ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: WITHIN THE TERRAIN: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF WHITE TEACHERS BEING AND BECOMING IN BLACK SCHOOLS

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In this hermeneutic phenomenological study, I explore the identity experiences of White teachers who work in Black schools. Specifically, I ask "What is the lived experience of White teachers as they name and continue to construct their identities while working in Black schools?" Given the ontological nature of phenomenological work, I rely on the philosophy of Martin Heidegger, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Emmanuel Levinas, and Edward Casey. Max van Manen provides a systematic approach that guides my methodological work. In order to investigate the lived experiences of White teachers working in Black schools, I had conversations with five White, women teachers and collected written anecdotes from two of these five teachers. These White women had varying years of experience as teachers and taught different grade levels, but all worked in predominantly Black schools.

At the onset of this study, I engage with scholarly sources, etymological investigations, and works of fiction to open up what may possibly be essential to White identity experiences. This initial exploration led me to suggest that White teachers' identity experiences could be likened to a journey, one that would lead teachers back to a point where they now know themselves better. However, through conversations with my five participants, the metaphorical

terrain of Black schools revealed itself as an essential element of their identity experiences. Rather than moving along a continuum like a journey, the White teacher participants of this study were engaged, to varying degrees, in a visionary project of seeing themselves as part of Black school systems, or terrains. I came to see that their experiences of their identities could be likened to landscapes, which can be seen as both nouns and verbs. These five White teachers both had an identity and were acting on or constructing an identity; landscapes are and are created. The life world of my participants involves the negotiation of their own position in Black schools, the vantage point from which they can see and understand the complexity of that terrain, and their experience of cultivating relationships with other members of their schools.

Viewing Black schools as terrains, and reflecting on my participants' positions within this terrain, led me to think about the ways in which White teachers may act on their identities in anti-racist ways. This reflection connected me with Kendi's (2019) explanation of an anti-racist as one who "locates the roots of problems in powers and policies" rather than "in groups of people" (p. 8). At the conclusion of this work, I open up possibilities for teacher educators and school districts as they consider how to guide White teachers towards anti-racist ways of being.

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by

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CHAPTER ONE: FALLING AFTER THE ‘W’HITE RABBIT

Visceral Questioning

> The rabbit-hole went straight on like a tunnel for some way, and then dipped suddenly down, so suddenly that Alice had not a moment to think about stopping herself before she found herself falling down what seemed to be a very deep well. (Carroll, 1865/2004, p. 13)

In the summer of 2015 I was walking home from dinner with my, then, fiancé in a residential neighborhood of our populous city. Two younger, Black boys were riding their bikes near us. One sped off in a different direction from his friend. The other stayed near us. I asked him if he was doing alright and if he needed to call his mom since it was getting late; he did not look much older than ten. He said he was fine and continued to ride near us. A few blocks later, we saw his friend being confronted by a police officer, who had her lights going as they were stopped in the middle of the street. The police officer, a younger, White woman, was using an aggressive tone with the boy. He waved to his friend, who had been riding near us, asking him to come stand near him. The boy near us looked wary of the whole situation but went over to his friend. The police officer continued to speak with them aggressively, the headlights of the car shining into the boys’ eyes making them squint. A male police officer hung back by the car and another car pulled up.

I told my fiancé we were staying to make sure the boys were ok. I did not know why they had been pulled over, but it was getting even darker and there was no one there in the situation that seemed as though they were on the boys’ sides. The female police officer came over and asked me why I was hanging around and if I had a concern related to the boys. I explained to her that we had been walking next to the one boy and I wanted to make sure nothing bad happened to him. Without a remark, she walked back over and continued aggressively talking to the boys. The situation did not end quickly and I started to cry. I did not cry the way you cry at a sad

movie or the way you might cry when you watch documentaries or news stories about tragedies that were real but that you did not experience. My crying was visceral and I felt it keenly. Maybe I was experiencing some worry and anxiety, but I knew I wanted to stay for those boys. Who had called the police? Why had they called? Why were the police not worried about the safety of these young boys? Why were these young boys being spoken to as if they were disrespectful and confrontational adults? These boys had their heads down, trying to avoid the accusatory glare of the headlights.

Eventually the situation ended. I asked the boys if they were ok and, again, if they wanted me to call anyone. They both said no and rode off. I cried some more. I told my fiancé how unfair it was that these boys were not allowed to ride their bikes around the neighborhood like both he and I had done when we were little. I complained how unfair it was that the police did not even ask them if they were safe. I wondered who called and suspected it was someone who, in my mind, was uneducated about race, someone bitter and resentful. I suspected it was someone who had not seen these boys do anything wrong, but had just seen two Black boys riding their bikes in a predominantly White neighborhood and figured they were doing something wrong.

Why did this situation affect me so much? Why did my fiancé not seem as worked up? My mother, when I told her about it later, asked "Why were you so upset?" Why *was* I so upset? What had this situation done with me? Was I so inclined to interpret the situation as a racially tense one because of the media surrounding the Black Lives Matter movement? Or might I interpret it this way because of my experience teaching Black children for several years? Would I have reacted this way before I taught Black children? What did the lives of anonymous Black children have to do with me, a White woman? How did I experience this situation differently

than perhaps another White person who had not taught Black children? Race and its implications in life do quite a lot with me now. But how and why?

I live out so many questions about Whiteness and Blackness and our experience of them when they are together. These are not questions I have always lived. Race had not done much with me until I became a teacher of Black students. Now, my questions are difficult and endless. They began, seemingly, as suddenly and continue to seem as endless as Alice's rabbit-hole. When I began teaching Black children, I took a steep fall down this deep well of questioning race and what it had done with my identity, and then in turn what my identity would choose to do with race.

In this chapter, I unpack my 'fall' into my questioning. Unlike Alice, however, my fall is cushioned by the writerly research space of phenomenology. In this space, I first need to delve into my own experience as a White teacher encountering and questioning race, which is what brought me to the deep curiosities I have about the phenomena of race and identity. I do not do this as a story-telling endeavor. Rather, I am following the type of suggestion voiced by Cochran-Smith (1995a) to "examine…what is usually unexamined in the tightly braided relationship of language, culture, and power in schools and schooling" (p. 500). Her advice is that we begin this examination with "our own histories as human beings and as educators; our own experiences as members of particular races, classes, and genders" (p. 500). In the complex space of schools, this knotted braid of an institution created not only by language, culture, race, and power, but all elements that constitute identity, unpacking our own histories is a critical step. I engage with my history and experiences as a way to move through what I think I have come to know about race, identity, and teaching in order to arrive at a new place that will then make these phenomena strange again. I raise questions about my experiences and uncover what other

sources, scholarly and not, may say about my experiences. I realize, as van Manen (2014) suggests, that "Forgetting one's preunderstandings is not really possible, and therefore the various assumptions and interests may need to be explicated so as to exorcise them in an attempt to let speak that which wishes to speak" (p. 224). My focus in this chapter is to provide a space where the phenomenon of teaching, race, and identity has room to do this speaking.

Altered Identity

Prior to becoming a teacher, I attended predominantly White public schools and existed in a primarily White niche as an undergraduate in my large, public university. In June 2009 I first entered a place of real racial questioning. I went for an interview at a neighborhood school in a predominantly Black, populous city. I knew nothing of the school's neighborhood despite growing up in a nearby county. This type of racial encapsulation, even if it is unintentional, is not unique, as many Whites share this experience (Winant, 2001). Though I certainly had some degree of raced consciousness (Gere, Buehler, Dallavis, & Haviland, 2009), race was not a salient part of my life or identity. Perhaps this isolation from the complexity and intensity of race was what allowed me to experience my interview in the way that I did. The following vignette, written in present tense to catch the immediacy and experiential nature of the event, highlights the racialized ways I interpreted my interactions and surroundings the day of my interview at a predominantly Black school in densely populated city. All names used in the vignette, and throughout this work, are pseudonyms.

I am driving up a two-lane road with housing project units on either side. The surrounding community is bare, but clean. I arrive at an elementary school at the end of the street and turn up the winding driveway to its parking lot. I think I might be pleased to see that there are two brightly colored playgrounds on the campus and two of the three buildings have

pretty, painted murals. I 'buzz into' the main building and walk into a lobby. There is a small library straight ahead of me. The library contains two cushioned chairs, a giant lion stuffed animal, and three shelves of books displayed standing up on their spines. More good signs- I am feeling good. I head into the main office on my left.

A middle-aged secretary asks me, "Can I help you?". She peers at me over her glasses. She has creamy black skin and relaxed hair streaked with gray. I explain in a quiet, but clear, voice that I am here to interview for a teaching position. She looks back down at her desk to continue sorting through papers, as she had been doing when I walked in, and calls out to someone I can't see, "Crawley, someone here ta' see you." I stand waiting expectantly for her to tell me to go into the principal's office, but she doesn't look back up at me. I'm a little nervous now— unsure of what I'm supposed to do. Shouldn't she say something else to me? Why isn't she helping me more? In a few seconds, I hear a voice come from a room right behind the secretary's desk, "Where Foster?" The secretary makes an announcement asking for Ms. Foster to come to the office. She finally looks up at me and tells me to go sit in a chair in the hallway outside the office.

After a small amount of time sitting in the hallway, I can hear someone dragging his or her feet down a hallway and then a dark-skinned Black girl comes from around the corner. Her hair is short and braided in cornrows that are starting to fray. She slumps into the office and the secretary clips, "What'd you do?" The girl mumbles something I can't make out and then is told to "Go sit down." The girl sits down in the chair next to me. I smile at her and after a while I ask, "What grade are you in?" She smiles back and says "Third." She sits up in the chair a little bit taller. I had been nervous, but I'm back to feeling pretty good about being in this elementary school.

After some more time passes, a White lady with blonde hair comes in through the blue doors. She walks with a quick pace and comes over to me. She says, "Are you here to be interviewed?" and she is smiling. After I say yes, she welcomes me to "come on back" with her. We go down the narrow hallway and into the door on the right. A light-skinned Black lady is sitting at a desk. She is not tall but her presence feels overwhelming to me. Ms. Foster, the White lady, sits down next to Ms. Crawley, the Black lady, who is the principal of this elementary school. We talk for about 20 minutes. I can barely recall what we talked about, but I know Ms. Crawley asked me questions. Her questions made it seem like she wanted me to admit I was too timid to teach in her school.

At the time, I had thought myself to be brave, strong, and committed. Looking back at this anecdote, however, I am embarrassed. I had embodied the 'savior' mentality we often see depicted in movies like *Dangerous Minds* (Bruckheimer & Smith, 1995) and problematized in academia (Brown, 2013; Whitaker, 2020). I can also look back to this day and see deficit thinking hidden beneath my positive outlook on the day. I was surprised and relieved to see bright, pretty playgrounds and murals. This is the kind of deficit thinking teacher educators are trying to battle as they work towards making schooling more equitable (Bauer, 2021; Valencia & Solórzano, 1997). I also see hints that, despite not being explicitly cognizant of race during this experience, my raced consciousness played a role in how I believed I was being treated by the Black secretary, Black principal, and White administrator (Gere, Buehler, Dallavis, & Haviland, 2009). It interests me that I would never have named or reflected on my interview in this way back in 2009. Why not? Despite some sense of my racialized self and interactions with people of color, why did I not see the deep and immediate ways race was involved? Did I not want to?

While Teaching

I did get hired to teach at the school for which I interviewed. Looking back on just my first year of teaching, I can see, as if it were a time-lapse motion picture in my mind, the drastic changes I experienced in that year. I did not learn just new pedagogical tools, as you would expect a beginning teacher might, but I experienced a rather painful shift in my core. Whereas before teaching I might have said I was brave, strong, and committed, I felt those words no longer applied. I did not know then how fatiguing racial identity work could be (Flynn, 2015). I actually did not know I was engaging in racial identity work; I just knew something had changed in me that was difficult and from which there was no return. I provide one more vignette, which is also written in the present tense to capture the experiential nature of the event, to highlight the change I went through during just my first year of teaching in a predominantly Black school.

It is February of 2010 and I am teaching first grade at an elementary school in a predominantly Black neighborhood in an urban school district. It is around four in the afternoon on a school day and I am in the assistant principal's office. Ms. Grant is a tall, dark-skinned woman. Oprah is on the T.V. behind Ms. Grant's desk and I am sitting in an armchair facing her. My hair is frizzy and my face feels gaunt.

Earlier that day my first-grade students had been sitting on our classroom's rainbow colored carpet. Their faces created a collage of varying shades of brown. They were all in varying states of attention as I talked and asked for participation. As I was teaching, I began to feel the air tighten- something was going wrong. Then I noticed Jaylen—his coffee-with-milk colored skin, close-cropped hair, and remaining toddler pudginess. He was picking apart a paper, or maybe just some lint, and tossing it over his head. All of the pieces were landing near Travis—his caramel-brown skin, even closer-cropped hair, and his wiry tight muscles (just like

his father). As the pieces of whatever Jaylen was picking apart landed around Travis, I could feel his muscles tighten and his fingers dig into his palms. I could feel his reaction to Jaylen's paper-tossing just in the way you feel a bill you forgot to pay; it was like tiny sparks of ice cold water flowing to different nerves. I made a quick joke, I don't remember what, trying to ease the tension Travis was feeling because I knew he was getting really angry with Jaylen. I made my joke, and I moved Jaylen another row up on the carpet before starting to teach again.

With just a slight movement, Jaylen threw one more piece of paper back towards Travis. The tension I had felt earlier had never really gone away and the air in the room blasted apart. Travis had sprung forward, knocked Jaylen to the ground, and pushed his fist quickly, but deep, into the side of Jaylen's head two times before I could make sense of what was happening.

This is why, at the end of the day, I am sitting in Ms. Grant's office. Travis' father, who had come to pick him up from school, wanted to know why Jaylen was throwing paper at his son. He did not think the fight was Travis' fault. This tall man, with his tight wiry muscles just like his son, had dark skin and wore a black doo rag every day. He dressed in heavy denim pants and long-sleeved shirts everyday even when it was hot. I couldn't understand why he thought this fight was Jaylen's fault because Travis was the one that did the hitting. I was frustrated at this man's insistence that I find out why Jaylen was throwing paper at his son. I thought, "Why did it matter? The incident was over so if you could please, just ask your son to try to control his anger and not hit anyone." I didn't have this thought because I was angry with Travis' father, but I thought it because I just couldn't understand him and his insistence that we 'get to the bottom' of the situation.

I ask Ms. Grant, "Why do these families always need to know 'who started it?' Why can't they agree with me that we should help the children learn how to 'end it'?" Ms. Grant, whose

eyes so often looked a little bit sad and always looked tired, gazed at me for a breath. She said, "Ms. Haddaway, this is the only place they get justice." She said this with a soft voice, but it pierced through my eyes like a bright light turned on in the middle of the night. I felt incredibly deflated, ignorant, and sad.

Thinking back to this day, in stark contrast to my interview in June 2009, I had not felt brave, strong, or committed. I felt incompetent and out-of-place. Also in stark contrast to my interview in June 2009, I felt 'White.' This Whiteness was also so strongly tied to the feeling of incompetence. I was experiencing many emotions beyond feeling ineffective as a teacher, and all of these emotions were tied to the word White. I was White and I was incompetent, sad, exhausted, angry, defensive, empathetic, embarrassed, and so on. Racial identity work certainly is an emotional endeavor (DiAngelo, 2018; Matias, 2016). At the time, though, I did not know I was engaging in this work. I just knew that now I was naming my self as White, and that seemed to be a very negative thing.

Teaching Encouraged a Shift

Of course, I had always been White, so why, after teaching, did the naming of my identity shift? Why did I begin to choose the word White when I would have never done so before? What did this word 'White' mean for my identity? And why was it so closely tied to feeling like I was lost and was a failure? I had always known that I am White and some others are Black, others are Latinx, others are Asian, others are Native American, and so on. I could fill in a demographic survey correctly and knew there were others filling in that demographic survey with different answers. I colored drawings of my face with the 'peach' crayon during elementary school and would have encouraged any Black friends (though there weren't any Black friends to have in my elementary school) to use a 'brown' crayon. But I never would have said, "I am

White" when asked, "Who are you?" until I became a teacher of Black students. Also, any prior sense of failure had never been associated with my Whiteness as it had during my struggles as a first-year teacher in a predominantly Black school.

According to Helms (1990, 1992, 1994), I had never used the word White before I became a teacher because I had been in the 'contact' stage of my racial identity development. This stage involves a lack of racial identity examination. However, Helms' White Racial Identity Development (WRID) framework ends there in terms of its usefulness in understanding my own Whiteness. The framework, which delineates six total stages, or schemas, related to racial identity work, says nothing to me about the confusion and emotionality I experienced.

The primary confusion I experienced was likely a lack of understanding about what it meant to name one's self as White, especially to name one's self as White in a predominantly Black school community. What is "w/White"? The Oxford English Dictionary (2015) offers several suggestions. The following definition is most explicitly related to how we might understand the meaning of an individual who says, "I am White:" "Of or with reference to the skin or the complexion: light in colour, pale, fair." Have we not heard before that indeed *color is only skin-deep?* So, should my investigation of what 'White' is, as it relates to a White person's identity, end here? White is skin that is light in color. White is the color of my skin. Is this definition missing some relational aspect, though? White is certainly a skin color, but it is not the only skin color, and the meaning of Whiteness encompasses much more than skin color. But, what is White in comparison to other colors?

Digging deeper into the meaning of "w/White," the OED (2015) suggests that common phrases or idioms in the English language often contrast white and black. In these phrases and idioms whiteness is juxtaposed with blackness, as in a situation being either black or white.

These are mutually exclusive terms. We also find that white is really the absence of any hue, since objects appearing white demonstrate "the equal reflection or emission of all wavelengths of the visible spectrum of light." Whiteness is the absence of all other colors. Though we say White is a color, a skin color, it is really the absence of color. So now I might understand that White is skin that is light in color, or is absent of color, which contrasts with other people's skin that is not light in color, or possesses any color at all. Maybe, from this exploration, I am to understand that White means *exempt from the labeling of skin color* because white is the absence of (skin) color. But now, after having been a teacher of Black children, it is clear that Whiteness earns no exemption when it comes to the possession of a raced identity. I have named it as *some thing*, something that is a part of my identity and a part of my teaching. Whiteness and the experience of it is more than the definition of one skin color in contrast to any other skin color. It carries significance. But as a teacher naming my Whiteness for the first time through experience, I did not know what that significance was. In this chapter, I continue to grapple with my own fall into naming the experience of Whiteness and identity. I ask: **What is the lived experience of White teachers as they name and continue to construct their identities while working in Black schools?** In chapter two, I open this question further through experiences of other White teachers through a continued exploration of scholarly sources, literature, poetry, media sources, and personal accounts from White teachers. I do this all before I unfold what the experiences of five White teachers show about this phenomenon in chapter four.

Examined Experiences

> Either the well was very deep, or [Alice] fell very slowly, for she had plenty of time as she went down to look about her, and to wonder what was going to happen next. First, she tried to look down and make out what she was coming to, but it was too dark to see anything: then she looked at the sides of the well, and noticed that they were filled with cupboards and book-shelves: here and there she saw maps and pictures hung upon pegs. (Carroll, 1865/2004, p. 16)

The beginning of Alice's adventure is marked by a fall down a rabbit hole. Alice was desperately motivated by curiosity to follow the white rabbit in a waistcoat. The beginning of my adventure into naming and understanding my own Whiteness did not begin with curiosity. It began with sorrow and anxiety as I tried to find my place as a White teacher of Black students. Despite the difference in source, we each, Alice and I, were highly motivated to pursue our own w/White rabbits.

My sorrowful, yet curious, White rabbit showed itself to me in my relationships with Black students, parents, and colleagues. Just as Alice's white rabbit was unreachable, my understanding of what *it* was that gave me pause and caused me worry in these relationships was difficult to grasp and lost easily. After days when a student or a parent would express anger towards me or someone else, the source of which I could not quite understand, I would sit in my car on the ride home from school in silence. Some of the events and encounters I participated in and witnessed did not register with the emotions, memories, expectations, and images I had catalogued so far in my life. So, I sat in silence trying to make space for a new understanding, one that included all of the Black students, families, and colleagues I was coming to know. Normally, I would not drive in silence. I would listen, often, to popular hip-hop and R&B songs or club music that played on a radio station I grew up with as a teenager. After days where I felt so distant and foreign to the particular anger of my students and their community, I felt that maybe this type of music was never meant for me and that there were messages in this music I could not understand. The rap, hip-hop, and R&B music on the city's radio station was meant for my Black students and their community— not for me. So, I sat in silence trying to make sense of who I was, who my students and their families were, and how we fit together. This silence often left me feeling lost.

During those first four years of teaching and silent car rides, I rarely named my White rabbit with the word "race." Despite now naming my self with the word White and naming my students with the word Black, the word 'race,' this holistic term, seemed hollow just as it had always felt hollow for me when I completed demographic surveys in my past. Race is, partially, a naming of skin color, but, from what I understood during my four years of teaching in predominantly Black, urban school district, had little to do with the dissonance I experienced as a White teacher. Race viewed as just a naming of skin color misses the emotionality of my experience. Sometimes I wondered if this *thing* I was trying to grasp, my w/White rabbit, was caused by the lack of training I received in my preservice teacher program. Other times I wondered if it was the lack of support given by my school district. And still other times I wondered if I was just too young. It did not occur to me to question my culture or my race because for the first part of my life, until my teaching career began, I had the privilege of identifying myself using individualistic character traits (strong, brave, committed, etc.).

Only after leaving the classroom and enjoying the luxurious contemplation that comes with a wealth of graduate school reading, did I realize that I may not have named 'race' because it is so complex, so difficult to name, to understand. Julie Landsman (2001), benefitting from a long career as a White teacher and from a keen use of the pen, admits, "Race and racism are complicated subjects. They are multifaceted: a prism turned perpetually in different directions, light breaking at a multitude of angles, revelations. Poverty, culture, and ethnicity are all part of this prism, this complexity of light" (p. xiv). Certainly, even now after careful reading of literature, diligent attention to news articles, and deep self-reflection, it is quite difficult to place a finger on what race *is* as we live it. However, I think, as a teacher, I might also have simply been *unwilling* to name my White rabbit— this enigma that captured my unease while

teaching— with the word 'race.' As I have said, there are some who think that *color is only skin-deep*. Had I believed this, truly?

The Strangeness of My Person

My fall down the rabbit hole included all of my first four years as a full-time elementary school teacher in predominantly Black schools. It was indeed a slow fall. Our experience of time is certainly relative to *how* we are in time. Van Manen (2014) shares with us, "When we travel by car for a three-hour drive to another city, it may feel that some stretches of the road are longer than other parts, even though they are objectively the same length" (p. 306). On the car trip that is my life so far, my teaching career in Black schools was one stretch of road that took longer. Alice, during her un-ordinarily long fall down the rabbit hole, found objects along the wall that seemed familiar at first. However, when she picked them up to examine them they were different from her expectation. During the un-ordinary time of the first four years of my teaching career I, too, saw objects that were at once familiar, but then upon second look were stranger than I believed. My own hair was one of these things.

My hair had always been a very important part of my person. I felt secure knowing that I was *the girl with long hair*. I would love to be admired by both family and strangers for it. As a teacher, it was still very long, light brown, and soft. But, as a teacher, my familiar hair became strange. Many of my students throughout those years of teaching in Black schools liked to explore my hair and I would explore it with them. I would lean over their desks, my hair brushing the surface, to help them, comfort them, reprimand them, or admire them as they worked. Many of them would look up and take a piece of my hair between their fingers. They were so curious, so interested in discovering something new. I would be struck by the intensity they showed over my hair. My hair is *different*, something to be *figured out*, and that is why they

touch it. Their hair is *different* to me, too. The girls had braids that pulled at their scalp so severely, smoothed-out ponytails that I knew needed a special product to look that way, and curls that looked like ribbons. The boys had etchings in their hairline, tight twists of hair close to their scalp, and wiry pieces of fuzz that would start to stick out after a while. I had thought my hair was *beautiful*. But, now that I knew those children to be *beautiful* too, I began to worry about what constituted beautiful. What is beauty to them and what is to be admired? So often beauty and admiration are tied together.

My hair became a source of worry. I did not want the children to hate me for this difference. I did not want them to be like Morrison's (1999) Claudia MacTeer: I did not want them to hate me curiously as Claudia hated the blued-eyed, White doll. She wanted to poke at it, then rip it apart. However, I equally did not want them to be like Pecola Breedlove, who envied the blue-eyed, White doll. But, what were the alternatives? Should I be the White version of Pecola and be envious of my students' braids, curls, and hair products? I did not know the answers. And I still did not name the quandary with the word 'race.'

It had never occurred to me that beauty had anything to do with race. I had never thought that Black girls and women might strongly associate beauty with Whiteness because of the intense social and cultural messages communicated through so many avenues (Poran, 2002); I did not realize fully it would take acts of resistance and activism for Black women to celebrate their own bodies (Allen & Miles, 2020). Since I had been ignorant of my own place in a raced institution, it did not initially occur to me that beauty is also a raced/racist concept in dominant U.S. culture. Having my students call attention to my physical being, aspects of my physical being I had thought to be beautiful, made raced concepts of beauty very real for me. But what

could I *do* about this? I could not change my hair, nor did I feel I had any autonomy to change the way concepts of Whiteness and beauty are connected in mass media.

The Discomfort of Naming Whiteness with Others

Part of my long fall down the rabbit hole also included master's courses that I completed in the evenings during the first two years of my teaching. I took these courses with friends who were, as was I, members of an alternative certification program (we were not traditionally certified teachers who completed a 'regular' four-year university program). In one of these courses, I was specifically asked to name and examine my own Whiteness, to talk about race. While I had begun to name myself as White, and had begun to grasp what this means, I was not comfortable with others asking me to bring my work with Whiteness forward into a public space. Being forced to read about and discuss Whiteness in the space of a master's course often required me to talk about Whiteness in a way that did not resonate with my experiences. I was often defensive, resistant, and exhausted. I spent an un-ordinarily long time sitting in, reading for, talking about, and thinking about this course.

In this course on 'diversity,' (it was labeled with the acronym HDLD), my peers and I were asked to read and then complete Peggy McIntosh's (1989) *White Privilege Checklist*. A Black woman taught the course. She, unlike several of our instructors in the program, was a full-time faculty member and held a doctoral degree. After reading McIntosh's checklist of privileges, I wondered why the professor had assigned it. What was my reaction supposed to be? Should I have experienced guilt over this long list of racial privileges that I have benefited from? I felt as though the professor wanted me to feel shameful and guilty. As I followed after my White rabbit, as I tried to make sense of my teaching career and where I could locate self in that experience, I did not often feel guilt related to my Whiteness. I felt guilt because I thought I was

an inadequate teacher during my first year. I felt guilt when I took a full weekend to do things for just my social life and not for my students. But the only space in which I felt guilt over my Whiteness was in this class, particularly after reading McIntosh's checklist of privileges.

Some would certainly say that it is necessary for White people who are learning of their privileges to move through feelings of guilt. Arminio (2001) would suggest that if White teachers do not feel guilt then they/we must not have cared for or about those who are disadvantaged by White privilege (namely, those of non-White races). She asserts, "The most destructive people to the efforts of creating a just world are those who feel no guilt at having committed oppressive acts or for being the beneficiaries of such acts" (p. 250). If I am to believe McIntosh (1989), and know that I have been the beneficiary of privileges that have oppressed others, and if I am also to believe Arminio and know that I am destructive if I do not feel guilt, then the only conclusion I can reach is that I should feel guilty about my Whiteness.

Baumeister, Stillwell, and Heatherton (1994), would suggest to me that guilt is not just something I experience when I am alone with my self and my reflections, but something I experience through my relationships with others. They explain to me, "Guilt is something that happens between people" (p. 243). So, then should my relationship with my Black students and their community have been defined, at least in part, by my feelings of guilt? Should my actions towards and with my Black students have been determined by guilt? The authors suggest that people "perform or avoid a stunning variety of actions" even in the face of *anticipated* guilt (1994, p. 243)! As I taught and interacted with my Black students, the dissonance I experienced with my self, a White teacher, did not burn with what I consider to be the shame inherent in guilt. I can never recall the bodily manifestations of guilt, the 'gnawing at the insides,' as I inhabited space with my students and their families.

Since I never felt guilt to be part of my interactions with my Black students, students who were oppressed by my privileges, I resisted the McIntosh (1989) reading I was assigned in my master's course. While I was intellectually stimulated by the readings and course materials, I resisted many elements of this course on diversity. It was confusing to deal with feeling like I was being *told* I *must* feel guilty. The syllabus, assigned readings, and associated discussions for the course felt, at times, accusatory and reproachful: Here is the literature telling you that you are privileged because you are White (Edler & Irons, 1998; Fingarsen, 1998; McIntosh, 1989; Olson, 1998); here is the literature telling you how your Black students have implicitly or explicitly suffered because of your privilege (Moore, 1976; Moore, 2011); and here is the literature telling you how you must teach them in order to make-up for the suffering caused by your experience of privilege (Banks, 2008). I shudder as I read, several years later, the frustration, and even anger, in my written responses to these readings, but I can also forgive my emotions because they were enacted in order to protect my self, to give my self space to learn and live into what it meant to *be* White.

Also, I was able to watch as my peers put up barriers of resistance during this master's course on diversity, fending off any guilt they thought they were being unnecessarily told to feel. Heidi, one friend of mine in the course, was working in an all-Black school with a nearly all-Black staff at the time. She reflected on McIntosh's (1989) "White Privilege Checklist" through the creation of her own Black privilege checklist. Her "Black Privilege" checklist described the ways in which she imagined the all-Black school setting favored her Black colleagues. I do not think her checklist (written as part of a formal, written response for the diversity course) was an act of aggression or anger, but perhaps an act of self-preservation. She felt as though, in her

school, she was the outsider and she was failing. Heidi was trying defensively to create a space where she could negotiate her experience for her self.

Other friends and peers put up barriers against any guilt they thought they were being told to feel as well, just in different ways. One friend would often claim to enjoy that everyone in her Black school community called her Barbie, which to her meant being called blonde-haired, vapid, unaware. Another would laugh so frequently in class that it was unnerving to me. She would laugh any time there was a discussion of race, a sharing of a written response about race, or the assigning of a new reading about race. Everyone had ways to build up a protective wall so they could *deal with* their Whiteness in their own time.

Certainly, these barriers, these defenses, could have looked like an unwillingness to recognize White privilege, White dominance. As we see in Howard's (1999) writing, this idea of barriers is associated with "dominance and racism" (p. 23). But, we can forget why barriers are built. Often, they are built because of fear and anxiety. We can also see that this resistance can be thought of as a relatively 'normal' stage in WRID. According to Helms (1990, 1992, 1994), White persons may enter a *reintegration* stage where they resist acceptance of their privileges and resist acknowledgement of racial hierarchies, and instead, resort to schemas related to White supremacy. I wondered, as I participated in the HDLD course and beyond the course, what good do feelings of guilt do for us if they seemed to lead to resistance, defensiveness, and anxiety?

Does an admittance of guilt improve White teachers' relationships with their non-White students? Does a willingness to accept the condemnation that comes when you own-up to the consequences of White privilege bring about an equitable change in oppressive institutions? Did the dissonance I personally experienced as a White teacher lessen when I finally gave up and admitted my guilt, the guilt of White privilege? Through two powerful narratives of White

teachers/teacher educators, Lensmire, McManimon, Tierney, Lee-Nichols, Casey, Lensmire, and Davis (2013) show that a "confession of [White] privilege seems to exhaust antiracist actions" (p. 214). It did feel like, at the time, the end-game of this diversity class in my master's program was only to have us White teachers admit our guilt. What difference did this course work make in the actions of my teaching, or even my reflections on my teaching? Lensmire et al. (2013) state, "McIntosh's [1989] ideas of white privilege….end up functioning as a sort of test or filter in which the only way to pass— as a good white person and good white teacher— is to acquiesce publicly to McIntosh's claims about how white privilege works" (p. 412). My peers and I were certainly unwilling to slide into complacency and ignore the dissonance we felt in our schools, but we were equally unwilling to 'acquiesce publicly' to McIntosh's (1989) claims, though perhaps we should have.

Eventually, over years of teaching, I did acquiesce to my privileges and feelings of guilt in my own time. It was a necessary step towards accepting my unearned position in the world, feeling the pain that has been caused by systemic racism, and moving forward to becoming a more sensitive pedagogue. Certainly, at the time of the HDLD course, we all wanted to know better how to *be* as White teachers, White teachers who acted in supportive and loving ways towards their Black students. However, discussions of guilt and privilege did not seem to be taking us in this direction at the time. Perhaps we were not prepared for the discomfort. Leonardo (2004) explains that discussions of guilt and privilege can never be conducted free of discomfort and with complete feelings of safety. But how can you prepare anyone for that level of discomfort? Is it with scholarly readings? Is it within the timeframe of a single-semester course? Or must it be in an individual's own time? Certainly, as Leonardo suggests, the discomfort is necessary in order to dismantle and disrupt the 'status quo' and encourage positive identity

development and change. My own racial identity development, and my own experiences of facing racism, was, and still is, slow.

Curious Reflections

> "'Dear, dear! How queer everything is to-day! And yesterday things went on just as usual. I wonder if I've been changed in the night? Let me think: was I the same when I got up this morning? I almost think I can remember feeling a little different. But if I'm not the same, the next question is 'Who in the world am I? Ah, that's the great puzzle!'" (Carroll, 1865/2004, pp. 24-25)

Through the end of my undergraduate career, I had always believed myself to be an open-minded person, accepting and welcoming of diversity. I was certainly 'not a racist.' I shuddered at any use of the 'n' word by a non-Black person (I understood that Black people may use the 'n' word as a way to reclaim it, reshape its meaning). I admonished bigots, those who possessed ignorance towards the beauty of other cultures. I noted the friends I had, mostly in my pre-adolescent years, that were non-White. I had been in households that practiced Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism. I had friends with varying shades of Brown and Black skin. I was welcomed and happy to be welcomed into the homes of these friends. However, through all of my friendships with people who were not White, I never turned the gaze back onto myself to say 'I *am* White.' The gaze was always on the friend, the one who was 'different.'

This experience, this absence of turning inwards on one's own Whiteness, is not surprising when reflecting on the words we often use, the words available to us, when talking about Black, Latinx, Native American, or Asian American people, or any other person who is not White. We often use the terms *minority* and *non-White.* These terms indicate that whiteness-as-skin-color represents the majority of people and that *everyone else* is without, they are *non*. 'Non' is an absence or lack of something (OED, 2003), a failure to *be* the way the one ought to *be*. Certainly, White people are no longer a true majority. For example, only 47% of all students

in elementary and secondary public school were White in 2018, and this statistic is projected to decline over the coming years (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). However, these words we use allowed me, as a child and adolescent, to keep my implicit gaze on the sociological *other*, not myself as the White person. I was not the *White person* when I was with my friends of color because the dominant society around me, and my still majority-White schools, allowed my experience to be the *norm* while my friends of color were the sources of *difference*; they were the *non* because they lacked my sameness. I could just be many other things beyond my Whiteness.

Things Went on as Usual

Tatum (2000), interested in identity constructs and the role of race, conducted an experiment of sorts with her students where she gave them one minute to complete, with as many descriptors as possible, the sentence "I am___." For example, during my undergraduate years I might have said, "I am a gymnast, a daughter, a sister, a good friend. I am smart, independent, and strong." She noticed that, "in the areas where a person is a member of the dominant or advantaged social group, the category is usually not mentioned. That element of identity is so taken for granted by them that it goes without comment. It is taken for granted by them because it is taken for granted by the dominant culture" (p. 10). Certainly, my Whiteness had never been named because it was taken for granted. Race, overall, was not taken for granted though. I am_____. I am <u>not a racist</u>. I was proud to have friends who were not White (the friends I described above). This pride stemmed from my own need not to be seen as racist. The world that I inhabited before I completed my undergraduate degree functioned strongly as a meritocracy. Good grades, visible acts of kindness, diligence and persistence, practices of acceptance/openness, participation in clubs and sports, these are the things, that when listed,

made you a ‘good person.’ To be open and accepting to those who were *non*-White was part of this list, because to be a ‘good person’ I could not be racist.

What are the alternatives to racism? In my pre-adolescent years, in order to resist the label of ‘racist,’ a label that made someone a ‘bad person,’ I made friends with those who were not White. I recognized their differences (though, as I have said, never recognized myself as one who was different). I asked my friend Rehema about fasting in the Muslim religion. I had my biracial friend Sadie show me how she likes to do her hair so I could learn. I asked my friend Aarthi what her favorite meal was. Her house, run by parents who had immigrated from India, always smelled delicious. As I sat with my friends of color during lunch and asked questions that acknowledged their differences, I imagined (though not explicitly) that this was the best route to not being racist.

After becoming a teacher, however, the best way to not be seen as ‘racist’ became more complicated. As a child, pre-adolescent, teenager, and college student the path was a little clearer. In these stages of my life, my world was predominantly White. It was easy to seek out friends who were not White and stand out for this action. People could think to themselves, explicitly or not, (or at least I hoped they would), “Jessica attends these majority-White schools and joins in sports with White kids. She could choose only White friends, but instead she chooses friends who are not only White. Therefore, she is not racist.” Now, as a teacher, there was no choice that would ‘prove’ my anti-racist attitude. All of my students were Black; there was no choice to make, other than the one that was already made to be a teacher in a predominantly Black school district. Now, what is the alternative to racism? How does my identity change when my race is no longer dominant? What does an antiracist agenda look like

when the dominant racial group in a given social setting is not the dominant racial group of society-at-large?

The Great Puzzle

Tatum (2000) also helps us understand that identity is commonly constructed using the following seven categories: race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, and physical/mental ability. Further, she explains that these categories generally are broken down into two distinct groups: dominant and targeted. Tatum explains that Whites are dominant in U.S. society and people of color are targeted when it comes to the identity construct of race. In my life prior to teaching Black students, the days that "went on as usual," meant that my race was part of the dominant society I lived in. It was taken-for-granted (along with other of my identity constructs such as my sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and physical/mental abilities). But as a teacher, my race felt so shockingly 'targeted'. It felt akin to Carroll's (1865/2004) concept of the 'to-day' that is 'queer.' Tatum, however, would argue my race was never truly targeted. She would note that my students had many visuals, given to them through movies, TV, advertisements, and so on, that showed them that White people are the ones who go on adventures, who have shiny white teeth, who receive diamond rings from their boyfriends, and so on. But, the reality of my life is that I am a human being susceptible to my emotions and I was shocked by how *targeted* I *felt* when it came to my race. Rarely in my life had I been the only White person in a room. Never had I had my race brought to my attention in negative ways.

Gadamer (2004) tells me something about shock, where it comes from and what it does with us:

> We have already seen that, logically considered, the negativity of experience implies a question. In fact we have experiences when *we are shocked by things that do not accord with our expectations*. Thus questioning too is more a passion than an action. A question

> presses itself on us; we can no longer avoid it and persist in our accustomed opinion. (p. 375, emphasis added)

Instances during my teaching career shocked me and made me feel targeted. One particular instance of my feeling shocked and targeted happened at the end of a school day during my first year of teaching and during a warm month. The day before, art class had been cancelled so I took my 25 first-grade students, all Black, mostly boys, only 6 girls, outside. We had been lining up to go back inside for the rest of the instructional day when Christopher tapped London on the bottom. London's father had been walking up the hill from the housing project neighborhood below to the school. He saw what Christopher did. Years later, I still remember that he told me about what he saw, but I cannot remember what he actually said to let me know. I thanked him warily and said I would talk to Christopher when we got inside. Somehow, this event came around to the attention of the administration and we had a meeting in the office conference room with myself, Christopher's mother, and the administration.

Christopher had been struggling in school, both with academics and behavior. His mother and I had built a trusting relationship and I was now meeting with Christopher for extra tutoring and relationship-building once a week after school. I did not want to turn on her now. So, during this meeting about how Christopher tapped London on the bottom, I defended Christopher. I told everyone he had not done it maliciously or in a crude manner. I said I believed that they were in first-grade and he did not fully understand the 'sexual' nature some adults might bring to the situation (beyond just trying to defend Christopher, I truly did believe these claims). In the end, Christopher got a good-talking-to from the principal, and a little from his mother, and it was over.

The day after the bottom-tapping incident and the same day as the meeting with the administration, my students lined up and got ready to go outside for dismissal. I walked them out

into the hallway and then the blue doors, close by, at the end of the hall, opened with a bang against the wall. London's father, a short, thin, Black man with lean muscle, came through the doors and yelled. I realized, he was yelling at me (the yelling at all, itself, was a shock as I was not used to being yelled at). The words I was able to catch from this man's angry, tightly drawn mouth were 'White bitch.' Bitch. I had heard that word directed at me before, so it did not induce so much shock. But, what I was shocked about and what I felt targeted by was the use of the word 'White' to preface the word 'bitch.' That I had not heard before. I *am* a White bitch? Am I a White bitch?

Shaking, and probably red-in-the-face from nerves, I did not respond to London's father. I continued to walk towards the door, trying to keep protective space around my students with my one, singular body. I heard one of my students whisper: "Ms. Haddaway, are you ok?" I nodded and we went outside. Someone had intercepted the father before we got outside. On the other side of the doors I could not hear him yelling anymore, but apparently, he had gone on to call another faculty member at our school a White bitch. She had him banned, successfully, from school grounds. I would not have been worried if this man was allowed back on campus. I, with all sincerity, was not scared of him. I was embarrassed and worried about who I was to my students and their families. Did they all think I was a White bitch? What *am* I, who am I, when I am a White teacher of Black students? That moment did not fully leave my mind for the rest of that year, my first year of teaching. Doubt about myself and my place in that school pulled my throat down into my stomach almost daily. I was shocked into questioning myself, my identity, my abilities as a White teacher, and whether I could do my students justice with regard to teaching them successfully.

I worried constantly about what other people in the school setting thought about me. Are my Black students looking at me that way because they expect me to fail because I am White? Are my Black colleagues staring at me because they want to see how the White girl acts with her students? These questions made me doubt who I was. I had few words. What am I as a White teacher? Am I *good* enough? Am I successful? All the things I thought I had been before, smart, independent, strong, funny, successful, I doubted. The measure of what is good, what it means to be successful, felt different as I taught in a Black school.

Confused Negotiations

I knew my reality as a teacher, my "to-day," was different from my childhood and adolescent experiences, the experiences of my yesterday. However, I still often tried to function in similar ways. The meritocracy that structured my life up through my undergraduate career felt comfortable. I still wanted to find ways to seem 'good.' I did not want to worry about parents, students, or any other Black community member thinking I was a 'White bitch;' that certainly does not make me seem good. I still wanted everyone to know I was not a racist. I did my best to treat the Black children in my class fairly so there could be no accusations. For me, fair treatment meant that I engaged in the following behaviors: I kept my voice low as much as possible; I taught children that, no matter who started a problem, they should both apologize and move on; I gave children second chances if they engaged in an initial, disruptive behavior; I allowed students to sit however they thought was comfortable in their chairs; I corrected behaviors in question form (i.e, "Can you please return to your seat?"); and I avoided letting parents know about any troubling behaviors. In summary, I treated the students as I would treat 'every other child'— White or Black.

Not Listening to No White Lady

This way of carrying along did not fare well for me or my classroom climate. My classroom was often chaotic, with students getting up at times they should have been engaged with work, yelling at one another frequently, cursing at others or in general, and fighting frequently. While these disruptive behaviors caused me stress, as they might any teacher trying to create a calm, supportive learning environment, the emotions they raised in me were familiar and identifiable (frustration, anger, defeat). However, there was one type of student behavior I could not handle rationally; one behavior that raised emotions that were hard to name. Although it did not occur as frequently as the disruptive behaviors described above, often enough my directive or reprimands were met with the following student response: *I don't gotta listen to no White lady*. I could not manage my feelings to this response. Having worked with children in the capacity of a gymnastics instructor before becoming a classroom teacher, I certainly was used to being told 'no' or being ignored by a child when giving a directive. Being told 'no' or being ignored elicits a feeling that could be best captured with the word *frustrated*, maybe even, sometimes, *angry*. But when students used this phrase, there was more packed into it than a simple, 'no, I will not comply with your direction.' There was something else; 'no, I will not comply with your direction because you are White and that means you cannot tell me, a Black person, what to do because you have no right.' The meaning I took from their use of the phrase *I don't gotta listen to no White lady* was not easily named. It bothered me much more than simply being told 'no.' But, why did it bother me so?

I am certainly not the only White teacher to have been told by a Black student, 'no, I will not listen to you because you are White.' I am not the only person to ask introspective questions about the feelings involved in that type of exchange. Paley (1989), a White teacher, describes an

instance where she had instructed one of her Black, kindergarten students to stop throwing sand while on the playground:

> ‘Don’t talk to me. I don’t have to listen to no white lady.’ The boy covered his ears and squeezed his eyes shut. His black skin glistened in the sun and there was a fine spray of sand covering his short thick hair. Everyone in the sandbox was staring at Steven Sherman. He opened his eyes a crack. ‘Don’t nobody white look at me. Don’t talk to me. You stink.’ He kicked a bit of sand at the children, but none of them moved. ‘Fuckers!’ I was annoyed at myself for feeling angry. Was it the part about the ‘white lady’ that bothered me, or the language? (p. 13)

Paley names her emotional response with the word *angry*, but she questions what caused the anger. She is not sure of the source. A lot of uncertainty comes up when interactions cause a doubt in one’s self. Later, Paley admits that she felt attacked. She questions herself, “Was I reacting to this affront to my authority as a teacher or to my authority as a white?” (p. 14). She admits, to her self and her readers, that she did know the answer to this question. The truthful answer was she was reacting to the “hostile use of ‘white’ by this black child” (p. 14). I, too, was reacting to the hostile use of the word White by Black children.

I was also, simply, reacting to the chaos in the room in general. More often than not, their refusal to follow directions, behavioral or otherwise, was not accompanied by a racial term. They just expressed a simple refusal to abide by the procedures I attempted to set in place. What was it about me and the way I was teaching that was causing these problems? Beyond my emotions and anxieties, I knew that logistically I could not carry on teaching and behaving in the same way in my classroom. It was chaotic and not conducive to quality learning. As much as I would want to save-face and simply give in to the ridiculously simplistic idea that nearly all of my students were ‘behavior problems,’ I knew the real problem was me. My students were not behavior problems; I simply was not reaching them in the way that they needed to be reached. At least part of the cause of this problem was my inexperience as a teacher; but, the emotionality I felt

when I was in or thought about my classroom could not be solely caused by inexperience. I felt certain that not all new teachers in all schools felt the way I did. I worried about the damage I might have been doing in treating the students as if they were just the same as 'every other child'.

What Damage is Done

What damage had I been doing to my students in acting this way? Delpit (1995) tells me that I am not the only teacher to have thought that fair treatment means to treat students just as any other child. She explains that "*I want the same thing for everyone else's children as I want for mine"* (p. 28) is a common statement we might hear coming from middle-class liberal educators (for me this term conjures up images of mostly 'White' educators, especially in this context). This statement, to me, is just the same as saying, as I had, 'I will treat these Black children just the same as I would treat any White child.' The damage, Delpit explains, is that "[to] provide schooling for everyone's children that reflects liberal, middle-class values and aspirations is to ensure maintenance of the status quo, to ensure that power, the culture of power, remains in the hands of those who already have it" (p. 28). My Black students, who attended a school in an area that Orfield and Lee (2005) would categorize as high-poverty and high-minority, are already marginalized by the dominant culture of U.S. society, the culture of power. As I employ middle-class, liberal values in my interactions with them, I am only furthering their marginalization (Leonardo & Boas, 2013). To think of it this way, I feel ashamed and worried that I caused harm, or at least did not do enough to prevent harm. How had I done something so egregiously wrong without having intended it?

What damage had I been doing to myself? My ego certainly took a hit. I was used to being not just listened to, but truly heard and respected (Delpit, 1995). Of course, I wanted the

best learning environment for the students and I wanted their community to trust me with their children, but I also wanted to feel like I was doing a good job; I did not want each school day to feel so stressful for both me and the students. In my beginning year of teaching, I was careful to notice how other teachers interacted with their students. In particular, I began to notice that my Black colleagues were particularly effective at managing the behaviors of the students. Very rarely, if ever, did I hear any child refuse to abide by a direction given by a Black teacher, administrator, or paraprofessional. Delpit seems to think that it would be common to hear a middle-class, liberal White teacher say: "'It's really a shame but she (that black teacher upstairs) seems to be so authoritarian, …. Those poor kids never seem to be allowed to really express their creativity. (And she even yells at them)" (p. 33). This was certainly not a sentiment that reflects my feelings about my Black colleagues as a first-year teacher. I was envious of the ease with which they interacted with students. One read through the book *Their Highest Potential: An African American School Community in the Segregated South* (Siddle-Walker, 1996), and I was teeming with admiration wanting to emulate the effective Black educators described. However, my confusion and sorrow over the chaos and complex problems caused by segregation while reading this book was intense. So, wanting to ease the damage I had done to my students and myself, I sought to emulate effective Black teachers.

As I emulated my Black colleagues and other Black educators I read about, I hesitantly began to choose directives such as "sit down, now*"* over "can you please take your seat." I called mothers, I talked to older siblings after school, and I talked to godparents/aunts/uncles, whoever I had the most access to, so someone else besides myself and my student knew what they were up to each day in school (good or bad). I made sure these family members and friends knew me, knew I was 'in-control' of everything, and that while I would look out for their child's education

and safety, I also would not let them misuse their time in school. I tried to make my voice sound full and resounding when I gave directions. I worked as hard as I could, being a normally timid person, to instruct, discuss, praise, and reprimand with an air of definite authority.

I am not the only White teacher to notice how effective Black adults are with their Black children. I am not the only White teacher to learn a great deal, and even seek to emulate, these Black adults. Vivian Paley (1989) learned a lot from her Black student-teacher, Janet. Greg Miche (2009), reflecting on his teaching in Chicago Public Schools, admired and emulated a Black colleague, Moses Green. Michie went so far as to name his emulating behaviors the 'Preacher Green' approach (p. 143). Landsman (2001) draws on the practices of her Black teaching assistant, Alan. Unlike these three White teachers, I dared not ask my Black colleagues explicit questions about how they teach and interact with their Black students. I dared not due to fear and embarrassment. I did not want to be looked at as the young, White girl who could not 'handle' her students. Equally, I did not want to seem burdensome. Why should my struggles in my classroom become the problem of my Black colleagues? Why should I make them do more work all because I am failing my students and my self? As Cochran-Smith (1995b) phrases this concern, I did not want to make "people of color do all the work, feeling called upon to expose themselves for the edification of others," in this case myself (p. 546). I did my best to adjust what used to be 'the way I treated every child.' I did my best to interact with my Black students in ways that emulated the behaviors of respected adults in their communities, their parents, their Black teachers/administrators/paraprofessionals, their older siblings, and their neighbors.

Finding a Place in the Black Community

This way of carrying on, emulating the speech and behaviors of Black authority figures, seemed to fare much better for me and my students. My classroom, in the years following my

first, was much calmer. My students clearly respected my authority and the environment became much more conducive to learning. Parents were happy to have a conversation with me and I often found them 'on my side' when I needed their help in correcting their child's behavior. During my third year, I overheard a student conversation that made me exclaim internally: I have done it! I have made myself a part of my student's community! In the winter months, a new student named Jada joined our class. I sat her with Anna, my one Guatemalan student, and Marshall. That year was my second year as Marshall's teacher. Both he and I moved from first grade to second grade and he was, again, assigned to my roster. I caught a few words in a comment Jada made to her two tablemates. Two of those words were 'Miss Haddaway' and the other was 'White.'

The Comfort of Skin Color

A kind of warm wind waved through my body and I froze to listen to what followed in Marshall's response in the above conversation. Moving along with his work, without causing the conversation to pause, Marshall replied, "Miss Haddaway not White, she light-skinned." I was so proud! I was so thrilled that this was Marshall's easy reply. Being called light-skinned must have meant that I was a part of the Black community. My students' close community was made up of solely Black members (with the rare exception of a few Guatemalan families). So, if you were not Black, you must not be part of the community. Perhaps, Marshall was trying to find a place for me in his community in a way that made sense. For him, perhaps I needed to be some shade of Black (light-skinned) in order to be close to him. I was close to Marshall's mom, who he feared, respected, and loved deeply. I talked to her frequently and I always felt that she and I were 'on the same team.' Every so often she would bring me a gift of body lotion or candy and say 'Thank you for dealing with Marshall' and I would assure her that I never felt as though I

was simply ‘dealing’ with him, that he was a valuable part of my life. Perhaps in Marshall’s mind I needed to be Black, like his mom, so that his life could make more sense, be more orderly.

Landa (2012) describes a picture one of her Black elementary students drew of himself and a White friend. While the little boy did not mention race in a description of his drawing, he represented his White friend with a figure that had been colored with a Brown crayon. I wonder if children find ways more easily to categorize people they like or love through locating some sort of sameness? I wonder if Black children find ways to incorporate the White people they are close to into their Black community? I certainly felt that Marshall was trying to include me in his closest community by calling me light-skinned; this made me proud. But, should I have been proud that Marshall called me light-skinned? Or should I have been concerned? Should I have corrected Marshall? I had done some damage by treating my former students as though they were ‘just like any other child,’ which may as well have been treating them like White children. But was I doing a different kind of damage by treating them as I observed other Black adults do when I am a White person? What potentially confusing messages might this send to the children? And what damage might this cause for my own identity?

Again, I am not the only White teacher to be comforted by the notion that she might, at least in some way, be similar to or compared with her Black students. Julie Landsman (2001) felt excitement and hope when a Black woman, even jokingly, suggested she was related to Black people: “‘Girl, I do believe you are related to black folk,’ Mae chuckled. She reached her arm around me and pulled me close. I liked what she said. I wanted to believe her” (p. 2). Just like Landsman, I felt comforted by a Black person suggesting that I was in some way connected to the Black community. This suggestion made me feel accepted and made me believe that I was

creating a positive place for my students to be and learn. However, I knew there was something damaging about both Marshall's comment and my reaction. My feeling of hope and comfort masked my reality. I am White and my experiences are White; I will never know what it is like to be Black as much as I hoped for that type of connection with my students. Landsman explains:

> Yet, of course, despite what Mae Gossett had said…., I know I am not black. I am white. My skin is white, and, more important, I have been treated all my life as a white person. So, as much as I would like to lean back against Mae's shoulder and blend in with her gentle teasing, become black for a few minutes, I know that is impossible. (p. 2)

Despite understanding the impossibility, I desperately wanted to feel a close connection to the Black community. I needed to know I belonged. While to some it may seem silly, at best, or deluded, at the worst, to have a desire for belonging intense enough that it would make someone wish they could identify with another race, it is important to note that pedagogical relationships, and the school setting in general, are uniquely personal (van Manen, 1991). I wanted that personal connection in my classroom. So, I tried to adopt some speech habits (words, phrases, syntactical patterns, intonations) that made me feel closer to my school's community.

The Comfort of Language

I found myself using the word "boy" to preface a verbal reprimand given to boys in my class. The women involved in my male students' lives, always so effective with their disciplining, would say "Boy, get yo self over here now." I loved the way they would say 'boy.' It was always said with authority, but at the same time it was said lovingly. In a White home, the woman might use the child's formal first and middle names together to serve a similar purpose, such as "John Robert, you get downstairs right now." I used 'boy' in my classroom as a way to feel a sense of belonging to the community. I would say, "Boy, sit down now." Since I grew to have good relationships with the students' families, my use of this language-of-the-family was met with good-natured compliance. As much as I loved this language, the language of the Black

community, I was unsure about my self when I used it. I felt like a fraud, even an interloper. Was this the right language to be employing? Am I being inauthentic? Do my students wonder why a White woman is speaking to them like their mothers do? Is that confusing to them?

Perhaps what I was doing by employing the language of the Black community was code switching. Code switching is the "alternating use of two or more 'codes" during a conversational event, where each 'code' requires "cultural or social knowledge" or order to "at a full understanding" (Auer, 1998, p. 1). However, much of the research, particularly early research, related to code switching within the educational setting, was related to Black students switching between Black English and Standard English (Lee, 1995; Ogbu, 1999; Perry & Delpit, 1998). As a White teacher, though, I was, perhaps naively, not as concerned with my students switching between Black English and Standard English as I was about whether I properly understood Black English. In my desperate attempt to become part of the Black speech community (Ogbu, 1999), I may have been continuing, as seemed to be the pattern, to cause damage. My concern still seemed more focused on 'fitting in' and acceptance than on the students themselves.

Inauthenticity and Appropriation

During the first years of my teaching career, I could have likely provided a definition of the word 'appropriation,' but would not have applied it to my adoption of Black speech habits. I certainly at times felt awkward, inauthentic, or embarrassed as I stumbled through the most appropriate language to use when I was with my Black students and their families. But I did not name the source of this discomfort with the word 'appropriation.' However, I realize now that my adoption of speech habits I noticed within the Black community was a continued form of White racism, a form of cultural appropriation (Hill, 2008; Jackson, 2019). After my years of teaching in this predominantly Black, city neighborhood came to a close and I began working in

my doctoral program full-time, I learned more and more about cultural appropriation from social media and popular culture. In a YouTube video posted by the channel Hype Hair Magazine (2015), actress Amandla Stenberg explains cultural appropriation. She uses White musicians who have adopted Black culture and rap culture into their music and acts as an example. In her video, she shows a clip of Black rapper Azealia Banks passionately explaining what message this (White artists appropriating Black culture) sends to children: "All this says to White children is, 'Yea, you're great, you're amazing, you can do whatever you put your mind to'. And it says to Black kids, 'You don't have shit, you don't own shit, not even the shit you've created for yourself.'" While this video talks about music and fashion style, I imagine it is a sentiment that could easily be applied to language usage.

What was I implicitly showing my Black students when I, a successful, middle-class, White woman, used Black English? Was I showing them, as Azealia Banks might fear, that not only can I use Black English, but I can use Black English and still be *seen* within the culture of power, still be economically successful? Do young children receive and internalize these types of messages? However, I wonder what my alternative was? If I used Standard English at all times I might have never reached a place where my students and their families felt comfortable around me. What harm might this lack of familiarity, lack of connection, have caused? Is one source of harm worse than the other? Amidst all of my concerns and questions about my students' well-being, was a concern for my own well-being. I had to feel comfortable in my pedagogical relationships, but I also needed to feel comfortable with my own self-identity. Who am I when I use Black English? Am I someone different?

Sometimes when I used Black English I felt inauthentic. I never used Black English with my family. When I used Black English with my friends (my White friends who were also

teachers of Black students) they giggled and treated it like a joke. To me, language is not a joke, so when I used Black English around my friends I felt I was playing a part in a cruel joke meant to make fun and make light of our students' realities. I also was not sure that Black English connected to my identity; yet, I was not even sure of my identity any longer. Martin Heidegger felt that the authentic moments of our lives "are those in which we are most at home with ourselves, at one with ourselves" (Moran, 2006, p. 240). How can you be authentic, then, when an experience in life has shaken you so much so that you are no longer sure who 'ourselves' are? Heidegger also felt that "[b]eing authentic is a kind of potential-to-be-whole" (Moran, p. 240). How can you feel whole when your identity feels split between two places? My identity felt split. I was divided by two places: torn between the Black community I taught in and the White, middle-class culture in which I was rooted.

Several Changes

So, now, as Alice asks, the great puzzle is "Who am I?" The Caterpillar forcefully asks Alice "'Who are *you*?'" and, with panic and timidity, Alice responds, "'I- I hardly know …just at present—at least I know who I was when I got up this morning, but I think I must have been changed several times since then'" (Carroll, 2004, p. 55). When I 'woke up,' or moved through adolescence, I felt assured in my identity. However, being presented with my Whiteness by a Black school community and questioning my self-identity throughout my years as a teacher, I hardly knew who I was anymore. I had certainly 'changed several times.'

I knew a few things with certainty as I began a doctoral program and entered my fourth year of teaching. I knew I felt passionately about my Black students. I wanted them to have the best education. I wanted to feel a close pedagogical connection to them. I knew I felt passionately about the families of my Black students. I wanted them to know I had their child's

best interest embedded in my actions, and I wanted them to know I was 'on their side,' whatever that could mean. I knew I still felt most comfortable in White, middle-class America. I knew I loved the sound of Black English, but that I felt uncomfortable using it because it did not seem like it was for me. I knew I wanted my Black students to have access to a 'culture of power' (Delpit, 1995). I knew my identity still felt torn. Could I be socially just while being White? Could I negotiate my identity in a way that allowed me to hold onto my Whiteness while at the same time supporting an emancipatory agenda that would support my Black students? Would anyone allow a White educator to talk about her own White identity? Would they think that a discussion of, what is still often called, the 'minority' community and their identities within the culture of power be more important? Would they think that I am selfish in wanting to discuss my own identity rather than that of my students? Would they admonish me for my sense of confusion and my inability to use the most appropriate and trendy academic language when talking about race in education?

During one class session during my first semester of my doctoral program, we entered a discussion around Delpit's (1995) work. Four years later, I cannot recall what prompted my entry into the conversation; however, I remember I said something like, "I know my students are Black, but that's not all I want to see. I want to see them for the individuals they are. I want them to be more than their race because that would be too limiting for them. I want them to know me beyond my race, too." Following my comment, I perceived a deluge of aggressive responses. Even my professor admonished me, explaining that this was exactly the kind of damaging 'colorblind' approach scholars like Bonilla-Silva (2003) warn against. In that moment, I could feel my face burn with embarrassment and knew that I had still not yet found the best words with

which to have a discussion of identity. I also worried that maybe I am just *wrong* and I am not a socially just teacher after all.

Race is a complex topic. Like Cochran-Smith (1995b), who shared my worry decades ago, I am concerned that we still do not have an answer to the question, "How can we open up the unsettling discourse of race without making people afraid to speak for fear of being naïve, offensive, or using the wrong language?" (p. 546). In the present, what language is acceptable as we discuss race? Is it only the language of academia? Is it avoidance of language that might be construed as naïve? What is the best avenue into the discussion in the first place? Are we only allowed into the discussion after in-depth reading of multiple scholarly sources? Who is allowed to have a voice in the discussion? Are our fumblings with self-identity allowed into the conversation about race? Should White voices be allowed in, or does that cause further damage to antiracist and socially just causes?

I felt such closeness to Julie Landsman (2001) when she pronounces one of the lessons she believes she took from her years teaching Black and Brown students. She writes, "I sometimes feel that the simplest lesson in all of this might be an acceptance of the intricacy and complexity of each one of us, that to generalize about anyone is unfair and destructive" (p. 21). I read this passage three and a half years after that discussion in my first semester of my doctoral program and I audibly groaned, wishing I had these words back then. Would the reaction of my classmates and professors been different if I used Landsman's language instead of my own? I was only trying to make the same point Landsman was making. I still exist in a world of such uncertainty when it comes to race, identity, and language.

Admitted Unfinishedness: The Path Through Phenomenology

Perhaps a lesson I have learned is that we are all, scholars and lay persons alike, in a state of 'unfinishedness' (Freire, 1998). As Freire explains, in our unfinishedness we must be conscious that we have arrived at our uniqueness, at our subjectivity, through our conditioned experiences of the world, through our interactions with many others. Then, we must allow our unfinishedness to make us educable; in other words, we must be open to continued conditioning or continued growth.

As I remain open to my own unfinishedness, I turn to phenomenology in my efforts to understand better what it might mean to talk about race in education. Specifically, I concentrate my efforts on better understanding what it means to negotiate a White identity while teaching Black students. I turn to phenomenology because it allows me to live my way further into the questions I have posed around race and identity in schools. Van Manen (2006) explains that "From a phenomenological point of view, to do research is always to question the way we experience the world, to want to know the world in which we live as human beings" (p. 5). In this way, phenomenology allows me to continue to question, to continue to follow my White rabbit. I purposely focus my questioning on White teachers working with Black students. I make a conscious choice in narrowing my questioning in this way. Firstly, I was turned towards this phenomenon because of my personal experience as a White teacher of Black children specifically. Also, I believe that there is a unique, historically-bound relationship between Whites and Blacks in the United States that is unlike any other racial pairing. Perry (2003) explicates this uniqueness:

> In thinking about how culture is implicated in school performance, the cultures of racial minorities might be viewed as on a continuum, with Black culture at one end and white culture at the other…. Stated another way, 'whiteness' was not constructed in opposition

> to ‘Asian-ness’ or ‘Puerto Rican-ness,’ but in opposition to how ‘Blackness’ was imagined. (p. 75)

Moving forward with phenomenology as my companion, I ask: **What is the lived experience of White teachers as they name and continue to construct their identities while working in Black schools?**

Phenomenological Questioning

> …and I would like to beg you, dear sir, as well as I can, to have patience with everything unsolved in your heart and to try to cherish the questions themselves, like closed rooms and like books written in strange tongues. Do not search now for the answers which cannot be given you because you could not live them. It is a matter of living everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, one distant day live right into the answer. (Rilke, 1929/2002, p. 21)

Knowing for certain that I have changed many times since I was a self-assured adolescent, I have moved through my years as a teacher of Black students into my years as a doctoral student reading and discussing race in education. Too often we associate time, experience, and education with answers to questions. However, what I have come to find is that I now have even more questions about race in education than I did when I was a first-year teacher. Though, unlike that first year of teaching, where I feared and worried over my questions, I have come to ‘cherish’ each one.

Over the first two years of my doctoral program, as I took several classes that reviewed various research traditions, I was told ad nauseam that one’s research question determines one’s research methodology; question first, methodology second. But I disagree. The questions we ask tend to reflect the way we orient to the world. The way we orient to the world is a methodology in and of itself. I have always been very dubious when someone gives a hard-and-fast answer to what I perceive to be a complex question about people’s experiences within education. I tend to

linger in my many questions and desire to open up interpretive possibilities. Van Manen (2006) describes a postulation I share, that methodology comes before the research question:

> But of course it is true as well that the way in which one articulates certain questions has something to do with the research method that one tends to identify with. So there exists a certain dialectic between question and method. Why then should one adopt one research approach over another? The choice should reflect more than mere whim, preference, taste, or fashion. Rather, the method one chooses ought to maintain a certain harmony with the deep interest that makes one an educator (a parent or teacher) in the first place. (p. 2)

In this regard, the phenomenological 'method' does connect with the deep interest that made me an educator. It is also this 'method' that allowed me to arrive at my research questions at all. It was not until taking a course focused on phenomenological inquiry that I found my way to these questions, having first resonated with the research approach.

As Rilke (1929/2002) expresses it, I tend to live into my questions. As an educator, rather than forcefully moving into a new teaching fad or curriculum, I have always preferred to question and to linger in consideration. I have always wanted to understand better the unique classroom situation so that I could act with the most tact. The phenomenologist also lingers with and lives into his/her questions. Gadamer (2004) explains, "In the comic confusion between question and answer, knowledge and ignorance that Plato describes, there is a profound recognition of the priority of the question in all knowledge and discourse that really reveals something of an object" (p. 371). The phenomenologist, similar to my self, tends to distrust theory. Van Manen (2014) tells us that the phenomenologist, "[s]omewhat surprisingly perhaps, …distrusts theory. The project of phenomenology aims to question the assumptions and abstractions of theory, push off theoretical frames, shake off the captive constraints of concepts" (pp. 65-66). I, too, find theoretical frameworks to be constraining, because the uniqueness of

pedagogical relationships cannot be explained or predicted through a framework. These predictive tools cannot call on educators to act in a more tactful, sensitive, or insightful way.

To Wonder and Wander

While I do live in and into my questions, I do hope they carry me, eventually, into something resembling an answer. This something-of-an-answer will, hopefully, "speak not only to [my] intellectual competence but also to [my] practical capabilities," and in so doing allow me to show myself and others how to act with more care and sensitivity in all of my pedagogical endeavors (van Manen, 2014, p. 67). I entered into phenomenological engagement with the experiences of the White teachers working with Black students, families, and colleagues throughout this work not expecting to predict, not expecting to name, but expecting to *unconceal*. Unlike our typical understanding of *truth*, or answer, the idea of unconcealment aims "to let them [the things; the phenomena] be seen as something unconcealed…; to discover them" (Heidegger, 1927/1993a, p. 79). I have attempted to follow my questions and see where they lead, knowing that any answer or unconcealment I share was only possible due to my persistent engagement with my questions and the phenomenon as-they-are-lived.

This is a somewhat challenging way to be in the world. It is an agreement to remain open to possibility and to suspend what you think you might know. It is an agreement to wonder and wander. My wonder is consistently inspired by my questions, the questions I was shocked into by my experience as a White teacher (Gadamer, 1960/2004). My wandering is also rooted in my questions. As Heidegger (1950/1993d) reminds me, "Let us also in the days ahead remain as wanderers on the way into the neighborhood of Being. The question you pose helps to clarify the way" (p. 143). My questioning is guided by van Manen's (2006) methodological structure for

doing hermeneutic phenomenological research. Within this framework, van Manen suggests six research activities:

> (1) turning to the phenomenon which seriously interests us and commits us to the world; (2) investigating experience as we live it rather than as we conceptualize it; (3) reflecting on the essential themes which characterize the phenomenon; (4) describing the phenomenon through the art of writing and rewriting; (5) maintaining a strong and oriented pedagogical relation to the phenomenon; (6) balancing the research context by considering parts and whole. (pp. 30-31)

I have turned to the phenomenon under study in this chapter and shown my deep interest and commitment. I have begun the process of describing the phenomenon through my writing and rewriting. I continue to engage in these research activities in the subsequent chapters and use them as a guide for my phenomenological inquiry. I further outline the priority of the phenomenological question and phenomenological research activities in chapter three.

Where the Wonderings and Wanderings Will Go

After using the space of chapter one to unravel how I have arrived at my phenomenological questioning, I now move beyond my own accounts, experiences, and histories. In chapter two I open up the phenomenon of Whiteness, identity, and teaching. Using scholarly sources, literature, poetry, media sources, and personal accounts from White teachers, I work to make Whiteness strange by questioning the emotional, physical, relational, and in-process being of White teachers. By pondering and revealing the strangeness of White being, I open up possibilities of a White, anti-racist identity. This project is anchored by the concept of and potential for an anti-racist identity for White teachers. I am drawn to Kendi's (2019) conception of anti-racism:

> The opposite of 'racist' isn't 'not racist.' It is 'anti-racist.' What's the difference? One endorses either the idea of a racial hierarchy as racist, or racial equality as an antiracist. One either believes problems are rooted in groups of people, as a racist, or locates the roots of problems in power and policies, as an anti-racist. There is no in-between safe space of 'not racist. (p. 9)

Kendi implies that anti-racism both relates to and goes beyond the individual. Anti-racists must act as individuals on the understanding that racism exists both within individuals and beyond them as it resides in "power and policies." Kendi's definition of anti-racism also shows opportunities for White teachers to act on their identity in ways that can be perceived in their lived experiences. Given this conception of an anti-racist, we can understand that an anti-racist educator is one who understands that school systems, with their hierarchical structures and policies, are racist in nature. An anti-racist educator must not be thwarted or deterred by interpersonal entanglements. This understanding of anti-racism seems to be a productive way to move forward as I enter into a phenomenological exploration.

In chapter three I explore my entrée into a phenomenological way-of-being and the potential to use this way-of-being in order to develop a greater sensitivity to the lived experience of White teachers in Black schools. I engage the philosophers who have founded the phenomenological mode of doing research in order to connect the phenomenon under inquiry and their ideas. Then, following van Manen's (2006, 2014) "phenomenology of practice," I outline my research plan, describing with more detail the six research activities described above before offering a phenomenological rendering of lived experiences of my five White, female participants.

In chapter four I enter into full engagement with the lived experiences of these five White teachers. I thematically render those experiences in a way that attempts to unconceal what it is like to *be* as a White teacher in vocative ways (van Manen, 2014). Then, in chapter five, I continue with my interpretive work by showing what lies within, behind, and beyond the themes from chapter four. In both of these chapters I rely on the hermeneutic phenomenological tradition

I describe in chapter three in order to interpret the life world of my participants and then connect that life world with possibilities for future, tactful actions.

In this next chapter I attempt to make the White body strange in order to unveil the taken-for-grantedness of Whiteness. As I have suggested in chapter one, Whiteness can be interpreted as an absence of culture. The implication is that Whiteness *is* popular, mainstream culture and White people might, then, interpret themselves as without race. Now I suspend these ways of thinking about Whiteness in order to engage in what van Manen (2014) refers to as the epoché. It is this task that will allow me to enter into my research without presuppositions.

CHAPTER TWO: A BODY MADE STRANGE

> This made me reflect upon the fair skins of our English ladies, who appear so beautiful to us, only because they are of our own size, and their defects not to be seen but through a magnifying glass; where we find by experiment that the smoothest and whitest skins look rough, and course, and ill-coloured. (Swift, 1726/2002, p. 89)

A being is at once familiar and strange. Our bodies and affects are at once ours and everyone's experience. Our familiarity with our being comes from being *in* our self and, likely, being *with* others who are most likely to reflect our interiority back to us (i.e., if we think we are reasonable, they think we are reasonable too). The strangeness of our being is presented to us in our relation with an ontological other. It is the other who allows us to move forward, not in our sameness, but in a constant state of identification, a constant state of revisiting our identity. Levinas (1961/2015) shows us how our engagement with the other, face to face, requires us to be in the 'unnatural position' of reflection. He explains that reflection involves "a calling into question of oneself, a critical attitude which is itself produced in the face of the other and under his authority" (p. 81). This critical questioning of our self when presented with the ontological other is not so unlike the critical questioning that happens when we are presented with the sociological other, although then the questioning might be even more pegged with anxiety, fear, and doubt. W.E.B. Dubois (1903/1989) presents us with the idea of double-consciousness. He shows us that the sociological 'other,' the other that has been created and reified through the violence of racism, is in a constant state of seeing himself from the inside as well as through the eyes of the oppressor. His work captures the grief and terror involved with this familiar-strange tension when it is experienced by those who have been oppressed within a society that has been shaped by racist policies and power structures.

The socio-historical context of identity work is grave and threatening. I realize the privilege I carry with me as I engage in what is, hopefully, an anti-racist exploration of White

identity. As Lensmire (2010) puts it, “For it is part of our white privilege in this society that we can continue wondering about, even struggle for years with, questions of dignity, inequality, and fear, and never really have to do anything” (p. 168). In this chapter, I aim to open up the phenomenon of White racial identity work as it occurs in the context of teaching in Black schools. As I do this work, I enter it with the recognition that no identity work exists outside of context. I agree with Leonardo and Manning (2015) and also insist on “the inseparability of the individual from the socio-historical context” (p. 2). I think this insistence marries well with Levinas’ (1961/2015) philosophical work. Levinas also insists that “The I is not a being that always remains the same, but is the being whose existing consists in identifying itself, in recovering its identity throughout all that happens to it” (p. 36). Certainly the ‘all that happens’ includes the effects of the socio-historical context.

My work in this chapter is meant to examine the strangeness of the White lived-body in order to understand White identity better and its development or narration. This work is meant to open up the strangeness of Whiteness in a manner that moves us toward anti-racism. Kendi (2019) suggests that anti-racism has to do with locating problems within power systems and policies. However, to be able to see these problems, we must first realize that the ways we interpret individuals are raced. Reaching this realization requires an undoing of taken-for-granted ways of thinking and being.

Yancy (2008) writes to describe the strangeness he experiences related to his lived-body, as a Black man, while he rides in an elevator with a White woman. He makes clear his experience of becoming “hypervigilant of [his] own embodied spatiality” when the White woman enters the elevator and how in contrast, when he is on his own, he moves freely “paying no particular attention to [his] bodily comportment” (p. 857). He also laments that the White

woman, likely, is not experiencing the same hypervigilance related to her own body; she is, instead, reacting to his otherness. Yancy describes this woman:

> …the [White] woman in the elevator fails to see that her identity is constructed and shaped through her negation of my humanity. She takes her identity to be full, a pure self-presence, unrelated, dialectically, to how my presence is distorted. While no one of us is completely transparent to oneself, her blinkers, her blind spots, are specifically shaped through the power of whiteness as the transcendental norm. (pp. 861-862)

But what if some work was done to remove the White woman's blind spots? What if her identity was not taken as unrelated-through-dialect to the Black person's presence? What if it was, in contrast, her bodily comportment that was distorted? What would that do for an anti-racist agenda? What would that mean for the White woman's identity development? In this chapter I take on Yancy's (2008) White-woman-in-the-elevator and flip the script. This idiom, of flipping the script, is fitting in that I do wish to hand-over the Black person's internal script, their painful identity work, to the White person. I wish to have White persons take on the burden of being made strange to themselves. Jonathan Swift takes his character, Gulliver, on voyages to encounter people whose sovereign states and bodily beings are very different from his own. Instead of only taking on the strangeness of these people, Gulliver instead 'flips the script' and reexamines some of the practices and peoples he knows from his home state. Like Gulliver, I seek to reexamine Whiteness, my 'home state,' to make it strange through an exploration of scholarly sources, literature, poetry, media sources, song lyrics, and personal accounts from White teachers.

Hearts in Throats and Pride Being Swallowed: Embodied Emotions

Sometimes we hear people say that they had a *gut feeling*. Our cognitive function, at least physiologically, happens in our brains, along with our affective functions. However, when we know something in our gut, we connect our cognitive knowledge with our affective sense-of-

being; we connect our cognition and affects with our bodies. We can also *hate someone's guts*. This means that we despise them down to their very essence, body and affect altogether. Phrases like this do justice to the notion that our feelings, our affects, are embodied. The way we act, bodily, in a situation is not distanced from how we feel in the situation. Fear makes our blood run cold, we shudder with disgust, and burst with happiness. Our emotions related to race, cultivated through our being-in-context, are also acted on bodily.

Sullivan (2014) describes a conversation held in one of her feminist philosophy courses. In the course, Sullivan and her students discussed Staples' (1986) article, which describes the racist stereotypes acted upon by 'purse-clutching' White women as they walk past Black men, who they perceive to be sexual predators. A student in Sullivan's class exclaimed, "But I *am* scared of black men! If I pass one on the street at night, I can't help it. I tense up and get knots in my stomach" (p. 592). This student showed how her, perhaps unconscious, racist attitudes and stereotypical beliefs were acted on bodily and so, to her, felt justifiable. Sullivan goes on to encourage her readers to think critically about our physical reactions and affects when it comes to race, racism, and stereotype. She does this not to suggest that racism can or should be justified through biology and physiology, but to suggest that a critical perspective can actually dispel any notion that our *gut* reactions are unrelated to the social construction of racism. In the remainder of this section, I open up several questions about identity, race, racism, and emotionality. Are White emotions always counter to an anti-racist agenda? Can a critical examination of our emotions further our anti-racist identity work? What harm is done to Black students and families as White teachers work through their emotions? What harm is done to White teachers if they attempt to dispel their own emotions?

The Guilt Trip: Transformative Possibilities

In chapter one I described my and my peers' unwillingness to acquiesce to the guilt we believed we were meant to feel after reading McIntosh's (1989) White privilege checklist. We were resistant, and I believed it was because we were not ready to experience guilt. Why did we need to be *ready* for guilt? Does guilt function like a train schedule? Do we need to be appropriately packed for guilt and arrive on time at the station? Perhaps we do. Perhaps guilt *is* a trip, as the idiom would suggest. You must always be prepared for a trip; otherwise you cannot go. If you did not pack appropriately, if the weather conditions are not agreeable, if you left your house too late to get to the airport on time, you cannot proceed with your trip. Maybe, sometimes, you do not want to go anywhere. Perhaps the White person, the White teacher, must be prepared and willing in order to take the guilt trip. But how and when do they become prepared and willing? Where does this trip go? What do White teachers experience during and after their guilt trip? What harm is caused if White people, White teachers, never prepare for and go on their guilt trip? Why might they never go?

Too tired for travel. Helms (1990, 1992, 1994) developed a framework in which White anti-racist identity development could be seen as a continuum with several stages. She and other scholars admit that this continuum is not meant to move only in one direction and that White people could move back and forth along the continuum, or not move at all. In chapter one, I explained that this framework (WRID) consists of six stages or schema. One of these stages is titled 'pseudo-independence.' In this stage, the White person begins to recognize racial privilege and the subsequent oppression experienced by those who are not a member of the dominant racial group. Along this vein, a body of studies, often labeled 'White privilege pedagogy,' developed within the education discipline as well as other domains of inquiry (e.g., Goodman,

2011; Jensen, 2005; Sleeter, 1994). These studies often encourage, or necessitate, feelings of guilt in their White readers. Perhaps the goal of these studies was to move White educators, and White people in general, along the continuum of racial identity development, to encourage travel along the continuum. However, guilt does not always inspire travel.

One reason we might avoid a trip in our lives is because we are too tired. Flynn (2015) believes that White preservice teachers (and college students in other disciplines) encountering White privilege literature often feel a sense of, what he calls, fatigue. This is different from the idea of resistance. It is not that the students are unwilling to take the guilt trip but, rather, they are too tired to move forward at this point. These fatigued students, Flynn explains, understand the moral imperative of anti-racist work. They understand that they have unearned privileges, but they also have reached a point where they might say things like 'I am tired of talking about racism.' What these preservice teachers are indicating with their fatigue is not that they are unwilling to acknowledge racism or are resistant to anti-racist work, but that they have reached a place of tension. In this fatiguing place of tension, students are "not yet situated to fully understand the complexity of racism and how it functions as an institutional and systemic phenomenon" (Flynn, 2015, p. 115). They are not fully prepared to *do* anything with their guilt. Perhaps the White students need additional sustenance, additional support, to revitalize them. What might that support look like? Who or where might it come from?

This sustenance might not come from scholars writing about White privilege. Levine-Rasky (2000) believes that White privilege pedagogy studies produce a feeling of guilt in their White readers and students, but do not contribute to participants working through the tension between acknowledging unearned privileges within systemic racism and taking action to refuse those privileges. Instead, she believes that White privilege pedagogy "abandons [the participants]

at the point of their engagement with white privilege" (p. 280). Other scholars similarly believe that White privilege, or White guilt, literature does not inspire movement, but rather encourages stagnation (Crowley & Smith, 2020; Lensmire et al., 2013). In Paley's (1989) reflections on her teaching, she describes a situation in which her Black teaching intern allowed a White kindergarten student to refuse her Black partner and choose a White student as her partner instead. Paley, a White teacher, remarks that she was surprised her intern, Janet, allowed the White student to choose a new partner. Janet explains, "Guilt feelings never bring about an improvement in behavior" (p. 46). So, we might question whether 'guilt' is the name of the trip White teachers need to take.

To move across. What opportunities are missed, though, when White teachers and students 'miss the boat' or are 'late for the train'? What damage is done to both their own identity development and the well-being of those who are not White when they do not jump aboard for their guilt trip? What *trans*formative possibilities are missed? We see this root word, *trans*, in a lot of words related to travel: transatlantic, transport, transcontinental. *Trans*, a root word of Latin origin, means 'across' (OED, 2016). When we ask White teachers to pack up and own their guilt, what are they preparing to move across? How do they *trans*form as White people and White educators?

Perhaps the scholars and educators who believe that guilt discourages movement and, rather, encourages fatigue and stagnation are dwelling too much *inside* the guilt. Instead these scholars and educators could consider guilt like a train ticket. It is what allows you to move from one place to another, to move across. Your ticket is punched to indicate where, personally, you are starting and where your movement will take you. Fine, Weis, Powell, and Wong (1997) explain, "We worry that white writers will indulge in…a narrative of guilt, …and by doing so

will dispense with the real work of organizing for racial justice and engaging in anti-racism pedagogies" (p. xiii). We certainly see literary examples of those whose indulgences in guilt carried them nowhere. Raskolnikov's indulgences with guilt only carried him to insanity rather than to any kind of atonement for his sins (Dostoevsky, 1866/2014). Dostoevsky's character finds that it is actually much more beneficial to own his guilt and move towards recovery than it was to attempt to avoid the guilt.

It is interesting, though, that White teachers writing about their own teaching rarely mention guilt as part of their experience of teaching students who are not White. Landsman (2001), Michie (2009), and Paley (1989), for example, do not discuss guilt very often. In fact, Paley (1989) is the only one of these White teachers to spend any noticeable amount of time writing about guilt. When she does, her guilt is related to her choice to teach a mixed racial group of students rather than to teach all Black students. She does not express any guilt feelings as they relate to systemic racism and her privilege in that system. Similarly, narrative inquiries about and portraitures of White teachers do not discuss guilt (e.g., Harding, 2005; Ullucci, 2011). Perhaps these teachers do not mention feelings of guilt because, just like the train ticket we drop in the trash once we have reached our destination, we drop our guilt when it has finally taken us where we need to go. When teachers have reached a place where they have the sustenance needed to write and talk about the tension-filled space between possessing a White identity and dealing with a historically and systemically racist society, they no longer need guilt. They have already taken their guilt trip and no longer need their ticket.

Considering the *trans*formative possibilities of guilt, it becomes clear that this embodied emotion may carry White teachers, and White people generally, to a more racially sensitive place. We cannot ignore guilt feelings just because they are difficult. We reap the rewards of a

turbulent flight when we arrive safely at our destination. Pockets of air that shake us up are no reason to dismiss our need to move from one place to the other. Leonardo (2002) would call pedagogy absent of guilt "a pedagogy of politeness" (p. 39). He explains that this type of polite avoidance of difficult emotions is simply a "democracy of empty forms" (p. 39). Certainly, Black people have no choice but to grapple with the violence of racism. White people have to grapple with it as well. Flynn (2015) explains, "Along with [their] position of privilege, however, White people also have to carry a history of genocide, manipulation, force, theft, lying, and dehumanization they are systemically encouraged to disregard" (p. 122). Given the absence of guilt feelings in the accounts of racially sensitive White teachers, we might still ask what it looks like to carry this type of socio-historical burden? What does guilt look like when White teachers, rather than dwell in it, allow it to carry them across to a more racially sensitive place? Is guilt always part of how anti-racist, successful White teachers narrate their identity?

Jumping Out of Your Skin: Fearful Displacement

In their feminist anthology celebrating women of color, Moraga and Anzaldúa (1983) would not use the name 'guilt' to describe the emotion White people embody as they confront their unearned privileges. They do not see the transformative possibilities of guilt. They instead see it as a mask to the *real* feeling White people would likely be experiencing as they learn about and work through their unearned privileges. They claim:

> Guilt is not a feeling. It is an intellectual mask to a feeling. Fear is a feeling— fear of losing one's power, fear of being accused, fear of a loss of status, control, knowledge. Fear is real. Possibly this is the emotional, non-theoretical place from which serious anti-racist work among white feminists can begin. (p. 62)

The English language tells us a lot about our embodied experience of fear, just as it does with guilt. Our idioms related to fear tell us something about how we live this emotion. When we are fearful we *jump out of our skin*, our *hearts are in our mouths/throats*, or we are scared *out of our*

wits. It is interesting how often our fear-related idioms indicate a displacement. When we are fearful we feel out of place.

Casey (2009) explains that being implaced, in-place, is an "ongoing cultural process" (p. 31). This connection between feeling in-place and the enculturation process illuminates something about White identity and emotionality. If we are in-place when we are familiar with the culture, then we are out of place when we are not familiar. White people are often encapsulated by the dominant culture of the U.S.. They are not often, if ever, asked to step outside of their culture. So, when White teachers are presented with an unfamiliar culture as they travel into non-White schools they are out-of-place and thus, fearful.

Language, Gadamer (1960/2004) shows us, is what "opens up the whole of our world orientation," is what opens up culture (p. 465). When looking particularly at preservice teachers preparing for their first entry into unfamiliar territory, we can note their fear, especially their fear of language and communication. In a study of preservice teachers being asked to conduct an internship in urban schools, Seglem and Garcia (2015) describe one particular student's fears: "As she discusses her fears of not being able to communicate with students very different from herself, Zoey has begun to examine her conceptions that have been influenced by the culture within her figured world" (pp. 13-14). Zoey's fears were of the unknown and the unfamiliar 'place' of her students' language. While Moraga and Anzaldúa (1983) believe White people's fears stem from a loss of power and privilege, sometimes the source of fear is feeling out of place, whether feeling out place connects with a loss of power/privilege or not.

When we are fearful, we tend to hide. When we hide, we revert back to some place safe or we crawl into something that covers us. Unfortunately, for White people, this safe place could be one filled with racism and oppression. Raible and Irizarry (2007) show that our process of

racial identification is one “based largely on fear of alterity,” and it is through this process, regrettably, that “individuals are inducted into the codes of white superiority” (p. 179). This reaction to fear is what inspires media-fueled hate, which is often exchanged during times of particular stress and struggle.

Newspapers and T.V. stations, in the past few years (from 2022), have covered a saddening number of stories about the deaths of Black males at the hands of police officers. The riots and peaceful protests that stem from these events incite a hate that is colored Black and White. Michael Eric Dyson (2016), a professor at Georgetown University, wrote an op-ed article for the *New York Times* that ended with the following lament: “We [Black people] cannot hate you [White people], not really, not most of us; that is our gift to you. We cannot halt you; that is our curse.” Dyson not only condemned the White people who violently and/or angrily combated the protesting of police officers, but also condemned the “cowardice” of White people too fearful to speak out against racialized violence.

While in this chapter I wish to focus on what scholarly sources, fiction, news sources, and accounts of other White teachers show us about the phenomenon of Whiteness, identity, and teaching, it does not make sense to remove myself, personally, from a discussion of fear. Without at least mentioning my own experience with fear, I let it stain the rest of my writing. Embodied emotions are at the *heart* (another idiomatic connection between our emotions and bodies-in-place) of our lived realities, and my own lived reality is so connected to this topic. I worry about what fear does with us. I was the White “coward” Dyson describes the night of a protest-turned-riot in my city. The protesting and rioting was in response to the murder of a Black man at the hands of the city’s police. The day the riots started, I continuous watched news coverage so I could see what was going on. My first fear, watching the news, was that one of my

former students was out in the crowd and would be assaulted just because they are Black and protesting. My fears grew more tangible after seeing a picture that did look strikingly like a former student (Rourke, 2015). However, as the night progressed, my fears became more selfish. As I sat in bed into the early morning, I shook while the noise of the helicopters and sirens blared through my room. I felt my safe space was being invaded. I did nothing to involve myself in these protests despite a conviction that what is happening (*has been* happening) with Black men and law enforcement is a horrific offshoot of a country steeped in institutionalized racism. However, when my fear is met with the hate Dyson (2016) shows in his article, I become unclear about what place fear has and should have in White identity development.

I began this section showing how Moraga and Anzaldúa (1983) believe that guilt is simply a mask for fear. The fear they are writing about is the fear that causes White people to revert back to racist tendencies, or causes them to go into what Helms (1990, 1992, 1994) would call the *reintegration* stage of WRID. This is not productive for an anti-racist agenda. The fear of being out of place that I open up here also does not seem productive. While guilt might take White educators and White people in general to a more anti-racist place, I am not sure that fear does the same. Like Sullivan (2014), I agree that we need to be critical of the fearful, 'purse-clutching' White person. However, beyond critically examining White people's fears, I do not know if fear will fuel any dynamic identity development.

An Elephant on Their Chests: Ongoing Anxiety

Though the terms 'fear' and 'anxiety' could be used synonymously, I address them separately. I think there is some *thing* in the notion that 'fear,' itself, is not something to be diagnosed, whereas anxiety is a diagnosable disorder. While we embody the emotion of fear through our physical actions, such as being *paralyzed* with fear, these physical manifestations

typically end after a given event. However, anxiety is an ongoing disorder with ongoing physical manifestations. The OED (2016), in defining anxiety, lists shortness of breath as one of the physical symptoms associated with ongoing anxiety disorders. As White teachers engage in identity work, they may feel as though they carry an elephant on their chest. They may live out their anxiety throughout the identification process, and it does not go away at the end of a given event along the way.

Simply being in a White body causes on-going anxiety for some. White students in Modica's (2015) study "understood that, for many whites, racial identity is nuanced by anxiety over potential accusations of racism" (p. 407). Though this type of anxiety has far less severe ramifications than the anxieties experienced by Black people due to discrimination and racism (Sosoo, Bernard, & Neblett, 2020; Williams, Kanter, & Ching, 2018), it is still something that could disrupt anti-racist identity work permanently. This type of anxiety also infects how we anticipate or prepare for interactions with others. In a case study of preservice teachers learning to adopt a culturally responsive pedagogy, Gere, Buehler, Dallavis, and Haviland (2009) discuss one of their participants and her anxieties about being interpreted in certain ways because of her Whiteness. They share the following comment the participant, Amber, made regarding a conversation she had with her Black, male mentor teacher: "'I don't think he really knew my attitudes and beliefs…..when we first started… I felt like he was judging me as this, like, preppy little White girl that was just coming to this school and had no idea what was going on" (p. 836). The authors interpreted Amber's statement as evidence of her hyper-vigilance of and anxiousness regarding how she was being "read racially" (p. 836). What might that be like for Amber, the White preserivce participant, to try to implement culturally sensitive pedagogies, while at the same time feeling anxiety about how she is interpreted racially? The authors do not

follow-up with Amber to investigate whether or not she was successfully able to practice culturally relevant teaching. I wonder if she was successful.

As we may have noticed from anecdotal experiences, those with diagnosed anxiety have difficulty carrying on with daily tasks not just because of the mental manifestations of their disorder, but because of the physical ramifications as well. When people experience an anxiety-induced panic attack, they might have difficulty breathing. The immediate threat to their well-being is physical and they, momentarily, put their mental health concerns to the side in order to deal with the immediate problem at hand of not being able to breathe properly. I wonder if anxiety similarly, though still somewhat figuratively, impedes the progress of White teachers. If White teachers are consumed with worry about how they are interpreted by Black colleagues, students, and the community, then perhaps they must put their concerns about teaching within a certain desirable framework aside to deal with the more immediate problem of feeling judged, isolated, or even hated. Howard (1999) believes that too much attention, in the field of education, has been put on the 'how' of multicultural teaching and not enough attention has been given to the 'who.' Perhaps it is this ill-placed focus that causes problems for teachers like Amber.

These wonderings are posed with the awareness that Black communities face these threats to self-image and anxieties to a much more significant magnitude in their daily lives (Britt-Spells, Slebodnik, Sands, & Rollock, 2018). I would argue that the racialized anxiety Black people experience is a testament to a widespread infection throughout our institutions. Identity work is muddled and marred in the muck of racist institutions that have superimposed group identities based on skin color for the good of some and the disadvantage of others. Along with all racial groups, "White identities have been displaced and refigured; they are now contradictory, as well as confused and anxiety-ridden" (Winant, 1997, p. 41). How do White

teachers cope with their anxieties while they try to implement effective teaching practices? Can we assume White teachers want to be effective at their craft and are battling against identity work in order to be successful? Does the emotion of anxiety cycle back to the emotion of guilt? Do White teachers feel guilty because the anxiety they are experiencing might be unjustified in comparison to the anxieties of their non-White peers and students? Is that comparison fair? In the end, White teachers still need to be able to teach their Black students, and all students who are different from themselves.

Turning Green: Admiration Entangled with Disgust

> I desired that the senate of Rome might appear before me, in one large chamber, and an assembly of somewhat a later age in counterview, in another. The first seemed to be an assembly of heroes and demigods; the other, a knot of pedlars, pickpockets, highway-men, and bullies. (Swift, 1726/2002, p. 188)

Gulliver, in his travels, visits a land of magicians. The governor of this land is able to call forth people from the dead for 24 hours. While Gulliver is visiting this land, he asks the governor to call forth all sorts of important political and philosophical figures from Alexander the Great to Descartes. In comparing some great figures from the past, such as some members of the Roman senate, to more modern historical figures, Gulliver is disgusted with modernity. He names current leaders as swindlers and liars who stole and cheated their way to success. In some ways, I draw a comparison to U.S. history. I am saddened and disgusted that White people have, in many ways, swindled and manipulated the culture of the country to benefit their own race. Particularly in regards to our nation's history of educational swindling, the dominant U.S. culture has disregarded the legacy of community, strength, and success of Black teachers and schools (Ginwright, 2010; McKinney de Royston, Madkins, Givens, & Nasir, 2021; Milner, 2006; Milner & Tenore, 2010).

Certainly, there is a lot of disgust to go around regarding the oppressive and unfair conditions of slavery and segregation. However, these phenomena do highlight the persistence and perseverance Black people demonstrated in order to educate themselves (Anderson, 1988; Williams, 2005) and the strength of Black teachers and their pedagogical work (Fairclough, 2007; Siddle-Walker, 1996; Siddle-Walker, 2001). Black teachers, rather than "become victims of their environments," instead "viewed themselves as trained professionals who embraced a series of ideas about how to teach African American children that were consistent with their professional discussions and their understanding of the African American community" (Siddle-Walker, 2001, p. 751). As a White teacher reading about this legacy, is there space for admiration? Is there a space for the White teacher to admire these Black teachers? What would an admiring space look like? Would it serve more good than harm?

Paley (1989), in her teaching autobiography, admires her Black teaching intern, Janet. Paley also worries that because she is not Black that this might be a detriment to her students. She wonders:

> What if Steven Sherman's [a Black kindergarten student] first teacher had been black? Wouldn't his kindergarten year have been less traumatic? Certainly his most serious problems would have existed with any teacher and any class. But Steven's initial confrontation had been, 'I don't have to listen to no white lady.' A black teacher might have gained his trust sooner. (p. 35)

Paley is envious of Janet as a teacher of Black students because she suspected that being Black, as the teacher, automatically made Black students more trusting and comfortable. She worried she would not have the same effect as a White teacher.

Greg Michie (2009), another White teacher who writes about his own teaching experiences, never uses the word 'envy' or 'admire.' However, he does talk about how effective a Black teacher named Moses Green is with, particularly, the Black students in Michie's school.

He goes on to talk about how he adopted what he calls the 'Preacher Green' approach to interacting with the students. Michie found Mr. Green to be so effective that he sought to emulate his way of communicating with the students. We could suspect that emulation is derived from admiration, so Michie might have been emulating Mr. Green's interactions with the students because of his admiration. It is also interesting that Michie employs some phrases we might associate with Black culture in his writing. For example, he uses the phrase "getting schooled" (p. 199), which is a phrase used to indicate that someone is informing you about something for which you have little, to no, understanding.

Perhaps White teachers admire and seek to emulate their Black colleagues because they want a better relationship with their students. Ullucci (2011) found that White teachers sought to "[build] bridges between their lives and the lives of their students" in order to "build solidarity and empathy….regardless of race" (p. 576). The teachers wanted to connect with their students, to not feel so distanced. Perhaps when White teachers see or read about the solidarity between a Black teacher and Black students this makes them admire the Black teacher. However, it is interesting to note that admiration and envy are closely tied. When someone is envious we often used the idiom 'they are green with envy.' Someone can also 'turn green' when they are sick. Since invoking the word 'green' in a figurative sense is strongly tied to a sick person, we can also be concerned that being 'green' with envy is some type of sickness, something to avoid and be careful around.

Envy and emulation can also lead to greed and appropriation. We want something that is not ours, so our only option is to assume it was ours for the taking. The additional problem when White people appropriate Black people's behaviors, is that White people have a greater amount of cultural capital due to the nature of our historically racist society. They take what is not theirs

and use it to acquire a greater gain than the Black person might have. While the problem of appropriation is not studied, in large scope in the field of education, it is one that is evident in fiction works and the media. For example, Sue Monk Kidd (2002), a White author, appropriates Black dialogue and character development in her book *The Secret Life of Bees.* Grobman (2008) explains that Kidd appropriates Black characters from Black writers like Toni Morrison and Gloria Naylor and uses them in a way that distorts the liberating intentions of the Black writers. Not only does Kidd engage in this type of theft, as Grobman calls it, but she does so in order to achieve immense economic success through the sale of her books. Whatever Kidd's intentions were, whether it was admiration or the tormented twin sister of admiration, named envy, the results were a distortion and appropriation of Black writers and their work.

Even if a White teacher is motivated by admiration while emulating the interaction style of her Black colleagues, there is an implicit message in this action that is rooted in the history of White privilege and power. In a blog put forth by The Poetry Foundation, titled *Harriet*, author Lillian-Yvonne Bertram (2015) engages in a powerful reflection on White people's appropriation of Black art, writing, etc.. She explains:

> It is that white representations of blackness function as *the operational vector* for white self-representation. White self-representation through white-mediated representations of blackness occur at all levels: writing, art-making…, music-making…, from the most public to the most intimate spaces. At the core of this is the centrality of whiteness. Whiteness presumes accessibility to all spaces and people. … It believes foremost in transcending race because it believes it can transcend the self. Therefore, whiteness presumes not only to represent blackness in art and/or as art- the black body on stage in a performance of white access to Others- but in the process enacts its centrality to its own interrogation and supposed dismantlement.

The space of White admiration and empathy for Blacks is a difficult one to assume. It is rife with tension between the desire to be empathetic and connected and the harm and violence caused by appropriation and unearned power. It is primarily a conflict of identity development. How can a

White person *be* a teacher of Black students without building empathy and connectedness? In what ways can a White teacher build empathy and connectedness without emulating and appropriating the culture of these students? What are the other options?

It Was Written All Over Their Faces: Embarrassment and Blunders

Swift (1726/2002) displays many of Gulliver's embarrassments and blunders as he travels from Lilliput to Brobdingnag to the country of the Houyhnhnms. Similarly, Landsman (2001), in reflecting on her own 'travels' as a White teacher, finds that "[her] life has been woven with moments of embarrassment at [her] own blunders" along with the joys of her teaching career (p. 162). As with all of the other emotions I have discussed previously, embarrassment is embodied. This embodiment is evident in our language. When we are embarrassed our faces, or ears, are said to burn. Often, due to the physiology of a light pigmentation, White skin blushes and turns red. The embarrassment of White teachers, because of its visibility, becomes a very real part of their lived experience with Black colleagues, students, and families.

Jablonski (2013) writes about skin in a way that weaves together its physiological and cultural components. She imbibes skin with all that it carries, literally and figuratively. In her introduction, she writes, "More than any other part of the body, our skin imbues us with humanity and individuality and forms the centerpiece of the vocabulary of personhood" (p. 3). While not much is written about embarrassment in the literature about and autobiographies of White teachers, the connection between this emotion and the physiology of White people is interesting. What do White teachers experience embarrassment about? How do Black students understand the physiological change they see as their White teacher lives through this embarrassment? How are White teachers to handle this embarrassment? Are they to *swallow*

their pride and just move on? As White teachers work through the embodiment of their emotions and their identity, that work is displayed physically for others to interact with and interpret. In the next section, I work through both the familiarity and strangeness of White skin and hair to highlight the connection between physicality/physiology, emotion, and identity.

When I Close My Eyes: What Our Physical Body *Is*

By Myself

When I'm by myself
And I close my eyes
I'm a twin
I'm a dimple in a chin
I'm a room full of toys
I'm a squeaky noise
I'm a gospel song
I'm a gong
I'm a leaf turning red
I'm a loaf of brown bread
I'm a whatever I want to be
An anything I care to be
And when I open my eyes
What I care to be
Is me.
(Greenfield, 1986, p. 30)

After spending some time playing around with and living in figurative language during our Language Arts block, I presented my first graders with Eloise Greenfield's poem. I asked them "What do you think you know about Eloise Greenfield after reading her poem?" They said things like, "I know she goes to church," "I think she likes to play," and, after I explained what a dimple was, "I think she cute." I then asked them, "What else might she look like?" They had not seen a picture of the author before. One of my students said, very inquisitively, "She Black?" I said, "It sounds like you have a good idea. What makes you say Eloise Greenfield is Black"? He said, "Because she said she's a loaf of brown bread. That mean her skin is brown. Brown skin means you Black."

If Eloise Greenfield's skin is a 'loaf of brown bread,' what might my skin be, as a White woman? What have my students thought my White skin was? In the figured worlds (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998) we live in, what *is* our skin? What *is* our hair? What meanings do our physical bodies hold for others? How does this relate to our emotions and our identities? In what ways does this connection between physicality, emotionality, and identity come together in the complex space of teaching and learning?

Thick Skins, Thin Skins, and Under Their Skins

Our skin is a literal and figurative representation of the nature of tension. Skin can literally be stretched and pulled taught, in-tension, by weight gain, malnutrition, pregnancy, and simply by pulling on it. The result of this pressure on the skin can include stretch marks, sagging skin, sores, and rashes. The figurative tensions we experience because of our skin can cause equally significant, but less visible, marks. We are told a resilient person has *thick skin* and a weak person has *thin skin*. These idioms make us believe that what lays at the surface of the skin is also indicative of what 'lies beneath' the skin, someone's identity and personality. Then we are told that *beauty is only skin deep* and that people can *get under our skin*. These idioms, on the other hand, make us think that what lies on the surface of our beings has little to do with our identity and personality. The tension here is that our identity is both upon and beneath our skin. Perhaps we might, then, experience confusion regarding what constitutes our identity. What marks and scars does this confusion leave on us?

It is also a common, perhaps cliché, expression to say that people are *multi-layered*. As Mike Myers voices it comically in the children's movie *Shrek* (Katzenberg, Warner, Williams, Adamson, & Jenson, 2001): "Onions have layers. Ogres [or, in our case, people] have layers… you get it? We both have layers." While this is simply a comic children's movie, our skin really

does, obviously, have layers. The epidermis is the top layer of skin, as the word indicates, with *epi* meaning upon and *dermis* meaning skin. The epidermis is responsible for maintaining the color of our skin. The dermis, our true skin, is the layer that does quite a bit of work for us in producing sweat, bringing blood to the skin, and allowing us to feel things. The bottom layer, the subcutaneous fat, or hypodermis, attaches our skin to our bones and keeps us warm. Do these layers of our skin represent an overall layered identity? Are we both our skin and whatever *it* is that is layered underneath? Does our skin help dictate whatever is underneath? When our epidermis is burned badly enough by the sun, heat, or electricity, the other layers of our skin also suffer damage. What damage does our identity suffer when we are named and identified by others through our skin? In the next section, I aim to open up and live within the tensions White teachers experience in Black schools related to skin and identity.

Underneath the skin. Well-intentioned White teachers might approach the teaching of Black children by thinking, *They are no different from me, we are all the same underneath our skin* (Howard, 1999). This type of thinking indicates a desire to connect with one's students. However, at its root, this expression displays a desire to be colorblind. This is interesting because we consider colorblindness to be a disorder, something that is out-of-order. When we struggle to differentiate colors we become limited. Similarly, in the scholarship on Whiteness and multicultural teaching, academics find this desire to be colorblind limiting and problematic (Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Milner, 2010; Ullucci & Battey, 2011). Scholars often hyphenate the term to make it 'color-blind;' this differentiates the practice of willing oneself not to see skin color from the physiological disorder of colorblindness, but color-blind thinking is dis-ordered all the same. Bell (2002) describes this type of dis-ordered, color-blind ideology as a 'sincere fiction.' She explains it is sincere in that White people truly do believe they are not discriminating against

others through being color-blind. It is a fiction in that it "[ignores] the enduring realities of racism… in favor of an optimistic tale of continuous progress and social reform that bolsters images of white decency and goodness" (p. 237). These sincere White teachers are attempting to find common ground with their non-White students.

White teachers who wish to connect with their Black students by willing themselves to *not see race* are seeking some common humanity that allows them closer access to their students. Also, perhaps some White teachers are hoping that by not seeing the color of their students' skin they will avoid or defend against the stereotyping behaviors of others. Another possibility is that they wish not to reduce their students to their skin color. In chapter one, I referenced Landsman's (2001) understanding of the complexity of each individual: "I sometimes feel that the simplest lesson in all of this might be an acceptance of the intricacy and complexity of each one of us, that to generalize about anyone is unfair and destructive" (p. 21). Well-intentioned White teachers hoping not to see the color of their own and their students' skin could be trying to avoid generalization and believe that the most intricate parts of our selves lay *under the skin.*

Black students wanting to establish a connection with their White teacher might try to manipulate skin rather than ignore it. In chapter one I discussed an experience I had where my Black student tried to name me as 'light-skinned,' a variation of a Black skin tone, in order to possibly represent the good relationship I had with him and his family. It seems that my experience is not isolated. I discussed this episode with a former White teacher and friend. This woman's skin is visibly White; she is actually quite fair-skinned. After we talked about my experience, my friend felt compelled to write out a similar anecdote of her own which I present below.

During my first year of teaching, I overheard some of my students discussing how they thought I was mixed [having both White and Black parents]. *I then had the following exchange with one of my students:*

Student: Ms. F, your father black?

Me: No

Student: Your mother black?

Me: No

Student: But you mixed, right?

Me: No, I'm just white.

Most people looking at me would clearly discern my ethnicity so I was somewhat confused by my student's questions. Afterward, I asked a fellow teacher, Ms. S, who was in her third year [and also a White teacher] *about the conversation. I jokingly told Ms. S that the kids thought I was mixed. 'Who would look at me and see mixed?' Ms. S told me that she had had some similar experiences with students. 'The kids like you, so they want to have something in common with you.' 'Okay,' I thought, 'that makes sense. But that still doesn't explain why they think I'm mixed. We have other interests in common like sports teams, music, things like that,' I said. Ms. S took on a slight somber tone then said, 'Unfortunately a lot of our kids have had bad experiences with white people and most of the people that they love and respect are black. When they look at you they can see that you're white, but they want to reconcile the fact that they respect you with what they see, so they try to come up with a reason like "she's mixed" or "she has someone black in her family".'*

After what Ms. S said, my students' comments seemed more logical. Although they were a bit naïve, I could see their struggle to adapt their negative past experiences with white people,

with me, their teacher who stood in front of them each day, who took them to the ocean for the first time, who was letting them do experiments, and so on. They wanted to let themselves start to like me, to find something in common with me, but without betraying the line that was clearly drawn in some parts of their community: black on one side, white on the other.

In Ms. F's anecdote, she seems to be reconciling the students' manipulation of her literal skin with what she believes the students see *under* her skin. That is, she cannot understand why they would think of her as anything but White because of the pigment of her skin. However, through conversations with others, she begins to understand that the Black students see that, *beneath* her skin, they find common ground with her and like her and that this might lead them to see *beyond* her skin. Perhaps, as Ms. F and her colleague Ms. S suggest, the students have many difficult experiences with White people. Perhaps White people have made them feel negatively about what is both *upon* and *beneath* their skin. If that is so, then the students may find some way to distance the White people who they come to like from the White people with whom they have had negative interactions. They choose to achieve this through the naming of skin color.

It is interesting, though, that we often use the phrase *under my skin* to indicate when someone's comportment or conversations really bother us to a large extent. To get underneath the skin is typically a bad thing as we use it in our language. So, then, is it a bad thing for students and teachers to work to see *beyond* and then get at what is *underneath* the skin? Perhaps it is. Perhaps this ignorance of what is going on at the surface of the skin is also an ignorance of major aspects of each individual's identity and experiences of the world. Just as our epidermis, the layer of skin that is *upon* us, works in conjunction with our other layers of skin, how our culturally constructed skin color is received in the world works in conjunction with the development of our identity and comportments. When others treat us in a certain way because of

the color of our skin, then we respond in one way or another, and this interaction shapes our identity. The socio-political and historical contexts of our country shape systemic responses to certain skin tones, which has then affected the identities of many. LaVeist (2005), shows that, as an example of this phenomenon, skin color, more than many other variables, predicts a person's health and mortality in the United States. To not see skin color is not to see the whole person, which disrupts any possibility to find commonality and universal humanity.

Thin and thick skins. Racially conscious teachers recognize that there is no way to see *past* or *beyond* skin color. Even while Landsman (2001) recognizes the complexity of each individual, she still acknowledges that her White skin and the Black and Brown skin of her students is perceived in certain ways. She writes, "The least I can do is acknowledge the perceptions of the world that students bring to me: perceptions about the difference their skin color makes in the way they are considered by store owners, teachers, policeman, and bosses" (p. 76). Our reactions to skin color are historically conditioned by systems of racism. The reactions to our skin color, in turn, shape our identity. Therefore, our identity development is grounded by and dependant on, in some ways, historicity. Gadamer (1960/2004) explains, "That what comes into being is free, but the freedom from which it comes is always limited by what has come into being— i.e., by the situation into which it comes" (p. 211). Our situations are historically conditioned. Gadamer (1960/2004) continues on and remarks, "In fact, all individuation is itself already partly characterized by the reality that stands over against it, and that is why individuality is not subjectivity" (p. 211). Historically, Whites have existed in a space that *is* qualified by Whiteness, whereas those who are not White have had to try to find some space to exist in a world that is not shaped for them or by them.

If someone is said to have thick skin, they are resistant to taunts and criticisms, whereas if they have thin skin they are not. Perhaps it is the White person who has the figurative thin skin. The White person has a difficult time naming their own Whiteness because it is not visible to them. Ahmed (2007) shows us, "Bodies are shaped by histories of colonialism, which marks the world 'white'" (p. 153). When asking a White person to name their skin color, they are forced to leave the comfort the world has created for them. The world has been historically molded to accommodate the White person's being, specifically, and when they leave this mold they are uncomfortable (Ahmed, 2007). So, then, perhaps it is the Black person who has the figurative thick skin. The Black person is used to figuring out how to *be* in a historically figured White world. Their thick skin is used to feeling not-at-home.

What happens when, not only do White teachers recognize the historically situated nature of their students' skin, but they notice their own skin as well? Ahmed (2007) explains that "Whiteness [is] a social and bodily orientation given that some bodies will be more at home in a world that is orientated around whiteness" (p. 160). What happens when a school community is not orientated around whiteness? How might that disrupt the White teacher's normal feelings of comfort-in-space? What does this new discomfort do for the White teacher's identity? Bell (2002) encourages discourse around Whiteness as a way to "hold up a mirror that allows white students [white people in general] to see their reflection more clearly" (p. 241). What will White teachers see in this mirror? White teacher's skin color can be so literally called into question when working with Black children. The curious nature of children is illuminating. I can recall my own experiences of having my Black students trace lines over my blue veins as I put my pale, White hand near their own brown one. Ahmed (2007) questions what it might look like to make the "invisible marks of [white] privilege] more visible" through phenomenological work

(p. 149). She suggests that the result might be to make Whiteness strange and open the possibility of displacing the habits of a White-washed world.

In Your Roots

While our interpretations of skin color receive a good deal of philosophical and scholarly attention in the field of education, human hair does not. However, hair is a very real part of our physical beings and a very real part of our experience of one another in any social setting, including schools. In chapter one, I describe moments where my students would take strands of my long, straight hair in their hands and wonder about it. What is it like to have your hair, a taken-for-granted aspect of our physical being, wondered about? What reactions does this wonderment cause? Would this wonderment be strange for a White teacher, or a White person in general? Should it be strange?

The wonderment over Black hair certainly is not a strange phenomenon. There are blog posts, comedy sketches, movies, and so on about Black hair. We might suspect that this wonderment over Black hair is due to White people's hold on the dominant U.S. society. This dominance manipulates and dictates advertising and media that target White people and largely misrepresents Black hair. Muhammad and McArthur's (2015) study discusses the effect of historically rooted negative images of Black women in contemporary media on the identity formation of young girls. The participants in the study were particularly concerned with representations of hair in the media. Muhammad and McArthur explain, "The participants talked through the dichotomy of 'good' and 'bad' hair. …Competing dichotomies like these continue to complicate Black girlhood and their ideals of beauty" (p. 136). The girls in the study felt negatively judged by their hair. The dichotomy of 'good' versus 'bad' hair that the authors discuss is historically rooted. The pun that puts hair roots in tension with cultural and historical

roots is telling of the connection between our physical beings and the culturally constructed interpretations of them. Bundles (2001) notes that 'good' hair is historically linked to White hair that is smooth, soft, and long, while 'bad' hair is historically linked to hair that is knotted, course, or 'nappy.'

This dichotomy of 'good' and 'bad' hair is explored in the documentary *Good Hair* (Hunter, O'Donnell, & Stilson, 2009). Chris Rock, a popular Black comedian, narrates and acts as host for the documentary. He approaches his task with a genuine inquiry regarding why some hair is 'good' and other hair is 'bad.' His two daughters, who began to wish for 'good hair,' motivate Rock. The documentary goes on to explain the chemical processes involved in straightening hair, visiting manufacturing plants that produce products for Black hair, and interviewing Black celebrities and regular people. In one scene, Rock interviews a chemistry professor. Rock explains to the White professor, "Black women, some men, …. put sodium hydroxide in their hair to straighten it out." The professor asks, "Why would they do that?" to which Rock answers, "To look White." The historically rooted cultural implications of 'good' hair are not lost on Rock or the people he interviews. Paul Mooney, a Black comedian interviewed in the documentary, expresses a belief that Black people desire straight, relaxed hair as a way to appease White people. He humorously comments, "If your hair is relaxed, White people are relaxed. If your hair is nappy, they're not happy." Jeffries and Jeffries (2014) analyze this documentary and find that it has the potential to empower Black women and encourage them to embrace their natural hair. However, we might wonder if the empowerment of Black women was the only purpose of the film. In one scene, several women are shown commenting that they do not like people to touch their hair, implying that many people, particularly White people,

might attempt to do so. Perhaps another purpose of the film is to educate White people about Black hair.

What if it was White hair that needed the explaining? What if it was White hair that was manipulated and misrepresented in the media? When a White teacher enters a Black classroom, perhaps the script is flipped. The young children in the *Good Hair* (2009) documentary are so familiar with the treatment of Black hair. Would they be as familiar with the treatment of White hair? Does the media fuel a fixation on White hair for the Black child? When the White teacher enters a classroom of Black children, she might become a source of questioning as they wonder about White hair. What might this line of questioning do *with* the White teacher? Through the children's wonderment, is her own hair made strange? Is the flipped experience of having *her* hair be the source of wonderment, rather than Black hair, do anything for her identity development or sensitivities in a still-racist society? Are there anti-racist possibilities in the White person's experience of having their skin and their hair made strange? What are these possibilities and do they prompt any reflection on the White person's 'roots'? I turn now to an examination of the White person's relational body. Through our emotions and physical beings, we are always in-relation with the ontological Other who calls on us through face-to-face encounters and conversations.

A Who or a What: Relational Body

Levinas (1961/2015) points out that when we ask a question about 'who,' most of the time the response we receive is usually more aligned with a question of 'what.' He explains, "We ask 'Who is Mr. X?' and we answer: 'He is the President of the State Council,' or 'He is Mr. So-and-so.' The answer presents itself as a quiddity; it refers to a system of relations" (p. 177). When we ask *who* someone is, we often seek an answer of the type that Levinas points out. We

do not really want to know *who* that someone is; we want to know *what* that person is in relation to some thing or someone else. We are relational beings.

What might a White teacher's relational being look like in a Black school? The previous sections in this chapter have tilled the earth in order to uncover some of the strangeness about the White teacher's emotions and bodily being. These emotions and understandings of bodily comportment are all motivated by and predicated on the being-in-relation-to-Other. How does the White teacher, a person who might be feeling guilt, admiration, and so on, name themselves when asked *who are you*? With what kind of *what* do they answer? They are not just 'teacher,' for sure; this might be too simple. They are also, likely, not just a *White* teacher. Perhaps they might name themselves as *White teacher* because that *what*ness shows how they are in relation to the Black school community. But, if the White teacher desires to feel connected to her Black students, as I have shown in previous sections that they might likely want to, how else might they respond to the question of *who/what*? They are a *White teacher*, but *what* else are they? And what do White teachers miss in terms of identification and identity development when they are so worried about answering a question of *who* as if it were a question of *what?* Do they miss aspects of not just their own identity but the identity of their students, the families, and the community?

Name-Calling: Naming Culture and Identity in Relation to Others

Naming is a significant part of teaching. Pedagogical relationships demand that the teacher, through acting with care, interprets and reflects on situations (van Manen, 1991). In doing so, the teacher is positioned to name herself and her students. Landsman (2001) reflects on how often she and her students struggle with naming, "They [her students] struggle with what they want to be called, what they will call me. We name things constantly for each other" (p. 8).

Many White teachers struggle to name their selves in a way that will connect them with and make them seem more empathetic to the experience of their Black students. White teachers, regardless of their level of willingness to explicitly confront systemic racism, understand that the world is racialized; they understand, to some degree, that their Black students are named and interpreted in an oppressive way. This might cause White teachers to name their self in a way that shows they have, too, been oppressed in some way.

Autobiographies and empirical studies of White teachers are rife with examples of teachers naming themselves in ways that show how they might connect with their Black students and the oppression they have experienced. Harding's (2005) portraiture of a White teacher shows how her participant, Jennifer, clung to what she called an "'urban' identity" which helped her "claim a connection to the Black community" (p. 75). Paley (1989) often discusses her identity as a Jew in her autobiographical book *White Teacher*. She admits, "It may seem that I am overdoing my comparison of Jewish feelings and Black feelings. But I am talking about feeling different" (p. 29). Understanding that Black students are oppressed and isolated by being made to feel different, Paley looks for aspects of her own identity that help her connect to this experience. For her, it is being Jewish. Ullucci's (2011) White participants believe they connect with their non-White students because of their experiences with poverty. The White teachers in her study believe their experiences in mixed-race, impoverished neighborhoods better situates them to understand the inequities their students face. Ullucci's participants had "first hand knowledge of diversity. To them, racial and ethnic diversity was a lived experience. It was not something learned about in school, nor an abstract concept, but rather a day-to-day phenomenon" (p. 575). Many White teachers answer questions of *who* with the *what* of their religion or class if it

somehow demonstrates an experience of inequity or oppression. Perhaps they name themselves in these ways to connect better or empathize with their students who are not White.

Some other teachers, though, are White men who have little experience with feeling 'different,' as Paley (1989) puts it, or with being oppressed. These White male teachers find other ways to name self that makes them seem more sensitive to the socio-political context of being Black or Brown. While Greg Michie (2009), a teacher in Chicago and author of an autobiographical text about his teaching, admits to having a typical 'White-bread' upbringing, he still tries to qualify his experience by naming himself as a 'friend of Black people.' He describes:

> I spent my elementary school years in a neighborhood that, due to a sudden outbreak of White flight, became integrated almost overnight. I walked to school and played ball with as many Blacks as Whites, had plenty of friends of both races, and sang gospel music in a biracial Presbyterian church from the age of five. Because of these early experiences, I considered myself somewhat well informed on issues of race and class- more so at least than the average White person. (p. 3)

Schultz (2007), another White male teacher writing about his teaching experience, seeks the help of a Black man in naming his self. With this validation, Schultz then names himself as someone who 'takes the side' of Black people, who is "'feelin' what they feelin'" (p. 82). Even when White teachers cannot point directly to any experience that names them as different or as oppressed, they seek some way to be-named-in-connection-with their students. What they end up missing, or concealing, is the great difference in how their White skins are interpreted in various settings. Whether these White, male teachers befriend or empathize with Black people or not, they have experienced a life that has been and still is mediated by their Whiteness.

The White teachers in the examples above name-call themselves as a way to make it seem like they are more similar to their students. What is interesting though is that when we use the phrase 'name-calling,' it has a negative connotation. Our meaning of name-calling, a tool to belittle someone or something, speaks to the derogatory possibilities of a name. It speaks to the

dangers of what happens when we answer a *who* question with a *what* answer. White people often deny the privileges of their race by naming themselves through the *what* of their experiences with class. In a life history study of six White teachers, Johnson (2002) notes that it was difficult for participants "from poor and working-class backgrounds to see how they might still benefit from White privilege even when they did not experience economic privilege" (p. 162). These White teachers use the name 'poor' or 'working-class' to deny the *who* behind their racial privileges.

Naming oneself using a *what* that brings the White teacher closer in connection with the Black student does some additional damage. Reflecting on an educational psychology course she taught, Rosenberg (1997) explains that her students were eager to identify with the diverse others they read about for their coursework. She notes that the "students often use other people's oppression in the identification and interpretation of their own lives," and goes on to say that it is "crucial for these students not to weave their narratives together with their inner city counterparts in a blanket of shared victimizations" because in doing so they "[obscure] the ways that racist domination impacts the lives of marginalized groups in our society" (p. 83). When a White teacher names herself in a way that claims a close relatedness to the experience of those who have been systemically oppressed and marginalized, it takes away part of the *who*, the being-ness, of those in the disadvantaged group. White people should be careful of the ways they respond to questions of *who*, of the ways they name. In trying to be-in-relation-with the Black community, they might be causing damage.

Underneath the Outside Face: Relational Possibilities

> Underneath my outside face
> There's a face that none can see.
> A little less smiley,
> A little less sure,

But a whole lot more like me.
(Silverstein, 2011, p. 132)

When we respond to questions of *who* with *what* answers, we respond with our 'outside face.' We respond with a mask that veils our socio-politically situated identities. Our *what* responses cover up our differences and how we are affected by policies and power, and, by doing so, reify systems of oppression. However, what if we spent time learning to be in-relation-with-the-Other in a new way, in a way that addresses our own *who* and the *who* of the Other? In this type of relation, we understand our own interiority, but beyond that we are compelled, through empathy, to know the Other. This is Levinas' (1961/2015) concept of infinity. He explains, "The idea of infinity implies a soul capable of containing more than it can draw from itself. It designates an interior being that is capable of a relation with the exterior, and does not take its own interiority for the totality of being" (p. 180). If we were to encourage White teachers to take off their 'outside face,' to name themselves in ways beyond '*what* are you,' we may support them as they begin to recognize that their perspective, their interiority, is immersed in Whiteness. This recognition of their own Whiteness will situate White teachers to be more sensitive to the unique socio-historical context that shapes the *who* of their Black students, colleagues, and school communities.

Leonardo (2002) defines Whiteness as a "racial perspective or world-view" that is steeped in social constructions of identity related to skin color (p. 31). If White teachers do not recognize their uniquely White perspective then they will "socialize children through a white-normed meaning system" that is "empowering for white students," but "for students of color and anti-racist white students, this learning promotes a veritable schizophrenia whereby the tools they are offered cannot solve the problem they perceive" (Leonardo & Manning, 2015, p. 8). However, if White teachers fully understand their interiority, which is situated in systems of

power and privilege, and they can feel compelled by the Other, what type of relation is possible? Will it be more honest, more empathetic? Will it promote an anti-racist agenda? What type of work would it take to arrive at a more honest, empathetic, anti-racist type of relation? Allen (2004), through exploring the concept of critical pedagogy, explains this work: "The white person needs to unlearn a lifetime of problematic white subjectivity, ideology, and behavior. He needs to learn how to see the world through new eyes that reveal the complexities and problematics of whiteness" (p. 130). The White teacher needs to see through 'new eyes,' see beyond their 'outside face,' in order to understand the complex institutional forces that act on both their own identity constructions as well as those of their students.

Certainly, learning to 'see' in new ways will take time and a willingness to live in the uncertain, the unsure. Will White teachers feel too uncertain as they work to relate with their Black students? Is this uncertainty only a bad thing? Does it include some possibilities? Crowley (2016) conducted a critical case study with six preservice teachers in, what he calls, an urban-focused preparation program. In discussing the preservice teachers' race-consciousness and critical understandings of race, he found that it was important to reassure the participants that racial relations and racial identity work is innately messy. Rather than let this concern him or his undergraduate students, Crowley remarks:

> I am buoyed by their sense that they do not know all of the answers. I feel this positions them in a generative space. We want new teachers to feel inspired, confident, and committed when they leave their teacher education, but we do not want them armed with simplistic understandings of complex social forces. (p. 1026)

This messy, uncertain work will certainly need to also be critical work. As White teachers work to be-in-relation-with their Black students and the Black community, they must avoid wanting to put back on the 'outside face' that masks the systems of racism all identities are scarred by.

In a critical examination of blackface minstrelsy, Lensmire and Snaza (2010) open-up the possibilities of examining what they call 'White desire.' They theorize that, while blackface is an 'old' and 'dirty' practice, it demonstrates a White desire for connection and relation with the Black community. They suggest, "White desire may manifest itself as a colonizing form of cultural appropriation. However, if such attraction can be maintained in tension with the hard work of explaining personal and societal investments in racism and White privilege, a potentially antiracist commitment might emerge" (p. 416). Blackface minstrelsy, a disturbing example of White desire to be-in-relation-with a Black community, shows the potential for a critical examination of misplaced relational being. As Lensmire and Snaza suggest, if White people could open themselves up to the messiness of relating to an Other (a person whose being compels us to act with empathy), and be critical about their position of power and privilege, there are anti-racist possibilities. While this scholarly work is an extreme example, I have discussed in the section above how White desire to be-in-relation-with the Black community causes them to mask their Whiteness and situatedness in systems of racism. But there are possibilities when the White teacher removes her *outside face*, and uncovers the *who* of her own and the Other's relational beings. Patience is needed as we recognize that White teachers, their emotional, physical, and relational beings, are bodies-in-progress.

No Venture, No Gain: A Body in Process

As Swift (1726/2002) has Gulliver travel from Lilliput to the country of the Houyhnhnms, it seems that Gulliver's body, affects, and country of origin take on new meaning with each adventure. In Lilliput, Gulliver's body is distorted by its largeness and then made diminutive in Brobdingnag. He becomes disgusted with modern mankind in Glubbdubdrib, a bit dubious of the power of the English language in the country of Houyhnhmns, and then perhaps a

bit less disturbed by his fellow Englishmen after meeting the Yahoos. His changing social and physical surroundings keep Gulliver's understanding of the larger world in flux, in constant process. Along the way, Gulliver's developing knowledge of the world does not follow a linear, organized path despite his best attempts to be a diligent note-taker and curious questioner. Also, despite his many travels, we never feel that Gulliver really 'arrives' at any one place. He is in a constant state of motion, moving back and forth from home to other lands.

Similarly, White teachers are not on a distinct 'journey' of identity. They are not on a quest to 'arrive' at any one place, but are in a constant state of motion, of change, as they learn to identify themselves in new ways through their work with Black schools. Their understandings of their own emotional, physical, and relational beings change with each new person they meet and place they visit in the community. The process is confusing, slow, and on-going. We have many idioms about change in the English language: when one door closes, another opens; break new ground; blaze trails; nothing ventured, nothing gained. Despite our propensity for optimistically referring to change, little has changed regarding race relations. Court rulings have determined that separate-but-equal is not constitutional, but de facto segregation still exists and affects schools. What can the White teacher do to create change in a society that seems stagnant on issues of race? Will racial identity work effect any change? Will the venture of identity work produce a gain? What would this gain look like? Who is it a gain for? Would it be distinguishable? Would it be a growing understanding of self and the world-around-self in the way that it was for Gulliver?

To Transgress Messily

> Sometimes it seems
> We'll touch that dream
> But things come slow or not at all
> And the ones on top, won't make it stop

So convinced they might fall
(Hill & Newton, 1998)

Earlier in this chapter, while discussing the embodied emotion of guilt, I wrote about how often the Latin root *trans* is used in terms related to travel. Another word using this Latin root is relevant here: *trans*gress (Crowley, 2016). Its etymology shows that this word directly means to 'step across.' When used as a noun, this word has negative connotations. The OED (2016) simply defines the noun as "trangression, trespass." The tone here is that someone has entered a space that was not meant for them. But to look at the verb, to transgress indicates the possibility for change. I find the verb form of this word to be most relevant given that I find the experience of identity, also, to be more of a verb, a some *thing* in action, than a noun. In action, when we transgress we step beyond the boundaries of a given rule or law. If White teachers work for change, are critical about their racial identity work, what will they transgress? What 'rules,' socially constructed or otherwise, might they step across? One might hope that White teachers could 'step across' the rules of White privilege and power by engaging in critical, racial identity work.

Images of breaking rules for just causes are empowering and uplifting, which is why we see so many media portrayals of uplifting educators. However, the time limitations of media sources do a disservice when we think about the transgressive possibilities of White racial identity work. Unlike in the movies, any change or movement will happen slowly, messily, and non-linearly. Cochran-Smith (1995b) uses the following metaphor to capture the nature of this messy, transgressive work as she sees it portrayed within a teacher education program:

> The process of constructing knowledge about race and teaching was more akin to building a new boat while sitting in the old one, surrounded by rising waters. In this kind of construction process, it is not clear how or if the old pieces can be used in the new 'boat,' and there is no blueprint for what the new one is supposed to look like. It is also not clear whether the new boat will float, hold the weight of its builder or hold back the

> water. And, of course, as one is trying to build the new boat, one is stuck inside the old one, struggling to negotiate tricky waters, not to mention rapids, hidden rocks, and unpredictable currents. (p. 533)

White teachers cannot be left to sink as they struggle with negotiating, continuously, their racial identity in the context of Black schools. They need support as a body-in-process. Hill-Jackson (2007) calls the process of negotiating racial identity and searching for anti-racist ways of being as 'wrestling Whiteness.' She believes that if White teachers are left alone in their struggle, then they are condemned to 'multicultural purgatory.'

Through labeling White teachers, such as with the word 'resistant,' we are refusing to offer this support and allowing them to drown in their struggles with identity, race, and pedagogy (Flynn, 2015; Neri, Lozano, & Gomez, 2019). We must remember that White teachers are, indeed, bodies-in-process and we cannot stagnantly label them. Identity frameworks that identify stages of identity development, such as Helms' WRID (1990, 1992, 1994), seem to necessitate labeling. These frameworks also seem to communicate that growth is regular and ongoing, when in practice it seems that White teachers move in and out of various places of identification (Gere et al., 2009). We need to assure White teachers that, like Gulliver, their understandings and trajectories need not be linear. Cubbuck (2004) explains:

> The nature of the process of disrupting Whiteness is not linear. It is not an endpoint at which one arrives. Nor is it simply the result of a prescribed approach to develop intentions and acquire knowledge. Rather, it is an ongoing process that requires significant rewriting of the narratives used to interpret lives and maintain congruence of self, done in the context of a community of support and accountability. (p. 330)

The process of racial identity work is circuitous and slow, to take the concept put forth by Lauryn Hill and Johari Newton (1998) in their song lyrics cited at the beginning of this section. Perhaps part of the struggle and reason for the sluggishness is related to fear, as discussed earlier in this chapter. As Hill and Newton suggest, White people might be fearful of losing power and

this might slow their identity development even further. What types of supports and accountabilities do White people need to encourage their identity progress? Will these supports and accountabilities help them resist temptations of fear in order to transgress, 'step across,' into a more anti-racist place?

To Have Companions

Perhaps the White teacher will need their White colleagues to encourage their work. But it is not enough to be supported by others who are still too similar to one's self. Paley (1989), as is always her tendency, encourages White teachers to turn to the children they teach. She explains, "Children do not ask: Where do you come from? They ask: What role will you play? The children have much to teach us, if we but stop and listen" (p. 142). To rephrase Paley's sentiment in Levinas' (19/61/2015) terms, as described earlier in this chapter, children are not concerned with knowing *what* you are as a White teacher, they want to know *who*. Children want to know *who* you are and how that *who* will come into play in their worlds. They know *what* their teacher is; she is a teacher, particularly a White teacher. But they do not know, at least not at first, what that means in terms of interactions, conversations, and so on. Raible and Irizarry (2007) believe that the children should not be the only companions of the White teacher as they work to develop what the authors call a *post-white* identity. These authors believe that while "there is much that can be learned from children of color….white pre-service teachers also need to interact with, and be challenged by, peers of color" (p. 193). While Raible and Irizarry are particularly focused on their participants who are pre-service teachers, we can imagine this concept could be similarly applied to practicing teachers and their Black colleagues.

Patience will be required of both the White teachers and their companions. Landsman (2001) believes:

> White people too often want solutions to be quick and easy. They want something they can follow and in a few months, a few years at the most, the problem will be solved. At the same time I believe people of color have known it will not happen this way. It will happen over decades, as our hearts change, our laws change, our responses soften, our minds open. (p. 161)

While there is certainly merit and admirable purpose to frameworks such as culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002) and multicultural education (Banks, 1994; Sleeter & Grant, 1988), these frameworks do not do quite enough to get at 'our hearts.' They stay focused too closely on the *what* of teachers and do not do enough to address the *who*, as in *who* is the educator beyond a White teacher (Howard, 1999). If we have the patience to let the White teacher engage in identity work as a body-in-process, what might this look like? Would it achieve the same goals that frameworks listed above aim to achieve? Would it be more beneficial for the White teacher to uncover the *who* of their teaching rather than the *what?* Who will be able to give the White teacher space to be as a body-in-process? Is there space available? We might believe that if the White teacher does not 'venture' to engage in racial identity work, then there will not be any 'gain' for the teacher or the school.

In my own transgressing, my own 'stepping across,' I am a body-in-process that has many companions. I have the companionship of my former students and colleagues, my White peers who have shared their stories with me through our friendship, and scholars who have begun to open up the anti-racist possibility in White racial identity work. Through conducting a phenomenological project, I also have the companionship of philosophers who shape this methodological work. It is these philosophers that encourage me to let my 'moral knowledge,' my desire to seek anti-racist possibilities and sensitivities, guide my work. Gadamer (1960/2004) says:

> We learn a techne and can also forget it. But we do not learn moral knowledge, nor can we forget it. We do not stand over against it, as if it were something that we can acquire

> or not, as we can choose to acquire an objective skill, a techne. Rather, we are always already in the situation of having to act…, and hence we must already possess and be able to apply moral knowledge. (p. 327)

So, while I may be familiar with pedagogical frameworks and 'best teaching practices,' I am guided in this project to act on my moral knowledge. Before I enter into companionship with the participants of this study, I take a moment in chapter 3 to dwell in and more fully consider the companionship I have with phenomenological philosophers and describe how their ideas guide me as a body-in-process. I show how their ideas continue to help me consider my question: **What is the lived experience of White teachers as they name and continue to construct their identities while working in Black schools?** I then turn to van Manen (2006, 2014) in order to describe the specific phenomenological research activities that will bring a distinct shape to my work.

CHAPTER THREE: PHILOSOPHICAL AND PHENOMENOLOGICAL POSSIBILITIES: THE WILDNESS OF WORDS

> We name us and then we are lost, tamed
> I choose words, more words, to cure the tameness, not the wildness.
>
> I remember everything it isn't past its wild
> I'm so constant and have nearly lost myself only seldom, later,
> But I would have lost it, lost me
> (Notley, 1998, p. 5)

At the beginning of chapter two I cite Yancy's (2008) White-woman-in-an-elevator. I reference his discussion of how this White woman made him feel strange in his own Black body while riding in the elevator with her. In an attempt to 'flip the script' and make the White person's emotional, physical, relational, and in-process body strange I engage a variety of sources from scholarly work to fiction. It is through words that I seek this strangeness. As Notley's (1998) poem highlights, words can both reel us in and liberate us. I choose to use words in 'wild,' liberating ways, not to create ordered frameworks. While there is great use in frameworks such as WRID (Helms, 1990, 1992, 1994) and culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002), this phenomenological work seeks to wander around in the wildness that words can offer. Through engagement with the philosophers, I locate ways to ensure that the White teacher is not a *constant,* is not *lost,* but has space to meander through strangeness into a realm of anti-racist possibilities. I describe hermeneutic phenomenological philosophical foundations and research activities to show how this methodology can help me open up 'wild' possibilities as I ask: **What is the lived experience of White teachers as they name and continue to construct their identities while working in Black schools?**

Throughout this chapter, and others, I engage several philosophers: Martin Heidegger, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Emmanuel Levinas, and Edward Casey. While their philosophies do not necessarily weave together to construct a cohesive whole, they come together through my understandings of my phenomenon and approach to my phenomenological work. In chapter one and chapter two I use Alice and Gulliver as examples of two protagonists who, rather than set out on a journey with the sole purpose of arriving at a particular destination, meander through strangeness in order to arrive back at the same place only to understand it better. I am also a meanderer. Like Alice and Gulliver, I wander through strange places, opened up by scholarly sources, fiction, poetry, and so on, in order to know the place where I started, my own understanding of being a White teacher, better. Also, similarly to Alice and Gulliver, I have companions who each add their own insights. Their ideas, while they do not always fit together like puzzle pieces, work through me and in doing so become whole through my phenomenological project.

Seeing With New Eyes

Before we can use words as liberators of the human experience, we have to know the phenomenon as a *lived experience*, rather than as one mediated through concepts and pre-ordered frameworks. Edmund Husserl, who is "generally regarded as the intellectual founder of phenomenological philosophy" (van Manen, 2014, p. 88), wanted to move past our interpretations, reflections, and theories in order to capture a 'primal realm' of how we engage with the things around us. Husserl's concern was to move past the 'tameness' of theory and move into the 'wildness' of how we experience some *thing* in the moment with no mediation.

Starting with this desire to see something with new, perhaps *fresh* eyes, Husserl's students carve their own initials into the phenomenological tree and develop their own

understandings of phenomenology. Martin Heidegger, one of Husserl's most notable students, was not convinced that there is such a thing as a 'primal realm,' and rather, thought that we are constantly in a state of interpretation; interpretation *is* part of our *lived experience*. Heidegger moved forward with the concept of hermeneutic phenomenology, which takes up interpretation as an essential ingredient of how we *are* in the world. For Heidegger, "Phenomenology…leads to a new way of seeing rather than to a set of philosophical propositions… For Heidegger this 'seeing' meant doing away with all philosophical theories, whether idealist or realist, and cultivating a 'pure naïveté'" (Moran, 2006, p. 228). The hermeneutic phenomenological project, as Heidegger shows, is a project of seeing anew. I lean on this concept as I attempt to see Whiteness, identity, and teaching in new and strange ways.

To Know More Than The Familiar

As we move about our day-to-day business, busy-ness, we use our knowledge of the familiar to conduct our affairs efficiently. We open the kitchen cabinet above the sink to grab the familiar handle of our coffee mug and take for granted what it feels like to have our morning coffee touch our lips. We live in the taken-for-granted, in the familiar. However, a hermeneutic phenomenological project must move past these familiarities in order to know better the essence of our lived experiences. White teachers try to conduct their busy-ness with efficiency as well. They have lesson plans to construct, conferences to attend, and (unfortunately or not) test score data to track. When these teachers prepare for a workday, they condition their hair and make-up their faces, listen to the morning news, head out to their cars, without thought to the familiarity of these routines. They take for granted their raced ways of being in the world.

In this phenomenological project, Heidegger and Gadamer particularly encourage me to look past the familiar routines and ways-of-being of the White teacher. Gadamer (1960/2004) explains that true *knowing* is to know *more* than what is familiar. He writes:

> But we do not understand what recognition is in its profoundest nature if we only regard it as knowing something again that we know already— i.e., what is familiar is recognized again. The joy of recognition is rather the joy of knowing *more* than is already familiar. In recognition what we know emerges, as if illuminated, from all the contingent and variable circumstances that condition it; it is grasped in its essence. (p. 118)

To know the White teacher, their processes of identification, more fully will require not just myself as the researcher, but the White teacher participants themselves, to move past their familiarities. I am optimistic about Gadamer's use of the word *joy* in this context. While I do not believe this project, which I hope is perceived as an anti-racist one, is consistently joy-filled given the insidious nature of systemic racism, I do hope there is joy in the anti-racist teaching possibilities that are uncovered, beyond the taken-for-granted.

Heidegger does not use the term 'familiar' as Gadamer does, but his concept of *altheia* informs my need to move past what I think I know about White teachers and identity. In a discussion on the idea of truth, Heidegger (1930/1993c) suggests that it is more suitable to think of truth as an unconcealment, as *altheia*. He suggests that by moving past our ordinary concept of truth we start to think beyond how a phenomenon presents itself and begin to let it disclose what is concealed within it. This type of truth-seeking is outside epistemology; it is to let things be and reveal themselves. This inquiry does not seek to develop frameworks, theories, and truth statements about White teachers and their identities. Those types of epistemologically-rooted projects are not phenomenological in that they may conceal something inherent, essential, in the phenomenon itself. What would I miss about the identity experiences of White teachers teaching in Black schools if I was searching for what we typically think of as truth statements? To

translate this into Gadamer's (1960/2004) terms, what would I miss about the experience of White teachers if I were to look only at the familiar rather than look for *more* than the familiar?

In order to see anew my body must experience movement. I cannot stay in the same figurative place if I am to gain a new perspective, a new view, of the White teacher. Something that I think is compelling about Alice and Gulliver is their constant state of movement. They move amongst different countries or different peoples and wonder about from where they came. I also believe that the White teacher experiences everything through her body; emotions are embodied, relations are embodied, and so on. To see anew, then, must necessitate movement. Casey (2009) discusses the tension between *here-there and near-far*. In this place-based tension, I also find the tension between the familiar and beyond. Casey's insistennce on 'getting back into place' illuminates something about my phenomenological project. In inquiring about the experience of White teachers and through needing to see beyond the familiar, I need to move from the 'here' that is the familiar into the 'there' that is something more. The 'there' is the place that *unconceals* the identity experiences of the White teacher in the Black school. Movement and place are key and I let this project carry me to the 'there.'

To Know the Authentic Being

For Heidegger (1927/1993a), the phenomenological method is meant to help uncover the nature of Being, of *Dasein.* Explicating the nature of Being is meant to help us see *things*, phenomena, in their essence, or to see them anew. As beings attempt to understand the meaning of Being more fully, they have two distinct paths. They can either live 'authentically' or 'inauthentically.' For Heidegger, inauthenticity is a concealment of the true nature of *Dasein*. He believes that a phenomenological method will help show the authentic meaning of Being. These concepts do not sit smoothly next to our daily usage of the terms *authentic* and *inauthentic*. Our

daily concern with these words is related to whether or not we feel like someone is telling us the truth or whether or not they are being 'fake' in their comportments and interactions. We might say that someone who wears too much make-up or speaks with a forced affect is being inauthentic. Someone who is authentic is 'better' than this; they are good and do not lie to us or hide anything. This is not Heidegger's meaning. Safranski (1998) explains, "What matters in Heidegger's authenticity is not primarily good or ethically correct action but the opening up of opportunities for great moments, the intensifications of *Dasein*" (p. 166). When we think about the White teacher's experiences with identity development in a Black school, we might have cause for concern if an authentic way of Being does not have something to do with ethics or morals.

While Heidegger's (1927/1993a) concept of the authentic Being shows me something about what I am aiming for in this phenomenological project (*Dasein's* true nature), it leaves out an essential element of any anti-racist project. It is here that Levinas' (1961/2015) insistence on the ethical lends support to my phenomenological work. Levinas notes the "'egoism' of ontology" in Heidegger's work and insists that if we wish to understand the 'I,' or Being, we must understand the *I* in relation to the *Other* (p. 46). For Levinas, an understanding of any *authentic* Being cannot be divorced from an understanding of alterity. This concept of alterity, and Levinas' connection between otherness and justice, is critical to my project. I am not aiming to understand the authentic experience of White teachers identifying their selves as an experience divorced from their interactions with the Black school community. This would be ethically impossible.

Levinas (1961/2015) explains further:

> The comprehension of Being in general cannot *dominate* the relationship with the Other. The latter relationship commands the first. I cannot disentangle myself from society with

> the Other, even when I consider the Being of the existent he is. Already the comprehension of Being is said to the existent, who again, arises behind the theme in which he is presented. This 'saying to the Other'— as interlocutor, this relation with an *existent*— precedes all ontology; it is the ultimate relation in Being. (pp. 47-48)

In working towards an anti-racist agenda, one that flips the script to make Whiteness strange, there needs to be an ethical component, a component that recognizes the priority of the relationship with the ontological Other. Howard (1999) claims, "The examination of Whiteness is an essential…part of the broader multicultural and social justice agenda" (p. 95). I think that what is missing in this claim, and in Heidegger's concept of authentic Being, is the relational and ethical component that Levinas addresses. In a country that is steeped in socio-historically dictated racial relations, an exploration of Whiteness and identity cannot exist without consideration of the others involved with the White person in her endeavors. How do these Others call upon the White teacher to think, act, and be in particular ways both in the school and outside?

Particularly in teaching, relationships are key. Through his focus on equity and liberation, Freire (1998) shows me that when we consider educative experiences where knowledge is transferred, it is impossible to think of the teacher as the subject of the exchange and the student as the object. This denies the essential relation that is a part of true learning. What will the student do with the knowledge? And what knowledge does the student bring to the situation? In what way does the student affect the teacher? Freire brings the term 'authentic' together with the realm of the ethical:

> When we live our lives with the authenticity demanded by the practice of teaching that is also learning and learning that is also teaching, we are participating in a total experience that is simultaneously directive, political, ideological, gnostic, pedagogical, aesthetic, and ethical. In this experience the beautiful, the decent, and the serious form a circle and join hands. (pp. 31-32)

While he uses the term ‘authentic’ differently than Heidegger, he shows how essential the ethical and relational components of Being are in a teaching and learning context. In this project, I am looking at White teachers with an eye on the ethical.

Through Language

> By means of poetic language, waves of newness flow over the surface of being. And language bears within itself the dialectics of open and closed. Through *meaning* it encloses, while through poetic expressions, it opens up. (Bachelard, 1958/1994, p. 222)

It is one thing to see a phenomenon ‘anew,’ and another to communicate that strangeness to an audience. Phenomenology is not just an endeavor of thoughtfulness; it is “fundamentally a writing activity” where “research and writing are aspects of one process” (van Manen, 2006, p. 7). Language and the written word are key, and the way language is used in a phenomenological study is paramount. It is why, for example, I separate pronouns from the word ‘self,’ so that one may see their own sense of being anew; I am not just myself, but I can sense my self, and the self of others. Hermeneutic phenomenology, particularly, points a finger towards the priority of language and interpretation. We are concerned not only with the role of interpretation in the lived experience of those who we engage in our study, but we are concerned with how the readers of our written work will interpret each word. It is important to remember that there is no *method* to our use of language, to our ‘opening up’ of new spaces (van Manen, 2014). Language, for me and for the philosophers I have made my companions, is space-based. As Heidegger (1947/1993c) declares, “Language is the house of being. In its home man dwells” (p. 217). Our ability to mold, like an artist molds clay, the words we use have always been a relief to me because they prevent us from being caged by names and frameworks.

I draw upon Carroll’s (1865/2004) story mostly for what it shows about my phenomenological project and the phenomenon of White teachers’ experiences with identity, but

also for his magnificent manipulations of language. I do not think Carroll obscures the nature of *things* through his writing. But by utilizing language in new ways, he causes us to question what we think we know and consider new understandings. Hermeneutic phenomenology also does not cover up the nature of *things* through language. The dwelling space of language is meant to be stretched and maneuvered through in ways that reveal something beyond the taken-for-granted. Bachelard (1958/1994) goes on to show how, despite her use of poetic language, the phenomenologist is not quite a poet. He explains that the phenomenologist "brings the image [the phenomenon] to the very limit of what [she] is able to imagine. However far from being a poet [she herself] may be, [she] tries to repeat its creation for [herself] and, if possible, continues its exaggeration" (p. 227). In this project, I endeavor to stretch language to its limit in order to represent the essence of the phenomenon under study, in order to 'repeat its creation.' It is this wild space of language, and engaging with Others through language, that shows the horizons, the possibilities, of this project. I roam purposefully, but freely, to the limits.

The Space of Language

Among the space-based tensions, the dialectic between *open* and *closed* seems to be one of the more noteworthy tensions related to language. In the excerpt quoted from Bachelard (1958/1994) above, we see that language carries both the ability to close off possibility and open it up. To move into the openness requires a perhaps less-than-ordinary approach to language. For Heidegger (1950/1993d), though, the concept of *open* is a project of unconcealment and visibility, and the concept of closed is as simple as a denial of Being. He explains, "It [language] not only puts forth in words and statements what is overtly or covertly intended to be communicated; language alone brings beings as beings into the open for the first time" (p. 198). As I interpret language in this project, the aim is to bring the Being of the White teacher and her

experiences with identity out into the open. I wonder though, once this Being is out in the open, where does it go? Do I move *forward* through language into some other way of understanding the White teacher's identity? Or do I move *around* in a circle to arrive back in the same place? Although we do move in a forward direction even when we walk in a circle, with one foot in front of the other.

If I have an eye on the ethical, as I mention above, then I might want the language of this phenomenological project to move not just out into the open, but beyond. I do not only want to reveal the White teacher's experiences with identity, but I want to show the potential anti-racist possibilities in those experiences. This seems to necessitate a moving forward. Casey (2009) shows me the necessity of a body-in-motion. He explains, "Things lying on the other side of the horizon possess only one certain property: they are in principle perceivable if only the requisite bodily motions place us in their presences" (p. 61). To search for anti-racist possibilities is to see what is on the *other side of the horizon* from our currently racist socio-political situation in the U.S.. Beyond opening up the identity work of White teachers, I have to follow through with the 'requisite bodily motions' that will take me past the horizon of anti-racist possibility.

I admit that this movement will often seem circuitous, arduous, and frustrating, though. Perhaps the best route in this project really might be a roundabout. T.S. Eliot (1943/2009) suggests, "And the end of all our exploring, Will be to arrive where we started, And know the place for the first time" (p. 24). For the White teacher, this way around hopefully would lead to a better understanding of her own racialized identity. This is certainly a difficult research route for someone who lives the phenomenon under study. In some ways, I walk around myself, as *I am* a White teacher. Heidegger's works show me that in being, not only do I exist, but also, I perceive my own existence (at once Being and interpreting Being). This is a difficult position to assume in

a phenomenological project that aims to know better its starting place. My starting place is my phenomenological question, which I turned to only through my own experiences. I am trying to know better the experience of White teachers as they engage in identity work, meaning I am trying to know better my own self in some ways. Safranski (1998), in summarizing Heidegger's ideas, explains: "We are never finished like something that exists, we cannot walk around ourselves; at each point we are open for a future. We must lead our lives" (p. 150). It seems to me that to engage in phenomenological movement is a tension-filled endeavor. I am trying to know better the place where I start, my phenomenological question. However, I have only turned to this question given my own experiences with self, and I cannot walk around myself. In some ways, I believe this project will both push me forward and pull me around back to where I began. It will push me forward, lead me, past my own experiences and familiarities. However, at the same time, that push forward will pull me back around to a place in which I know better where I started. I make these movements all through language.

Knowing the Other Through Language

Again, if I am to keep an eye on the ethical in this phenomenological project, then I must be aware of how language connects us with the Other. Heidegger is concerned with how language brings Being out into the open, but does not pick up on the ethical implications of language. The question that leads my phenomenological work does not stop at asking about the White teacher's experiences with identity. My question has to do with this experience of identity in the context of a Black school. It is the relational aspect, the interaction with the Others in a school setting, that is critical. I am concerned with how the ethical call from the Black school community weaves itself into the identity experiences of the White teacher. So, as I research this phenomenon I interpret language not only to see how it brings the White teacher's identity out

into the open, but how it shows the relation between the White teacher and the Black school community.

Gadamer (1960/2004) shows how language is what keeps individuals from being a single, "lonely point" in the world. He explains, "The individual ego is likely a lonely point in the world of appearances. But in its utterances above all in language and in all the forms in which it expresses itself, it is no longer a lonely point. It belongs to the world of the intelligible" (p. 216). In his work, Gadamer explains how language is not just a tool through which Being opens itself up. It is through our interpretation and engagement with others through language that we shape our Being, as it is a Being-in-relation.

Levinas (1961/2015) shows how it is through language that we are called upon by the Other (the Being that is not 'I'). We know that we cannot be the same as the Other— that is not the purpose of language. But, it is through our interpretation of the language of the Other that we are called upon to question ourselves and what we might be able to do for the Other. Levinas explains, "Language is not inacted [*sic*] with consciousness; it comes to me from the Other and reverberates in consciousness by putting it in question. This event is irreducible to consciousness, where everything comes about from within" (p. 204). It is through language that the Other comes into question and, in turn, we come to question our self. In my own project, this means my interpretive work involves understanding ways the 'language' of the Black school calls on the White teacher. Moran (2006) helps me to understand Levinas' insistence on the role language plays in the relation between 'I' and Other. He explains:

> Language is the means by which the other communicates him- or herself to me but by so doing his or her 'otherness' is not brought down to the sphere of the same, rather the other still transcends me. The ethical relation puts the 'I' in question, Levinas says. (p. 347)

In chapter two, I show how the White teacher might want to find ways to connect with her Black students, and in doing so, might try to find ways that they are the 'same.' Levinas calls this type of action into question. The White teacher cannot use language to put herself into 'the sphere of the same' with the Black student or colleague. All the White teacher may do as a body-in-relation is question her self through the call made upon her by the Other. Through both interpreting and using language in this project, I seek to 'unconceal' ways that White teachers question themselves through their relationships with Others.

To Prioritize the Question

In the section above I describe my phenomenological question as both my starting and my ending point. This indicates a serious prioritization of the phenomenological question; it is both the beginning and end marker. In any inquiry, the question is the initial force that sets motion to the research activities. As a beginning doctoral student, I was told repeatedly that one's research question would determine one's methodology. Certainly, a question about correlations between variables would not necessitate a phenomenological study, but a question of 'essence' would. However, hermeneutic phenomenology takes the priority of the question a step further. The question is not only what sets the research activities in motion; it is more than that. The phenomenological question is the priority because it was *lived into*, as I describe in chapter one. The question was not designed, or crafted, as part of an overall research agenda because it came before any methodological schema. In our busy lives, we so often associate the word 'priority' with lists that either order tasks to make them happen more efficiently or a ranking of things from most to least important. But the priority of the phenomenological question does not have to do with efficiency or an evaluation of importance. It is above and beyond these concerns because it was *lived into*. In this section I discuss the prioritization of the hermeneutic

phenomenological question to show how it is the guiding lighthouse for a project that seeks to sink into the dimly lit world of strangeness.

To Be Shocked Into the Question

Van Manen (2014) tells me that a "phenomenological question may arise any time we have had a certain experience that brings us to pause and reflect" (p. 27). My experience as a White teacher, an experience often fraught with doubt and wonder as shown in chapter one, certainly gave me opportunity to pause and reflect. I had not come to teaching prepared to undertake painful racial identity work. Prior to teaching, I had always proceeded with an assured sense of self. However, this was a sense of self in which I neglected to realize my Whiteness as a tangible part of my identity. Being presented with my self in a new way through my teaching situation, I had to question my being and consider my Whiteness. As Gadamer (1960/2004) explains:

> We have already seen that, logically considered, the negativity of experience implies a question. In fact we have experiences when we are shocked by things that do not accord with our expectations. Thus questioning too is more a passion than an action. A question presses itself on us; we can no longer avoid it and persist in our accustomed opinion. (p. 375)

I certainly felt shocked that in order to uphold what felt like a moral duty to my students, I had to turn inward and wander about in this new place specifically as a White woman. I did not expect to have to look inward in order to perform the role of teacher. What I was doing, in order to find my way as a teacher, was *living into* a question. The question was not named at the time, and no research agenda was designed and described. The act of teaching and the ethical call of the Other shocked me into questioning the nature of my own being.

My familiar way of being-with-my-self, my ignorance of my own Whiteness as part of my identity, allowed me to be shocked when I entered a new situation, one that did 'not accord

with my expectations.' Only years later did I begin my doctoral program and begin to name this question for the purposes of my research project. The shock of *living into* a question can create quite a large amount of darkness that we then need to crawl back out of. We live our lives so quickly, so efficiently, and in such a mode of taken-for-grantedness. We name only when it is efficient. So, to begin a research project by asking, "What was that? What caused me to pause and reflect? What caused me such shock?" is a difficult, ill-lit path on which to embark. The philosophers and phenomenologists show me how to construct my phenomenological question in a way that provides a lighthouse. By naming a phenomenological question, I am able to name what it was that shocked me about my teaching experience. I am then able to move through my own experiences, out of the familiar, and into the realm of the strange. A phenomenological question provides me with some light to begin my wandering. As I gain footing, I begin to learn to cherish my question, as I describe in chapter one. Also, with this footing gained, I can ask my question more critically.

To Assume a Critical Attitude

To ask a question is no easy task. It requires patience and it denies ignorance. The first 'critical attitude' I need to assume as I pose and pursue my phenomenological question is one of diligence, patience, and willingness to submit to the unknown. Gadamer (1960/2004) explains:

> In order to be able to ask, one must want to know, and that means knowing that one does not know. In the comic confusion between question and answer, knowledge and ignorance that Plato describes, there is a profound recognition of the priority of the question in all knowledge and discourse that really reveals something of an object. Discourse that is intended to reveal something requires that the thing be broken open by the question. (p. 371)

It is interesting that Gadamer, through his syntactical structure in this passage, seems to pair questions with knowledge and answers with ignorance. To seek knowledge, then, is to have patience with the posing of a question. In order to open up phenomena we must have the patience

and diligence to ignore a too-quick answer. To find an answer too quickly might be a bit ignorant or arrogant. I think of Carroll's (1865/2004) book again in this moment. The Queen and the Duchess, two characters who are quick with their answers and unlikely to ask questions, are depicted in the book's original illustrations as having very large heads. When we talk of people who are arrogant we describe them as being full of air, or having big heads. Carroll has taken this literally in his conception of these characters. Meanwhile Alice, who does nothing but let her questions guide her along the strangest of paths, has a very typical sized head. Patience and diligence, rather than ignorance, are the critical attitudes needed to guide phenomenological questioning.

Another critical attitude required when pursuing a phenomenological question, especially in this project, is attention to the ethical call of the Other. As I have mentioned several times in this chapter already, my question is deeply concerned with ethics and equity. The project is not meant to be one that is focused on the White teacher solely for the sake of focusing on the White teacher. The identity development of the White teacher is only of interest because of the call of the Other, the Black students and the Black school community. How can these Others be better served through the racial identity development of the White teacher? Levinas (1961/2015) explains:

> And if I set forth, as in a final and absolute vision, the separation and transcendence which are the themes of this book [*Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*], these relations, which I claim form the fabric of being itself, first come together in my discourse presently addressed to my interlocutors: inevitably across my idea of the Infinite the other faces me- hostile, friend, my master, my student. Reflection can, to be sure, become aware of this face to face, but the 'unnatural' position of reflection is not an accident in the life of consciousness. *It involves a calling into question of oneself, a critical attitude which is itself produced in the face of the other and under his authority*. … The face to face remains an ultimate situation. (p. 81; emphasis added)

As a phenomenologist asking an ethically-situated question, I have to realize that the question was posed only through a relation with the Other. In my teaching situation, the experience that allowed me to *turn* to the phenomenon under study, the Others were my Black students, their families, and the school community. It was through my daily interactions with them that I was called upon to question my moral position; it was through all of the face-to-face interactions with people who I cared for, respected, admired, and wondered about that made an ethical claim on me.

Levinas (1961/2015) juxtaposes the concepts of *totality* and *infinity*. The totality of being is when we are convinced that only our own interiority constitutes Being. The infinity of being is to know that it is only through our interactions with others that we come fully into Being. To deny the totality of Being is to assume a critical attitude, an attitude that allows me to recognize that Being is more than just the individual. Levinas describes, "The idea of infinity implies a soul capable of containing more than it can draw from itself. It designates an interior being that is capable of relation with the exterior, and does not take its own interiority for the totality of being" (p. 180). The White teacher is more than just her individual reflections-on-self. The White teacher comes into Being only through her interactions with her students, families, and the school community. Through my phenomenological question, I am critical in that I look beyond interiority and know that the individual comes into Being only through her interactions and the moral claims made upon her by the Other.

To Follow Questions Rather Than Chase Answers

In this section I liken my hermeneutic phenomenological question to a lighthouse. While I am nothing of a sailor or boat person in anyway, I understand the general purpose of the lighthouse as a navigational tool. Constructed to mark points of danger or important landmarks,

the lighthouse is not necessarily the beacon of a journey's end. My phenomenological question is also not meant to point to an immediate answer, or end. However, by letting the hermeneutic phenomenological question guide me in a series of question-posing endeavors, it keeps me from the danger of rushing into answers about my phenomenon. By letting questions shed light on my meanderings into strangeness, I avoid crashing into jagged rocks and stay on course— stay true to my phenomenological intent.

For Heidegger (1950/1993d), truth is only opened up through questioning, rather than through a direct path towards an answer. He believes that it is through questioning, particularly a questioning of the nature of Being, that we will open up the most. Moran (2006) explains:

> Heidegger's passion was for questioning, not answering. Questioning appeared to him as 'piety of thinking,' because it opened up new horizons and sanctified what appeared in them. For Heidegger it was one question in particular that has this opening-up power, the question he had asked all through his life, the question about Being. (p. 429)

This opening-up possibility of the question meant, for Heidegger, that the priority was not the answer. Rather, a long series of questions were the guiding tools to open-up any phenomenological question about Being. As Heidegger explains it, the answer is the final step, reached only after a long process of questioning. He explains: "The answer to the question, like every genuine answer, is only the final result of the last step in a long series of questions. Each answer remains in force as an answer only as long as it is rooted in questioning" (p. 195). This concept of a long series of questions with an answer that is ultimately rooted-in-questions speaks to the Rilke (1929/2002) excerpt I cite in chapter one. Rilke insists, to the recipient of his letters, that the joy of the 'journey' is in the questions that lead it. Questions, and the strange path they carve, are something to cherish. We only live *into* the answers after living *through* the questions.

To Suspend: The Epoché

As I pursue my phenomenological question, I need to remember to suspend my own understandings of the phenomenon. My own experiences, scholarly frameworks, and sociological theories could be considered burdensome. Alice leaves behind the weight of her world, as does Gulliver, when they dip into the shadows of strange places. In *doing* phenomenology we name the practice of 'leaving behind' these preunderstandings, the *epoché*. Van Manen (2014) explains that the method of the epoché is "the moment of withdrawal from the natural attitude and from the everyday world" (pp. 91-92). This suspension of the 'natural attitude' is an endeavor that involves moving away from what one has come to know or take for granted. In this project, there are a number of 'natural attitudes' I must suspend. Van Manen (2014) further explicates the method of the epoché: "One needs to be aware of one's own constant inclination to be led by preunderstandings, frameworks, and theories regarding the (psychological, political, and ideological) motivation and the nature of the question" (p. 224). In this inquiry, I must suspend what I think I have come to know about Whiteness, about identity development, and about Black schools. I similarly have to suspend what the literature has 'told' me is true about White identity development and Black-and-White relations in this country. I must be sensitive to the experience of White identity development as it is *lived through*, not as I have reflected upon it and not as frameworks depict it.

Learning to Forget

In a project that aims to 'see anew,' learning to forget is a symbiotic part of that aim. Heidegger (1947/1993c) uses the phrase 'existing in the nameless' to describe a learning-to-forget type of attitude. He explains:

> But if man is to find his way once again into the nearness of Being he must first learn to exist in the nameless. In the same way he must recognize the seductions of the public

> realm as well as the impotence of the private. Before he speaks man must first let himself be claimed again by Being, taking the risk that under this claim he will seldom have much to say. (p. 223)

I am reminded of the poem excerpt I cite at the beginning of this chapter as I engage with Heidegger's idea of 'existing in the nameless.' Alice Notley (1998) suggests that we lose ourselves in naming. Heidegger similarly portends that which names— frameworks, concepts, theories— masks Being and does not let it *be* what it *is*. What is the White teacher when she is not being named by her pedagogical strategies? What is the White teacher when identity frameworks do not claim her? How might she exist 'in the nameless'? What might arise when we let the White teacher's being-in-process speak for itself and resist our own urge to *say something*, to name? Learning to forget what one thinks one knows might help open up these questions and let Being speak for itself.

What exactly will I, as the White teacher/researcher, need to forget in order to engage with my phenomenon? Gadamer (1960/2004) makes the following suggestion:

> We learn a techne and can also forget it. But we do not learn moral knowledge, nor can we forget it. We do not stand over against it, as if it were something that we can acquire or not, as we can choose to acquire an objective skill, a techne. Rather, we are always already in the situation of having to act… and hence we must already possess and be able to apply moral knowledge. (p. 327)

Gadamer, similarly to Heidegger, suggests that we should, and do, forget the concepts and frameworks that so often reign over our taken-for-granted ways of being. However, he begins to draw in a bit of the ethical nature of Being that we see dominating Levinas' work (1961/2015), a nature that is critical to my own phenomenological project. Gadamer suggests that we might learn, for example, certain pedagogical frameworks as teachers. However, he also suggests that what allows us to act, to *be*, is not these frameworks, but a 'moral knowledge.' In the situation of the White teacher in the Black school, what might this moral knowledge be? Perhaps it is the

ethical call of the Other, as Levinas would suggest. In the situation of the White teacher, the 'Other' is the Black child, his or her family, and the school community.

While I have been taught, as a preservice teacher, and have taught, as a teacher educator, many pedagogical frameworks and theories related to many subject areas and concepts, in this project I must forget them. Just as Alice's cat Dinah and Gulliver's shipmates do not accompany them into the strangeness of their wanderings, I cannot let my understanding of teaching frameworks accompany me on my own wanderings. I put them down and let my moral knowledge guide me in my actions and interactions with the participants of this study.

Living in In-Between Places

Where am I when I am 'existing in the nameless'? I am some place in-between perhaps, but in-between what? I started in a place where taken-for-granted frameworks, concepts, and experiences guided my understanding of my phenomenon. I am working through strangeness to arrive at a place where I can see my phenomenon 'anew'. Much of the phenomenological project exists in this in-between place. Casey (2009) philosophizes about Being and place. He discusses how we might *be* when we are in-between places:

> Between finding our way and having a residence- between orientation and inhabitation- there is a whole domain of encroaching implacement. In this domain we are neither disoriented nor settled. We wander, but we wander in the vicinity of built places we know or are coming to know. Not discovery but better acquaintance is our aim. (p. 121)

I have used the word 'wander' to describe my phenomenological way-of-being as a researcher. The wandering I do is a project of first suspending my taken-for-granted ways of knowing and then looking to present my phenomenon in a new, thoughtful, and tactful way. Throughout my wandering I am, as Casey shows, in a place that is between 'orientation' and 'inhabitation.' The place of inhabitation is not a new 'discovery' regarding White teachers, identity, and Black

schools. The place I reach is, rather, one where I am better acquainted with what it *is* to experience identity as a White teacher in Black schools.

Since I investigate a phenomenon I have lived through, it is tempting to come back to the 'orientation' with which I am already familiar. We are always so tempted by our 'home' places— these ways of knowing that are easiest and most comforting for us. However, through the diligent work of suspending my taken-for-granted ways of knowing, I am set up to know my 'home' place as a White teacher more thoroughly when I have reached the final steps of my journeys through strangeness. Casey (2009) uses the example of Odysseus to show the unique experience of coming back to the home place after pursuits through many strange, in-between places. He explains that, beyond great works of fiction, this homecoming experience is much the same as when he himself returns to his own hometown, "which is at once recognizably the same and yet disarmingly different each time [he] comes back" (p. 274). Following Heidegger's (1950/1993d) advice to let the questions lead the way, I suspend my own knowledge of what I think it means to experience identity as a White teacher in a Black school and prioritize the questions. Through this endeavor, I engage in interpretive work that uses words in a way that opens up, rather than limits, the anti-racist possibilities of White teacher identity development in Black schools.

To *Do* Phenomenology

Earlier in this chapter I discuss the use of language in a phenomenological project and insist that there is no 'method' for phenomenological writing. Indeed, there really is no general set of directions to follow as a phenomenological researcher. As van Manen (2006) explains, "There is not really a 'method' understood as a set of investigative procedures that one can master relatively quickly. Indeed it has been said that *the method of phenomenology and*

hermeneutics is that there is no method!" (pp. 29-30). However, van Manen does believe that there are guidelines, recommendations, and insights we can take from the "history of lives of thinkers and authors" (p. 30). Van Manen introduces these guidelines as six methodological themes, or research activities. I mention these six research activities at the end of chapter one and expand on their meaning here. Before naming and venturing into a discussion of the research activities I take up in this project, I clarify the general meaning of 'hermeneutic phenomenology' for the sake of plain language.

In this chapter, I discuss the project of seeing anew through language, the priority of the question, and the suspension of the taken-for-granted throughout this chapter. Through this discussion, I use the word 'interpretive' or 'interpretation' frequently. These concepts and these words show something about hermeneutic phenomenology. However, for purposes of clarity, van Manen (2006) uses plain language to 'define' this research tradition:

> Phenomenology describes how one orients to lived experience, hermeneutics describes how one interprets the 'texts' of life, and semiotics is used here to develop a practical writing or linguistic approach to the method of phenomenology and hermeneutics. (p. 4)

To reiterate and summarize, hermeneutic phenomenology is an endeavor in which the researcher attempts to 'orient to lived experience' by interpreting 'texts of life.' Through this research practice, one is in the position of always questioning "the way we experience the world" and wanting "to know the world in which we live as human beings" (van Manen, 2006, p. 5). The research activities I describe below help guide my hermeneutic phenomenological work.

Turning to the Phenomenon

In chapter one, I focus on my own experiences as a White teacher in order to open up questions related to teaching and identity. I proceed in this fashion because, as van Manen (2006) tells me, "Phenomenological research does not start or proceed in a disembodied fashion. It is

always a project of someone: a real person, who, in the context of particular, individual, social, and historical life circumstances, sets out to make sense of a certain aspect of human existence" (p. 31). A recollection of my own experiences, while it certainly has the potential to drown me in the taken-for-granted, serves the purpose of embodying my research. By turning to the phenomenon through my own recollections I show that, despite the rigor with which I pursue my study, I can only provide one interpretation of a phenomenon and this cannot "exhaust the possibility of yet another complementary, or even potentially *rich* or *deeper* description" (p. 31). Through 'turning to the phenomenon' under study, I attempt to both bring the phenomenon out into the open and to show my deep interest in this study.

When one orients oneself to a phenomenon, this "always implies a particular interest, station or vantage point in life" (van Manen, 2006, p. 40). What makes one a teacher, a pedagogue, gives one a 'vantage point' with which to view the enterprise. This vantage point positions one to ask particular questions about the 'lifeworld' of the teacher, specifically in my case, the White teacher. While I show my deep interest in the phenomenon through an opening up of my own experiences, I must be clear that this is not a simple naming of experience or memory.

In chapter one, I work to do more than just describe experiences I had as if I were logging day-to-day activities. Instead, I attempt to "recall the experience in such a way that the essential aspects, the meaning structures of this experience as lived through, are brought back, as it were, and in such a way that we recognize this description as a *possible experience*, which means *as a possible interpretation* of that experience" (van Manen, 2006, p. 41). As I bring forward the essence of what it means to *be* a White teacher of Black students, I am not trying to organize, simplify, or, as van Manen (2006) phrases it, 'dispel mystery.' Instead, the object of this

opening-up/turning-to endeavor is "to bring the mystery [of the phenomenon] more fully into our presence" (p. 50). Throughout chapter one and two, I position myself alongside Alice and Gulliver to show that I am particularly open to wandering within the 'strangeness.' My active position as 'the wanderer' demonstrates my deep interest in the phenomenon, and my agreement to pursue the 'strange' shows my determination to 'bring the mystery' more fully into presence.

Investigating Lived Experience

The second research activity van Manen (2006) describes is "investigating experience as we live it rather than as we conceptualize it" (p. 30). Throughout chapter one and chapter two I open up my phenomenon through personal experience, etymological explorations, experiential descriptions from White teachers' autobiographical works, experiential descriptions from colleagues, idiomatic investigations, and so on. These materials serve as what we typically, in other venues, might call 'data.' They provide glimpses into what it is like to *live as* a White teacher in Black schools. I continue to use materials similar to these and incorporate the personal life stories of my participants throughout the remainder of my phenomenological project. In doing this, I attempt to remain focused on what van Manen (2006) calls the 'lifeworld.'

The 'lifeworld' is simply "the world of lived experience" and is "both the source and the object of phenomenological research" (van Manen, 2006, p. 32). When researching the lifeworld of White teachers, I am not sifting through data by coding, naming, and theorizing. Rather, I am immersing myself in the experiential world of the White teacher. Van Manen (2006) describes this as more of a 'finding':

> To make a study of the lived experience of parenting or teaching, one needs to orient oneself in a strong way to the question of the meaning of parenting or teaching. Nothing about the notion of pedagogy (parenting or teaching) should be considered 'given' or 'granted'; only that the meaning of pedagogy needs to be *found* in the experience of pedagogy, because the lived experience of pedagogy is all that remains if presuppositions are suspended. (p. 53)

As I discuss previously, I work to suspend what is taken-for-granted in the world of teaching, and focus on what the experience of White teachers *is*. As I gathered 'personal life stories' and experiential descriptions (van Manen, 2006) from my White teacher participants, I continued to interpret the text of the lived world to render what it might possibly mean to experience identity as a White teacher in a Black school.

Reflecting on Essential Themes

In order to bring meaning to the lifeworld, the lived experience, the phenomenologist attempts to reflect on what is essential, or what is the essence of, the phenomenon. As van Manen (2006) puts it plainly, "The purpose of phenomenological reflection is to try to grasp the essential meaning of something" (p. 77). This process involves thematizing. However, this thematizing is unlike what a social scientist would think of because it does not involve mining data for codes. For the human science researcher, the phenomenologist, themes simply attempt to shape the "structures of experience" (van Manen, 2006, p. 79). The phenomenologist is not able to enter qualitative data into a program and have the program call up counts, codes, and themes. The hermeneutic phenomenological 'method' of thematizing, rather, "is not a rule-bound process but a free act of 'seeing' meaning" (van Manen, 2006, p. 79). The experiential materials I discuss in the section above act as the text to interpret. Through these interpretations, themes that call up not facts, but essences, are grasped and rendered for a reader. It is important to remember that themes cannot do justice to the wholeness of a phenomenon as it is lived through. They can only begin to hint at the essence of an experience so that it is more meaningfully and tactfully understood.

It is particularly challenging to thematize around a phenomenon related to teaching. Van Manen (2006) discusses the unique situation of interpreting the text of a teacher's lived

experience: “I, as everybody else, have a notion of what a teacher is. But what is much more difficult is to come to a reflective determination and explication of what a teacher *is* [emphasis added]” (p. 77). My participants and I have many notions regarding what a teacher is and these notions have the potential to stand in the way of unconcealing *who* a teacher *is* as they experience identity in Black schools. I have notions of what teachers should be, based on instructors I have had, scholarship I have read, and preservice teachers I have taught. But this is not the work of phenomenological thematizing. The difficult step is to move past these notions. Levinas (1961/2015) reminds me to acknowledge the Other of a teaching situation, to recall that it is through interactions with the Other that meaning is given to experience. He explains, “A meaningful world is a world in which there is the Other through whom the world of my enjoyment becomes a theme having a signification” (p. 209). As the researcher, I must “keep the question (of the meaning of the phenomenon) open” and keep both myself and “the interviewee oriented to the substance of the thing being questioned” (van Manen, 2006, p. 98). Along with my participants, I must continue to ask whether the themes I see are really an essential part of what the experience of identity and teaching are really like for the White teacher in the Black school and move past taken-for-granted notions.

Van Manen (2006) provides some practical advice for phenomenologists as they attempt to uncover themes within the text of lived experience. He suggests three approaches for uncovering or isolating thematic aspects of the text: “the wholistic or sententious approach,” “the selective or highlighting approach,” and “the detailed or line-by-line approach” (pp. 92-93). These approaches act as lenses through which we might view the text. Van Manen also suggests that the phenomenologist work with what he calls the four ‘existentials’ as they begin to thematize. These include lived space, lived body, lived time, and lived human relation. These

existentials can be considered types of 'fundamental lifeworld themes.' In chapter two I work through these existentials to begin highlighting some potential elements of the experience of White teachers. Additionally, Van Manen reminds us of what phenomenological themes should be: "Theme is the experience of focus, of meaning, of point," "Theme formulation is at best a simplification;" "themes are not objects one encounters at certain points or moments in a text;" and "theme is the form of capturing the phenomenon one tries to understand" (p. 87). These practical pieces of advice guide my interpretive, thematic work.

For the sake of multiple modes of explication, I must continue to be clear that themes are not meant to exhaust the fullness of experience, nor are they meant to be universally applicable. They are simply modes of pulling forward what is essential about the phenomenon. Van Manen (2006) gracefully describes the nature of phenomenological themes:

> Metaphorically speaking they are more like knots in the webs of our experiences, around which certain lived experiences are spun and thus lived through as meaningful wholes. Themes are the stars that make up the universes of meaning we live through. By the light of these themes we can navigate and explore such universes. Themes have phenomenological power when they allow us to proceed with phenomenological descriptions. (p. 90)

Earlier in this chapter, I liken my phenomenological question to a lighthouse to show its strong guidance in my journeys into strangeness. My themes also serve as an additional guiding tool. Like the lighthouse, the star-like power of themes will shed a glow on the dimly lit world of the strange, the not-taken-for-granted.

Phenomenological Writing and Rewriting

In discussing concepts brought forward by philosophers, I highlight the essential significance of language in the phenomenological project. Van Manen (2006) explains, "For, indeed, to *do* research in a phenomenological sense is already and immediately and always a *bringing to speech* of something. And this thoughtfully bringing to speech is most commonly a

writing activity" (p. 32). In addition to the way I tend to orient to the world, the priority of language and writing is another 'element' that initially drew me into hermeneutic phenomenological research. Beyond the cathartic experience writing can bring, I find I make the most meaning and sense *through* writing. So many times, I have written letters that were never sent, simply so I could make better sense of my being-in-relation. It is through writing that the phenomenologist makes sense of themes. If a theme is not able to generate a phenomenological description, then the phenomenologist can see, through writing, that this theme was never an essential part of the phenomenon. The nature of the phenomenological writing projects demands that the phenomenologist, the human science researcher, develop and maintain "an almost unreasonable faith in the power of language to make intelligible and understandable what always seems to lie beyond language" (van Manen, 2014, p. 242). This is certainly an understandable demand of the phenomenological researcher when to *do* phenomenology *is* to write and to recognize the ability of language to *show* lived experience.

There are, however, many tensions present in phenomenological writing (van Manen, 2006). Through writing, we both distance ourselves from and bring closer through discovery the nature of lived experience. The written word, concrete on the page, decontextualizes thought from practice but then brings our thoughts back to praxis. Abstract shapes that we have come to recognize as letters disconnect our experiences from the world, but written words also "concretize the experience of the world more pithily it seems, more to the shaking core… than the world as experienced" (p. 129). Additionally, writing objectifies thought through print, but also subjectifies our understanding of a phenomenon in a way that truly engages us. The phenomenologist must be aware of these tensions and use this awareness not just to write, but to re-write (re-think, re-flect). I do not accomplish the writing of a phenomenological text through a

simple session of typing or note taking. In any phenomenological project, there is always much going back-and-forth, from writing, to thinking, to rewriting, to rethinking in order to achieve a successful text. I had always told colleagues, when we would gather monthly to discuss our phenomenological lives, that I had often spent my long drives from Baltimore, where I live, to College Park 'writing' and re-thinking. It is a thoughtful, rigorous, and, perhaps, artful endeavor to engage in phenomenological writing.

The vocative methods. To further guide the phenomenologist, van Manen (2014) describes what he calls 'vocative methods.' He explains:

> The vocative dimension of the phenomenological method becomes especially active in the actual process of phenomenological writing. In the reflective process of writing, the research not only engages in analysis but also aims also [*sic*] to express the noncognitive, ineffable, and pathic aspects of meaning that belong to the phenomenon. (p. 240)

These vocative dimensions are methods of tone. They are meant to 'reach out' from the page and make a call upon the reader. Van Manen (2014) explains that the 'voking features' of a phenomenological text are meant to encourage the phenomenologist to move beyond what we might consider 'ordinary narrative prose' and engage in the following methods: "lived-throughness, nearness, intensification, appeal, and answerability" (p. 241). The need to use language in this way demands a great deal of the phenomenologist-as-writer. She needs to know how to dwell in words carefully, purposefully, and, to some degree, poetically.

Bachelard (1958/1994) has much to say about the phenomenologist and what she must learn from the poet. While the phenomenologist is not the poet, nor the philosopher, she can learn from the poeticizing practices of the poet. Bachelard himself poeticizes our understanding of words, as he imagines:

> Words— I often imagine this— are little houses, each with its cellar and garret. Common sense lives on the ground floor, always ready to engage in 'foreign commerce,' on the same level as others, as the passers-by, who are never dreamers. To go upstairs in the

> word house, is to withdraw, step by step; while to go down to the cellar is to dream, it is losing oneself in the distant corridors of an obscure etymology, looking for treasures that cannot be found in words. To mount and descend in the words themselves— this is a poet's life. To mount too high or descend too low, is allowed in the case of poets, who bring earth and sky together. Must the philosopher alone be condemned by his peers always to live on the ground floor? (p. 147)

The phenomenologist, who is neither poet nor philosopher, is not stuck on the ground floor of words but maybe does roam as far as the poet. Rather, she occupies the space in between. Van Manen's (2014) description of the vocative methods provides the phenomenologist with some guidance as she seeks to move around a bit in the poetic space of words. I describe the five vocative methods below.

The revocative method: Lived-throughness. As I describe above, one of the six phenomenological research activities is to investigate experience-as-lived. This first of the five vocative methods helps the phenomenologist represent, in words, the lifeworld. Van Manen (2014) explains, "The revocative method aims to bring experience vividly into presence (through the power of experiential anecdote, expressive narrative, or qualitative imagery)— so that the reader can recognize unreflectively…these experiential possibilities of human life" (p. 241). This vocative method reminds phenomenological writers to represent their project in ways that allow the reader also, not just the researcher, to grasp the meaning of lived experience.

The evocative method: Nearness. Perhaps through anecdote, or other phenomenological writing 'approaches,' the phenomenologist wants to represent the phenomenon in a way that not only helps the reader grasp the lived-throughness, but also in a way that helps the reader feel 'close to' the phenomenon. Van Manen (2014) suggests that the phenomenologist write in a way that addresses the readers and brings them to 'attentive recognition.' The phenomenologist does not want the reader to feel disconnected, but rather touched by the phenomenon under study.

The invocative method: Intensifications. In describing the invocative method, van Manen (2014) takes a moment to discuss the derivation and meaning of the term 'invoke.' He explains, "The term 'invoke' derives from invocare: to summon, to call upon, to appeal, to implore, to conjure, to bring about, to call forth by incantation" (p. 260). Phenomenological writing should do more than explain or describe. It should invoke intuition, feeling, emotion, or a sense of embodiment in the reader.

The convocative method: Pathic. The convocative method "aims for the text to possess the (em)pathic power to appeal— so that its life meaning speaks to, and makes a demand on, the reader" (van Manen, 2014, p. 267). This element of the phenomenological text calls upon the readers' sensitivities, sympathies, empathies, and 'pathic understandings.' In educational research, we often see texts that successfully communicate concepts, transfer informational knowledge, and describe frameworks. However, more is demanded of the phenomenological text. A phenomenology of practice does have the potential, unlike what we might consider more 'ordinary prose,' to create texts that "speak to us and make a demand on us" (van Manen, 2014, p. 269). A successful phenomenological text will do more than communicate information; it will make an appeal to the reader.

The provocative method: Epiphany. This method, in some ways, is the phenomenologist's 'call to action.' A strong phenomenological text has the ability to provoke action. Van Manen (2014) explains, "The provocative method articulates the kind of ethical predicaments that are suggested in the phenomenon that is being studied, and what are the active normative responses (advice, policies, tactful practices, and so on)" (p. 281). However, it is important to remember that phenomenology differs greatly in terms of what we often call 'generalizability.' Phenomenology is a 'theory of the unique' and, although a strong text

provokes action, the reader should be warned that the "insights yielded by phenomenology may not be applicable in concrete individual situations" because "people differ in the way they experience things" (van Manen, 2014, p. 281). However, a strong text should still provoke thinking that leads, generally, to more tactful understandings and actions in pedagogical situations.

Maintaining a Pedagogical Relation

Van Manen (2006) suggests that we can evaluate a phenomenological text by questioning whether it is oriented, strong, rich, and deep. These four categories, particularly the first two, indicate the need for a phenomenologist, and her written product, to maintain a 'strong orientation' to the phenomenon under study. It is this fifth research activity that requires me to 'wear two hats,' as the idiom would have it, and be the teacher-researcher. I must remain oriented to the 'world of pedagogy.' Van Manen explains, "To be oriented as researchers or theorists means that we do not separate theory from life, the public from the private. We are not simply being pedagogues here and researchers there— we are researchers oriented to the world in a pedagogic way" (p. 151). There is certainly constant conversation in the research world about 'neutrality,' 'objectivity,' 'researcher bias,' and 'validity.' However, these words would have no place in a conversation about or within a phenomenological project. The phenomenologist "cannot afford to adopt an attitude of so-called scientific disinterestedness" and should instead be "animated by the object [of study] in a full and human sense" (van Manen, 2006, p. 33). This is certainly quite different from many other educational research protocols.

Perhaps we might often encounter teachers who have an image of the disinterested, disassociated, 'foreign' university researcher. It might be that the "tendency for abstraction" we find in many research studies is "the reason for the disdain that practitioners hold for university-

based theorists who have lost touch with 'the real world of children'" (pp. 138-139). Phenomenology, however, requires that the researcher maintain a strong orientation to the world of pedagogy, 'the real world of children,' through rich, deep, oriented texts. In my own phenomenological project, I have continuously evaluated my text by asking myself: Would a White teacher, a colleague of a White teacher, or a member of a Black school community feel that my phenomenological text resonated with them? Would any of these readers be brought closer to what it *is* truly to experience identity as a White teacher? Does this text, in short, stay related-in-nature to the 'real world' of teaching?

Balancing Parts and the Whole

As with any research project, or really any task in life, it is important to have an idea of how each particular activity fits into the 'big picture.' In a hermeneutic phenomenological project, one that is especially writing-intensive, it is easy to get lost in 'parts' and lose track of the 'whole.' Van Manen (2006) explains, "It is easy to get so buried in writing that one no longer knows where to go, what to do next, and how to get out of the hole that one has dug" (p. 33). He provides several recommendations that will prevent a phenomenological researcher from getting lost in the *part*iculars. To begin, it is important for the phenomenologist-as-writer, to step back and examine the text as a whole. While the phenomenologist may not enter a writing text with a set outline ordered in a specific way, it is necessary to ensure that the text has an 'organic wholeness' that is consistent with the phenomenon under study. While there is not one particular 'method' for hermeneutic phenomenological research, as I mention previously, some aspects of the research plan can and should be specified. For example, the plan for recruiting and conversing with participants is a concrete part of this research plan and is described below.

Van Manen (2006) also gives some suggestions for how to balance parts with the whole as the phenomenologist approaches the activities of reflecting on and writing about essential themes. He lists the following approaches to writing: thematically, "using emerging themes as generative guides for writing the research study" (p. 168); analytically, starting with reconstructed life stories or singular descriptions; exemplificatively, starting by "rendering visible the essential nature of the phenomenon and then filling out the initial description by systematically varying the examples" (p. 171); exegetically by "engaging one's writing in a dialogical or exegetical fashion with the thinking of some other phenomenological author(s)" (p. 171); existentially, by weaving "one's phenomenological description against the existentials of temporality (lived time), spatiality (lived space), corporeality (lived body), sociality (lived relation to others)" (p. 172). In chapters one and two, I tentatively begin to reflect on potential themes connected to my phenomenon prior to engaging in my study. I do so by taking up, already, several of van Manen's (2006) recommendations. In chapter two, for example, I 'weave' my phenomenological description of White teachers' experiences with identity against the existentials of lived space, lived body, and lived relation to others. I also engage with the thinking of other phenomenological authors in chapter two. I continue to utilize van Manen's suggestions throughout the next two chapters.

As I work to balance the parts and the whole of the writing project, I also have to remember to balance my writing project with the overall intentions of phenomenological research. Van Manen (2006) reminds me:

> Hermeneutic phenomenological human science in education is…not simply an 'approach' (alongside other approaches) to the study of pedagogy. That is, phenomenology doe not simply yield 'alternative' explanations or descriptions of educational phenomena. Rather, human science bids to recover reflectively the grounds which, in a deep sense, provide for the possibility of our pedagogic concerns with children. (p. 173)

Ultimately, I balance my research task with what drew me, in a 'deep sense,' to an engagement with this project. I have remembered to maintain a 'strong relation' to the pedagogic phenomenon that brought me to this research-writerly space. As I engaged in this project, I have recalled the faces of my students and the ethical call they made upon me through this face-to-face. I have evoked several images, not to romanticize but to maintain a strong orientation, that help me balance my writing project with the tactful aims of phenomenological work: their sometimes funny though always intense intellectual curiosities; their ability to see, at the same time, through and beyond racial distinctions; and the wonderful engagement I felt with them as they, immersed in work and play, would call for me simply with, "Ms. Haddaway?". As they called for me, they called upon me to examine my own identity as a White teacher in a Black school.

A Body-in-Relation with Others

As I describe in a previous section, I began opening up my phenomenon through my personal experiences as a White teacher, etymological exploration, experiential descriptions from just one other White teacher colleague, autobiographical works, idiomatic investigations, and engagement with phenomenologists and philosophers. However, in order to fully open up the lived experience of White teachers in Black schools, I engage in conversation with other White teachers. As van Manen (2006) explains, "The point of phenomenological research is to 'borrow' other people's experiences and their reflections on their experiences in order to better be able to come to an understanding of the deeper meaning or significance of an aspect of human experience" (p. 62). I step outside of what is immediately offered to me through my own experience and my own wonderings. Through doing so, I am a body-in-relation with other White teachers. It is through the experiential descriptions of participants that I thematize and bring the

meaning of their lived experience to a writerly space in vocative ways in the upcoming chapters.

The Plan for Engagement with Other White Teachers

As I discuss above, van Manen (2006) does suggest that certain elements of the phenomenological research project need to be carefully planned. Part of this careful planning included making logistical arrangements so that conversations with White teachers could take place. As a former teacher in a predominantly Black, urban school district, I have made contacts that helped guide me in approaching potential participants.

Nancy, a former colleague and friend of mine who serves as a guidance counselor in a large, urban school district and acts as a teacher educator and professional development coordinator for both preservice and in-service teachers, agreed to send out a brief recruitment announcement (Appendix A) on my behalf. The recruitment announcement was sent to practicing teachers Nancy encountered in her school district or teacher education experiences. The recruitment announcement describes inclusion and exclusion criteria for participation. The only parameters for participation were that the participant identifies as White and that his or her past or present school enrolls a majority of Black students. The participants' gender, socio-economic status, religion, teacher preparation pathway, years of experience, and grade level taught were not part of the inclusion or exclusion criteria. By omitting these qualities as inclusion or exclusion criteria, I attempted, the best I could, to seek a diversity amongst my participants, aside from race.

After receiving the recruitment announcement, potential participants chose whether or not to be in direct contact with me through their communication with Nancy by letting her know she could share their email address. Then, Nancy shared any willing teachers' email addresses with me. Using provided/preferred email addresses, I sent a copy of the Informed Consent Form

(Appendix B) for the potential participants to look over. They made a decision regarding their participation in the privacy of their own homes. Five total teachers indicated willingness to participate. Of these five teachers, all five chose to participate after receiving the Informed Consent Form. All five participants of this study submitted their signed copy of the Informed Consent Form during our first meeting. This process produced a group of teachers who were diverse in terms of their experiences and backgrounds. However, the teachers were not diverse with regard to gender, as all five teachers identify as women.

I had a total of two conversations, lasting around one hour, with each participant. During the first conversation, participants chose pseudonyms. Each conversation was audio taped. The audio taped conversations were recorded, saved, and stored on a password-protected computer. I then transcribed each conversation and stored the transcriptions on a password-protected computer. The typed transcriptions, totaling 110 pages, were also stored on a password-protected computer. These measures helped ensure the confidentiality of participants.

My aim in each conversation was to guide the participants in opening up their experiences as White teachers. In the first conversation, I also gathered basic narrative descriptions from each teacher so that I could orient the reader to each participant's place in the world. In order to render these narratives, I asked the questions regarding the following: how long the teachers had been working in their current school district; what grade levels they had taught; what subjects they had taught; how many schools they had taught in; where else they had taught besides their current school district; what other positions they had beyond that of a teacher; and their preparation path towards becoming a teacher. After gathering a basic narrative from each teacher, the first conversations focused on the participants' lifeworld. As van Manen (2014) reminds us:

> It is important to realize that data gathering methods borrowed from the social sciences- like the interview, observation, participation- for the purpose of phenomenological inquiry differ critically from those methods as practiced in social science disciplines…. The difference is that the phenomenological interview and related methods primarily aim to gather prereflective experiential accounts. (p. 311)

In order to gather these prereflective experiential accounts, the participants were asked questions and engaged in conversation that helped them render experiences related to the following: significant experiences they had as teachers that might have changed their perspectives or practices; significant events that caused them to be particularly mindful of their Whiteness; significant childhood or early adolescent experiences they had related to their racial identity; and significant moments they had in their personal lives as adults related to both their racial and teaching identities. Some of the questions asked to bring forward these experiences were phenomenological adaptations of interview questions that have been used in other qualitative studies with White participants (Lensmire, 2010; Thandeka, 2001). All questions were aimed at drawing out the complexities of White racial identity and White racial identity development. Participants were not asked for their "opinions, beliefs, or perceptions" so that the focus was on "capturing experiences as they are lived through" (van Manen, 2014, p. 298).

In preparation for second conversations, the first conversations served as departure points for emerging questions. I remained open to the experiences brought forward by each participant in the first conversation. I used the transcription of the first conversation to identify areas for further elaboration and discussion. It may be worthwhile to note that for three of the five participants, the second conversations were longer. Several participants made comments indicating that the space between the two conversations allowed them to relive many moments that were significant to their identity development as teachers and caused them to either want to recall those moments again or bring forward additional, related experiences. Out of the two

participants whose second conversations were shorter, one had to end the conversation due to a scheduling conflict.

Additionally, I asked each participant if they were willing or able to write an experiential anecdote regarding their practice as a teacher. Van Manen (2014) explains that anecdotes are "probably the most common device by which people talk about events" (p. 250). I guided participants in constructing these anecdotes by sharing van Manen's (2006) suggestions with them. He advises that as you produce an experiential anecdote, or lived-experience description, that you engage in the following practices: 1) "describe the experience as you live(d) through it," 2) "Describe the experience from the inside, as it were; almost like a state of mind," 3) "Focus on a particular example or incident of the object of experience" 4) "Try to focus on an example of the experience which stands out for its vividness," 5) "Attend to how the body feels, how things smell(ed), how they sound(ed), etc.," and 6) "Avoid trying to beautify your account with fancy phrases or flowery terminology" (pp. 64-65). Two out of five participants were willing and able to provide typed, written anecdotes relaying an experience they could recall as a White teacher. The anecdotes were sent via email and stored on a password-protected computer.

These conversations and experiential anecdotes served as lived experience materials around which I reflected on essential themes related to my phenomenon. As I described previously, van Manen (2006) offers three different approaches to thematizing. There is the "wholistic or sententious approach," "selective or highlighting approach," and "detailed or line-by-line approach" (pp. 92-93). As I remained open to the nature of the lived experience texts, I found it most productive to engage in the wholistic approach first. I attended to each text (each typed transcription and anecdote) as a whole. As I considered the whole of each text, I was able to develop tentative thematic renderings. I was then able to reread each text in order to determine

if there were phrases that "capture[d] the fundamental meaning or main significance of the text as a whole" (p. 93). I also engaged in the selective approach as I reread each text several more times. After engaging with them wholistically, I printed hard copies of each text (which were stored in a locked file cabinet) and read each text again and again. I was able to locate statements or phrases that seemed particularly revealing regarding the phenomenon. I would then highlight those statements and phrases. Both of these approaches helped me arrive at essential themes relevant to the phenomenon. The thematizing process took place both during and following the conclusion of conversations.

Phenomenology, hermeneutics, and the practice of writing and rewriting come together through the act of thematizing. Utilizing the textual accounts of my participants' lived experiences, I engage in interpretative work through writing. The interpretations I render in chapter four are meant to bring the reader back to life as it is lived, rather than abstracting the phenomenon under study in a reflective manner. Van Manen (2006) clarifies:

> Language that authentically speaks the world rather than abstractly speaking of it is a language that reverberates the world, as Merleau-Ponty says, a language that sings the world. We must engage in language in a primal incantation or poeticizing which hearkens back to the silence from which the words emanate. What we must do is discover what lies at the ontological core of being. So that *in* the words, or perhaps better, *in spite of* the words, we find 'memories' that paradoxically we never thought or felt before. (p. 13)

In this way, the analytic, or interpretive, work that is part of the hermeneutic phenomenological methodology is unlike that of the analytic work in other qualitative research traditions. The reader of a phenomenological text will not follow a linear path linking relevant data points to a key finding, as this would be the type of abstraction van Manen says we should avoid in phenomenological work. The phenomenologist, Gadamer (1960/2004) explains, must be "prepared for [a text] to tell him something" and must be "sensitive to the text's alterity" (p.

282). Ultimately, this sensitivity to the text will help bring the reader closer to the life world of the participants and will speak to the phenomenon under study as it is lived.

White Teacher Participants

In this section, I describe the five participants who provided the lived experience texts for this research. As mentioned above, each participant chose a preferred pseudonym and shared the following narrative information during our first conversation (with any necessary follow-up in the second conversation). I relay this narrative information in order to help orient readers and give them some place, time, and relational markers through which they can begin to name each participant, at least superficially. While these women came to our conversations with different personal experiences, it is relevant to note that they all benefit from racist policies and power structures, since they are all White. Their experiences as teachers also differed, but they all had similar access in terms of witnessing the effects of racist policies that have, for example, caused de facto segregation (Bankston & Caldas, 1996) and imbalances when it comes to opportunity (Carter & Welner, 2013), in predominantly Black schools.

Jenna had taught in one predominantly Black, urban school district for eight years at the time of our conversations. She had not taught in any other school district and teaching was her first career after receiving her undergraduate degree. She had taught first, second, and third grades. She entered teaching through an alternative certification program and received her Master's of Arts in Teaching degree two years after beginning her career. Jenna grew up in a predominantly White, middle-class neighborhood, according to her description and memory. She married a Spanish-speaking, Puerto Rican man with a dark complexion. Jenna's husband, as she described him, can be Black-appearing to strangers. She had one child with her husband at the time of our conversations, and was the step-mother to two girls.

Jill entered teaching through an alternative certification program. She had attempted to major in education while completing her undergraduate career but had made a late decision to switch majors and would not have been able to graduate on-time had she switched majors. Her undergraduate degree was in library sciences; she explained that "a lot of the library science classes overlapped with the education classes." Through her alternative certification program, Jill was placed as an elementary special education teacher in a predominantly Black, urban school district and served in that role for the three years immediately following her undergraduate degree. During that time, Jill participated in some free professional development courses in library media offered by the district. She took an interest in library sciences and went back to receive a graduate degree in that area. She worked towards her "master's in education with a certification area in library media" for three years. During that time, she also worked for a non-profit organization that provided after-school learning programs. She led an after-school program for preschool and kindergarten aged students. Following her graduate degree, she spent a year teaching in Costa Rica. When she returned to the United States, she spent one more year with the non-profit, after-school program before finally returning to the school district in which she originally taught, but now served as a school librarian. At the time of our conversations, Jill was in her first year as a librarian. She grew up in what she describes as a racially and religiously diverse town in New Jersey. Her mother was also a teacher.

Joy had taught in one predominantly Black, urban school district for eight years at the time of our conversations. Like Jenna, she had not taught in any other school district. She also entered teaching through the same alternative certification program as Jenna. Joy was a high school English teacher, having taught all high school grade levels, and had worked in three different schools. She received her Master's of Arts in Teaching degree two years after

beginning her career. Joy grew up in “rural Washington state,” in a religious community, and described herself as a “very standard, middle-class kid.” Many members of her family were, in some way, involved in the field of education. Her dad, in particular, seemed to express interest in her teaching career and visited her schools on occasion. At the time of our conversations, Joy was engaged to a Black man, whom she married shortly after our second conversation.

Kelly had been a teacher for thirteen years. She spent her first years of teaching in North Carolina and Virginia. She spent five years teaching fourth, fifth, and sixth grades in a predominantly Black, urban school district in a different state. At the time of our conversations, Kelly had moved on from teaching and was working as a guidance counselor in two schools within the same urban school district that she had taught. She said she had moved on from teaching not due to dissatisfaction but a need to engage with the students in a different way. During our first conversation, she explained, “I can’t just teach. I need the social-emotional piece in working with these kids.” Kelly was prepared to teach through a traditional, four-year university program. She had a typical student teaching experience, which was split across two different settings. It seemed that Kelly’s preparation program attempted to give the preservice teachers a variety of experiences in different types of schools. However, Kelly mocked that attempt to a degree as she explained, “Then, my second half of student teaching, they gave us, and I air quote this, an urban, inner city setting.” She explained that this setting was a town two hours north of Pittsburgh that was “not very ‘city’ at all.” Kelly grew up in a predominantly White, suburban neighborhood outside of Pittsburgh. She explained, “When I was in second grade my school system merged with two other school systems, because the school system I was in was very White. And they merged with more diverse and more Black school systems.” After this perceived ‘merger,’ Kelly felt that her schooling experience was no longer racially insulated.

Kelly had previously been married to a White man who taught at one of her schools, but they were divorced a few years before our conversations took place.

Linda had been working as a special educator in a self-contained preschool and kindergarten classroom in predominantly Black, public school district for two years at the time of our conversations. Prior to teaching in the school district, she had worked as a special educator with kindergarten through second grade students for three years at a nonprofit organization that supports children with disabilities and disorders. The nonprofit provides an in-house schooling program for children in need of an appropriate setting outside of the traditional public school. Prior to working in special education, Linda had received an undergraduate degree in human and organizational development with a minor in child development. After she received her degree, she worked for a domestic violence non-profit. In that role, she provided group educational experiences related to domestic violence in juvenile detention centers and prisons. After working in that job, she received a grant to complete a master's degree in special education with a focus on autism spectrum disorders. After completing her graduate degree, she began working for the non-profit, which is in the same city as the predominantly Black public school she taught in afterwards. Linda grew up in a predominantly White neighborhood and attended predominantly White private schools. She acknowledged that private school access relates to socio-economic status, which is itself often linked to race and opportunity, or lack thereof. She credited her undergraduate experience with offering her the chance to interact with racially diverse peers. At the time of our conversations, Linda was married to a White man.

As I engage with the lived experiences of these five women, I leave behind the taken-for-grantedness of my own experiences. In the coming chapters, I show the results of my phenomenological engagement with the "concrete experiential accounts" and "direct descriptions

of the experience[s]" of my participants (van Manen, 2014, p. 299). In the next chapter, I explicate the essential themes related to the phenomenon under study. Van Manen (2006) reminds me that "the project of phenomenological reflection and explication is to effect a more direct contact with the experience as lived" (p. 78). This is the goal of the upcoming chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR: EXISTING WITH-IN PLACE: WITH-OUT BEGINNINGS AND WITH-OUT ENDINGS

> Was it an accident I saw that, Fiyero wondered…. Or is it just that the world unwraps itself to you, again and again, as soon as you are ready to see it anew? (Maguire, 1995, p. 204).

Stories of journeying and wandering abound. In chapters one and two I drew on Alice's and Gulliver's stories because of the unique way they each show how someone can go on a journey and, rather than arrive somewhere different, end up right back where she or he started—knowing the place in a new way. As I initially turned to the phenomenon under study and explored it as a lived experience in these first two chapters, I felt that these works of fiction resonated with what it might be like to identify and engage with identity as a White teacher. So, as I approached initial conversations with my participants (see chapter three for an introductory narrative related to each of the five participants), I thought I could imagine them on a journey of self-exploration. I continued thinking of all the great books that followed this theme or pattern. Through doing this, Dorothy came to mind. She leaves Kansas and journeys through Oz only to arrive back, again, in Kansas knowing her self and her home better than before. However, as I sat with my participants over time and lingered with the text produced from our conversations, I came to see that their lived experiences were actually resistant to this idea of a journey. What place does journeying have in the lives of White teachers of Black students? As Chubbuck (2004) explains, "The nature of the process of disrupting Whiteness is not linear. It is not an endpoint at which one arrives" (p. 330). Similarly, the nature of the process of identifying as an antiracist White teacher is not linear. Can we even identify a potential end point? Does that exist? What attributes would a White teacher at the *end* of the racial identity journey possess?

Likely, any attempts to answer these questions would result in a limiting experience for White teachers and their students.

The readers of Baum's (1900/2000) story are to understand that Glinda is the "good" witch of the North. Baum juxtaposes this character with the "wicked" witch of the West. In this tale of journeying, these two characters stand on opposing ends of the spectrum. Dorothy, despite her flaws, would land somewhere near Glinda's side of the spectrum, while the Wizard, given his selfish tendencies, leans a little more toward the evil side. While we might not utilize classifications of good or evil when thinking about how people navigate their identities, the metaphorical connection with Baum's work relates to some type of juxtaposition we might find in some White racial identity literature. Perhaps, if I were to link Baum's work to an understanding of White teacher identity, the related juxtaposition would be a publically undesirable versus a publically desirable racial identity. However, these contrasting terms seem reductionist in nature. Also, how would undesirable and desirable be defined when it comes to racial identity? How would we be able to accurately interpret a White teacher's public actions? It is certain that outwardly aggressive, violent, and illegal racist actions and speech need to be labeled as lawfully and morally wrong or, at the very least, wholly undesirable. However, when it comes to racial identity, should our ultimate goal be trying to move ourselves along a spectrum that *ends* with Glinda-like goodness, or some type of defined, desirable identity construct?

Movement along a spectrum also implies lateral movement. Is sliding along, sideways, on a continuum the only way for White teachers to navigate their racial identity as they work in Black schools? This type of movement is very reminiscent of the discernable path created by the yellow brick road in Baum's story. Is that all the White teacher must do? Follow a paved path towards some desirable racial identity construct? We could imagine that someone who knew the

definitive answers to these questions would be able to discuss their teaching experiences with a great amount of certainty. The White teachers who shared their experiences with me did not exude this type of assurance. However, an easy path carved by simple answers to complex questions is not desirable. The complexity of the questions my participants faced necessitates a complex response, a response that cannot be negotiated by following a subscribed path.

Specifically, I think of Jenna sitting in her living room on a quiet April afternoon. After a long pause, she begins hesitantly: "Honestly, I don't really know what my identity is as a teacher." She is not on an identity journey; she has no idea where to orient herself, and orientation is key to travel. When we journey, we have the reassurance of knowing where our beginning place was— we can always go back there. The White teacher, once she has been called upon by her Black students, cannot return to the "where" of some identity origin. As I sit with Linda, she comes out of a deep contemplation regarding the difficult, ambivalent experiences she's had as a White teacher and says with unexpected clarity, "They [my experiences as a White teacher] carry over into every interaction I have." Every interaction, she explains, is now interpreted and acted on through the lens of all the lived experiences that have come before. Every moment, from now on, compounds her identity as a White teacher and erases any possibility of returning to some previous identity. But, do these teachers know where they are meant to be going? People with an end destination are confident of where they are going, even if they are not sure how to get there. As Chubbuck (2004), again explains, the nature of disrupting Whiteness is not "simply the result of a prescribed approach to develop intentions and acquire knowledge" (p. 330). There is no road map to follow, no yellow brick path. The identity experiences of these women deny the essential components of a journey.

We can imagine that this might be an uncomfortable place for White teachers to be. After all, journeying is an important conceptual and metaphorical tool in our westernized world. It may be difficult to break away from this tradition. Our daily lives are fueled by goal-achievement and forward progress, especially if we are part of an academic institution. Achievement in education is measured by movement towards something: a degree, a higher score on a teacher evaluation, improved test scores, moving along a tenure-track, and so on. To remove the cultural expectation of moving through a journey might produce some tension or discomfort. I could hear that tension when I spoke with Jenna that afternoon in April. After Jenna states that she isn't sure what her identity was as a White teacher, she follows up by saying simply, "which is a little uncomfortable." She goes on to explain that before teaching she "always felt very confident," but that now she was much more unsure. Jenna married a Puerto Rican man with a dark complexion and became the step-mother to his daughters, who are also darker-complected. She felt that her marriage and role as step-mother brought out another layer of her identity. However, she reverts back to more comfortable journeying language by saying that this experience also "started to move me in another direction." Just a few moments later, she opts for place-based, rather than journey-related, word choices when she says that as a White teacher trying to understand her identity more and more thoughtfully, she now "stop[s] and think[s] a little bit more." As I sit with the text from our conversation, it seems as though Jenna was searching for language that accurately demonstrated her process of identifying as a White teacher, but still felt she might need to hold on to the language of the journey to show, perhaps, that she was working towards being a better, and more sensitive, teacher.

When I first encountered and engaged with first-wave White identity studies, I felt like this body of literature was trying to create road maps for White teachers to follow. It seemed that

these journey-like spectrums, which arrange identity-development into stages leading from undesirable (racist, race-evasive, etc.) to desirable (race-visible, actively anti-racist) inadequately addressed the complexity I saw in my own experience as a White teacher (Jupp, Berry, & Lensmire, 2016). One reason I feel these stage models fall short is because my participants and I could not really name ourselves as White teachers in such a way that would place us precisely at one particular spot on a spectrum of development. Han, West-Olatunji, and Thomas (2011) similarly find that teachers cannot be placed precisely along a spectrum (Helms, 1990; Lee et al., 2007) because teachers' identity statuses "concurrently represented multiple statuses" along a spectrum. This is problematic when we think of the metaphor of a journey. It is implicit and essential to a journey that one be in only one place at a time. No one can be in two places at once while on a journey.

My participants cannot identify the endpoint of their journey (and are even unsure about their use of journeying language in conversation). Additionally, the participants and the women who participated in Han, West-Olatunji, and Thomas' (2011) study felt that they were in two places at once when asked to identify their positioning along a journey-like spectrum model of White racial identity development. Without a clear beginning, endpoint, and position along the way, the identity experiences of these women deny the essential components of the journey. They are with-out beginning and with-out end; they all exist with-in themselves, which is certainly a more complicated place to be than the yellow brick road.

In this chapter, I begin by briefly showing where several types of specific journeying metaphors fall short in helping us make sense of the participants' identities and identifying experiences. After I put the notion of journey to rest, I am hesitant to move away from a generally place-based rendering of the participants' experiences. Casey (2009) explains, "It

remains the case that where we are- the place we occupy, however briefly— has everything to do with what and who we are (and finally, that we are)" (p. xiii). We cannot deny the importance of place, particularly from a socio-historical perspective. The places teachers occupy are steeped in complex issues of institutionalized racism (Ahmed, 2012). To ignore the place of teachers, particularly the place of the institution, would be to fall into the trap of White-invisibility and race-evasiveness. Institutions, even those with commitments to diversity, reify racial hierarchies by classifying non-Whites as different, thereby masking Whiteness as race. As Bergerson (2003) contests, though, "Whiteness is a race. The inability or unwillingness of whites to see our whiteness as race is one of the most harmful aspects of supposed neutrality" (p. 57). As a White researcher rendering the experiences of White teachers, I must recognize the place of White-as-race in the institution in order to deconstruct the privileges Whites carry, e.g. the privilege to "not think about race" (Bergerson, p. 57). So, after a brief putting-to-rest of journeying, I move on to uncover further what place has to tell us about the identity experiences of White teachers in Black schools, as I continue to displace the journey metaphor.

With No Path to Follow: Where the Yellow Brick Road Does Not Lead

> ...this was not the first time I had been given a map which failed to show many things I could see right in front of my eyes. All through school and university I had been given maps of life and knowledge on which there was hardly a trace of many of the things that I most cared about and that seemed to me to be of the greatest possible importance to the conduct of my life. I remembered that for many years my perplexity had been complete; and no interpreter had come along to help me. It remained complete until I ceased to suspect the sanity of my perceptions and began, instead, to suspect the soundness of the maps. (Schumacher, 1978, p.1)

What opportunities are missed when we persist in our attempt to apply the journey metaphor to our understanding of the experience of White teachers? What opportunities are missed by the teachers themselves when they cling to journey-related language? Are there opportunities to stray from the path in order to contemplate previous experiences, make

mistakes, or say the wrong thing? To make use of Baum's example once more, we can consider whether Dorothy, for example, had the opportunity to wander off her yellow brick road to contemplate her upbringing in Kansas. Did she have the opportunity to sit down, wearily, along the side of the road and consider whether she could continue journeying with three others who had their own unique set of needs? Where were her chances to step back and consider other injustices occurring in Oz? Did she even know why the munchkins lived where they did? How did the monkeys come to be the property of the Wicked Witch? Baum (1900/2000) gives Dorothy no time for these contemplations as he pushes her along the road.

At the beginning of our second conversation, Linda reflected on how she had no other opportunities to think about her racial identity as a teacher. She explained, "I just think it's stuff that I probably don't talk about that much, so I think just the whole act and practice of talking about it [her racial identity and her racialized experiences in predominantly Black schools] was kind of therapeutic in a way." I wonder if Linda was presented with first-wave White identity studies, such as Helms' (1990, 1992, 1994), whether those frameworks would have encouraged her to contemplate her identity. And if those types of frameworks did encourage contemplation, if it would be the type of reflection that would have pushed along a continuum towards what Helms might suppose is a desired ending point, where racial identity work is "complete."

As I have implied above, one risk we take in persisting with journeying language is to suggest that teachers can reach an ending point with their identity work, a final destination, whatever that might mean for the White teacher. What is risked if teachers feel like they are too far behind in this journey? Will they want to give up? At the same time, what is risked when teachers feel like they have completed their journey and no longer have any work to do related to

their racial identity? This continuum and the idea of a journey reduces the complex nature of identifying oneself while participating in such a politicized institution as a school.

Joy admits that navigating her understanding of self and her understanding of racism as a systemic problem is ongoing and difficult; there is no end to her work. She elaborates, "I had to get to a place where I could recognize, 'No, this is a system problem [i.e., a problem she believes is caused by systemic racism] or this is something worth fighting and *this* [other, interpersonal squabbles or difficulties] I really should just deal with.' That was hard to find that balance of, like admitting laziness in some cases." It is notable that Joy uses journey- and place-based language in her comment. Once in a "place" of being able to differentiate between systemic racism and general, interpersonal problems, she was not done with her racial identity work; she was not done with her work of combating systemic racism. When talking with Joy, I had felt I was in the presence of a self-actualized person who was fully committed to anti-racist teaching and advocacy. However, Joy was not "done" with her identity work. To be done with that work would be a sign of laziness for her. Perhaps we are driven to use journey-based language because we feel the movement related to a journey is a sign of effort and energy. But, place-based language does not have to indicate stagnancy; rather, it can indicate contemplation, reflection, and more socio-politically-driven action. Complexity and purpose can live in place. Place does not negate time; place can show us the influence of time on space.

Author Gregory Maguire (1995) has already taken issue with Baum's perhaps one-sided portrayal of his characters and the forward-moving journey. In his book, *Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West*, he politicizes the land of Oz and shows how the socio-historical context of this world has shaped the identity of the characters. He shows how the wicked witch of the West, or Elphaba as she is named in the book, has been shaped by a biased

political climate and a traumatizing social experience in school related to her outward appearance. In the excerpt that opens this chapter, a character named Fiyero is sitting in a café. After having met Elphaba he is starting to notice, for the first time, the mistreatment of certain groups within Oz. He wonders why he was never attuned to the political and historical contexts of his world before. However, now that he is prepared to look for and understand the marginalization and mistreatment of certain groups, he is seeing things anew. As Maguire develops his Oz-related plot, the characters are never placed stagnantly along a continuum. They possess qualities that perhaps seem undesirable, other qualities that may appear more publically desirable, all the while continuing to evolve within the socio-political context of their figured world. Perhaps this modified version of Oz provides a more useful metaphor for how we might understand the development and narration of the White teacher's identity— a version that is more complex and fluid.

In the sections that follow I pause a moment to show how common journeying terms, phrases, and metaphors, even those used frequently in academia, reduce and over-simplify the identities and identity processes of White teachers.

Intersections: Staying in Your Own Identity Lane

When we travel by car we are likely to come across a vast number of intersections. We meet other travelers at the intersection. Some of them have arrived at the intersection using the same road, facing the same direction, and will follow the same route. Others, while still arriving at the very same intersection, have arrived there in a different fashion and are headed in a different direction. We can see how this metaphor could provide a useful tool for understanding identity. If there was an intersection called womanhood, not all women arrive there from the same route. Brah and Phoneix (2004) explain simply, "One critical thematic of feminism that is

perennially relevant is the important question of what it means to be a woman under different historical circumstances" (p. 76). Some women arrive at the intersection via the path of Blackness, others from Whiteness, and so on. It is certainly critical that we understand the uniquely situated experience of varying identity groups, which is likely why we see broad use of the term intersectionality in our day-to-day lives and in academia.

What is interesting about an intersection, though, is that each of the paths that leads to the convergence is discernable from one another. The Whiteness road is distinguishable from the middle-class road, which is also distinguishable from the womanhood road. These three types of roads (race, class, and gender) could be likened to major roadways. Scholars who work to shed light on systems of oppression often rely on a conceptual frame where these three constructs work together to create a complex and uniquely situated identity (Bettie, 2003; Crenshaw, 1991). However, these types of studies risk reifying the very categorizations of identity that generate oppression (Nash, 2008). While we need to recognize that identities are constructed through how we experience multiple aspects of our selves, we also must be careful to avoid essentialism (McCall, 2005). This is a complicated task for Jenna, Jill, Joy, Kelly, and Linda, who are all trying to identify themselves within a schooling system steeped in oppression. The White teacher often asks: *Who* am I? *Who* are my students? Do I identify myself in contrast to my students, who are a different race and class? As these White teachers ask themselves these questions are they even able to identify the parts of themselves that are inherently woman, inherently White, inherently middle-class? Is this even a desirable thing to be able to do?

All of my participants arrive at their identity intersection from a pathway of Whiteness and womanhood. If these women were to describe their identity paths by metaphorically naming roadways, which road might they say they spend the most time on? Are they mostly on the

womanhood road? Mostly the Whiteness road? Intersections do split into separately identifiable roadways, as I have mentioned. Although we sit at the traffic light at the cross-sections of White and woman, we can see those roadways diverge. If they are all White women, have they spent an equal amount of time thinking about and naming parts of their identity in this way? Have they spent an equal amount of time on the roads they have equally shared, at least from a socio-historical perspective?

Joy explains, "[As a teacher], I took things about gender much more personally than I did things about race." As someone who did not think much about her womanhood while teaching, I ask, "Why do you think that is?" She replies, quite simply, "Because it's something I care a lot more about." Jill, on the other hand, only references her womanhood when discussing how she felt her physical size influenced her students' perceptions of her self. For Joy and Jill, it seems the intersection metaphor falls short. Despite having arrived at the identity intersection from shared socio-historical perspectives, these two White women do not identify by shared paths.

Additionally, the use of the intersection metaphor as applied to White teachers would necessitate that each individual teacher stays in her own identity lane, the one which best captures the intersecting aspects of her identity. The White, female teacher should stay in the lane that is appropriate for her race, gender, and socio-economic status. But, what happens if the White teacher's behaviors do not match what her Black students expect? What if her physical body does not match what her Black school community expects of a White body? Or at least, what happens if the White teacher perceives her school community's confusion over her identity and behavior? What type of confusion does that generate for the teacher and students who have come to expect that each individual stay in their lane?

Joy relays an anecdote from her first year of teaching. She explains that she had purchased a new watch from a Target retail store across the street from her school, in a shopping area that later became well-known for its affiliation with protests related to the killing of a Black man by police. The first day she wore her watch to school she received compliments from her students. When she told them where she bought her watch, the students had a "hard time believing" she had bought her watch from a shopping area where they typically only see Black people. Joy relays, "It became this almost 30-minute debate where my class essentially took sides of either trying to decide – one side was either saying Ms. X [Joy] is lying about where she got the watch, or Ms. X is lying about being White, because White people did not shop at [this retail area]." As part of this debate, Joy's students discussed different things about her physical being and comportment that did not align with what they believed was a White woman; at least, this is what Joy felt they were doing. She went on to explain, "They're saying things, like the side that said, '[I'm] not really White', were [also] saying things like 'Yea, but her ass is a little bit bigger, so…' I mean, that was a very real part of the conversation. I have a different body type than what they had experienced when they see White women. I was about 20 pounds heavier than I am now, so things just took more space up than they do now. So that was part of the conversation, 'Well her body type represents something that we don't see.'"

In this scenario, we could imagine Joy's students questioning: What lane is my teacher supposed to be in? If she was a White woman, she should stay in her own lane and not shop in an area they felt was typically for Black people. If she was shopping at this store, she could then not identify as White. During the debate, Joy explains that she was looking right out of the window at the shopping center where she bought her watch. Her tone as she recalled this event was one of surprise and some disbelief. She sputters, they were having this debate "even though it [the

shopping center] was literally— you could see, I could literally look out of the window of my classroom and see the store!"

Joy wondered about why her students could not reconcile her body type, choice of shopping locations, and dialect with her white skin. She ventures, "They just had such limited exposure [to] people outside of their own racial group and had very clear kind of roles…and silos for those people. When you weren't somebody…that fit in that silo, they didn't really know what to do." We could imagine that a White, female teacher who has had "limited exposure" to Black children might have their own "silos" through which they categorize and interpret others, whether with good intentions or not.

The path or journey-related metaphor of intersection may help us more tactfully understand the unique circumstances experienced by groups of people who may or may not share a demographic characteristic. However, this metaphor is limiting when we use it to keep people in their lane. Joy was able to find a way around this jam at the intersection and develop a meaningful pedagogical relationship with her students. She explains the benefit of being able to "really make connections with kids who had never had a positive interaction with somebody outside of their race…to kind of gain their trust." She feels that successful relationships in the "real world" are only possible if people are able to move past the silos into which they categorize others dependent on their race, gender, and socio-economic status. Certainly, this is a tricky line to toe when we cannot ignore the socio-historical rootedness of identity experiences.

Asleep at the Wheel and Crossing the Road When I Get to It

Journey metaphors also provide the opportunity for ignorance. People can be asleep at the wheel or put off decisions, only crossing the road when they get to it. While it may not be useful to vilify White teachers as they navigate their identities, it is certainly not acceptable to

champion ignorance. For the White teacher, these particular journey metaphors demonstrate the concepts of race-evasiveness and color-blindness, discussed in chapter two. What damage is done to and by White teachers if they are, indeed, asleep at the wheel?

While race-evasive comments were not made widely by my participants, Kelly put forward several statements that were aimed at steering us away from conversations that named race specifically. After being invited to provide a written anecdote exemplifying an important moment in her life related to her teaching identity, particularly around race, Kelly writes, "I struggled with writing this." She was insistent that race had nothing to do with her experience, but was more so about her personal identity. For Kelly, respect had everything to do with her relationship with her Black students. She explains, "It is about respect. I may get upset with a student because of choices they are making, or not doing what is asked, but I still care about them and respect them as a person, not because they are white, black, pink, or green. I respect them because they have a purpose, and so do I." Anytime I talked with Kelly, I wondered what opportunities she might have missed, and what potential benefits her students had to gain, from a willingness, on her part, to name her own racialized identity.

However, Kelly seemed reasonably successful in her role. She had been a classroom teacher for years and was now a guidance counselor. She demonstrated persistence and tenacity, explaining that she would never leave the district for which she worked; she would never quit or go to another school district. Interestingly, Kelly turned to her students to help her with her written anecdote. She explains that one of the students to whom she directed some questions about their experience of her-as-teacher "even stated he sees me as another mother." I wondered at what point Kelly would be willing to cross the road and stop waiting until she got there. In chapter one, I described a student of mine, Michael, who referred to me as light-skinned (as

opposed to White) when talking with another student in my class. Even at the time, I wondered if my close relationship with his mother was what prompted him to think of me as some version of Black. It struck me that when a student compared Kelly to a mother figure she did not see the connection to race. That student's mother is Black. What did Kelly miss in this circumstance? And what damage was done to the student in her care? In a study of White preservice teachers, Amos (2016) found that the race-evasiveness and power of White teacher candidates had a "harmful impact" on teacher candidates of color, causing them "emotional and psychological upheaval" (p. 1012). We might reasonably imagine that the race-evasiveness of a teacher could cause similar harm to K-12 students of color.

At the same time, what would be missed if Kelly were pushed into a more transgressive way of talking about race and racism? Again, while ignorance cannot be promoted, perhaps resting in some type of evasive place allows for moments of self-reflection, especially for a teacher who is seeking to do her best for her students. Perhaps, though, Kelly's ways of describing her relationships with her students are not truly evasive. Instead, her language choices may be her way of creating space for engagement with her racial identity in her own, unique way. As Crowley (2016) notes, this type of language may create "small discursive space[s]" that allow for "considered and critical engagement with racial knowledge" (p. 1026).

In my conversations with Kelly, I found that she was not hesitant to discuss race generally, but made the types of discursive moves Crowley (2016) discusses in order to make space for other aspects of her self, which she wanted to push to the forefront as she named her experiences in Black schools. Specifically, the concept of respect became a very important theme. She recognized that she did not automatically inherit respect through a position of authority, and was, instead, insistent that she had to work to earn the respect of her Black

students and their parents. I wonder if labelling Kelly as race-evasive and assuming she would only cross the road of racism if and when she got to it would produce anything generative for teachers and teacher educators working towards social justice and equity. Would the research and education community miss out on useful understanding by tossing her understandings and experiences aside? In this regard, this journey metaphor highlights potential missed opportunities when labeling White teachers and assuming they are asleep at the wheel.

Running on Fumes and Reaching that Point

Perhaps one of the most problematic aspects of the journey metaphor as a whole is the implication of an ending. Journey-ending idioms such as running on fumes and reaching that point imply that a journey was ended on a sour note; the suggestion is that someone quits the journey. Certainly, with scholarly consensus around the problem of teacher attrition (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003), we do not want to put forward a metaphor for racial identity development that has any potential to signify quitting. Particularly, Borman and Dowling (2008) show, through a meta-analytic review of related literature, that White teachers are more likely to leave the profession than teachers of color. While work must be done to recruit, train, hire, and retain teachers of color in order to reduce the gap between students of color and their teachers (Villegas, Strom, & Lucas, 2012), we do not want to ignore the attrition of White teachers either.

Quitting was a salient topic across several of the conversations I had with my participants. Several of my participants entertained the notion of quitting. Linda actually decided to leave teaching while we were in the process of scheduling and carrying out our conversations. Her decision was complex and wrought with emotion and is discussed at length throughout various sections of this chapter. Jenna and Jill also discussed quitting the profession with some

detail, though both stayed in their districts through the end of the 2016-2017 school year, while conversations took place, and into the next school year. During one conversation Jill explains, "I can't live like that, like counting down [the days of school]. Right now, I'm counting down until spring break, and then I'm-, everyone I know is counting the days left until the end of the school year. And, I cannot live like that. Like, I don't want to rush through [my life]."

Both Jenna and Jill's conversations around running on fumes had much to do with their racial identity. Jenna had been working with a child who was experiencing upheaval in her home life related to her living arrangements. When this child was experiencing particularly tumultuous times she would lash out at Jenna and call her names such as "White bitch." While Jenna was able to understand logically that the child was simply acting out through name-calling, she admits that the child's race-related comments felt exhausting over time. She explains:

> It definitely takes a toll on you when…every single day, all day long, you listen to a child, even though you know they're a child, it's still difficult to mentally, to stay positive. You listen to a child say things like…like call you a 'White bitch' or 'that White lady needs to go back where she came from,' um 'we were better off without her, when her son was sick she should've never came back.' But saying these things repeatedly, like every day, all day long, it's like, 'What am I doing here?' It's definitely worn me down a lot over the past few weeks and it is definitely weighing heavy on me. I'm feeling like, right now, since I can't handle her and she's saying all these things all day long about me, … I don't know if this is for me. Maybe I do need to go because I don't think I can do this all the way until June.

If we are to understand Jenna's racial identity work as a journey, this might have marked her end. However, a discussion of feeling worn out does not have to signify an end. To be clear, the exhaustion White people can face when it comes to race is certainly nothing to compare to the systemic racial battle fatigue faced by people of color (Smith, 2004; Smith, Hung, & Franklin, 2011). In chapter two, I wondered whether guilt could cause exhaustion in White teachers (Flynn, 2015). However, I did not venture to wonder whether constant engagement with racial identity, specifically when it is brought to the forefront of your attention in a negative way,

would also bring about fatigue. For Jenna, it was not the work of teaching nor her guilt over her role as a person of privilege, but the forced engagement with racial identity through a negative experience that brought about her fatigue. However, it is key to note that her journey was not over. If she were truly running on fumes she would have eventually had to give up, but she did not. There is more to her and her racial identity than her contemplations about quitting.

Bridges: Opportunities to Cross or Places to Pause

In our day-to-day travels, bridges allow us the opportunity to cross back and forth from one place to another. Metaphorically, the bridge may help a White teacher make her way *over* to the cultural space of her Black students. Two concepts I opened up in chapter two would relate here. The guilt trip could be viewed as a transformative possibility for White teachers; experiencing guilt over their place in systemic oppression may help carry them over the bridge to a space where they are more sensitive in their pedagogical practices with their Black students. Additionally, I opened up the notion of code-switching as a way to connect with Black students, but had some concerns that this might lead to cultural appropriation. The academically-accepted concept of 'cultural border crossing,' initially introduced by Giroux (1992), may also be relevant as we think about the bridge-as-metaphor. Some have viewed the term 'border-crossers' (or bridge-crossers in my version of this metaphor) as rife with opportunities for social justice and equity in education (Bartolomé, 2004). However, others (Aoki, 2005) have problematized this idea of cultural bridge-, or border-,crossing.

Aoki feels that the bridge is too often interpreted as a way to cross back and forth between places and cultures. He felt that this interpretation would lead to the continued marginalization and appropriation of certain groups. Lee (2017) explains:

> One of the metaphors that Aoki brought to the curriculum field is his reconceptualization of the word 'bridge.' He introduced this idea in a conference where his concern was for

> educators who continued to emphasize crossing from one nation or culture to the other. The function of the bridge is to provide such ease in the crossing, however, Aoki was concerned that this cross-cultural conversation would result in tourism, a shallow awareness of culture, or business propagation, the colonization and taking of another culture's resources. (p. 23)

However, the bridge can serve another purpose, other than to move one across or back and forth. Aoki (2005) wondered about the possibilities the metaphor of the bridge could provide. While reflecting on the beautiful bridges in Oriental gardens, Aoki wondered if, instead, the bridge could be a place to pause. He explained that this "Heideggerean" sense of a bridge "lure[s] us to linger" (p. 316). He goes on to say that the bridge can serve as "a clearing— a site— into which earth, sky, mortals, and divinities are admitted. Indeed, it is a dwelling place for humans who, in their longing to be together, belong together" (p. 438). In this sense, we can view the bridge as disconnected from the journey and instead see it as a place to dwell-in, to dwell-in-to-being more and more thoughtfully.

So, it is on Aoki's (2005) Heideggerian bridge that I linger as I continue to interpret the lived experiences of my participants. I am not alone on this bridge, though. Often in my conversations with Jenna, Jill, Joy, Kelly, and Linda, they would discuss the many moments they took to pause and linger with their experiences. Joy purposefully planned her moments to linger with her experiences and shared those moments with others. When she began her teaching career, she began an emailed type of newsletter which she would send to friends, previous professors, and family members recounting important moments in her teaching. She also had many discussions with her family. She explains:

> My whole family's in education. So, when I'm at home at Christmas and they're asking, 'How are schools in [in your predominantly Black school district]?,' they understand the systems enough that I can say things like, 'Here's how Black teachers and White teachers interact. Here's what kids say to me because of the way I look.' And it's a safe enough discussion and then the questions that they ask, because they have that background are [good], so it gets to a deeper level than just, you know, kind of, I think than people who

> don't have that experience. So…I've had a lot of conversations about it [race and identity] so I've had to really articulate it [my experiences].

These moments of lingering on the bridge through emails and conversations have made Joy more confident about her self and the way she talks about her teaching.

Linda had a similarly positive experience with this type of pause. However, it was only through our conversations that she first experienced Aoki's (2005) sense of lingering on the bridge. Linda began our second conversation by saying, "It actually felt kind of good when I left [from the first conversation], like I almost felt like I had a mini therapy session, even though it was just me talking the whole time!"

This is not to say that Aoki's (2005) bridge is always a soothing, therapeutic, or even comfortable place to be. In a written anecdote, Jenna shared her struggles with her pauses and lingering. She relayed a moment in her teaching career when one of her students whispered to a peer to inquire about a picture of Jenna and her husband which she kept on her desk. The student had asked of her peer, "'Why does her [Jenna's] husband look Black?'" Jenna felt that the student whispered because it might have seemed wrong that a White-appearing woman would be married to a Black-appearing man. She took time to describe how it felt to be in that moment, after she overheard her student's whispered remark, and explains how she lingers with that moment still:

> In that moment, I did not really know what to say, as I was taken aback by her question. I should have taken that moment to say something, explain something, but I just could not think fast enough about the right words. The other student just shrugged and focused on their work. I still think about that moment and how powerless I felt.

While Jenna felt guilty that she could not come up with something to say, I wonder if it might have been more detrimental had she rushed to ease her own and the student's tension in this

moment. Likely, her lingering discomfort serves a purpose in the continued unfolding of her identity.

Moving forward in this chapter, I use Aoki's (2005) conception of the bridge, not as a tool for moving forward, but as a place to linger. In what follows, I let go of journeying and root myself in the terrain, in the world. What can we learn from the world when we view it from our place-of-being, rather than pushing through it while journeying? Levin (1985) offers, "Earth, in its deepest truth, is the Being of beings, presencing *in our world* as its elemental ground: the ground which underlies the mystery of the 'worlding of the world'" (p. 284). I dig into the truths of the terrain to see what it shows of my participants' identity experiences.

Terrain: Dwelling Within

> She walked on the Earth in beauty and harmony but never for a moment lost touch with her place. It dwelled within her; she within it. (Krall, 1994, p. 117)

While I have put journeying to rest, I do not mean to imply that there is no opportunity for change, growth, or continued self-actualization in the experiences of White teachers. Levinas (1961/2015) shows, "The I is not a being that always remains the same, but is the being whose existing consists in identifying itself, in recovering its identity throughout all that happens to it" (p. 36). Each person is in a constant state of identifying and acting on his/her identity. Rather, by exploring the identity experiences of Jenna, Jill, Joy, Kelly, and Linda through terrain, the opportunity becomes available to show that there is no unimplaced culture, no unimplaced sense of *I*. Identity is molded by culture and, as Casey (2009) shows us, "Places are also primary in the order of culture… there can be no unimplaced culture" (p. 31). In any exploration of race, racism, and racial identity, culture must be primary if we are to avoid reifying sources of systemic oppression. There must be a recognition of institutions and systems if we are to approach a racial identity exploration in an anti-racist manner. Certainly, whether they name race

explicitly or not, my participants do recognize inequity and have some conception of where they are positioned within this system.

At the same time, they do not simply stand, stagnant, in-place. My participants had experiences, whether they named them as raced or not, before becoming teachers. These experiences do not leave them. However, they also grow, change, and renew their perspective of the world around them, along with their place in it. The participants' efforts to name themselves, their students, and schools are much more similar to the work that we do when we try to describe a terrain. As I talked with my participants, our conversations were filled with contemplative pauses. These women inserted phrases such as "I'm not sure," or "I don't know," and introduced many wonderings about whether they were describing an experience in the most accurate way. They often second-guessed their reactions in moments that passed, and there were also many moments where a description of an experience would unfold with such detail, weaving into the description of other experiences, to the point where the participants would say something such as, "I'm sorry, where did I start with all of this?" It was often difficult for these women to find the 'best' words. But, what words do justice to actual earthly wonders? We might have heard someone say, "The pictures don't do it justice" when they come back from a trip to a natural wonder. If a photographic replica does not do it justice then how can words? What justice do our words serve when we are trying to name our place-in-relation to a system where justice is now much more literal? How do White teachers experience the naming of their own implaced identity when justness and justice are at stake? It is the exploration of these questions through the language of the terrain that helps us to "really [open] up the whole of our world orientation" (Gadamer, 2004, p. 465). Dwelling with-in themselves, as part of the terrain, these White

teachers persist in continuous self-identification in relation to the world around them. This is another key aspect of terrain—the world around the implaced identity.

The word terrain can be considered a geographical term; however, if we think about the terrain from a biological perspective we might be provoked to think of the term ecosystem. In a given ecosystem, it is critical to acknowledge all of the organisms that exist within, how they interact with that ecosystem and with each other, and how the history of the ecosystem has affected the organisms within (OED, 2008). Viewing the terrain in this way also provides an opportunity to see how the White teacher can interact with the others around her. Levinas (1961/2015) suggests, "The relationship between the same [the I] and the other, my welcoming of the other, is the ultimate fact, and in it the things figure not as what one builds but as what one gives" (p. 77). Acknowledging the opportunities presented by the terrain, I continue to open up the experiences of my participants further, as they are of this world. The terrain is a very real part of the participants' lived world, as they experience visceral emotions and act on their perceptions of everything around them. In this section, I show that the term terrain is not used in only a metaphorical sense throughout this chapter, but instead has much to show about the participants' way-of-being.

The term terrain is derived from the Latin word *terrenus* meaning, "Belonging to this earth or this world" (OED, 1989). As we consider our most visceral experiences, they always root us firmly in this earth. This deep connection to the terrain is even evident when I consider my former first grade students and their writing. In chapter two, I describe a poem by Eloise Greenfield (1986), that I read with these students. In this poem, Greenfield uses figurative language to name who she is, her identity. Through a continued exploration of figurative language, my students had the opportunity to write their own poems, wondering what they might

be if they could only close their eyes and represent themselves in whatever way they choose. As I look back at my students' poetry journals, I see that Terrell wrote, "I wonder what it might be like, If I would be a flower and, some body would pick me, out for a nice mom, that would teach me right." Chris wrote:

> I wonder what it might be like in a tree, I can climb high, and high until I reach the sky, to touch and love, I climb down and eat an apple, to rest and rest all day, then I can go down and down until I reach the ground to go inside, to get an apple, and go to sleep.

At six-years old, Chris and Terrell show us how rooted-in-this-earth we all are at the most instinctive level. At the height of their imagination they *were* the earth. To ignore terrain, to float out of this earth-as-it-is, would not only be anti-intuitive, but would potentially be to give up on antiracist teaching. In his novel, *The Road*, McCarthy (2006) shows how important it is to grounded in the terrain, to be of this world: "'Listen to me,' he said, 'when your dreams are of some world that never was or some world that never will be, and you're happy again, then you'll have given up. Do you understand?'" (p. 201). Just like the world in McCarthy's novel, the racist terrain of public schools is problematic. However, to ignore the world-as-it-is would be to acquiesce to racism and its insidiousness.

As they consider their identities, these White teachers are rooted in this earth in that they are negotiating both the cultural terrain of a schooling institution and their personal earthly beings. Their experiences are not simply anecdotes to relate orally, and not just memories that can be delineated chronologically. Even as they are remembered, reviewed in retrospect, these experiences are felt; they are of this world. In my first conversation with Linda, before she began describing her experiences with her racial identity as a teacher, she showed how the visceral memory of those experiences lives in her and is felt all the time. She explains:

> [I'm] definitely feeling more tired, more burnt out, not as excited, less patient. … You know, I used to be fine with bringing work home, um [I had] almost a desire to, or a want

> to. [I] don't have that anymore. Um, and it's sad to me. It's not something I'm proud of by any means, but it's just where I'm at. And I've really struggled with that, I guess, as a person and as a teacher.

Linda's experiences around racial identity existed in her viscerally and carried over in all areas of her life, not just as a teacher, but as a person. Sitting there with her the day of our first conversation, I could feel the weight of her experiences. They lived *in* her; the feelings were of this world. I could similarly feel the weight Jill carried with her from her challenging experiences as a White teacher. Despite negative experiences, Jill seemed to feel that the place of non-White schools was essential to her, like nutrients. Towards the end of our first conversation, Jill explains, "I've never taught anywhere else. … I can't be in a little cookie-cutter, Pleasantville type of neighborhood…I need…culture, diversity." She began to respond to the environment of Black schools with a visceral sense of need; she needed to be around non-White students and families now.

For Joy, the atmosphere of schools as institutions was a strong, palpable part of her experience. She felt the atmosphere of the institution and it affected her responses to teaching experiences and pedagogical approaches. Levinas (1961/2015) helps us to understand the role of the atmosphere in our experiences:

> *The atmosphere permeates everything*. What else would we expect from something whose very name means 'sphere of vapor or smoke' and which shares the Sanskrit *atman* (soul, self) a root in *an*, breath? As breath, smoke, and vapor move not only between bodies but inside them, so the atmosphere of a wild place animates all that we experience in its presence. It is as essential to that place as breath is to our bodily being. In sharing the same atmosphere, body and place realize a common essence as well as their own most intimate unity. (p. 219)

As part of an alternative teacher preparation program, Joy was exposed to Doug Lemov's (2010) internationally best-selling how-to book about establishing classroom routines and procedures (the book was widely distributed to teachers in Joy's school district upon its release as well). She

spent a fair amount of time in all of our conversations heatedly describing her negative reactions to the strategies presented in Lemov's book. Particularly, she was deeply opposed to one strategy in the book, technique 32, titled with the acronym *SLANT*. The strategy requires that the teacher establish procedures regarding how students sit and listen (sit up, listen, ask and answer, nod your head, and track the speaker) (Lemov, 2010). The atmosphere of the school-as-institution came into intimate unity with Joy's bodily being to create a visceral reaction, on her part, to this strategy. She refused to attempt such strategies as they felt completely counter to her way-of-being. In my second conversation with Joy, we came back to a lengthy argument she posed against pedagogical, behavior management strategies such as those Lemov suggests. She had thought more about her visceral reactions to such strategies and explains:

> It just, it just always seemed a little bit like people trying to slap a band-aid on the larger issue of, like, school is institutionalized as a way to conform to, mostly, White, middle-class ideals and it becomes this way of saying, like, 'Well, we can't talk about all of the reasons why school might be challenging for you [the Black student], but we can teach you how to sit correctly.'

While she admitted that the strategies just did not resonate with her personally, especially after having attended Montessori schools as a child (where the focus is on the child-as-individual), her most aggressive form of protest against this teaching strategy was related to systemic racism. The atmosphere of the institution permeated her, and the attention she paid to it lived within her, guiding her sense of being.

Joy explains that she would have felt inauthentic if she applied a strategy in her classroom that did not resonate with the cultural atmosphere she perceived in her schools. She details:

> If you really want to be culturally authentic, you can't do that in a universal way because nobody's culture, even if two kids look the same, they come from different places and different houses and different interests, and it's [behavior strategies like the one's Lemov

> (2010) suggest] just not, to me an authentic way to do it [establish a productive classroom climate].

For Heidegger (1927/1993a), authenticity-of-being often runs counter to the way the individual behaves in the public domain, falling prey to "idle talk" (Moran, 2006, p. 243). However, I think something is missing in this perspective. There are opportunities for authenticity, which can resonate both with-in and around the individual, when the nature of the public institution is fully and honestly realized. Joy's resistance to prescribed behavior management techniques certainly runs counter to her authentic self, but she recognizes that this strategy also runs counter to the true nature of the atmosphere of Black schools.

As these teachers participate in this world, feeling their emotions resonate within their earthly beings and perceiving/reacting to the atmosphere, they are in the position of *being* a being. They both are who they are and are cultivating who they are, experiencing their identity as both a noun and a verb. In the next section, I explore this aspect of being a White teacher through the concept of the landscape.

A Landscape and To Landscape: Experiencing Identity as A Noun and A Verb

All of my participants, to varying degrees of explicitness, recognize that they *are* White teachers. However, they are also all in-the-process of uncovering what that means. Perhaps the *process* aspect of identity, identifying, is why many scholars find the idea of a White-identity spectrum or continuum appealing. However, an in-process being does not necessarily run counter to the concept of terrain. As any gardener would know intuitively, the landscape both *is* and *is created.* When searching the term *landscape* in the Oxford English Dictionary (OED, 1989a; OEDb 1989) one is of course directed to two separate entries for the word, as a noun and a verb— a landscape and to landscape.

Jenna, for example, experienced her identity as noun and verb in her interactions and relationship with a Black colleague. Together, they navigated student behaviors and interactions with parents. She explains:

> I had a team teacher, when we [her school] were departmentalized…. I [am] White and she was Black. And we would have children that would behave in the exact same manner but when we went to speak to parents they would be very receptive to whatever she [Jenna's Black colleague] said and then if I said it, it would be a little more like, well-they wouldn't take it as well. It was more of a pushback on me.

In this situation, Jenna had to recognize her self for who she is, a White teacher. She also had to find ways to navigate within this identity and act in an effective manner. While she dealt with the reality of identity-as-noun, she still worked to identify in ways that were productive and helpful in her relationships with colleagues, parents, and students. She continues:

> We [her Black colleague and herself] worked together for four years and she was always on my side, we always figured out a way to sort of meet together, her and I and the parent and the student. So, at least she was sort of there as a buffer and she would take the lead of the conversation and sort of let me weave in and out.

The experience of both being and being a being has a lot to do with visibility. The landscape is seen by others; the self is perceived by the others with whom the self interacts. The White teacher has an opportunity, then, to landscape the self in a way that responds to that perceiving. Jenna saw how she was perceived by her Black colleague and the parents of her students. She recognized the value the parents placed on their interactions with a Black teacher. Jenna has proclaimed, and I have observed, that she is quite confident and self-assured in her actions, taking charge easily and acting in roles of authority naturally. Perceiving her self through others, she made a lot of changes to the ways she acted on her identity. Instead, her Black colleague took on the authoritative role.

Seidl and Hancock (2011) portray the experience of responding to how one is seen by others as a double image. Responding to the DuBois' (1903) concept of double consciousness

within the Black community, Seidl and Hancock explain that a double image "provides White people with insight into the images they project in cross-raced encounters, allowing them to anticipate the ways in which People of Color might perceive some of their behaviors, responses, and beliefs and to understand the emotions these might raise" (pp. 689-690). While the dichotomous nature of DuBois' double consciousness shows the pain that systemic racism causes people of color, the conflict present in Seidl and Hancock's double image is meant to help White people grapple with their role in systemic racism in a productive manner. The ability to cultivate a double image "allows one to more successfully navigate and mediate the relational terrain central to many antiracist efforts" (p. 690). While Black people have no choice, given the socio-historical context of this country, but to see themselves through the eyes of a racist America, White people are too often able to evade seeing themselves within this system. They may say, "Well *I* never owned slaves" or "But, I have Black friends!" A double image helps to show the White person how systemic racism is bigger than any one individual, and how they can work to be a part of more antiracist institutions through their actions.

While this chapter is focused on the experiences of my participants, I pause here to share a personal anecdote that helps to highlight further the concept of a double image. During my doctoral program I returned to full-time, public elementary school teaching. In an effort to increase professional development opportunities and encourage discussion of pedagogical strategies, the administration asked our reading specialist (which is its own type of administrative role) to observe teachers and then meet with them as a grade level to discuss what she noticed. The reading specialist at my school is a Black woman, who I perceive to be about my age, named Ms. Lake. When she came into my classroom to observe, she did not greet me upon entrance and soon started to take pictures of the self-generated posters on my walls and my students' work

using her personal cell phone. I took issue with this and asked her, bluntly, what she was going to do with these photos. I was concerned about my intellectual property being shared without my permission and about student work being shared despite some parents signing a form indicating that they would not like their child's work to be put on display outside of the classroom setting. Ms. Lake curtly stated, "It's not like I'm going to put them on Facebook or anything," and went on taking pictures. When she was finished observing, she did not say goodbye, offer to debrief with me individually, or leave any notes. She made another visit to my classroom to observe about a month later, repeating her same behaviors.

After she visited the other members of my team, she met with all of us during a planning meeting. Ms. Lake came prepared with a list of items she wanted to review. Without engaging in discussion, she went on to state that while we all did a good job managing our classroom climates, she saw too much spelling instruction. She had, indeed, observed my special educator, Ms. Evans (a young White woman), leading a phonics lesson with a small group of the students we co-teach. As a team, she wanted us to choose more "impactful" teaching practices. She did not clarify what impactful meant in this context, and went on to discuss approved curricular materials we could use for guided reading. Ms. Evans, feeling that her instruction was being unfairly critiqued, cycled back around to the notion of unnecessary spelling instruction. She explained that her IEP students have specific goals related to phonics instruction. While Ms. Evans was trying to speak, Ms. Lake went on, without addressing Ms. Evans, and continued talking about guiding reading materials using a now louder speaking voice. When another teacher on my team, Mrs. Taylor (an older Black woman), tried to explain that spelling instruction is part of the district-mandated curriculum, Ms. Lake responded to her by calling her "darling" and proceeded to say, enthusiastically, again, "But, how is that impact?!" When yet

another member of the grade level team, Ms. Williams (a young, White woman), tried to clarify what Ms. Lake meant by "impact" and "impactful," she said, "Like, do what makes the most sense for them [the students] and do what you feel will be the most impactful." When this teacher tried, yet again, to gain clarity around Ms. Lake's use of the word "impact," by asking for specific, measureable goals we should aim for in terms of improving our instruction, Ms. Lake replied, "I'm not sure you have listened to me!"

During all of these interactions with Ms. Lake, I felt frustrated. After receiving some training and having experiences as a teacher educator and leading professional development, I felt that her approach to the process of observing and providing feedback was ineffective. I was frustrated by her tone during our meeting and felt that she was disrespectful towards my colleagues. I did let me frustrations be known in those moments by providing my own pushback and asking her for clarification like my colleagues had done. After the meeting, Ms. Lake chatted with Mrs. Taylor. She said, in reference to myself, Ms. Evans, and Ms. Williams, "They just think I'm an angry, Black woman." Mrs. Taylor relayed Ms. Lake's concerns to me during recess the next day. With that, my frustrations ebbed. I thought, "What must it be like to constantly question if you are receiving pushback because you are Black." I also had to pause and consider my own actions and demeanors. Was I too blunt, curt, or forceful in my interactions? How does Ms. Lake perceive me? Is there another way I can interact with her that shows greater respect for the authority implicit her position?

While proficiency should be expected of any teacher leader, there was more to this interaction than just interpersonal conflict and a lack of pedagogical skill. I was called upon by Ms. Lake's comment to step outside of my self, how I saw these events unfold, and to contemplate how I was being seen. I still perceive Ms. Lake's strategies during these encounters

as ineffective, but I was also able to learn more about how I might be perceived by Black women in authority. Through seeing myself in this way, I continued to be a being in process. In the next section, I continue to explore the concept of both seeing and being seen to understand the complexity of identity better and identifying as a White teacher.

The Self as a Seeing Being and a Seen Being

> Less, for the face summons me to my obligations and judges me. (Levinas, 1961/2015, p. 215)

Sight, both literally and metaphorically, is key in our racialized world. Namely, the academic community is concerned with whether or not White teachers see race. First-wave White identity studies problematize the race-evasive, color-blind perspectives of some White teachers (as explored in chapter two). More recent inquiry continues to problematize this lack-of-sight, but also seeks to uncover the array of race visible attitudes of some White teachers (Jupp, Berry, & Lensmire, 2016). Sight also carries metaphorical significance for the White teacher as we think about her interactions with Black colleagues, students, and families. In chapter three, I introduced Levinas' (1961/2015) emphasis on the call of the face of the Other. This philosophical, rather than sociological, Other calls upon the I, the self, to act responsibly and ethically. Without truly seeing the Other, and allowing that seeing to spur a self-reflection, the White teacher may ignore, or miss, this call. Sight, in this sense, goes both ways; it allows us to see the Other and our self. As Bachelard (1958/1994) explains, "Full contemplation would divide into the observing being and being observed" (p. 234). What are White teachers' experiences as observing beings and of being observed? What are they seeing when it comes to their own race and the race of their students? How does it feel when they are observed by the Black school community? What does this sense of being observed do with their identities?

Linda, of all my participants, used specific sight-based language the most frequently. She describes instances where she, figuratively, felt sightless, blind, as she navigated her Black school community. She also described instances where the process of being observed by others caused discomfort as she negotiated her sense-of-self as a White teacher. Linda describes her initial experiences of being seen by the Black school community. She says that when she first came into her current, predominantly Black school district she encountered a "whole different set of struggles" than she had faced in her previous school setting (a non-profit organization that provides schooling experiences for students with special needs). One of those struggles included "something [she] really never had to deal with before, which was being White." Linda clarifies, "I really had never been so aware of my own race working somewhere [other than the predominantly Black school]." She felt ill-prepared for the experience of being observed and re-examining her self through that experience. Recalling all of her previous experiences, including her master's program in special education, she contemplated, "There's so many things that I feel like I went in to kind of blindly, I guess. There was no specific course on, you know, culture, or ethnic-type situations or anything that really could prepare me." While academia's most common use of blindness is to describe teachers who discursively avoid acknowledging race (Bonilla-Silva, 2003), in Linda's case the blindness was only identified in retrospect, interestingly, when light was shed on her race.

The tension in re-visioning self.

Certainly, there is a lot of tension when one confronts blindness and acquires a new sense of visibility. Levin (1988) shows:

> The re-presenting of the visible in its absolute otherness is a process which takes place as the field of visibility begins to take shape in and around a subject-object structure. The problem with this structure is that it tends to polarize into a situation of opposition, or

> conflict, and to condense into a rope of pain drawn between two knots of being: the ego-subject which 'see's and the object which, held tightly in its grasp, is 'seen.' (p. 66)

While Linda uses the word blind to describe how she felt, perhaps it was really more a re-presenting of something visible. She encountered the "knot" of tension between what she was able to see, as the ego-subject, and herself as seen. For Linda, this "knot" manifested as doubt, particularly doubt in her self and a continued doubt in her own vision.

In our second conversation, after thinking more thoroughly about her White identity as she first saw it in her school setting, she explains, "I never really… I mean, I guess I thought about [my race] sometimes. … When I was made to be aware of my skin color, [that experience caused] doubt." She wondered if her struggle to negotiate her Whiteness in a Black school was a fault of her own. As I sat with her on a warm day in April, she pushed to see her self more fully, but felt lost. She considered that the overwhelming presence of Whiteness in her childhood generated some sort of deficit within her. However, she pushed back a little on that notion, recognizing that where she grew up and who attended her schools wasn't "[her] fault." Still, she felt maybe there was something wrong with her ability to see her self, fully, within a raced world. Truly, she felt blind as she worried, "Maybe it's me and I just can't see it." We often think of how we can confront the stereotypes we have of others, but how can we confront the stereotypes we have of ourselves? Levin (1988) suggests, "We need to give thought, for example, to the ways in which we *stereotype* the visible; and to the ways we avoid the challenge of finding a *fresh response* even to that which is familiar" (p. 68). Linda struggled to find a positive way to respond to a re-visioning of her self, after being seen by the others in her school.

Despite a lack of in-sight into her self, Linda's experiences observing beings in Black schools increased her sight when it came to a more sensitive way of perceiving people of color in

her day-to-day life. Towards the end of my final conversation with Linda, just before she resigned from teaching, she shares:

> Looking back on [my time spent in a predominantly Black school], now that it's almost over, you know, I really am just trying to take away the positives and look back and be like, 'Wow, you really experienced a lot, and it wasn't all good.' But, it has definitely, I feel like, helped to open my eyes and be extra sensitive to people's feelings and perceptions.

While Linda had bemoaned the lack of preparation provided by her master's program, it seems that she accomplished, or at least was working towards, many of the goals teacher educators (Villegas, 2007) and policy documents set for teachers (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2013). Her experience of *observing beings* promoted "critical dispositions" related to social justice put forward in documents such as Interstate Teaching Assessment and Support Consortium's (InTASC) *Model Core Teaching Standards and Learning Progressions for Teachers* (2013). The document specifically names the ability of a teacher or teacher candidate to be respectful of the varying perspectives held by students and their families, which Linda claimed is a skill she now possessed.

Despite this disposition, Linda's struggle to *see* herself as an observed being caused such tension that she was led to quit teaching. She could not negotiate how she was seen by others with how she saw herself. Krall (1994) states simply, "One source of human suffering arises when our words and actions are perceived, by those we serve or love, in a light different from that intended" (p. 163). While there is no purpose in comparing such suffering to those who have been historically marginalized, it is important to acknowledge the experiences that led to Linda leaving teaching.

The social nature of visibility.

Jill also struggled with being an observed being. Actually, she felt quite invisible in her school setting, as if her Whiteness made it so she was not worth being observed by others, particularly the Black adults in her schools. Jill often claimed that she "didn't matter" in her school settings because she was White. This perceived invisibility seemed strongly connected to her own inability to self-reflect. She did not seem to recognize fully the influence of Whiteness within systemic racism and how her own White identity could be perceived in a Black school. Whereas Linda tried, ultimately failing, to negotiate her sense of self with how she believed she was seen by others, Jill did not look inward in this way. Not once during our conversations did Jill admit to re-flecting on her identity-in-process. While she was willing to identify race, broadly, (she would refer to her self as a White teacher), she seemed unwilling to renegotiate her sense of self in this setting. Additionally, Jill's observing being served only to cause her anger, isolation, and frustration rather than a renewed perspective of others.

Specifically, Jill often describes the pride shown by her Black colleagues regarding where they attended college. At one of her schools, her Black, female principal spoke often of and promoted her alma mater, a historically black college/university (HBCU) in the area. It seemed to Jill that many of the teachers at the school, almost all of whom were Black, had also attended the same HBCU. Through the principal's affiliations, the school conducted an event in association with this university. Jill describes:

> We had a big pep rally [at my school] and they brought in all the [university's] dancers and cheerleaders and step team. Every single person that they brought in [for the pep rally] was Black…. They had an MC [who was] Black. Everything- all Black. … All the fraternities came and the sorority sisters. I mean, there was not one White person representing the [university] at all. So, it's kind of like, you know, we're [her elementary school] doing all these outreach programs and bringing all these different people into the school for these different assemblies, activities, and events and it's great and all, but none of them are White. So, you're [the principal/others who planned the events] just

> furthering the fact that we [the few White teachers at the school] don't matter. I look around the room [at the pep rally] and there's three hundred people in here and there's like two White people. You know, it's kind of like saying, 'Go stand [away from us]- you don't matter.'

While Jill would occasionally remark that it was "great" for her principal to promote higher education through her affiliation with this particular HBCU, and that this type of pride was a good model for Black students, she ultimately felt events such as the pep rally were dismissive of White staff. She felt unseen by the Black school community. Jill seemed like someone who liked to belong, or fit in. She described the different ways she tried to join in on community events, such as going to after-school work parties, committing to playing on a staff softball team, and attempting to partner up with a colleague for a 'biggest loser' weight loss competition. But, ultimately, she felt that her Whiteness prevented her from fitting in. At a back-to-school night event, Jill explains that most of the Black, female teachers wore what she called "African gowns" that reflected "African colors." She, again, discusses feeling left out, and remarks, "I don't own anything like that."

While Jill felt that her race made her invisible to Black staff, she felt that students observed her race and this observation led them to act disrespectfully and dismissively towards her. It is in this sense that Jill's observed being caused additional frustration. As a librarian, Jill was able to watch her students with their classroom teachers. She feels that the students listened to and respected their Black classroom teachers, but did not treat her the same way because she was White. During a conversation in April of 2017, Jill describes an instance from that school day:

> Today I had them [her students] in the computer lab and they were terrible. And we were doing a research assignment. And this one girl was like, 'I'm not doing it [the assignment] anymore!' Her computer [had] shut down and she's like, 'I'm not doing this anymore! I'm not turning it back on!' And, [she said it] in a really disrespectful way. And I was like, 'Woud you say this to Ms. T?! [the student's Black classroom teacher]' And

> she just looks at me, [as if thinking] No, of course not and then she just turns her head [away from me.] And then I'm like, 'If you wouldn't speak that way to her, don't speak that way to me!' And, I mean the behaviors are just— it's just like I'm not even there most of the time. And, they've never said anything like, I'm not going to respect you because of the color of your skin, but it is just very obvious [that this is why they misbehave]. They don't see me as a role model and they don't see me as somebody that they should have to respect.

When Jill did feel seen by members of the Black school community, namely her students, she felt that her observed being caused others to treat her poorly. Jill seems to imply, continuously throughout our conversations, that her Black students received a message from their Black administrators that White people were not their leaders and were not to be respected. It was also evident that Jill took this perceived message very personally. As we would have conversations after her work days, she seemed agitated, defensive, and a bit shrill when she would recall teaching episodes such as the one summarized above.

Jill expresses that she wanted to fit in. She made attempts to fit in by trying to or wanting to act and engage in the same way as her Black colleagues. Ultimately, though, she felt isolated. Isolation is difficult to grapple with. Levin (1988) shows us, "Getting in touch with our visionary self is not a process, however, which can happen in social isolation" (p. 264). While seeing herself as an observed being, she was not able to productively face her self as a double image (Seidl & Hancock, 2011). She also seems to have missed an opportunity to realize that in all of our country's institutions, this is how Black people are made to feel— isolated and left out. She missed the chance to be called upon by the experience of the others in her schools. This empathy could have fueled antiracist ways of identifying. How could Jill have moved past her feelings of isolation? Would it have been helpful for her to have more White colleagues? Would it have been helpful if she had read more literature around racism in schools? Ultimately, she could not leverage her experience as an observed being in order to become a keener observing being.

Vision as responsibility.

Levin (1988) explains, "Self and society are not separate systems. Needful changes in the one call for, are responsive to, corresponding changes in the other" (p. 319). While Jill made several comments about the importance of racial diversity and the need to advocate for marginalized groups, she did not connect this societal expectation to a need to make changes in her self. Rather than support and uplift Black students and staff, she felt herself to be marginalized. It was as if Jill thought her mere desire to teach and her presence in a Black school was all that was needed in order to advocate for anti-racism. However, Levin details:

> We can *work* with our sense of affliction to conceive, beyond mere 'strategies' of localized and immediate resistance, some appropriate modes of constructive engagement with society. We must expect, however, that as we commit ourselves to self-transformative work— to 'caring for the self' which is also a social practice, we will be confronted, at certain points of pressure, by powerful obstacles to our further development: limits that are manifestly social in origin. Moreover, we will inevitably encounter social conditions that distort and confuse this process of self-development, and even operate, sometimes, to suppress what cannot be assimilated by the existing institutions. (p. 319)

Jill was not prepared for the obstacles she encountered and did not engage in self-transformative work. The 'mere strategy' of showing up to work in a Black school was as much as she had done. Payne (2008) explains that people who simply show up in high-poverty, high-minority schools are simply using the institution to "position [themselves] with angels" and are "pretending that social marginalization does not do anything negative to people" (p. 205). Ultimately, Jill's refusal to recognize that Black people have historically felt invisible, disrespected, and ostracized led to a lack of personal development on her part and a missed opportunity to better see the effects generational marginalization has had on her students.

Seidl and Hancock (2011) also shed some light on Jill's responses to being observed and observing beings. They explain, "Many White people who move into antiracist work believe

they are doing something good or even altruistic and can be surprised when they find that their presence is considered suspect or unwanted" (pp. 701-702). As Seidl and Hancock warn, if White teachers are ill-prepared for this response, they may unnecessarily personalize these responses. Despite struggling in the Black school community, Jill felt strongly that, as a White teacher, she should be working in non-White schools (as referenced earlier in this chapter, a non-White school setting seemed essential to her). However, she had not expected to be treated as someone who was unwanted. Perhaps this contributed to her unwillingness to re-vision her identity. Additionally, her unwillingness or inability to cultivate relationships with those observing her being caused her to lack the sight needed to identify in new ways.

Jill might have had the opportunity to engage with her colleagues in ways that helped her find a productive place, a fertile space, in her school. However, her feelings of isolation prevented her from developing necessary relationships. Casey (2009) explains, "The more I feel myself to be isolated (not only geographically but also socially, culturally, linguistically, etc.), the more I will tend to find my surroundings desolate; and the more I perceive these surroundings to be themselves desolate, the more I will feel isolated in various ways" (p. 197). If a teacher is working to support an antiracist agenda, and if that teacher is trying to identify in antiracist ways, perhaps a necessary accompaniment to seeing and being seen is interacting with others and cultivating relationships with others. Cultivating these relationships will prevent isolation and support the White teacher as she identifies in the Black school.

Ultimately, while Jill was not blind to race as a phenomenon, she was blind to how Whiteness, including her own Whiteness, reifies systems of oppression for Black people. Levin (1988) claims that too many in our modern society are blind and resist the light of vision available within the Being of beings. Jill's insistent focus on how she, a White teacher, was

being marginalized showed her inability to see fully the socio-historical nature of racism in schools. Levin explains further, "The images of reality are systematically derealized, as the images which serve the narcissism of our present subjectivity take on the halo of truth and an overpowering reality" (p. 126). Vision is not an opportunity to realize the self, as individual, independent of society. Vision, as the act of seeing and being seen, is instead an opportunity to find the self's place in and responsibility towards society. Levin shows, "Vision is nature's gift of a possible *adventure* in the social, or cultural order. It is not only an opportunity for individuation; it is also at the same time a project of responsibility for the social order as a whole" (p. 56). Jill was ultimately not prepared to see either her self as a responsible member of her school's society and continued to derealize the images presented in her Black school in self-centered ways.

To Cultivate the Landscape: Interacting With Others

As I initially opened up the concept of the terrain, I discussed the connection Casey (2009) makes between culture and place, showing that there can be no unimplaced culture. Casey also makes an etymological and experiential connection between culture and cultivating. He shows:

> *Culture* and *cultivation* were synonymous in Middle English, a reflection of the fact that both words derive from the Latin *cultus*, worship. *Cultus* in turn stems from *colere*, to take care of, till, occupy, dwell. The mention of 'dwell' forewarns us of a curious twist in the history of the word culture. Despite its current connotations of 'higher' learning, this word has profound roots in the land and the soil. (p. 230)

Culture has much to do with cultivating, particularly when we consider the cultivation of relationships. In the places we dwell, we not only cultivate physical spaces, we also cultivate relationships. These relationships are key if we are to feel implaced, rather than lost or isolated as

Jill had felt since she had failed to responsibly curate relationships with staff and students at her school.

As the White teacher experiences her self as an observing being and an observed being, she works to negotiate new ways to identify. Much of this negotiation is done through interactions with others. Levin (1988) clarifies, "The self is not self-created," rather, "[m]uch of our so-called 'inner life' is really nothing but internalized social control" (p. 300). Our process of identifying self is linked with how we internalize our interactions with others.

The depth of vision and cultivation.

In this regard, Kelly worked diligently at her relationships with others and those interactions helped her identify over her years working in Black schools. However, as I discussed above, Kelly avoided explicit discussions around race and, therefore, exemplified the race-evasive behaviors highlighted in first-wave White identity studies (Jupp, Berry, & Lensmire, 2016; Jupp, Leckie, Cabrera, & Utt, 2019). What might Kelly have been missing as she internalized her relationships with others without specifically recognizing the dynamics of race? What did she miss in terms of her own identity development, and what opportunities did her students, their families, and her colleagues miss out on? What depth can be developed in a relationship if something as culturally significant as race is not directly acknowledged?

Kelly certainly showed a great deal of care for her students and their families; she wanted her students to thrive and their families to feel welcomed in the school. Was Kelly's clear care around cultivating these relationships enough, or was something missing? Pennington, Brock, and Ndura (2012) studied two White teachers' understandings of their identities and how those understandings influenced their relationships with students of color. They felt that cultivating caring relationships without a clear recognition of a racialized world is problematic:

> A complex notion, White privilege combined with White teachers' positions of privilege in schools can encourage color-blind caring as teachers can be focused tightly on themselves as the ones caring acting [*sic*] in socially determined ways. Teachers' positions afford them the power to construct caring relationships in ways they deem appropriate. (p. 767)

When Kelly was teaching elementary school, she worked with a student, Harold, who displayed certain aggressive behaviors. Harold, she explained, cursed at her and yelled at her on a regular basis. Kelly maintained that her persistent forgiveness, combined with her insistence that he act better, led him to behave more appropriately in school and, eventually, they built a caring relationship. For about three or four years after Kelly finished teaching Harold, she and her husband at the time would take him shopping for back-to-school things. She explained that before taking Harold shopping, she would talk with his dad first: "I always checked with his dad, like, 'Look, we don't mean to step on your toes.'" Knowing the nature of my dissertation research, Kelly thought I was wanting her to use racialized language always in our conversations. So, while talking about Harold and whether or not she and her husband were stepping on his dad's toes, she wondered to herself if this situation would have been different if Harold were White. She didn't think so.

It was clear that the relationship with Harold changed Kelly. Throughout our conversations, Kelly came across as tough and no-nonsense. However, when she talked about Harold she openly cried. This gesture of openness and vulnerability showed how Harold likely softened Kelly and influenced her way of being. Despite the seemingly positive changes Kelly went through because of the relationship she patiently curated with Harold, I cannot help but connect her experience with the type of White-teacher-as-savior archetype put forward in movies and academic literature (Brown, 2013; Cammarota, 2011; Sondel, Kretchmar, & Dunn, 2019). Likely, there is an opportunity Kelly missed to enhance her relationship with Harold and to

identify further in ways that are mindful of society's realities. As she described taking Harold out for clothes she commended him for spending the money she gave him wisely (i.e., looking for good sales so he could buy more items), but she did not once recognize how systemic racism and the cycle of poverty was what landed Harold and his family in the situation of not being able to afford back-to-school items (Morgan & Amerikaner, 2018).

Perhaps some would argue that what Kelly did for Harold and the work she put in to cultivating this relationship was commendable. But that type of behavior can also be viewed as a maintenance of White hegemony. Kelly seemed to think that if she would "just be nice" to Harold and others in her school setting that this would be all she could do to help (Picower, 2009). According to Picower, this focus on just being nice "maintain[s] White innocence" and absolves White teachers of the role their Whiteness plays in systems of oppression (p. 206). Without a recognition of the role her own race plays in her schooling institution, Kelly's relationships and identity processes lack depth. Levin (1988) explains:

> According to the depth of feeling in which our vision is rooted, the depth of awareness from which our vision is drawn, such is the extent of our capacity to see with eyes of compassion— and make visible, in the world of our living, what those eyes see a need to accomplish. (p. 252)

How truly deep can our relationships be if we do not see each individual as rooted in a socio-historical way? As I explain in the opening to this section, there is no unimplaced culture. We are all linked to the unique place in which we have developed as individuals. Harold's life, and the lives of all Kelly's Black students, are linked closely with the deep roots of racism. How profound can her relationship be with him, even if it stems from her honest caring, if she has ignored such a key part of his experience in this world? If this relationship lacks depth, then Kelly is not really gaining the vision she needs to see her self fully as an anti-racist educator.

In addition to being nice, Kelly focused a lot on the concept of respect as she discussed her relationships with not just students but their families as well. Kelly felt that respect was not something automatically earned through being a teacher. Instead, Kelly insisted that it was through relationship-building that she earned the respect of her students. Through inviting her students and their parents to judge whether Kelly was worthy of respect, she attempted to open herself up to them. However, as she invited their judgment did she look in to judge her self? Did she question what it means, as a White person specifically, to earn the respect of Black persons?

In our first conversation, Kelly models what she would say to her students about respect:

> I said [to my students], 'You don't know me. It's- I have to earn it [your respect], just like you have to earn it.' You know? And I remember a couple of girls, a couple of Black girls, that, you know…I remember Tammy, I can still remember it, I remember her saying, 'Well, my parents said I have to respect [you].' And I said, 'Ok, and I'm going to respect that. I just want to let you know that I am ok with the fact that, yes, I'm an adult, yes, I am your teacher, but you don't know me.'

It was very important to Kelly that she earn, or cultivate-with-intention, a respecting relationship with her students. Kelly felt an equal sense of responsibility in terms of cultivating her relationships with parents. One of Kelly's key strategies in terms of communicating with students' families was her tone. She described how she thinks about her tone when meeting with a parent: "I wouldn't even know how to use slang if I tried, but [I try to be] just casual [with my tone]— and I'm aware of the language I'm using." Kelly tries to "adapt to her audience" by replicating the formality she detects in their own tone. It seemed as if Kelly did not want to make parents feel intimidated by the institution of the school and thought the tone she used could help cultivate important relationships. As Kelly challenged her students by saying, "but you don't know me," and attempted to match her tone to that of students' parents, I wonder what she felt she knew about her *self* in these moments. She invited the students to judge her self and then

nearly hid her self through her speech with parents. What did she want students to find? What did she want parents to hear? Or was her openness to them in some way a cover-up of her self?

Kelly did show some fear around how others would perceive her as she attempted to be open with students and parents. More than with students, she worried about how parents would receive her because of her Whiteness. During our first conversation in the winter of 2017, while Kelly was serving as a guidance counselor, she describes one experience with a parent:

> I've had a parent at the beginning of this school year. I worked with her one son last year during the school year, and I was helping her with something. She has two boys at the one school, and I was helping her do something. And, she said, oh… what did she say? 'I don't mean to sound insulting…' And I'm like 'Son of a bitch. I'm helping you out, like where are we going with this?' And she said, '…but you White people in this building have been nothing but kind to me and my boys.'

Kelly was clearly afraid that the mother was going to complain about their interactions or the school as a whole. However, she relayed this anecdote with what seemed like pride. She was pleased to be perceived in a positive way. What caused her fear and subsequent relief, or pride? Perhaps it was something she feared in herself that she had not fully addressed that caused her to act in certain ways with students and parents.

Again, Kelly showed an openness and vulnerability in how she cultivated relationships with the Black members of her school community. She wanted them to have access to resources and recognized the importance of parent involvement in schools (Barger, Kim, Kuncel, & Pomerantz, 2019; Lareau & Horvat, 1999; Lee & Bowen, 2006). However, she lacked a willingness to address the racialized comments made by people such as the parent referenced in the anecdote above. Kelly was notably irritated when the parent began her comment and seemed to anticipate a racialized remark. Also, Kelly did not address her reaction to the parent's use of the term "White people." According to Gadamer (2004), "Openness to the other, then involves recognizing that I myself must accept some things that are against me, even though no one else

forces me to do so" (p. 369). In this situation, the thing against Kelly is her ability to deal with the role of Whiteness in systems of oppression. Her ability to be open with parents and open with her own development of self was slightly hindered by this unwillingness to recognize the full socio-political nature of her relationships with Black members of the school community.

Finding stable ground: Welcoming the other.

While Kelly's relationships might have been somewhat lacking in terms of her openness to the influence of race, they still seemed to sustain her and provide her some stability. After all, Kelly had been in her predominantly Black school district for decades and insisted she would never leave. However, what happens when there is no stable ground built through cultivated relationships, perhaps even despite some effort? Specifically, a few of my participants noted tumultuous relationships with administrators or other colleagues. Actually, the relationships Kelly felt the wariest of, and seemed to spend the least time trying to cultivate, were her collegial relationships. She felt the most negative about teacher-administrator relationships. Kelly used the word support a lot when discussing relationships with administrators; she felt that the onus was on the administrator to support the teacher, and through that support, build a productive relationship. For her, this supportive relationship had a lot to do with why White teachers who she had known had quit teaching:

> So, I just think you can have— you can be, you know, in the worst school, in the worst part of town, [but] I think if you have a strong, solid, supportive principal, you know, somebody that makes you want to work harder, to be better, and supports you, then that makes all the difference. You take that same school and you have a shitty principal, you don't want to get out of the car, you have no drive [to go into the school building for work].

While Kelly had some negative experiences with previous administrators, she was determined not to let that interfere with her attitude towards her job. It seemed as if Kelly had cultivated a place for herself in her school through other relationships. But, this was not the case for Linda.

Linda's sour relationship with her principal directly led her to leave her school in the middle of an academic year. It seemed that several instances deterred Linda from even attempting to cultivate a relationship with her principal. For example, in Linda's first months at her school she found out, through talking with the para-professional in her classroom, that another para-professional had called her racist. The conversation was over-heard by the aid in Linda's room, who then told her about the conversation. Linda, who identifies as a very assertive person by nature, confronted the para-professional who had called her racist. She wanted to settle the issue and did not feel comfortable with someone thinking so poorly of her. The accusation shook Linda's stable sense-of-self; she did not identify as racist. Linda found out that the reason the para-professional felt she was racist was because Linda only held the hand of her one White special needs student during the morning when the students were getting off the bus, and did not hold the hands of any of her Black special needs students. Linda explains to me, and had told the para-professional, that it just happened that the White student had the most significant physical and social needs of all the students and, so, his hand needed to be held for that reason.

Being called a racist had an immediate impact on how Linda felt about her self and her role in her school; she says, "I was torn up, like really torn up. I don't like to cry in front of people, [but] I was sobbing in [a colleague's] office. I mean, [I was] hysterical." She felt that the para-educator should have known that she chose to work with a majority Black population and that this choice should show her commitment to anti-racism. She says, "I'm here because this is where I want to be and I want to be working with *these* kids."

Linda wanted to resolve the tension, so she went to her principal, a Black woman, who she thought could serve as a productive mediator for her and the para-educator. When Linda went to describe the accusation to her principal and express interest in setting up a meeting, she

recalls her principal saying “I was making too big of a deal out if it” and that the terms racism and racist were “trendy in society right now.” Her principal “was [still] going to set up a meeting for us to talk” but it never happened. Wanting to resolve the situation and talk through the accusations, Linda followed up once more with her principal, who responded, “’Is it really necessary?’” After describing this event, Linda trails off into another anecdote. She had no words left to help her negotiate this event.

While it is not the obligation of Black persons to help a White person grapple with systemic racism, what damage was done to all parties by not having a conversation about the para-educator’s accusation? Without a need for blame-placing, we can question what all parties, Linda, the para-educator, and her principal, missed out on through this avoidance. In what ways could they have each yielded to the other? What opportunities did Linda miss in terms of both cultivating relationships and learning about her self through being an observed being? Reflecting on her own, continued lack of relationship with her principal, Linda summarized that the event described above, “really set the tone for the rest of our relationship and conversations. And, I mean, we pretty much avoid[ed] each other.” Linda went on to have several other interactions with her principal, all of which led her to believe that the principal had no interest in cultivating a positive relationship. Linda felt that this had a lot to do with how the principal perceived her and her actions as a White teacher; she felt unable to break through her principal’s perceptions in order to cultivate a productive relationship.

It did not seem, though, that the infertile ground upon which Linda’s relationship with her administrator stood affected her ability to cultivate relationships with other colleagues. Linda had some positive experiences with the Black teachers in her school. Particularly, she built a productive and friendly relationship with a Black kindergarten teacher. As Linda shared different

experiences she had with this Black colleague, a note-worthy triad developed between her self, the kindergarten teacher, and Linda's administrator. In some ways, it seemed that Linda, and her colleague, thought that if Linda could not till the ground to cultivate a relationship with her principal, then maybe someone else could do that for her. What was this Black kindergarten teacher willing to offer Linda and in what ways did Linda give herself over to this woman that allowed for a more productive relationship? Was this relationship, though, acting as a barrier to Linda's own, direct relationship with her principal? If a relationship is difficult to cultivate does that mean it is time to give up and head for more fertile ground? What had the principal's own experiences with systemic racism done with her identity? In what way had this administrator's past experiences caused her to not fully invest in a relationship with Linda, a White educator?

During our first conversation in February 2017, Linda described one difficult conversation she had with her principal about logistics for a field trip. A parent had showed up the morning of the field trip requesting to be a chaperone, despite not having filled in the necessary forms. Linda also knew that this parent had recently been incarcerated. She was concerned about whether or not she should allow him to chaperone, so she sought the advice of her principal. When she went to her principal before leaving for the field trip, she was harshly admonished for being nosy and inappropriate; her principal felt that she should not have known about this parent's recent incarceration. When Linda later talked through this interaction with her Black colleague, the kindergarten teacher said to her, "'I wish I had gone and asked her because it [the principal's reaction] would have been different.'" What was Linda missing in this charged incident that might have plucked a nerve for her principal? And what did Linda's colleague pick up on that allowed her to empathize with Linda's concerns? Perhaps Linda did not recognize the

racialized connections that can be made between Black men and violence. However, Linda's administrator might not have recognized Linda's ultimate concern for her students.

Linda also seemed to feel that if her friend could not communicate with her principal on her behalf, then at least she could, in some ways, absolve Linda for not being able to cultivate a relationship with the principal. In some instances, Linda assumed that some of her colleagues were exasperated, as Black women, with their Black administrator. If these Black, female teachers were put off by the principal, perhaps Linda thought it meant it was okay for her to feel similarly. Linda relays an experience she had in a back-to-school staff meeting:

> The principal said— I wish I had written down the direct quote at the time— but, she said how lucky she felt to have a strong majority African-American staff and, of which, [is approximately 98 percent African-American]… and of that staff, 80 percent went to traditionally Black colleges and 'I just wish it was more.' And the kindergarten teacher looked at me, because she was sitting right there, and she said, 'Did she really just say that?!'

It seemed that in moments like this, Linda felt that if her Black colleagues were as incredulous as she was then it meant that perhaps this administrator was just difficult to build relationships with, on an interpersonal level. At the same time, while Linda did not at all object to promoting the success of Black professionals and students, she felt that all of the actions of the principal pointed to not just the support of Black students and staff, but the isolation of White staff, as separate from the school community. This caused Linda to, herself, feel socially isolated and unsupported in her desires and efforts to be an anti-racist educator.

Again, what opportunities were missed here both by Linda and her administrator? In what ways might they have each yielded to the other? Levin (1988) explains:

> 'Yielding' is a marvelous word; it will facilitate our access into the primordial dimension of our visionary experience. 'Yielding' means giving up and giving over; but it also means allowing, accepting, and receiving. In other words, it speaks of the unity or identity of the two, the two as one. That which is yielding, then, is a oneness, a harmony of opposites, which can become two-fold: a giving and a receiving …. (pp. 60-61)

Linda and her administrator had completely closed themselves off to a relationship. But what could her administrator have offered her? Linda likely missed out on the sensitivities present in her communication with Black persons. If both parties had been willing to yield to one another, and be open, Linda's visionary project might have been a bit more successful. In chapter two, I explain how upset I was that a father of my student insisted I get to the bottom of who had started a fight his son was involved in. Thankfully, my Black administrator was yielding, and offered me a better view of the situation when she explained that schools were likely the only places the Black people in our community could find some sense of justice. I was also open to receiving this perspective. Linda's administrator might have been able to offer such a perspective. What might have prevented her administrator from yielding? What challenges might Linda have faced in her relationships with others and with her self as a being observed by Black colleagues and administrators?

As I consider Linda's principal, I imagine that she might not be able or willing to cultivate a relationship with a White educator if she is too tired to till that earth. From Linda's descriptions, it seemed that her principal was committed to showing Black students that there was a place for them in academia. In that way, I would describe her efforts as activism related to educational justice. Gorski and Chen (2015) show us that people of color who identify as social justice activists in education can suffer burnout caused directly by White people within their work space or who also identify as part of activist efforts. We could imagine that Linda's principal, in her long career, had experienced racism from White teachers and colleagues. Also, we can imagine that Linda's fear of being labeled as racist (Case, 2012; Srivastava, 2005), was, in itself, taxing for her principal. Was it simply self-care that made her unwilling to yield to a relationship with Linda? At the same time, what was Linda to do in terms of finding some stable

ground upon which to cultivate relationships? She did show a desire to engage in anti-racist teaching. But, how was she supposed to sustain her willingness to be this type of educator if she felt isolated? Case (2012) shows us, “In the absence of social support, White anti-racists will likely be overwhelmed with feelings of isolation that may result in abandoning their strive for social justice” (p. 94). Was there a way for Linda’s principal to avoid burnout and for Linda to avoid social isolation?

Ultimately, despite her ability to till the earth and build relationships with some Black people in her school setting, Linda did not feel a sense of stability and felt pushed towards quitting teaching. Casey (2009) explains, “Without a sense of stable ground— when ground has become a literally sub-versive presence— we are lost: abandoned, desolated, and prevented from proceeding further” (p. 212). Without a secure sense of place, Linda likely felt unable to realize her identity and continue identifying as a productive, White teacher.

I began this section discussing how one’s experience of her identity, and the term landscape, are both verbs and nouns. The identities of my participants are both things and things to be acted on and acting beings. Their beings are observed and observing. The relationships these women have are generated from their identity and generate their identities over again. This tension between being and being a being while simultaneous navigating this duality through their relationships with others was difficult to balance for some of the participants. Levinas (1961/2015) explains, “The relationship between the same and the other, my welcoming of the other, is the ultimate fact, and in it the things figure not as what one builds but as what one gives” (p. 77). Could Kelly and Linda truly give to these relationships if they were struggling to negotiate their identities and the role their Whiteness played in systemic racism? Likely not. Linda especially had little to give over to her relationships since she was significantly struggling

with how to identify and was led to leave teaching. This points to the importance of the cultivation of relationships with others, as Levinas (1961/2015) confirms, “A meaningful world is a world in which there is the Other through whom the world of my enjoyment becomes a theme having a signification” (p. 209). Linda’s world in Black schools lacked signification so greatly that she left her career. For Kelly, at least some meaningful relationships were built, despite their lack of depth, which sustained her.

The Tree: From Roots to Immensity

So far in this chapter, as I have moved away from the metaphor of journeying and into the world of the terrain, I showed how the use of the word landscape as both a noun and a verb has something to show us about White teachers’ identities. Just like the term landscape, White teachers are both beings and are in the process of being a being. They accomplish this duality through vision (as observing beings and observed beings) and cultivation (cultivating relationships with others and being cultivated by those relationships). As I continue to move forward within the terrain, it might be helpful if we were to position the White teacher, in some way, within the terrain, the landscape. The metaphor of the tree as part of the landscape might have something to offer as we continue to consider the White teacher’s identity development.

As I was in the midst of having conversations with my participants, I came across an excerpt on judgment by Ram Dass (2016):

> When you go out into the woods and you look at trees, you see all these different trees. And some of them are bent, and some of them are straight, and some of them are evergreens, and some of them are whatever. And you look at the tree and you allow it. You see why it is the way it is. You sort of understand that it didn’t get enough light, and so it turned out that way. And you don’t get all emotional about it. You just allow it. You appreciate the tree. The minute you get near humans, you lose all that. And you are constantly saying, ‘You are too this, or I’m too this.’ That judging mind comes in. And so I practice turning people into trees. Which means appreciating them just the way they are. (n.p.)

Certainly, there are some concerning aspects of Dass' comparison when we think of racialized identities. For example, he encourages us to "just allow" people as we allow trees, without getting "all emotional about it." As I showed in chapter two, emotionality does have quite a bit to do with being a raced individual in our current socio-historical/political climate, one that is steeped in racist policies. However, we can appreciate looking at the tree in a way that acknowledges how it got to be what it is, its rootedness and its changes. Unspoken in Dass' metaphor comparing people and trees is the unfinishedness of trees. Bachelard (1958/1994) introduces, "Never, in the dream world, does a tree appear as a completed being. According to a poem by Jules Supervielle, it seeks its soul" (p. 200). In this way, the metaphor of the tree-in-the-landscape resists the implication of an ending, a finish, that is inherent in the journey metaphor. Additionally, it still serves to give the White teacher room for growth.

In addition to a sense of unfinishedness and potential for change, the metaphor of the tree allows for the uniqueness of each individual's identity development. Dass' (2016) excerpt highlights the uniqueness of each individual tree; we could imagine that from Dass' perspective, even a tree of the same type as another would be appreciated for its very specific qualities which make it stand out. At the same time, the tree is enrooted and affected by the environment around it. This tension and duality between the individual and the influence of the environment on the individual is important in the development of the White teacher; it helps the White teacher avoid stereotyping others. Additionally, this duality prevents the White teacher from relying on "typical" ways of being White that simply reinforce White privilege and racist institutions.

It is certainly damaging for the White teacher to not recognize the uniqueness of each individual student and their environmental influencers. Marx (2008) shows how ineffective White teachers are when they stereotype their students of color and do not recognize their socio-

historically rooted individuality. However, is it just as damaging if White teachers allow themselves to be stereotyped? Saffold and Longwell-Grice (2008) show how damaging it can be to "[mask] difference in the lived experiences for the development of White, middle class women as urban educators" (p. 204). In their research, they found that a lack of recognition of individual differences between White, female preservice teachers prevented opportunities for growth and development.

Several of my participants had experiences with their students that might have caused them to wonder if there really was much difference between themselves, as White women, and any other White, woman teacher. Jenna relayed similar experiences to ones I had also had as a White teacher where my students physically lumped me together with other White people, in a gesture that seemed to say, 'All you White people are the same.' Jenna explained that many times when another White person would come into her classroom, her Black students would ask if that person was a relation of hers. She explained that if I, for example, were to come into her classroom, her students would say, "'Oh, you're sisters.'" Jenna models what she would typically say to her students:

> 'No, just because we're both White doesn't mean we're sisters. Just because you two are Black doesn't mean your brothers.' But that's something that happens *all* the time. And then, if you say that to them, because I'll just say it to them sometimes, like, 'Just because we're White doesn't mean we're sisters. Just like you're not related to everybody in this room but you're all, you're all Black.' And they just kind of stop and they give a funny face and then keep on going about their day.

Jenna had managed to push herself to acquire a racially sensitive perspective through her experiences. She recognized the uniqueness of her students while also recognizing the marginalization they faced due to racist institutions. However, she also recognized her position as a White person and pushed back against normative White privilege. Would she have been able

to reach this awareness if she allowed herself to believe she was just like any other White person as her students would sometimes imply? Likely not.

Through the rest of this section, I use the metaphor of the tree-as-part-of-the-landscape to highlight the relationship that exists between the White teacher as a unique individual (her interiority) and her politically, socio-historically charged environment (her exteriority). Bachelard (1958/1994) shows the duality of this relationship when he explains, "The two kinds of space, intimate space and exterior space, keep encouraging each other, as it were, in their growth" (p. 201). If mindful, the White teacher's recognition of her self as a unique individual, apart from others, and her recognition of the true nature of her environment can lead to changes in her anti-racist identity.

Rooted in Space

Obviously, the White teacher does not materialize in her classroom having come from nowhere. She is rooted, just as the tree, in all her prior experiences. Levinas (1961/2015) explains simply, "Man abides in the world as having come to it from a private domain, from being at home with himself" (p. 152). The private domain consists of all that came before and all that exists at present in the lives of the White teachers outside of the public sphere of their classrooms. But what does it mean to be at home with oneself? At the very least, perhaps being at home with oneself needs to begin with a recognition of whatever constitutes this private domain. Certainly, if you don't even recognize where you've come from and where you currently are, you cannot be "at home" with your self. If the White teacher arrives in the public space, in her classroom specifically, with no recognition of her individuality (and is not at home with herself) nor of how her uniqueness may affect her interactions with others, what harm does that cause her self and others? White teachers cannot attend to the uniqueness of other raced

individuals if they have not first dealt with their own raced history. Ullucci (2012) explains, "Understanding others' cultures is difficult when you do not understand your own" (p. 89). But what else does the White teacher need aside from this understanding of her own culture?

All of my participants were eager and willing to reflect on their childhoods and their home lives through the lens of being a White teacher; they all recognized the ways race worked in their private domains while growing up. Jenna, Joy, and Linda all noted the predominant Whiteness of their childhoods. Jenna recalls, "I mean where I grew up it was basically middle-class; everybody was White; everybody in the surrounding towns was White; everybody I went to school with was White." However, she counters this recollection with her parents who "never put any sort of negative, you know, stereotypes or anything in my head." One example she gave was a Black baby doll her parents bought for her when she was younger; her parents explained that this was the one that was available at the store and that its quality was in no way changed because of the race of the doll. I wondered how Jenna was able to recognize the particular racial openness of her parents if she grew-up surrounded by Whiteness. However, she also revealed that her father's parents would openly make racist comments. For example, her paternal grandmother was baffled by her cousin's choice to date a man of color. Her grandmother had exclaimed to the family with incredulity that her cousin would have Black, or mixed race, babies if she married this man. Jenna noted that her dad managed not to "internalize" this attitude. Perhaps this experience, and the recognition of the difference between her paternal grandmother and her father, allowed Jenna to realize that one's attitudes towards others are an active choice.

Jill's and Kelly's experiences during childhood differed from Jenna, Joy, and Linda with regards to the presence of Whiteness. Kelly recalled that while she was in early elementary school, her predominantly White elementary school merged with another, predominantly Black,

school. She ended up becoming good friends with Black girls. She does recall that she knew other White girls who were friends with the Black girls but that their parents would not let them go over to the Black girls' houses; they worried about the safety of the neighborhood the Black families lived in. Kelly relays, about her own parents, "But my parents said they were never worried about me, because the girls' parents were always there." While claiming that her and her parents were not racist and did not stereotype based on race, Kelly would also, contradictorily claim that she did not think of these girls as Black. She recalls that when her parents asked her about her new friends, she described them as "tannish." In the same breath, Kelly both claims that she didn't really register that these particular friends were different from her but also that she was made fun of for being the only White girl who would go over to the Black girls' houses for sleepovers. She seemed proud of her self when she said that her sleepovers with her Black friends were the reason she knew how to braid hair and dance. However, a full recognition of the raced nature of her childhood was missing.

Jill did not relay any specific anecdotes, but took note of the 'diversity' of children at her school. Describing her town and neighborhood schools, she says, "We had a mix of cultures. I had a lot of Asian friends when I was really little. My town is very Jewish, so I had a lot of Jewish friends. I mean, I was in the minority not being Jewish." I was interested to know whether Jill was exaggerating the diversity of her schools, so I found 2010 U.S. Census data pertaining to her town (for the sake of anonymity I will not share the specific reference). Non-whites are the majority in Jill's town; specifically, Asian people hold the majority as a single racial group.

As the participants recalled their raced childhoods they all seemed very comfortable identifying the race of those around them and their own race (with the exception of some of Kelly's avoidances). Some, specifically Linda, expressed a little bit of guilt around being racially

insulated, but ultimately recognized that while their parents made the choice to live in a predominantly White area, they had not. However, not all of the participants seemed to recognize that attitude towards race is a conscious choice, and so did not seem as prepared to recognize discrimination, inequity, or racism. In exploring the nature of the questioning Being, Heidegger (1927/1993a) explains, "As a seeking, questioning needs previous guidance from what it seeks. The meaning of Being must therefore already be available to us in a certain way" (p. 45). As I interpret Heidegger through the lens of my phenomenon, I take this to mean that the significance my participants found in their teaching experiences as it related to their identity relied heavily on their previous experiences not only recognizing their raced worlds, but unearthing the nuances and choices related to that world. Jill, for example, seemed to take diversity, as she perceived it in her childhood, for granted. For her, people's race and beliefs have to vary in order to have a productive, tolerant society. However, she did not quite realize the unique socio-historical experiences of each raced group in the United States (for example, Asian-Americans have endured different struggles than Black Americans). As a teacher, Jill yearned for a diverse student population that replicated her pleasant childhood experiences. However, without the guidance of a more critical attitude towards what is required of a diverse group in this country, she was not able to understand the unique struggles Black people still face as they participate in public institutions (as was evident in her critique of her school's pep rally discussed earlier).

Joy, however, was guided by a more critical attitude, acquired by living in a household of progressive educators (her father, particularly, served as a model for her as he continuously critiqued his own school district's choices related to equity). While Joy grew up in a predominantly White, Christian town, she had experiences being frustrated by instances of discrimination and marginalization. Her zoned high school is driving distance from the

reservation where Sherman Alexie (a notable author) grew up. She pointed out that her school system had, at some point in time, banned one of Alexie's (2007) popular books. The inequity and unfairness of the censorship enraged Joy. As she described the banning of his book, she cried out "Sherman Alexie's banned and he lives here! Like, he lives…I could drive to his house!... It's just like, are you fucking kidding me?!" Despite her insulated upbringing, she was keen to notice injustices. On the contrary, for Jill, diversity was not a choice; it just *was*. These experiences provided different types of "previous guidance" that set Joy and Jill up differently for the "seeking" and "questioning" they did as White teachers (Heidegger, 1927/1993a, p. 45). Jill sought belonging and couldn't understand why she didn't easily coalesce with those who were different from her as she did in her childhood. This led to frustration and contemplations of quitting. Joy sought a more critical understanding of her students raced ways of being; she did not make excuses for her students that set them up for academic failure, but she understood that their actions were rooted in their raced experience of the world. Joy, then, was sustained by this ongoing seeking of understanding, justice, and equity.

Branching into the Present

> You are looking outwards, and of all things that is what you must now not do, …. Go inside yourself. (Rilke, 1929/2002, p. 12)

One's past is not the only part of their "private domain" that they bring into the public sphere. Above, as I worked to uncover part of what it meant for the participants to be "at home" with their selves, I discussed their raced experiences in childhood. Heidegger (1927/1993a) explains, "In its factual Being Dasein always is as and 'what' it already was. Whether explicitly or not, it *is* its past" (p. 63). However, this suggestion is a bit misleading. While my participants do bring their past with them, and that past affects their ability to seek new meaning, still they are drawn into and learn from new experiences outside the childhood home. Specifically, Casey

(2009) shows, “For the individual human being, the core of this more encompassing world may remain the home-place, out from which so much energy and so many memories and reveries proceed. But other places and groups draw us out of the intimate isolation of the home” (p. 179). What new “place and groups” did my participants encounter and in what ways did that bring them out of the “isolation” of their childhoods, if at all? In what ways can new situations, those outside of the childhood home-place, allow one to feel not just at home, but at home with oneself?

For some of my participants, their present romantic attachments seemed to develop their identities as White women and encouraged reciprocal changes within their teaching identities. Of my five participants, two were engaged or married to men of color. Jenna is married to a Puerto Rican man. As I have mentioned above, her students, when they saw pictures of him, perceived him to be Black-appearing. Jenna’s relationship with her husband, two step-daughters, and son guided her understanding of racism. As we were discussing experiences in teacher preparation programs, Jenna mentioned that the perspectives and voices of people of color were missing from her program. She felt that her alternative certification and master’s programs did not let her hear, from people of color, what it feels like to suffer marginalization, racism, and oppression. She explains,

> [It would have been helpful] if I heard other people’s experiences maybe who weren’t White. Not— I already know I have White privilege. I don’t need anyone to confirm that for me, …. Um, but, I don’t know… just to, you know, imagine what it’s like to be on the other side of it [White privilege], but it [would be] definitely helpful, it makes you, I think more sensitive and able to try to empathize more if you have a real person in front of you [who] can share their experience of real events that have happened to them, and real situations that they’ve been in.

Jenna’s relationship with her husband was what eventually allowed her to fully see and open up to the experiences of people of color. She recognizes the insularity of her White experience and

admits that seeing how her husband views the world, and how the world views him, helped her better understand the role of White privilege in the U.S. She says that her relationship with him, someone who is "such an important part of my life," and experiencing the world with him, helps her become much more sensitive to experiences of racism.

Jenna had already felt at home with the idea that attitudes towards race are a choice and already accepted Whiteness-as-privilege (without succumbing to it). However, prior to her relationship with her husband, she had not quite been at home with the tensions still present in this country around race. The experiences in her present, adult life drew her out of her childhood sense-of-home and added to her understanding of her position and the positions of people of color within the socio-political climate of our country. Jenna related a specific anecdote where racism became personally apparent to her. She and her husband had gone to Macy's to do some Mother's Day shopping for her mother-in-law. She relays:

> He [her husband] called his mom and double-checked exactly what she wanted, so he's speaking to her in Spanish. And we go to pay and the woman behind the counter was telling us about, you know how they always tell you about those credit card offers. She was speaking to us about that, and then we were like, 'No, we're good. Thank you. We don't come to Macy's that often and it just doesn't make sense for us.' And she was like [uses a whispered tone] 'Yea, I didn't think so anyway.' And I was like, 'What?' She said something about, 'I didn't think it was an option anyway' and whispered it. And I was like, 'Excuse you?!' You know, it just took me so off-guard because nobody's ever treated me in that manner. Um, and obviously I— I can imagine what it would be like, you know, for somebody of color, but I don't *really* know. That was the first time I was really like, 'Oh my god, she's saying that because I'm— we're— I don't know if it was because he was speaking Spanish on the phone. I don't know if it's because his skin is darker.

Experiences such as this allowed Jenna to feel more at home with the struggles of people of color. As she moved further into her teaching career, her identity seemed influenced by being married to her husband and mothering two dark-skinned step daughters and her own biracial child. To be clear, being at home with experiences of marginalization and discrimination did not

cause Jenna to feel complacent— though, she still had not quite figured out what this new sense of understanding meant for her as an anti-racist teacher.

At the time of our conversations, Joy was engaged to (and later married) a Black man. She did not discuss her husband much during our conversations, but did show how her relationship with him sometimes allowed for not only herself to feel more at home as a White teacher, but for her Black students to feel more at home with her. She explained how her high school students would express interest in who she was dating; they were particularly interested in whether she would or had dated a Black man. She details:

> And my fiancé now happens to be African American, um, and that earns me at least two kids' trust in a year. When my kids, kids who— because I, it's a small enough school that I teach kids now, I've had some of my seniors now for three years, so, they've met him, just at school events; so it's [her relationship with an African American man] is not a surprise. And, so, when a new kid will ask something [about her personal life], it's like, 'Oh, don't worry her husband's Black. It's fine.' So that adds a whole other dynamic of, like the type of White woman they think dates Black men. [This also] adds a whole other layer of like, 'This is none of your business' but it kind of makes my job easier so… like where you kind of draw that line of building credibility with kids without sharing parts of yourself that aren't really for them to know.

It is clear that Joy isn't quite sure that her personal life needs to be a part of her anti-racist teaching identity, but she does feel certain that it helps the students feel at home with her, which in turns allows her to think that the experience of being romantically involved with a Black man further carves out a home for her in Black schools. Joy did not, though, describe any ways in which her husband's experiences may have drawn her out of the isolation of her predominantly White childhood. Perhaps she had already felt at home with the dis-ease and tension present in racist institutions; this is to say she confidently recognized inequity and knew that there were steps she needed to take to undo the damage racism causes.

Both Jenna and Joy, though, seemed to have been prepared to seek nuanced meaning from their experiences in Black schools through the experiences of their childhoods. Perhaps

they were only available to learn from the new people and places of their present social lives because their childhoods primed them in this way. Heidegger (1954/1993b), in describing the nature of building and dwelling (which I connect with Casey's rendering of being implaced and cultivating) explains, "*Only if we are capable of dwelling, only then can we build"* (p. 361). Through the lens of my phenomenon, I interpret this to mean that only if White teachers are ready to be active, productive participants in their Black schools, only then can they build an anti-racist identity and a lasting place for themselves in the education institution. Joy and Jenna were capable of dwelling in their Black schools and so were prepared to make meaning from their present

Despite Linda's willingness to recognize her race, her position of privilege, and the Whiteness of her childhood, she still did not seem prepared to dwell in her Black school. She felt judged and critiqued constantly; she did not quite recognize that this experience of being judged is constant and omnipresent for people of color. She relayed a particular situation where she felt Black families were assuming things about her personal life which offended her. Soon after the November 2016 presidential elections, Linda overheard a parent make a comment about how she "must have voted for Trump" because she was White. She was very put-off by this comment and her self-described fiery personality took over and led her to ask the parent, "'What? Why? Because I'm White?'" Older students at her school [not her own students] had asked her if she voted for Donald Trump in the elections; however, she seemed more comfortable with their asking; as if the students new her better and she accepted their questioning as curiosity rather accusatory. She relays the questioning of two children, "'Did you vote for Trump… because you're White?' I'm like, "No, dear god! Like what?!' And I was like, 'Do you really think every White person voted for Trump?' And it was just, that's what they honestly thought."

I began this subsection with an excerpt from Rilke; in it he is encouraging his letter recipient to look inward for sources of new learning rather outward. In the midst of a socio-politically charged time, Linda did not take this opportunity to look inward. She did not question herself and ask: What is it about this questioning and these accusations that makes me so uncomfortable or agitated? What discomforts do I still have about my Whiteness in this Black community? As is often reported in the news media, the election of Donald Trump is representative of divisive times in our country. Some of this division is created by the drawing of racial lines. Linda seemed deeply uncomfortable being associated with the type of White persons who put themselves on the other side of the line as people of color. However, what was it about her, if anything, that caused parents and students to assume she would politically align herself in this way? Perhaps it was just a systemic perception they had of White people in general.

Linda took these accusations very personally and did not seem to connect the comments to deeper socio-political implications. Perhaps some inward reflection might have helped Linda realize that these comments were not a personal attack, but that she might have used them to learn more about how people of color are experiencing our current political climate. Understanding how your self fits into the socio-political terrain can certainly help one feel implaced and at home. Levinas (1961/2015) shows that identification of self has to come from negotiations with*in*: "The identity of the individual does not consist in being like to itself, and in letting itself be identified *from the outside* by the finger that points to it; it consists in being the *same* in being oneself, in identifying oneself from within" (p. 289). While Linda needed to gain, as she explained, a broader awareness of how Whiteness is perceived from people of color, she needed to use that awareness to re-identify herself. Instead, she let how others identified her (in this case, as a supporter of divisiveness and racism) affect her and bring her down.

The Immensity of Space: The Expanse Surrounding the Tree

> Simultaneously without and within, he goes forth outside from an inwardness [intimate]. Yet this inwardness opens up in a home which is situated in that outside— for the home, as a building, belongs to a world of objects. (Levinas, 1961/2015, p. 152)

If I continue using the tree as a metaphor for the teacher-in-the-terrain, we certainly know the tree does not exist in isolation. The tree is part of the greater expanse of the landscape. So, while teachers are rooted in their past and branch out through their present they are not limited to these intimate experiences. The tree, as it grows, is situated in a way so that it can take in the expansive immensity of the surrounding terrain. While in the previous sections I discuss how White teachers need to look inward, this is not all they must do. As Levinas (1961/2015) describes in the excerpt above, we all move forward from our inwardness into the world of objects, into the outside world. He points out that our place of dwelling, our feelings of being-at-home-with-our-selves, are and must be part of the outside world. Our inwardness is part of the greater immensity of all other beings we encounter. Just as teachers must start with a recognition of their own raced world, they must also begin with an understanding of the raced nature of their surrounding institutions.

When Linda decided to leave teaching, she acknowledged how much she had learned about herself and the raced world. She explains that while "there always would have been an awareness" of her position in a raced world, her experiences in Black schools increased "the level of awareness" she had. While many of her experiences were negative, she attributes the worry these experiences caused with heightening her understanding of how Whiteness exists in the world and how people of color may interpret Whiteness. She explains, "I mean, I could have been just as aware [of my race and race in general] but felt fine about it and it would have been very different, whereas I felt very aware but then very worried and concerned…. I was so aware

of my race." Prior to teaching, she was, as she explained, aware that she was White, that she was a raced being. However, the dominant way she understood herself was through individualistic character traits such as hard-working or sociable. Her experiences in Black schools pulled her further into the expanse of the world by causing her to realize how Whiteness can be interpreted by marginalized people who have experienced the consequences of racist institutions. Despite her inability to negotiate her new understandings without succumbing to negative emotions, Linda still became more aware of the raced world around her.

Joy was able to grasp more smoothly the immensity of the raced world around her. While Linda was not sure what to do with her new understandings and was instead crushed by worry, Joy felt empowered to make change. She names herself as a "systems person." She clarifies by describing what she learned from watching her dad as an example, "My dad is the person who, if he doesn't like something, he'll go ask the city council. We were— my personal motto is don't complain about things you can change." Joy's interactions with her students and colleagues allowed her to understand better the systems of oppression created by problematic institutions. Rather than blame her students, their parents, her colleagues, or herself for problems in her school, she turned to the "systems" she believed caused a cycle of oppression and marginalization. Since she was not from the city in which she taught, Joy took it upon herself to understand better the nature of de facto segregation (Bankston & Caldas, 1996), a system she perceived to be at work in her school district; she knew this to be an unfair and academically perilous situation for her Black students. She looked closely at the history around housing development and zoning policies in the city. Then, she went to meetings at the Board of Education regarding rezoning schools.

While both Joy and Linda became more aware of the immensity of the problem of racism, Joy felt she knew what to do with any new understandings she gained. She knew there was no blame to place other than on the institutions themselves. Linda, rather, seemed to feel there was blame to place and might have kept coming back to placing blame on herself. Krall (1994) shows how people suffer when they are not perceived by others in the way they intended. Linda felt herself to be anti-racist, but felt that others thought she was, as a White person, a source of oppression. While I explored how White teachers needed to look inwards and understand their own raced personal lives, it also seems that they cannot remain steadfastly focused only on their own inward journey. They must turn outward; but Linda did not. She could not negotiate her understanding of her identity with how she felt she was treated at school. While she was appreciative of the new awareness she gained around race, she felt she was "spinning [her] wheels" in her school and had to quit in order to "figure out what [she wanted] to do" with regards to anti-racist work.

As is natural within the purview of my research phenomenon, in this section and the two previous, I remained solely focused on the participants' experiences of their raced inward and outward worlds and how these experiences influenced their teacher identities. However, I am also pushed to understand that many other elements within these women's inward and outward worlds affect their ability to access raced understandings and sensitivities. As I have so intensely focused on experiences of racial identity in schools, occasionally I forget that all of these women had to contend with the challenge of simply learning to teach and developing a teacher identity at the onset of their careers. Jill would consistently bring up the importance of the challenge of learning to teach during our conversations. Jill had entered teaching through an alternative certification program (as had Jenna and Joy) and did not have a typical student teaching

experience. So, her first year of teaching gave her the immersion experience most prospective teachers get during their internship, or student-teaching, year. Even if Jill was not a new teacher, the circumstances of teaching can prove to be barriers to improved or changed practices if teachers are not supported by the administration or appropriate school policies (Kennedy, 2005).

Jill explained how difficult it was to not only have to take on the immensity of the world around her in Black schools, a world which she explains was new to her, but to also figure out how to best do her job and take on the, sometimes, challenging circumstances of teaching. She details:

> I personally don't feel like I was well-educated on, really, the type of environment I was moving myself into and I think that affected me a lot in my first few years because not only was I trying to be a new teacher, trying to do all that new teacher stuff, like understanding content and all that kind of stuff, I was also trying to understand an entirely different world from what I was from…. I was trying to get used to being around everyone so different from me and then having them get used to me.

As I mentioned in the sections above, Jill did not seem primed to seek new meaning and ask important questions of herself as she entered Black schools. However, what I sometimes overlooked was how burdened she felt by simply figuring out how to teach. Jill did not feel supported as a White teacher specifically, but as a teacher more broadly.

As I reviewed scholarly sources I had accessed throughout my doctoral program, since the focus of my studies was teacher preparation and professional development, I came across Worthy's (2005) in-depth description of one particular beginning teacher. In her study, Worthy describes a White male teacher, named Mark, beginning to teach in a predominantly Latinx school setting. The emphasis of the article was the lack of support Mark received from administration and veteran teachers as he struggled during his first years of teaching to manage the behaviors in the class and effectively communicate content. While race and culture were not mentioned once, the difficulties of preparing teachers for and retaining teachers in (Green &

Muñoz, 2016; Ingersoll, 2001; Weiner, 1990; Zhang & Zeller, 2016) high-poverty, urban, or context-specific (Tamir, 2010), schools were noted. Jill encountered similar struggles as Mark during her first years in her "high-poverty," "urban" schools. Jill noted the lack of support from her administration and how she experienced difficulties with managing the climate of her classroom with regards to student behaviors, similar to Mark.

I wondered why Worthy (2005) did not note the difference between Mark's racial identity and that of his students. The way she separates the task of preparing teachers to work with diverse others and preparing teachers for basic pedagogy is concerning. In my experience, and as I learned about the experiences of my participants, race and identity is such a critical part of teaching anywhere. As I thought carefully about Worthy's decision to separate basic teaching training and support from identity, race, and culture, I wondered what caused her to miss this connection. My supposition is that both Worthy, herself, and her participant could not see or attend to ontological questions when they were down in the weeds. By 'down in the weeds,' I mean that Mark was consumed by the minutiae of his day: the physical and literal tasks of record-keeping, lesson planning, and effectively managing classroom climate. These things, though, are part of the greater landscape of teaching and are not divorced from teacher and student identities. When someone is overwhelmed by the immensity of an experience, perhaps it is difficult to see the landscape clearly. I imagine how difficult it is to appreciate a mountain range when you're standing at the base. Mark, and Worthy, were not looking at the immensity of race and cultural, and the role these phenomena play in pedagogical relationships. Possibly, Jill was also still in the weeds and could not attend to the immensity of her experience.

I am inclined to think that Worthy (2005), in rendering Mark's experience, and Jill missed necessary ontological opportunities. Mark did end up persevering and becoming a

stronger pedagogue; I am not sure if Jill persevered as our relationship ended at the conclusion of the conversations that comprised this research project. While basic pedagogy, in and of itself, is important to master, it cannot be learned or practiced in isolation from the realities of our identities and how we live through our experiences with others. What about the call of the other that Levinas (1961/2015) encourages? What about our own needs to be fulfilled beings with a strong sense of identity-in-relation-to-others? Gadamer (2004) explains, "Openness to the other, then, involves recognizing that I myself must accept some things that are against me, even though no one else forces me to do so" (p. 369). While Worthy does not discuss any of Mark's struggles beyond a lack of support from his administration, Jill certainly did not recognize that her inability or unwillingness to delve into her own racial identity, the racial identities of her students, and the socio-historical nature of racist institutions might have been preventing her from enacting strong pedagogical practices. These things were "against her," yet she did not face them directly.

Neither Jill nor Mark (Worthy, 2005) seemed completely open to the racial differences between themselves and their students; nor did they seem open to racialized experiences their students faced within the institution of schools. While we cannot have our public school teachers struggling to the point of putting their students in academic peril, we cannot have teachers become lost or enveloped solely in the technical aspects of teaching. What might Mark and Jill have gained, and in what ways might they have moved past their struggles sooner, if they had recognized that they were not the only ones suffering in their classrooms? Their students' academics and senses of self were also suffering. Jill only existed inwardly, as Linda did, but perhaps for differing reasons. Jill did not open herself up to the "world of objects;" she did not turn outward to understand the immensity of the raced world around her.

This is not to say, though, that schools are without real institutional problems that affect a teacher's day-to-day ability to simply perform their pedagogical tasks in a successful manner. These institutional problems can be significantly demoralizing for teachers especially in high-poverty areas, where they are confronting school systems that have not fully dealt with the realities of marginalization and oppression (Payne, 2008; Reardon & Owns, 2014). Joy, who seemed sustained and racially aware as an anti-racist White teacher, encountered her share of problems which affected her pedagogical tasks and caused her to leave certain schools in her district, seeking out other schools that offered better support and structure. At the second school in which Joy taught, she encountered a non-supportive administration. She felt that the leaders of the school were intentionally 'out to get' teachers. It seemed Joy believed that the administration had no faith in teachers' skillsets or motivations. She described one instance where she felt an administrator intentionally arrived late for an observation so he could record that she had not met certain lesson expectations. However, those lesson expectations were met at the beginning of the lesson which he had missed. Joy had videotaped her lesson (not only for her own protection but so she could improve her practice) and used that evidence to file a grievance. In this instance, I am again reminded that the "world of objects," outside of the teachers' private lives, contains the mess of the racist institution itself, and that this mess can make the day-to-day pedagogical tasks teachers encounter even more difficult.

Intimate Immensity

> The idea of infinity implies a soul capable of containing more than it can draw from itself. It designates an interior being that is capable of relation with the exterior, and does not take its own interiority for the totality of being. (Levinas, 1961/2015, p. 180)

Despite the challenges of the day-to-day life of teaching, the teacher has an ethical responsibility to attend to her self and, as Levnias (1961/2015) describes it, the call of the face of

the other. I began this section by using the tree as a metaphor for the teacher-in-the-landscape. The tree attends to its interiority, its enrootedness and how its branches have grown out, and it also attends to its exteriority, the surrounding landscape. As I quoted Bachelard (1958/1994) at the beginning of this section, interiority and exteriority work together in order to encourage growth. The teachers in this study who seemed to struggle the most with both pedagogical tasks and their teaching identities had not dealt with either their raced interiority or exteriority. For Jill and Linda, their struggles caused them to either quit or to strongly contemplate leaving teaching. Joy and Jenna, the participants who seemed the most committed to teaching (despite brief moments of uncertainty) and successful in their current role, not only acknowledged both their raced personal lives and the raced world around them, but used the two of these to open up an *intimate immensity.* Bachelard helps us understand the possibilities of an intimate immensity: "Immensity in the intimate domain is intensity, an intensity of being, the intensity of being evolving in a vast perspective of intimate immensity. It is the principle of 'correspondences' to receive the immensity of the world, which they transform into intensity of our intimate being" (p. 193).

When we take Levinas' (1961/2015) idea of a "soul capable of containing more than it can draw from itself" and Bachelard's (1958/1994) intimate immensity, we sense that fully evolving beings need to be able to recognize and reconcile their interiority and exteriority. However, we also understand that someone who is leveraging each end of this duality and developing her identity in ways that are sensitive to the world around her is able to have her interiority and exteriority work to inform one another. What I interpret Levinas' and Bachelards' concepts to mean with regards to my phenomenon is that the White teacher needs to be able to recognize herself as a raced individual, as well as the raced world around her, *and* needs to be

able to use both of these understandings to inform a continuation of her evolving identity. This evolving identity should then influence everyday decisions and actions. What does this seemingly complex and profound process look like in daily life?

For Joy, the process of growing the intimate immensity of her raced teacher identity was part of even simple activities such as interactions during happy hours. With the recognition of her own raced world and understanding of the marginalization her Black students faced, she was careful with the ways she approached social conversations with acquaintances and non-teacher friends. Joy described herself as rather timid and reserved in college, but had a burgeoning social life, with many new social contacts, when she began teaching through her alternative certification program. She went out to happy hours with friends and struck up conversations with new people while out in public. Joy's social interactions were often with young, White professionals. She knew that there was a great temptation to relay anecdotes from her school day that confirmed people's stereotypes of "what a [predominantly Black, urban] school is and what kids in [city] schools are like." But she also knew if she did that she was playing a role in "perpetuat[ing] the stereotype" of her students and Black schools.

What does resisting a tempting happy hour story about her student show us about Joy's ability to build an intimate immensity? What significance does this have? Happy hour is certainly an interesting place in which to examine the identity development of a White, middle-class teacher. In itself, happy hour might be considered a privilege of the middle class, those who have jobs where work hours span the conventional nine-to-five hours and salaries allow for discretionary spending. It may also seem too distant from school. However, Joy made it clear that school did not leave her, and she did not leave school, as she explains, "You can't turn off those things that happen during the day." What stood out about Joy, though, was that she did not

just bring school home with her in a menial sense. We hear many teachers talk about doing lesson planning, grading, and other tasks at home (Linda referenced how doing these things would make her feel she was dedicated to her job). Instead, her teacher self was a permanent and consistent part of her whole identity. In this way, she was able to take her understanding of her own raced interiority and her raced experiences at school and then use this duality to inform a growing sense of self that permeated all aspects of her life, even happy hour.

Reflecting on her choices to curate carefully what she told strangers and acquaintances about her experience at school, she explains:

> They [people she would talk to in social situations] feed off of the [stories such as], um—'What?! Somebody called you a bitch?!,' or 'What?! Your kids fought because someone took their peanut butter sandwich?!,' you know? And, yes, those things were true things. I'm not inventing anything. But, it's not particularly productive. Like, what are you [the stranger or acquaintance] going to do with that story besides buy me a second drink? You're not really going to do anything to change that. You're certainly not going to teach.

Joy did struggle sometimes. The anger students express and the problems schools face because of the historically rooted racism within the institution of public education was sometimes overwhelming. Through always having school reside within her, she sometimes struggled to be around people who took race and privilege for granted, or ignored the concepts completely. She recalled sobbing in the middle of a pumpkin carving party with a new boyfriend. She was overwhelmed by coming home from an intense day at school and then going to a friend's house to carve a pumpkin with people who had no sense of the realities and problems caused by racism. However, the immensity of Joy's intimate sense-of-self knew what damage could be done if she, as she named it, perpetuated the stereotypes of Black students and urban schools.

Joy, mostly, seemed comfortable with an intimate immensity, with drawing the exterior world into her self. She seemed self-assured and empowered. However, we can also imagine that

Levinas' (1961/2015) concept of a soul taking in the immensity of the world around it could also cause some feelings of uncertainty. As I mentioned earlier on in this chapter, Jenna doubted and had trouble naming her teacher identity. She was trying to reconcile how her whole self was changing with how she wanted her teacher self to change. Perhaps she might arrive at the conclusion that her teacher self is part of her whole self. But during our conversations, she wondered whether her uncertainty "might have to do with things that have happened in my personal life," namely her marriage and children. Before marrying her husband, becoming a step-mother, and a biological mother to children of color, Jenna had felt she was a get-down-to-business type of teacher. She clarifies that she did recognize herself as White and recognize the students' own raced experiences. She phrased her initial perspective on her teaching self by saying, "'Yea, I'm different than you and you're different than me, but we're here to learn and I have a job and you have a job.'" However, understanding the experiences of her husband and having a biracial child in the midst of highly publicized racial tensions (the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement) brought increased emotions into her being as teacher.

Jenna called herself a "no bullshit" person in her classroom, but that mothering her step-children and son caused her to be more sensitive and patient with her students of color. While Joy grew the immensity of her sense of self via experiences in her school and brought that sense of immensity out into her personal life, Jenna did the opposite. Her personal life encouraged her to draw in more than her own interiority and rather than leave that as solely part of her personal life, she brought this newly defined sense-of-self into her school. Jenna explained how she feels her teacher identity is evolving and that manifests in the way she communicates with her students:

> I'm much softer as a person. I feel like I'm more motherly than I used to be and I have this thing in my head now, where I'm like, 'Ok, I'd want somebody to do this for my child, so I'm going to do this for somebody else's child.'

For Jenna, as for Joy, their identities as private people were becoming less separate from their teacher identities, if separate at all.

To be clear, an intimate immensity is different from the type of growth teachers experience pedagogically or shifts they might make from race evasion to race visibility. Intimate immensity is more of a manifesting realization than growth. While this dissertation is not focused on my personal experiences, I feel it relevant to share my perspective as I returned to public school teaching. After four years teaching Black students in an urban, public school district, I switched to being a full time graduate student. In the midst of my dissertation, I felt drawn back to full-time work. I ended up back in a different public school district working at an elementary school with primarily Latinx and Black students. I feel my pedagogical skills have improved slightly over the years, as I learn from colleagues, attend some professional development sessions, and apply more of what I learned in my graduate studies. I also feel that my recognition of my self-as-raced and the raced world around me has remained more or less the same, though I am still seeking out a better understanding of the nuance of racism, the ways racism insidiously seeps into institutions, and the ways that my choices reflect or support those racist institutions. What is different is the immensity that I have taken in to my self. It is not quite a measured change, and I don't know if an educational researcher would classify my differences as growth. But I see and take in the immensity of situations differently. As I describe it to my family and friends, I can *see* better. I see myself, my position in the world, and the position of others more clearly. My actions in all areas of life contain more patience and care than before. I did not move on in a journey. If I were the tree, I can now not only see my own interiority, not

only take in the vast exterior world around me, but I can also see how that exteriority informs my sense of self. I feel calmer, while still motivated, and capable of drawing in more than I can from my self.

In chapter two, I wondered how White teachers can prepare for or be encouraged to identify their own privilege and work through any feelings of guilt. I questioned whether this work could be accomplished in just one semester of study or if a teacher could be pushed to do this work at all. After talking with my participants, some of them bemoaned the lack of opportunity their teacher preparation programs offered them to understand the raced world around them better and the racism inherent in our institutions. However, I don't know if this preparation would have made much of a difference in how their careers played out. Even if Linda had taken a class on race and urban schools, would she have been encouraged not to quit? She simply did not seem ready to take on the immensity of race and racism. During one conversation, she explains her struggles in her schools:

> I was met with a whole different set of struggles [than she had experienced in the private setting she had worked in previously], one of them being something I really never had to deal with before, which was being White. I really had never been so aware of my own race working somewhere. Um, and that has been, I guess, brought to my attention so much that I am uncomfortable.

Linda's statement does make it seem that she had not really considered her own race before. This runs counter to some of her other statements where she remembers to be aware of the Whiteness of her childhood and grateful for the racial diversity in her undergraduate experience. What I interpret this statement to mean is that she had never had to deal with her Whiteness in the context of racism. She felt targeted by her race and had not yet learned how to separate herself as a White individual from the larger systemic issue of racism. She had not yet learned to take in

the immensity around her and use that to inform a more sensitive, action-oriented perspective on race.

Heidegger (1957/2002) states simply, "Thus we think of Being rigorously only when we think of it in its differences with beings" (p. 62). An intimate immensity requires rigorous consideration of self, particularly in reference to the differences between self and the exterior world. Earlier in this chapter, I considered the role vision plays as teachers are both observed beings and observing beings. An intimate immensity is a visionary project. The work of the teacher-as-the-tree-in-the-landscape requires a willingness to see. Levin (1988) explains:

> For vision is the gift of an existential capacity: a gift we are free to abuse or deny as well as cultivate. What we do with our natural endowment— how we respond to the gift of nature— constitutes the *character* of our vision. Whether, and how, we take up our visionary project: that is the measure, the test, of our character, our development of self. (pp. 55-56)

I would suggest that, first, teachers need to be able to open up their general sense of vision. They need to be able to first see themselves and then see the world around them. Then, they can begin to take on this ultimate visionary project, one that requires such rigor, in order to see how exteriority informs one's interiority. Levin (1988) states, "We need to *see* our pain and suffering and needs, as the 'effects' of changeable social arrangements" (p. 319). What is paramount here is vision, and specifically a vision that allows us to bring the world of objects into our own interiority.

Shadows and Reflections: Possibilities Within Doubt

> And your doubt can become a good quality if you train it. It must become *aware*, it must become criticism. … But do not give way, demand arguments and conduct yourself thus carefully and consistently every single time, and the day will dawn when it will become, instead of a subverter, one of your best workmen,— perhaps the cleverest of all who are building at your life. (Rilke, 1929/2002, p. 42)

Many things threaten the White teacher's ability to *be* successful within the terrain of Black schools. Doubt is chief among those threats. The White teacher questions: Do I belong here? Am I doing good? Or am I causing harm? Do the people in this environment want me here or does my presence offend them? Could someone else do my job better than I could? Earlier in this chapter, as I showed the shortcomings of the journeying metaphor, I explained how exhaustion and the metaphor of "running on fumes" was problematic. The exhaustion described in that section connected to doubt. I showed how Jenna would ask herself, "What am I doing here?" But doubt does not have to subvert or deter; it does not have to be problematic. As Rilke shows, doubt can serve to benefit the identity of the White teacher if cultivated meaningfully.

In chapter two, which was developed before speaking with my participants, I opened up the possibilities of White teachers' embodied emotions. Doubt is missing in that chapter but became a very relevant emotion in the lived experiences of the White, women teachers with whom I conversed. Doubt is relevant in the terrain. Within the landscape, our doubts are cast as shadows. This is fitting as we often use the term shadow when we talk about our insecurities and doubts. When we are feeling insecure and someone has made us think we are unimportant we say they overshadowed us. When we are certain about our decisions we say that we are doing something without a shadow of doubt. Shadows are often seen as sources of doubt and concealment. However, Levin (1988) shows us that shadows are, in fact, "phenomena of light" (p. 429). Light is the same source that allows for vision and vision is paramount in the development of the White teacher's identity. What experiences cause doubt for White teachers? How do they, if at all, learn to "train" their doubt and allow it to act as a "phenomena of light"? Can some experiences cast a stronger shadow than others and prevent White teachers from learning their way through moments of doubt?

For Linda, she did feel that certain experiences had a more powerful effect on her than others. As I discuss throughout this chapter, Linda did start to see her self as raced more clearly. She also began to be more sensitive to the exterior world and understand the effects of racism a bit. However, the negative experiences she discussed, especially those related to missed opportunities to cultivate relationships as I discussed earlier in this chapter, blocked out the light and inhibited her vision. She shares, "I feel like, just based on some of the negative things that happened, that it kind of overshadowed a lot of, more of the positive things and the things that were good." Linda did not really venture to think what could have removed the shadow. Her doubt about whether or not she belonged in a Black school community was met with an administrator who did not seem willing to cultivate a relationship (and Linda did not seem capable of breaking down any of the barriers towards building that relationship). While some might wish that Linda had let down her guard and separated herself as an individual from the actions of her Black administrator, was this really a possibility in the face of a long shadow of doubt? As I utilize the metaphor of the terrain throughout this chapter, in this instance it seems that the length of the shadow in the terrain was too far removed from the light. Linda could not find her way through the doubt.

For Kelly, the shadows of doubt never blocked her source of light. While I have discussed Kelly's problematic unwillingness to truly recognize race as a critical part of the institution of public education, she remained a motivated educator. She persistently felt committed to her position in schools of color. However, despite her tough exterior, she admitted to moments of doubt. "[There] were moments [in my teaching career] where I just wanted to cry. Yeah, I don't know how many times a kid was like, 'Get out of my face, bitch!'" It did seem that Kelly's insistence on separating her pedagogical work from race sometimes helped her in

moments of doubt. After admitting to feelings of doubt around her students' outbursts of anger and resentment, she claims, "But it was [the students' comments] never like, it was never derogatory as far as, you know, it was never a race thing."

As I mentioned at the beginning of this section and earlier in the chapter, Jenna also had moments of doubt. During the academic year in which our conversations took place, she was working with a particular child who happened to be dealing with a crisis at home. The child would often call her names, act aggressively towards her, and point out Jenna's race in a negative way. While Jenna doubted whether she was the best teacher for this student, her doubt was, as Rilke called it, aware. Through her doubt, she had an awareness that the situation was bigger than herself, and bigger than the child. She explained that in moments like the one she was currently dealing with, she can still see her self for who she is and can recognize the difficult situation her students might be facing in their personal lives. She details:

> Nothing that I've really done, from my perspective, has changed. There's just something else in there [the children's] life that's causing them to behave in a manner [where they attack me]…. They don't know how to explain to me, like, this is what's going on and this is why I feel this way. And then they get to a point where they're attacking me and the color of my skin. And that's, you know, probably not really what they mean. They just have so many things going on.

In moments like this, she describes her doubts about her presence in Black schools as something that "peek[s] in there." Looking closely at her word choice shows something about how Jenna navigates doubt. Her doubts only "peek," they do not overshadow. A peek still involves vision and not darkness. It seemed that Jenna used these moments of doubt to think more critically about her relationships with Black students as a White woman. But they did not prevent her from staying committed to teaching.

Levin (1988) clarifies something about shadows: "Shadows are not real and their presence is deceptive. Being unreal, they cannot be objectives of knowledge; they yield no

knowledge. By shading and concealing, they fall in the way of knowledge" (p. 426). Jenna realized that her shadows of doubt should not deceive her into thinking that she did not belong in her school. Instead, she was able to use shadows as a source of light. In situations where students were angry with her and pointed out her race in negative ways, she used this opportunity to understand better how racism has affected them and their family. While the situation caused her to feel negatively, she was able to learn something. She did not let misplaced name-calling fall in the way of what she could learn and did not let it deceive her into thinking she was not a good teacher.

As I have discussed throughout this chapter, Jill had many experiences that particularly caused her pain or doubt. She did not quite achieve the vision or immensity needed to sustain herself as a White teacher of Black students. However, this is not to say she did not learn something about her exteriority. At the end of our last conversation, Jill clarifies, "I am really grateful for everything that I've learned *here*" (emphasis in original statement). Jill means that she recognizes how much she has begun to realize about the complex ramifications of race in this country. She noted that many of her students faced a lot of challenges (though occasionally she framed these challenges in a deficit way with regards to the child's family). However, she realized how much harder her students had to work than she did to "still come to school and still try and focus and get their work done." Jill's statements here, while problematic, show glimpses of potential opportunities for new realizations about race, racism, and racial identity.

Through a reflection on the differences between her students' realities and her own childhood privileges, Jill was able to maneuver, a little, around her shadows of doubt. She was able to see more clearly when working with very young students and was able to express more gratitude for her teaching position when talking about them. Perhaps she misperceived their

youth as innocence, as if even young children do not experience the effects of systemic racism and do not recognize race. She explained how much she would dote on her young students and how they would tell her they missed her if she visited the second of her two schools one day. Jill claims, "They're [the young kindergarten students] not disrespectful *because* of your race. They'll be disrespectful because that's just, you know, because they're in a bad mood or something." I do wonder if Jill missed a chance to learn a lot more about her students and her self in these moments of reflection. Levin (1988) suggests, "Perhaps, if we can allow our gaze to wander, to come under the spell of shadows and reflections, and can learn from *their* way of being a more playful way to *be* with visible beings, we might at long last break the spell of metaphysics" (p. 438). As I read this passage from Levin and particularly interpret it in light of Jill's experience, I take this idea to mean that Jill might have had access to a better understanding of herself and those around her if she had given in more to her reflections and doubts. She seemed resistant and defensive when she doubted her place in her school. Only in brief moments of reflection did I see possible chances she missed to gain some increased vision with regards to her identity.

A Dialectic of Opened and Closed: Tension in the Terrain

> If I have changed the meaning of my whiteness, it is inasmuch as I have refused, whenever possible, to perform certain versions of it. When does seeing tip over the edge into refusing to perform? … Alertness and compassion. Seeing what is. Asking how it came to be. (Frankenburg, 1996, p. 16)

As White teachers begin to see more about themselves and the world around them with regards to race, racism, and racial identity, certain tensions arise. The White teacher might ask her self if there are some phenomena she sees, about her self or others, that she should just ignore. Are there some things that should be closed off, rather than letting them remain open and revealed as phenomena of light? Should some experiences or realizations stay in the shadows?

Do some experiences or realizations not warrant reflection on behalf of the White teacher? Also, the White teacher might question, as Frankenburg has above, when her sense of sight should necessitate action. What should the White teacher do with her realizations about race? How is she supposed to "refuse to perform" her whiteness? What does it look like for the White teacher to face these questions?

As we consider what, if anything, should remained closed off for the White teacher in the terrain of Black schools, Levin (1988) cautions us about our tendency to view the world from a distanced perspective. Letting ourselves be closed off in this way is damaging. Levin details:

> We, of the modern epoch, experience our world as a picture (*Bild*). Now, a picture is something we 'view'. The viewpoint of a view, however, is a distinctive structure of vision. Whatever the tragedy, however intense the pain, we can turn it into a 'picture'—something we can 'show' and 'watch', *without being touched* …. (p. 257)

We can think of many casual, everyday circumstances in which we remain closed off and untouched. For example, we might argue that many of us have become numb to gruesome scenes in television shows. However, as I interpret Levin's excerpt in light of my phenomenon specifically, I take this concept to mean that the White teacher could, if she chooses, view a moment of her life in a detached manner, not weaving her own racial identity into the way she experiences the moment. When some event or exchange occurs that is racially charged, the White teacher could choose to detach her self from that moment and, instead, view it solely through her "willful ego" (Levin, 1988, p. 341). The willful ego is capable of "confining and closing off" the self from the whole of the experience. For the White teacher, this means that her focus is on her self as a non-raced individual or that she does not see how racism has influenced events she experiences. From this perspective, it is not desirable for the White teacher to close her self off from moments that could shed light further on her racial identity.

Unsurprisingly, as Jill recalled various moments from her teaching career, she re-presented them as she remembered experiencing them and, even though her re-telling, seemed untouched as far as her racial identity. Specifically, Jill recalls a presentation she did at the beginning of a school year to introduce herself to her students. Rather than choose an activity where her students get to represent themselves in some way, Jill created a PowerPoint to show the students who she was. She explains:

> I had a story for every picture [in my PowerPoint presentation]. They are really unique pictures. Like, in one of them I was eating octopus and then the final slide is bringing me back to [this city] as a media specialist and I had the schools [I work at] listed.

Since Jill's race had been pointed out to her either explicitly or implicitly by her school's administration and some of her colleagues, Jill did always have race on her mind in some way. But, usually her thoughts around race were, as I have showed above, surrounded by doubt or fear. She recalled preparing her PowerPoint slides and the thoughts she had while sharing them:

> At first I was, like, I don't know if I want to show them [the slides] because I don't want to make it seem like I'm bragging that I've had all these experiences and I was fortunate enough to be able to travel and be able to do these kinds of things and then come back. Even so, because in the 6th grade class, when I was showing it to them, there were two paras, para-educators, in the room who are Black, and I was like, 'Oh god.' I know they're from [the same predominantly Black city as they worked in], they grew up there. One of them told me she's never been outside of the city. So, I was like, I don't want to make it seem like I'm kind of bragging, like, 'Oh, look at me!' But, I really wanted them to get to know me and these are the things that I've done that are interesting to me. I love to travel and I love animals, so I want you guys [her students] to get to know me. And I went on with it, but I was definitely a little like, 'Oh, I don't know if this was a good idea.'

As I consider Jill's experience and decision to share only information about her self, rather than gather information about her students on the first day of school, I think about Levin's suggestion that people are capable of viewing a situation without being touched. Jill's main view of this situation was related to sharing images of her self that, perhaps, she felt liberated her from being

just the White teacher who did not fit in with the other Black staff members. After she relayed her experience of creating delivering her PowerPoint, she shares her students' reactions:

> They [the students] still ask me, like every few weeks, 'Did you eat octopus for lunch today? Are you going to bring one in for us?'… They still talk about it. And they ask, 'Are you a vegetarian? But you like animals so much.' You know? So, they definitely paid attention and I don't think they thought of it as, like, 'Look at this White girl with all her privileges and experiences.

It seemed as though Jill thought, in this instance, she was excused from her Whiteness and could, instead, find a way to relate to her students that let her leave behind racism. Though, she missed an opportunity to get to know her students because she was closed off from understanding the deeply rooted nature of racism— she was so deeply entrenched in the shadows that she could not separate systemic, institutional racism from herself as an individual White person. Rather than find ways to let the terrain of Black schools open itself up to her so she could see better and *be* a more productive White teacher, she closed herself off and clung to qualities of her self that served little purpose with regards to anti-racist teaching.

In Jill's case, there seemed to be many situations like the one above that should not have remained closed off, or in the shadows. But, just because Jill had closed off experiences that could have been productive, does that then mean that all experiences should be phenomena of light? I think about Linda who, like Jill, struggled a lot with having her race made so apparent by members of her Black school community. Unlike Jill, Linda was willing or prepared to see more about her self and the world around her as I showed above. However, this new sense of vision came with a great amount of worrying and, in her words, paranoia. I wonder if Linda would have been able to stay in Black schools and continue to realize more about her self and the raced world if she had left these emotions in the dark. As she worried and fretted over her actions and

how they would be perceived, she second-guessed everything and ended up submersing aspects of her identity that sustained her and made her feel whole.

Casey (2017) warns, "Something more difficult happens when I am *divided against myself* in ways from which no previous experience or sound judgment rescues me. I find one part of myself directly at odds with another. I am a split self" (p. 245). When Linda became so aware of her self and her raced world, this brought on feelings of worry that divided her against her self. Outside of school, Linda is confident, sociable, and reassuringly commanding. These are qualities of her self that reassure her and "rescue" her in moments of doubt. However, these were qualities that were masked by the level of worry brought out by trying to navigate the tension of being a White individual in a historically racist institution. Linda recalls a particular moment where her confidence in her ability to do her job well and her worry over how others perceived her were in direct conflict:

> Now, *now* it's funny because this situation has made me very aware and sensitive to, like, is it bad that I make my kids walk in a line? Is it bad that I'm making them walk in a line, like, against the wall? Because I had a parent tell me that I was one, that I was the equivalent of one of the, a White police officer in the Freddie Gray case for making my kids walk in a line and stand against the wall while waiting for their bus. … So, he said, pretty much that I was treating them like I was a prison guard and they were incarcerated. So, the first day he said it, I just ignored him. Then he came back the next day and said the same thing and then started to go around to the front of the school where all the parents are waiting for their kids saying, 'Oh, look at that teacher over there. Like she makes them stand against the wall. Like she doesn't let them run around like the other kids who've been dismissed.' Because once the other kids get dismissed and get out the door, they're like, whoosh, just scattered. So, he's going around and then all these parents are like giving me the sideways glances.

Linda decided to confront the parent and shared with him, against her initial better judgment, that her students had special needs and needed different behavioral and emotional supports than other students. The man ended up apologizing for making his comments, but Linda still felt attacked and wished the man had decided to have a conversation with her rather than criticize.

While Linda was well-trained as a special educator and had sufficient experience, she lost her confidence in her abilities as a pedagogue. She explained that this situation "made me very sensitive to, well, how people are viewing me when I'm in the hallways telling my kids, like, 'Get in line. Get in line with your friends.'" While she was able to realize that the strategy of having her students walk in an organized line was beneficial for them and appropriate for their needs, her worry won out. She laments, "I hate being paranoid about all these stupid, stupid, small things that I never gave mind to before." What if Linda had been able to close off her paranoia and worry in this situation and other similar ones? Her reflections related to how she was being perceived as a White woman by a Black community, taught her a lot about race and the effects of racism. However, her worry led her to feel like a split self; this sense of being divided against her self seems to be what caused her to quit teaching. I wonder if Linda knew how to refuse to perform her Whiteness, as Frankenburg (1996) suggests, that it might have helped her close off her worry.

Being Underway Within the Tensions

Joy seemed confident in her ability to close off that which showed her little about her self as raced and the raced world around her. For her, if it wasn't productive in terms of helping her *be* as an anti-racist teacher, it was not necessary as a phenomenon of light. Instead, the biggest tension for Joy was knowing what to do with her understandings of race, racial identity, and racism. How could she refuse to perform her Whiteness? Was this refusal to perform Whiteness always going to be necessary to do what was best for her students? Rather than closing off this tension, Joy viewed it carefully as something to balance delicately. She gives a brief example related to race/racism and professional communication,

> It's that balance of, same thing in English, like do you teach them, like do you teach kids that might write or speak outside of academic English to write and speak in academic

> English because they're supposed to or do you explicitly say, like, this is how you have to write to get a job. But I always then wonder, well, does that then just perpetuate that that's not what a job could be, but then at the same time I still have to check myself if I'm in a room of teachers and people who are speaking or acting in a way that I don't think is professional, you know. I make assumptions about that and that's still— it's messy.

As Joy relays the tensions she deals with, it's clear that she hasn't been able to find, yet, the best way to view the tension. She certainly isn't quite sure what is best for her to do as an anti-racist educator. What does it even fully mean to be an anti-racist educator. Many scholars suggest, and I might imagine Joy would agree with them, that anti-racist education (and anti-racism broadly) is political in nature and is aimed at dismantling racist systems of power and policies (Niemonen, 2007; Kendi, 2019). Should she find a way for her students to access systems of power? Or should she be more critical of the systems of power themselves? Which option can she even act on? Can she really dismantle systems of power her self? Or can she just be more mindful of how she understands professionalism?

For Joy, the pursuit of these questions and the balance to be found in the tensions is where she resides within the terrain. It is the viewpoint from which she makes decisions and works to dismantle racism. There are some things, though, that she seems to close off from her view. Particularly, Joy did not find it worthwhile to view her self and her school through a lens of White guilt. Joy easily and willingly admits, "I didn't have a particularly challenging life, and, yes, I certainly was privileged in the sense that I did not have to worry about money." However, she counters this realization with unproductive conversations she had with staff and corps members within her alternative certification program and colleagues in her school district. She felt that her preparation program tried to divide corps members into two groups: White people and 'people of culture.' This made Joy feel angry and defensive. She gives one example:

> I got really mad at a district meeting once because they were putting up a slide about AP stats and I had the original printed PowerPoint. And that stat was like the percentage of

> students of color who pass AP [advanced placement] exams in the city. And they changed the slide that they presented to 'students of cultural backgrounds.' And I just got so mad because I was like, 'I understand what you're trying to say, but that's not actually what the statistic— like you're presenting a statistic and now you're telling me that I'm not a person with a cultural background?'

In this instance, Joy closes off any interaction where someone is suggesting that White people, due to their privileges, do not have a cultural background. Rightfully so, Joy recognized that this phrasing actually promotes race evasion.

Joy also thought it futile to have to verbalize White guilt constantly. She explained that the majority of conversations around race in her preparation program consisted of "White corps members essentially have to continue to explain their guilt" or "teachers of color having to constantly explain why they wanted to be teachers." She felt that the preparation program wanted teachers of color to affirm that they wanted to teach in order to "help their racial community" and that White teachers had to view their teaching position through a lens of guilt in order to be effective. While Joy recognized the importance of being race-aware, this approach to encouraging dialogue around race felt unproductive because it did not lend itself to full conversations about everyone's unique experiences of their racial identity, and it certainly didn't promote the type of action needed to be an anti-racist educator. I suspect that if Joy had been pulled into these conversations, they would have caused her unnecessary worry and would have distracted her from the visionary project required of someone trying to realize fully and act on their anti-racist identity.

What are the differences between Jill, Joy, and Linda's experiences of the open and closed terrain? What was different about how they dealt with tensions in the terrain? Jill, primarily, did not deal with the tensions at all. Fruitful opportunities to reflect on her self remained closed off and hidden in the shadows. Tensions caused Linda to feel on edge. What

should she have done with the tension between acting on her professional knowledge appropriately and understanding how certain procedures can be interpreted through a raced lens? Perhaps there was a way through this tension, but instead it caused a line to be drawn in the terrain of the Black school, a line that separated Linda's understanding of her self as confident and competent and her self as a White woman realizing more nuances about race/racism in a Black school. As Casey (2017) shows, this divided sense of self caused Linda to feel split, and she was not sustained.

However, Casey urges that though tensions can create edges, or lines, in the terrain, not all of these edges have to split the self. He encourages, "They [edges] are also moments of discovery— of finding out how it feels to be *underway* at various stages, which has its own pleasure and value" (p. 50). Joy seemed to have viewed tensions in this way. Tensions that seemed unproductive allowed her to discover what experiences were worthy phenomena of light and which could be closed off. Tensions also gave Joy the opportunity to reexamine her beliefs and look for the most productive way forward as she did when she contemplated perspectives on race/racism and professionalism. Joy seemed comfortable with her self as underway. It allowed her to forgive herself of her mistakes while at the same time still holding her self accountable for realizing the potential in her expanding anti-racist identity. She had no clear answers for how she might refuse to perform her Whiteness and was not always certain how or when her realizations about race necessitated her to refuse this performance. However, she found some "pleasure and value" in working within tensions.

Casey's (2017) use of the term *underway* brings me back to where I began this chapter— with a denial of the usefulness of the journey metaphor. One definition of the word underway, as applied to a person, is "embarked upon a journey; having started on a course of action" (OED,

2015). We are always drawn into the journey, with its reassuring implication of movement, of beginning and ending. However, a closer look at the meaning of underway offers one more possibility, "Of a process, project, activity, etc.: …in the course of happening or being carried out" (OED, 2015). In this definition, there is less emphasis on progress forward, towards the end. Levin (1988) urges us, "We need to give much more thought to the way we give our attention to that which shines forth in the field of light" (p. 63). How can we give our attention to this type of visionary project if we are in a constant state of journeying? Greene (1978), shows that true growth, or movement (if we find this word necessary or hard to avoid) does necessitate vision: "…the one who is submerged, who cannot see, is likely to be caught in *stasis*, unable to move" (p. 18).

Coming back to the excerpt cited at the beginning of this chapter, from Maguire's (1995) satirical representation of the land of Oz, the character Fiyero suggests that the "world unwraps itself to you, again and again, as soon as you are ready to see it anew" (p. 204). This is more fitting of the White teacher's experience of her identity. Rather than constantly journeying forward, she sees the world of Black schools anew as she is ready. The White teacher learns to attend to the landscape of the Black schools. She learns more about the terrain, her place in it, and her relations with others also in the terrain. Levin clarifies, "…because we are sentient and responsive beings, beings whose visionary existence is always inscribed into the intertwinings of our being-with-others, a sense of response-ability is inherently conceded by our vision from the very first moment on" (p. 259). In the final chapter I expand on what it looks like and how we can promote the response-ability of the White teacher if she is to attend to the terrain of Black schools successfully and act on an anti-racist identity. I open up possible insights that aim to bridge 'thoughtfulness' and 'tact', as van Manen (2014) urges.

CHAPTER FIVE:

FAR-REACHING: WITHIN, BEHIND, AND BEYOND THE TERRAIN

> ‘Maybe,’ he said hesitantly, ‘maybe there is a beast.’ … ‘What I mean is…maybe it’s only us.’… Simon became inarticulate in his effort to express mankind’s essential illness. (Golding, 1954, p. 89)

I was reading a book one summer during a vacation. My mother-in-law had already read it. She said, “That’s a good one. It really stays with you.” Typically, the books I enjoy the most really focus on character development, but this book, *Where the Crawdads Sing* (Owens, 2018), was a bit different. It treated the terrain as if it were a character. Reading a book where the terrain served as a character, and thinking about books that have stayed with me, I began thinking about this dissertation work and the phenomenon regarded within. The three novels I cite at the beginning of chapters one, two, and four stood out to me because of the characters rather than the terrain (though, looking back, the terrain was very much a force in the plot for each). All those novels had really stayed with me over time. But, the first two of the cited novels had a lot to say about journeying and that was not what my participants brought forward as they rendered their lived experiences as White teachers, as I show in chapter four. In many ways, I rely on novels for the great many things they show me about the world. I have relied on them as I have turned to, opened up, and thematized around the phenomenon under study here. So, where could I turn to enter into this fifth and final chapter? I found myself thinking of, disregarding, and then returning my thoughts to *Lord of the Flies*. The terrain is so much a character in this chaotic and tense story. But, I felt uncomfortable drawing on the themes of this novel in a dissertation centered on the identity experiences of White teachers in Black schools, perhaps because at times the plot is quite disturbing. However, I could not get my mind to move past this novel, so I thumbed through it again.

The titular character in *Lord of the Flies*, the beast, is a manifestation of the terrain, both the literal, physical terrain and the figurative, social-political terrain built by the boys. Simon, always the mindful, kind, and intellectual one among the group of boys, began to realize that the beast was not a real, physical creature, as the other characters believed it to be. Rather, he knew the beast to be, as shown above, "only us." This was not an idea the other boys could accept. Rather than name the beast for what it was, a representation of their fears and worries, a rendering of the worst aspects of themselves, they continued to describe it as an external source of evil and danger, something that had nothing to do with them. It is this theme in the novel that drew me into a consideration of the terrain of predominantly Black schools. I am particularly reminded of Jill in instances where she described her struggles with classroom management. She explains:

> And, they [the students in her library media classes], I mean they treat me like shit, like I'm invisible. … And it's just like [throws hands up in frustration], 'I've been here for an hour! And none of you pay any attention to what I've been saying.' I mean, all day long it's just me screaming at them to sit down, to stop running around, to stop fighting, to stop throwing things. It's hell. Um, and none of them have ever verbalized, well, 'You're White, so we're not going to listen to you.' But, I mean they don't need to say that. It's clear that that's what the case is.

Jill's experience reminds me of the chaos and tension we are meant to feel as we read Golding's text. There is some *thing* undergirding Jill's situation. Similarly to how the characters in *Lord of the Flies* create 'the beast' as a manifestation of their unease and unrest, Jill names the tension she experiences in her classroom with the term 'Whiteness.' But, what is she missing? What is her role in causing the tension and chaos? What part of her students' experiences is she missing out on? How could she have acted more tactfully? Simon says the beast is "only us." Just as the boys are unwilling to realize the role they played in generating fear, distrust, and chaos, Jill was unwilling or unable to recognize the active role she played in the creation of her

classroom environment. She was also unwilling to recognize the socio-political terrain within which her classroom was set. What did she miss that was within the terrain of the school system? What did she miss that was hidden behind her own unwillingness to truly see the terrain of the school system for what it was? What are educators and teacher educators able to understand and learn from Jill's experience?

As I pose these questions about Jill's experience, I am able to situate myself in preparation for engaging with this last chapter. Golding (1954) accomplishes many simultaneous tasks in his novel. He provides both an engrossing description of what is **within** the physical terrain of the island and draws out themes that show what lies **behind** the physicality of the island in terms of the tense, chaotic socio-political terrain the boys create while stranded. This novel has stayed with me because it is more than the sum of its parts, so to speak. After reading it, I am encouraged to think **beyond** the specific scenario of the book and wonder about what is inherent in human beings when they come together and what evils and goodness people are capable of. I, too, would like to accomplish simultaneous tasks in this chapter. Here, I attempt to show what lies within, behind, and beyond the terrain of predominantly Black schools as they are lived in by White teachers who are experiencing and acting on their identities.

In other social science research, you may expect the last dissertation chapter to show the implications of the original research. You would want the author to show how the analysis connects with the literature, if it supports or refutes theoretical frameworks, etc.. This is not the work of hermeneutic phenomenology. Rather, in this chapter, I aim "not to create technical intellectual tools or prescriptive models for telling us what to do or how to do something effectively," but instead, I aim "to open up possibilities for creating formative relations between being and acting, between who we are and how we act, between thoughtfulness and tact" (van

Manen, 2014, pp. 69-70). In order to accomplish this task, I highlight what I learned about the essence of the phenomenon under study through my thematizing, draw out tensions that exist behind those themes, and point to what lies beyond the themes by offering possibilities for what tactful actions educators may pursue. This chapter, then, addresses the insights that I came to at the close of this study. Since, as van Manen (2014) suggests, phenomenological studies are intriguing because they may offer "plausible" insights which "speak not only to our intellectual competence but also to our practical abilities" (p. 67). I begin by further discussing the broad theme of the terrain.

Within the Terrain

Before I highlight what is essential about and within the phenomenon of White teachers identifying within the terrain of predominantly Black schools, I spend some time thinking further about the terrain itself. In chapter four I described the terrain as part of this world, or part of the atmosphere— the landscape. Situating the White teacher and her identity as part of the terrain, rather than as an individual on a journey, led me to wonder about the possible ways in which White teachers may act on their identities in anti-racist ways. Joy, in particular, showed me a bit more about the possibility inherent in how we view schools, their socio-historical/political backdrop, and the people who participate in these institutions. Joy continuously referred to *systems* when speaking about schools. She explains, "I'm very interested in the systems or processes that cause outcomes, and that didn't change when I became a teacher." When any tense, difficult, or chaotic event happened in her school or classroom, she would try to position the event within the broader context of the school-as-system. Joy would dialogue with herself, "'No, this is a system problem and this is something worth fighting and *this* [different event] is something I really should just deal with [accept and move on from].'" Her use of the word

system intrigued me and seemed to show something about the essence of being a White teacher in predominantly Black schools. But I had not had much experience with the concept of systems until the spring of 2021 when a colleague introduced me to Meadows' (2008) book, *Thinking in Systems: A Primer*.

In this text, Meadows (2008) applies concepts from computer science and mathematical models to the practical world. She explains that nearly everything, "every person we encounter, every organizational, every animal, garden, tree, and forest is a complex system" (p. 3). This text helped me better understand Joy's use of the word systems. Meadows contends that we, as humans, are inclined to see the world as a series of events rather than elements of a larger, complex system. She explains, though, that what we experience as events, such as the tense events related to misbehaviors in Jill's classroom, are better understood as patterned behaviors that are rooted in the history and structure of a system. Jill's classroom management issues are not just events experienced in one school, with a few groups of students. Rather, her struggles are rooted in the history of her school district, the history of public education in this country, the structures that gird schools, and Jill's own position within this system. Meadows goes on to explain, "Social systems are the external manifestations of cultural thinking patterns and of profound human needs, emotions, strengths, and weaknesses" (p. 167) So, school systems are manifestations of the broader racist institution in which they exist, as well as people's own experiences being identified by others and identifying themselves within this institution.

Viewing schools as systems does not weaken the metaphor of the terrain, but strengthens it. Terrains are systems, just as schools. Viewing them both as systems shows us even more about the racial, political, social, and historical context. In the section that follows, I reflect on the themes from chapter four. What do those themes show about the essence of being and

constructing identity as a White teacher while working with Black students, families, and colleagues? What lies, inherently, within this phenomenon? What is it like to exist within the system/terrain of Black schools as a White teacher?

As I move forward in this final chapter and reflect on the essence of the phenomenon under study, I also find myself reflecting on the methodological experience as a whole. Through my writing in chapter two, I had done the work of suspending my taken-for-granted knowledge of what it is to be a White teacher working with Black students, families, and colleagues. As van Manen (2014) urges, I tried to be "aware of [my] own constant inclination to be led by preunderstandings, frameworks, and theories" (p. 224). I believe I did that work successfully. But, in so doing, it meant that when I engaged with my participants' lifeworlds I was re-living the experience. Given everything else going on in my life, both personal and professional, the work of thematizing around this phenomenon was challenging. My re-living of this phenomenon, through the texts generated by conversations with my participants, was a visceral experience that brought forward authentic emotions.

My hope, though, is that my emotional, personal experience of engaging with this methodological project demonstrates my commitment to suspending my beliefs, hunches, theories, and ideas about this phenomenon. As I render my reflections on the essence of what it means to be a White teacher, I do revisit some metaphors and ideas brought forward in earlier chapters. I do not do this to validate my earlier writing or my own experience, but to put forward what is inherent in the experiences of my participants, even if those experiences do connect with my own.

The socio-political terrain of U.S. school systems serves as part of the roots for each of our identities as students and teachers; we each view the system from different points as we

grow. While systems are complex, they unite us in some ways. So, as a White woman myself, the experiences of my participants did speak to me about the way I lived through my teaching of Black students and my interactions with Black adults. The visionary themes I rendered seemed to highlight three essential aspects that undergirded the experience of being a White teacher. Below, I discuss the following: the emotionality in the experience of self-as-a-seeing-being and self-as-being-seen; the complexity and interwovenness of pedagogy and self; and the willingness of a teacher to view the terrain of predominantly Black schools from the perspective of an individual or an institution.

Emotionality

The emotions White people display when it comes to race and racism can be difficult to talk about and experience. Writing from the perspective of a teacher educator of color, Matias (2016) explains:

> Overall, the emotionality of whiteness is of grave concern for us as critical race educators. If the sensibilities of teacher candidates are such that they do not even want to learn about racism or white supremacy because it is emotionally discomforting to them, and/or refuse to be corrected about racial assumptions, then how can teacher educators expect teacher candidates to muster the emotional investment needed to engage in prolonged projects of antiracist teaching beyond a mere utterance of self-professing that they are? (p. 34)

My participants were all willing, to some degree, to name themselves as White. They were aware of themselves as racialized beings and had experienced being seen as raced while working in Black schools. Whether it was simply because their race became the minority in their Black schools or due to other experience or dispositions, all of my participants were willing to deal with their sense of identity as raced. As I interpret Matias' work, I perceive her to be talking about White people who are refusing to recognize themselves as raced because of the strong emotional reaction they have to this notion. What I wonder, though, is how Matias would feel

about the emotional responses of my participants as they worked in Black schools. DiAngelo (2018) shows that an emotional confrontation with one's own self-as-raced is essential to the building of an anti-racist identity:

> Yet a critical component of cross-racial skill building is the ability to sit with the discomfort of being seen racially, of having to proceed as if our race matters (which it does). Being seen racially is a common trigger of white fragility, and thus, to build our stamina, white people must face the first challenge: naming our race. (p. 1)

All of my participants did have very emotional responses to their own identities and experiences as White teachers. All five of my participants either specifically referenced or alluded to moments where they were brought to tears because of something that had happened in school and related to their racial identities.

DiAngelo (2018) dedicates an entire chapter of her book to *White Women's Tears*. In this chapter, she shows the negative effects, both historically and currently, of White women's tears. She explains that in cross-racial settings, White people should not cry. To explain why this response is problematic, DiAngelo relays a metaphor paraphrased by "antiracism strategist and facilitator Reagn Price," who says, "'Imagine first responders at the scene of an accident rushing to comfort the person whose car struck a pedestrian, while the pedestrian lies bleeding on the street'" (p. 134). This metaphor makes sense. However, it leaves out the issue of power. Specifically, DiAngelo describes how White women use their tears as a source of power, as a way to gather protection from White men. My participants were not using their tears as a source of power, especially since they often cried in private. So, while we would not want to comfort White people who are having an emotional response related to race or center their experience over that of people of color, does that mean that the emotional response of the White person cannot and should not be part of the experience? Emotionality IS part of the experience of being as a White person in this country, and is part of being a White teacher in Black schools.

As I share this essential aspect of the phenomenon, I do not mean to engage in White centering (Saad, 2020). I do not wish to detract from the oppression and marginalization experienced by Black people across generations and put forward a narrative of Whiteness-as-more-important. However, I am committed to rendering what is inherent in the lived world of the White teachers who participated in this project. I am hopeful that by showing the emotionality experienced by White teachers engaged in racial identity work within the setting of Black schools, we can better situate ourselves to understand what is experienced when White teachers are committed to anti-racist identity work, or struggling to teach in Black schools.

Joy, who was deeply committed to anti-racism, admitted to multiple emotional moments throughout her teaching career up through the time of our conversations. While she engaged with the school system by attending board meetings, pushing for equitable housing/zoning policy within the city, and so on, she still had moments where the day-to-day experience of being White in a Black school caused her to feel worn down. She explains:

> I didn't realize [during my first years of teaching] just how emotionally draining it was every day to be called derogatory things about my race or my sex, or have students explicitly talking about and offering up sexual things in class because of my race. Things they never would have said to a Black- probably worse things to a Black woman, to be honest.

Despite Joy's many realizations about how racist policies affect people's experiences, including her own, it was still hard to identify as a White woman while receiving comments like the ones she references. She is quick to clarify that she did not have experiences like this all the time, "certainly not every day, certainly not every student." In other conversations she explained that she wanted to serve as a model for her female students by showing them that these types of comments were not to be tolerated. While she can rationalize and know that this type of

comment is not something to dwell on, it was hard to be spoken to in such a manner and these remarks would, at times, cause her to have an emotional response.

Jenna was committed to being an in-process being. Her experience of her identity was very much a verb, as introduced in chapter four. Her personal life encouraged her to think more deeply about the systems, policies, and stereotypes held by individuals that affect her husband, son, and step children who are all people of color. Jenna's maternal role encouraged her to engage in a re-visionary project as she continued to cultivate her relationships with students. Despite the view she had of her terrain, she was still brought to tears by her experiences. During the academic year in which our conversations took place, Jenna was working with a student who experienced a number of traumas. The student would often lash out at Jenna using racist terms and curse words. Jenna knew the child was simply manifesting her anger and tried not to take it personally; the child was reacting to her traumas. Jenna had been called derogatory names related to her race before. But, in these one-off incidences, she could more easily understand and write off the behavior as a manifestation of anger. However, the child who she was currently working with made these comments so often and with such force, that it began to wear on Jenna.

While Jill, Kelly, and Linda did not quite gain the same wide-spread view of the terrain of Black schools as Joy and Jenna, we can still look at their emotional experiences. While Jill missed many opportunities to cultivate relationships and to view herself as raced in the terrain of Black schools, she still desired to be a good educator. She was trying to do what she thought was best. Her misled and miscalculated efforts as a teacher led to many classroom climate issues where students were openly disrespectful towards her. When I asked how she felt in the moments when students were not participating in her classroom the way she had envisioned, she said "Not worthy at all. Not like a teacher. … I mean, it feels terrible." Kelly also described instances when

students who she tried, day after day, to be patient with and give space to as they worked through moments of anger would scream at her and call her names. She admits, “It [when students would yell or say curse words] was horrible. I wanted to cry.” Kelly said she would never cry in front of students but, at times, she would save space for herself to cry in private. She explains that students who yell out in anger are just responding to a system in which White teachers have not always respected them. However, being yelled at was still an emotional experience.

Within my thematic rendering, I likened the White teacher to a tree. The tree is both rooted and branches out. Some of my participants were able to branch out and were positioned to view the immensity of the raced world around them, and others were even more aptly positioned in order to view the immensity of their selves as raced individuals in a complex, raced world. Regardless of their roots and how far they were able to branch out, all of these teachers experienced moments of feeling emotionally overwhelmed, even reaching tears at times. DiAngelo (2018) suggests, and seems to worry, that much of White women’s tears stem from guilt or “grief about the brutality of white supremacy and [their] role in it” (p. 137). However, that is not what was inherent in the experiences of my participants. DiAngelo’s view in her chapter titled *White Women’s Tears* was written from a systemic point of view, which is useful and important. However, our experiences of the world, even when we can achieve a vantage point from which to best view our position within the broader socio-political terrain/system, are always going to feel personal.

I quoted Krall (1994) in chapter four in order to reveal more of Linda’s experience with being an observed being. I cite Krall’s work again to show, “Happiness and harmony follow us when others see us as we see ourselves” (p. 163). The chasms that develop and separate these, sometimes, opposing visions can be painful. The differences between myself-as-I-see-myself and

myself-as-others-see-me cause emotional responses when experienced on a regular basis in everyday life. While I agree with DiAngelo (2018) and understand that White people's emotional responses cannot overshadow the harms people of color have endured within the terrain of racist systems, such as schools, I am still called upon by the emotional experience of the White teachers of this study.

Pedagogical Being

The emotionality that exists within the experiences of my participants as they work in predominantly Black schools shows how complex the relationship is between teaching and self-identity. I am not certain that there even is a *relationship*. I am more inclined to think that pedagogy and self are one in the same. The White women I spoke with did not respond to the events described above just *as teachers,* but rather as a whole self. Aoki (2005) expresses a similar concern as he writes, "There is forgetfulness that what matters deeply in the situated world of the classroom is how the teachers' 'doings' flow from who they are, their beings. That is, there is a forgetfulness that teaching is fundamentally a mode of being" (p. 160). The emotionality that is essential to the experience of being a White teacher is not separate from the participants' sense of being a being. They are the same. A pedagogical orientation can never be divorced from a person's sense of self.

My participants cannot be divided up into separate selves; they *are* them selves as whole beings. The separation of my self as a White person and my self as a White teacher is not only impossible but it is potentially problematic. Van Manen (2006) warns, "Rather than teaching us to live our lives with children more fully, educational research so often seems to be cutting us off from the ordinary relation we adults have with children" (p. 139). If teaching is a mode of being,

as Aoki (2005) shows, then this research must allow that so teachers are not "cut off" from being with their students, families, and colleagues in tactful ways.

What lies within each of the themes from chapter four is a sense of pedagogy-and-self-as-one. A struggle with self was a struggle with teaching. Jill, particularly, struggled with basic pedagogical skills. These difficulties became tightly woven into her struggles with her sense of self. Like Jill, I had difficulty with managing the day-to-day goings on in my classroom during my first year of teaching. During that first year, I just thought I didn't know, well enough, how to teach. Now, though, I realize that what I didn't know was how to *be* within the setting of Black schools in a tactful, purposeful way. Jill was also starting to come to the realization that the less than desirable behaviors she saw in her classroom were not just a product of her newness to teaching.

Also like Jill (and Joy and Jenna), I entered teaching through an alternative certification program. There have been, historically, a camp of researchers who find that alternative pathways to teaching produce underprepared teachers who are a disservice to the urban students they work with (Darling-Hammond, 2008; Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, 2002; Darling-Hammond, Holtzman, Gatlin, & Vasquez Heilig, 2005; Laczko-Kerr & Berliner, 2002), at least as measured by student achievement data. Kelly was also a critic of these alternative certification pathways. She felt that the teachers who came from those pathways did not have a sense of the "whole picture" of teaching. Kelly explains:

> The difference in what I know- you know, I'm not that familiar with TFA [Teach For America] and Urban Teachers [another alternative certification pathway], whatever it is, but obviously, a difference of four years of prep versus a summer of student teaching in a summer camp or whatever the heck the experience is, is going to give somebody a bigger picture of what it's like to be in a classroom, in a school, during a normal time of year, not summer, you know, with normal school-like things going on. You know, how a fire drill can set off an entire morning, how picture day can set off an entire morning, how a substitute across the hall, or wherever, can set off a class, where I don't think a non-

> traditionally tracked program, someone who goes through a different program, doesn't get that full experience. So, I think those kinds of teachers are already set up, not for failure, but not exactly the whole picture of 'this is what it's like to be in a school. This is what it's like to teach for real.'

Unlike the researchers cited above, Kelly's critique of alternatively certified teachers was not that they were ill-prepared to help students succeed on tests of achievement, but that they were ill-prepared for the daily goings-on of a school. Is there something about different pathways to teaching that better prepare people to find their own mode of being within a school? It is Kelly's perspective that teachers prepared in a traditional, four-year university, have a better vision for what it might be like to identify within a school setting.

Mo and Conn (2018), who Teach For America (2020) cites on their website, find that TFA corps members actually end up with a better vision of the experiences of marginalized groups than peers who had not joined the corps. Engaging in an argument over which pathway to teaching better prepares teachers for the visionary project of being within schools, especially being as a White teacher within Black schools, is fruitless. Scholars now suggest that there is just as much individual variation amongst teacher candidates within programs as there is across programs (Grossman & McDonald, 2008; Humphrey & Wechsler, 2007; Humphrey, Wechsler, & Hough, 2008; Koballa, Glynn, & Upson, 2005). However, what this debate should bring to light is that we are concerned with how one's pedagogical preparation orients one's self to teach in the most tactful way. To me, this signals further the essentialness of pedagogy-as-self, teaching as a mode of being.

Joy and Jenna perceived the interwovenness of their selves and their being-as-teacher while recalling the beginning of their careers. Joy describes her first year of teaching:

> It [my first year of teaching] was definitely a tension of like who you are. You're struggling as a first-year teacher, not because all first-year teachers struggle, but, because you're White and telling Black kids what to do. Um, and vice versa, that like there was

> kind of this stereotype of what good teaching looked like [in predominantly Black schools], and it was often what an authoritative Black woman looked like. I think, too, in my first couple years [of teaching], since you don't really have exposure to much else, that was kind of just like, you didn't know that there were many ways to be a good teacher.

The tension Joy felt in her first few years of teaching did not have to do with whether or not she knew how to teach, in terms of content, etc., but whether she knew how to be as a White person engaged with Black others. What would that look like for her as a raced being? Joy's perspective on her early career convinces me more strongly that what Kelly noticed while observing alternatively prepared teachers was not a lack of understanding about the daily goings on of a school, but a lagging sense of self within the Black school. Jenna also was not quite sure how to be as an early-career teacher. She cited her age, not her race, as a reason for her uncertainty. Regardless, her grappling with her identity in her early career was closely tied to her learning of a new profession.

This is not to say that there is no place for the learning of pedagogy-as-the-relaying-of-content. There is skill involved in the practice of teaching. All of the participants except Linda (who worked with mostly preverbal students), at some point in our conversations, described instances of delivering content. They spoke of conversations about novels, using art to depict the meaning of a vocabulary word, and so on. Their attitudes towards content were present as well. Kelly struggled most as a teacher when she taught fourth and fifth grade reading. During this time, she was not only struggling with how to be-in-relation with Black students who would often yell at her, as described above, but also struggling with how-to-be-in-relation with the content she taught. She explains, simply, "It was overwhelming doing fourth and fifth reading. It [the curriculum] was boring as hell." At the time of our conversations, Kelly was serving as a guidance counselor. I think that the removal of certain pedagogical tasks allowed Kelly to

struggle less with her sense of self; her experience with teaching curriculum required more adjustments to her mode of being.

The interwovenness of self and pedagogy is what ultimately led Linda to quit teaching. She was worn down by the struggle to find her mode of being as a teacher. She reflects:

> I think that special education in general, I mean teaching in general is a very, I feel like, tiring career, especially for people who are passionate about it. I feel like you put your whole self into it, for better or for worse.

At some points, Linda tried to invest less of her self into her teaching. But, then, she "still struggled," and wondered, "Am I being apathetic? Am I not caring enough?" It is interesting that Linda struggled just as much when she tried to care less about her teaching. That lack of caring caused her to question her sense of self as well.

Earlier in this work, I expressed concern that Heidegger's (1927/1993a) concept of authenticity did not do enough to address the self-in-relation-with-others, which is the concern of this phenomenological project. However, I see now that Heidegger's sense of an authentic self is critical to how beings relate to others in the outside world. I return to Moran (2006) and expand on an excerpt of his which I introduce in chapter one in order to better understand the usefulness of Heidegger's sense of authenticity:

> *Authentic* moments are those in which we are most at home with ourselves, at one with ourselves. I may initiate or take up possibilities as my own; I have a deep, concrete experience of 'mineness' of 'togetherness'. However, in our more usual, normal, everyday, moments we do not treat things as affecting us deeply in our 'ownmost' being. Heidegger thinks we live in an inauthentic way most of the time. For example, we read about a tragic death in the newspapers but don't necessarily absorb the event into our own selves or experience it personally; we don't take it personally. We are experiencing these kinds of moments *inauthentically*, experiencing them as one does, as anyone does. Being authentic is a kind of potential-to-be-whole: humans have the urge to get their lives together, to collect themselves, to gather themselves into wholeness. (p. 240)

Linda needed that authentic sense of wholeness in order to continue with teaching. She wanted to live authentically as a teacher, but was not able to do so successfully. Her experiences show how

essential wholeness is to being a White teacher working with Black students, families, and colleagues.

The interwovenness of self and pedagogy experienced by my participants reveals the importance of attending to the whole self while being and becoming a White teacher. These women could not be successful in their work and relationships with others in the terrain of schools if they did not pay mind to all aspects of their identity. This includes their emotionality. Feeling depressed or anxious will not lead to a productive mode of being. Greene (1978) explains, "I rather doubt that individuals who are cowed or flattened out or depressed or afraid can learn, since learning inevitably involves a free decision to enter into a form of life, to proceed in a certain way, to do something because it is right" (p. 49). What allows some teachers to productively negotiate their sense of self while engaging with others in a pedagogical space? In talking with my participants, it seemed that those who were able to view the terrain of the school system beyond the vantage point of a sole individual were more sustained in their work.

Positionality in Viewing the Terrain: Interpersonal or Systemic

I also used the tree as a metaphor for the teacher within my themes as I wrote about the teacher's perspective of the immensity of the terrain. Some of my participants were able to see the complexity of the school system and others were not. I discussed whether the participants were able to use that sense of immensity within the terrain to better understand and position themselves. While this was only one part of my thematic rendering, the implication of this metaphor can affect many aspects of White teachers' sense of being and becoming. For example, in order to cultivate successful relationships, a White teacher must have a wide view of the terrain of the school system and a solid understanding of their own position within that terrain. For example, Jill had a harder time cultivating relationships with her students, colleagues, and

administrators than Joy did. Jill was also more affected by negative experiences than Joy was. If I were to imagine Jill as a tree within the terrain of the school system, I would imagine that her branches had not extended very far. Her view of the school system stayed at an interpersonal level and she often missed systemic issues that affected the daily goings on in her school. Joy, on the other hand, had an expansive view of schools as systems and could see where she fit in that system. This allowed her to more easily dismiss negative interactions for what they were—unfortunate or uncomfortable interpersonal exchanges that happen simply because we are beings in communication and nothing more. Joy's understanding of her position in a larger system allowed her to see her self and others as individuals who are constantly influenced by the socio-political and historical roots of U.S. policy and culture.

Steele (2010) shows us that we are all products of and influenced by socio-political systems, whether we realize it or not. He explains, "…despite the strong sense we have of ourselves as autonomous individuals, evidence consistently shows that contingencies tied to our social identities do make a difference in shaping our lives" (p. 14). Jill did not recognize her self or others in her school setting as having *social* identities and this limited her ability to be productive in her school. Steele goes on to warn us, "If you want to change the behaviors and outcomes associated with social identity… don't focus on changing the internal manifestations of the identity, such as values, and attitudes. Focus instead on changing the contingencies to which all of that internal stuff is an adaptation" (p. 84). Thinking about Jill's experience with student behaviors in her classroom, I see that she was trying to shape their attitudes towards her self and schooling (though, I don't even think she was attempting to shift her own values and attitudes, which might have caused a small shift in her classroom even if it's not what Steele is suggesting). What Jill did not realize is that it was fruitless to focus on the internal

manifestations of her students' identities. What she should have been thinking about, instead, was how her students' behaviors have been shaped by the racist nature of schools as institutions and the racist nature of the world surrounding the school. Perhaps, that shift in focus might have made a measureable difference in her experience. Personally, I wish I could repeat my first year of teaching and experience it all again with the perspective I now have of the school system. I wonder if I might have struggled less.

Jill also struggled to interpret the behaviors of her colleagues through an understanding of racist institutions. When she saw her Black colleagues celebrating HBCU's, her only response was to feel left out. If Jill had a better, fuller view of the terrain of Black schools, she likely would have experienced this event differently. Since she had a limited view of the school system, her only response was to feel left out as an individual. Joy seemed to have a much different perspective on staff of color. Rather than interpreting events from an interpersonal lens, she was able to see the importance of having staff members who reflect the raced identities of the student body from a systemic level. Joy discusses the staff and hiring challenges within the school she taught at during the time of our conversations:

> We [the current staff] all recognize that we are not the most effective staff we could be if we all look like me [are all White]. So, it's this weird, like, how do we hire? We will have one opening because we have a couple people retiring outside of the budget, but you can't explicitly publish, like, 'We're only hiring people of color.' But, there's a really experienced teacher that's wanted to come work there [Joy's current school] for a couple years that's a White man. And I don't know how to tell him, like, 'You could have perfect AP scores, but they're not going to hire you. And I'm kind of ok with it. Like, I'm ok with the fact that they're not going to hire you.'

I wonder how Jill might have reacted if she had experienced Joy's situation. Would she have been angry that her friend, an experienced teacher, did not get a job because he was White? In this case, Joy had very little emotional response to the situation. She recognized a need for teachers of color in her school. I suspect that this is because she could view the hiring process as

more than an interpersonal situation and instead view it as something that was fulfilling an institutional need.

As I use the word ‘emotional’ in the paragraph above, I begin to consider whether having a wider view of the terrain of schools leads to less emotionality. If White teachers are able to position themselves in a way where they can see their experiences as more than interpersonal and, rather, see how institutional forces are at play in their day-to-day lives, would they be less emotional? My inclination, after talking with my participants and engaging with scholarly works, is that emotionality and positionality are not always related. Joy was still worn down and emotional over some of the daily goings on in her school. However, it is useful to point out that Joy did not get emotional when she knew there was an equitable outcome to be achieved, as is shown by her reaction to her school’s hiring endeavors.

Kendi (2019) asks his readers, “What if instead of a feelings advocacy we had an outcome advocacy that put equitable outcomes before our guilt and anguish?” (p. 210) With his focus on policy change, Kendi is encouraging his readers to focus on outcomes rather than feelings, which Joy does in many instances. Joy struggled with how to best capture her perspective and what she felt was her responsibility as an anti-racist teacher. However, what she was attempting to show was that the experiences of all the constituents in the school systems went beyond each individual, went beyond the sum of the parts of the system. Rather, she felt firmly that people, especially policymakers (she focused particularly on local government and school boards), needed to understand why certain outcomes have manifested. Joy explains, “I see it as part of my responsibility to really advocate for— I mean, for the system and for my kids in a way that’s more nuanced than the way they are seen.” At the time of the conversation during which she shared the above, she was focused on how housing policies have historically shaped

school zoning policies. She was doing research and attending meetings to help address her concerns. This systems perspective is what sustained Joy in her career as a teacher. She said that engaging in this type of work as a teacher is what gave her "professional satisfaction." I wonder if Jill would have felt more sustained in her career (she mentioned quitting, or at least moving to another state to teach, a number of times) if she had a wider view of the systemic nature of schools and her position within that institution.

As I reflect on the themes I shared earlier, I see how important each teacher's positionality was in terms of how they engaged with others and how they experienced their sense of identity. An interpersonal versus an institutional view of the terrain of Black schools made a difference in how sustained and confident each teacher felt in her career and her self. This is not to say that White teachers should be discouraged from being mindful of their interpersonal relations. Saad (2020) warns against White people simply "jumping into activism without doing any real self-reflection work on your personal racism" (p. 159). Any actions a White teacher takes because she has branched out into the intimate immensity of figuring out her own positionality within the broader terrain of the school system should not be performative so as to not exacerbate feelings of grief, anger, hopelessness, or fear for people of color.

This section has revealed essential aspects within the lived experiences of my participants: emotionality, the interwovenness of pedagogy and self, and the differences between an interpersonal and institutional view of the terrain. These *things* flow into and across all of the themes rendered in chapter four. My work has been to show what and how my participants experience their life world as White teachers. If I have done my work well, this rendering was hopefully evocative. I hope that my audience has had a reaction. It is time now, to attend to some of these potential reactions. I must dig down and think about what is hidden behind the thematic

terrain I have discussed. What insidious things are buried within the terrain I have presented? What is potentially of concern as we consider the phenomenon-as-revealed?

Hidden Behind the Terrain

> The skirts of the forest and the scar were familiar, near the conch and the shelters and sufficiently friendly in daylight. What they might become in darkness nobody cared to think. They worked therefore with great energy and cheerfulness. (Golding, 1954, p. 130)

Earlier, I show that the experience of being and becoming a White teacher is a visionary project. We associate vision with light. I also discuss the concept of shadows within my thematic rendering. While we think of shadows as being related to darkness, the opposite of light, they are not. They are a product of light. I showed that shadows of doubt can actually enhance the visionary project of teaching in Black schools. So, until this point, I have not contended with darkness. Darkness conceals, but a phenomenological project must fully attend to all that is concealed in our lived world, as Heidegger (1930/1993c) urges. As I discuss earlier in this chapter, Golding's (1954) *Lord of the Flies* has stayed with me because he did more than just show me what existed within the island and what was going on with the boys. For me, his novel also reveals what was hidden behind the daily goings on in the micro-society the boys built. He shows the insidiousness there. The excerpt above hints at it. The boys are comfortable and move with ease in the light, but the darkness of the island threatens to reveal the true nature of the boys' inclinations and actions. It is this darkness, what is hidden in it, that reveals even more of what must be attended to by the reader if they are to walk away from their reading with a full grasp of what Golding meant to convey. In this section, I turn to the darkness of what is hidden behind the themes and essential aspects related to the being and becoming of my White participants. I aim to attend to what has been evoked and what is potentially problematic.

White Centering

The entirety of this project is focused on the White teacher's experience. So, at the base of this project, hidden by the darkness of its mere existence, there is the potential for problems. In unconcealing the experience of being and becoming a White teacher, I risk centering a White narrative, perhaps over the narrative of people of color. While this is not my intention, it is a risk taken in any project that focuses on Whiteness. Saad (2020) warns her White readers, "Disrupting white centering begins with disrupting how white centering happens in your own mind and in your own behaviors," and then, in light of the nature of this project, asks me specifically, "During your antiracism work, do you focus more on how you feel over what racism feels like for BIPOC?" (p. 139). To be clear, I do not intend for nor do I think the themes rendered in this project actually do demand more "credence, respect, worth, [or] energy" than a project related to the experiences of people of color (Saad, 2020, p. 139). However, I recognize the tension in rendering a White experience when discussing antiracism.

Reflecting further on Saad's reference of a White person's feelings, I wonder if my focus on the feelings and experiences of my White participants is to the detriment of Black people. Does that part of this work take up too much space? Through my unconcealing of the experiences of White teachers I did not intend to continue to adhere to what Mills (1997) calls the *racial contract*, where Whiteness and the White experience is the norm. I did not attempt to reify a White view of the world and White systems of power. I wonder what would happen, though, if we never allowed space for an examination of the types of emotions I describe in this study. I wonder, if these emotions are left unexamined, can we really take a meaningful step towards antiracism? Kendi (2019) explains:

> The antiracist power within is the ability to view my own racism in the mirror of my past and present, view my own antiracism in the mirror of my future, view my own racial

> groups as equal to other racial groups, view the world of racial inequity as abnormal, view my own power to resist and overtake racist power and policy. (p. 215)

Would White teachers be able to do the kind of work and engage in the type of introspection Kendi is urging if they are not provided with a visceral understanding of what is involved in the White experience and how that experience interfaces with the Other, as Levinas (1961/2015) represents them?

Jill made all of her relationships in Black schools about her self. She did engage in White centering. She would ask her self why her students would not respect her and why her Black colleagues would not include her or get to know her better. She could not realize that it was not about her, from an interpersonal perspective. However, Joy could recognize that not everything was about her self, from an institutional perspective. I wish, as a beginning teacher, I had been better positioned to understand that not everything that happened during the school day was about me. In chapter one, I relay an experience I had during my first year of teaching. A parent had approached me wanting to know who had started a fight between his son and another student. I was exasperated and worn down. I had wondered, at the time: Why was he asking *me* this? Why do *I* have to figure it out when we should just be telling the boys not to fight? I had bothered my Black assistant principal with my wonderings and subsequently wore her down as well (who knows how much I disturbed the father who asked me to get the bottom of the fighting; it pains me to think about it). Upon reflection, I am ashamed to say that I was engaging in White centering in that moment of my past. This project, through rendering the White experience of being and becoming within a Black school setting, aims to tear down the narrative of White centering by making the ways in which White teachers live out their identity as more accessible, less cloaked by White systems of power.

In this situation, I am reminded of a spotlight. We use this word both literally and figuratively to refer to something or someone who is the center of attention. So, we might be concerned that the unconcealing of White teachers' identity experience might cause the spotlight to fall solely on White people, it might be a form of centering. However, when we talk about the spotlight, we often do not think of what lies hidden in the darkness, off in the figurative stage wings. It is possible that if Whiteness is not brought forward into the light, it will be allowed to lurk in the darkness and the insidiousness of White systems of power will be allowed to linger. Perhaps we must push past our understandings of the spotlight as being meant only for those who are center stage. Maybe we must ask ourselves more about what is left off to the sides in the darkness, going unexamined.

Revisiting White Emotions

As I think further about the spotlight, I am called upon to reflect on the stage. The actors on a stage fill the space of a theater by engaging with the audience through the emotions of their character. In a theater, this is a good thing. But, what about in real life? As I brought these White teachers into the spotlight, their emotions did fill the space of our conversations. Above, I show that we may question our understanding of the spotlight. Rather than only think about what is being centered by the spotlight, we might worry about what is left in the dark if we do not move the spotlight onto certain phenomenon. Once we have adjusted the spotlight, we might worry about what is unconcealed. In this case, emotionality came forward as a large part of the identity experiences of my participants. Is this worrisome?

DiAngelo's (2018) entire book aims to warn readers about the dangers of what she calls White fragility, which signifies White people's problematic emotions. This concept suggests that White people's emotional responses to racism can be detrimental to antiracist work. Saad (2020)

clarifies, “White fragility thus makes you an unreliable ally to BIPOC, because you do not have the resiliency needed to talk about racism” (p. 44). It is interesting though, that earlier in her book, Saad also writes, “Challenging emotions like shame, anger, grief, rage, apathy, anxiety, and confusion will come up for you if you are doing this work [the work of antiracist introspection and combating racism] deeply” (p. 25). I struggle with these two excerpts when I put them together. As we unconceal the experiences of White teachers in Black schools, how might we interpret with these two excerpts, side-by-side? On the one hand, Saad suggests that emotion is an essential component of antiracist work, but on the other she suggests that White emotion makes a White person an unreliable partner for antiracists of color.

However, when revisiting the lived experiences of my participants, I think I have grasped Saad’s (2020) meaning. I see, more fully, the tension she implies in her writing. Linda, for example, experienced many of the emotions described in the excerpt I cite toward the end of the above paragraph. She was angry, shameful, and anxious much of the time; and perhaps, her feelings of being worn down would constitute apathy. But, Linda did not let those emotions expand her sense of intimate immensity. She was becoming better positioned to see what racism can look like, but was not ready or willing to see how she was positioned, systemically, in the racist terrain of U.S. public schools. Because of this, she wore down some of her Black colleagues, and even her self. Earlier in this work, I suggest that the only beneficial function of guilt is that it can move us forward into a more productive way of being and becoming. I wonder if many other emotions can serve that same role, if we allow them to. Linda was not able to do anything with her anger, shame, anxiety, and apathy. So, she was likely not able to act as a reliable antiracist teacher, even if that’s what she may have wanted to do. Ultimately, Linda felt a different profession might allow her to carry out an antiracist agenda more productively. I do

wonder, though, if any profession would allow her to live into an antiracist identity if she was not willing to confront all of the emotions racism brought up for her.

Joy, on the other hand, experienced sadness, anger, and frustration in her role as a teacher. But, those emotions did not prevent her from acting on an antiracist identity. While Joy never discussed her experiences of living *through* those emotions, I wonder if she had done that work at some point before her teaching career even began. She said that she's always been a "systems person," but did not ever name an experience that showed how she gained that perspective. Regardless, her way of being in Black schools showed how she could leverage emotion in a way that did not detract from her ability to act on an antiracist identity.

Ahmed (2004) confirms, "Emotions do things" (p. 119). Emotions, in my case, and I wonder if also in Joy's case, did something with my identity that allowed me to more fully connect with the terrain in which I was teaching and to be in a more productive way. Ahmed goes on to explain:

> [Emotions] align individuals with communities- or bodily space with social space- through the very intensity of their attachments. Rather than seeing emotions as psychological dispositions, we need to consider how they work, in concrete and particular ways, to mediate the relationship between the psychic and the social, and between the individual and the collective. (p. 119)

I share this excerpt for those who are concerned that a focus on White emotions is detrimental. As Ahmend suggests, emotions can do something productive with White people if they are willing to let them. Emotions can connect the White person with the collective work of antiracism. So, in that regard, racialized emotions (Bonilla-Silva, 2019) can aid a visionary, antiracist project for a White teacher.

I return to the stage metaphor again, to wonder whether the unconcealment of White teachers still leaves some worrisome emotions lingering in the dark stage wings. It is a

possibility that White fragility, which may be a sort of relation between White centering and emotionality, may linger in the dark stage wings. It may be possible, though, to allow White emotion without permitting the fragility and lack of resiliency DiAngelo (2018) warns against. I believe I see that possibility in Joy's experiences.

Being an Ally

As I continue thinking about the metaphor of the stage and the spotlight, I further reflect on how the emotions of the actors can draw the audience into the performance. When they have done their job well, the actors can convince the audience to look past the artifice of a performance and immerse themselves in the story being told. Just like the darkness of the stage wings may conceal something about racism or anti-racism, I wonder about the falsehoods White teachers may put forward as their identity experiences are brought into the light. What facades might they put forward that conceal their true life worlds? From Italian for *face* (OED, 2019), the term façade seems to relate to the light, that which can be seen. However, as I show with the metaphor of the theater and the stage, there is artifice involved. Should we be worried, then, about the artifices put forward by White teachers as they share their identity experiences while teaching in Black schools? Façade, in this sense, has the potential to conceal, and what is put forward in the light may allow other problematic, potentially racist ideas, to be kept in the darkness. What if White teachers act as if they are antiracist and allies of Black people, but really they are covering up racist ways of viewing the world?

Tatum (1994) suggests that, at the time of publishing her article on White allies, White people are only given three models of how to *be* as White people: racist; color blind, or guilty. She suggested that there is yet another model for White people, but one that was not as well-known at the time: the White ally. While this fourth model, as Tatum portrays, for how to *be* as a

White person existing in a racist socio-historical context is certainly more productive than the three others she mentions, I wonder about this idea of allyship because it may leave opportunity for artifice. Continuing with Jill's example, she made and hung posters with Black characters, used "skin-colored" crayons with her students, and claimed to yearn for "diverse" settings. However, behind the façade she put forward, that of wanting to be inclusive and antiracist, were many problematic attitudes and dispositions that prevented her from being an effective teacher of Black children. Was her yearning for diversity really artifice?

Saad (2020) calls this type of artifice optical allyship. She warns that what some White people might "deem to be allyship could actually be white centering, tokenism, white saviorism, or optical allyship instead" (p. 126). While Jill never used the word ally, she would seek out examples of times when she thought she was being inclusive to justify the anger and frustration she experienced when her students would not comply with her directions. It was as if she was asking, 'Why won't they listen to me? I did all of these multicultural activities. I have put up a poster with a Black child in it so they felt represented.' She used these justifications to hide, from herself and perhaps others in her life, the fact that she was engaging in White centering and optical allyship.

Levinas (1961/2015) shows how a façade can prevent unconcealment: "[The façade] captivates by its grace as by magic, but does not reveal itself" (p. 193). In what ways might White people and White teachers captivate us by a performance of artifice? In reflecting on this question, I consider my observations of how White people engage with social media to demonstrate allyship. I question whether they are always being authentic. For example, on June 2, 2020, White people took to social media attempting to engage in an antiracist behavior by posting a black square on their Instagram page with the hashtag 'BlackOutTuesday'. These

people thought they were supporting the Black Lives Matter movement after continued killings of Black men by the police, but what they were actually doing was burying the Black voices who came up with the concept of #BlackOutTuesday in the first place (Coscarelli, 2020). Their Instagram posts may have been performative. Seeing the dozens of black squares on my Instagram feed on that day in 2020, I wondered what those people were actually *doing* and what ways they were actually *identifying* as antiracists. What was concealed by their potential artifice? Apathy? Implicit biases? Delfino (2021) explains, "The construction of such a figure [the White ally], then, permits the reproduction of individualist framings of race and racism such that allies are positioned as woke individuals who exist outside of histories and spaces that drive white privilege and white racism" (p. 254). As we shed light on the identity experiences of White teachers, hoping to bring potentially racist ways of being out from the dark stage wings, we may consider if, and in what ways, they engage in artifice. What facades might they be displaying related to allyship or antiracism? How will we know when they are being truly authentic or just 'acting'? Bringing the identity experiences of White teachers out into the light might allow us the opportunity to pose these questions and live our way into potential, antiracist answers.

Dichotomizing Racialized Experiences

Artifice is not the only way that the theater, what is in the spotlight on stage, may be problematic. The comedy and drama masks, the main symbols of the theater, hint at another problem. Actors on a stage draw us into a story that is, in some ways, a simplification of our true lived experiences. Our lives are filled with both comedy and drama, as well as many other experiential modes. But, for the sake of drawing us into a story, the theater renders this dichotomy, comedy or drama. Is it possible that White teachers could hide something, as well, if they create and live out dichotomies?

As we see in the section above, viewing White people as 'woke' or not is problematic in that it can promote artifice and hide potentially racist ways of being. Kelly never used the word 'woke' but described a childhood where she "learned how to braid hair" and "learned how to dance" from Black friends. She described how she was able to "adapt" to the "casual speech" she perceived being used by some Black families she worked with. All of this, to her, seem to show that she was what Delfino (2021) put forward as 'woke'. Kelly was not 'not woke,' from her perspective. She was not like other colleagues who were "negative on the profession and negative with what they are doing and the kids and the families and everything else." Implied in Kelly's way of being was a dichotomy she had created that separated her self from 'negative' teachers who could not or would not connect with the students and their families. But, this dichotomy concealed something from Kelly. She did have problematic ways of viewing the terrain of Black schools, even going so far as to write, in an anecdote, a common colorblind phrase: "I may get upset with a student because of choices they are making, …but I still care about them and respect them as a person. Not because they are white, black, pink, or green." Kelly's own dichotomous way of viewing her self, especially in comparison to other White teachers, prevented her from seeing the complexity of how race and racism manifest in the terrain of Black schools.

Dichotomies were problematic for my participants, both as seeing beings and as beings who are seen. For example, Kelly's seeing being created a simplified dialectic, "negative" or not. I wonder, though, if Kelly would want her self to be dichotomized in this way as she interacted with others in Black schools. Saad (2020) urges her White readers, "I invite you to release the desire to be *seen* as good by other people and instead explore what it looks like for you to own that you are a person who holds privilege" (pp. 192-193). All of my participants either explicitly

said, or at least implied, that there are certain ways in which they would like to or need to be seen in order to feel at peace with their selves. So, as I reflect on Saad's excerpt, I focus on the word 'good.' What would it mean for White people, as seen beings, to let go of a good-bad dichotomy? Might letting go of this dichotomy affect their selves as seeing beings? I wonder what possibilities there are in the act of releasing dichotomous ways of viewing self and others, especially when it comes to our raced identities.

Dichotomies risk oversimplifying a complex terrain that White people inhabit. The task of negotiating self-as-White within a racist institution has many components and no one person can position one's self on either side of a rigid dichotomy. These dichotomies can create generalizations that conceal the complexity of racist policies. Kendi (2019) explains:

> People of color sometimes cope with abuse from individual Whites by hiding those individuals behind the generalized banner of Whiteness. 'She acted that way,' we say, 'because she is White.' But generalizing the behavior of racist White individuals to all White people is as perilous as generalizing the individual faults of people of color to entire races. (p. 44)

Assuming that individual White people can only be good or bad keeps us from seeing what racism is, according to Kendi- the effects of racist policies and reified, socio-historical ideologies.

White teachers may risk losing sight of racist policies and institutions if they only see Black people in dichotomous ways. Jill seemed to think that Black people, as individuals, could either be welcoming of her or not. She felt her administrators were not welcoming of her. This seemed to cause her to lose sight of why her Black administrators would celebrate HBCU's and Black academic achievement in the ways they did.

Diversifying the Pool of Teachers

Returning to the metaphor of the spotlight, I wonder what questions my readers might ask because of where I have chosen to shine the light. I suggest the reasoning behind my choices above, but wonder if others may think I should have made space for teachers of color to step into the light. I imagine there are some who might ask, "Why not talk about diversifying the pool of teachers?" and "Why continue to talk about White teachers when we should just focus on hiring Black teachers for Black students?" The reality is that, based on the 2013 National Assessment for Educational Progress data, "Most Black students (67%) were taught by a White teacher, which makes sense because most teachers are White" (Yarnell & Bohrnstedt, 2018, p. 301). That reality can be dealt with in multiple ways. One way is by training, recruiting, and retaining more Black teachers, since the data do suggest that there are better student achievement outcomes for Black students when they have a Black teacher (Redding, 2019). Another strategy for dealing with reality of a large pool of White teachers is to question what systems have allowed for more White people to become teachers. Neither of these aims, while important, can be attended to by this study.

What is interesting, though, is thinking about why Black teachers are more successful in terms of promoting academic achievement amongst Black students when compared to White teachers (Redding, 2019). I wonder, why is that? Milner (2006) suggests that Black teachers are successful because they serve as role models for Black students and because Black teachers are better positioned to build culturally mindful/congruent relationships with students and parents. These suppositions related to the success of Black teachers might imply that White teachers could be less successful because they cannot serve as a racial role model, but also that they do not know how to build culturally mindful or congruent relationships with students and parents.

What might we do with this implication? As I work to build a relation between thoughtfulness and tact, as van Manen (2014) suggests any phenomenological project should aim to, I rest in this question. It is important to uncover how we may best prepare and retain White teachers in a way that allows them to *be* with Black students in productive ways.

Now that I have named what is essential within the phenomenon of White teachers being and becoming in Black schools, and have unconcealed what may lie in the darkness of the themes rendered in this study, it is now time to make a tactful turn. What lies beyond what I have discussed so far? What possibilities exist when we reach out toward the atmosphere of the terrain and guide us as we consider how to prepare and retain White teachers?

Beyond the Terrain: An Atmosphere of Opportunity

> The atmosphere … takes us *up and out*; we draw our breath *from* it, not from ourselves. (Casey, 2009, p. 262)

When I first introduce the metaphor of the terrain, I cite Levinas (1961/2015) who claims that the "*atmosphere permeates everything*" (p. 219). I revisit the metaphor of the atmosphere, as part of the terrain, in this last section. After thematizing around this phenomenon, I understand more fully the importance of the atmosphere. As Casey shows, it is more than we can draw from ourselves. Yet, as Levinas shows, the atmosphere also informs our sense of self and helps us realize that our self is in-common with others. He explains, "In sharing the same atmosphere, body and place realize a common essence as well as their own most intimate unity" (p. 219). So, I now reach out, taking my self and the reader up and out, toward the atmosphere in order to suggest possibilities for tactful responses to what we may now understand about what it is like for White teachers being and becoming in Black schools. I specifically look for opportunities related to teacher education and opportunities for practicing teachers.

Teacher Education

As I consider teacher educators and preparation programs, this dissertation work prompts me to wonder about several possibilities related to how teachers are prepared for the identity work they will encounter when teaching students and working with colleagues who are racially unlike themselves. As I show above, identity and pedagogy are closely tied. How might teacher educators link these phenomena in their courses and programs? This study focuses on the identity experiences of White teachers only. But as teacher preparation programs consider how they might connect their candidates' identities with pedagogical practices, they must be mindful of the racial diversity of their preservice teachers. Preparation programs will need to find a way to encourage their White candidates as they consider their socio-historically rooted identities in a way that does not cause harm to teacher candidates of color. In this section, I relate what has been unconcealed about the phenomenon under study to potential possibilities for teacher educators.

Firstly, as I consider the metaphor of the tree I rendered earlier, I am encouraged to suggest that one area for contemplation is related to how we address the rootedness and personal experiences of teacher candidates. Greene (1978) suggests:

> It does appear, however, that attentiveness to one's own history, one's own self-information, may open one up to critical awareness of much that is taken for granted, as it may to the importance of breaking created structures [such as prejudices]. (p. 103)

White teacher candidates may not have been prompted, yet, to consider their identity as raced. This might prevent them from seeing how the experiences of people of color may drastically differ from their own. Cherng and Davis (2019) suggest that White preservice teachers are less likely to have a multicultural awareness in comparison to Black and Latinx teacher candidates. The experiences of my participants show that when White people are asked to consider their own

racialized past, they are better positioned to see the experiences of others (they become more primed to be a seeing being as well as a seen being).

Teacher educators might also consider how they will encourage their preservice teachers to look outward, towards the terrain and towards others, in productive ways. This may produce a tension for preparation programs. How might they encourage candidates to look inward without sacrificing their ability to look outward as well? This tension between looking inward at one's own rootedness and interpersonal life and looking outward at the vast terrain reminds me a bit of some of the tensions I see in Deardorff's (2011) model for developing intercultural competence. In her work, Deardorff offers that intercultural competence has to do with "the ability to understand other worldviews" (p. 68). Deardorff offers that people's personal attitudes must change in order to support more productive outcomes as they interact with others. She also suggests that building this type of competence will involve both cognitive and affective domains of understanding (Deardorff, 2009). All of these pushes and pulls, inward and outward, attitudes and outcomes, and cognitive and affective domains, imply that the preparation of teachers who are equipped to engage in productive identity work will be a balancing act. This balancing act connects us back to the terrain, yet again. Our ecosystems all need to be in balance. For example, the wildfires that have ravaged the West coast have shown us that we must balance natural and necessary fire with the economic issues that affect housing, etc.. School systems, and preparing teachers for those school systems, will also require balance.

My participants spent some time recalling experiences from their own preparation. In their varying experiences, I can see the need for balance and for managing the tensions I describe above. Jill, for example, spent a bit too much time in her preparation focusing outwardly, on outcomes, and not really any time looking inward, thinking of her own attitudes and affects. She

recalls that she took a number of what her college called urban education classes as an undergraduate. She explains some of those courses: “I took an urban geography class that focused on geographies of different cities, of urban cities, specifically. The other ones, kind of, focus on a lot of African American authors and stuff, and the impact they can have on their cities.” Jill admits that she may have missed out on some of the significance of this undergraduate coursework. She wonders that if she had known, at the time of taking these courses, she would be a teacher in a Black school, she may have thought more about how her coursework related to her own identity.

Joy, on the other hand, lamented the direction one alternative preparation program had taken as it planned coursework for teacher candidates and practicing teachers. Joy taught literacy courses for a university that partners with the same alternative certification program through which she entered teaching. She describes working with new teachers: “When I work with the first-year teachers [who are a part of the alternative pathway program] now, they’re like ‘Thank god we’re just talking about a reading strategy because if I have to talk about my self and my feelings one more time I’m going to lose it.’” It seems that, in opposition to Jill’s experience, the early-career teachers Joy worked with, did not have the opportunity to look outward. They were asked, too frequently, to examine their own identities without being asked to connect those identities with outcomes, for example how their identities would impact their teaching of a reading strategy.

Jenna says she cannot recall having conversations about identity and difference in any of her courses offered through her master’s degree. She says, “But I really don’t remember having those kinds of conversations [about diversity and identity], which is kind of a disservice, I feel like, to us and the students because that was an opportunity to really, you know, have an

academic conversation about it and get other people's perspectives." She even went so far as to call it shameful when these types of call-ins are not asked of teacher candidates. Jenna thought that maybe one reason conversations that connected identity and pedagogy were avoided in her courses is because they would make people "uncomfortable." She also wondered if it was because issues of diversity and how to best educate people from varying backgrounds are issues that are not resolved. But she goes on to say, "Maybe it [conversations and coursework that connect pedagogy and identity] was supposed to make you uncomfortable and maybe it [how to best attend to diversity and difference in schools] wasn't supposed to be resolved because it really still isn't in our society." Implied in Jenna's reflections is that teacher education programs may not need to present coursework as if all of the 'right answers' related to identity and pedagogy are mapped out. The terrain of Black schools is messy and complex. But, the struggle to see more fully is part of the identity work of White teachers, as shown in this study. Linda admits that she's not sure "there's necessarily a class that could prepare you for it [for examining your own identity in a pedagogical setting] because I think that everyone has unique experiences, so there's not necessarily a set curriculum or syllabus that addresses everything." But, she goes on to say, that identity is "an important aspect for teacher programs [to attend to]."

Given the complexity of the terrain, how might teacher educators create spaces where preservice teachers can engage in this identity work? How can preparation programs create spaces where teacher candidates feel safe while looking inward and outward? Joy describes one of the courses she took in her master's program that allowed her to think pragmatically about how her identity interacted with the content she taught. She explains:

> The professor that we had [for a literacy methods course], she was able to make a safe enough space that we could be like, 'Ok, but I really don't know what to do here.' And particularly in English we had an entire elective about teaching language, like the teaching of language. Um, so, the whole class was structured around, like, 'Ok, well do

> you teach- do you correct a kid who uses a different subject-verb agreement? Do you teach literature with the n word in it?' Like, I mean, it was like real talk and so, that was really the only place where I felt like I could express things and genuinely question without it seeming like I was a bad person.

While Joy uses the term "safe" as she describes the environment one of her professors created, we likely do not want to think that "safe" spaces discourage the type of discomfort Jenna yearns for in the paragraph above. Arao and Clemens (2013) offer up the concept of a brave, rather than safe, space that would allow for people to negotiate their identities in an academic setting in ways that neither make them feel like bad people nor in ways that discourage discomfort.

In addition to balancing tensions between inward and outward and making space for discomfort while examining the connections between identity and pedagogy, teacher education programs may also consider the terrain in which they place their teacher candidates. Fieldwork may be a taken-for-granted component of teacher preparation, but it offers opportunities for supporting the efforts of balancing tensions and promoting necessary, but uncomfortable, conversations around identity and pedagogy. Teacher educators might be able to pay close attention to the types of settings in which they place candidates for their internships. Kelly credits her placement in an "urban setting" for helping prepare her to think more thoroughly about what it would be like for her to teach others who were different from her self and what that would mean for her identity. Opportunities to explore how the terrain of public school systems and the terrain of Black communities will interact with identity do not have to be limited to what we may think of as a typical student teaching experience. Waddell (2011) offers a model where candidates engaged in what was called a Summer Community Immersion experience. She explains that the aim of having preservice teachers immerse themselves in urban communities was "to help candidates gain a better understanding of themselves as teacher in urban schools, gain a better understanding of the urban community…, and develop a deep understanding of the

experiences of the students and families with whom they will work" (p. 26). This type of experience, as we can see in Waddell's wording, offers the chance for teacher educators and teacher candidates to attend to tensions between self and terrain.

Within all of these areas of possible contemplation for preparation programs, we should not forget that there is a responsibility to support teachers of color. We cannot support the needs of White candidates who are exploring their identities and privileges at the sacrifice of teacher candidates of color (Kohli, 2009; Ndemanu, 2014; Smith Kondo, 2019), especially since programs will also need to work on recruiting and supporting more teachers of color. All teacher candidates, not just White candidates, will need to explore their sense of self and their understanding of the broader terrain of schools/school systems in relation to pedagogy. But, what about practicing teachers? How are they to continue to engage in the visionary project of being and becoming productive teachers in Black schools? In the next section, I briefly suggest possibilities for supporting practicing teachers with their identity work.

Practicing Teachers

As I consider possibilities for practicing teachers to continue to engage in meaningful identity work, I revisit the priority of language that I discuss in chapter three. I believe that it is through language that practicing teachers can fully engage with their identities-as-verbs, the ways in which they act on their identities. Gadamer (2004) offers, "The verbal world in which we live is not a barrier that prevents knowledge of being-in-itself but fundamentally embraces everything in which our insight can be enlarged and deepened" (p. 463). Considering Gadamer's meaning in relation to the identity work of White teachers in Black schools, we can imagine that these teachers' understandings of their own beings can be enhanced through language. However, I cannot forget Levinas' (1961/2015) insistence that I can only fully understand my self as I am

in relation with others. Through reflecting on both Gadamer's and Levinas' work, I understand that my sense of self is enhanced through language, particularly through communication with others. How might practicing teachers engage with others, through language, in order to engage with their identity work? For my participants, it does seem that community was helpful for them as they continued navigating their identity while working in Black schools.

Kelly describes the informal community she has built for herself throughout her career. She explains, "I pull things [ideas and practices] from everybody I work closely with for the last 19 years because I still feel like I am learning." Every participant did reference a close, collegial relationship they cultivated that sustained them in their understanding of their selves as teachers. Even Jill, who struggled to maintain positive relationships with many people in her schools, mentioned a mentor who suggested several books for her to read related to equity, justice, and/or pedagogy. This was one of the only positive relationships Jill mentioned and one of the few times in our conversations where she seemed to relate a lived experience that seemed calm, rather than fraught with anger or frustration.

One concern I have, though, is that the communities described by my participants and the ones I have experienced myself, are all informal. They were created without a focused purpose and they had the potential (and sometimes did) reify racist ideologies. I wonder if schools or school districts might consider how to create meaningful, yet structured, communities where teachers can continue to negotiate their identities alongside their pedagogical responsibilities. Yoon (2016) warns that the narratives White teachers build together while they socialize in informal communities can actually be potentially problematic from an anti-racist perspective. She does suggest that having staff of color is one way to prevent White teachers from building

deficit-oriented narratives about their students as they consider those students in relation to their selves and their personal lives.

Denevi and Pastan (2006) offer the suggestion that critical White studies groups could be structured to help White people come together "to support one another in the struggle against racism" (p. 71). The study group they describe was one designed for high school students, but I see potential in a similar opportunity for teachers. The purpose of such a structured community may center around the development of a group identity, which may then support the identity work of individuals. Poekert, Swaffield, Demir, and Wright (2020) offer that any community that is developed around a leadership initiative focused on equity in education should be concerned with the intersection of learning/identity development, inclusion/shared leadership, and dialogue/enquiry. Their model seems, to me, to attend to some of the tensions or problems I have introduced related to the interwoveness of pedagogy and identity, inwardness and outwardness, and the importance of cultivating relationships within the terrain of Black schools. School districts might consider how these types of communities may work to promote the visionary project of being an antiracist teacher.

School districts might also need to consider how the work of teaching itself could, if we allow it, obstruct the visionary work of White teachers' identity development in Black schools. Greene (1978) warns, "Emancipatory activity seems continually thwarted in our everyday lives. … We are caught up in product orientations, credentialing practices, and preoccupations with utility" (p. 22). I do not think this is to say that pedagogy itself is a preoccupation, but that some aspects of bureaucratic institutions can sometimes become unnecessarily burdensome. Haberman (2010) names these unnecessary burdens with the phrase 'pedagogy of poverty,' activities that cloud the work of what Haberman calls, in juxtaposition to the pedagogy of poverty, good

teaching. Haberman implies that pedagogy cannot be reduced to basic tasks like the ones I list above. Rather, the curricula offered by school districts should present opportunites for genuine engagement. To illustrate this idea, one reason Kelly shifted from her role as a teacher into a position as a guidance counselor was because she felt burdened by what she deemed to be boring curricular materials. She explains, "I just hated the curriculum [for the elementary Language Arts classes she taught]. … it was horrible, it was so scripted." Schools and districts may view curriculum as flexible opportunities for pedagogy and identity to work in tandem.

I wonder if school districts would worry that teachers would not want to engage in conversations regarding the interwovenness of identity and pedagogy. What would resistance to these kinds of conversations, and the communities that support those conversations look like? My participants, though, were not resistant to talking about their race, identity, and pedagogy. Kelly ended our last conversation by saying how it was "nice to think about things" related to her identity and her work in schools. Linda also felt engaged by our conversations. When we began our second conversation, she said, of our first conversation, "I actually felt kind of good when I left…. But, I think it's stuff that I probably don't talk about that much, so I think just the whole act and practice of talking about it was kind of therapeutic in a way."

I suggest earlier that one's experience of her identity is both a noun and a verb; it is something that *is* and is *in process*. We must be mindful that teachers are raced and in-process beings. In looking at identity this way, school districts might find room for possibility. Conversations and communities focused on in-process ways of being could be meaningful for practicing teachers. School districts may ask themselves how they can promote these types of communities and whether or not some teachers might be resistant to this practice.

I conclude this chapter by returning to where it began, with a quote from Golding's (1954) *Lord of the Flies*. The racism that exists in school systems is 'just us.' This does not mean that racism exists only in the beliefs of individuals, though it does exist there too. What it means is that it is our actions, or lack of actions, and our ways of being that shape the policies and practices which affect schools. I find this to be an empowering idea in the face of the massive problem racism presents us. It is *just us*, which means we have the opportunity to address the problem. I am hopeful that the visionary project of being and becoming a White teacher in Black schools can be enacted in ways that promote the examination of racist ways of being. We can address the *us* that affects the terrain, and in the process, find anti-racist ways of being.

Appendix A

Recruitment Notice

Dear Respected Teacher,

My name is Jessica Haddaway. I am a former [city school] teacher and am currently a doctoral candidate at the University of Maryland, College Park. I am writing to tell you about my research and gauge your interest in participating in that research.

As a doctoral student, I began to reflect on my teaching experience in [a predominantly Black city]. Through this reflection, I found I had many questions about what aspects of teaching I was and was not prepared for. While I, personally, felt I was adequately prepared to design a learning objective, create an assessment, write a lesson plan, and track student data, I did not think I was as well prepared for what teaching would ask of me emotionally and socially. Particularly, I did not feel that I was prepared to examine my racial identity.

Now, as I conduct research for my dissertation, I am seeking to engage White teachers in order to better understand their identity experiences while they work in predominantly Black schools. I hope that this research adds to a body of knowledge that may be used to help better prepare teachers to engage in anti-racist practices and racial identity work.

I am writing to you to inquire about your interest in participating in this research. Your participation would involve three to four interviews, each of which would last approximately two hours, and a brief written 'anecdote' recalling a particular teaching experience. All interviews would take place somewhere of your choosing outside of your school. Several measures will be taken to ensure both your comfort and confidentiality. You will be thanked for your time with a $25 Amazon gift card.

If you are interested in becoming a participant in this research, or if you have more questions about this research, you may contact me at the following email address: haddaway@umd.edu.

Best Regards,
Jessica Haddway
Ph.D Candidate
University of Maryland, College Park
2311 Benjamin Building
3942 Campus Dr.
College Park, MD 20740
haddaway@umd.edu
(410) 227 1630

Appendix B

Informed Consent Form

Project Title	Seeking Strangeness: A Phenomenological Study of White Teachers Teaching in Black Schools
Purpose of the Study	This research is being conducted by Jessica Haddaway at the University of Maryland, College Park under the direction of Dr. Francine Hultgren. I am inviting you to participate in this research project because you are currently, or have been previously, an individual that identifies as a White teacher in a predominantly Black School. The purpose of this research project is to better understand the experience of White teachers, as they work to construct self-identity, teaching in predominantly Black schools.
Procedures	The procedures involve three to four interview, each of which will last approximately two hours. An example of a potential question that may be asked during an interview would be: "What would you consider a particularly impactful teaching experience you have had? Can you describe that experience?" All interviews will take place at a location of your choosing outside of the school in which you teach. For your comfort, both public and private (i.e., your home or the home of the researcher) places may be selected as potential interview locations. The interview will be audio taped and later transcribed. Both the recordings and transcriptions of interviews will be stored on a password-protected laptop. Any printed copies of interview transcriptions will be stored in a locked file cabinet. Only a pseudonym, or your first name if you choose to identify with it, will be used in the transcriptions. Additionally, you will be asked to write an anecdote that captures a moment from your teaching career. The creation of this written product will take approximately 30 minutes. You will be given some suggested guidelines to assist you in writing your anecdote. You will share this anecdote, if you choose to do so, with the researcher via email. The anecdote will be saved to a password-protected laptop. Any printed copies of the anecdote will be stored in a locked file cabinet. You will be thanked for your time and effort with an Amazon gift card valued at 25 U.S. dollars. You will receive this gift card even if you decide to withdraw from the study.
Potential Risks and Discomforts	There is the potential for you to feel as though your decision to participate in this study might impact your relationship with our mutual contact who initially presented this research opportunity to you. I have worked to reduce this risk by providing you, from the beginning, my email address so that you could contact me directly rather than contact me through our contact. Our mutual contact will not be privy to your decision to participate, as that information is kept confidential. Additionally, you may experience some emotional discomfort due to the sensitive nature of this research topic. In order to minimize this risk, I encourage you to select locations for interviews that bring you the most comfort and privacy. Also,

	you are encouraged to select a pseudonym by which to identify throughout this study, or you may choose to identify by your first name only.
Potential Benefits	There are no direct benefits for participants. However, this study may add to a body of knowledge that may be used to help better prepare teachers to engage in anti-racist practices and racial identity work.
Confidentiality	Any potential loss of confidentiality will be minimized by recording, storing, and transcribing interviews on a password-protected laptop. Any printed copies of transcriptions will be stored in a locked file cabinet. Only a pseudonym of your choosing, or your first name if you wish to identify by it, will be recorded on transcriptions. Your written anecdote will be shared via email, which is protected by password protocols through both your own and the researcher's email server. Any printed copies of your written anecdote will be stored in a locked file cabinet. Only a pseudonym of your choosing, or your first name if you wish to identify by it, will be recorded on the written anecdote. The researcher will be the only individual with access to the password-protected laptop and locked file cabinet referenced above. All transcriptions, written anecdotes, and printed copies will be destroyed after five years following the completion of the research. If I write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible. Your information may be shared with representatives of the University of Maryland, College Park or governmental authorities if you or someone else is in danger or if I am required to do so by law.
Compensation	You will receive an Amazon gift card valued at 25 U.S. dollars as compensation for your time and effort. You will provide your name and address in order to receive this compensation.
Right to Withdraw and Questions	Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify. If you decide to stop taking part in the study, if you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or if you need to report an injury related to the research, please contact the investigator: Jessica Haddaway University of Maryland, College Park 2311 Benjamin Building 3942 Campus Dr. College Park, MD 20740 (410) 227 1630

	haddway@umd.edu Dr. Francine Hultgren University of Maryland, College Park 2311 Benjamin Building 3942 Campus Dr. College Park, MD 20740 (301) 405 4501 fh@umd.edu	
Participant Rights	If you have questions about your rights as a research participant or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact: **University of Maryland College Park** **Institutional Review Board Office** **1204 Marie Mount Hall** **College Park, Maryland, 20742** **E-mail: irb@umd.edu** **Telephone: 301-405-0678** This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland, College Park IRB procedures for research involving human subjects.	
Statement of Consent	Your signature indicates that you are at least 18 years of age; you have read this consent form or have had it read to you; your questions have been answered to your satisfaction and you voluntarily agree to participate in this research study. You will receive a copy of this signed consent form. If you agree to participate, please sign your name below.	
Signature and Date	**NAME OF PARTICIPANT [Please Print]**	
	SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT	
	DATE	

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