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Sankofa for students: Literature as the impetus for empathy and social justice

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SANKOFA FOR STUDENTS: LITERATURE AS THE IMPETUS FOR EMPATHY

AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

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ABSTRACT

This thesis analyzes empirical educational data and research-based best practices with the goal of synthesizing and implementing literature instruction to garner cultural empathy and to make strides toward social justice in a high school setting. The author suggests there are significant academic and social-emotional benefits to cultural discourse, verifying the efficacy of targeted instruction. Empathy, while often viewed as a fixed component of human personality, can develop and grow if paired with culturally-responsive practices, meaningful and diverse texts, and small and large group discourse. Additionally, growing cultural diversity and racial tensions make the study and application of culturally-responsive instruction imperative to best prepare young hearts and minds for post-secondary life.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

I first learned the word Sankofa from Woodland Hills Church (St. Paul, MN) teaching pastors Greg Boyd and Osheta Moore, both of whom have first-hand experiences with Sankofa journeys. The word Sankofa, comes from the Twi language of Ghana, the literal translation of which means "it is not taboo to go back and fetch what you forgot" (University of Illinois Springfield Department of African-American Studies). These American Sankofa journeys ask participants to travel to historic sites that have relevance or poignancy to our nation's deep-rooted struggle with slavery and racism, with hopes of facing our nation's troubled past head on and, in turn, pursuing a more inclusive future. For example, participants will explore portions of the Underground Railroad, African American history museums, sights of the slave rebellions, and more. After these tours, participants are asked to discuss their experiences with those in their group, most of which are complete strangers from diverse backgrounds. While there is certainly something moving about physically visiting these sites and engaging in social discourse, it is impossible and impractical to expect our students to take such a journey. But what if I, as a classroom teacher, could provide a similar journey for students through literature within the four walls of my classroom?

As a department, we are currently reviewing and updating the white-washed English curriculum bestowed upon us by preceding district administration; the curriculum has long outlived its makers. For years, I have lovingly (and not-so-lovingly) deemed our body of authors the "dead white guys," but the humor deflates when stories that need to be told remain untold and when voices that need to be heard remain unheard. This issue becomes especially problematic in the predominately white and affluent area in which I teach; a lovely suburb but one that often shelters students from those who stray from status quo. Each grade level does have

one or two short texts dealing with issues of racial, social, and economic disparities but they are brief and often dismissed by students as so-called "token black texts." As a white educator who has been granted power and privilege, not because I've earned it but because this is the way of the world, I must use that power and privilege to give voice to the voiceless and hope to the hopeless. There is an implicit understanding that, because they are public servants, all teachers are non-racist, but the prefix "non" simply means they are not racist. In this divisive time in which we live where hate crimes are on the rise (Hassan, 2019) and our schools are more segregated than ever (Meatto, 2019), is being "non-racist" really *enough*? What our schools, our society, our students need are *anti*-racist allies. The mere shift in prefix implies action and vigilance in lieu of antipathy and complacency. We cannot be passive purveyors of one-size-fits-all curriculum; instead, we must be creative combatants of institutional racism. For my part, I hope to actively take a role in social justice and take a stand against racial inequality.

Literature is a poignant tool to create change at both micro and macro levels; if I did not truly believe this, I would not be an English educator. We all have anecdotal evidence of narratives that have changed the way we look at the world. For some it might be a first hard look at racism in Harper Lee's classic *To Kill a Mockingbird (1960)*; for others, it might be a feminist lens like that found in Kate Chopin's *The Awakening (1899)*; for others, it might by the wry and sometimes painful humor about discrimination seen in Sherman Alexie's *Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian (1966)*. Regardless of the text, the impetus of change, literature transports and transcends. Social barriers and norms are cast aside because we can discuss the hard issues from the safety and lens of a protagonist's journey; the fictitious nature of the tale renders our own personas and personal beliefs irrelevant. Literature changes lives; it has certainly changed mine. We live in an increasingly divided country and world; the very fabric of our own

democracy is in the balance simply because dogma and stigma compel one from simply crossing an aisle. In a time where our television screens blare and our social media outlets buzz with divisiveness and derision, it's a comfort to remember that narratives, characters, and, most importantly, themes bind us in poignant and even surprising ways.

All of this soul searching brings us to the guiding questions, the incendiary of this thesis project:

1. How can one meaningfully use literature to evoke empathy and to engage students in social justice? More specifically, what specific literature (types and lenses) can be used?

2. How can empathy be taught and harvested? Minority voices and communities demand fair representation and understanding.

3. What community standards or roadblocks might impede this type of curriculum?

Definition of Terms

Before delving deeply into analysis of literature and its implications, it is essential to define key terms that will invariably clarify meaning and deepen understanding. The key terms are as follows:

Critical consciousness (CC). CC, or Critical Consciousness Theory, is a cognitive awareness wherein individuals focus in on the role of oppression and privilege as major contributors to social inequality. More specifically, CC allows an individual to understand and reflect upon his or her own place within social hierarchy which is the first step to enacting change.

Critical Race Theory (CRT). CRT is an academic approach to a given subject area through the specific lens of race. Just as some literary lenses ask students and teachers alike to analyze a given text through a particular perspective (i.e. historical, colonials, feminism, Marxist, psychology, etc.), CRT concentrates, specifically, on race and race relations. Instructors who

utilize CRT might ask questions like, "how does race factor into this issue?" or "how does racial bias influence action or thought in this scenario?"

Multiculturalism. Unlike racial tolerance, which merely requires one to put up those different from themselves, multiculturalism is the belief society benefits from increased diversity. In brief, a true multicultural stance embraces xenophilia[1].

White privilege. Whether conscious or subconscious, white privilege encapsulates various social benefits for white people and, in turn, social disadvantages for non-white people. More specifically, white individuals tend to reap greater social, financial, and political advantages due to implicit or explicit racial biases. These benefits do not stem from greater merit or worth; they are simply toxic byproducts of systemic racism in America.

Intersectionality. First coined by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, American lawyer and civil rights advocate, intersectionality helps us understand how various aspects of identity (i.e. religion, sex, gender, ethnicity, etc.) combine to create unique individuals. A person is neither African American *or* female; instead, she is *both*. Additionally, when we analyze or evaluate a person based upon only one of his or her many identities, we fail to understand the person holistically.

Empathy. Empathy is the human capacity to feel the emotion of another, deeply and without inhibitions. To quote Atticus Finch, "You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view…until you climb into his skin and walk around it in it" (Lee, 1960, p. 39). Often conflated with sympathy, the major contrast between the two is empathy allows a person to feel *with* another (interpersonal, collaborative) whereas sympathy allows a person to feel *for* another (singular, solitary).

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[1] Xenophilia – Greek "xenos" meaning stranger, unknown, foreign and "philia" meaning love, attraction

Social justice. Social justice is the belief in fair and equal rights between majority and minority populations. Additionally, social justice is often revered as an active stance taken by those advocating for equality.

Racial literacy. Racial literacy is a pedagogical practice that teaches students how to identify and combat forms of everyday racism. This practice can be done through various means such as the inclusion of diverse authors and perspectives, small and large group discussions, introspective journaling, and more. Just as traditional literacy exhibits student ability or competency to read and to write, so too does racial literacy gauge one's ability to understand the complexities and importance of race relations.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

When analyzing and tackling social justice issues in education, access to and inclusion of literature should not be geared toward one specific marginalized group but rather inclusive of the diversity present in the study body. Doing so may be broad but if the end goal is an immersive, inclusive, culturally-responsive, and culturally-competent curriculum, it is imperative to explore many cultures and their intersections; however, African American students seem the most historically marginalized and underrepresented in the American education system, making the focus on this particular group more pressing. Research suggests that despite shifting cultural variables, best practices remain a constant and can readily be shifted to address the needs of a given community. Lastly, culture is a moving target, so seeking out more recent works and consistently re-evaluating one's practices are key.

Critical Consciousness

As defined by Jemal (2017), Critical Consciousness (CC) is true mental liberation that occurs when an individual reconstructs and repossesses his or her own humanity by contextualizing that of others. While it is essential for teachers, parents, and administrators to recognize cultural and racial disparities facing today's students, Jemal (2017) asserts that one's *own* knowledge and awareness of these social barriers is paramount for true personal and community growth. Jemal (2017) continues that the three crucial elements to CC are as follows: cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral. All three of these components, when merged, lead to the ultimate goal, liberation. While the research is mostly theoretical in nature, the text closes with tools, strategies, and methods for implementation; more specifically, constructive dialogue in small groups and praxis. Reflection, either through dialogue or done independently is another

CC-based activity advocated for by the text. Lastly, psychosocial support, or peer modeling and mentorship, and co-learning, or problem-posing education, are other valuable paths to CC.

The passion behind Jemal's prose is undeniable; clearly, this is a topic near and dear to her heart and her life experiences. Consequently, her strong diction makes the piece both transformational and engaging, rendering the sage advice more likely to be heeded. Her admission to the ongoing necessity for CC encourages and humbles the reader to adopt at least some of the practices regardless of where he or she falls on this continuum. It is also worth noting how unashamedly Jemal calls out white privilege, a truth that is often a painful pill for some to swallow. Instead of working to solve racial inequities, some exhaust too much time and energy arguing whether or not they exist in the first place. Jemal cuts straight to the point and her problem-solution approach may be painfully honest, but she makes sure to productively lead the way toward resolution.

A practical approach where one can envision Jemal's strength and authenticity manifesting in the classroom is calling out or naming privilege to better contextualize one's position. For example, when discussing a given text, students are asked to weigh in on race-related topics both in small and large group discussion. Before stating their position, students could briefly explain the lens or angle with which they are approaching the issue (i.e. "when I think about how Miss Watson's Jim [*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*] feels *as a white reader*, I think that…"). Simple teacher modeling can help normalize this practice and make the students feel more at ease about naming their own lenses and privilege. After all, there is nothing inherently wrong about knowing and naming one's bias; issues arise when we are negligent and absolutist with bias. As simple as this practice may be, it validates the experiences of *all* students while tapering hasty generalizations.

Jemal asserts that "there is no such thing as a neutral education process;" instead, education can either be a tool to affect positive change or a tool to reinforce and encourage conformity to the status quo (2017, p. 603). The text goes on to argue that the systemic denial of and discrimination for students of color, and the consequent privilege afforded white students are institutional and in dire need of reform, specifically through CC-based teachings. In summary, it is only when we are fully aware that we are active participants in our education that we can truly reap the rewards of it and don the role of social justice advocate.

Multiculturalism

In an editorial written after a brief stent participating in and reflecting upon an experience serving jury duty, Smith (2013) seeks to define multiculturalism in a way that can be practically applied in a classroom setting. Stripped of names and replaced with numbers, the cultural rite of passage that is jury duty acts as a stirring personification of how culturally divided we have become. Smith reflects upon the experience as a self-proclaimed "melting pot of socially-conscious citizens" but the novelty of the experience caused great introspection and conviction (2013, p. 40).

A body of jurors is intended to intentionally reflect multicultural peoples but (thankfully), jury duty is a fleeting phase in life, so how can multiculturalism exist beyond the parameters of forced democracy? In a courtroom setting, open-ended discussions and reasonable doubt through civil discourse are encouraged, but do teachers encourage those same practices within the walls of their classrooms? Smith asserts that when multicultural education truly exists "students and groups are taught to coalesce and work together across lines of race, gender, class, and ability in order to strengthen and energize their fight against oppression" (2013, p. 41). Each juror was hand chosen by the prosecution or defense, so each voice is given equal

weight and authority with hopes that this diverse body of peers will render justice. While we cannot manipulate the demographic pool of students in our classrooms, we can harvest multicultural mindsets and practices where each member serves a pivotal purpose without whom, the show cannot go on.

Finally, Smith (2013) asserts that the primary barrier to multicultural mindsets in the classroom is not the students but rather, the teachers. "As one colleague noted in response to my questions, "kids don't seem to have a problem communicating with people of other cultures; it seems to be the adults that need the help." As children, we are innately curious and open to almost everything. Perhaps it is the seemingly frozen cultural ideals of our elders that influence our beliefs more than we do through learning from our own experiences and explorations" (Smith, 2013, p. 41). Too often educators focus so much on equalizing the playing field for students that we fail to be open-minded to and aware of differences that make us who we really are.

Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning

According to Dr. Hollie (2017), founder of The Center for Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning, the basis of all CLRT boils down to validating and affirming, a practice he affectionately deems "vabbing," with the intention of building a bridge between students and teachers. Before learning how to appropriately "vab" with students, Hollie (2017) argues against a narrow understanding of culture, a term too often conflated with race. Hollie's "Rings of Culture" diagram visually represents seven rings of culture – age culture, gender culture, religious culture, socioeconomic culture, national culture, orientation culture, and ethnic culture (see Appendix A for a visual representation of the graphic) (Hollie, 2017).

Dr. Hollie (2017) acknowledges that culture is akin to an iceberg: generally speaking, we

only catch glimpse of culture, as so much of it remains unsaid and deeply knit in the fabric of our lives. Hollie's graphic encapsulates many aspects of culture, but it is by no means all encompassing. Some of these rings may overlap and interact with one another but it is crucial for classroom teachers to understand the complexities and nuance surrounding cultural identity. Once a teacher is able to better understand the unique rings of culture, he or she can better validate and affirm student values, which is the first step in building a trusting relationship between teacher and student, inevitably working toward increased student achievement.

Understanding Dr. Hollie's "Rings of Culture" is imperative to meaningful curriculum development and instruction. For example, although Mark Twain's classic novel *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1996) has been a fixture in American schools for over a century, the ways in which students grapple with the themes of racial and social tolerance are greatly affected by other rings. For example, the foil characters Huck and Jim undoubtedly relate to ethnic culture, but student's age culture may color how they view this relationship unfolding. Students' grandparents and great-grandparents may have been shocked to see such an unlikely pair because inter-racial friendships may have been taboo in their youth; however, today's youth seem to see the pairing as fairly commonplace in modern society. Additionally, Twain's social commentary on religion, while still inarguably relevant, seems to reverberate differently with today's youth, a generation made up of many religions (not simply Christianity) and followers who seem less tied to religious institutions and more rooted in personal belief systems. Overall, Hollie's "Rings of Culture" is intended to give educators a practical and visible way to understand the many facets that make up the overall culture of a given student.

Critical Race Theory

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is a theoretical framework with which to approach education

that asks students and educators to analyze society and culture through the lens of race and race relations. While a theory lauded by many scholars, its implementation varies greatly from region to region, demographic to demographic. In a 2014 volume of Instructional Pedagogies, researchers sought to analyze and measure the efficacy of CRT practices at a historically black university (HBCU) (Talpade & Talpade). While racial segregation in modern day American schools is often discussed pejoratively, the reclamation of black excellence through HBCUs has fostered pride, community, and opportunity for many in the black community. Additionally, students of color, especially those in the African American community, are too often shielded from discussing issues of race in their all-too-often whitewashed schools, so concepts like CRT aren't even introduced to learners until post-secondary education.

It is in the HBCU environment, researchers assert, that we can see how much culturally-relevant instruction resonates with students. The goal of the study was to gather student feedback on the implementation of CRT to inform future educational practices and learning outcomes, specifically for African American students (Talpade & Talpade, 2014). The students surveyed were questioned about the following: "Use of culturally-specific examples in class whenever possible; use of culturally-specific presentational models, use of 'relational reinforcers', and active engagement students" (Talpade & Talpade, 2014, p. 5). A few more of the constructed response questions related to the themes above were also enumerated.

- My instructors use textbooks in class that are written by people of my own race.
- Resources (websites, books, videos) used in my classes feature people of my own race.
- My instructors use examples that are related to the experiences of my race.
- I can relate to the examples that my instructors use in the class

·   I am exposed to several role models of my own race

·   Contributions of individuals from my own race are introduced in class.

·   My instructors make references to people, places, things, that I can identify with.

(Talpade & Talpade, 2014, p. 5)

The findings of this research, while somewhat limited by the sample size, conclude a strong connection to and correlation between CRT practices and student success. By relating course content to student culture and experience, students could understand course content on a much deeper and more personal level, and the results crossed curriculum area boundaries. Talpade and Talpade found that incorporating student personal experience, home life, cultural connections, and more were effective "in the field[s] of genetics and cell biology…medical education…health education…social studies" and there are implications that these same trends could be found in other core content areas as well (Talpade & Talpade, 2014, p. 6-7).

Finally, researchers conclude that while CRT practices are present and thriving in HBCU environments, "it is a failing of our education system that these practices are implemented too little, too late" (Talpade & Talpade, 2014, p. 7). In the realm of education, it is often touted that what is good for one student is good for all; for example, providing auditory and visual representations of lecture might be needed for a student on an individual education plan (IEP), but wouldn't that same accommodation aid the broader student population? Can't the same be said for theoretical frameworks like CRT? Even if the cultural references aren't applicable to all students, the implementation of CRT in more diverse classroom settings provides the potential for students to learn more not only about course teachings but also about each other, their community, and the broader world.

Working Through Whiteness

White privilege, while an undisputed fact, remains a highly polarizing topic in civil discourse. Many in the majority population want to write off write privilege as a relic of the past or a truth of which they want to remain blissfully ignorant. After all, as aptly stated by Cabrera, "Why would a person in a position of societal privilege challenge a system from which he or she benefitted?" (2012, p. 376). This inevitable roadblock in predominately white communities provides a painful crossroads for educators. The beginning of these conversations, however bleak, may lead, as Cabrera suggests, to a gleam of hope at the end of the tunnel. While Whiteness may stem from a place of oppression and hierarchy, Cabrera asserts that "this does not imply that Whiteness cannot be transformed" (2012, p. 378). Cabrera's research at the post-secondary level was intended to discover just that – how can we work through Whiteness?

When diversity is discussed, whites tend to approach it more passively as racism seems to only affect them peripherally, but Cabrera suggest that white people must take on a more active role. It is impossible to simply shed oneself of White privilege, but, according to Cabrera (2012), we instead must take up our mantle and use it for the purpose of greater racial justice. Some tangible modeling educators can do in their own classrooms include "promoting Whiteness awareness, minority experiences, coursework on race, anti-racist action, interactions with diverse [people]...and racial justice role model" (Cabrera, 2012, p. 379). In essence, in order for one to work through Whiteness, one needs to be pushed out of his or her respective comfort zone(s) to acknowledge truth that may be initially painful but eventually productive.

Beyond mindset, Cabrera (2012) suggests cautious action toward racial equity. Well-meaning white people may don the role of ally, but, unfortunately "some who genuinely aspire to act as social justice allies are harmful...they patronizingly speak for minority communities,

thereby reinforcing the oppressive, racist structures they wish to dismantle" (Edwards, 2006, as cited in Cabrera, 2012, p. 380). In other words, many ironically replace white privilege with a white savior complex, which can be equally harmful. Instead, Cabrera suggests tapering actions based upon an evaluative approach to the "invisible power relations that inequitably structure society" (2012, p. 381). Some suggest that "people of a privileged class are limited in the roles they can play in a collective action because 'the oppressor, who is himself dehumanized because he dehumanizes others, is unable to lead the struggle' "(Freire, 2000, p. 47, as cited in Cabrera, 2012, p.381). The first step to finding this delicate balance, however, is racial cognizance.

Cabrera (2012) sought to aggregate data to quantify this concept of racial cognizance. The sampling included all white male undergraduate students who grew up in white majority neighborhoods. By in large, the respondents expressed an awareness of white privilege but often saw themselves as immune to the system's benefits and failed to extend their understanding into action. According to Cabrera (2012),

> Those who were working through Whiteness not only became aware of their racial privileges, but they also developed the agency to struggle against it with varying degrees of dedication and involvement. These actions were sometimes bold and dramatic (e.g., organizing rallies in favor of affirmative action) and other times behind closed doors (e.g., disrupting familial racism). (2012, p. 390).

The respondents of the survey, while aware of these outlets for social justice, either did not actively engage in or outright dismissed the practices. While all came to the same conclusion, that race and racism are pressing social issues, they all still had great strides left to take on the path toward working through Whiteness.

Many of the white males surveyed had a few cross-racial friendships, but between their

community's lack of diversity and that of the high education institution, these strides toward working through Whiteness become exceedingly challenging. Cabrera (2012) suggests that multicultural education can help disrupt the hegemonic system and increase social knowledge and awareness. Cabrera also enumerates three key reasons education, higher education in particular, plays a key role in combatting Whiteness:

1. Racial minorities were not expected to be the teachers for their White peers, which has been shown to take a psychological toll on them

2. The ability to increase racial cognizance in the absence of racial minorities means that students can learn about issues of race regardless of their institutions' compositional diversity

3. The initial steps in racial justice ally formation are usually externally prompted, and classroom experiences in higher education can play an integral role in facilitating this process (Cabrera, 2012, p. 395).

Cabrera (2012) warns against the trap of colorblindness and oversimplifying the intersections of culture. An easy mantra many whites tout when addressing race is the age-old, "I don't see color," which is just as dismissive as it is ludicrous. Whites cannot shirk responsibility as the oppressor but denying that which otherizes the oppressed. Additionally, because race has become more and more nuanced, so too must be our understanding of it. Intersectionality, or the relationship between various cultural identities, is a more holistic approach to understanding and empathizing with others from varying marginalized groups. For example, actress and comedian Wanda Sykes is a gay, black, female. All three of those cultural identities are important to her and it is their unique intersection that defines who she really is. To only see only see one culture, for example race, is to neglect seeing her whole being.

Finally, Cabrera concludes that "working through Whiteness continue[s] to challenge and transform what it means to be White" (2012, p. 397). At the conclusion of the study, participants concluded that one can both "struggle against racial privilege and continue to be white" (Cabrera, 2012, p. 397). As quaint and obvious as the latter idea sounds, it is a truth of which white students and educators alike need to be vigilantly aware.

Learned Empathy

Junker and Jacquemin (2017) aimed to use both qualitative and quantitative analysis of both literature and written responses to assess empathy. The study spanned a semester to gauge whether student empathy could grow and develop over time. Junker and Jacquemin's (2017) methods were through and deliberate – more specifically, students would read and discuss texts and then compose a written response. The goal of these prompts was to discern and analyze the following: "multiple perspectives, cultural frameworks that affected characters' behaviors, affective responses to the texts, and literary concepts" (Junker & Jacquemin, 2017, p.81). From these written assignments, a four-point scale was developed to assess student cognitive and affective empathy. The four measures were as follows:

> "openness," (student's ability to read about diverse cultural experiences and people with-
> out leaping to premature judgments), "cultural frameworks" (student's ability to identify
> and understand the complexity and implications of a character's cultural background and
> frameworks), "multiple perspectives" (the student's imaginative ability to view a
> situation from a multiplicity of viewpoints), and "affective" (the student's identification
> of emotional nuance and expression of shared emotional experiences or traits) (table 1).
> (2017, p. 81)

While the research seemed fairly thorough (252 responses from 42 students using 12

novels over two semesters) and methodical (numerical scale as the constant), researchers Junker and Jacquemin (2017) concede that the results of their study, while promising, have limitations. The data indicate a "strong positive covariation between individual empathy metrics as well as significant covariation between textual difficulty and time (e.g. harder texts assigned later in the semester)" (Junker & Jacquemin, 2017, p. 84). The researchers seemed most surprised by the correlation of text difficulty and capacity for empathetic growth. Additionally, based on their measures, students did not show numerical growth in empathy at semester end despite teacher and student reports that they felt a stronger propensity toward empathy, which leaves the question of empathy as a measurable skill somewhat unanswered (Junker & Jacquemin, 2017). The conclusion of the study urges educators to "commit to social change" and align advocacy with course objectives, "read literature to generate empathy" and pair that literature with meaningful writing and discussion-based activities, and, most importantly, give these practices time to fairy and authentically gauge progress (Junker & Jacquemin, 2017, p. 86).

Another study, conducted by Pinhasi-Vittorio and Vernola (2013), tackles the topic of learned empathy head on. Pinhasi-Vittorio and Vernola (2013) posit that by validating students' own thinking and imagination, the students may learn that although their understandings and perceptions are different from their peers, the difference does not discredit their own interpretations. In their own words: "A meaningful learning that calls for immersion within the text and opens the door to unseen places, emotions and experiences is learning that can provide the reader with the feeling of empathy toward others" (Pinhasi-Vittorio & Vernola, 2013, p. 59).

Students, especially those from the majority population, can never truly understand the oppression of others because they have not experienced it head on; however, we've all been gifted with the power of imagination which grants us access to lives, experiences, and hardships

we might never face in real life. For example, in the infamous trial scene in Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1960), fictional African American character, Tom Robinson, faces an all-white jury for a crime he did not commit. The seventeen-year-old students in my classroom have likely never had their life hanging in the balance in such a way – a courtroom full of enemies solely due to skin color, a biased judge and jury, and an inability to represent oneself fairly and accurately. Despite shared experience, Lee's visceral descriptions, exceptional character development, and keen ability to portray dramatic tension with historical realism make the scene one of the most harrowing in all of American literature. Readers are imaginatively transported into that courtroom and cannot help but rally to the side of the helpless Tom Robinson. Although we are aware that these characters, this place, these events are mere figments of the authors imagination, they affect us in very real ways and we carry those experiences with us, almost as we do our own.

Beyond imaginative practices, Borba (2018) proposes a more concrete approach to empathy instruction. As an educational psychologist and parenting expert, Borba spent the last decade researching how to solve this so-called empathy crisis and begin moving toward "planting seeds of empathy" in today's youth (2018, p. 23). Prior to establishing the hows of empathy instruction, Borba (2018) enumerates the vast benefits of increasing empathy for both the individual student and the broader classroom. Borba (2018) asserts that students who exhibit high levels of empathy benefit both academically and socially, such as classroom engagement, academic achievement, communication skills, reduced aggression. Moreover, Borba concludes that increase empathy among the student body may be "our best antidote to bullying and racism" (2018, p. 23). If empathy instruction has such far-reaching and long-lasting results, why, then, isn't it at the forefront of educational discourse? Plain and simple, educating for empathy

"requires ongoing, embedded work guided by strong school leaders who are empathetic themselves" (Borba, 2018, p. 24). As simple as these ingredients sound on paper, between frequent teacher turnover, constantly shifting state standards and building/district initiatives, and teacher burnout coupled with burgeoning class sizes, it is no wonder many teachers choose immediacy over delay, concrete over abstract.

In her research, Borba (2018) discovered nine elements of successful empathy education, those being emotional literacy, moral identity, perspective taking, moral imagination, self-regulation, practicing kindness, collaboration, moral courage, and growing changemakers. Too often well-intentioned educators dive headfirst into the tough conversations with students without recognizing they do not have the skills nor the self-awareness to tread water. The first step, emotional literacy, asks students to refine their ability to read and identify emotions. However, according to Borba:

> Empathy thrives in environments that prioritize face-to-face connections, so a key step for school leaders is to help teachers create classrooms that nurture meaningful interaction and engagement. Notice also if students have opportunities to share ideas and discuss lessons. Watch to see if teachers are *with* students and building caring relationships, or if they're sitting behind a desk disengaged (Borba, 2018, p. 24).

So, in other words, a simple litmus test about the arrangement and fostering of face-to-face student encounters might be the important, but often missed, first step to empathy education.

Steps two through four (moral identity, perspective taking, and moral imagination) are often seen as one synonymous approach; however, understanding the distinction might be the difference between mediocre and masterful empathy education. Many educators have likely been guilty of asking students to choose and explain their position before actually understanding from

where these opinions derive. Moral identity asks for educators to establish a common motto or mantra that highlights shared values (Borba, 2018). Beginning with shared values instead of immediately picking sides implicitly weighs collective values against those of the individual, contextualizing discourse and tempering conflict. Perspective taking and moral imagination go hand-in-hand, asking students to figuratively walk in the shoes of another, and, echoing the research of Pinhasi-Vittorio and Vernola (2013), use active imagination to ground perspective taking in some semblance of reality, even if it is a visionary one.

Self-regulation, practicing kindness, and collaboration (steps five, six, and seven) activate the reflective empathetic process. Borba argues, "Self-regulation allows kids to keep their emotions in check and recognize others' feelings, empathize, and then calmly think of how to help" (2018, p. 26). In fact, Borba (2018) contends that a student's ability to manage his or her emotions is a better predictor of academic achievement than traditional Intelligence Quotient (IQ) tests. The research continues that "teaching children how to recognize their stress triggers and signs before they're in overload," is the key self-regulation (Borba, 2018, p. 26). Simple solutions like meditation, yoga, and other mindfulness practices, when done regularly, can drastically impact truancy rates, standardized test scores, and rising rates of youth depression and anxiety. Additionally, while most see kindness as an obvious shared value, Borba (2018) argues that, like any skill, with practice comes results. Simple acts like friendly greetings, high fives in the hallway, and kindness routines can be foundational to fostering kindness-centered learning environment. The ultimate goal of prioritizing kindness is a subtle push to encourage students to be more attuned "to other people's feelings and needs, trust more, and become more 'we' oriented and less 'me' oriented" (Borba, 2018, p. 26). That "me" to "we" mentality shift is furthered in the collaboration stage. Borba sees empathy as "never a solitary act," and argues that

"when we let go of our self-centeredness and feel *with* other that our hearts open" (Borba, 2018, p. 26). For this practice, Borba encourages classroom activities that foster student cooperation such as jigsaw-type learning or small-group discussions. Just as with the previous steps, the benefits of these practices harbor not only empathetic growth but also academic growth.

The final two elements of Borba's (2018) approach to empathy instruction are moral courage and growing changemakers, both of which ask students to have some semblance of self-efficacy. As defined by Borba, "Moral courage is the inner strength that motivates children to act on their empathetic urges and help others despite the potential consequences" (2018, p. 27). Teaching students upstander skills such as Socratic dialogue and civic discourse will help students, in a more structured setting, find their own voices and practice standing up for their beliefs. Another useful strategy mentioned by Borba's (2018) research is using historical and fictional figures who modeled civil disobedience for us, figures like Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandella, Gandhi, or Harry Potter. The last step Borba (2018) suggests enacting is giving students real-world, tangible opportunities to affect positive change either in their community or on a more global scale. Borba beautifully affirms, that "every student, regardless of zip code, has the potential to make the world a better place, *if* we provide the right experiences" (2018, p. 27). That "if" implies that educators hold a real and urgent responsibility to take empathy instruction to the next level and, in turn, out of our classrooms. This charge, however daunting, is not bestowed upon educators without guidance. Borba (2018) closes with seven principles of empathy education that can function like a checklist of future lesson planning and assessment (see Appendix B).

Another study, conducted by theology professors Agnew Cochron and Fozard Weaver (2017), was developed with the intent to measure the effect of pedagogical practices on learned

student morality and ethics. The curriculum sought to draw out empathy in students through the study of narratives as they "equip student to recognize moral decision-making…self-understanding…theological and moral imagination" (Agnew Cochran & Fozard Weaver, 2017, p. 246-247). Documentaries, memoirs, and fiction were paired with both small and large group discussion and experiential learning activities. Qualitative data were gathered through the following means: written course assignments, student reflections on the experiential and community-engaged class activities, and student participation in preliminary and concluding surveys" (Agnew Cochran & Fozard Weaver, 2017, p. 247). The study concludes that of the 219 students surveyed, 172 affirmed the course's outcomes in relation to ethics expectations (Agnew Cochran & Fozard Weaver, 2017). This particular study took place in a Catholic school setting, so researchers fully acknowledge that the results may have been impacted by that detail. They were, however, surprised to learn that students who were initially skeptical of an ethics course due to pre-existing opinions on church dogma, expressed surprise and hope for respect and diversity within their institution. The results of this study, albeit narrow, hint at the broader truth that morality is like a muscle, able to grow when flexed but results in atrophy when neglected.

The Rhetoric of Empathy

While the fostering of empathy has its own challenges, the *expression* of empathy is equally important as that communication binds people and breaks down barriers. Fike, deems this process "emotional labor," as one must to *actively* take strides to express oneself and without that self-expression, the empathetic experience becomes a solitary experience (2007, p. 1). Thankfully, Fike (2007) breaks down this complex and laborious process into three manageable steps – acknowledgement, empathy, and trust. Step one, acknowledgement, "means simply to recognize the emotional value to the student of what he or she has written" (Fike, 2007, p. 1).

This might seem a stilted or insignificant practice but Fike (2007) asserts that the implication of not acknowledging student emotion is denial of said emotional experience. The acknowledgement of emotion can be solicited by the teacher or can be shared between student peers.

Step two, empathy, is arguably more challenging and complex. Fike defines empathy as "being on the same side or wavelength" or "projecting awareness of student emotional involvement" (2007, p. 6). Showing empathy is not something that comes easily to most, so, surprisingly, Fike suggests two courses of action: "surface acting" or the practice of "suppressing one's felt emotions and faking the desired emotions" and "deep acing" or "modifying one's feelings in order to display the appropriate emptions" (2007, p. 6). This seemingly-disingenuous practice may feel counterintuitive at first, but Fike suggests that the manufactured empathy can do no harm to those on the receiving end and may, after all, encourage more authentic responses from the giver when routinely practiced. For example, an analogous situation would be teaching one's child how and when to apologize for wrongdoing. The child is certainly play acting when he or she says the obligatory "I'm sorry" but the gesture is still important for those on the receiving end and, after time, the child will learn to mean the phrase from a more empathetic place in one's heart.

Step three, trust, as defined by Fike is "to feel confident in another person's intentions and abilities" (2007, p. 6). In essence, when students trust their teachers from an emotional standpoint, they begin to put more trust in them academically as well. For example, if a student is writing a personal narrative where he or she is expressing a personal hardship, the teacher will both (step one) acknowledge and (step two) show empathy first. Even though the assignment is an academic one, without gaining the student's trust emotionally first, the editorial comments

will fall on deaf ears. Fike asserts,

> A student writer cannot be faulted for ignoring the editorial advice of someone who
> appears to be clueless as to the emotional significance of an essay. But once trust is
> established and nourished through continued acknowledgement and empathy, both
> student writer and responder can more fully engage in meaningful dialogue about other
> issues to improve a draft (2007, p. 7).

It is called emotional *labor* for a reason: it takes time and effort, but if personal and academic growth are at the forefront of our teaching paradigms, them the effort is well worth it in the end.

Social Justice

Beyond exposure to culturally-diverse materials and perspectives, researching the relationship between change of mindset and propensity to act was imperative. In their action-research work, Martin et al. (2012) affirm the importance of education's role in developing global citizens which, in turn, can lead to awareness of social justice. More fully, "students need to understand the extent to which their own lives and fates are tightly tied to those of powerless and victimized groups in society" (Banks, 2003, as cited in Martin et al., 2012, p. 158). Researchers hope to understand literature's role in bringing forth such awareness and advocacy. With global literature as the medium, researchers hope to expand horizons, question injustice, and become inspired to act.

The research project enumerates steps taken by the classroom teacher to move toward social justice. The first day of instruction focused on decoding and exploring the meaning of global citizenship. Using a K-W-L chart, conversation was student driven and collaborative in nature. Instructors used this formative assessment to tailor future instruction. While global

literature was briefly introduced on day one, it was on day two that literature was addressed and discussed more explicitly. Using the book *One Hen*, inquiry was encouraged, especially in relation to one's own life experiences and circumstances. Small literature circles were formed from which students participated in a jigsaw activity. Through the following questions, students became expert collaborators:

· What kinds of decisions did the main character in your book make?

· What important actions did each main character make? Why were they important?

· How are these individuals "global citizens"?

· What are the responsibilities of a "global citizen"?

· What did you learn after reading your book and hearing the ideas of others about being a good "global citizen"? (Martin et al., 2012, p. 160).

After attentively sharing ideas with others, the entire class came back together to focus their attention on a microfinancing organization, such as Pennies-for-Patients or the Water Project. Students independently evaluated the missions and impacts of these microfinancing organizations and shared their findings through a multimedia presentation on day four. The class voted on the most affecting presentation and thus, the most affecting microfinancing organization. Donations were collected, and financial support was given to the class-chosen organization. As a concluding activity, students returned to the K-W-L chart and reflected upon new-found learnings. In addition, all students responded to the following prompt in writing: "What is a global citizen? Why is it important to be a global citizen?" (Martin et al., 2012, p. 160). Responses were open ended as students could use narrative prose, poetry, or any other form of creative writing. "The purpose of the final activity was to assess the overall learning of each student as a result of participation in the unit of study as well as offer an opportunity for

reflection and synthesis of their ideas about global citizenship" (Martin et al., 2012, p. 160-161).

Oral and written responses were used to assess learning and the K-W-L charts "provided important data that allowed [instructors] to evaluate student learning" (Martin et al., 2012, p. 162). Students were able to clearly convey their learning about global citizenship through both classroom presentation and composition. Learning extended beyond social concepts and into social action. Many students moved from literal concept understanding to more abstract application, as seen in the depth and figurative representations through poetry.

As admitted by Martin et al. (2012), pacing was challenging as they attempted to tackle many abstract and poignant ideas in a brief period of time (only five school days). Literature circles can also be challenging when pacing curriculum because books vary in length and Lexile difficulty, meaning students complete their portion of the jigsaw at different times. Technology was utilized for both presentations and donations; both unfortunately malfunctioned during the study. While this study was delivered to a specific grade level, an instructor could easily increase rigor by choosing more challenging texts, requiring more independence in group work, and expanding upon the nature and breadth of written responses.

The move beyond theoretical into civic action is definitely commendable. These students not only made a difference in the lives of others but also understood the significance of said difference. Additionally, by researching other like organizations and thus like peoples in need, one might surmise that these students will be more attuned and civically engaged in the future. The autonomy and self-reliance required of students, especially at such a young age, shows true devotion to the cause and makes global citizenship more pressing and personal. On the other hand, the topic of global citizenship is incredibly broad and nuanced, especially for such a brief unit of study. This unit could easily be tailored to and regionalized for a specific work of

literature (i.e. *Of Beetles and Angels*, an Ethiopian refugee's first-hand account of how he went from homeless to Harvard). Finally, as much as this unit is geared toward social studies, the same motifs can be found across the humanities, so translating to language arts or English should be relatively seamless.

A different study conducted by the previously mentioned Pinhasi-Vittorio and Vernola posits the questions:

> What was the interplay of the arts and aesthetic education in developing my students' imagination in relation to literacy and the text? How did imagination and the integration of the arts impact the students' awareness of empathy, social justice, and critical thinking as they read the texts? (2013, p. 57).

Firstly, Pinhasi-Vittorio and Vernola (2013) sought to establish a formal definition of social justice with which they will base their study and research. For the purposes of their research, social justice is defined as "the ability to see beyond what appears to be. It is the process where we are imagining what others might think and feel; it is looking at people in their uniqueness and individuality. Toward that end, we "must resist viewing other human beings as mere objects or chess pieces and view them in their integrity and particularity instead" (Greene, 1995, p. 10 as cited in Pinhasi-Vittorio & Vernola, 2013, p. 58).

The research project tasked students to synthesize and consequently discuss art; informal observations were made of facial expressions, body language, interpersonal interactions (systematic ethnographic observation). There were also transcribed focused conversations about artistic artifacts as well as the collection of student work (both written and visual). Using Freire & Macedo's framework of critical literacy, common vocabulary was developed and thus the authors were able to gauge student conversations and interactions with more objectivity. The

focus of artistic analysis centered on "deep noticing" requires students to see beyond the surface, pushing toward deeper understanding and eventually empathy (Pinhasi-Vittorio & Vernola, 2013, p. 60).

Findings suggest that utilization of the arts is integral to engaging imagination leading to critical thinking. The fluidity of interpretation offered by art allows and encourages participants to be more accepting of different interpretations, understandings, and viewpoints. Looking ahead, interaction with art in such a way positively affected the pedagogies of both in-service and pre-service teachers by reinventing and revising current curriculum. The ultimate goal is that the lives of many students will be affected through this artistic approach to fostering empathy. The ultimate goal and therefore success of such aesthetic infusion is as follows:

1. Reading selected texts that discuss and theorize aesthetic education, as well reading children's and young adults' literature that includes different social, cultural, and political issues;

2. Experiencing the making of art through the following art activities: collage, drawing, painting, poetry writing, music, and dance in the classroom; and,

3. Viewing and responding to the work of art, whether it is music, theater, dance, or visual art. None of these aspects is taught in isolation, and all are strongly connected to and interrelated to one another (Pinhasi-Vittorio & Vernola, 2013, p. 61).

The conclusions of the researcher seem to corroborate the vetted research of others; more specifically that of Burton, Horowitz, and Abeles who state that students who were engaged seriously with varied arts experiences over periods of time were found to be "...more confident and willing to explore and take risks, exert ownership over and pride in their work, and show compassion and empathy toward peers, families and communities" (Pinhasi-Vittorio & Vernola,

2013, p. 57). Additionally, previous findings concur with those of this study in that students in art-rich schools find enjoyment in collaborative learning. These researchers adeptly surmise, "it is the imagination which may allow us to think extraordinary thoughts and become creative. Subsequently, it is the imagination which may give us the tools to develop critical thinking and have a better grasp of social justice issues" (Pinhasi-Vittorio & Vernola, 2013, p. 59). The irony of education is that we are all gifted with an exceptional propensity toward imagination but much of traditional secondary schooling works to iron this out of young minds to facilitate a more standardized approach; however, this youthful spirit of imagination needs to be resurrected, so we can all have a more mature and full capacity for empathy and social justice.

Curriculum Development

Vetter and Hungerford-Kressor (2014), sought to find concrete multicultural strategies with data-proven results. Both researchers conceded that many classrooms are void of race-related discussions namely due to lack of experience and comfortability with said subject matter in addition to a fear that engaging in such discourse has "the potential to disrupt an already delicate classroom community" (Vetter & Hungerford-Kressor, 2014, p. 83). Regardless of comfort level or experience, when educators engage in race-related literacy strategies, they can be effective facilitators of change. Vetter and Hungerford-Kressor (2014) do not oversimplify the daunting task of creating a learning environment in which students feel safe and comfortable enough to grapple with sensitive topics; instead, they encourage consistent and frequent dialogue that promotes reflectiveness and trust. More specifically:

> We argue that examining peer group conversations could provide insight into how high
>
> school students engage in racial literacy practices independent from adult supervision.
>
> This examination is especially pertinent to high school teachers who are preparing

students to engage in social justice practices independently in higher education, in future careers, and as active citizens in their communities (Vetter & Hungerford-Kressor, 2014, p. 83)

Allowing students to discuss weighty topics without active supervision or facilitation might make an already-daunting task seem even more terrifying, but Vetter and Hungerford-Kressor (2014) go on to argue that student-led conversations in small groups conducted over time yields the following growth of abilities: appreciation for diverse and unfamiliar experiences, problem-solving skills within the community, and opportunities to talk about race.

Assessment through discussion can be difficult to both facilitate and assess but thankfully, Vetter and Hungerford-Kressor (2014) established helpful norms and common language to streamline the process and bring as much objectivity to the data as possible. Their research took place in three phases and relied heavily on ethnographic methods. Conversations between students were recorded and then categorized based upon their characteristics of conversation about racism (see table below):

Table 1

Characteristics of Conversations about Race

Characteristics of Racism	Characteristics of Racial Literacy
Essentialize race: portray race as a predetermined and deterministic aspect of personality and life.	Challenge undemocratic practices
Colorblindness: Dismisses the significance and relevance of race	Hear and appreciate diverse and unfamiliar experiences
Racism as thing of the past	Recognize how to ask questions related to race
Racism as extreme action or words: Only see blatant aspects of racism	Understands that racial identities are learned
Racism as personal: Used as a way to downplay racism	Engage in talk even when difficult or awkward
Racism within the myth of individualism: Anyone can overcome obstacles	Recognize race as a structural rather than individual problem
	Facilitate problem solving within the community

(Vetter & Hungerford-Kressor, 2014, p. 87)

These "characteristics of conversations about race" were used in tandem with "tools for discourse analysis" (see table below):

Table 2

Tools for Discourse Analysis

Situated Meaning	Social Language	Discourse Models	Situated Identities
What are keywords or phrases in the text? What do these words mean in this time and place? What do words mean in this context?	What is the grammar and function of the language? What type of person speaks like this? Is the grammar appropriate for the setting?	What are the speaker's underlying assumptions and beliefs? What are the simplified story lines that one must assume for this to make sense? What Discourse models does the speaker believe in?	Who is the speaker trying to be, and what is she or he trying to do? What Discourses are being produced here?

(Vetter & Hungerford-Kressor, 2014, p. 89)

Between these two frameworks, researchers Vetter and Hungerford-Kressor (2014) were able to conclude that the most important factors in yielding meaningful and constructive student discourse were frequency (a specific guideline/number was never shared but the study was conducted over several months, so the implication is that time eases tension. Topics and conversations may go unresolved for days and educators must be okay letting students sit in that place of unresolved.), common vocabulary (encouraging words and phrases like "my perspective" and "I hear where you're coming from" can go a long way to bridge gaps between

opposing viewpoints), autonomy (researchers realized very quickly in their study that students behaved more earnestly and authentically when not under constant teacher supervision), and empowerment (students need to feel like their voices and opinions matter, even outside of the classroom) (Vetter & Hungerford-Kressor, 2014, p. 90-96).

While Vetter and Hungerford-Kressor (2014) focused in on student-centered instruction, researchers Pearce and Cumming-Potvin (2017) took a more teacher-centered approach. Teachers were formally interviewed about their perceptions of discriminatory behavior within their school systems. Then, based upon initial findings, all teachers were "obliged to follow the Australian Curriculum, which clearly endorses the principle of equity in education" (Pearce & Cumming-Potvin, 2017, p. 82). The English classroom was seemingly well suited to promote such equity as issues of community engagement and social justice are routinely discussed in this content area. "English invites such a focus on social encounters, as students are able to explore issues that are real and relevant…and English teachers are uniquely positioned to *hear* when students share personal information" (Pearce & Cumming-Potvin, 2017, p.83). Many noted that the standardization of curriculum took away from the authenticity of such "social encounters" and that more organic exchanges about inclusivity harvested productive discussion.

Additionally, it is noted by Pearce & Cumming-Potvin (2017) that issues such as homophobia, transphobia, and heterosexism can be aptly addressed and discussed by English educators through inclusive texts and diverse perspectives. Through the inclusion of diverse authors and diverse points of view, students were able to explore issues of sexuality, gender, and gender expression in the more benign world of fiction; however, the standardization of curriculum restricted literary selections. For those teachers hoping to go against the grain and forge a new path by seeking representative literature, there may be push back from both building

and district administration as well as from the community at large. To take the opposite approach and embrace so-called "null curriculum" only embraces the heteronormative and cis-gendered status quo. Many teachers took a middle ground approach by abiding to necessary standards but also finding ways, however small, to encourage inclusivity. All of these responses were gathered narratively and through an online system. The results indicate that it is possible to find moments, through English curriculum, to achieve social justice for LGBTQ individuals. (Pearce & Cumming-Potvin, 2017). While overt homophobia was mostly present in boys' schools, teacher participants indicated that homophobia was omnipresent in schools in both overt and covert ways, and that many LGBTQ students felt alienated from the broader school community (Pearce & Cumming-Potvin, 2017). However, many teachers were hopeful of increased acceptance as many more LGBT students are choosing to live openly, a sign of change. Furthermore, their research concludes that "it is possible for teachers to commit to the struggle to confront such discourses, despite the 'lack of institutional direction,'" (Pearce & Cumming-Potvin, 2017, p. 87). While it is unclear the long-term effects of such intersectional curriculum, researchers concluded that all participants were able to make stride, however small, toward greater social justice for LGBTQ youth (Pearce & Cumming-Potvin, 2017).

Pearce & Cumming-Potvin (2017) mention that "understanding and valuing diversity as a general principle leads to a greater acceptance of all types of diversity" quite briefly but fail to explore the analogous relationship more fully (Pearce & Cumming-Potvin, 2017, p. 82). Additionally, feedback was elicited from instructors, but we did not hear directly from the students as to the impact of such social interactions and gender discourse. It is also worth noting that gender identities and sexual orientations are present in both the student and staff population. Gathering such private information, especially in a homophobic climate is understandably

difficult but it would be worth investigating to see what sort of impact representation had on results. Because the study is localized and entrenched in the cultural conflict of Australia, it would be interesting to see similar curriculum implementation in more or less progressive countries. What about in regional/rural areas? It was refreshing to see that these researchers were self-aware that this sort of social progress cannot be done lightly nor quickly. The issue of gender is fluid and many secondary students are still on that path of exploration and expression, so the fluid nature of the study was warranted. Lastly, researchers leaned on teachers as the experts instead of forcing initiatives and curriculum on students with whom they are unfamiliar in a community with which they are disconnected. Pearce and Cumming-Potvin call for a shift in curriculum noting "a just curriculum would be one in which their own experiences are recognised as just as valid and worthwhile as those of every other member of the school community" (2017, p. 87). Despite the complexities of intersectional instruction, both researchers were happy to say that the literary approach to curricular justice is a meaningful first step toward social equity.

Lastly, the exploration of supplemental texts for the English classroom might garner greater exposure to and empathy for racial disparities in today's society. Researchers from a 2008 edition of *Academic Psychiatry* laud film's ability to successfully teach and assess cultural competencies (Lim et al., 2008). Reinforcing Borba's (2018) position, these medical researchers stressed the importance of staff diversity training as a proactive measure. Although this research was conducted in the field of psychiatry, not education, the aim of the study directly aligns with the values of empathy education. More fully, researchers, and teachers alike, hope to "remove the barriers to learning cultural competence, such as a belief that people are more alike than different, a lack of awareness of prejudice or of cultural assumptions" (Lim et al., 2008, p. 292).

The research builds off of previous studies positing the use of feature films to teach empathy and cross-cultural understanding, but extends these results to non-feature films, documentaries, and public-service announcements (Lim et al., 2008). Specific non-feature films studied were "*The Way Home*, a 90-minute film about how women experience race-related issues, Black and Blue, a 16-minute film about depression featuring African-American patients, *The Color of Fear*" and more (Lim et al., 2008, p. 293-234). The research concludes that there is something unique about the medium of film that "can create an environment where trainees feel more comfortable discussing these personal issues in a group format, which facilitates the learning of the importance of these difficult topics by showing other people grappling with these issues" (Lim et al., 2008, p. 292). Additionally, researchers found, based upon patient observations, that the brevity of these non-feature films allowed students less visual information to process which made decoding meaning and, resultantly, sharing perspectives more manageable for the viewers. Given infrastructural constraints like class period length, having a myriad of short films would prove advantageous for a classroom teacher as well. If a class period is only forty minutes, students need time to process information before moving on to their next course. Without this time, valuable discourse is lost. Finally, while the researchers openly called for further research on the subject, they offered valuable, somewhat comprehensive, multimedia lists that could be the basis for future curriculum development (see Appendix C-E) (Lim et al., 2008, p. 296-297).

Moving back to the realm of written literature, researcher Shelton (2017) sought to examine literature as a tool to combat social justice within one's own school - more specifically, using Shakespeare to combat bullying and harassment. The area in which Shelton teaches is unique demographically as 100% of their student population is categorized as socioeconomically

disadvantaged and despite having 70% students of color, Shelton reports that "the high school's neighboring county had its first desegregated prom only about a decade ago" (2017, p. 3). Adding to these challenges, as a white educator, she felt ill-equipped to address some of the bullying and harassment issues, as most were deeply rooted in race and culture. Shelton poignantly posits:

> Discussing discrimination based on race, ethnicity, and religion were often challenging for me, primarily because I am White and was raised in a Christian religious tradition. In several of the classrooms, I was both the only White person and the person of authority, while nearly every student identified as Christian. My very existence reinforced Whiteness as power, even if unintentionally (2017, p. 8).

In Shelton's (2017) classroom, students read and discussed William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* not only as a study of literature but also as a study of society's foibles. The text very blatantly discusses religious discrimination, as the Jewish character, Shylock, is openly ostracized and mistrusted, but Shelton (2017) dug deeply into other social commentary within the text – race, ethnicity and religion, patriarchal misogyny, and more. When Shelton (2017 transitioned course discussion from fictional characters to real-world happenings, she noted, "students found it much harder to ignore truths, such as ostracized peers, if we were talking about them in relation to both literature and real life" (2017, p. 8). The intention of the social implication was for students to discuss broader social issues, but Shelton (2017) was surprised and intrigued when discussions shifted to the power structure of the school itself. Paralleling Shakespeare's characters and plot lines, students called out cultural bias and targeted discipline practices amongst teachers and administration. For example,

Adults can be bullies, too…Students began to note that school rules, such as the dress

code, seemed to target students of color while simultaneously treating what they termed

"White behavior," such as tucking shirts into belted pants, as acceptable and expected.

(Shelton, 2017, p. 8-9).

The direction of student discourse did not necessarily move in the manner Shelton (2017)

expected but was blown away that a simple work of literature could be the catalyst for such

productive social discourse. At the close of her study, Shelton challenges teachers to "realize that

there is true social justice potential in every classroom, in every assigned material" (Shelton,

2017, p. 12). There is nothing innately superior about using Shakespeare to begin the

conversation; instead, Shelton (2017) urges educators to use pre-existing resources or curriculum

to find new and innovative ways to infuse social justice.

CHAPTER THREE: CONCLUSION

Summary of Literature

Cultural disparities both academically and socially continue to be at the forefront of educational dialogue. In order to be an active advocate for social justice within the realm of education, one must thoroughly and methodically develop multicultural practices and materials. One of these practices, Critical Consciousness (CC), or awareness of one's own role in relation to privilege, mainly white privilege, and social disadvantage, is imperative when tackling race relations in the classroom; after all, awareness of the problem is the first step to overcoming it (Cabrera, 2012; Jemal, 2017). Engaging in CC can be uncomfortable for both students and teachers alike but pushing through that discomfort over time can yield progressive thought and collaborative classroom environments. The ever-changing demographics and politics of our world should be reflected in the classroom in its curriculum, in its teaching staff, and in its points of view; giving credence to diverse and divergent thinking and understanding the dynamic rings of culture is an integral step (Hollie, 2017; Lim et al., 2008; Pearce & Cumming-Potvin, 2017). Educators must make a conscious effort to understand the many and diverse cultures from which their students come; without this connection, one cannot truly engage in culturally-responsive practices (Hollie, 2017). However, having diverse classes and putting diverse materials and teaching staff in front of students is not enough.

In order for students to honestly engage in a democratic educational system (Jemal, 2017; Smith, 2013), they, like their teachers, need to take an active role in discourse (Borba, 2018; Talpade & Talpade, 2014). Both small and large groups discussions have their merits, but it is imperative that students take ownership of these tough conversations, as their responses will be less authentic and transformative when teacher-centered (Vetter & Hungerford-Kressor, 2014).

Additionally, exposing students to compelling and challenging texts over time will yield more conclusive growth (Junker & Jacquemin, 2017). It seems that educators, especially language arts educators, have unique tools at their disposal to evoke student imagination (Pinhasi-Vittorio & Vernola, 2013) and civil discourse (Vetter & Hungerford-Kressor, 2014). Active imagination, Critical Race Theory, and literacy practices have been found to foster learned empathy (Junker & Jacquemin, 2017; Pinhasi-Vittorio & Vernola, 2013; Talpade & Talpade, 2014;). Empathy, just like any other academic skill has growth potential (Cochran & Fozard, 2017). However, teachers must work actively and deliberately to build student-teacher trust, without which academic engagement cannot occur (Fike, 2007).

Beyond the walls of the classroom, student empathy affects cross-curricular academic achievement, leadership, community and civic engagement, self-confidence, risk-taking, and serves as a powerful antidote to both bullying and racism (Borba, 2018; Martin et al., 2012; Pinhasi-Vittorio & Vernola, 2013). When harvested over time, empathy garnered from classroom teachers can spill into other areas of life, such as civic engagement and social justice (Pinhasi-Vittorio & Vernola, 2013). Teachers do not need to reinvent the wheel in order to create these experiences; instead, they can use pre-existing curriculum to heighten cultural awareness and engage students in meaningful social discourse (Shelton, 2017). Additionally, there are many pre-existing non-profit and microfinancing organizations that could bring clearer global awareness, with little extra effort required of the teacher (Martin et al., 2012). There may be certain community barriers to in-depth discussions about diversity, however, even brief representation of marginalized peoples can have far-reaching impacts for students and families (Pearce & Cumming-Potvin, 2017). Student empathetic growth may take time, attention, and vigilance, but, like anything rewarding, it is a practice well worth the investment.

Professional Application

As noted previously, my English department is currently in the process of curriculum redesign for the sake of diversity and inclusion. While culturally-responsive teaching has been at the forefront of district professional development initiatives, beyond sitting through hours of lectures, little has been done to affect positive change in the trenches, where it counts. Resources and monies have not been allocated for such change but building administration is supportive of the strides we are taking to make English more representative of the unique and diverse student body we serve. From a more practical standpoint, this means beyond acknowledging deficits (our body of authors are predominately white and male – see figure below), we need to study and enact best practices surrounding diverse authors and perspectives.

Figure 1

American Literature Author Demographics:

East Ridge High School English Curriculum 2009-2018
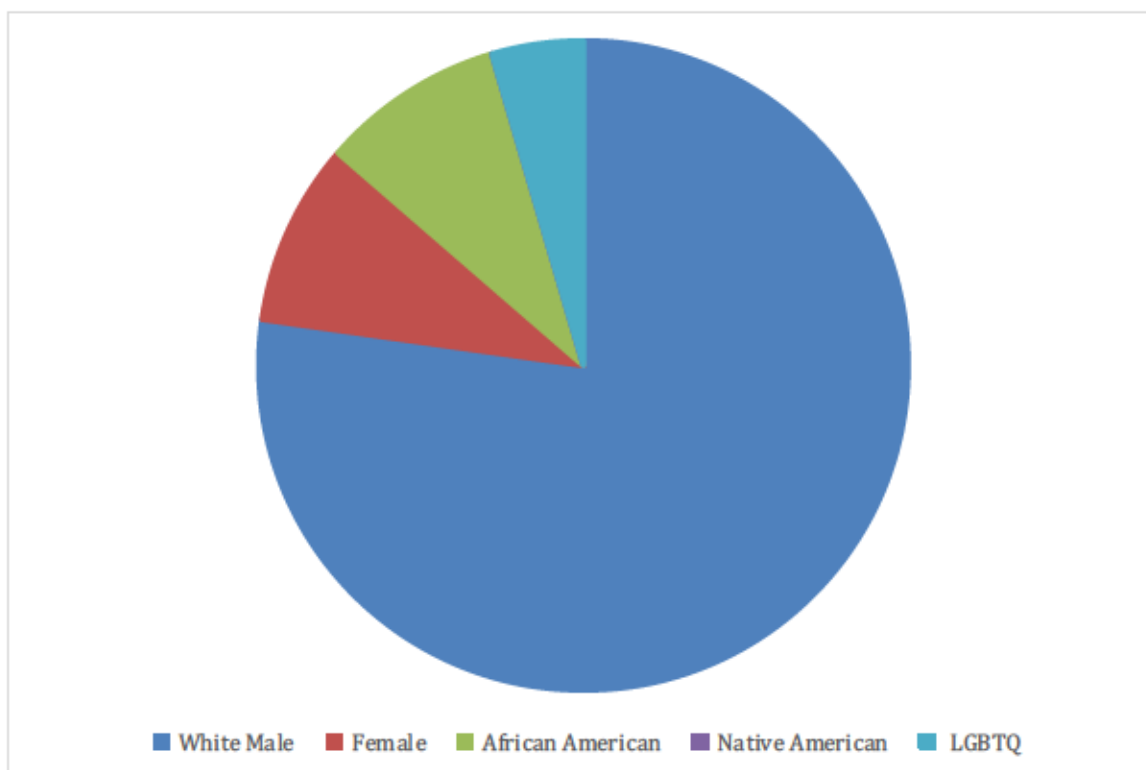
Note: The following authors were taught district wide as part of long-standing and pre-existing curriculum: **White male**: Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Benjamin Franklin, Mark Twain, Ambrose Bierce, William Faulkner, Washington Irving, Edgar Allan Poe, Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, William Cullen Bryant, F. Scott Fitzgerald, John Steinbeck, Carl Sandberg, Robert Frost, **Female**: Kate Chopin, Emily Dickinson, **African American:** Frederick Douglass, August Wilson, **Native American:** NA, **LGBTQ**: Tennessee Williams

More specifically, I would love to develop course teachings that promote and portray the following perspectives (these being the most underrepresented and most socially-pressing in the

community in which I teach): African American, Native American, and LGBTQ. Currently, theses demographics are grossly underrepresented and yet demand for such perspectives could not be higher. My intention for application moves beyond mere tolerance but instead challenges learners to develop interest in and empathy for those in these marginalized communities.

More specifically, I see the fruits of this project blossoming among the English 11, American Literature curriculum. Currently, we take a chronological approach to American literature beginning at our forefathers all the way up through modernism. The unspoken elephant in the room is that, much like our history textbooks, our literature textbooks are devoid of people of color or even women, for that matter. If we as teachers long to share the American story through the lens of "The American Dream" it's integral to teach the *full* scope of that dream. What does the American Dream look like for newly-minted immigrants in a culture that now demands walls and firm borders? What does the American Dream look like for a first-generation college graduate who also happens to be a single African American mother? What does the American Dream look like for a closeted teenager? Is the American Dream even relevant and attainable anymore? For whom? These and many more pressing questions need to be answered but remain taboo, unspoken, and therefore unsolved simply because we refuse to give them equal airtime in the classroom.

These last two school years, since establishing a clear direction for my thesis, I have made it my charge to give our survey of American literature course a bit of a facelift. In order to make this leap, I took a page from celebrated composer, lyricist, singer, actor, producer, and playwright, Lin-Manuel Miranda. Miranda's color-conscious casting approach to his Tony-award-winning Broadway smash, *Hamilton (2016),* transformed the white-washed pages of an American history book into an anachronistic and colorful retelling that grants access to this

early-American narrative to *all* Americans, regardless of skin color. Miranda wanted minority groups to see and feel like they are an integral part of our nation's narrative and so, he boldly chose to depict historic figures, audiences might associate as white, like George Washington and Aaron Burr, as African-American, Asian-American, Latin-American; but, as Miranda contends, no matter one's family's nation of origin they all are, in fact, *American*. If Miranda can show audiences that America's narrative is an ongoing one and we all have a role in writing it, so too can this philosophy be transferred to the English classroom.

American literature courses tend to survey major literary eras (i.e. Age of Reason, Romanticism, Transcendentalism, Realism, Modernism, etc.) and cover celebrated authors of the literary canon; the innate issue with these survey courses is that they do not accurately and fairly represent a *complete* American narrative, a misstep that must be addressed and amended. After reviewing curriculum that has been used since before East Ridge's inception, I identified certain voices that were missing, namely female, African-American, Native American, and LGBTQ authors. Representation matters, plain and simple; if students who identify with any of these cultural groups enter my classroom and do not see themselves reflected in the coursework, they will feel as though their journeys, their obstacles, their growth does not matter. With careful consideration, I sought out not only multi-cultural voices but also multi-media sources. We added in excerpts from Afro-futurist graphic novels, Native American poetry, African-American speeches, texts with LTBTQ characters, and more. When all is said and done, the demographic shift in curriculum in just under two years was dramatic and transformative (see figure below).

Figure 2

American Literature Author Demographics:

East Ridge High School English Curriculum 2019-2020
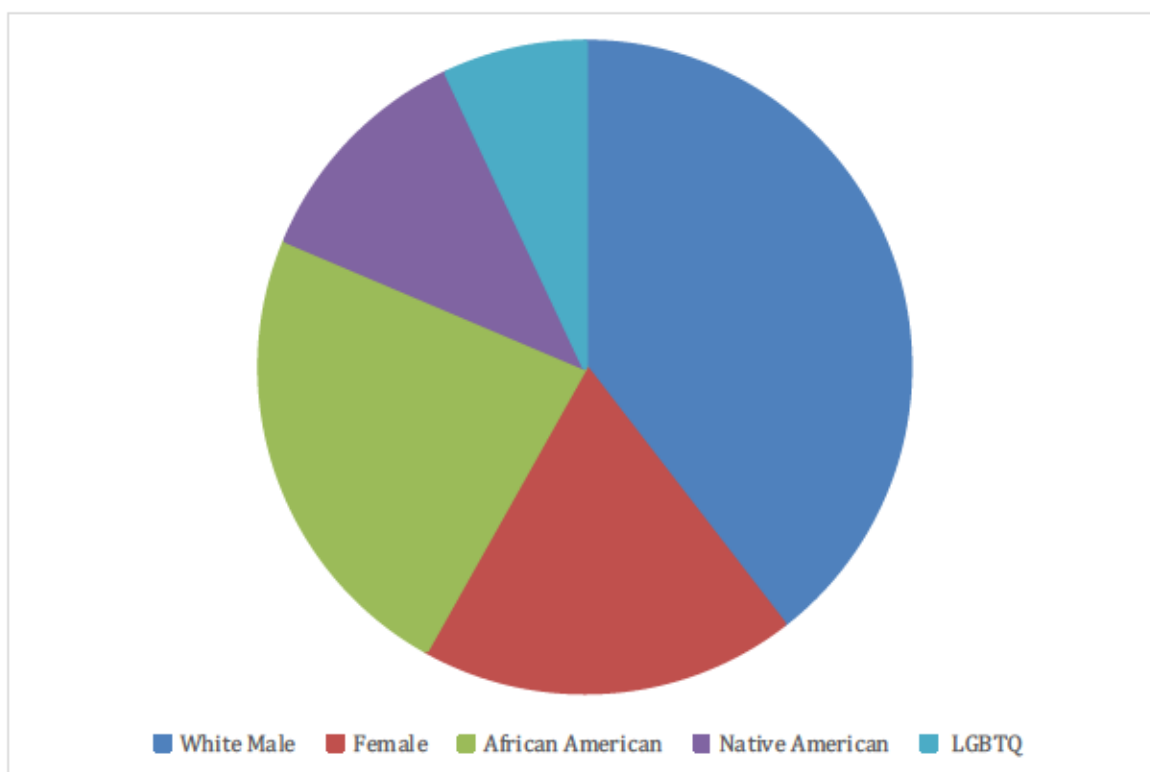
Note: The following addended authors were added to preexisting curriculum texts: **Female**: Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Flannery O'Connor, Edna St. Vincent Millay, **African American**: Toni Morison, James Baldwin, Langston Hughes, Gwendolyn Brooks, Martin Luther King Jr., Roland Laird, Tanesha Laird, Arthur C. Clarke, **Native American:** Mark Anthony Rolo, Sherman Alexie, N. Scott Momaday, Black Elk, Joy Harjo, **LGBTQ**: Walt Whitman, Truman Capote

Instead of tackling one token text, like a figurative checking of a proverbial diversity box, students had frequent and consistent exposure to varied voices. There certainly is still work to be

done on the curriculum equity front and the benefits of said shift might need more time and vetting however, I am exceptionally proud to see so much growth in so little time.

Beyond presenting diverse texts, research suggests that students need to be given imaginative and communal means to process their own viewpoints and the diverse perspectives of others. While I can safely say our curriculum is undergoing a transformative process, more work needs to be done to foster student imagination and inter-personal communication. Our district's push toward common assessment, while well-intentioned, has inadvertently stressed objective assessments which are antithetical to these known deficits. Undoubtedly, many teachers within my professional learning community (PLC) and department use imagination and face-to-face communication for formative assessment, but I cannot recall any meaningful instances where these seemingly-soft skills are assessed at a summative level. The label, formative or summative, may seem like semantics, but to identify a skill as something worth summative assessment validates the skill as useful and relevant. In order to grow as empathetic learners, we cannot expect students to coincidentally find opportunities for social discourse -- we must create these opportunities and give students the tools necessary to refine these skills to take with them into post-secondary life. America needs imaginative minds and conscientious voices to guide us through the problems of tomorrow; America needs collaborative communicators who can empathetically mitigate conflict and shape social progress.

Strides have certainly been made by my part to transform American literature curriculum but the effects of said changes are still left untapped. Taking a page from my college professors, I usually end the year with a student survey to both garner constructive feedback to infuse into practice and encourage students to take an active and democratic role in the educational process. With all these changes in curriculum in mind, I'd like to enact a pre and post assessment to

survey students on the personal value of these changes. Our district utilizes Google suite, so creating a survey through Google forms seems the most user-friendly, for both teacher and student, to gather data. As previously mentioned, that which I hope to measure is a bit abstract, so I would plan on using a 1-5 scale to ground these intangible ideas in something numerical. I am fully aware that introducing a numerical scale does not immediately render the research concrete; there certainly is subjectivity to scales (i.e. one person's four is another person's five), however, it seemed the best course of action provided the questions and content I would like measured. The survey below would be used for both baseline and post-assessment:

Using the 1-5 scale (5 being absolutely agree and 1 being absolutely disagree), please review and respond to the following statements. All responses are anonymous, so students are encouraged to responded earnestly.

1. The literature read in class is diverse and relevant.
2. The literature read in class reflects my cultural identity.
3. Throughout the year, there was one or more author with whom I could connect or relate.
4. Throughout the year, there was one or more character with whom I could connect or relate.
5. In class, I feel comfortable sharing my ideas and viewpoints.
6. I am comfortable listening to classmate opinions that differ from my own.
7. In class, my words and opinions are valued.

8. I was given many opportunities to discuss subject matter in a small-group setting.

9. I was given many opportunities to discuss subject matter in a large-group setting.

10. I can affect positive change in the world.

The student survey would conclude with an optional open-ended response for students to provide more qualitive feedback. Here, students can commend particular works, author or units; otherwise, they can provide constructive feedback of what they felt was missing or lacking from current curriculum. Having this balance of qualitative data to contextualize and counterbalance the quantitative data would presumably offer more thorough and useful data.

Lastly, much of the literature suggests a need for practical community-based projects, so students can begin taking an active role in social justice. Many high schools, albeit peripherally, engage in community outreach and civic projects, but they are often done through extra-curricular activities, so participation is not compulsory. Should classroom teachers work these types of social justice projects into curriculum, students will have a safe, guided environment in which to get their feet wet. Additionally, these types of projects transcend curricular boundaries. For example, it might be easy to think of social-justice-related projects in a civics or political science course but what about in mathematic? In English? Simple resources like Minneapolis Public School teacher's, Perkins', The Mathematicians Project (2016), which seeks to bring awareness to racial and gender disparities amongst celebrated mathematicians or engaging in the Letters to the Next President (2016) program in one of the humanities courses, which elicits student voice for the purposes of democracy, there are so many tools out there to make social justice projects meaningful and practical. Too often, educators feel like they need to reinvent the

wheel when creating student projects but if we just tapped into the many and rich resources at our disposal, social justice projects may be easier to implement than previously thought.

Limitations of Research

Most of the research presented includes American educational systems. Limiting international sources seemed important since many of the social divisions discussed are uniquely American. Undoubtedly, racial divides exist elsewhere in the world, but given America's long-running history of racial discrimination, research that reflected American students seemed apt. Additionally, much of the research reflects teaching positions within the humanities (i.e. English, social studies, etc.). These qualifiers allowed for a wide range of research to be more easily organized and categorized, as they share like qualities. In all of these subject areas, reading, writing, and discussion are at the forefront of pedagogical practices. While these means of assessment are more subjective in nature, the breadth of research allowed trends to become more apparent, giving the data more traction. With that same idea in mind, research gathered is mostly reflective of the last five or so years. Race-relations might be a staple in the fabric of America; however, that does not mean that there aren't frequent developments. For example, major current events like Ferguson[2] and Charlottesville[3] undoubtedly impact and evolve discussions and opinions about race, so including research that pre-dates the last decade would omit an ever-changing variable. Lastly, most of the research reflects secondary and post-secondary settings. Primary schools should certainly be discussing race with their students, but given certain cognitive, emotional, and developmental barriers, the depth and breadth with which these topics are discussed will be limited. On the other hand, secondary and post-secondary students are in a

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[2] The 2014 protests that erupted in Ferguson, MO after the police shooting of Michael Brown
[3] The 2017 "Unite the Right" rally in Charlottesville, VA which featured blatant white supremacy, neo-Nazi, and white nationalist ideologies

more developmentally-appropriate stage in life to have respectful and meaningful discourse about race.

As mentioned previously, culture is a nuanced and constantly-shifting target, so the research included is not, by any means, all-encompassing and might only provide a limited glimpse of what culturally-responsive teaching really looks like. For example, the African American population takes center focus in the research provided (for the sake of focus and brevity), but how might these practices shift when working alongside Asian American, Native American, Latinx and Hispanic, and LGBTQ+ communities? One might surmise that the practices presented in this research would and could be readily transferred to any marginalized group, but that hasty generalization only reveals how short-sighted and misrepresented well-intentioned pedagogical practices can be.

Another key limitation of the research provided was the human variable of instruction. Course materials and practices can only give us glimpses into classroom culture and climate. The same two instructors may tackle the same texts with similar student demographics but yield varying results. It is often the adeptness of the instructor to bring conscientiousness, humor, and heart to the table, which elevate a stock-and-store lesson into something memorable and moving. Unsurprisingly, it was very challenging to glean details about the personified instructor and how the human element impacted student learning and growth.

Implications for Future Research

Because empathy, diversity, and social justice are more nuanced topics, measurement and growth are more elusive. Many researchers took measures to gather data in more objective ways (i.e. rating scales to assess student interest in and efficacy with culturally-diverse texts) but in the end, the weightiest evidence stemmed from teacher observations and student interviews. As an

English educator we are constantly asked to develop and apply numerical rubrics to subjective assessments like writing and public speaking. It would be worth future research to see if the same could be done for measuring student strides in cultural competencies and learned empathy. Early childhood educators are asked to assess students academically, yes, but are also called upon to monitor and foster social and emotional growth; why then, does that practice cease when students reach adolescence? Why laud curriculum content over cultivated character?

Additionally, the recently and rapidly changing demographics of our nation make this educational forefront a relatively new one and therefore one worthy of further research. The country's educational system was founded on the notion that our teachers, our students, our curriculum reflect a very whitewashed past. And while our student body is changing, so too must our curriculum and staff. The former is already in the works but needs time to settle and develop. For example, as previously mentioned, great strides have been made at East Ridge High School but the narrow pool of students who have gone through curriculum rewrites cannot fully reflect an overall culture shift.

Lastly, and this is an element above and beyond the skills and capabilities of one researcher, if students need to see themselves and their culture represented in our curriculum, they also need to see diverse representation among teaching staff, the educational role models. In much of the research reviewed, the race and cultural identities of students were listed and explored, but I wonder how having a more diverse teaching staff might affect student's openness to and interest in engaging in cultural dialogue. For my part, opening these conversations can be somewhat cumbersome as a predominately white woman. Some students show visual trepidation to go down the rabbit hole of race, especially the handful of students of color scattered among a

sea of white faces. Will the sole African American student be asked to speak up and represent an entire race of people on his or her own?

I wonder, and would love to find the research to back this, how student engagement and comfortability might change if their classroom teachers weren't predominately white? In listening to Malcolm Gladwell's podcast *Revisionist History*, he tackles the unseen and often unspoken side effects of major milestones; in one particular episode, he unpacks the Brown v Board of Education Supreme Court victory, often lauded as a victory for racial integration in schools (2017, June 28). However, Gladwell contests that while our student population has become increasingly diverse, teaching staff demographics do no match that trend. Incidentally, Brown v Board of Education allowed students of color to integrate into white schools but that, in turn, meant that black educators were removed from the equation (Gladwell, 2017, June 28). Even today, there are huge disparities between the racial makeup of a given community and the racial makeup of the teaching staff. Having rich and diverse curriculum and opportunities for imagination and civil discourse are positive starting points, but how much more affecting might these strategies be if the teachers at the helm of the ship could, on a personal level, understand and empathize with the many rings of culture represented in their classroom?

Conclusion

In order to be active combatants against cultural discrimination, teachers and students alike need to embark on a Sankofa journey, using literature to "go back and get" what we may not have known or experienced in our own lives. Imaginatively transporting ourselves from our comfort zones into the lives and trials of fictional characters can challenge our belief systems and empathetic capacity in real and transformative ways. All educators, regardless of curricular area, intend to prepare students for the real world that awaits them outside the safety of the classroom. Learned empathy, cultural competencies, and civic discourse are skills our world aches for, no matter the vocation. My hope is that, through this Sankofa journey, students can "kɔ w'anim," – the Twi word for "go forward," carrying with them open minds and empathetic hearts.

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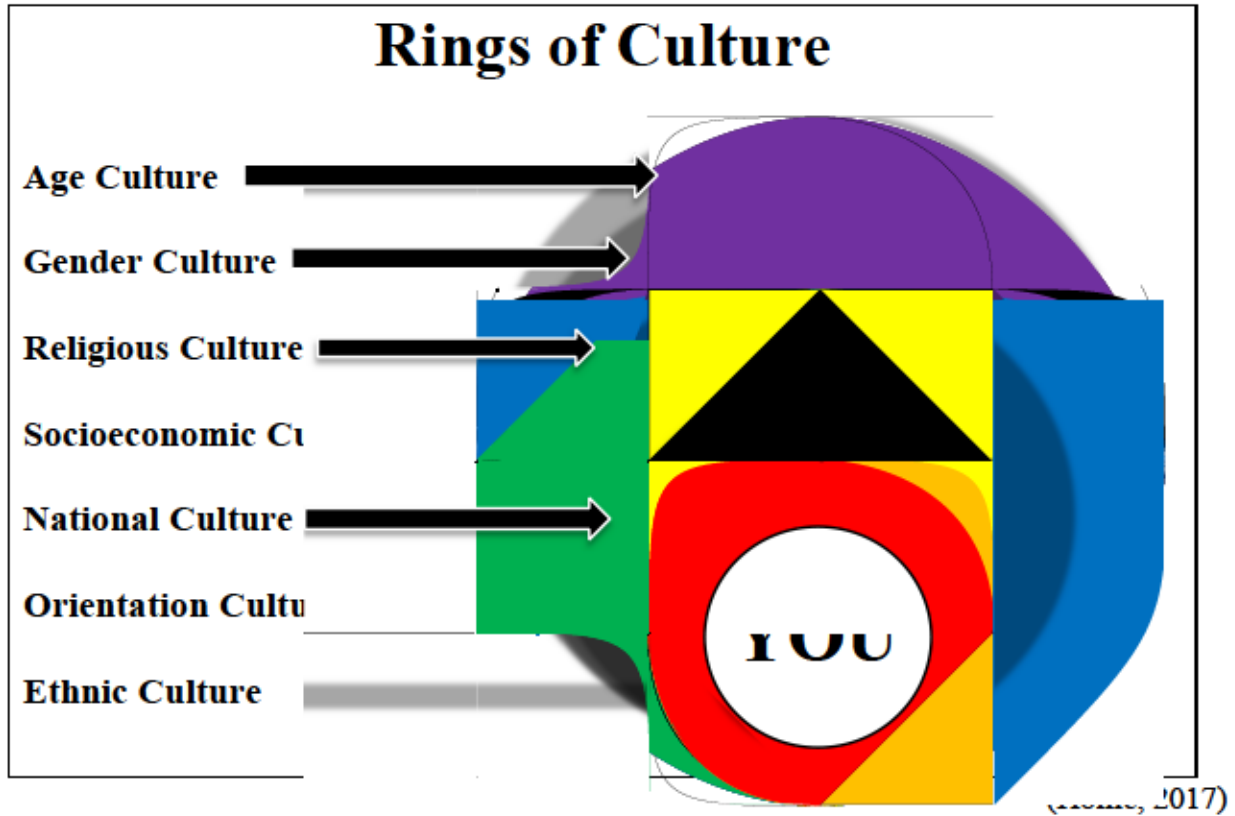
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Appendices

Appendix A

Rings of culture diagram – The Center for Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning

Rings of Culture

Age Culture

Gender Culture

Religious Culture

Socioeconomic C

National Culture

Orientation Cultu

Ethnic Culture

YOU

(Hollie, 2017)

Appendix B

Seven principles of effective empathy education

Principles of Effective Empathy Education

Effective empathy education requires seven core principles guided by strong, empathetic school leaders.

1. Ongoing

Educating for empathy is not a one-time lesson, but a continual focus.

2. Woven-In

Empathy competencies are integrated into content and interactions, not tacked on.

3. Meaningful

Instruction is authentic, touches the heart and mind, and stretches "me" to "we."

4. Internalized

The goal is for students to adopt empathy competencies as lifelong habits.

5. Student-Centered

Students' needs, not curriculum, drive the lessons and experiences.

6. Respectful Relationships

Empathy breeds in a culture of respect and caring.

7. Empathetic Leadership

Empathy is modeled, expected, and core to a principal's vision, purpose, style, and interactions.

(Borba, 2018)

Appendix C

Multimedia resources for multicultural counseling practices itemized by marginalized group

Table 2. University of California San Francisco Video Library for Enhancing Cultural Competence

Documentaries	Date	Running Time	Topic
All God's Children	1996	26 min	AfA, G
Ethnic Notions	1987	57 min	AfA
Color Adjustment	1991	87 min	AfA
Black Is...Black Ain't	1995	86 min	AfA, G
Carved in Silence	1988	45 min	AsA
Days of Waiting	1990	28 min	AsA
Girls Like Us	1997	57 min	mix, F
A Question of Color	1992	58 min	AfA
Sewing Women	1982	14 min	AsA
Shattering the Silences	1997	86 min	mix
Slaying the Dragon	1988	58 min	AsA, F
The Way Home	1998	92 min	mix, F
Lectures	**Date**	**Running Time**	**Topic**
Barriers to Effective Multicultural Counseling	1989	75 min	mix
Counseling and Therapy with Native Americans	1994	68 min	NatAm
Cultural Considerations for Working More Effectively with Latin American Individuals	1994	60 min	LatAm

Cultural/Racial Identity Development	1989	64 min	mix
Culture Specific Strategies in Counseling	1990	105 min	mix
Guidelines for Counseling Asian American Clients	1994	85 min	AsA
Issues in Counseling African American Clients	1992	57 min	AfA
Managing Issues in African American Clients	1992	44 min	AfA
Specifics of Practice for Counseling with Latinos	1994	68 min	LatAm
Jacquelyn B. Chang, M.D., Grand Rounds San Francisco General Hospital, 2001 AfA = African Americans; AsA = Asian Americans; F = Feminist Issues; G = Gender Issues; LatAm = Latino Americans; NatAm = Native Americans			

(Lim et al., 2008, p. 296-297)

Appendix D

Non-fiction training videos used for staff professional development

Table 3. Mental Health Center of Dane Country Training Videos on Cultural Competence

Cultural Competence	Film Title
Race Focused	*Distinguished Lecture Series: Race Matters, Cornel west* *The Color of Fear* *The Way Home* *Skin Deep* *Question of Color* *Essential Blue Eyed* *Blue Eyed* *Eye of the Storm*
Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Transgender Focused	*Straight from the Heart* *All God's Children* *Another Side of the Closet* *Speaking for Ourselves: A Portrait of Gay and Lesbian Youth* *In the Life PBS: GLBT Teens*
Diversity Counseling Series	*Issues in Counseling African American Clients* *Working Effectively with Latin American Clients* *Specifics of Practice for Counseling with Latinos* *Guidelines for Counseling Asian American Clients* *Counseling and Therapy with Native American Indians*
Mental Health Center of Dane County, 625 W. Washington Ave., Madison, WI 53703-2637. http://www.mhcdc.org/default.html	

(Lim et al., 2008, p. 296-297)

Appendix E

Film references and resources for multicultural trainings

Table 4. Contact Information for Films Mentioned in this Article

Black and Blue: http://www.bluerockrpoductions.com

Blue Rock Productions, 4226 Amos Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21215. Purchasers are requested

     to specify the nine-minute or 16-minute version, as well as preferred format: VHS, CD-

     ROM, or DVD, and enclose a check for $35.

The Color of Fear: http://www.stirfryseminars.com/pages/coloroffear.htm

The Culture of Emotions: http://www.fanlight.com/catalog/films/361_coe.shtml

The Way Home: http://www.newday.com/films/TheWayHome.html

Out of print: Check libraries for copies.

The Cross-Cultural Therapeutic Alliance: the African-American Client:

     http://www.unitedlearning.com

Distributed by United Learning (previously The Altschul Group), 150 Sherman Ave., Suite

     100, Evanston, IL 60201

(Lim et al., 2008, p. 296-297)