Article

Critical Race Theory 20 Years Later: Where Do We Go From Here?

$\circledS$SAGE

Tyrone C. Howard[1] and Oscar Navarro[1]

Abstract

As the nation's schools become increasingly diverse along ethnic and racial lines, examining and understanding the racial complexities in the United States is more germane now than ever in the nation's history. To that end, critical race theory (CRT) has been a transformative conceptual, methodological, and theoretical construct that has assisted researchers in problematizing race in education. As we reflect on 20 years of CRT, it is essential to examine in what ways, if any, CRT is influencing school practice and policy. Given the disparate educational outcomes for students of color, researchers have to inquire about the influence of CRT on the lived experiences of students in schools. In this article, the authors lay out the historical trajectory of CRT, discuss its influence on educational research, and then evaluate to what extent, if any CRT has had on school policy and practice. The article will conclude with research, practice, and policy implications that may influence CRT's development over the next 20-year period.

Keywords

racism, social, race, identity, achievement gap

Race and education have always been an essential element in the way opportunities for learning have manifested in U.S. schools. Throughout the last several centuries, there has been an ongoing quest for educational inclusion

[1]Graduate School of Education & Information Studies at UCLA, Los Angeles, CA, USA

Corresponding Author:
Tyrone C. Howard, 405 Hilgard Ave., Los Angeles, CA, USA.
Email: tyrone.howard06@gmail.com

from a number of marginalized groups (Donnor, 2011; Leonardo, 2013; Spring, 2006). The premise has always been straightforward; marginalized groups, be they African American, Asian American, Native American, Latina/o, the poor, or women, have sought education as a pathway for economic mobility, economic empowerment, political voice, and social transformation. More specifically, the current educational climate for non-White students would suggest that although some educational improvement has occurred across racial lines over the past several decades, stubborn disparities still remain largely intact (Aud, Fox, & KewalRamani, 2010; Schott Foundation for Public Education, 2012). The ethnic and racial realities of U.S. schools today merit that a notable shift has occurred in terms of the makeup of youth that schools are serving, where surging numbers of Latino and Asian American children in recent years have changed today's ethnic landscape, and will continue to do so in years to come.

To consider the changing face of today's student population, consider that the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES; U.S. Department of Education and NCES, 2014) reports that Latina/o youth will account for 25.8% of U.S. public pre-K-12 students during the 2014-2015 school year and will make up close to 30% of all students in the 2019-2020 academic year. Moreover, NCES data inform us that the White student population is expected to drop precipitously over the next several decades, where they will go from being the largest student group in schools today to dropping to as low as 35% of the total student population by the year 2060 (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). African American enrollment in public schools will remain constant at approximately 15% over the next several years, whereas the Asian American/Pacific Islander population will remain at approximately 5.5% over the next several years, and Native American students will be 1.1% in 2014-2015 and 1% in 2019-2020. In short, race has always mattered and will continue to do so in this country (U.S. Department of Education, 2014).

Although news of increasing ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity is not a novelty to many large urban cities and districts, it does warrant that educational practitioners and scholars to think innovatively about how educators meet the academic, cultural, and social needs of a diverse student body. Some demographers contend that ethnic and racial diversity in the United States is here to stay, and point to projections that contend by the year 2060, people of color will make up 57% of the nation's population (Dillon, 2006; U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Plain and simple, student demographic data tell us that race matters today, and will continue to matter in the foreseeable future (Howard, 2010). Although ethnic and racial diversity continues to increase in the nation's schools, the chronic achievement discrepancies between non-White and White students have been chronic (Aud et al., 2010; Carter & Welner,

2013; Darling Hammond, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2006). The difficult reality around disparate educational outcomes across ethnic and racial lines has been the topic of much debate within the educational research, practice, and policy community (Darling Hammond, 2010). The focus of this work is not to revisit these debates, and address root causes of the disparities, but rather to pay particular attention to one theoretical, analytical, and conceptual frame that has garnered significant attention over the last two decades where issues of race and education are concerned—critical race theory (CRT) in education, at its 20-year anniversary to discuss its impact on the educational landscape for racially diverse students.

An analysis of CRT in 2015 is notable because the state of affairs for students of color remains one of the most pressing concerns in education, and data suggest that students of color experience schools in a distinctly different way than their White peers (Donnor, 2011; Milner, 2010, 2013). Despite a plethora of school reform efforts over the past three decades, under the guise of neoliberal reform, and the intensity of standards-based education movements, scripted curriculum, heightened accountability, corporate influence, and legislative mandates such as *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) and the *Common Core State Standards* (CCSS), students of color continue to underachieve in comparison with their counterparts from different racial and ethnic backgrounds (Howard, 2010). The opportunity gaps and learning outcomes between African American, Latina/o, Native American, and certain Asian American students and their White counterparts have been well documented (Braun, Wang, Jenkins, & Weinbaum, 2006; Campbell, Hombo, & Mazzeo, 2000; Milner, 2010). Some contend that issues around performance disparities are due to a combination of various factors such as structural inequality (Massey & Denton, 1993; Spring, 2006), poor teacher quality (Darling Hammond, 2010), lack of cultural relevance in school instruction (Gay, 2000), and racial re-segregation of the nation's schools (Donnor & Dixson, 2013), and some have called for a new social movement aimed at authentic access and equity for all students (Anyon, 2014). Amid the multitude of reform efforts, one of the more prevalent explanations provided for the different school outcomes across racial and ethnic lines has been an explicit focus on the role that race and racism play in school policies, pedagogies, and practices (Dixson, 2014; Kohli & Solórzano, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Leonardo, 2013). The claim is that many students of color are expected to learn in schools where content, instruction, school culture, and assessment are often racially hostile, exclusive, and serve as impediments for school success (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). In this article, we will discuss the importance of CRT in education 20 years after its introduction to the educational landscape, we will elaborate on its core aims and goals, identify

notable empirical examples of the theory connected to practice, and then discuss ways that it can play a role moving forward in helping to reduce academic disparities in schools.

Race and Education: From Past to Present

Gloria Ladson-Billings and Williams Tate's (1995) introductory work on CRT in education provided a significant spotlight on the salience of race, school, and educational outcomes in the mid-1990s. It should be noted that Ladson-Billings and Tate's work builds on the work of a number of scholars in previous years who called for greater analysis of race, culture, teaching, and learning for diverse populations. They were clear from the outset that although issues of gender and class had been discussed at length in the educational literature, that race remained largely under-researched and under-theorized (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Moreover, they were explicit in their contention that "race continues to be significant in explaining inequity in the United States is that class- and gender-based explanations are not powerful enough to explain all of the difference (or variance) in school experience and performance" (p. 51). Ladson-Billings and Tate did not seek to overlook the work of other scholars whose works evoked race as an explanatory variable in life and learning outcomes, they gave particular deference to scholars such as W. E. B. DuBois and Carter G. Woodson as key pioneers in examining race where educational opportunities were concerned. In the early 1970s and 1980s, scholars such as James Banks (1972), Christine Sleeter and Carl Grant (1987), Geneva Gay (1988), and Carlos Cortes (1991) and others explained educational inequities through a cultural, historical, and inclusion lens that did not recognize the importance of non-White groups in school curriculum. As a result, multicultural education and scholarship would go on to become an integral part of school curriculum and instruction, and school culture (Banks, 2004, 2015). The premise was that racially diverse students enter schools where their experiences, histories, and perspectives are largely excluded from school curriculum and learning opportunities, which were transformative at the time because they understood and recognized the forthcoming racial, ethnic, and cultural change in the nation's schools, and what it would mean for students if schools did not rethink and revise curriculum and practice (Banks, 2004). In addition, multicultural education scholars sought to offer a different way to think about educating students of color that moved educators away from deficit notions of students of color, and the pathology-based notions of their families and communities (Bloom, Davis, & Hess, 1965; Jensen, 1969; Moynihan, 1965). Furthermore, multicultural education provided an important landmark in research, theory, and practice because it promoted the idea that students of

color possess a rich, complex, and robust set of cultural practices, experiences, and knowledge that are essential for learning and understanding, a concept that challenged racial pathologies often used to explain disparate school outcomes between White students and students of color (Gay, 1988). Although the premise of this early work was not explicitly focused on race and racial realities, they were important in providing a scholarly foundation for race works to become part of the educational discourse.

Although much the scholarly discourse in education prior to CRT was not as centered on race, it often highlighted culture as a means to query about the experiences of students of color in schools. Dating back to the mid-1970s, scholars such as Ramirez and Castaneda (1974) talked about the cultural differences possessed by students of color and the need for educational practitioners to take notice of diverse ways of knowing, thinking, and communicating. In the early 1980s, terms such as *culturally appropriate* (Au & Jordan, 1981), *culturally congruent* (Mohatt & Erickson, 1981), and *culturally compatible* (Jordan, 1985) approaches to instruction were offered by scholars to recognize the value of cultural characteristics of non-White students. Scholars such as Ronald Edmonds (1986) and A. Wade Boykin (1986) suggested that there were unique cultural features that explained the manner in which African American students processed and participated in the learning process, and that instruction should be modified accordingly. Educational researcher Kathy Au (1980) examined teachers' participation structures in lessons consistent with language practices common in Native Hawaiian speech events called "talk story" and saw reading achievement increase significantly. These scholars' work provided much of the framing upon which Ladson-Billings and Tate's (1995) work emerged, and must be recognized by new scholars to this work, because these earlier works were instrumental in moving away from the cultural deprivation and deficit explanations that had become entrenched in the professional literature about students of color. Moreover, these works offered frameworks that contended students were not the sole reason to explain disparate outcomes, but that institutional practices and curriculum were also complicit in creating conditions that were not often sensitive to, or inclusive of, the needs of non-White students (Nieto, Gordon, & Yearwood, 2002). One of the critiques of these earlier works was that multicultural education did not explicitly critique systems of oppression, such as racism and capitalism, and until they did so, they were overlooking structural inequality (Sleeter, 1995). Although these critiques hold merit, it should be noted that structural analyses were never the goals and aims of multicultural education. Nonetheless, the importance of these works cannot be understated, because they would ultimately move the scholarly needle to a place that would allow CRT and discussions around race and racism to emerge decades later.

In the early 1990s, Gloria Ladson-Billings and William Tate (1995) built on the work of multicultural scholars and critical race scholars in the legal field by suggesting that social inequity in education was based on three central propositions:

1. Race continues to be a significant factor in determining inequity in the United States.
2. U.S. society is based on property rights.
3. The intersection of race and property creates an analytical tool through which we can understand social (and, consequently, school) inequity. (p. 48)

CRT within the field of education has since become an evolving methodological, conceptual, and theoretical construct that seeks to disrupt race and racism in educational theory and practice (Solórzano, 1998). It enables scholars to ask the important question of what racism has to do with inequities in education in unique ways. The use of CRT when examining P-20 education entails scrutinizing the insights, concerns, and questions students of color have about their educational experiences, whether they are in elementary school or graduate programs. CRT also serves as a framework to challenge and dismantle prevailing notions of fairness, meritocracy, colorblindness, and neutrality (Parker, Deyhle, & Villenas, 1999).

In addition to examining meritocracy and neutrality, CRT is used within this field to examine issues of racism and educational inequity. However, it also calls for an analysis of racism and its intersection with other forms of oppression such as sexism, classism, homophobia, and nativism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). CRT scholars have developed the following five tenets to guide research and inquiry on educational equity and racial justice:

1. Centrality of race and racism—All CRT research within education must centralize race and racism, including intersections with other forms of subordination such as gender, class, and citizenship.
2. Challenging the dominant perspective—CRT research works to challenge dominant narratives and re-center marginalized perspectives.
3. Commitment to social justice—CRT research must always be motivated by a social justice agenda.
4. Valuing experiential knowledge—CRT builds on the oral traditions of many indigenous communities of color around the world. CRT research centers the narratives of people of color when attempting to understand social inequality.

5. Being interdisciplinary—CRT scholars believe that the world is multidimensional, and similarly, research about the world should reflect multiple perspectives (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001).

Using these tenets as guideposts over the last several decades, there has been an extensive amount of research, theory, and practice concerned with CRT (Lynn & Dixson, 2013). Thus, in many ways, the race–equity–learning connection seems to have gained more attention from scholars and practitioners than ever before; yet, the disparity on educational outcomes between White students and students of color has moved very little over the same period of time. The explanations for this vary: Douglass Horsford and Grosland (2013) assert that "badges of inferiority" continue to affect Black students and other students of color where achievement is concerned, because the salience of White superiority has hindered efforts to close the achievement gap due to a refusal to "account for the substantial historical evidence that explains largely why so much inequality exists within and among U.S. public schools" (p. 161). Ladson-Billings (2006) contends that as long as the "achievement gap" is framed within an ahistorical context, disparities will continue to remain in place across U.S. schools. Her analysis of the "achievement gap" suggests that the United States suffers from an "educational debt" and that until the nation examines the historical, economic, sociopolitical, and moral components of inequality in the United States, disparate outcomes will not be ameliorated. So, at close to a quarter century of seeking to center race, and offer racism as a significant variable in disparate school outcomes, what have we learned? Where do we go from here? Has recent research and scholarship helped practitioners and scholars to better understand how to achieve racial justice in schools? If not, where does CRT need to move over the next two decades?

CRT: What Have We Learned?

As scholars continue to make a compelling case as to why race matters in education, gaps in experiences and outcomes remained persistent. It could be argued that many scholars and practitioners have struggled to grasp how a concept such as CRT translates into research, theory, and practice to achieve educational equity. One of the realities that has become more apparent with the introduction of CRT is the importance of explicitly acknowledging race, racism, and the roles that they can play in educational opportunity, experiences, and outcomes (Parker et al., 1999). We would argue that although the theoretical tenets of CRT have been growing in the literature for more than two decades, concrete examples of how to use it as an

analytical tool to improve school outcomes remain a pressing need. In short, students of color are still not graduating at rates comparable with their White peers, are disciplined at disproportionate rates at K-12 schools, and pathways for postsecondary opportunities for students of color are often obstacle filled as well (Artiles, Kozleski, Trent, Osher, & Ortiz, 2010; Aud et al., 2010; Howard, 2010). To be clear, CRT rests on a comprehensive and informed set of propositions that many scholars and practitioners fail to possess in their attempts to engage and diverse students in the teaching and learning process (Solórzano, 2013).

Ladson-Billings (2013) has been clear in her contention that what CRT is not is a "sexy," "trendy," or "new" thing that absolves them (scholars) of the responsibility to do "quality work" (p. 44). Moreover, Ladson-Billings provides a CRT "anti-chronicle" (p. 44) that offers persuasive ways of not doing CRT. Furthermore, she reinforms readers of the manner in which Delgado and Stefancic (2001) identify key hallmarks of CRT being the following:

- Belief that racism is normal or ordinary, not aberrant, in U.S. society
- Interest convergence or material determinism
- Race as a social construction
- Intersectionality and anti-essentialism
- Voice or counter-narrative

One area where CRT can be used to analyze schooling experiences is the growing chasm between the makeup of classroom teachers in the United States and students. Data from the U.S. Department of Education informs us that more than 80% of classroom teachers are White, middle class, and monolingual (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). Hence, the likelihood that many, if not most, teachers in today's schools, although well intentioned, may be quite unaware of the racial experiences, cultural knowledge, practices, and dispositions that their students bring from their homes and communities is high (Howard, 2010; Sleeter, 2012).

Current teacher demographics coinciding with today's student makeup provides the possibility of a significant racial and cultural knowledge gap between teachers and students, which Gay and Howard (2001) refer to as the *demographic divide*. Hence, any attempt to see CRT enacted on a larger scale in U.S. schools is contingent on helping teachers understand how White privilege and its accompanying components affect their practice, and how remnants of Whiteness can have a profound influence on how students of color experience schools, unless teachers are consciously aware of racial ideologies that play out and are seeking to actively disrupt them (Milner, 2008, 2010). Thus, what is needed is a way to not only translate theory to practice

for in-service and pre-service teachers but also to be clearer about the development of racial consciousness for all classroom teachers, their content, as well as instructional practices (Howard, 2010). A critical race analysis would suggest that racial consciousness development cannot be taught in a superficial way that reduces racial awareness to simplistic dos and don'ts, but requires a deep level of analysis, self-reflection, and understanding of racial realities both past and current (Leonardo, 2013; Mills, 1997). However, there must be an introduction to race as not only a social construct, but a deep seated ideology that is deeply embedded in behaviors, policies, practices, ways of knowing, communicating, and surviving in a given context (Dixson, 2014). This approach must help teachers to comprehend how race and racism are pervasive, seen and unseen, fluid, and continue to take new shapes and forms across space, time, and generation with different social groups (Milner, 2007). Leonardo and Boas (2013) talk about the salience of race in classrooms where they examine White women teachers' role as "benevolent saviors of children in need" (p. 322). To this end, their CRT analysis suggests that teachers be mindful of the following:

- Critically reflect on racialized and gendered histories and how you are implicated in them.
- Make race and race history part of the curriculum, and fight for its maintenance in it
- Teach race as a structural and systemic construct with material, differential outcomes that are institutionally embedded not reducible to identities.
- Work to understand and teach race not as a personal crusade but as a sociohistorical construct through which we are all (unequally) produced. (p. 322)

To this end, they also argue for examining the significance of White women teaching in racially diverse school settings without interrogating race, racism, and its implication on school practice and pedagogy.

Critical race scholar David Stovall's (2006) research documents a course he taught with Chicago high school students centered on CRT. In this work, he documents the validity of counter storytelling as a means to analyze the firsthand experiences of "those who have intimate knowledge of racism in their lives" (p. 231). In this work, Stovall documents the value of having the rubber hit the road where CRT needs to move from theory to praxis in the high school classroom, or to make the rhetoric real. His work is important because he discusses that "schools often operate as spaces where the realities of race and racism go undiscussed, even if understood by the students"

(p. 232). By using community-based topics such as resources, the influence of media on youth of color, and by engaging students in historical accounts of the Japanese internment, the Black Panther Party, and Chicago street gangs, students examine race historically and contemporarily. Stovall offers a framework for using CRT as a framework for an inclusive school curriculum that directly addresses issues tied to race and racism.

In response to the critiques about CRT not having enough empirical data tied to student experiences and outcomes in students in educational institutions, it is vital to document the growing numbers of work that are moving the construct forward by offering exemplars of how CRT is being situated in practice and policy.

Datnow and Cooper (2009) situated CRT as an analytical tool to examine the experiences of African American students at predominately White independent schools. In an examination of eight schools selected for their study, they discovered that African American students felt extremely racialized among their peers where they were often reduced to being labeled as "the Black students" (p. 197) who were often excluded from other social groups, and peer cliques. Moreover, their study discovered that African American students found it hard to fit in, and struggled socially, psychologically, and even academically in environments that were purported to be inclusive. As a result, students created counterspaces, wherein they organized Black student organizations to affirm their racial identities and that their strong bonds with one another assisted in their ability to overcome difficult learning environments.

Recently, a growing number of scholars have used CRT to examine practices and policies in higher education. Teranishi and Pazich (2013) examined the inclusion of Asian American and Pacific Islanders and argue that CRT provides the appropriate analysis to examine "how issues of race impact the educational experiences, opportunities, and outcomes of AAPI (AAPI) students" (p. 205). By outlining interest convergence, intersectionality, and social justice as key tenets to unpack the historical legacy of AAPI's in the United States, Teranishi and Pazich challenge the model minority myth that has persistently plagued AAPI students, and called for a more comprehensive and historically centered examination of the population's exclusion from various educational opportunities. They make a compelling case about Asian American/Pacific Islander (AA/PI) not being monolithic, and are often overlooked and mischaracterized. In short, the CRT approach pushes higher education scholars and practitioners to recognize the diverse histories, cultures, and experiences that are part of the AAPI framework.

Additional higher education scholars have used CRT to examine the value of diversity in higher education. Some have done this work through gendered

and racialized lenses and Black feminist thought, Black feminist economic theory (Collins, 1989, 2002; A. Y. Davis, 2011), and CRT (Bell, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012) as guiding frameworks. As explicated by these types of frameworks, examining issues of marginalized groups requires one to employ the standpoints and analytical methods created by and for certain groups. Thus, an empowering analysis of racial justice necessitates a theoretical approach grounded in race-centered *and* feminist valued orientation, as this will allow researchers, practitioners, and policy makers to think through a multiplicity of issues related to the intersectional impact of educational initiatives not just on students, but around faculty, policies, and on the key institutions and economic drivers within the contemporary context. In the following section, we delve further into the race, gender nexus, and explore the possibilities that intersectionality offers research and practice.

CRT and Gender: The Importance of Intersectionality

An area where CRT has enhanced the knowledge base in education is by exploring the complexities of how race, class, and gender intersect in powerful ways. In 1989, critical race legal scholar Kimberle Crenshaw introduced the concept of intersectionality in her work "Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics." In this work, she describes the multidimensionality of Black women's experiences as being complicated based on their gender (in a patriarchal society), race (in a predominately White society), and poverty (in a capitalistic society). Crenshaw's works spurred a plethora of works from dominated groups who argued that traditional approaches to examining equity and discrimination did not effectively capture the full spectrum of their experiences. Intersectionality is a way to conceptualize how oppressions are socially constructed and affect individuals differentially across multiple group categories. Crenshaw's explanation of intersectionality is central to understanding the complex and marginalized aspects of identity of which women in communities organizing for social change of have long been aware.

Intersectionality—the interaction of multiple identities and varied experiences of exclusion and subordination (K. Davis, 2008)—provides a suitable framework to examine the experiences of many populations in U.S. educational institutions. Recently, we have begun to use this framework to investigate the educational experiences of high achieving Black and Latino males because it not only centers race at the core of its analysis but also recognizes and examines other forms of oppression and identity markers, namely, class, gender, citizenship, and sexual orientation, which have important implications

for these two populations (Conchas & Vigil, 2012; Fergus & Noguera, 2010; Harper, 2012; Howard, 2014). The concept of intersectionality is based on the idea that the typical conceptualizations of discrimination and oppression within society, such as racism, sexism, homophobia, and class-based discrimination do not act independently of one another; instead, these forms of oppressions interrelate, creating a system of oppression that reflects the "intersection" of multiple forms of exclusion, prejudice, and discrimination (McCall, 2005). For CRT to be more effective in dismantling racism in schools, scholars and practitioners have to be willing to push beyond the essentializing boundaries that place limits on how marginalized populations are seen, heard, and understood (Dixson & Rousseau, 2006). The intersections of race, class, and gender have manifested in a multitude of complex and harmful ways within the United States that have profoundly influenced the manner in which youth of color (and males of color in particular) experience schools and society (Conchas & Vigil, 2012). This intersectionality is under examined and, as a result, opportunities to authentically capture the breadth and depth of marginalized populations is missed or misunderstood, and efforts to capture the stories of those on the margins and reform schools that they attend are misinformed and misguided.

CRT in education continues to push educators to examine how interlocking oppressions (McCall, 2005) expands the idea of intersectionality, names the mechanisms of social construction more concretely, and explicitly calls for a deeper examination of intragroup differences among identities. Interlocking oppressions considers how interactions between individuals and social factors shape their subjectivities. Specifically, interlocking oppressions names how one person's sources of privilege or subordination can construct another's marginalized identity. In this way, the concept of interlocking oppressions explains how the oppressions associated with different socioeconomic locations are socially constructed, and calls on individuals to take responsibility for their roles in the oppression of others as well. Examining the interlocking oppressions for our forthcoming work on Black and Latino males may be subject to, and explicating their experiences within those socially constructed locations of marginalizing subjugation could prove fruitful in widening the discourse around academic identity for marginalized populations. Heterosexual males of color, for example, though oppressed in many forms for varied reasons, possess the privilege that being male brings. However, that male privilege becomes complicated, and even undermined when conflated with issues such as sexual orientation, documented status, and poverty. Thus, accounting for interlocking oppressions, can serve to marginalize homosexual men of color in unintended and largely unexamined ways (Conchas & Vigil, 2012; McCready, 2010a, 2010b). Again, this

intricate level of examination and discourse is necessary to better understand the complexity within the experiences of people of color. So, for CRT to move further in the next two decades and beyond, educational researchers and practitioners should remain mindful of an additional aspect of CRT, which is the idea of "differential racialization" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001) and what that means for people of color. The concept of differential racialization and its many consequences are important here for future work, because it seeks to disrupt the essentializing of racial groups. Critical race writers in law, as well as social science, have drawn attention to the ways the dominant society racializes different minority groups at different times, in response to shifting needs such as the labor market, and often fail to complicate their multiple, diverse, and shifting identities. Delgado and Stefancic (2001) contend that

> closely related to differential racialization—the idea that each race has its own origins and ever evolving history—is the notion of intersectionality and anti-essentialism. No person has a single, easily stated, unitary identity. (p. 1)

CRT: Looking Forward

Although the empirical development of CRT continues to grow, additional work remains. For scholars who continue to look for ways to make meaningful contribution to the field for practitioners, theorists, and policy makers, we believe that there are areas that remain in need of further development. Dixson and Rousseau (2006) contend that for CRT to become authentically integral in the eradication of educational equities, educational scholars have to be prepared to go beyond mere recommendations to inform reform; in short, they charge racial justice advocates in education to organize, put forth concerted efforts, and become more familiar with the legal literature to "address the persistent and pernicious educational inequity in our communities" (p. 50). The following areas represent areas that CRT can help to inform due to the need for further developing, but based on an analysis of the current literature, they do shed light on areas that remain under-researched and theorized, and calls for future inquiry to help the field expand by providing work in the following areas:

Teacher Preparation

One of the most crucial steps that requires careful investigation is the manner in which concepts and theory around race is provided to pre-service teachers. There will be a considerable turnover in the teacher force over the next decade.

Many new teachers will remain largely homogeneous racially and ethnically; thus, there will be a pressing need for teacher preparation programs, be they university, alternative certification, or school based, to help pre-service candidates to understand race, racism, and how it influences learning, and how implicit bias along racial lines can disconnect students from learning. Pre-service preparation must place an authentic and sustained focus on race and racism, understand how they play out in schools and educational policies, and identify teachers who are embodying racially inclusive teaching practices, so that they can be model mentor teachers to help aspiring teachers have a hands-on understanding of effectively teaching across racial lines. We recommend for teacher education programs and school districts to provide curricular opportunities and professional development (respectively) to align teaching practice to the elements of CRT. Pre- and in-service educators *need time* allocated and structured to enhance their ability to engage in critical race teaching approaches; however, curricular opportunities and professional development should be teacher driven and led, based on teachers' questions and concerns. One example of teacher-led professional development is a critical inquiry group. Critical inquiry groups provide a safe haven for educators to engage in meaningful professional development that involves reflection, theory, dialogue, and developing plans of action (Duncan-Andrade, 2004, 2005; Nieto et al., 2002; Picower, 2007). Critical inquiry groups can be ideal places for sustained, honest, and informative dialogues around race, racism, structural inequality, and intersectionality. Elementary and secondary educators participating in critical inquiry groups are documented as benefiting from a collaborative environment where historical constructs, pedagogical approaches, teaching strategies, and instructional resources are shared to further enhance their ability to engage in critical pedagogies, such as, culturally relevant teaching, engaged instruction, and historically meaningful curriculum (Duncan-Andrade, 2004, 2005, 2007; Nieto et al., 2002; Picower, 2007, 2011). Anderson and Cross (2013) contend that CRT offers a highly effective means of moving teacher education program away from colorblind notions of preparing teachers, and to even move away from safer terms such as "diversity" and "urban" and to put a direct emphasis on race and racism in teacher education. They contend "CRT offers a way to examine the preparation of teachers for urban schools in a potentially transformative way" (p. 394). Milner (2008) contends that

> teacher education become more serious about interrogating, exposing, and challenging racist policies and practices . . . and that we analyze, discuss, and explain these policies and practices in [more] meaningful ways. This examination does not stop with White teacher educators but extends to teacher educators of color as well. (p. 338)

Current Reform Efforts

Various critical race scholars have documented that students of color are being severely affected by current education reform policies in the post-NCLB era (Gilborn, 2013). The rise of standardization of curriculum aligned to high-stakes testing, accountability measures, and privatization measures has led to a marginalization of more racially and culturally inclusive approaches to teaching (Sleeter, 2012). Instead, scripted, mandated, and narrowed curriculum constrains educators' ability to be more autonomous and creative in their work, and dominate teacher professional development in schools (Duncan-Andrade, 2004; Milner, 2013; Picower, 2011). Scholars (Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008; Ladson-Billings, 2013) suggest that educators are able to address the demands of high-stakes testing through approaches such as critical pedagogy and culturally relevant teaching; however, we argue that there is a need to support teachers as they confront the obstacles of the post-NCLB era. In essence, more examples are needed to demonstrate that the incorporation of CRT curriculum, policy, and praxis does not require the sacrificing of teaching to content standards. In addition, it is important to note how teachers and policy makers are challenging various practices around testing. At the end of 2015, the Seattle school district and teachers union decided to strike over pay issues and learning conditions for students, namely, non-salary items like 30 min of recess guaranteed for all elementary school students, the placement of equity teams in 30 schools, and the end of a teacher evaluation process based on standardized test scores. Near the end of 2015, the Obama Administration has decided to scale back on the excessive usage of standardized tests in schools as mandated by NCLB. The degree to which these test heavy practices were much more visible in schools where low-income students of color were likely to attend schools became an increasing concern for equity advocates.

In moving forward, scholars and practitioners concerned with CRT must continue to keep the focus on educational outcomes disparities involving students of color and their White counterparts. As issues pertaining to racism, structural inequities and student disengagement remain entrenched in schools; equity advocates must remain steadfast in identifying policies that in the name of "reform" cause additional damage to communities of color and their educational institutions. School closures, corporate charter influences, and punitive steps taken against underperforming schools all have a significant influence on students of color. CRT pushes educational equity advocates to ask what the racial ramifications of current educational policy are. With current discussions around the re-authorization of NCLB, and the expanding influence of Common Core, issues that are around racial equity must

be integral to these policies. It is our hope that schools remain focused on creating spaces of racial inclusion that includes community building activities, high expectations for all students, different modes of assessment, and content reflective of all students' backgrounds, histories, and experiences. It is our hope that a CRT-based analysis of schools is committed to eradicating structural inequities that have contributed to generations of educational exclusion and disenfranchisement. As issues continue to happen across the educational pipeline, ongoing, informed analysis and attention to race will be increasingly necessary. Whether it be issues tied to faculty and students of color in higher education institutions (Villalpando & Bernal, 2013) or the pernicious affects of the school-to-prison pipeline disproportionately affecting students of color in K-12 schools (Valles & Villalpando, 2013), a need for a permanent focus on race is required. Finally, it is our hope that CRT over the next 20 years becomes an integral part of all educational discussions, where practices and policies in higher education and K-12 schools are mindful of larger social discourses around race. At a time when immigration discussions have highly charged racial subtexts, anti-affirmative action sentiments remain, and in the era where Black Lives Matter is salient, race remains relevant. It will be essential for the research, practitioner, and policy community to play an active role in identifying, analyzing, and seeking replication of racially inclusive and sensitive learning environments. There remains a pressing need for race to be a prominent variable in discussions around educational equity that will undoubtedly play a pivotal role in the next two decades. It is our hope that today's students' children enter learning spaces that will be much improved because of this commitment.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

Funding

References

Anderson, C. R., & Cross, B. E. (2013). What is "urban"? A CRT examination of the preparation of K-12 teachers for urban schools. In M. Lynn & A. D. Dixson (Eds.), *Handbook of critical race theory in education* (pp. 386-396) New York, NY: Routledge.

Anyon, J. (2014). *Radical possibilities. Public policy, urban education and a new social movement* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Artiles, A. J., Kozleski, E., Trent, S., Osher, D., & Ortiz, A. (2010). Justifying and explaining disproportionality, 1968-2008: A critique of underlying views of culture. *Exceptional Children*, *76*, 279-299.

Au, K. H. (1980). Participation structures in a reading lesson with Hawaiian children: Analysis of a culturally appropriate teaching event. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, *11*, 91-115.

Au, K., & Jordan, C. (1981). Teaching reading to Hawaiian children: Finding a culturally appropriate solution. In H. T. Trueba, G. P. Gurthrie, & K. Au (Eds.), *Culture and the bilingual classroom: Studies in classroom ethnography* (pp. 139-152). Rowley, MA: Newbury.

Aud, S., Fox, M., & KewalRamani, A. (2010). *Status and trends in the education of racial and ethnic groups* (NCES 2010-015, U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Banks, J. A. (1972). The imperatives of ethnic minority education. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *53*, 266-269.

Banks, J. A. (2004). Multicultural education: Historical development, dimensions and practice. In J. A. Banks & C. A. M. Banks (Eds.) *Handbook of research on multicultural education* (2nd ed., pp. 3-29). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Banks, J. A. (2015). *Cultural diversity and education: Foundations, curriculum and teaching* (6th ed.). New York, NY: Pearson.

Bell, D. A. (1995). Who's afraid of critical race theory. *University of Illinois Law Review, 1995*(4), 893-910.

Bloom, B. S., Davis, A., & Hess, R. (1965). *Compensatory education for cultural deprivation*. New York, NY: Holt.

Boykin, A. W. (1986). The triple quandary and the schooling of Afro-American children. In U. Neisser (Ed.), *The school achievement of minority children: New perspectives* (pp. 57-92). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Braun, H. I., Wang, A., Jenkins, F., & Weinbaum, E. (2006). The Black–White achievement gap: Do state policies matter? *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, *14*(8).

Campbell, J., Hombo, C., & Mazzeo, J. (2000). *NAEP 1999 trends in academic progress: Three decades of student performance* (NCES 2000469). Washington, DC: National Center for Educational Statistics.

Carter, P. L., & Welner, K. (2013). *Closing the opportunity gap: What America must do to give all children an even chance*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Collins, P. H. (1989). The social construction of Black feminist thought. *Signs, 14*(4), 745-773.

Collins, P. H. (2002). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Conchas, G. Q., & Vigil, J. D. (2012). *Streetsmart, school smart. Urban poverty and the Education of adolescent boys*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Cortes, C. E. (1991). Empowerment through media literacy. A multicultural approach. In C. E. Sleeter (Ed.), *Empowerment through multicultural education* (pp. 143-157). Albany: State University of New York Press.

Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory, and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, *1989*, 139-168.

Darling Hammond, L. (2010). *The flat world and education: How America's commitment to equity will determine our future*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Datnow, A., & Cooper, R. (2009). Peer networks of African American students in independent schools. Affirming academic success and racial identity. In E. Taylor, D. Gillborn, & G. Ladson Billings (Eds.), *Foundations of critical race theory in education* (pp. 190-209). New York, NY: Routledge.

Davis, A. Y. (2011). *Women, race, and class.* New York, NY: Vintage.

Davis, K. (2008). *Intersectionality as buzzword: A sociology of science perspective on what makes a feminist theory successful*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2001). *Critical race theory: An introduction*. New York: New York University Press.

Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2012). *Critical race theory: An introduction*. London, England: New York University Press.

Dillon, S. (2006, August 27). In schools across U.S., the melting pot overflows. *The New York Times*, pp. A7, 16.

Dixson, A. D. (2014). Researching race in education: Policy, practice and qualitative research. Information Age Publishing as part of the education policy in practice. In R. Hopson & E. Hamann (Eds.), *Critical cultural studies.* Charlotte, NC. Information Age Publishing.

Dixson, A. D., & Rousseau, C. (2006). *Critical race theory in education: All God's children got a song*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Donnor, J. K. (2011). Moving beyond brown: Race in education after *Parents v. Seattle School District No. 1. Teachers College Record*, *113*, 735-754.

Donnor, J. K., & Dixson, A. D. (Eds.). (2013). *The resegregation of schools: Race and education in the twenty-first century*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Duncan-Andrade, J. (2004). Toward teacher development for the urban in urban teaching. *Teaching Education*, *15*, 339-350.

Duncan-Andrade, J. (2005). Developing social justice educators. *Educational Leadership*, *62*(6), 70-73.

Duncan-Andrade, J. (2007). Gangstas, wankstas, and ridas: Defining, developing, and supporting effective teachers in urban schools. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *20*, 617-638.

Duncan-Andrade, J., & Morrell, E. (2008). *The art of critical pedagogy: Possibilities for moving from theory to practice in urban schools*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.

Edmonds, R. (1986). Characteristics of effective schools. In U. Neissser (Ed.), *The school achievement of minority children: New perspectives* (pp. 93-104). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Fergus, E., & Noguera, P. (2010). *Theories of change among single-sex schools for Black and Latino boys: An intervention in search of theory.* New York, NY: New York University Metropolitan Center for Urban Education.

Gay, G. (1988). Designing relevant curricula for diverse learners. *Education and Urban Society*, *2*, 327-340.

Gay, G. (2000). *Culturally relevant teaching*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Gay, G., & Howard, T. (2001). Multicultural teacher education for the 21st century. *Teacher Educator*, *36*, 1-16.

Gilborn, D. (2013). The policy of inequity: Using CRT to unmask White supremacy in educational policy. In M. Lynn & A. Dixson (Eds.), *The handbook of critical race theory in education* (pp. 129-139). New York, NY: Routledge.

Harper, S. R. (2012). *Black male student success in higher education: A report from the National Black Male College Achievement Study*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Center for the Study of Race and Equity in Education.

Horsford, S. D., & Grosland, T. (2013). Badges of inferiority: The racialization of achievement in U.S. education. In M. Lynn & A. Dixson (Eds.), *The handbook of critical race theory in education* (pp. 153-166). New York, NY: Routledge.

Howard, T. C. (2010). *Why race and culture matters in schools: Closing the achievement gap in America's classrooms*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Howard, T. C. (2014). *Black male(d). Peril and promise in the education of African American males*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Jensen, A. R. (1969). How much can we boost IQ and scholastic achievement? *Harvard Educational Review*, *39*(1), 1-23.

Jordan, C. (1985). Translating culture: From ethnographic information to educational program. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, *16*, 105-123.

Kohli, R., & Solorzano, D. (2012). Teachers, please learn our names! Racial microaggressions and the K-12 classroom. *Race, Ethnicity & Education*, *15*(4), 1-22.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal*, *32*, 465-491.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2006). From the achievement gap to the education debt: Understanding achievement in U.S. schools. *Educational Researcher*, *35*, 3-12.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2013). Critical race theory—What it is not! In M. Lynn & A. Dixson (Eds.), *The handbook of critical race theory in education* (pp. 34-47). New York, NY: Routledge.

Ladson-Billings, G., & Tate, W. (1995). Toward a critical race theory of education. *Teachers College Record*, *97*, 47-68.

Leonardo, Z. (2013). *Race frameworks: A multidimensional theory of racism and education*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Leonardo, Z., & Boas, E. (2013). Other kids' teachers: What children on color learn from White women and what this says about race, Whiteness, and gender. In M. Lynn & A. Dixson (Eds.), *The handbook of critical race theory in education* (pp. 313-324). New York, NY: Routledge.

Lynn, M., & Dixson, A. D. (2013). *Handbook of critical race theory in education*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Massey, D. S., & Denton, N. A. (1993). *American apartheid*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

McCall, L. (2005, Spring). The complexity of intersectionality. *Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, *30*, 1771-1800.

McCready, L. T. (2010a). Black queer bodies, afrocentric reform and masculine anxiety in an African dance program. *International Journal of Critical Pedagogy*, *3*(1), 52-67.

McCready, L. T. (2010b). *Making space for diverse masculinities: Identity, intersectionality, and engagement in an urban high school*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.

Mills, C. (1997). *The racial contract*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Milner, H. R. (2007). Race, culture, and researcher positionality: Working through dangers seen, unseen, and unforeseen. *Educational Researcher*, *36*, 388-400.

Milner, H. R. (2008). Critical race theory and interest convergence as analytic tools in teacher education policies and practices. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *59*, 332-346.

Milner, H. R. (2010). *Start where you are but don't stay there: Understanding diversity, opportunity gaps, and teaching in today's classrooms*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Milner, H. R. (2013). Scripted and narrowed curriculum reform in urban schools. *Urban Education*, *48*, 163-170.

Mohatt, G., & Erickson, F. (1981). Cultural differences in teaching styles in an Odawa school: A sociolinguistic approach. In H. T. Trueba, G. P. Gurthrie, & K. Au (Eds.), *Culture and the bilingual classroom: Studies in classroom ethnography* (pp. 105-119). Rowley, MA: Newbury.

Moynihan, D. P. (1965). *The Negro family: The case for national action*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor.

Nieto, S., Gordon, S., & Yearwood, J. (2002). Teachers experiences in a critical inquiry group: A conversation in three voices. *Teaching Education*, *13*, 341-355.

Parker, L., Deyhle, D., & Villenas, S. (1999). *Race is . . . Race isn't. Critical race theory and qualitative studies in education*. Boulder, CO: Westview.

Picower, B. (2007). Supporting new educators to teach for social justice: The critical inquiry project model. *Penn GSE Perspectives on Urban Education*, *5*(1), 1-16.

Picower, B. (2011). Resisting compliance: Learning to teach for social justice in a neoliberal context. *Teachers College Record*, *113*, 1105-1134.

Ramirez, M., & Castenda, A. (1974). *Cultural democracy, bicognitive development, and education*. New York, NY: Academic Press.

Schott Foundation for Public Education. (2012). *Yes we can: The Schott 50 state report on public education and Black males*. Cambridge, MA.

Sleeter, C. E. (1995). An analysis of the critiques of multicultural education. In J. A. Banks & C. A. M. Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of research on multicultural education* (pp. 81-94). New York, NY: Macmillan.

Sleeter, C. E. (2012). Confronting the marginalization of culturally responsive pedagogy. *Urban Education*, *47*, 562-584.

Sleeter, C. E., & Grant, C. A. (1987). An analysis of multicultural education in the United States. *Harvard Educational Review*, *57*, 421-445.

Solórzano, D. G. (1998). Critical race theory, racial and gender microaggressions, and the experiences of Chicana and Chicano scholars. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *11*, 121-136.

Solórzano, D. G. (2013). Critical race theory's intellectual roots: My email epistolary with Derrick Bell. In M. Lynn & A. Dixson (Eds.), *The handbook of critical race theory in education* (pp. 48-68). New York, NY: Routledge.

Solórzano, D. G., & Bernal, D. (2001). Examining transformational resistance through a critical race and LatCrit framework: Chicana and Chicano students in an urban context. *Urban Education*, *36*, 308-342.

Spring, J. (2006). *Deculturalization and the struggle for equality* (5th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Stovall, D. (2006). Where the rubber hits the road: CRT goes to high school. In A. D. Dixson & C. K. Rousseau (Eds.), *Critical race theory in education: All God's children got a song* (pp. 231-240). New York, NY: Routledge.

Teranishi, R. T., & Pazich, L. B. (2013). The inclusion and representation of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in America's equity agenda in higher education. In M. Lynn & A. D. Dixson (Eds.), *Handbook of critical race theory in education* (pp. 204-215). New York, NY: Routledge.

U.S. Census Bureau. (2012). *2012 national population projections: Press releases*.

U.S. Department of Education & National Center for Education Statistics. (2014). *Digest of education statistics, 2013* (NCES 2014-015, Chapter 1).

Valles, B. G., & Villalpando, O. (2013). A critical race policy analysis of the school-to-prison pipeline for Chicanos. In M. Lynn & A. D. Dixson (Eds.), *Handbook of critical race theory in education* (pp. 260-269). New York, NY: Routledge.

Villalpando, O., & Bernal, D. (2002). A critical race theory analysis of barriers that impede the success of faculty of color. In W. A. Smith, P. G. Altbach, & K. Lomotey (Eds.), *The racial crisis in American higher education: Continuing challenges for the twenty-first century* (pp. 243-269). Albany: State University of New York Press.

Author Biographies

Tyrone C. Howard is professor of education in the Graduate School of Education & Information Studies at UCLA. His research examines race, culture, and equity in urban schools.

Oscar Navarro is a doctoral candidate in the Graduate School of Education & Information Studies at UCLA. His research examines social justice teaching, critical pedagogy, and social studies education.