Article

Critically Compassionate Intellectualism in Teacher Education: The Contributions of Relational–Cultural Theory

Amy Rector-Aranda[1]

Abstract

Cammarota and Romero describe how they utilized a framework they call *critically compassionate intellectualism* (CCI)—a trilogy of critical pedagogy, authentic caring, and social justice–oriented curriculum—to lift up previously disempowered Latinx youth. CCI can also serve as an appropriate framework for emancipatory pedagogy and curriculum in teacher education and other settings, especially those committed to a mission of educational justice for our most disadvantaged students. Because the compassion element in CCI is understudied in teacher education, yet crucial to the success of the framework as a whole, in this article, I apply the tenets of *relational–cultural theory* (RCT) to enhance existing understandings of this component. Based on feminist theories of psychosocial and moral development, RCT expands the original framework to account for varied experiences of privilege and vulnerability when applying CCI beyond its original contexts while retaining core emphases on relationships, empathy, and associated aspects of authentic caring.

Keywords

care, critical theory/critical pedagogy, diversity, multicultural teacher education, social justice, urban teacher education

The body of literature around educating for social justice is ever growing, even if what constitutes social justice is often interpreted in vague or contradictory ways (North, 2006). What is clear is that social justice is still lacking in light of the racism, sexism, classism, ableism, genderism, and other forms of "othering" that persist in contemporary society. Eradicating these kinds of injustices "presupposes a commitment on the part of educators and researchers to subversive views of the purposes of education, of the roles and responsibilities of teachers, and of how we want students and society to change" (Kumashiro, 2000, p. 48). Such an interpretation of social justice is most likely to be accomplished by foregrounding consciousness-raising, antioppressive, and humane principles not only as educational aims but also, importantly, as keys to educational practice.

Cammarota and Romero (2006a) describe how they utilized a framework they call *critically compassionate intellectualism* (CCI)—a trilogy of critical pedagogy, authentic caring, and social justice–oriented curriculum—to galvanize Latinx youth with the capacity to comprehend systemic oppressions affecting them and their communities, so that they could rise above these limitations and create better worlds for themselves and others. Although the term has mainly appeared in these authors' literature on educating Latinx high school students, it serves as an appropriate model for how emancipatory pedagogy and curriculum might be executed in other settings, especially those committed to a mission of educational justice for our most disadvantaged students at all levels.

Also gaining traction in the field is the stance that social justice–minded teacher educators should model a just and humanizing pedagogy in our own classrooms, thus aligning our means with our ends (Carter Andrews, Bartell, & Richmond, 2016; Conklin, 2008; Picower, 2012). In my own teaching of educational foundations courses in both an urban teacher education program with a social justice mission and a more traditional teacher education program, implementing CCI has proven itself in this regard. It not only guides my pedagogy and curriculum but also reminds me to give equal consideration to important care and relational supports, a holistic approach that appears to make CCI especially productive and also unique, though similarly rounded frameworks are now emerging in teacher education (see, for example, Conklin & Hughes, 2016).

Honoring the roots of CCI within a social justice project for Latinx students, I contend that we should expand frameworks such as CCI into teacher education, to explicitly foreground what has been shown to work for students of racial/ethnic minority backgrounds who "have historically not been well-served by the mainstream education system, including traditional teacher preparation programs located at colleges and universities" (Cochran-Smith & Villegas, 2016, pp.

[1]Texas A&M University, College Station, USA

Corresponding Author:
Amy Rector-Aranda, College of Education and Human Development, Texas A&M University, 4232 TAMU, College Station, TX, USA.
Email: aranda@tamu.edu

10-11). In addition to modeling such a pedagogy for all candidates' future work in PreK-12 schools, CCI may offer culturally marginalized preservice teachers a learning experience that promotes their ways of being and knowing, rather than expecting them to conform to the prevailing models of teacher education that uncritically cater to the dominant culture. Furthermore, although current methods and policies at all levels of education do privilege some students over others, these approaches are typically not relationally supportive or truly empowering for any of our students. So, whether students have benefited from, or merely accommodated themselves to, a system that is inherently inhumane and unjust, CCI could create and model a more compassionate and equitable learning experience for all involved.

Because the compassion component in CCI is understudied in teacher education, yet crucial to the success of the framework as a whole, here, I offer the tenets of *relational–cultural theory* (RCT) to enhance existing understandings of this component. Based on feminist theories of psychosocial development, RCT helps expand the original framework to account for varied experiences of privilege and vulnerability when applying CCI beyond its original contexts, while retaining core similarities as a counterhegemonic perspective that emphasizes relationships, empathy, and associated aspects of authentic caring. This article joins existing literature around critical, compassionate (Conklin & Hughes, 2016), antioppressive (Kumashiro, 2000), nonviolent (Wang, 2013), liberatory (King, 1991), culturally responsive (Villegas & Lucas, 2002), bordercrossing (Reyes, 2016; Romo & Chavez, 2006), and similar pedagogies in teacher education for social justice.

On a cautionary note, Cochran-Smith and Villegas (2016) found that teacher preparation research tends to assume "that school factors, including teachers and teacher preparation, rather than social factors, such as poverty and institutionalized racism, were both the problem and the solution to failing schools" (p. 11). Here, I want to clearly state that I do not hold the misguided belief that caring teachers alone can "save" disenfranchised students. I do believe that educators at all levels must be better prepared to confront the education debt (Ladson-Billings, 2006) owed to these students in its myriad relational, cultural, and structural forms. Given CCI's original focus on ethnic minority students, and because most student oppression stems from characteristically "White" ideologies we fail to name as such—that is, White privilege and supremacy couched in paternalistic, middle-class, cisgender, meritocratic, and associated norms and ideals—I also draw attention to the roles of race and whiteness throughout this discussion (Castagno, 2014; DiAngelo, 2011; Leonardo, 2004, 2013; Matias, 2016a).

The Importance of Care and Compassion for Marginalized PreK-12 Students

CCI is an approach cultivated through several programs Cammarota and Romero (2006a) implemented for Latinx youth in Arizona high schools: the Social Justice Education Project (SJEP), the CCI Model of Transformative Education, and CCI's Third Dimension (Romero, Arce, & Cammarota, 2009). Among other findings, these studies show that increasing teachers' ability to act with care and compassion is imperative in our efforts toward equitable treatment and outcomes for these students; however, the ways this care is enacted must simultaneously reflect the critical and social justice aims of the CCI framework.

The compassion component in CCI is originally based on Valenzuela's (1999) study of how Latinx students in a large inner city high school experienced their schooling as uncaring, and her deconstruction of the kinds of care that happen in the modern cultural and political contexts of our education system. Examining the paradox that teachers can care about their students while uncritically maintaining the dominant culture and colonizing effects of curriculum, policy, and practice, she differentiates between what she terms *aesthetic* versus *authentic* care. Although all teachers most likely care about students' academic growth and achievement, in a climate of "subtractive schooling," where students of color are denied connections with their culture and community, this aesthetic caring still serves as a falsely apolitical rejection of essential parts of students' personhood. Other authors have similarly written about the "disconnect between alleged educational ideals and students' actual lived experiences of alienation and cultural irrelevance" (Castagno, 2014; Jay, 2003; Matias, 2016b; McKnight, 2015; Rabaka, 2013; Rector-Aranda, 2016, p. 4). As Castagno (2014) contends, even with the proliferation of *multiculturalism, diversity*, and *equity* as educational buzzwords, a "culture of nice"—where these topics are approached from a position of rote affirmation and simulated neutrality that reifies White norms—prevents educators from engaging in the critical examinations needed to truly understand the racialized experiences of their diverse students. "Whiteness maintains power and privilege by perpetuating and legitimating the status quo while simultaneously maintaining a veneer of neutrality, equality, and compassion" (Castagno, 2014, p. 5). Furthermore, teachers' implicit biases toward students of color continue to affect their treatment of students despite these larger agendas (Warikoo, Sinclair, Fei, & Jacoby-Senghor, 2016).

Instead, Valenzuela's (1999) concept of authentic caring means fostering deeper relationships with students, embracing and affirming their racial, cultural, and community identities, and otherwise reaching beyond achievement to support their flourishing on all levels. Authentic caring is reciprocal, "that is, the teacher establishes an emotional, human connection with his or her students and demonstrates a real interest in the students' overall well being" (Cammarota & Romero, 2006b, p. 309). Rojas and Liou (2016) also found that successful social justice–oriented teachers are sympathetic to their students in a proactive sense—not as a kind of pity denoting student deficiency, but as a recognition of the challenges students face that translates into loving care, genuine relationships, and high academic expectations. Authentic care

also means acknowledging the failure of "nice" policies and practices centered on "inclusion, optimism, and assimilation" (Castagno, 2014, p. 4) that ignore the institutional inequities experienced most acutely by students of color.

The *2013-2014 Civil Rights Data Collection: A First Look* report from the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (2016) confirms gaps still exist in educational opportunities for racial minority, disabled, and English learner students, as evidenced by their rates of access to quality schools and experienced teachers, and enrollment in advanced coursework and other paths to greater college and career readiness. Researchers have correspondingly found that teachers' differential treatment of students based on race contributes to lower achievement and other measurable disparities (McKown & Weinstein, 2008; Okonofua, Walton, & Eberhardt, 2016; Tenenbaum & Ruck, 2007). It is, however, important to recognize that overreliance on measurable achievements is a distraction that can actually exacerbate inequity while overlooking the importance of care and other less easily measured supports (Rojas & Liou, 2016; Trout, 2012). Given the high stakes of modern reforms that have predominantly placed the schools these students attend at risk of closure or other sanctions based solely on test scores (Au, 2009; Kumashiro, 2012; Reyes, 2016; Saltman, 2012), their teachers face a dilemma of care when they must teach to the test and/or choose whether to focus most of their efforts on students who are likely to do better on these measures at the expense of helping those who are falling behind, a dilemma further amplified in locales that use student test scores to evaluate teacher performance (American Educational Research Association, 2015; Berliner, 2011; Fraser-Burgess & Rodgers, 2015). Showing how truly uncaring these effects can become is the systematic removal of vulnerable students who drag down school- or district-wide test scores, as in one border district where "students of Mexican-descent known to have limited English proficiency or a history of behavior problems . . . were asked to seek out their GED, were artificially demoted or promoted, or encouraged to drop out of school altogether" (Reyes, 2016, p. 338).

The 2013-2014 CRDC report (Office for Civil Rights, 2016) also vividly demonstrates another alarming inequity that could be partially alleviated through increased compassion, which is that K-12 students of color are still disproportionately more likely to receive harsh, exclusionary discipline from the cadre of mainly White educators[1] than White students, as similarly documented in other literature (McGrew, 2008; Okonofua et al., 2016; Valles & Villalpando, 2013). For instance, Black students were 3.8 times as likely to receive out-of-school suspension, 1.9 times as likely to be expelled, and 2.2 times as likely to be disciplined through law enforcement compared with White students (Office for Civil Rights, 2016). Students of color were also more likely to be identified as having a disability, confirming research that shows teachers are more likely to refer them for special-needs testing (Tenenbaum & Ruck, 2007). Again, this is

concerning because students served by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) were 5.6 times as likely to be subjected to restraint or seclusion and 2.4 times as likely to be suspended as students without disabilities (Office for Civil Rights, 2016). The most recent 2015-2016 CRDC data shows little or no improvement in these rates (Office for Civil Rights, 2018). Students who drop out of school also report that receiving exclusionary discipline is one of the motivations for this decision, which drastically affects life outcomes such as future education attainment, employment, lifetime earnings, mental and physical illness, and likelihood of incarceration (Okonofua et al., 2016).

A large part of increasing educational justice for disadvantaged students, therefore, means increasing their opportunities for better in-school treatment. Harm is done to students not only by cruel and uncaring actions such as "discrimination, harassment, physical and verbal violence, exclusion, and isolation," but also by failing to take more positive action on these students' behalf (Kumashiro, 2000, p. 26). What is necessary is explicitly antiracist education: "an educational approach that goes beyond tolerating or celebrating racial diversity and *addresses* racism as a system of unequal power between whites and people of color" (DiAngelo, 2012, p. 290, emphasis added). Generating a workforce of teachers who make conscious efforts to be more critically and authentically caring and compassionate could help remedy the disproportionately injurious phenomena these students endure, keeping more of them in the classroom while more humanely supporting their learning and growth.

Why RCT?

Valenzuela's (1999) conception of authentic care fits perfectly with the larger goals of CCI for supporting marginalized students, and reinforces the critical pedagogy component by linking care to its cultural and political underpinnings. Although her conception is definitely still relevant to reframing CCI for teacher education, particularly for teacher candidates of color, RCT also has a lot to contribute when considering how CCI might be applied more broadly and explore more deeply the larger sociocultural norms influencing both marginalized students and those who may be demographically and contextually very differently situated than the students in Valenzuela's and Cammarota and Romero's projects. In my own classes, for example, the majority of students are White, middle class, and come from more suburban and rural locales, and all are, of course, college students, not ethnic minority public high school students. So, although I have remained committed to supporting my students' cultural identities and lived experiences, I cannot ignore that these students mainly reside in positions of relative cultural privilege. Consequently, most relate happy experiences in their recollections of their own schooling—rather than feeling uncared for, many express that relationships with their teachers were positive and even inspirational to

their decision to become teachers themselves. They have generally felt supported by their teachers, culturally connected to their curriculum, and fairly treated by school policies. In this regard, it would be less productive and somewhat incongruous for me to only utilize Valenzuela's framework when translating CCI to my setting.

Students (and their instructors, for that matter) also come from a variety of backgrounds beyond their race or culture that influence their perspectives in more nuanced ways—I have taught students with disabilities, varied sexual orientations, mental health issues, or who have lost a parent or loved one, to name some examples. Therefore, it is important to have compassion for our students as individuals whose worldviews have evolved in relation to their own unique experiences, which, privileged or not, have been largely beyond their control or choosing. Positioning students in binary terms as privileged or not privileged disregards the innumerable incarnations hardship can take, as well as the dialectic in which many individuals simultaneously embody both privileged and nonprivileged identities. RCT offers an alternative through which to interrogate the reality that candidates from varied backgrounds have had equally varied experiences and, thus, bring their own specific cultural perspectives, privileges, and assumptions to their teaching and learning.

Regardless of background, very few teacher candidates have experienced truly humanizing pedagogies in their own schooling due to current education trajectories based on testing, accountability, and surveillance. While incorporating CCI into teacher education can better support racial/ethnic minority preservice teachers, it can simultaneously convey an unfamiliar and alternative pedagogy for *all* students to consider as they form their own teaching identities, hopefully helping them understand and eventually enact similar practices. A further advantage may be that a cycle is initiated, in which previously marginalized PreK-12 student populations who now have better schooling experiences are more likely to choose the teaching profession themselves and then, hopefully, have more successful experiences in teacher education programs, thereby increasing the diversity of the teacher workforce.

RCT and Compassion in the Classroom

Comstock and colleagues (2008) explain how RCT complements social justice efforts by identifying how contextual and sociocultural factors affect the creation of growth-fostering relationships, and by examining how relational competencies are developed throughout the life span. Emerging in opposition to the prior perspective that a primary goal for an individual's learning and development is to achieve independence from others (Jordan, 1995), RCT proposes that the opposite is true, and that successful relational *connections*—interactions that are *mutually empathic* and *mutually empowering*—are vital to individual and shared learning, as well as emotional growth and health (Miller & Stiver, 1997). Here, I explain the foundations and tenets of RCT to demonstrate their role in educating teachers through compassion to be more compassionate supporters of their own diverse students.

Missing Perspectives

RCT challenges the strong focus on attributes of independence and separation seen in leading Western developmental theories of the second half of the 20th century (Erikson, 1959; Maslow, 1970), which tended to de-emphasize or even ignore the ways growth is socially and relationally constructed as well as the importance of preserving relationships of mutuality and interdependence for healthy psychosocial development. Through early work of Jean Baker Miller (1976) and Carol Gilligan (1982), RCT emerged as a feminist theory of development, proposing that the female predisposition to experience the world and grow through relationship and emotional connection was as valid as those dispositions identified in predominant theories that emphasized the goals of autonomy and rationality. Particularly, their psychological research was meant to fill in the missing perspectives of girls and women in traditional theory that was empirically androcentric, based only in studies of male participants just as most research had been to that point. Although the relational understandings of women had traditionally been seen as weakness, as a less mature phase of development, or pathologized completely, RCT demonstrates that the ability to care for others and to form growth-fostering connections is actually the epitome of moral and emotional maturity and psychological well-being.

Gilligan's (1982) and Noddings's (1984) related theorizing of *care ethics* also contrast with traditional ethical viewpoints, in which to do the right thing out of caring or love holds no moral standing on its own. Blum (1988) juxtaposes Gilligan's moral theory of care with Kohlberg's theory of the stages of moral development, the latter of which holds that the highest and most desirable stage of moral judgment is based on "impartiality, impersonality, justice, formal rationality, and universal principle. This *impartialist* conception of morality . . . has been the dominant conception of morality in contemporary Anglo-American moral philosophy" (p. 472). Because caring depends more on emotion than reasoning, it has typically been dismissed in a Western worldview that emphasizes reason over emotion.[2] However, care ethicists hold that care indeed relies on sophisticated reasoning, it is just motivated by emotion, empathy, and a concern for the cared-for (Noddings, 2012). This is not empathy as a projection of oneself into the mind of the other, but as a *feeling-with* the other, reading the other. It is a recognition that we are each situated within a complex system of ongoing relationships, and morality "consists in attention to, understanding of, and emotional responsiveness toward the individuals with whom one stands in these relationships" (Blum, 1988, p. 473).

RCT theorists also assert that supposedly "feminine" tendencies toward emotion, care, and relationship are, in fact, human tendencies that have been suppressed under false ideals of competition, guardedness, and individuation held throughout Western thought in patriarchal societies (Spencer, 2000). Relational theories are informed by the observation that "societal systems perpetuated within patriarchy create a particular relational context which negatively impacts psychological development through the subordination of whole groups of people and the normalization or valorization of some forms of disconnection" (Spencer, 2000, p. 15). In contrast, the relational model of human development has been shown to apply to individuals of any gender, and holds that *all* "people gain a central sense of meaning, well-being, and worth through engagement in growth-enhancing relationships" (Jordan, 1995, p. 1). Relating RCT back to CCI, we see that although it is meant to be a universal theory of human development, its message is particularly salient for those most disempowered by the dominant cultural norms and systems in U.S. society.

A Culture of Disconnection

RCT defies theories and cultural norms that represent human nature as greedy, selfish, aggressive, and lacking in capacity to care about others, asserting that these are not natural, but socially constructed (Jordan, 2014).

> RCT argues that mutuality should replace the dichotomy of selfishness versus selflessness, the prevailing model characterized either by competition over scarce resources . . . or self-sacrifice. In mutual relationships . . . safety is gained by building good connections and not by exercising dominance over others. (Jordan, 2014, p. 681)

Jordan (1995) names persistent flaws in Western culture that produce and reinforce feelings of disconnection and isolation, which are particularly enforced for the boy, who is "taught to see himself as standing *over* or *against* rather than *with*; in such a stance he is taught to deny basic human engagement and vulnerability" (Jordan, 1995, p. 2). This artificial separation can be seen throughout the established structures and habits of our stratified and individualistic culture.

Defensive disconnection. The types of problems Jordan (1995) describes particularly persist in traditional classroom relationships, especially as students mature and advance through the system. The first of these is a "normative emphasis on defensive disconnection as a means to feeling strong and self-sufficient" (p. 2). Students are encouraged to compete with one another, and praised for gaining self-reliance rather than for their ability to relate to others. Dependence on other students is typically discouraged, seen as incompetence to do the work on one's own or even as cheating, rather than being encouraged as shared, growth-enhancing learning in collaboration. These separations might stem from a sincere desire for students to grow as individuals, however, the assumption that this makes students stronger or more self-sufficient is misguided. For example, neuroscience now shows that our brains process the "pain" of social rejection, exclusion, and other social disconnections and losses similarly to how they process physical pain (Eisenberger, 2012). We physically need social connection to thrive. Instead of making students strong and self-sufficient, separation, thus, hinders the deeper learning that would be possible through interpersonal connection.

Hierarchical disconnection. The second force Jordan (1995) identifies are those contextually produced disconnections that occur when certain groups are made to feel "lesser than" others. This is seen, for example, when students who compete academically are subsequently tracked into stratified learning groups based on ability, rather than seen as relational beings who might be able to enhance each other's varied knowledges. This effect is especially pronounced for students of color when we recognize that they are more likely to experience de facto school segregation (Donnor, 2013), to have their cultures only superficially represented in curriculum (Chandler & McKnight, 2009), and to be labeled with learning disabilities (Office for Civil Rights, 2016), placed on vocational tracks (Cammarota & Romero, 2006a), and otherwise sidelined through a system that privileges Eurocentric norms and ways of knowing.

In the generally nondemocratic current educational setting, teachers and students are also obliged to assume a hierarchical relationship, as in Freire's (1970/1993) notion of "banking pedagogy," wherein the teacher holds "expert" power over the student, as well as the capacity to substantially affect the student's future with the simple assigning of a grade. Interdependence and collaboration between teacher and student are viewed with even more apprehension than between students, perceived as illogical, inappropriate, or insufficiently disciplinarian based on hierarchical power models. The result of hierarchical forms of disconnection is that over time, "the suppression of all experience which makes the dominant group uncomfortable or threatened leads to self-protective inauthenticity in many marginalized groups—another source of disconnection" (Jordan, 1995, p. 2). Students, in general, are a disempowered group; however, when this is compounded through intersections with other identities such as race, class, socioeconomic status, ability, or gender, the effect can be even greater disconnection from learning.

Interactive disconnection. Finally, a third form of cultural impairment Jordan (1995) distinguishes are the individual disconnections caused by repeated interactive violations in close relationships. These disconnections create a *central relational paradox* (Miller & Stiver, 1997), particularly applicable in situations where one person is dependent on the other, as is the child on the parent, and likewise, the student

on the teacher. In school, the central relational paradox is exemplified when, after years of increasingly fractured and discouraged interactions as the student moves up in grade levels, she still desires connection with and approval from teachers, while self-protecting and taking cautious steps to avoid revealing this vulnerability. If this need for connection goes unmet for too long, the student may cease to expect much connection with any instructor, and even be surprised by or mistrusting of one who does seem to care.

Miller and Stiver (1997) assert that repeated instances of either connection or disconnection in a particular context form *relational images* that continue to affect our behavior in future relationships in similar contexts. "The belief that no empathic response will be available from another person leads to deep withdrawal and immobilization," particularly when we decide based on these relational images that it is unsafe to share our authentic selves (Jordan, 1995, p. 4). In the classroom, Miller and Stiver (1997) infer that students "invent strategies of disconnection" to safeguard themselves, such as becoming silent and essentially "disappearing," adopting the "good student" role as they try to be whatever the teacher wants from them, or acting up to gain the teacher's attention as well as the ability to control or predict the teacher's reactions (p. 106). In all these strategies, students fail to be true to themselves to some degree. Although some students are resilient enough to press on despite relational obstructions in school, the pain of this isolation can cause other students to withdraw from their education completely. We are then apt to "blame the victim" for not being independent or "gritty" enough to soldier on despite these contextual and relational failings.

Healing Through Connection

RCT theorists propose several concepts that when better understood may help nurture healing and growth in relationships. When this is accomplished, Miller (1986) proposes that we can tangibly observe at least five "good things":

- Each person feels a greater sense of "zest" (vitality, energy).
- Each person feels more able to act and does act.
- Each person has a more accurate picture of herself/himself and the other person(s).
- Each person feels a greater sense of worth.
- Each person feels more connected to the other person(s) and feels a greater motivation for connection with other people beyond those in the specific relationship. (p. 3)

These are the workings of *mutual empowerment*, which is achieved through several elements RCT generally proposes are essential in successful growth-fostering relationships. These elements are *trust, mutual empathy, authenticity, power-with*, and *growth-in-connection*. It follows that successful teaching–learning relationships are founded on these

same ideals. Although these elements are differentiated in this theoretical summary, this is a false separation, and, in practice, they occur much more synergistically within our teaching–learning interactions.

Trust

> *Trust* has become a popular word in educational discourse these days . . . In an educational climate that has devastatingly eroded this foundation of the teaching-learning enterprise, teachers and researchers are assiduously working to grasp, describe, resurrect, recreate, or otherwise hold on to what we know sustains human capacity to construct knowledge. (Raider-Roth, 2005, pp. 17-18)

Raider-Roth (2005) writes about the imperative to develop a context of trust in the classroom, and particularly the need for students to "trust what they know," meaning to be able to "discuss, use, and depend on their understandings" within their teaching–learning relationships (pp. 28-29). Examining this notion of trust in the perspective of Hawkins's (1973) concept of *I, Thou, and It* means the trust students have in themselves and their own knowledge (I), in what they know about and their interactions with others (Thou), and in the content and context of their learning (It) creates a *relational triangle* that enhances and fortifies their growth (Raider-Roth, 2005). Unfortunately, "practicing teachers as well as teacher candidates often do not appreciate the funds of knowledge that students bring with them into schools, nor the legitimacy of this knowledge and the language and cultural practices in which students engage" (Richmond, 2016, p. 6). Teaching and curriculum must, therefore, be truly culturally sustaining (Paris & Alim, 2014), not just infused with superficially multicultural content, for students of nonprivileged identities to be able to trust in their personal knowledge and ways of knowing. McDermott (1977) reminds us that trust is not a personal trait that some have and others do not, but occurs within contexts where people actively work to achieve trust, and in schools, an environment must be conducive to creating the kinds of trust that lead to learning.

Trust is an important part of CCI's compassion element because students who consistently experience compassion within this relational triangle can come to trust that they and what they know will be treated with respect and kindness as they venture into unknown academic territory, which, in turn, creates positive relational images and future trust. They can trust that their unique situations are being taken under consideration, and can, therefore, more easily remember to consider the environments others must navigate. The downside is that, in the current educational setting, many relational triangles lack compassion, so that students instead experience disconnection between themselves, their co-learners or teachers, and the material; are discouraged from trusting their own knowledge in a culture of banking pedagogy; and may even come to expect to be treated uncaringly or to distrust future acts of compassion, which hinders their ability to learn. In teacher education, therefore, it is imperative that students are able to trust in compassionate treatment from

their instructors, not only to enhance their learning ability but also to help them enact trust in their future classrooms. This trust is doubly important in matters of socially just education strategies, as most marginalized students already distrust a system that repeatedly lets them down.

Mutual empathy. Interwoven with trust, *mutual empathy* is also important to relationships and learning. People need "others who can be mutually empathic with them, can resonate with them and respond to them—can join with them in these thoughts and feelings . . . to even *experience* their important feelings in all of their depth and complexity" (Miller & Stiver, 1997, p. 45). Empathy, as it is generally regarded, tends to be seen as a one-way action in response to another's emotions or ideas as one recognizes, understands, experiences, and responds to the other person (Segal, 2011). However, *mutual empathy* creates a different dynamic in which both individuals are affected in an active creation of both mutual and individual understanding (Miller & Stiver, 1997). The student, for instance, may experience a teacher's empathic response as empowering validation of what is important or interesting to the student, helping the student construct similar and future knowledge around these ideas and feelings. At the same time, the teacher is acting on her own ideas and feelings about what it means to be a teacher, and the student's response can make the teacher feel effective, which affects her growth as a teacher. Both are empowered and enabled to proceed in similar and improved future action. When this *mutuality* is lacking, however, the result is immobilization, as both student and teacher fail to move into deeper understanding of their own and each other's ideas and feelings, leading to stagnation rather than action (Miller & Stiver, 1997). This is the kind of stagnation that, if it persists, results in a vicious cycle of educational failures on the part of the student, and the inability of the teacher to learn how to remedy the problem.

A compassionate response is an important part of empathy; it is the action that shows one's needs have been recognized, understood, and personally experienced by the other, for without this response, it is hard for the person seeking mutuality to know whether they have found it. In essence, mutual empathy is a cycle, and compassion is the action in that cycle that hopefully leads to more empathy and more action. When a teacher is compassionate to a student's learning and relational needs, the student *experiences* the teacher's empathy, and is more likely to reciprocate a level of compassion toward the teacher and the job the teacher is trying to do. One way to induce mutual empathy is through immersion into the experience of another. In teacher education, one example of how this can be accomplished is when the students are allowed to take on the role of the teacher through activities where they are expected to work with the instructor, with one another, or on their own to co-construct their own content

knowledge. Through creations that require them to ponder their own learning, pedagogies, and educational philosophies in light of what they have received in the course, students are more able to recognize, understand, experience, and respond to their instructor (as well as to other and previous instructors), and instructors are better able to understand how students are receiving what they are offering. In this process, each may gain an appreciation for the work and roles of the other, thereby inducing greater and more reciprocal compassion within those roles.

As tools toward broader social justice in education, compassion, and mutuality are a step in the right direction, however, we also need to develop empathy in ourselves and students as a prosocial capacity toward a common good.

> Individual empathy is insufficient to motivate a society or community toward social justice. The most effective way to change structural inequalities and disparities is to provide people with opportunities to gain a deep contextual knowledge and have experiences that create empathic insights into the lives of people who are oppressed. (Segal, 2011, p. 268)

In teacher education specifically, opportunities for empathy can begin in the classroom through critical and in-depth examinations of the historical, cultural, sociological, philosophical, and political roots of injustice, as gained in an educational foundations course. In this way, empathy is more likely to derive from a whole-picture understanding of the structural nature of inequity (Gorski, 2016), rather than shallower explanations and deficit ideologies that position students and their communities as somehow inherently deficient and needing "white martyr-messiahs" to help them overcome these deficiencies (Matias, 2016a, p. 9). Too often, we accomplish little more than turning our privileged students' dysconscious racism (King, 1991) and "emotions of disgust to false claims of love, empathy, and caring" (Matias, 2016a, p. 26). As Delgado (1996) posits,

> False empathy is worse than none at all, worse than indifference. It makes you overconfident, so that you can easily harm the intended beneficiary. You are apt to be paternalistic, thinking you know what the other really wants or needs. You can easily substitute your own goal for his. You visualize what you would want if you were he, when your experiences and needs are radically different. (p. 31)

It is, therefore, vital that teacher candidates be compelled to examine their own implicit biases and taken-for-granted assumptions to hopefully avoid the false empathy so typical of many multiculturalism and diversity initiatives (Castagno, 2014; Duncan, 2016; King, 1991).

It is possible that students may acquire a more profound empathy when they are sent into actual classrooms in high-needs schools or other youth development sites to experience the realities of what they have learned (Romo & Chavez,

2006; Tinkler, hannah, Tinkler, & Miller, 2015). Given the right preparation and support through coursework and structured reflexivity (Duncan, 2016), in these settings, preservice teachers could create mutually empathic relationships with individual students, where the students gain from the extra attention and compassion of the student–teachers, and the latter can gain a more solid grasp of the experiences of underprivileged students and hopefully come to realize that they have the power to help improve those experiences through genuine empathy and compassionate care. Taking these experiences a step further might entail doing youth participatory action research projects, in which our preservice teachers learn to lead their students in investigation and action on issues the students themselves identify and find meaningful (Cammarota & Romero, 2009; Rubin, Abu El-Haj, Graham, & Clay, 2016), and practitioner inquiry to critically examine their own assumptions and aims related to their teaching practices (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009; Lysaker & Furuness, 2011).

It is important that these experiences not be isolated or random course requirements, but sustained threads of community engagement throughout students' time in their teacher education programs and in their practicum placements (Sanford, Hopper, & Starr, 2015), especially because it is typically the newest and least experienced teachers who are hired into the most disadvantaged schools (Office for Civil Rights, 2016). This exposure must begin in the first term of the program, be incorporated into as many of their courses and other requisites as possible, and emphasized through connected course topics and projects that oblige students to critically reflect on these experiences (Pugh, 2014). Unfortunately, students typically only get this exposure later in their programs during their student teaching—and not at all if they are not placed in high-poverty schools—at which point they might already be too entrenched in a deficit mindset (Kirkland, 2014). Programs are also increasingly removing or de-emphasizing sociocultural foundations courses that help students to fully develop "the professional vision, cultural competence, and adaptive expertise they need to meet the changing learning needs of their students" (Zeichner, Payne, & Brayko, 2015, p. 124). Placing *too* much emphasis on field learning that students are not adequately prepared to comprehend is more likely to exacerbate privileged biases and ideologies, therefore, theory and practice must go hand in hand.

Authenticity. If it was possible to place these different aspects of growth-fostering relationships in a linear order, *authenticity* might come after trust and mutual empathy, for without these, it is difficult for individuals to feel safe enough to share their true selves, feelings, and experiences with one another. Miller and Stiver (1997) describe authenticity as

> a person's ongoing ability to represent her-/himself in a relationship with increasing truth and fullness . . . If we don't have other people in our lives who can resonate and respond, we

become less and less able to state our feelings and thoughts or even to know them . . . If we have found it disconnecting and dangerous to put forward our feelings and thoughts, we begin to focus on methods of not representing our perceptions and feelings. (pp. 47-48)

Lack of authenticity is a particularly troubling state within our current education system, where students and teachers are subject to increasing demands that they conform to externally prescribed goals for the time they spend together. Teachers may not feel safe to authentically represent their own beliefs about what is important or right for their students and to act on these beliefs. Students are expected to convey little more than whether they have met the prescribed goals, while often denied expression of their authentic identities when these do not align with the goals. For example, a standard protocol for students is to "give teachers what they want," disingenuously engaging with subject matter and assignments as they do whatever it takes to meet imposed ideals and get the best grade or score. And, students whose identities include minority or marginalized distinctions due to their race, gender, or class, for example, can be further distanced from their learning when those identities are ignored in curriculum, assignments, and class norms and discussions. Teachers gain little in return through these exchanges, as they fail to receive truth from their students and, therefore, cannot really gauge whether students' growth, if it even occurs, serves any real purpose.

Even when steps are taken to promote trust, empathy, and authenticity, "one of the hardest things teachers learn is that the sincerity of their intentions does not guarantee the purity of their practice" (Brookfield, 1995, p. 1). Rodgers and Raider-Roth (2006) craft a notion of authenticity in teaching that confronts the rampant inconsistencies between our claims to support students and the actual policies and practices that seem to prevent it. This entails teaching "as engaging in an authentic relationship with students where teachers know and respond with intelligence and compassion to students and their learning" (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006, p. 265). They define this as *presence*—

> a state of alert awareness, receptivity and connectedness to the mental, emotional and physical workings of both the individual and the group in the context of their learning environments and the ability to respond with a considered and compassionate best next step . . . it involves self-knowledge, trust, relationship and compassion. (pp. 265-266)

It is not surprising that compassion is a key element of presence. As an action of empathy, compassion facilitates presence because it requires genuine care and concern for one's students for a teacher to want to be fully present in the first place. Teachers who are authentically present with themselves, with their students, and with the subject matter are more able to use this relational triangle as a way to bring out students' authentic

selves, and, thus, to facilitate the students' own presence and self-awareness within their own triangles of self, other, and context. Here, "development of self is asserted not by autonomy and separation but rather by construction, defining, and refining of relationships" (Raider-Roth, 2005, p. 20).

Authenticity and presence in teacher education requires that instructors be reflective practitioners and encourage reflectiveness in their students. This self-knowledge entails acknowledging the "cultural, psychological and political complexities of learning, and the ways in which power complicates all human relationships" (Brookfield, 1995, p. 1). Authenticity is an especially relevant concern in teacher education, where many White and relatively privileged candidates can genuinely hold deep fears and biases toward the kinds of difference they will encounter in their potential students of nonprivileged races and backgrounds. These are students who "rarely engage the word race, have not had prolonged relationships with people of color, or have never stepped inside an urban community of color" (Matias, 2013, p. 70). Representing themselves and their feelings authentically, in this case, becomes potentially very uncomfortable and destabilizing for students. Although this is an appropriate kind of personal suffering in the process of learning about the suffering of others (Mintz, 2013), it is important to provide an environment of trust, empathy, and compassion, rather than one that will further put students on the defensive, a frequent manifestation of what DiAngelo (2011) terms "white fragility" or "the reduced psychosocial stamina that racial insulation inculcates" (p. 56). Although too often we do cater to the "interests, fears, and feelings of whites" (Gillborn, 2013), in teacher education, recognizing and owning these feelings are essential parts of mediating candidates' privileged worldviews that can otherwise end up hurting the already marginalized students in their care (Matias, 2013, 2016a; Okonofua et al., 2016). Presence means facilitating an honest investigation of privilege and race dominance in ways that simultaneously acknowledge our students' feelings, backgrounds, and lived experiences. Although this is no guarantee that they will fully overcome their fragility, fears, and biases, making the process as compassionate as possible is at least a step in the right direction.

At the same time, it is important not to necessarily equate an environment of compassion with certain notions of "safe space," in which guidelines for dialogue are devised that can actually inhibit a lot of the "unsafe" talk necessary to truly get at topics of injustice. Although the ability to dialogue across difference has been touted as a key aspect of social justice pedagogy, we must be sure to recognize how notions of safety in this dialogue can also be problematic from a social justice perspective because they have a tendency to subdue important dialogue as well as privilege the dominant groups' ways of feeling safe while further marginalizing our already marginalized students. To maintain authenticity, we must, therefore, prioritize the kinds of antiracist responses outlined by DiAngelo (2012), through which the dominant

group is still compelled to actively engage with uncomfortable topics. I would propose using Sensoy and DiAngelo's (2014) "less-orthodox adaptations" of the typical safe space guidelines in which intellectual humility, understanding the difference between opinion and informed knowledge, looking for group-level patterns, noticing our own defensive reactions, recognizing our own social positionality, learning comfort with discomfort, and pushing ourselves to extend our thinking beyond our existing "learning edge" become the emphases of our interactions and assignments (p. 8).

In essence, through presence and authenticity, we are hopefully better able to express our humanity and learn to support the humanity of others. "To be more fully human is to act, think, and reflect on one's presence and position in the world, and to be allowed to do so" (Reyes, 2016, p. 339). Our compassion for the humanity of our students means we desire for their true selves to be recognized, seen, and understood, "not just emotionally but cognitively, physically and even spiritually" (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006, p. 267). For the student, this is experienced as

> a feeling of being safe, where one is drawn to risk because of the discoveries it might reveal; it is the excitement of discovering one's self in the context of the larger world, rather than the worry of losing one's self, in the process. (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006, p. 267)

One of the greatest gifts we can give preservice teachers, and that they can give to their own students, is the gift of discovery that comes when our full presence facilitates expression of their authentic humanity.

Power-with. Moving forward with trust, mutual empathy, and authenticity means coming to understand the acts of shared power these entail. RCT draws much attention to power in relationships, particularly as it has historically been used by some to dominate others and as it operates as one of the means by which a Western epistemology of separation and competition is perpetuated. Under these conditions, power typically exists as one person's or group's *power over* another. In the classroom, this is seen, for example, as the teacher's power over the students as he makes most decisions as to curricular content, pedagogy, assessment, and so on. In the other direction, students theoretically hold some power over teachers in districts who use students' test achievement to evaluate teachers' performance and whether they get to keep their jobs, or, in extreme cases, whether the school even remains open (Saltman, 2012). In higher education, the students do hold some power over their instructors' livelihoods by means of officially or unofficially evaluating their performance, recommending or enrolling in future courses with the same instructor, or even whether or not they choose to remain in and financially support the university. These types of power are not really in the hands of the students, however, but ultimately in those of administrators and

policy makers, so basically, both teachers and students are threatened by someone or something holding "power over" their futures. This goes beyond the more confined effects of a teacher's power over students through traditional, banking pedagogy; this larger power over threatens individuals' and groups' sense of security, triggering a fear of nonconformity that can paralyze efforts toward trust, mutual empathy, and authenticity.

On the contrary, RCT positions people in growth-fostering relationships as actively creating *power-with* one another. In their study of female dispositions, early theorists discovered that women use power-with in relationships to foster others' unique development (Miller & Stiver, 1997). A teacher of any gender enacts this special attribute when using power "to increase the other person's resources and strengths in many dimensions—emotional, intellectual, psychological, and more" (Miller & Stiver, 1997, p. 16). When power is not used *over* others to intimidate or control them, but instead *with* them, it empowers both actors to grow.

> The power of people to interact so that both benefit is unlimited. It is possible to create repeatedly more of this kind of power . . . teacher and student . . . can and do engage in mutual empathy and mutual empowerment. Each may contribute a different kind of action based on her/his age, role, or experience, but each can be fully engaged in, and affected by, their shared activity. (Miller & Stiver, 1997, p. 47)

This symbiosis of activity through mutually empowering exchanges between student and teacher leads to growth on both their parts, as they are both positioned equally as givers and receivers of knowledge and enrichment.

Because our culture inherently stations us in hierarchical roles that can be difficult to shake, close attention to compassion is still necessary in even the most democratic classrooms where students and teachers actively co-create learning together. With consciousness of the structurally imposed power differentials between them, and to account for the inevitable disconnections that occur in any relationship, compassion and mutual empathy help to preserve a power-with stance in the classroom. Power-with is perhaps most important in nurturing trust and authenticity with traditionally disempowered people and groups, such as underprivileged students and their families who have grown accustomed to a "politics of desperation" in which they have been victimized by reforms that were supposed to help them (Stovall, 2013). Indeed, part of the potency and importance of compassion lies in its ability to disrupt such inequities.

> If a person with power hurts a person with less power and the less powerful person can represent his or her hurt to the more powerful person, who then responds with empathy and earnestness, both people develop an enhanced sense of mattering to each other and of being effective. Trust grows and the relationship gains strength, stability and resilience. (Jordan, 2014, p. 682)

Teacher educators and future teachers must learn how best to craft an environment of trust and to enact mutual empathy with their students by sharing power with them.

Growth-in-connection. All these factors contribute to what RCT proponents term *growth-in-connection*, which is essentially the enhanced ability to learn and progress through healthy, growth-fostering relationships. Knowing what we know about trust, mutual empathy, authenticity, and enacting power with others, it seems nonsensical to believe that growth could ever possibly occur through the opposites of isolation, separation, disconnection, or competition—in essence, growth-*limiting* relationships.

Although the attribute of "independence" has rarely held a negative connotation in our traditional understandings of human development, in the context of educational, personal, and interpersonal growth, perhaps it should.

> The goal of development is not forming a separated self or finding gratification, but something else altogether—the ability to participate actively in relationships that foster the well-being of everyone involved . . . Participating in growth-fostering relationships is both the source and the goal of development. (Miller & Stiver, 1997, p. 22)

As a crucial component of CCI, RCT situates compassionate, caring relationships at the center of any worthwhile teaching and learning endeavor. This is particularly significant when the goal of that endeavor is to create genuinely humane and empathetic future educators empowered to do the same for their own students, often despite cultural and structural norms that encourage them, or at least make it too easy for them, to do otherwise.

Conclusion

The purpose of this article has been to situate compassion in teacher education within the conceptual frameworks of RCT and social justice education. A thread of caution I have tried to lace throughout is that we must avoid the tendency to complacently enact shallow forms of compassion without questioning how these efforts ignore and potentially exacerbate multiple forms of inequity and oppression, both in teacher education and education at large. Genuine compassion and relational connection—creating contexts of mutuality, respect, and authentic care—can help counteract this tendency, and providing and modeling this for our teacher education students is an important part of helping them become caring and just teachers themselves.

As a critical pedagogue, I am personally committed to problem-posing education that is organic and contextual, so although I have offered some broad examples of the kinds of

actions and changes necessary to more thoroughly position trust, mutual empathy, authenticity, power-with, and growth-in-connection at the center of our practice, how these concepts play out in different teacher educators' settings will be greatly influenced by

- their own positionalities of power/privilege and identity,
- the demographics of their teacher education students,
- the political and geographical locations of their universities,
- how their programs' policies support or hinder social justice efforts (especially those critical discourses that may call mainstream practices into question),
- the availability of resources (such as partnerships with schools and other organizations that serve underprivileged students), and so forth.

Writing about practical applications is a next step in my work and I also invite other practitioners to share how they either purposely or tacitly enact RCT tenets in their teacher education courses to continue this discussion. For now, I point out the large body of existing social justice literature in which many authors have offered descriptions of practices and techniques that may align well with this framework and be transferable to a reader's specific setting.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

Funding

Notes

1. Although teacher diversity has been slowly increasing, a recent report by the U.S. Department of Education shows that between 1987 and 2012, the proportion of White teachers still only decreased from 87% to 82%, whereas White students made up just 51% of the student population in 2012 (Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, & Policy and Program Studies Service, 2016). Furthermore, the report shows that although more teacher candidates of color are entering the field than previously, their representation diminishes along the educator pipeline, with lower employee retention rates versus their initial postsecondary enrollment in teacher education programs. Administrators and others with decision-making capacity are also overwhelmingly White, middle- or upper class, and male (Castagno, 2014; Matias, 2016a), another failure of adequate representation for racial minority, low socioeconomic status, and other nonprivileged students.
2. Matias (2016a) offers an evocative discussion of the incongruence in Whites' typically emotional responses and resistance toward topics of race, where suddenly emotion is allowed to completely overrule otherwise glorified principles of reason

and logic. DiAngelo (2011) has named a similar response "white fragility,"

> a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium. (p. 54)

Leonardo (2016) notes that "in fact, white emotionality is perhaps the most egregious violation of Enlightenment principles because it represents the gateway practice leading to denial, failure to weigh social science evidence, and, ultimately, violence" (p. xiii). The approved academic setting also rejects emotion as being at all relevant to learning and knowing, meaning students of color who dare to invoke emotion or the need for relational connection, which are characteristic within their cultural ways of being, are penalized and, thus, held to a double standard (Ladson-Billings, 2012; Subedi, 2013).

References

American Educational Research Association. (2015). AERA statement on use of value-added models (VAM) for the evaluation of educators and educator preparation programs. *Educational Researcher*, *44*(8), 448-452.

Au, W. (2009). *Unequal by design: High-stakes testing and the standardization of inequality*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Berliner, D. (2011). Rational responses to high stakes testing: The case of curriculum narrowing and the harm that follows. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, *41*(3), 287-302.

Blum, L. A. (1988). Gilligan and Kohlberg: Implications for moral theory. *Ethics*, *98*(3), 472-491.

Brookfield, S. (1995). *What it means to be a critically reflective teacher*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Cammarota, J., & Romero, A. (2006a). A critically compassionate intellectualism for Latina/o students: Raising voices above the silencing in our schools. *Multicultural Education*, *14*(2), 16-23.

Cammarota, J., & Romero, A. (2006b). A critically compassionate pedagogy for Latino youth. *Latino Studies*, *4*(3), 305-312.

Cammarota, J., & Romero, A. F. (2009). A social justice epistemology and pedagogy for Latina/o students: Transforming public education with participatory action research. *New Directions for Youth Development*, *123*, 53-65.

Carter Andrews, D. J., Bartell, T., & Richmond, G. (2016). Teaching in dehumanizing times: The professionalization imperative. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *67*(3), 170-172.

Castagno, A. E. (2014). *Educated in whiteness: Good intentions and diversity in schools*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Chandler, P., & McKnight, D. (2009). The failure of social education in the United States: A critique of teaching the national story from "white" colourblind eyes. *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies*, *7*(2), 217-248.

Cochran-Smith, M., & Villegas, A. M. (2016). Preparing teachers for diversity and high-poverty schools: A research-based perspective. In J. Lampert & B. Burnett (Eds.), *Teacher education for high poverty schools* (pp. 10-31). New York, NY: Springer.

Cochran-Smith, M., & Lytle, S. L. (2009). *Inquiry as stance: Practitioner research for the next generation*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Comstock, D. L., Hammer, T. R., Strentzsch, J., Cannon, K., Parsons, J., & Salazar, G. I. (2008). Relational-cultural theory: A framework for bridging relational, multicultural, and social justice competencies. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, *86*(Summer), 279-287.

Conklin, H. G. (2008). Modeling compassion in critical, justice-oriented teacher education. *Harvard Educational Review*, *78*(4), 652-674.

Conklin, H. G., & Hughes, H. E. (2016). Practices of compassionate, critical, justice-oriented teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *67*(1), 47-60.

Delgado, R. (1996). *The coming race war: And other apocalyptic tales of America after affirmative action and welfare*. New York: New York University Press.

DiAngelo, R. (2011). White fragility. *International Journal of Critical Pedagogy*, *3*(3), 54-70.

DiAngelo, R. (2012). Antiracist education and the road ahead. *Counterpoints*, *398*, 289-302.

Donnor, J. K. (2013). Education as the property of whites: African Americans' continued quest for good schools. In M. Lynn & A. D. Dixson (Eds.), *Handbook of critical race theory in education* (pp. 195-203). New York, NY: Routledge.

Duncan, G. A. (2016). Critical race theory and method: Rendering race in urban ethnographic research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *8*(1), 85-104.

Eisenberger, N. I. (2012). The pain of social disconnection: Examining the shared neural underpinnings of physical and social pain. *Nature Reviews Neuroscience*, *13*(6), 421-434.

Erikson, E. H. (1959). *Identity and the life cycle: Selected papers*. New York, NY: International Universities Press.

Fraser-Burgess, S., & Rodgers, K. L. (2015). Reconsidering the moral work of teaching framework: Weighing the moral hazards of accountability. *Philosophical Studies in Education*, *46*, 62-72.

Freire, P. (1993). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: Continuum. (Original work published 1970)

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

Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Gorski, P. C. (2016). Poverty and the ideological imperative: A call to unhook from deficit and grit ideology and to strive for structural ideology in teacher education. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, *42*(4), 378-386.

Hawkins, D. (1973). I, thou, and it. In D. Hawkins (Ed.), *The informed vision: Essays on learning and human nature* (pp. 48-62). New York, NY: Agathon Press.

Jay, M. (2003). Critical race theory, multicultural education, and the hidden curriculum of hegemony. *Multicultural Perspectives*, *5*(4), 3-9.

Jordan, J. (1995). *Relational awareness: Transforming disconnection* (Working paper series). Wellesley, MA: Stone Center.

Jordan, J. (2014). Relational-cultural theory. In D. Coghlan & M. Brydon-Miller (Eds.), *The SAGE encyclopedia of action research* (pp. 680-683). London, England: SAGE.

King, J. E. (1991). Dysconscious racism: Ideology, identity, and the miseducation of teachers. *Journal of Negro Education*, *60*(2), 133-146.

Kirkland, D. E. (2014). "They look scared": Moving from service learning to learning to serve in teacher education—A social justice perspective. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, *47*(4), 580-603.

Kumashiro, K. K. (2000). Toward a theory of anti-oppressive education. *Review of Educational Research*, *70*(1), 25-53.

Kumashiro, K. K. (2012). *Bad teacher! How blaming teachers distorts the bigger picture*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2006). From the achievement gap to the education debt: Understanding achievement in U.S. schools. *Educational Researcher*, *35*(7), 3-12.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2012). Through a glass darkly: The persistence of race in education research and scholarship. *Educational Researcher*, *41*(4), 115-120.

Leonardo, Z. (2004). The color of supremacy: Beyond the discourse of "white privilege." *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, *36*(2), 137-152.

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

Leonardo, Z. (2016). Foreword: Whiteness and emo-social justice. In C. E. Matias (Ed.), *Feeling white: Whiteness, emotionality, and education* (pp. xiii-xvi). Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.

Lysaker, J. T., & Furuness, S. (2011). Space for transformation: Relational, dialogic pedagogy. *Journal of Transformative Education*, *9*(3), 183-197.

Maslow, A. H. (1970). *Motivation and personality*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.

Matias, C. E. (2013). Check yo'self before you wreck yo'self and our kids: Counterstories from culturally responsive white teachers? . . . to culturally responsive white teachers! *Interdisciplinary Journal of Teaching and Learning*, *3*(2), 68-81.

Matias, C. E. (2016a). *Feeling white: Whiteness, emotionality, and education*. Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.

Matias, C. E. (2016b). "Why do you make me hate myself?": Re-teaching whiteness, abuse, and love in urban teacher education. *Teaching Education*, *27*(2), 194-211.

McDermott, R. P. (1977). Social relations as contexts for learning in school. *Harvard Educational Review*, *47*(2), 198-213.

McGrew, K. (2008). *Education's prisoners: Schooling, the political economy, and the prison industrial complex*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.

McKnight, A. N. (2015). "They never really tried to reach out to us": Examining identities and confronting the emotional distance between urban youth and urban schools. *Critical Questions in Education*, *6*(2), 86-102.

McKown, C., & Weinstein, R. S. (2008). Teacher expectations, classroom context, and the achievement gap. *Journal of School Psychology*, *46*(3), 235-261.

Miller, J. B. (1976). *Toward a new psychology of women*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Miller, J. B. (1986). *What do we mean by relationships?* Wellesley, MA: Stone Center.

Miller, J. B., & Stiver, I. P. (1997). *The healing connection: How women form relationships in therapy and in life*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Mintz, A. I. (2013). Helping by hurting: The paradox of suffering in social justice education. *Theory and Research in Education*, *11*(3), 215-230.

Noddings, N. (1984). *Caring: A feminine approach to ethics and moral education*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Noddings, N. (2012). The language of care ethics. *Knowledge Quest*, *40*(4), 52-56.

North, C. E. (2006). More than words? Delving into the substantive meaning(s) of "social justice" in education. *Review of Educational Research*, *76*(4), 507-535.

Office for Civil Rights. (2016). *2013–2014 civil rights data collection: A first look*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

Office for Civil Rights (2018). *2015-2016 civil rights data collection: School climate and safety*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, & Policy and Program Studies Service. (2016). *The state of racial diversity in the educator workforce*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

Okonofua, J. A., Walton, G. M., & Eberhardt, J. L. (2016). A vicious cycle: A social-psychological account of extreme racial disparities in school discipline. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, *11*(3), 381-398.

Paris, D., & Alim, H. S. (2014). What are we seeking to sustain through culturally sustaining pedagogy? A loving critique forward. *Harvard Educational Review*, *84*(1), 85-100.

Picower, B. (2012). *Practice what you teach: Social justice education in the classroom and the streets*. Florence, KY: Routledge.

Pugh, G. L. (2014). The experiential learning cycle in undergraduate diversity and social justice education. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work*, *34*(3), 302-315.

Rabaka, R. (2013). W.E.B. Du Bois's contributions to critical race studies in education: Sociology of education, classical critical race theory, and proto-critical pedagogy. In M. Lynn & A. D. Dixson (Eds.), *Handbook of critical race theory in education* (pp. 69-87). New York, NY: Routledge.

Raider-Roth, M. B. (2005). *Trusting what you know: The high stakes of classroom relationships*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Rector-Aranda, A. (2016). School norms and reforms, critical race theory, and the fairytale of equitable education. *Critical Questions in Education*, *7*(1), 1-16.

Reyes, R. III. (2016). In a world of disposable students: The humanizing elements of border pedagogy in teacher education. *The High School Journal*, *99*(4), 337-350.

Richmond, G. (2016). The power of community partnership in the preparation of teachers. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *68*(1), 6-8.

Rodgers, C. R., & Raider-Roth, M. B. (2006). Presence in teaching. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, *12*(3), 265-287.

Rojas, L., & Liou, D. D. (2016). Social justice teaching through the sympathetic touch of caring and high expectations for students of color. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *68*(1), 28-40.

Romero, A., Arce, S., & Cammarota, J. (2009). A Barrio pedagogy: Identity, intellectualism, activism, and academic achievement through the evolution of critically compassionate intellectualism. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, *12*(2), 217-233.

Romo, J. J., & Chavez, C. (2006). Border pedagogy: A study of preservice teacher transformation. *The Educational Forum*, *70*(2), 142-153.

Rubin, B. C., Abu El-Haj, T. R., Graham, E., & Clay, K. (2016). Confronting the urban civic opportunity gap: Integrating youth participatory action research into teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *67*(5), 424-436.

Saltman, K. J. (2012). *The failure of corporate school reform*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.

Sanford, K. J., Hopper, T. F., & Starr, L. (2015). Transforming teacher education thinking: Complexity and relational ways of knowing. *Complicity: An International Journal of Complexity and Education*, *13*(2), 26-48.

Segal, E. A. (2011). Social empathy: A model built on empathy, contextual understanding, and social responsibility that promotes social justice. *Journal of Social Service Research*, *37*(3), 266-277.

Sensoy, Ö., & DiAngelo, R. (2014). Respect differences? Challenging the common guidelines in social justice education. *Democracy & Education*, *22*(2), 1-10.

Spencer, R. (2000). *A comparison of relational psychologies*. Wellesley, MA: Wellesley College Stone Center.

Stovall, D. (2013). Against the politics of desperation: Educational justice, critical race theory, and Chicago school reform. *Critical Studies in Education*, *54*(1), 33-43.

Subedi, B. (2013). The racialization of South Asian Americans in a post-9/11 era. In M. Lynn & A. D. Dixson (Eds.), *Handbook of critical race theory in education* (pp. 167-180). New York, NY: Routledge.

Tenenbaum, H. R., & Ruck, M. D. (2007). Are teachers' expectations different for racial minority than for European American students? *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *99*(2), 253-273.

Tinkler, B., hannah, c. l., Tinkler, A., & Miller, E. (2015). The impact of a social justice service-learning field experience in a social foundations course. *Critical Questions in Education*, *6*(1), 16-29.

Trout, M. (2012). *Making the moment matter: Care theory for teacher learning*. Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.

Valenzuela, A. (1999). *Subtractive schooling: U.S.-Mexican youth and the politics of caring*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

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

Villegas, A. M., & Lucas, T. (2002). *Educating culturally responsive teachers: A coherent approach*. New York: State University of New York Press.

Wang, H. (2013). A nonviolent approach to social justice education. *Educational Studies: A Journal of the American Educational Studies Association*, *49*(6), 485-503.

Warikoo, N., Sinclair, S., Fei, J., & Jacoby-Senghor, D. (2016). Examining racial bias in education: A new approach. *Educational Researcher*, *45*(9), 508-514.

Zeichner, K. M., Payne, K. A., & Brayko, K. (2015). Democratizing teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *66*(2), 122-135.

Author Biography

Amy Rector-Aranda is a visiting assistant professor of teacher education and urban/multicultural education in the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Culture at Texas A&M University. Her scholarship examines matters of equity, relational culture, care and compassion, critical consciousness, and student agency and voice in pK–12 and teacher education. Her current research interrogates how we can better prepare future educators for their essential roles in a pluralistic society.