
Whiteness Boundaries

Laboring for Meaning in Teacher Education Programs

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Abstract

This theoretical essay considers how we, two teacher educators, work toward justice in our university teacher education program. By examining the contradictions between our conceptions of teaching for justice and the application of shifting practice in relation to Whiteness, we locate and interrogate generative spaces for redesign in our literacy courses and mentoring. We use deconstruction as a theoretical frame to break down how Whiteness is embedded in the education system through discourse patterns, policy initiatives, course programming, and the social construction of the white body. We utilize boundary theory to help locate where justice might best be practiced in relation to our identified locations of Whiteness. In addition, we theorize that critical agency design (as an armature of boundary theory), when used along-

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side deconstruction, can pinpoint specific areas worth transforming *in praxis*. We identify how tools have been used in boundary crossing and then apply these notions specific to contemporary teacher education. We propose three modes of labor at this juncture: (1) laboring for meaning around compliance and care, (2) laboring for meaning around the languaging of equity and justice, and (3) laboring for meaning around the tools we use to mediate shared dialogue. We identify the implications of these epistemological, practice-based shifts in our work today as we continue to think through future iterations of teacher education programming. We come up for air with more questions than answers, yet the expansiveness is welcomed.

Introduction

University-based teacher education occurs within a system whose economic, social, and cultural foundation is white¹ settler colonialism (Gonzalez, 1999; Oakes et al., 2013). As such, Eurocentric ideologies pervade notions of professional knowledge and practice, including teacher evaluation and certification. From early common schools (Rice, 1893), the notion of educating children came from a colonial narrative of citizenship, morality, and, especially for students of indigenous, immigrant, refugee, and migrant students and families, documented efforts toward assimilation and subjugation (Mills, 1997). In doing so, written agreements (later, standards) of what was most valuable to teach and learn became a hegemonic backbone to formal schooling. For the interests of this conceptual essay, the same Western epistemology that grounds U.S. public schooling discourse also frames the schooling evaluations, coursework, and field experiences of (primarily white, female) educators who comprise 80% of the teachers in our nation's classrooms (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2019). The systems, however, no matter how populated with initiatives toward social justice and equity, are not actively shifting students' lived experiences in classrooms and schooling communities (Adair & Colegrove, 2021; Love, 2019; Tatum, 2015). We can do better.

In the following essay, we share how we are laboring toward justice in our university teacher education program by pinpointing the contradictions between the *conceptions* of teaching for justice and the application of shifting practice toward justice *in praxis*. These pinpoints, in conjunction with our growing understanding of Whiteness in literacy spaces, are what we call the *Whiteness boundaries* that shape notions of learning to teach. They include (but are not confined to) conceptions and connotations of expertise, structures and formats of growth, and prioritizing the written word over other modes of expression in general education coursework and field experiences for student teachers. Rath-

er than reducing the focus of engaged practice through reductionism and representational rhetoric, we endeavor to shift the lens and broaden the focus to locate generative spaces for redesign.

This charge toward justice must consider historical teaching discourses alongside local and present contexts. Contemporary inequities in schooling experiences based on racial and economic division have been made explicitly clear. Indeed, Adair and Colegrove (2021) argue that schooling has been *designed* for experiential segregation. If it is in the schools, this same design is in the programs preparing the teachers *for* schools. Indeed, we have witnessed many white people struggle to recognize how historical, systemic Whiteness in schooling manifests, even when steeped in teacher education programs that claim to champion social justice initiatives and antiracist agendas. We include ourselves in this struggle.

In the following, we endeavor to define Whiteness in education writ large and then sketch out local iterations of what we call *Whiteness boundaries* in learning to teach in one southwestern state. We take up this inquiry from our position as literacy instructors and researchers at a large public university by naming how we see Whiteness manifest in discourse patterning, educational policy, and the body in our work with preservice teachers. From there, we delineate what we call boundary-crossing *labors*, which we take up alongside critical design theory in our courses and mentorship to nuance and trouble these boundaries. We must also bear in mind our use of the term boundary or boundaries as sites of *multiple* intersecting tensions, which we do not presume or expect to quantify or objectively delineate. We will end with considerations and implications for course pedagogy.

Whiteness in Education

Whiteness and education, specifically U.S. schooling, follow closely nested patterning. White supremacy culture characteristics, such as paternalism, either/or thinking, worship of the written word, and one-right-way (Jones & Okun, 2001), undergird acceptability politics in normative schooling discourses. This is true, especially between and among educational stakeholders and policymakers. For instance, one can look at the integration of state-wide testing over the last few decades, which harnesses the same triumvirate of money, intelligence surveillance, and sorting as it did in the past (Lomawaima, 1993), albeit more surreptitiously. Educational equity is something teacher educators aspire toward, but disentangling the work from the words and routines of policy takes great critical precision. Consider how the

distance that Whiteness reifies through Euro-centric standards (Apple, 2013; Au, 2012; De Lissovoy, 2016), intellectualizing over listening (Kleinrock, 2021), and fears of not “doing” anti-racism right or causing harm (Gorski, 2019), continue to thwart actual changes that affect the living experiences for children in classrooms. Knowing the historical roots of U.S. public education—the histories and ideologies behind the shaping of bodies and minds—is imperative for all teachers.

Nevertheless, knowing how these roots continue to manifest is a crucial and critical practice. For those who are just starting this journey, recognizing *how* Whiteness has manifested into materiality over time is critical to recognizing it in action (Leonardo, 2009). Today’s policy and mandated curricular programming is designed and aligned through institutions born from the same systemic underpinnings, which reify and reproduce, quite effectively, the character model of appropriate teacher participation (Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011). This toil, this wave of continued making is ours to dam.

Whiteness in Teacher Preparation Programs

Consider how white “ways of being” saturate the character model of many new-teacher imaginaries. For example, *who* chooses to become a teacher and *how* they imagine the embodied work (as they develop their professional identity) speaks volumes about the ideological, often unyielding, white discourse of schooling when learning to teach (Hyttén & Adkins, 2001; King, 1991; Marx, 2006; Sleeter, 2001, 2016). These new teacher imaginaries (fed by media, consumer rhetoric, and social construction) reproduce “the dominant, (dis)embodied and normalized culture of Whiteness that pervades contemporary teacher education” (Brown, 2014, p. 327; Giroux, 1997). These and other forms of social conditioning around, for instance, linguistic and literary appropriateness (Flores & Rosa, 2015), literary imagination (Morrison, 1992), academic curriculum (Au, 2012), and certification expectations (Zeichner, 2020) are tremendous tides that design (and verily recruit) the standard teacher-model in the broader U.S. imaginary. Moreover, in our state, despite the impetus toward change and revised recruitment strategy, new teachers in urban districts are likely to end their career in three to five years (Texas Education Agency, 2022). Coaching teachers to stay, to endure, in harmful systems is not the answer. Nor is turning our scrutiny from the practices that uphold the hegemony.

To divest from white cultural characteristics as an armature of educational discourse can feel, for many educators, like an attack on their professional identity—one that is also profoundly nested in the four-

dational mechanics of the system. It can also feel counter to a lifetime investment toward conscientious practice and intellectual success. Conceptions of mastery and “truth” are inevitably called into question; herein lies a boundary of Whiteness. Haviland (2008) and other scholars address this by naming race-evasive strategies that teachers use to insulate themselves from responsibility and “gloss over” issues of race and racism “in ways that reinforce the status quo, even when they have a stated desire to do the opposite” (p. 41; Hytten & Adkins, 2001; King, 1991; Land, 2019; Marx, 2006; Sleeter, 2001, 2016; Wetzels et al., 2017; Wetzels et al., 2021). These hedging patterns show up in preparing new teachers because school systems operate in Whiteness-dominant, normed ways and are kept in place by people who subscribe to those norms (Ward, 2019). Therefore, in order to shift patterns of Whiteness from our dialogic praxis in teacher preparation programs, we must first identify the edges of the “official” white container within which we are steeped, and once we have the edges, we may strategically and intentionally cross them.

Whiteness and the White Body

Most, but not all, of our educational communities have been with other white educators. As white female identifying, our collective holds many spirits in our hands. Furthermore, it is no secret that the white woman’s role within the educational labor machine (her professional identity and how it manifests) is borne from a historical trope that both feeds *and is fed by* the mainstream imagination: popular media, memory, and literary craft (Morrison, 1992), among others. This teacher image is a prime example of “the ‘subject-function’ (p. 53), which produces a ‘subjectivity-effect’ (p. 48)” (Althusser, 2003, as quoted by Leonardo, 2004, pg. 41) that saturates the word *teacher* (as it did for the authors) with racialized subjectivity. In turn, this subjectivity shapes the actions and imaginations of a teacher candidate herself. Per Dunham and Alexander (2022), we urge readers to ponder: “it is not the white woman under scrutiny, but the system and practices that this intersectional identity has come to dominate that demands interrogation” (p. 16).

When we endeavor toward transformative practices and (re)construction of the white *body* as implicated in the perpetuation of Whiteness (Giroux, 1997), we must recognize our partiality within our intersecting identities. This is the development of racial literacy. We must also foster the requisite humility to locate instances of contradiction and tension within ourselves and the systems in which we participate. Yoon (2012) names these instances “Whiteness-at-work.” She writes:

“Recognizing Whiteness-at-work can become a tool for educators to interrupt taken-for-granted ideologies and actions and redirect discourse toward socially just aims to support educational opportunities for their students” (p. 609). For white people in particular, this labor must be done upon our own dime, time, and mind without the continued laboring and belaboring of our colleagues of color (Aguilar, 2020; Picower & Kohli, 2017; Pizarro & Kohli, 2020). This labor is our charge.

As white coaches and teacher educators, we recognize ourselves as sedimented beings with experiences and values made by and upon us, dipped and continuously (re)designed within discourses of participation, educational or otherwise. Our socio-cultural conditioning, our spectrum of identities, and our apprenticeship to observation (Lortie, 1975; Smagorinsky, 2020) sediment our classroom practices, bodies, and power to affect change in response to various problems of practice. Self-awareness of how Whiteness works in and through us is primary, as is the notion that language and identity continuously evolve, are fluid and complex, and are mediated through dialogic and intentional negotiations. These layers both guide and shape our desire toward responsive pedagogical design.

As literacy teacher educators, we also recognize the systemic white gaze embedded in the literature, media, programming, and resources available to teachers (Martin, 2021; Morrison, 1992). We also are aware of the “white listening subject” stance many educators embody as an observer or listeners when evaluating learners towards linguistic “appropriateness” in standards and teaching practice (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Sensory interpretations of success and accuracy, borne through racialized nervous systems, cannot be conflated with objectivity. In this manner, we follow critical literacy theorists (Freire, 1970; Janks, 2009, 2012; Luke, 2012) who teach us to “read the world” as a text, to disrupt and examine the commonplace, and per Sealy-Ruiz (2018), dig deeper into our racial consciousness if we are to fully embrace and teach to the collective capacity of the learners in our care. These intra-actions of bodies’ knowing, being, and doing (Barad, 2007) reside in what we might call the “official world” of teaching within the academy. Acknowledgment of such in ourselves is a means to get curious and to model for others the “grammars of settlement and structuration of conventional reason” (López López, & Nikey, 2020, p. 7) embedded in normative teaching practice.

Deconstruction

“Justice,” Derrida (1967) noted, “is what gives deconstruction its movement, that is, constantly to suspect, to criticize the given determinations of culture, of institutions...to respect this relation to the other is justice” (as quoted in Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 26). For many (white) people, this process evokes tremendous emotions, yet we cannot allow this to stop the discourse of race in teacher education (Matias, 2016). In taking up this frame for our work with teachers, we endeavor to begin identifying the traces, per Derrida, that are the “condition(s) of thought and experience” (Derrida, 1967, as quoted in Jackson & Mazzei, 2021, p. 21) that linger in our language and action whether acknowledged or afforded scrutiny. Identifying and interrogating these traces are what makes our stance critical.

Deconstruction as Related to Whiteness

Per Derrida, traces happen inside us during the subtle presentations of *familiarities* in praxis (the commonplace), arriving in shifts or waves of varying sizes, often unfettered by contraption or capture in the rush of time and decision-making. We use the word *familiarity* to focus on feelings or concerns that erupt in practice and otherwise might go unnoticed. For instance, the traditional preparation of teachers in university education programs can be considered a cultural (white) way of doing things, of “knowing” things. These “things” intra-act in interpretations, valuations, and assumptions of what constitutes effective teaching. For example, instead of relying on objective, Western measures of data identification, often rooted in transactional, property-based binaries of *right* or *wrong*, or instantiations of intellectual ownership, we can challenge our teachers (and ourselves) to invoke *felt* tensions and contradictions in decision making. These *traces* might recognize where personal-value, rule-based, and labor systems collide, and many times *traces* appear to be paradoxes and seem irreconcilable. This nervous-system data speaks directly to the injustices embedded in the roil of schooling discourse.

Additionally, deconstruction, per Jackson and Mazzei (2012), asks us to “ride the tension” or “glimpse the snag” in order to destabilize what appears routine and identify the words, worlds, moments, and incongruities that percolate with dis-ease. Metaphorically, this is the gray space between binaries or dualities, the both/and, and the ambiguous and cringy and discomfoting—not only our own but its perpetuation in our thinking with others as well. To think inside this space, we argue, is to interrogate between borders or boundaries of dominant

discourses. Additionally, the hybridity of tensions (or the collision of identities and teaching discourses) are evoked through carefully negotiated discussions and an appreciative stance toward learning (Wetzel et al., 2023).

Critical Agency Design

To conceive of teaching and coaching from the point of deconstruction, we first must name areas of tension and contradiction in our systems and then employ *critical agency design* to reshape practices. “Tensions and contradictions” are the language of activity theory (Engeström, 1999; 2000). As teacher educators, we take up this theory *alongside* deconstruction to pinpoint specific areas in our systems and systems of practice worth transforming. These areas include, we argue, all fundamental patterns of Whiteness that constitute the “realness” of schooling systems. Critical agency design is one vehicle to get us moving in this direction. Per Ellis, et al. (2015):

This critical consciousness [per critical agency design], it is claimed, is stimulated by the power of the conceptual tools of activity theory (as represented by the triangular image of the activity system) in helping participants analyse how the object of their collective activity is constructed, how rules and a division of labour have emerged historically within a community of practitioners, and how cultural tools are appropriated by members of that community—and how these might be changed for the better. (p. 47)

In our theorizing with critical agency design, we suggest shifting attention to boundary crossing as one strategy communities can utilize when viewing classroom data, especially data that speaks to the *enactment* of ideology (Wetzel et al., 2016). By classroom data, we include observational notes on teaching, video and audio, conversation transcripts, classroom discussions, lesson plans, and so on. Such dialogue around data includes remembering, problematizing, and laboring through language to conceptualize equity across diverse forms of expertise.

Boundary Crossing

Boundaries, per Akkerman and Bakker (2011) are defined as “socio-cultural differences leading to discontinuity in action or interaction” (p. 1). In our U.S. public schooling system, boundaries between and among identities, affiliations, interpretations, and expectations in learning to teach are saturated with potential interdisciplinary, intercultural possibilities. Moreover, as mentioned in previous sections, we replace the notion of interaction with *intra-action* to represent the

multiplicity of tension and turn toward posthumanist performativity (as an armature of deconstruction) in efforts to stretch the landscape of possible pedagogical design (Barad, 2003). However, the extant literature on boundary crossing has yet to focus specifically on Whiteness patterning as a salient boundary in preservice teacher development. Instead, boundary-crossing objects in teacher education have centered on mediating devices between competing (yet similar) domains, such as a university teacher education program and the partnering school(s) or a coaching journal shared between a preservice and mentor teacher (Gurley et al., 2015). Boundary-crossing is also closely tied to Lave and Wenger's (1991) theories of situated learning and communities of practice as spaces of generative, horizontal conflict and potential sites of expansive growth.

Because we seek a *transformation* of practice (Akkerman & Bakker, 2011; Engeström, 1999; 2000), we suggest the boundary-crossing nature of a living document, such as a vision statement or a shared rubric, designed and redesigned in-community, can chip away at these static measures (Anagnostopoulos et al., 2007; Zeichner et al., 2014) and open generative space to target Whiteness and unidentified racism in "official" schooling discourse(s). As an object crossing among and through competing frames of schooling, teacher education, and personal identity, a living, shared vision *as an object itself* is designed to (de)form and (re)form upon a continuum from complement to critical change agent, all *in use* toward critical transformation (Baral, 2006). Furthermore, because the edges of Whiteness-at-work manifest inside formal documents, policies, and conceptions of mastery, the boundary-crossing nature of a living document can (with attention) counter these uniform measures. It removes the container that shapes the interpretation of observational data, data sources, and professional expectations of dress, voice, tone, and time priorities.

Boundary Crossing in Teacher Education

In university teacher education programs specifically, boundary-crossing occurs at fissures between institutions, ideologies, levels of experience, and the accompanying expectations determined by those who hold power. Each individual within the structure/system of the university teacher education program brings their own unique identity, memories, discomforts, and affect. These can become entry points of analysis to confront and question what, to many educators, may appear "natural" regarding schooling instruction.

To identify dominant boundaries in our mentoring, we may pay

close attention to the semiotic systems of positioning (e.g., gesture, analogy, evasion, collision) and the felt resonances of individuals as they reflect on a teaching event. We can partner these reflections with a shared vision of equitable, justice-focused teaching, side-by-side, as we discuss observational data. By focusing reflective dialogue as *intra-action* among the individuals, the event, and the vision, we can foster an epistemological broadening, seeking multiplicity and pluralism in a system that champions singularity or rigidity. We can also work to amplify awareness of boundary crossing during this reflection time by subtracting the expected and juxtaposing it with an array of other possibilities, or alternative theory, to evoke a laboring for meaning. Below, we present three “labors” that we find most salient in our coaching, mentoring, and instructional practices.

Laboring for Meaning Around Compliance and Care

As mentioned in the introduction, and again in our consideration of Whiteness in educational settings, we know bodies carry historical, socio-cultural markers that, in the uptake of school discourses, are evaluated on normed physical comportments and Euro-traditional ways of being. As children, teachers, and now, as teacher educators, we have seen the interminable amount of time learners have been expected to sit in tiny chairs and pay attention (with the requested head nods, posture, and output). We have seen how those hours were spent (or, on what they were not spent) and the off-hand, rather casual insistence that *with time*, the children would come to realize their successes depend only on their gumption to *work harder*. This assumption denies a critical look at the systems shaping the container, the body, and the interpretive gaze within which the child participates.

In our ongoing dialogue with preservice teachers in coursework and fieldwork, we notice and invite purposeful struggle in decentering systemic Whiteness across multiple frames: historical, local, and individual, and how these concepts shape the living experiences for the bodies they teach in classrooms. In our post-observation conferencing, we have witnessed preservice teachers use phrases such as “talking about these things with my students,” choosing the word “things” rather than explicitly using the words race or racism, or “feeling weird” in a classroom where one’s social and emotional well-being parallels physical compliance. The patterns of what is *seen* may not yet be something they have “official” teacher language to describe; as teacher-educators, we zoom in here. In other discussions, preservice teachers shape stories around human behavior that do not align with their developing under-

standing of inclusive and anti-oppressive spaces and pedagogies. They see children excluded from literary discussions to finish “seatwork” and they hear adults’ linguistic marking (or “fixing” oral grammar) during informal conversations with children on the playground. Compliance, as it intersects with care, is a tricky concept in schooling, which shows us the importance of developing shared discourse patterns for preservice teachers when they experience moments of inequitable ambiguity. These fuzzy, felt collisions between theory and practice are rich points for further interrogation.

These moments of inequitable ambiguity are not easy to shape into a discussion. However, we see it as an opportunity to create an ongoing communication channel around how injustice and inequity look and sound—what actual events, moves, and language perpetuate the harm. We cannot know how to foster justice if we do not recognize iterations of *injustice*; we cannot foster equity if we cannot recognize *inequity*.

Laboring for Meaning Around the Language of Equity and Justice

In addition to holding space for preservice teachers to complicate complicity and care in their teaching, we have also found opportunities for dialogue around the language of equity in our university’s shared vision for teaching. Language on this living document includes, for example, explicitly valuing multiple knowledges, designing inclusive and anti-oppressive spaces, and taking challenges and risks toward educational justice. For preservice teachers and their mentors and instructors to seek the actions behind the words (representations) of equity—to begin collecting how such language becomes life, embodied in practice—data must exist, be engaged, and be troubled (Pollock, 2004). This work is not simple or fast, but it is imperative to shifting cultural consciousness toward enacting equity in classroom spaces. Listing, noting, curating, and cataloging the (non-exhaustive) lines between the language of equity and the pedagogical doings in the classroom that embody these notions must become our dialogic and shared labor.

Additionally, superficial measures of professional discernment that deny abstraction and subjectivity and divorce participatory agents from their lived realities must be continuously sought out and dismissed. The *materiality* of language-in-action (or languaging) in real-time, matters to our ability to transform practice. We take up the call that educators who are intent on enacting substantial change in their programming and endeavor to move explicitly from “who they are” into “who they want to be” (Cobb & Krownapple, 2019, p. 21; Sail-

ors & Manning, 2020). To do so, we must continuously interrogate the verbiage of equity embedded in all tools and documents and prioritize the development of a (local) conceptual application.

Laboring for Meaning Through the Development of Tools

If we want to shift discriminatory behaviors and beliefs in praxis, we need tools—linguistic, conceptual, material—that prioritize alternative ways of knowing. “Thinking is mediated by cultural tools,” Smagorinsky (2020) reminds us, “...whose potential for practice is a function of the setting and the cultural and historical antecedents that have shaped the present moment” (p. 13-14). Of course, this demands that teacher educators have a broad understanding of the culture of Whiteness if they are to wield their tools wisely, beyond the superficial.

For instance, a critical lens on the conceptual tools we already use, such as dialogic inquiry, can help groups (re)design conceptions of “quality teaching” (Beneke & Love, 2020) to prioritize and conceptualize educational equity instead of educational uniformity. Furthermore, tools, such as teacher evaluations, must be scrutinized for epistemic equity and, with an effortful redesign, help participants mediate new thinking patterns in and with their local communities. For example, Wetzel et al. (in press) hone a direct focus on equity through shared inquiry, community connection, and dialogic praxis for teacher and student agency and activism (Bieler, 2010; Sailors & Manning, 2019). Similarly, Aguilar’s (2020) equity framework for coaching centers inter-relational tools, such as a teacher and mentor looking at classroom data together and strategic planning to support the emotional labor of justice work. Like Price-Dennis and Sealy-Ruiz (2021), she foregrounds racial consciousness and dialogic collaboration in efforts to divest from oppressive systems and practices.

Other coaching tools work to evoke counter-stories and decenter epistemic dominance in mentoring conversations. Wetzel et al. (2022) present a tool called “critical race wonderings” to “go beyond surface-level” identification of c/Critical issues in teaching and connect to “concrete examples of teaching practice” (Land, 2018, p. 505). Bieler’s (2010) research foregrounds the value (and challenges) of “dialogic praxis” in mentoring through the “continual acts of negotiation” (p. 396) teaching and learning demand. By targeting a “moment of rupture” (p. 398) between a preservice teacher and a mentor teacher, Bieler explores how power and positionality shape mentoring talk. Dialogic praxis, she argues, centers on the generative nature of embracing tensions. For instance, by purposefully evoking memory, hesitancy,

discomfort, and affect in our coaching dialogues (Aguilar, 2020; Gee, 2021; Matias, 2016), we are finding the preservice teachers and their mentors are more likely to shift their lenses from rigid constructions of teacher identity, into descriptive narratives of conceptualizing educational equity *alongside a teaching event*. In this way, they shift their conception of “good teaching” as a singular product, into “good teaching” as a process of responsive inquiry. Similarly, when we recognize justice as the shift toward inclusivity and belonging, we can prioritize seeing classroom data differently to aide us on this journey.

Closing

The diversity of thought required to provide the identity-safety and epistemological expansiveness our nation’s learners deserve will challenge educators for generations to come. Schooling inequity is upheld by systems (of people) that maintain reductionary rhetoric as a necessary evil out of their control. The feeling of *it’s-not-in-our-control* turns harm into a distanced object: non-human, political, or separate from the bodies that employ the ideas in their daily lives. Objectifying harm in this way contradicts the reality that people *are* actively intertwined within the systems. These notions hinder the impetus to deconstruct and reconsider the ontological, methodological nature of their role in how power works to liberate or oppress. Therefore, the onus to enact change is upon the *people*, such as ourselves, who actively participate in systems to adjust their participation based on their interactions with others.

Of course, this is a lifetime of learning and unlearning that must be done with others in response to inequities. As explored in this essay, the systems are solid and protected. All efforts to actualize a dynamic multiplicity of “good teaching” require risk and creativity. We urge readers to invite posthumanist notions of memory, discomfort, and affect as valuable analysis points to confront and question what may appear “natural” (Barad, 2007; Derrida, 2008) in schooling. “We are all responsible for removing what Charles Mills calls the personhood–subpersonhood line that justifies some receiving freely what others have to earn or demonstrate worthiness in order to receive” (Adair & Colegrove, 2021, p. 5). We accept this charge.

Note

¹ For this conceptual essay, we differentiate Whiteness as a dominant discourse with a capital W from white as an identifiable body, which we lower-case. Though these representations are not fully realized as separate in many

hearts and minds, we resist conflating the white body with Whiteness in order to examine the conditions of their aggregation in teaching discourses.

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