http://www.cswe.org/File.aspx?id=81660>.
- Daniel, C. L. (2008). From liberal pluralism to critical multiculturalism: The need for a paradigm shift in multicultural education for social work practice in the United States. *Journal of Progressive Human Services*, 19(1), 19-38.

- Daniel, C. (2011). Lessons learned: Pedagogical tensions and struggles with instruction on multiculturalism in social work education programs. *Social Work Education, 30*(3), 250-265.
- Davis, A. & Gentlewarrior, S. (2015). White privilege and clinical social work practice: Reflections and recommendations. *Journal of Progressive Human Services, 26*(3), 191-208.
- Davis, A., Mirick, R., & McQueen, B. (2015). Teaching from privilege: Reflections from White female instructors. *Affilia: Journal Of Women & Social Work, 30*(3), 302-313.
- Deal, K. H. , & Hyde, C. A. (2004). Understanding MSW student anxiety and resistance to multicultural learning. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work, 24*(1-2), 73-86
- Deepak, A. C., Rountree, M. A., & Scott, J. (2015). Delivering diversity and social justice in social work education: The power of context. *Journal Of Progressive Human Services, 26*(2), 107-125.
- Deweese, M. (2001). Building cultural competence for work with diverse families: Strategies from the privileged side. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work, 9*(3-4), 33-51.
- DiAngelo, R. (2011). White fragility. *International Journal of Critical Pedagogy, 3*(3). pp 54-70.
- DiAngelo, R. (2010). Why can't we all just be individuals?: Countering the discourse of individualism in anti-racist education. *InterActions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies, 6*(1). 1-24.
- DiAngelo, R. (2006). My class didn't trump my race: Using oppression to face privilege.

- Multicultural Perspectives*, 8(1). Pp. 52–56.
- Frankenberg, R. (1993). *White women, race matters: The social construction of Whiteness*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.
- Garcia, B. & Melendez, M. P. (1997). Concepts and methods in teaching oppression courses. *Journal of Progressive Human Services*, 8(1), 23-40.
- Garcia, B. & Van Soest, D. (1997). Changing perceptions of diversity and oppression: MSW students discuss the effects of a required course. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 33(1), 119-129
- Garcia, B. & Van Soest, D (1999). Teaching about diversity and oppression: Learning from the analysis of critical classroom events. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work*, 18(1-2), 149-167.
- Garcia, B., & Van Soest, D. (2000). Facilitating learning on diversity: Challenges to the professor. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 9(1-2), 21-39.
- Garran, A. M., Aymer, S., Gelman, C.R. & Miller, J. L. (2015) Team-teaching anti-oppression with diverse faculty: Challenges and opportunities. *Social Work Education*, 34(7), 799-814
- Grady, M. D., Powers, J., Despard, M, & Naylor, S. (2011). Measuring the implicit curriculum: Initial development and results of an MSW survey. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 47(3). (Fall 2011).
- Green, R. G., Kiernan-Stern, M. & Baskind, F. R. (2005) White social workers' attitudes about people of color. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 14(1-2), 47-68.
- Gutiérrez, L., Fredricksen, K. and Soifer, S. (1999). Perspectives of social work faculty

- on diversity and societal oppression content: Results from a national survey. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 35(3), pp. 409-419.
- Gutiérrez y Muhs, G., Niemann, Y. F., González, C. G., & Harris, A. P. (Eds.) (2012). *Presumed incompetent: The intersections of race and class for women in academia*. Boulder, Colorado: University Press of Colorado.
- Haney López, I. (2006). *White by law: The legal construction of race* (Revised and updated 10th anniversary edition). New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Harris, C. I. (2007). Whiteness as property. In L. Alcoff and E. Mendieta (eds.) *Identities: Race, class, gender, and nationality* (pp.75-89). London: Blackwell Publishing.
- Harris, M. S. (1997). Developing self-awareness/racial identity with graduate social work students. *Smith College Studies in Social Work*, 67(3), 587-607.
- Haynes, A. W. & Singh, R. N. (1992) Ethnic-sensitive social work practice: An integrated, ecological, and psychodynamic approach. *Journal of Multicultural Social Work*, 2(2), 43-52.
- Haynes, D. T. (1999). A theoretical integrative framework for teaching professional social work values. *Journal of Social Work Education* 35(1) pp. 39-50
- Holley, L. C. & Steiner, S. (2005). Safe space: Student perspectives on classroom environment. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 41(1), 49-64.
- Horner, W. and Borrero, M. (1981). A planning matrix for Standard 1234A. *Journal of Education for Social Work*, 17(1). pp. 36-43.
- Hornung, R. (2012). *Whiteness in social work education: Authentic White allies* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses. UMI

- Number: 3504495.
- Hounmenou, C. (2012). Black settlement houses and oppositional consciousness. *Journal of Black Studies* 43(6), 646–666.
- Hughey, M. W. (2012). Color capital, white debt, and the paradox of strong white racial identities. *DuBois Review: Social Science Research on Race*, 9(1), 169---200.
- Hyde, G. A., & Ruth, B. J. (2002). Multicultural content and class participation: Do students self-censor? *Journal of Social Work Education*, 38, 241-256.
- Jacobson, M. F. (1998). *Whiteness of a different color: European immigrants and the alchemy of race*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Jani, J. S., Pierce, D., Ortiz, L. & Sowbel, L. (2011). Access to intersectionality, content to competence: Deconstructing social work education diversity standards. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 47(2), 283-301.
- Jeffery, D. (2005). “What good is anti-racist social work if you can't master it?”: Exploring a paradox in anti-racist social work education. *Race, Ethnicity & Education*, 8(4), 409-425.
- Jeyasingham, D. (2012). White noise: a critical evaluation of social work education's engagement with whiteness studies. *British Journal of Social Work*, 42(4), 669---686.
- Judah, E. H. (1979). Values: The uncertain component in social work. *Journal of Education for Social Work* 15(2), pp. 79-86
- Kayser, J. (2005). *The early history of racially segregated, Southern schools of social work requesting or receiving funds from the Rockefeller Philanthropies and the responses of social work educators to racial discrimination*. Rockefeller Archive

- Center, Research Reports. Retrieved from:
<http://www.rockarch.org/publications/resrep/kayser.pdf>.
- Kivel, P. (2011). *Uprooting racism: How white people can work for racial justice*. Gabriola Island, BC: New Society Publishers.
- Le-Doux, C. and Montalvo, F. F. (1999). Multicultural content in social work graduate programs: A national survey. *Journal of Multicultural Social Work*, 7(1/2). Pp. 37-55.
- Lee, M. Y. & Greene, G. J. (2003) A teaching framework for transformative multicultural social work education. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity In Social Work*, 12(3), 1-28.
- Longres, J. (1972). The impact of racism on social work education. *Journal of Education for Social Work* 8(1), pp. 31-41.
- Lipsitz, G. (1995). The possessive investment in whiteness: Racialized social democracy and the "white" problem in American studies. *American Quarterly*, 47(3). Pp. 369-387.
- Loya, M. (2011). Color-blind racial attitudes in White social workers: A cross-sectional study. *Smith College Studies in Social Work*, 81(2-3), 201-217
- Martinot, S. (2010). *The machinery of Whiteness: Studies in the structure of racialization*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Temple University Press.
- MacMullan, T. (2009). *Habits of Whiteness: A pragmatist reconstruction*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press.
- Matias, C. E. and DiAngelo, R. (2013). Beyond the face of race: Emo-cognitive explorations of white neurosis and racial cray-cray. *Educational Foundations*,

- Summer-Fall 2013. 3-20.*
- Matsushima, J. (1981). Resistance in infusing minority content in social work education. *Smith College Studies in Social Work, 51(3)*, 216-225.
- McMahon, A. & Allen-Meares, P. (1992). Is social work racist? A content analysis of recent literature. *Social Work, 37(6)*, 533-539.
- Mildred, J., & Zúñiga, X. (2004). Working with resistance to diversity issues in the classroom: Lessons from teacher training and multicultural education. *Smith College Studies in Social Work, 74(2)*, 359-375.
- Mills, C. W. (1997). *The racial contract*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.
- Miller, J., Donner, S., & Fraser, E. (2004a). Talking when talking is tough: Taking on conversations about race, sexual orientation, gender, class and other aspects of social identity. *Smith College Studies in Social Work, 74(2)*, 377-392.
- Miller, J. & Garran, A. M. (2007). *Racism in the United States: Implications for the helping professions*. Thomson Brooks/Cole: Belmont, CA.
- Miller, J., Hyde, C. A., & Ruth, B. J. (2004b). Teaching about race and racism in social work: Challenges for white educators. *Smith College Studies in Social Work, 74(2)*, 409-426
- Mindrup, R. M., Spray, B. J., & Lamberghini-West, A. (2011). White privilege and multicultural counseling competence: The influence of field of study, sex, and racial/ethnic exposure. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work, 20(1)*. 20-38.
- Mishna, F. & Bogo, M. (2007). Reflective practice in contemporary social work classrooms. *Journal of Social Work Education, 43(3)*, 529-544.

- Mizrahi, T. & Dodd, S. (2013). MSW students' perspectives on social work goals and social activism before and after completing graduate education. *Journal of Social Work Education, 49*(4), 580-600.
- Nagda, B. A., Spearmon, M. L., Holley, L. C., Harding, S., Balassone, M. L., Moïse-Swanson, D. & de Mello, S. (1999). Intergroup dialogues: An innovative approach to teaching about diversity and justice in social work programs. *Journal of Social Work Education, 35*(3), 433-449.
- National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Practice Research Network (2003). Demographics of social workers. Retrieved from:
<http://www.socialworkers.org/naswprn/surveyTwo/Datagram2.pdf>.
- National Association of Social Workers (NASW), (2007). *Institutional racism and the social work profession: A call to action*. Washington, DC: National Association of Social Workers. Retrieved from:
<http://www.naswdc.org/diversity/InstitutionalRacism.pdf>.
- National Association of Social Workers (NASW), (2008). *Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers*. Retrieved from:
<https://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp>.
- Norton, Q. (2014, October 3). The White problem. *Medium*. Retrieved from:
<https://medium.com/message/whiteness-3ead03700322#.w14fmeepe>.
- Nylund, D. (2006). Critical multiculturalism, whiteness, and social work: Towards a more radical view of cultural competence. *Journal of Progressive Human Services, 17*(2), 27-42.
- Omi, M. and Winant, H. (2014). *Racial formation in the United States* (3rd Edition,

- Kindle Edition). Retrieved from Amazon.com.
- Osteen, P. J., Vanidestine, T. J. & Sharpe, T. L. (2013) Multicultural curriculum and MSW students' attitudes about race and diversity. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work, 33*(2), 111-128.
- Park, Y. (2005) Culture as deficit: A critical discourse analysis of the concept of culture in contemporary social work discourse. *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare, 32*(3). 11-33.
- Park, Y. (2008). Facilitating injustice: Tracing the role of social workers in the World War II internment of Japanese Americans. *Social Service Review, 82*(3). 447-483.
- Pewewardy, N. & Severson, M. (2003) A threat to liberty: White privilege and disproportionate minority incarceration. *Journal of Progressive Human Services, 14*(2), 53-74.
- Pewewardy, N. (2004) The political is personal: The essential obligation of White feminist family therapists to deconstruct White privilege. *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy, 16*(1), 53-67.
- Pewewardy, N. (2007). *Challenging White privilege: Critical discourse for social work education*. Alexandria, VA: Council on Social Work Education Press.
- Pewewardy, N. & Almeida, R. V. (2014) Articulating the scaffolding of White supremacy: The act of naming in liberation. *Journal of Progressive Human Services, 25*(3), 230-253.
- Phan, P., Woods, D. R., Vugia, H., Chu, M., Wright, P., & Jones, T. (2009). Teaching note: A social work program's experience in teaching about race in the curriculum. *Journal of Social Work Education, 45*(2), 325-333.

- Plionis, E. M. & Lewis, H. J. (1996). Teaching cultural diversity and oppression: Preparation for risk--the Coverdale model. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work, 12*(1-2), 175-192.
- Pon, G. (2009). Cultural competency as new racism: An ontology of forgetting. *Journal of Progressive Human Services, 20*(1), 59-71.
- Poole, D. L. (1998). Politically correct or culturally competent? *Health & Social Work, 23*(3), 163-166.
- Potocky, M. (1997). Multicultural social work in the United States: a review and critique. *International Social Work 40*(3). 315-326.
- Redmond, M. (2010). Safe space oddity: Revisiting critical pedagogy. *Journal Of Teaching in Social Work, 30*(1), 1-14.
- Reupert, A. (2009). Students' use of self: Teaching implications. *Social Work Education, 28*(7), 765-777.
- Rodenborg, N. A. & Boisen, L. A. (2013). Aversive racism and intergroup contact theories: Cultural competence in a segregated world. *Journal of Social Work Education, 49*(4), 564-579.
- Ronnau, J. P. (1994). Teaching cultural competence: Practical ideas for social work educators. *Journal of Multicultural Social Work, 3*(1), pp. 29-42.
- Rubin, A., and Babbie, E. R. (2011). *Research methods for social work*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole Cengage Learning.
- Saleh, M. F., Anngela-Cole, L. & Boateng, A. (2011). Effectiveness of diversity infusion modules on students' attitudes, behavior, and knowledge. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work, 20*(3), 240-257.

- Schiele, J. H. (2007). Implications of the equality-of-oppressions paradigm for curriculum content on people of color. *Journal of Social Work Education, 43*(1), 83-100
- Shine, P. (2011). White professors taking responsibility for teaching white students about race, racism, and privilege. *Journal of Progressive Human Services, 22*(1), 50-67.
- Singleton, S. M. (1994). Faculty personal comfort and the teaching of content on racial oppression. *Journal of Multicultural Social Work, 3*(1), 5-16.
- Social Work Congress (2005). *Social work imperatives for the next decade*. Washington, DC: National Association of Social Workers. Retrieved from: <https://www.socialworkers.org/congress/imperatives0605.pdf>.
- Social Work Policy Institute, (2014). *Achieving racial equity: Calling the social work profession to action*. Washington, DC: National Association of Social Workers. Retrieved from: <http://www.socialworkpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/SWPI-Racial-Equity-Report.pdf>.
- Sowers-Hoag, K. M & Sandau-Beckler, P. (1996). Educating for cultural competence in the generalist curriculum. *Journal of Multicultural Social Work, 4*(3), 37-56.
- Srivastava, S. (2005). "You're calling me a racist?" The moral and emotional regulation of antiracism and feminism. *Journal of Women in Culture and Society, 31*(1), 30-62.
- Steinberg, D. M. (2004). *The social work student's research handbook*. New York: Haworth Social Work Practice Press.

- Sullivan, S. (2006). *Revealing Whiteness: The unconscious habits of racial privilege*.
Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press.
- Sullivan, S. (2014). *Good white people: The problem with middle class white anti-racism*.
Albany, Kindle Edition. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Swank, E., Asada, H., & Lott, J. (2001). Student acceptance of a multicultural education:
Exploring the role of a social work curriculum, demographics, and symbolic
racism. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 10(2), pp. 85-103.
- Tatum, B. D. (2003). *“Why are all the Black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?” and
other conversations about race*. New York, NY, USA: Basic Books.
- Todd, S. (2011). “That power and privilege thing”: Securing whiteness in community
work. *Journal of Progressive Human Services*, 22(2), 117-134.
- Van Soest, D. (1994). Social work education for multicultural practice and social justice
advocacy: A field study of how students experience the learning process. *Journal
of Multicultural Social Work*, 3(1), pp. 17-28.
- Van Soest, D. (1996). Impact of social work education on student attitudes and behavior
concerning oppression. *Journal of Social Work Education* 32(2). pp. 191-202
- Van Soest, D., Garcia, B., & Graff, D. (2001). Sensitivity to racism and social work
professors' responsiveness to critical classroom events. *Journal Of Teaching In
Social Work*, 21(1/2), 39-58.
- Varghese, R. (2013). *Transformation in action: Approaches to incorporating race and
racism into clinical social work practice & curriculum* (Doctoral dissertation).
Dissertations. Paper 736.
- Vodde, R. (2000). De-centering privilege in social work education: Whose job is it

- anyway? *Race, Gender & Class in Social Work and Practice*, 7(4), 139-160
- Werkmeister Rozas, L. (2007). Engaging dialogue in our diverse social work student body: A multilevel theoretical process model. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 43(1), 5-30.
- Werkmeister Rozas, L. & Miller, J. (2009) Discourses for social justice education: The web of racism and the web of resistance. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 18(1-2), 24-39.
- Wong, Y. R. (2004). Knowing through discomfort: A mindfulness-based critical social work pedagogy. *Critical Social Work*, 5(1). Retrieved from:
<http://www1.uwindsor.ca/criticalsocialwork/knowning-through-discomfort-a-mindfulness-based-critical-social-work-pedagogy>.
- Wong, Y. R. (2013). Returning to silence, connecting to wholeness: Contemplative pedagogy for critical social work education. *Journal of Religion & Spirituality In Social Work*, 32(3), 269-285.

Appendix A

Approval by Smith College Human Subjects Review Committee



School for Social Work
Smith College
Northampton, Massachusetts 01063
T (413) 585-7950 F (413) 585-7994

February 18, 2016

Lea Broh

Dear Lea,

You did a very nice job on your revisions. Your project is now approved by the Human Subjects Review Committee.

Please note the following requirements:

Consent Forms: All subjects should be given a copy of the consent form.

Maintaining Data: You must retain all data and other documents for at least three (3) years past completion of the research activity.

In addition, these requirements may also be applicable:

Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of the study (such as design, procedures, consent forms or subject population), please submit these changes to the Committee.

Renewal: You are required to apply for renewal of approval every year for as long as the study is active.

Completion: You are required to notify the Chair of the Human Subjects Review Committee when your study is completed (data collection finished). This requirement is met by completion of the thesis project during the Third Summer.

Congratulations and our best wishes on your interesting study.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elaine Kersten'.

Elaine Kersten, Ed.D.
Co-Chair, Human Subjects Review Committee

CC: Fred Newdom, Research Adviso

Appendix B

Protocol Change Approval by Smith College Human Subjects Review Committee



School for Social Work
Smith College
Northampton, Massachusetts 01063
T (413) 585-7950 F (413) 585-7994

March 9, 2016

Lea Broh

Dear Lea,

I have reviewed your amendment and it looks fine. The amendment to your study is therefore approved. Thank you and best of luck with your project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elaine Kersten'.

Elaine Kersten, Ed.D.
Co-Chair, Human Subjects Review Committee

CC: Fred Newdom, Research Advisor

Appendix C

Recruitment Email Sent Directly to Faculty

Dear Professor NAME,

I am a second-year MSW student seeking volunteer research participants. This research will be used to complete my Masters thesis at the Smith College School for Social Work.

I am seeking to interview professors who have taught at least one course on race and racism in an MSW program. My research focuses on how white MSW students engage with this course material. As a white person and social work student in my own process of unlearning racism, I am interested in how and why white people resist or accept engagement with issues of race and racism. I hope through this research to learn more about white resistance and acceptance of information on race and racism, and about how this phenomenon manifests in and impacts MSW programs.

I write to request your participation in this research. Participation will of course be kept confidential. It involves a 45 to 60 minute in-person or phone interview on your experiences with white MSW students while teaching a course on race and racism. I will also ask about your identities, your approach to teaching this course, and how teaching the material to white students has impacted you.

Please contact me at lbroh@smith.edu with any questions or if you are willing to participate. Thank you in advance for your time and generosity in supporting this research.

Best, Lea Broh

This study protocol has been reviewed and approved by the Smith College School for Social Work Human Subjects Review Committee (HSRC).

Appendix D

Recruitment Email Sent to Listservs and Posted on Facebook

I am seeking to interview volunteers for research on white MSW students' engagement with issues of race and racism. I am looking at how courses on race and racism are taught in MSW programs and how white students engage with the material. **If you have taught or are currently teaching a course on race and racism in an MSW program, I would like to interview you!**

I am a second-year MSW student at the Smith College School for Social Work and this research will be used to complete my Masters thesis. As a white person and social work student in my own process of unlearning racism, I am interested in how and why white people resist or accept engagement with antiracism. I hope through my research to learn more about white resistance and acceptance, and to contribute to knowledge about how they manifest and impact MSW programs.

Participation will be kept confidential, and involves a 45 to 60 minute interview on your experiences with white MSW students while teaching a course on race and racism. I will also ask about your teaching approach and how teaching this material to white students impacts you. This interview will be audio recorded with your permission. **If you are interested in participating in this research, know someone who may be, or have questions please email me at lbroh@smith.edu.**

Best, Lea Broh

This study protocol has been reviewed and approved by the Smith College School for Social Work Human Subjects Review Committee (HSRC).

Appendix E

Interview Guide

- 1) Please tell me about the most important aspects of your identity.
 - a) Race(s) and/or ethnicity(ies)?
 - b) Age?
 - c) Socioeconomic status?
 - d) Gender?
 - e) Sexuality?
 - f) Religion?
 - g) Where did you grow up?
 - h) What else is important to you?
- 2) Please tell me about the MSW course(s) you have taught on race and racism.
 - a) How long have you taught this course?
 - b) What does the course cover?
 - c) What are your teaching style and methods?
 - d) What are your goals for students in these courses?
 - e) Why do you teach these courses?
- 3) Please tell me about your experiences with white students in courses on race and racism.
 - a) Have you experienced white students being receptive to material on race and racism? Can you give specific examples?
 - b) Have you experienced white students' resisting material on race and racism? Can you give specific examples?
 - c) Are there other experiences you have had with white students that you wouldn't categorize as either accepting or resisting the material? What happened?
 - d) How do your experiences with white students compare/relate to your experiences with students of color?
- 4) Please tell me about any patterns you have observed in how white students relate to the material in your course.
 - a) Do you think white students' engagement is affected by your identit(ies)?
 - b) Do you think white students' engagement is affected by your teaching methods?
 - c) Do white students tend to respond in particular ways to particular types of material? What material?
 - d) Are there populations/groups of white students that seem more likely to accept or reject material on race and racism?
 - e) Are there other patterns or tendencies you've noticed?
 - f) Has there been change over time, either within a course or across courses?
- 5) Please tell me about how your experiences with white students in these courses have affected you.
 - a) What emotions have come up for you in interacting with white students?

- b) Has anything surprised you? Changed you?
- c) Will you continue teaching these courses in the future? Why/why not?
- 6) What else would you like to tell me about this subject or your experiences?
- 7) Do you have any feedback for me?

Appendix F

Informed Consent Form



2015-2016

**Consent to Participate in a Research Study
Smith College School for Social Work • Northampton, MA**

.....

Title of Study:

Confronting race and racism: Perspectives of instructors on how white MSW students engage with course material on race and racism

Investigator(s):

Lea Broh, Smith College School for Social Work MSW Program, xxx-xxx-xxxx,
lbroh@smith.edu

.....

Introduction

- You are being asked to be in a research study exploring how white MSW students engage with course material on race and racism.
- You were selected as a possible participant because you have taught at least one course at an MSW program on race and racism.
- We ask that you read this form and ask any questions that you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

Purpose of Study

- The purpose of the study is to explore how white MSW students engage with course material on race and racism. It consists in interviewing instructors of MSW courses on race and racism to gather their perspectives and experiences with white students in these courses.
- This study is being conducted as a research requirement for my master's in social work degree.
- Ultimately, this research may be published or presented at professional conferences.

Description of the Study Procedures

- If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to do the following things: participate in an interview either by phone or in-person with the researcher for approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. You will be given the interview questions in advance, and given an opportunity to follow up with the researcher as you choose. You will also be provided with a copy of the findings if you choose.

Risks/Discomforts of Being in this Study

- The study has the following risks. First, the study explores complex and potentially difficult subjects. You may experience emotional distress in recounting personal experiences with white MSW students while you taught a course on race and racism. Second, the study explores your experiences, which may include opinions that differ from official positions of the MSW program with which you are affiliated. .

Benefits of Being in the Study

- The benefits of participation are the opportunity to explore and process with an interested person your experiences with white MSW students who have taken your course(s) on race and racism. You will be able to express your opinions and beliefs about the work you have done.
- The benefits to social work/society are that this information may help inform future interventions and pedagogy designed to support and challenge white MSW students and social workers to acknowledge racism and pursue racial justice. It may also highlight areas for further research in future.

Confidentiality

- Your participation will be kept confidential. The researcher will conduct an interview by phone or in-person, depending on feasibility. The time and location of the interview will be at your convenience. You have been recruited by one of the following methods: you received a recruitment email directly from the researcher and/or you were referred by an acquaintance. If you were referred to the study, the person who referred you will not be informed of your participation. In addition, the records of this study will be kept strictly confidential. The audio-recordings, notes, and transcription will be stored in a password-protected file and no one but the researcher will have access to them.
- All research materials including recordings, transcriptions, analyses and consent/assent documents will be stored in a secure location for three years according to federal regulations. In the event that materials are needed beyond this period, they will be kept secured until no longer needed, and then destroyed. All electronically stored data will be password protected during the storage period. We will not include any information in any report we may publish that would make it possible to identify you.

Payments/gift

- You will not receive any financial payment for your participation.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

- The decision to participate in this study is entirely up to you. You may refuse to take part in the study *at any time* (up to the date noted below) without affecting your relationship with the researchers of this study or Smith College. Your decision to refuse will not result in any loss of benefits (including access to services) to which you are otherwise entitled. You have

the right not to answer any single question, as well as to withdraw completely up to the point noted below. If you choose to withdraw, I will not use any of your information collected for this study. You must notify me of your decision to withdraw by email or phone by April 1, 2016. After that date, your information will be part of the thesis, dissertation or final report.

Right to Ask Questions and Report Concerns

- You have the right to ask questions about this research study and to have those questions answered by me before, during or after the research. If you have any further questions about the study, at any time feel free to contact me, Lea Broh at lbroh@smith.edu or by telephone at (xxx) xxx-xxxx. If you would like a summary of the study results, one will be sent to you once the study is completed. If you have any other concerns about your rights as a research participant, or if you have any problems as a result of your participation, you may contact the Chair of the Smith College School for Social Work Human Subjects Committee at (413) 585-7974.

Consent

- Your signature below indicates that you have decided to volunteer as a research participant for this study, and that you have read and understood the information provided above. You will be given a signed and dated copy of this form to keep.

.....

Name of Participant (print): _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Researcher(s): _____ Date: _____

.....

[if using audio or video recording, use next section for signatures:]

1. I agree to be audio taped for this interview:

Name of Participant (print): _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Researcher(s): _____ Date: _____

2. I agree to be interviewed, but I do not want the interview to be taped:

Name of Participant (print): _____

Signature of Participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature of Researcher(s): _____

Date: _____

Appendix G

Instructor Descriptions of Course Content and Teaching Philosophies on Race and Racism

Professor A

Course content.

- “Students were asked to understand what social identities are, understand what the meaning of race is, what is racism, understand the historical content around the construction of race, as well as understand the systemic implications of racism as an institutional interpersonal and individual phenomenon. And so they were asked to engage in those pieces. They were also asked to explore what it means in the context of the social work profession: in what ways has the profession of social work contributed to the sustainability of racism and social service systems as well as its role in also helping to dismantle the systems and institutionalized structures. That was a very brief overview of a lot of content. I would say there is also a lot of theory involved. We have students read a text called *Critical race theory* which is I think a very good primer on what race theory is, as well as in the other pieces of material based on my own areas of interest.”
- “I created a course called *Understanding culture through narrative*. That course while it does not have race explicitly in the title, what we asked students to do in this course is read memoirs. And we deliberately pick memoirs based on the population in [city]. So we have students read a memoir by a Puerto Rican author and memoir by a Haitian author, a memoir by someone who is African-American and a memoir by someone who is white. And we have it reflect the population of

[city] because students are going to be working in [city] for their field placement and [school of social work] attracts a lot of students who decide to stay in [city] after they graduate. So in that class we do much more in-depth conversations about the role of race globally and intersections of national identity and race, and issues of immigration and class. Because of the format of that class, and because students are also in small groups, we have them in small groups select a memoir based on a cultural group that they're interested in. They are asked to do a much more in-depth study of what culture means, what does culture mean to identity, and those pieces of that course is the more advanced course that I taught that intersect with race but also these other themes.”

Teaching philosophy and pedagogy.

- “I carry a strong position around critical race theory because I think it's a good way to approach discussions of race and racism and I think critical race theory is very useful. for that purpose. I also would say I bring a strong Black feminist framework to how I address issues of intersectionality, and that's a key piece to me, teaching courses on race and racism, is making sure intersectionality is highlighted.”
- “I found that we had to spend a lot more time getting to know each other and making everyone feel comfortable having hard conversations. So there was a lot more time spent doing icebreakers like ‘crossing the line’ and lots of use of anonymous index cards so people could ask their questions and help them feel comfortable.”

- “I always at some point to figure out a way for students to do caucus grouping...when I've had classes with all white students I've had them do caucus groups based on class identity. Primarily to try and reinforce the point around the value of people talking with folks who they can share a common experience with. I do believe very strongly that caucus groups work. Even when students may feel like they are not working I think there's something being gained in those moments too.”

Professor B

Course content.

- “Many schools have a social justice course, and as part of that, in terms of framing the course...in terms of introducing people to understanding their social identity and the ways in which their identity is sort of engaged within a larger system. And so I use it as a framework to then talk about racism as one aspect of oppression. So racism, I talk about sexism, and homophobia, heterosexism, ethno religious oppression, which I bring back to racism in terms of thinking about islamophobia or anti-semitism. And then in Practice I sort of start with that in terms of getting students to understand themselves, in terms of personal and social identities and the ways in which their identities are at play in their exchanges with their clients. And that it's important to understand race and racism, white supremacy, and it the context of their own identities, the institution, the history of institutions, the history of various issues related to larger macro issues that show up in terms of their one-on-one exchanges.”

Teaching philosophy and pedagogy.

- “Social justice education is about not only teaching content related to oppression but helping me understand the pedagogical processes, helping me think about curriculum, helping me think about my identity as a learner and how that impacts how I teach, and helping me think about identities and history of students coming in the room...and also thinking about the larger history of higher education, why certain people are in my classroom versus others. And then my training in women gender and sexuality studies, particularly thinking intersectionally and having a multilevel analysis, micro, meso, and macro. Really understanding and linking the micro level issues that clients may come in with, and linking them back to meso and macro processes.”
- “Let's say people learn best through lecture, and I need to be attuned to trying on a different approach and that's the same as practice. I might love psychodynamic theories but say someone has an anxiety disorder. And what I've done in terms of using psychodynamic theories might help them to a certain point, but I have to be comfortable with trying on other modalities as a way to help support my client.”
- “I want people to be aware of themselves and others, I want them to be aware of assumptions they bring in the room and how that impacts the work they do, I want them to have some common language, know what stereotypes, discrimination, are, what white supremacy is, what racism and microaggressions are. I want them to be able to think about how they might practice with clients, and also interrupt oppression because the work you do is not only with clients but in agencies and institutions.”

- “I do a needs assessment form that asks people about their identities and the ways in which what their previous experience with the material is. You'd ask in an intake, have they been in counseling before. And asking about their different learning styles, as a way to learn who my students are and so on.”
- “I talk about social identity and we do this thing called a cultural share. Where we have students bring in...something about your racial identity. And then you can pick something else...You bring in a picture, you might bring in song, you might bring in a piece of jewelry, whatever. So it allows people to story tell, which I think can be really powerful. And then after they share I might say, I ask questions, like what identity did you focus on, which you didn't? Which ones show up in your placement, which ones don't? How does this discussion relate back to the readings on social identity and how it's structured? As a way to, for me, in terms of teaching it's important to do personal reflection but also linking to concepts and theories.”

Professor C

Course content.

- “Basically it's about building in kind of shared foundational understanding of structural, institutional, interpersonal, individual oppression, with a focus on racism for the first basically month of the class. And then after that...if I remember correctly, then we shift into identity-based, which has its pluses and minuses. In terms of the way that we approach it--and when I say we I mean my co-teacher and myself, we teach the course in a fairly different way from most of the other professors and what I've heard from the students, and my own

understanding. [My co-teacher] and I try to bring in pretty much immediately an intersectional lens. So when we're talking about any identity group we're also talking about the complexities of that. Like for example LGBTQ identities is a simple one that are often whitewashed and seen as affluent, et cetera, so always bringing in, how is race complicating this? How is class? How is religion? I mean to the extent that we can in a two hour class."

- "So intersectionality is one of the key pieces throughout, and we also ground it in the four I's of oppression...So there's internalized, interpersonal, both of which are the ones that people most often associate to any kind of oppression, particularly racism, and then there's also the institutional and ideological, and so we use that as a framework throughout the entire course. And I would say each year we've gotten better at using that as an organizing principle, because it helps to frame that for folks, people want to go to bias, which is really interpersonal, and want to stay there, but instead we're gonna keep bringing it back to systems-level and structural level."
- "We put in a lot of blogs, we put in a lot of news articles, a lot of short videos, like Jay Smooth if you're familiar, it's like 5 minute clips and things like that. And part of that is just really for a range of learning styles, but also part of it is because I think it's really important for students to see and hear people's stories from themselves. So it's like reading academic articles that are written by people of color about people of color is great, but also it's really different when you're reading, for example like one blog I feel like is really powerful is an xoJane article by a South Asian trans woman just talking about her reactions to the

coverage of the murders of trans women of color. And it's like that is so much more fucking powerful than academic articles we have about the rates of trauma in transgender populations.”

Teaching philosophy and pedagogy.

- “Making sure that as we’re talking about racism, really kind of driving home the core foundational concepts. So again the difference between interpersonal bias and systemic racism. And then extrapolating from that that we’re not just talking about racism as we continue through the class, we’re also talking about heterosexism, classism, et cetera...I think that we try to be very careful to not rank oppression, and not kind of say like “OK so you’ve got 10 oppression points!” But again to approach it from an intersectional perspective. And I would say certainly for myself an anti-racist, feminist lens is where I operate from.”
- “I’m very deeply committed to reflective and experiential learning, including popular education, applied learning...we kind of break down each of our lessons...into what types of learning styles are engaged with each component of the lesson. So as opposed to just having all discussion, not that that’s bad necessarily but it really only creates a space for a certain type of learner, and so a big part of my belief of teaching is that we have to model all the liberatory, as much as possible, the liberatory practices that we’re trying to teach people. Because otherwise if I’m telling you that different people, because of identities, experiences, value systems, have different ways of understanding things, different ways of learning things, and all I’m doing is lecturing, then there’s a disconnect between what I’m modelling, and it does a disservice to the learning.”

- “We try to incorporate a lot of self-reflection, a lot of different kinds of exercises, simulations, games. Like bringing playfulness into the room is really important I think because it is so painful and heavy.”
- “We do a pre-survey before the class begins, to get a sense of where the class is at, which has been highly, very very helpful to me, just to have a sense of where are people coming from. So we ask questions about pertinent identities, we have it as an open-ended question, like ‘how do you identify?’ versus having like ‘what’s your race, what’s your class?’ Just leaving it open. And then asking about people's experience with social justice work in general, and not defining it, just leaving it open...We also ask about learning styles, and we actually have a list for that because I find often when people are so used to didactic learning, they actually don't know how they learn...So that’s been really helpful for us to get a sense of who’s in the room before they come in.”
- “We do a lot of framing at the beginning of the class to talk about comfort zones and triggers, and discuss what can happen in conversations around oppression. We have white fragility articles on our syllabus obviously, but from the first class start framing out ‘this is what’s gonna happen, and it’s an opening for growth, and you can either decide to sit in the fire and see what happens and what transformation can occur, or you can kind of shut it down and you’ll stay where you are.’”

Professor D

Course content.

- ‘It kind of covers basic things like power, privilege and difference, different theories about understanding oppression. It covers Whiteness and white fragility, and those kinds of theories about being a white person. Social identities, that kind of model. It talks about cultural humility, looking at the intersectionality and the intersections of oppression. Microaggressions and internalized oppression, historical trauma and colonization. And then social justice frameworks and theories of change, ways of changing at a structural level. Coalition-building, allyship, so more of a, more at a micro or meso level. And then self-care, healing, coping, and resistance, is the last section.’

Teaching philosophy and pedagogy.

- “All students are coming into the classroom with varying degrees of comfort with education, and varying experiences with it, good, bad, positive, negative. And to create access and to create the ability to have a free or education as freedom, as bell hooks would say, I think that we have to work pretty hard to change the environment of the classroom, as instructors. And so typically I spend actually the whole first day doing a lot of that work, which is really kind of making very visible my politics, my belief about education, kind of what I’m saying to you right now, that I know everybody has these different experiences, that for a lot of folks education has been a place of exclusion. And that what I’m trying to create in the classroom here is a place where everybody can access the material, that everybody can engage in the conversations, and so I want to use different kinds of modalities for teaching. So videos and websites, and writing and talking and small groups and big groups, and lots of different ways of getting at the

material...I do as much as I can to kind of constantly be deconstructing myself in front of the class, and deconstructing the classroom.”

- “I think, it’s modelling a way to, especially for white students, I think it’s modelling a way to be in the world that, one is, we, white people are not used to! Like putting yourself in a vulnerable situation where you can be hurt, where you can have pain, where you can feel other people’s pain, that’s the place that we need to be. And be willing to experience that. And so that’s another piece for the white students that I really want to teach. And the other part is, I want to show and teach and model resiliency and resistance. And so that is another piece that I try to work in as well, so even when we’re talking about things that are very challenging and difficult, you know trying to really celebrate the ideas that come up in class, and the ways that students come up with thinking about resistance and resiliency in class.”

Professor E

Course content.

- “I started teaching human behavior and the social environment courses, so really general sort of foundational course that I found to be lacking really in critical knowledge a lot of really the more systemic impact for people as they develop. And it was really focused on psychological development and some identity development but really spanning the life course. And so I actually took that course and started teaching it but infused it with anti-racist pedagogy and sort of reframed the way that I was teaching human behavior across the life course. So the perspective of looking at oppression and structural racism and history.”

- “In classes that are more 101, [my goal is] to plant the seed of A) learning about history, so positioning contemporary social work practice in a historical context, and then do understanding identity development and the stages of identity development. And B) getting students to really critically self-examine where they are with their own identity, and how it relates to their engagement in this topic. And the third is always to read the *Code of ethics*, and to have everyone leaving understanding that this is actually a mandate for our practice.”

Teaching philosophy and pedagogy.

- “A lot of it is based on principles of transformative learning. And with the idea being that when we give a group of people an opportunity to flexibly think together, that we can transform both our understandings of ourselves and also what’s in the space. And I try to apply that to everything that I’m teaching, like walking in knowing that I’ll be changed by the process, people will be changed by that process. And if I go rigid at any point in thinking about what *has* to happen, that that’s probably actually going to be prohibitive of learning. And so that framework is how I start any of the courses I teach, but specifically around race and racism it’s very trauma-informed for me...Nobody does well, including myself, when we activate the defenses, when we activate the trauma response of ‘I have to get out of this room, it's really dangerous’ or there’s a threat to my humanity and there's a threat to my safety, literally, in this space”
- “I do my own work before entering the class. I come in relaxed. And I have to come in relaxed, I cannot come in stressed or I really won't be doing a great job.”

- “I started teaching these experiential courses, like lab courses on intersectionality and oppression, and so they were taught pretty much like the classroom as a lab and so we would go through a series every week of social experiments together, and then self-reflective practice on what those experiences brought up within us. And I included myself in that as faculty so I was also kind of working on experimenting with a lack of any power dynamic in the room around hierarchy and had students co-facilitating.”

Professor F

Course content.

- “I think we have to shift, or I try to shift even the beginnings of the field. So Jane Addams, Hull Houses, I would argue that the first social workers were not that. I think they were people of color who were surviving and creating systems around survival, like the Underground Railroad, that people who were enslaved in the south, people of African descent who were enslaved in the south created. Like an entire system, a network of support and survival. That to me represents the founding of social work so I think if we try to upend the ways in which White supremacy continues to persist in every aspect of how we learn this field, then what if we just started from a different place? So, there’s a lot of literature in History and in American Studies and blah blah blah, but not in this field. So that’s the, I would like to write that textbook! [laughs] What would upending White supremacy in social work look like if we shift from the frame of where we start?”
- “I work with students to identify problems that we’re seeing in communities, ‘social problems.’ And then thinking about, what are the policies that codify those

problems? In order for us to question the idea that individual behavior necessarily is the only factor that contributes to negative outcomes. In communities of color in particular, instead it's policies and very purposeful ones that create those realities. And so our work is to question or just to even name the fact that these realities are created on purpose. Whether it's looking at stark racial disproportionality in the criminal justice system, just to look at the ways in which ushering the age of mass incarceration and the drug wars--questioning the ways in which the war on drugs then ushered in the age of incarceration and the ways in which it created that reality is something that we really have to question--which is what we did last night in my class! So that's a way of thinking I try to share or practice in my class is looking at, what are the results we see in communities and what are the policies we see that codify those realities for people?"

- "That course starts with some framing ideas around intersectionality, power and privilege in the broadest definition, and then does in-depth work looking at the different ways in which communities of color and then White communities experience, or how they relate to power, privilege, and oppression. It's a lot of learning, like one class is on, and in a little bit of a reductionist way, which I sort of question, like looking at the Latino community. Like, what's the difference between Latino and Hispanic?"
- "The course is structured around different communities and their very broad experiences. Really introducing, or giving students a chance to think about "as a social worker how do I relate to different communities?" regardless of their own identities. Being in various communities of color, White folks, middle eastern,

north African, Muslim north African people, et cetera. So there's a course on each one of those communities and then a lot of time for critical reflection, so 'what were some of the first things that you remember learning about' --in this case, just to give an example, 'Latino or Hispanic communities?' Where did those ideas come from, if people do identify in that way? 'When was the first time you knew that you were Hispanic or Latino? What solidified that?' So each class brings in that level of interest and introspection. How do I know what I know? And then providing some historical information about why racial identifiers exist in the ways in which they do. The ways in which the government labels, and the necessity to order people has resulted in racial identification. And how it's so much more complex than that."

- "I assume that we are all on board, I'm not gonna be like "is the world racist?" I don't care, like we're past that, I can't talk about that because I don't have time for dwelling on small stuff. I'll teach some formative concepts, sure, but I won't spend too much time. Like in the policy class we do 'what is race? Race is, racism is: race privilege plus power. Under this construction, White people are the only people who can be racist, moving on.' Like I can't dwell on all that stuff. If people are challenged by it, I give them resources and I tell them to do their own work."

Teaching philosophy and pedagogy.

- "There's a lot of writing out there on the depoliticization of social work through the professionalization of the field. So it's harder to be a political being given the forces at work, given licensure, and that movement more broadly in [city] and

also nationally too. So that said, I still think, or even more so, I think it's important to embrace a really deep and critical politic around race and racism in this work. And so I try to embody that in my day to day teaching and also in my life, in general."

- "I really do, particularly in that class, see myself as a facilitator, less so than a teacher and in a professorial sort of role. Because people are coming in with so much expertise. And same is true in policy, like people who've been working on the front lines of homelessness know directly the impact, I mean they know the impact of what the policies have been! They see it every day. And so to be able to really uplift that, and ensure that people's real lived experiences as social workers and as professionals is also seen as valid is really really important to me. Because I think this profession, like many, only values really specialized or really what we deem as sophisticated types of knowledge, and then in doing so leaves the knowledge of people on the front lines, who are overwhelmingly women and people of color out."
- "My work is to really question the policies that result from these core constructions. So it's interesting to approach the work from, or focusing on the more structural ways in which racism in particular manifests because it gives folks an actionable thing to dismantle. If we are concerned about the prison system, we can think about policing practices, and the war on drugs as things to fix. It gives White people also an opportunity to actively engage and question the ways in which they are complicit. And so if we can just get there--all of us can do that, but like, the personal work in our heads will take a lifetime, and there are

things that we can do to fix structures in the interim that are lower-hanging fruit in some ways, as weird as that may be, if we really think about that [laughs]. There are things we can do, and we are and things are changing, very very very slowly.”

Professor G

Course content.

- The classes “talk about race on different, from different angles and on different levels. One of them is about personal racism and whiteness and one of them is about institutionalized and systemic racism and whiteness. So, I’m pretty intent on talking about both of those but then even before that we do a session on social identity in general, and how social identity gets constructed and how we internalize the values of what we’re told about ourselves, and the way that that impacts our identities as we grow. And also thinking about it generationally speaking, not just from what I’m experiencing now but from what my family experienced and what their family experienced and how that trickles down.”
- The class is “in your face, let’s address whatever your triggers are, like whether that’s around gender identity, whether that’s around sexual identity, disability, aging. And race is one of those subjects, that over the past couple of years has been made much more front and center and prominent in the, so even as we start to talk about gender, we talk about intersectionality. We talk about class, and we talk about intersectionality with race.”

Teaching philosophy and pedagogy.

- “My classes are extremely personal and self reflective in terms of, what are the messages I’ve internalized about my own race but also about people of other

racism? Like I've learned those things unconsciously but I need to unlearn them consciously. And become more aware of how this influences the way that I may see other people in my class that I may see other people, in my dorm that I may see, in my clients....It's highly interactive and highly personalized, but at the same time there's a matter of fact, like I don't really care if you think this is something you personally struggle with or not, I want you to leave this class feeling like it's something that you are absolutely ready to address in the clinical environment.”

- “I try really hard, even with the articles that I assign, I assign blogs and I assign videos, and YouTube videos and Vines and podcasts. As long as they have access to it, as long as they can get their hands on it, there’s nothing I won’t use for discussion material. And we watch videos in the class too. And so I feel like by bringing in more personal stories and stuff that is much less heavy and academic, people can come to the table with conversation and not feel like they are not able to contribute to that.”

Professor H

Course content.

- The course includes content on:
 1. Definitions of race, racism
 2. History of the social construction of race and racism in the United States
 3. Racial identity
 4. Microaggressions
 5. Gender and intersectionality

6. Analysis of institutions: Look at structural racism within institutions students are part of. Analysis of anti-racism work in institutions, and what it looks like to change an agency
 7. Applications to clinical practice
- “I’m committed to talking about structural racism, not so much interpersonal racism. Even though that’s harder because we’re most comfortable with talking about interpersonal racism.”

Teaching philosophy and pedagogy.

- “It’s funny because I have a very anti-authoritarian bent. But I expect that if you’ve signed up for grad school, that you come to school, you come to class, you do the readings, you stop worrying about your grades”
- “I tend to be super-positive, super-positive in classes, even when students get testy, and some of them get pretty testy.”
- “I tell my students, ‘I’m not sure you’re gonna be safe here. This class isn’t about safety, it’s about getting comfortable feeling uncomfortable.’”

Professor I

Course content.

- “The idea is that all students get some kind of fundamental understanding of how privilege, oppression and difference operate in our society. And I see it as, that’s really my only goal, that students leave with an understanding that diversity and oppression and privilege matter, and that they inform our practice and our practice, inform our practice on all levels micro all the way to macro, including

individual practice, policy, social programs, organizational work. I am expending to focus more on global issues than we have in the past, because I think we have to.”

- “The way I teach it is, it’s all about self-reflection and awareness. I think it’s interesting, our school requires these milestone assignments that all students have to do regardless of the section they’re in and the instructor they have in certain courses. And the milestone assignment for the diversity and oppression course is a self-reflection, and I think that’s interesting because it’s not, that gives you a hint into what the goal is at a school level. So the students have to do a lot of self-reflecting, they do weekly assignments where they self-reflect. They also do, they work in groups a lot because I want them to be exposed to different viewpoints on this topic. We do tons of class discussion. And then all of the readings are, the way I structure the readings and choose the readings based on this priority of exposing them to different viewpoints from people who are diverse. Because I can’t teach on other people’s experiences for groups that I have not been a member of. So it’s all structured that way, a lot of fiction, short stories.”

Teaching philosophy and pedagogy.

- “My teaching philosophy is based on my experience doing positive youth development work, and this idea that students need to feel safe. They need to feel a sense of belonging and connection before they can really learn anything. So I do a lot around building community, especially in courses like diversity and oppression, community building activities, communities where people feel safe to say things, safe to take risks. And then I focus on critical thinking and applied

knowledge. So everything I do requires students to learn something and then apply it in some way.”

- “They’re in small groups, they have to do an action toolkit that is, it takes them the whole semester to do in small groups. And each group picks their own topic, related to a social problem and diversity and oppression. And then they do a literature review and then they develop an actual action toolkit that includes resources and information on the problem, and they can do that however they want to do it. It can be a website, it can be a powerpoint, it can be a pamphlet, and then they present them to each other at the end of the semester.”
- “Every week, they have to do bullet points, which is just their thoughts on the readings. And they have to do ten bullet points, they can be thoughts, questions, self-reflection. It can even be like ‘this is just like that episode of *Orange is the new black*.’ What it can’t be is summary though. So I consider those forms of self-reflection so they’re reading and thinking about it. A lot of them will say ‘this is just like my sister’s experience’ or ‘I had a neighbor once who was transgender.’ So they’ll connect it to their own lives. And then at the end of the semester they also have to do a self-reflection paper...I have them make lists of three takeaways from the course, and then they have to explain them. And then they have to also list three biases or something they have, and then they have to identify at least one way that they will begin to address each of those. So some of them might say ‘I didn’t realize it but I am scared of Muslim people.’ And then they have to say what they might do to learn more or to kind of confront their own bias.”

Professor J

Course content.

- With a lot of White women the way to enter into the conversation about race is through feminism. Begin with introduction to Black feminism and intersectionality, and “there’s no way not to talk about race.”
- Explicit focus on institutional racism.

Teaching philosophy and pedagogy.

- Focus on “here are our commonalities, here’s what matters.” “We start with finding a shared identity, we don’t yet enter through difference.” “Finding the spaces where we have stuff in common allows for a more intersectional analysis and conversation”. Finding commonalities allows for trust, value, fun, and Professor J focuses on community, trust, and collaboration.
- “Be really transparent. Be authentic, be genuine, be vulnerable from day one. You have to model the kind of work you want them to engage in.” As bell hooks writes, be an “engaged and mutual classroom facilitator, not the teacher.”
- Students create a “Life Map” about how they came to social work school. There is often an experience of tragedy or of trauma, which is true for many women, and “we connect that to systemic oppression.”

Professor K

Course content.

- “There’s a standard syllabus that’s broken into three or four major segments. Four major segments. One is basic concepts of race and racism through a critical

race theory lens, so that's a beginning segment. Then there's a second segment on history of institutional oppression, there's a third segment on racial identity development, privilege and oppression, and then there's a final segment on application to clinical context as well as public policy. So it's broken into four segments, and there's standard readings through the course syllabus, with the option for professors who teach the course through different lived experiences and lenses to modify or emphasize some parts more than the other."

- "There's a need to focus on history, to understand the present context. My experience is that many students, even these very privileged students who come in from backgrounds where you might think that their educational background was better, I find many of them coming in with huge gaps in their understanding of history. Including even a basic level of the civil rights movement. So lots of stock stories, or just very very general, superficial knowledge, not knowing who the freedom riders were, things along that line. So my stress is on that, not everybody carries that same stress. My stress is also on integrating the understanding of race and racism through the lens of colonialism...For me it gives me a much better global grasp of what's going on in the world when it's integrated through that lens. So I have particular readings I bring into the course. I emphasize through that lens, understanding how race was constructed, on top of what was already being constructed in terms of dominance, religions, through religion, the enlightenment, all of those different aspects of it. And many students have told me they find that very valuable. To understand, to situate it in the larger context, the United States in the larger context of the world. Which I think

sometimes doesn't happen because we get very focused on the United States context, but I think it is helpful to bring in the global context.”

- “My emphasis is on cultural formation and Whiteness as a cultural phenomenon. And also that Whiteness can't, needs to be understood, and this I'm actually developing more my thinking and reading, is that there's ways Whiteness is refracted through the other identities that people may carry. So that you cannot separate it out so easily from intersectionality.”

Teaching philosophy and pedagogy.

- “There's been one core assignment that everybody has to do, which is the racial ethnic autobiography, so everybody has to do a racial/ethnic autobiography, which also builds on a cultural autobiography which they did in their *Introduction to human behavior* course. So they bring that autobiography that they did which is a first experience of looking at their different cultural identities, and they bring that into the racial justice course and re-look at it now, what would they change or update or do differently, or what comes out differently through looking at it through the lens of this course.”
- “The teaching philosophy for this particular material is that you have to live it to understand it in some way, which is then why for me the emphasis on doing experiential exercises and putting students into situations where they're working with or talking to people who are different from themselves, and doing fishbowls, all of those kinds of things. That this type of material cannot be learned on the basis of reading, and can't be learned if you're not living it in some way. I have also taken to asking students to, I do things that sometimes are, I have them

engage with each other on Blackboard discussions, in my class which sometimes can feel risky for students to put their thoughts and ideas out there in public, and have other students interacting. I've also asked students to go out and do some type of immersion action where they're either out there on the streets with something, or going to some other kind of event where they're actually getting an experience of how this material shows up in the world."

- "We also have ground rules that we do at the beginning. I call them 'ways of being' document. I use that from Occupy [Wall Street], I've brought in tools from Occupy. So we have ways of being that the class develops themselves. I don't present them to them, the class develops them. And I make suggestions if they haven't covered certain things. And in particular the suggestions I bring in from Occupy is the tool of oops/ouch/what's up with that? Which is like, if you've triggered somebody and somebody has said something you can say 'ouch' and we have to stop and process that. 'Oops' if you said something and you kind of want to take that back and reformulate what you've just said. And 'what's up with that?' you don't really know what's going on. And a couple of student in another class said 'well what about the wow and the ah ha moments?' So we added those too. But really like I language, respect, try to have respect for good intentions. Understand communication styles might be different, what's the difference between safety and discomfort. Feeling OK to be challenged, that includes me. Recognizing that I'm also learning from them. I've had many ouch and oops stuff in my life and I will continue. So I think it's important for me as the instructor to be humble and open about my own stuff, my own identity."

- “Every instructor is different, and every instructor will bring their own lens and material and experiences into this. And that I always tell the students too, is that we all have had positive and negative experiences in this, and as teachers, as instructors, and we bring that into whatever our growing edge is and also sometimes ways that we may inadvertently not, shut down or not be open to certain material, or contribute to not as great a learning experience for our students.”