

Opening the Curricular Gate: Contextual Factors Influencing Teachers' Inclusion of Racial Justice Content in Predominantly White Classrooms

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Abstract

Despite research demonstrating that teaching social studies students about race-related issues has many short- and long-term benefits, it is often minimized or avoided in predominantly white classrooms with white teachers. This study is an examination of how secondary social studies teachers tend the curricular-instructional gate on contemporary racial justice content, with a specific emphasis on the contextual factors they perceive as enabling or disabling their ability to teach these topics. Focusing on predominantly white-schools across Ohio, this study employed a qualitative approach with 9 social studies teachers. Teachers completed a questionnaire, interview, and month-long reflective journal in which they tracked their curricular decisions. While teachers navigate a complex decision-making process, some factors influence their decisions more than others. teaching philosophies can be undermined by three excluding factors: (1) accountability systems that drive teachers' conceptions of curricular relevance, (2) low RPCK, and (3) perceptions of safety. These interconnected factors can lead to the exclusion of contemporary racial justice content. However, when further analyzing these factors through the lens of Critical Race Theory, they can be explained by the myth of neutrality, white privilege, and interest convergence. Identifying these barriers is a critical step in removing them and opening the curricular gate in the future.

Key words: racial justice, gatekeeping, social studies, teachers, curriculum, decision making, critical race theory, critical whiteness studies, Ohio.

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List of Acronyms

AP	Advanced Placement
BIPOC	Black, Indigenous, and People of Color
BLM	Black Lives Matter
COVID-19	Coronavirus Pandemic
CRJC	Contemporary Racial Justice Content
CRT	Critical Race Theory
CWS	Critical Whiteness Studies
NCSS	National Council for the Social Studies
ODE	Ohio Department of Education
PCK	Pedagogical Content Knowledge
RPCK	Racial Pedagogical Content Knowledge
SS	Social Studies
US	United States

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

On May 25th, 2020, a white police officer kneeled on George Floyd's neck, an African-American, for nine minutes and nineteen seconds, killing him. Excruciating video of the murder sparked the largest sustained protests for racial justice in United States (US) history (Barrie, 2020). These protests coalesced under a larger movement-Black Lives Matter (BLM) (Samayeen, Wong, & McCarthy, 2020; Berry & Stovall, 2013).

Founded in 2013 by Black¹ organizers, BLM is “a decentralized movement that supports local leaders to...make their communities more just” (Khan-Cullors & Bandele, 2017, p. 249). BLM aims to reconstruct society towards racial justice, by mending the “ways in which Black people are deprived of basic human rights” (Love, Gaynor, & Blessett, 2016, p. 227; Miller & Schwartz, 2016) since, race is “a profound determinant of one's political rights [and] location in the labor market (Omi & Winant, 1994, p. 1)...Race has always been at the center of the American experience, even as the national story claims otherwise” (Chandler & McKnight, 2009, p. 220). A conflicting national story exists because white Americans, including teachers, are socially conditioned to avoid discussing the racial hierarchy, constructing it as taboo (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Sue, 2015; Tatum, 1992). Nonetheless, this hierarchy perpetuates “social, cultural, and economic advantages for whites” (Martell, 2016, p. 93).

BLM has met a multi-faceted backlash, championed by conservative Republican politicians, not only in police violence against activists, but in a meteoric rise in white nationalist demonstrations, attacks, and racially-motivated hate crimes² (Davies, 2021; Faust, Johnson, Guignard, Adechoubou, Harlos, Fennelly, & Castañeda, 2020; Horton, 2020; Razzante, 2020; Taylor, 2019). Hostilities became so omnipresent that the Department of Homeland Security, labeled white supremacy³ the “most persistent and lethal threat” facing the US (Kanno-Youngs,

¹ It is an intentional choice to capitalize Black, yet never capitalize white. While this may seem grammatically inappropriate as a nonparallel use of racial categorization, I borrow from Harvey (2018) and Matias (2016), who made the same choice and argued, “white identity and Black identity are not parallels...African American communities have created Black identity as a conscious, collective, historical, and constructive way to self-identify...In contrast, to this point in US racial history, white is not a similarly constructive, conscious, and collective identity that has been claimed-at least not for the purposes of antiracism” (Harvey, 2018, p. 7). Language is indicative of power, and while language is never perfect, this is an appropriate way to indicate these identities.

² The US Federal Bureau of Investigation defines a hate crime as a “criminal offense against a person or property, motivated in whole or in part by an offender's bias against a race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or gender identity” (FBI, 2020).

³ White supremacy is the “doctrine of racial superiority that justifies discrimination, segregation, and domination of persons of color based on an ideology and belief system that considers all other non-white groups inferior” (Sue, 2015, p. 155).

2020). Research suggests that the 2016 election of Republican Donald Trump intensified this violence (Edwards & Rushin, 2018).

These divergent forces collided spring 2020 when a series of events exposed the magnitude of US racial injustice. The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic disproportionately impacted Black Americans and high-profile murders of Black Americans⁴ drew BLM activists and counter-protestors to demonstrate (Gibson, Chancellor, Cooke, Dahlen, Patin, & Shorish, 2021). Peaceful BLM protests were met with excessive force from the state, white supremacist violence, and arrests (Kishi & Jones, 2020).

This racial reckoning seeped into schools (Lewis-McCoy, 2018; Perry, 2016). Across the country, instances of teachers being disciplined appeared for teaching about BLM⁵ (Elassar, 2020; Hauck, 2020; McLean, 2021). States and districts began implementing policies about race-related content, with some expanding curriculum, and others banning curricular materials focused on racism, calling them “divisive” or “anti-American” (Girard, Harris, Mayger, Kessner, and Reid, 2020; Impelli, 2021; Schwartz, 2021). Social studies (SS) teachers face a dilemma: “ignore BLM and forgo the benefits of allowing students to engage with the issue...or teach the movement and risk a wrath” (Freelon, Mcilwain, & Clark, 2016, p. 77). This dilemma is the backbone of this research.

1.1 Background and Rationale

SS has been contentious as it involves metanarratives on patriotism and citizenship, while preparing youth with “the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for...participation in society” (Ross, 2006, p. 18; McAvoy & Hess, 2013; Zimmerman, 2005). Thus, its’ curriculum “is embedded in the ebb and flow of ideological struggles” to preserve or challenge the status quo (Camicia, 2008, p. 300; Chandler, 2009; Giroux, 1997). However, there is scholarly consensus that, “conservative cultural continuity is the dominant approach”, so content contradicting this approach is avoided, such as contemporary racial justice content (CRJC) (Ross, 2006, p. 231; Hess, 2005). Despite research demonstrating that CRJC is beneficial for all students (Avery, Bird, Johnstone, Sullivan, & Thalhammer, 1992; Hess, 2002; 2009; Hess & Ganzler, 2007; Martell, 2016), and beneficial for pluralistic democracies (Camicia, 2008; Misco & Patterson, 2007; Ochoa-Becker, 2007), teachers-

⁴ This refers to the police murders of Breonna Taylor and George Floyd, as well as the lynching of Ahmaud Arbery.

⁵ Instances also appeared of teachers being fired for displaying support for BLM. In Texas, a teacher was fired for wearing a face mask that said, “Black Lives Matter” (Elassar, 2020). A teacher in Florida was reassigned to a “non-teaching role” when she refused to take down a BLM flag in her classroom (McLean, 2021).

especially white teachers in predominately white classrooms-omit or distort it (Bigler, Shiller, & Willox, 2013; Brown & Brown, 2010; Chandler & McKnight, 2009; Epstein, 2009; Howard, 2003, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 2002; Ledesma & Calderón, 2015; Sleeter, 2001).

These omissions are exacerbated by segregation, as US schools “are more segregated than before *Brown vs. Board of Education*” in 1954, with most white students attending racially homogenous schools (Miller & Schwartz, 2016, p. 18, Love, 2019). This can be detrimental as students in “mostly white settings do not live in a vacuum; they will experience diversity in the world, and they must be prepared” especially given the looming threat of white supremacist violence (Milner, 2005, p. 395; Castro, Hawkman, & Diaz, 2015; Evans-Winters & Hines, 2020). If the purpose of SS is to prepare students for civic life and improve human relations, avoiding CRJC counteracts this (Hess & Posselt, 2002; Ho, McAvoy, Hess, & Gibbs, 2017; Levstik & Tyson, 2010; Misco, 2018; Zimmerman, 2005).

Simultaneously, “there is a small, but growing, movement of teachers” who center CRJC (Martell & Stevens, 2018, p. 277). However, empirical, modern evidence trails behind theory in understanding these choices and the contexts that drive or limit educators to include CRJC (Girard et al., 2020; Levstik & Tyson, 2010). Regardless of the national debate, teachers control the curricular gate, opening it to include content, or keeping it closed (Thornton, 1991, 2006). However, teachers are not isolated and make curricular decisions (hereinafter, “decisions”) shaped by context (Au, 2009; Barton & Avery, 2016; Shulman, 1986). If teachers are the “most critical element in the improvement and transformation of curriculum”, it is key to understand their decision-making, and the factors that allow them to open the curricular gate, so others may open theirs (Ross, 2006, p. 18; Boote, 2006). Researchers must understand the barriers in complex environments, “before we can hope to overcome them” (Evans, Avery, & Pederson, 2000, p. 295).

Given that CRJC is more likely to be excluded in predominately white environments, it is relevant to explore curricular choices there. This research has been overlooked, as will be established in chapter 3. Relatedly, it is most relevant to explore more contested environments with a variety of political opinions (Cornbleth, 2008). Ohio fits these criteria. Ohio’s schools are some of the most segregated nationally, with only 28% of Black students in majority white schools (Orfield Frankenberg, & Kuscera, 2014; Department of Education, 2012). Ohio is also relevant due to its diverse political composition. For example, Ohio is one of six states that has bipartisan legislative representation (DeSilver, 2021). Consequently, Ohio has wide-ranging sociopolitical opinions (Malloy & Schwartz, 2020). A September 2020 study discovered Ohioans were more

closely split than other midwestern states with similar populations about racial justice (Baldwin Wallace University, 2020). Given these elements, Ohio creates a unique environment.

1.2 Objective

The objective is to discover and describe factors that influence a teacher’s content choices regarding CRJC in secondary public-school SS classrooms with predominately white students in Ohio. Exploring these choices through the lens of Critical Race Theory (CRT), can offer a new analysis to these decisions (Ladson-Billings, 1998). The intent is not to shame participants’ choices, but highlight common barriers, amplify teachers’ experiences, and provide neoteric insights to propose pragmatic solutions (Segall & Garrett, 2013). Table 1.1 outlines the definitions of terms applied throughout this study.

Table 1.1 *Definitions of Terms*

Term	Definition
<u>Contextual Factor</u>	Context refers to “that which surrounds and that which is woven together” (Rosenberg & Koehler, 2015). A factor is any influence that teachers mentioned they considered while planning (Brown, 1998, p. 73).
<u>Contemporary Racial Justice Content</u>	“Contemporary” is bounded within the last 30 years. Although complex, by racial justice, this research employs the definition utilized by the Black led research institution, Race Forward. Racial justice refers to “the systematic fair treatment of people of all races, resulting in equitable opportunity and outcomes for all...It is not just the absence of discrimination and inequities, but also the presence of deliberate systems...to achieve and sustain racial equity” (Race Forward, 2015, p. 31-32). “Content” refers to the topics teachers present to students covering these events, ideas, or concepts.
<u>Curricular Decisions</u>	These are decisions about “appropriate teaching goals and the experiences to reach them” regarding the content to include in curriculum (Thornton 1991, p. 237).
<u>Curricular-instructional Gatekeeping</u>	Gatekeeping, as defined by Thornton (1991) refers to the “decisions teachers make about curriculum and instruction and the criteria they use to make those decisions” (p. 237).
<u>Planning</u>	Planning is the “component of teaching in which teachers formulate a course of action for carrying out instruction” (Borko, Roberts, & Shavelson 2008, p. 50).
<u>Social Studies</u>	In the US, social studies refers to the “integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence” which can include history, geography, government, sociology, economics, current events, and others (National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), 2010, p. 3).

Source: Author

1.3 Research Question

To fulfill these objectives, this study is guided by this question and sub-question:

1. What factors influence social studies teachers’ decision-making for the inclusion or exclusion of contemporary racial justice content in predominately white secondary schools in Ohio?
 - a. How can Critical Race Theory explain these factors?

1.4 Significance

If CRJC is beneficial and its inclusion desirable, it is important to understand, from teachers, what factors facilitate inclusion and what serves as barriers, to inform curriculum,

teachers, and policy. Establishing “supportive conditions involves recognizing and dealing with constraints” (Cornbleth, 2001, p. 74). Insights should be gathered to begin breaking down white silence on CRJC, as it “blocks white students from seeing themselves as active agents in the racialized social structure...and disengages them from understanding that racism affects us all” (Brunsma, Placier, & Brown, 2012, p. 13; Razzante, 2020). Few have gathered this evidence, so barriers cannot be properly addressed as they do not reflect decision-making in the current context (Branch, 2002; Howard & Navarro, 2016) This research is a step in filling this knowledge gap). Although “a lack of research does not preclude fine teaching...it hinders informed decision-making in classrooms and policy” (Levstik & Tyson, 2010, Introduction). The unique theoretical underpinnings, explained in the next chapter, methodology, and analysis employed, offer an opportunity to expand the literature and inform stakeholders.

Chapter 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter outlines the theories shaping this research and their conceptualization.

2.1 Gatekeeping Theory

Underpinning this research is the principle that teachers are active decision-makers who “ultimately make most of the classroom decisions” (Grant, 2003, p. 184). Pulling from the work of Shaver, Davis, and Helburn (1978), who assert teachers are central to the curriculum students experience, Thornton’s (1991) gatekeeping theory is foundational to research on teachers’ decisions. According to Thornton, teachers, consciously or not, “tend the gate” by deciding the content to be taught and how. Citing Beard’s (1934) concept “frame of reference”, Thornton (1991) argues, “every human brought up in society inevitably has in mind a frame of social knowledge and ideals...[and] since all things known cannot be in the schoolroom...a selection will be made” (p. 237). Thornton concludes, “gatekeeping does not occur in a social vacuum” (p. 238) and teachers’ decisions are influenced by contextual factors.

In a literature review, he finds that teachers feel constrained and do not view themselves as key players in deciding curriculum, but attribute responsibility to administration or the state. Nevertheless, Thornton (1994) contends that teachers have agency, particularly in SS, where mandated curriculum is vague. For instance, an Ohio standard for American Government reads, “The US has struggled with the extension of minority rights” (Ohio Department of Education (ODE), 2018, p. 37). However, the minorities and struggles, are decisions left to the educator. Thus, choices are made (Thornton, 2001). Teachers are not “pawns of larger power structures” (Grant, 2003, p. 51), but powerful decision-makers, whose choices vary greatly by their context (Pace, 2011). Curriculum implementation varies per teacher, as each interprets it through their own lens (Thornton, 1991).

Thornton does not condemn gatekeeping as it is inevitable and argues most teachers are unaware of the “degree of control that their gatekeeping exercises over their curriculum” (1994, p. 245). However, Thornton contends it is important to call teacher’s attention to the practice and conduct research that better understands the conditions that foment the practice, which are aims of this study.

2.2 Critical Race Theory

In the last three decades, CRT has served as a tool to critically analyze race in education (Ledesma & Calderón, 2015). CRT shaped this study as it serves as an epistemological standpoint, theoretical framework, and a methodological approach (Ladson-Billings, 2002).

CRT emerged from the 1960s Civil Rights Movement seeking to study the relationship between power and race. It has roots from critical legal studies (Bell, 1995) and has been applied to education largely by Ladson-Billings (1998) and Tate (1997). As schools re-enforce the status quo, making them inseparable from racism (Evans-Winters & Hines 2020; Berry & Stovall, 2013; Bery, 2014). CRT argues: (1) race, a social construct, and racism are endemic and “normal” features in US society (Delgado, 1995, p. xiv), (2) dominant ideologies such as race neutrality and color-blindness re-enforce white supremacy, (3) experiential knowledge and story-telling are legitimate forms of knowledge, and (4) CRT is not an academic theory, but a movement to expose and transform the racial power structure (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1998, Delgado & Stefancic 2001). CRT critiques notions of interest convergence, contending that white people advocate for racial justice when it advances themselves and offers tools for interrogating whiteness in education (Castro et al., 2015).

Also complementing this research is a CRT subsidiary, Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS), which gained credibility in the 1980s. Researchers have focused on the impact of structural racism on Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), yet only recently have begun studying its’ influence on white educators (Jupp, Berry & Lensmire, 2016). CWS examines the construction of whiteness, or the hierarchical and “hegemonic racial structuring of social and material realities...that perpetuate racialized inequalities and injustices” (Jupp, et al., 2016, p. 1154; Evans-Winters & Hines, 2020). Whiteness is the water society swims in, just “as fish are immersed in water, we breathe it in with every breath” (Owens, 2007, p. 214). In this structure, there is no “neutrality”, although whiteness is often unnoticed by white people (Hawkman, 2020). CWS explores white fragility⁶, colorblindness⁷, and white privilege⁸ (Lewis, 2004; Sleeter, 2017). CWS

⁶ White fragility describes the reactionary behaviors white people exhibit in discussions about race or racially-tense situations. These emotional behaviors are “response mechanisms...to scapegoat racial discrimination as historically situated...and/or resist questioning about how whites are the peak of the racial hierarchy” (Evans-Winters & Hines, 2020, p. 3).

⁷ In colorblind ideologies, mainly the dominant racial group, are race-evasive and do not “see any color, just people” (Bonilla-Silva & Embrick, 2006, p. 3). It is propelled by a myth that “race has all but disappeared as a factor shaping the life chances of people in the US”, so pointing out racial identities and will only instigate tensions (*Ibid*, p. 19).

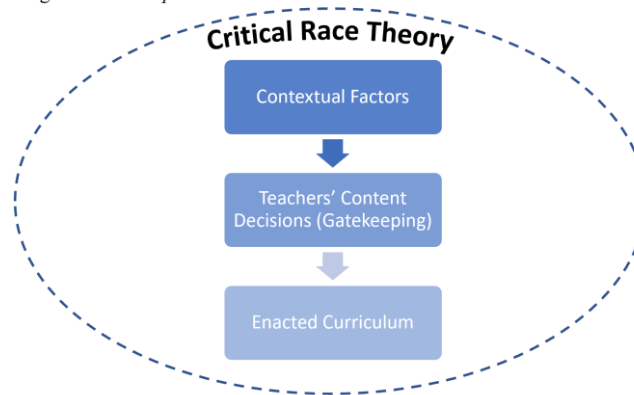
⁸ White privilege is “the unearned advantages and benefits that accrue to white folks by virtue of a system normed on the experiences, values, and perceptions of their group” (Sue, 2003, p. 137).

is not an attempt to homogenize or attack white people, but “the socially-constructed and reinforced power of” racial inequity (Davies, 2021, p. 4).

2.3 Unified Conceptual Lens

Gatekeeping theory and CRT frame this study. CRT is the environment in which teachers make decisions. It surrounds their gatekeeping and the contextual factors that shape decisions (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 *Conceptual Model*



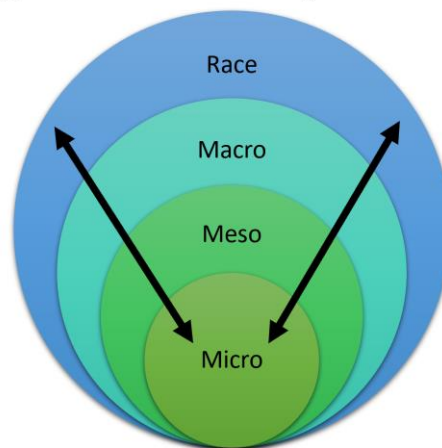
Teachers act as gatekeepers in a values-infused milieu that is being informed implicitly and explicitly by CRT (Miller-Lane, Denton & Mar, 2006). Contextual factors shaping teachers' gatekeeping practice occur in a society shaped by notions of race (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Analyzing gatekeeping through the lens of CRT helps to “push beyond superficial analyses” of decisions that ignore racialized dimensions of those content choices and the factors influencing them (Sleeter, 2017, p 165). As CRT's strategy is “unmasking and exposing racism”, unpacking CRJC decisions can offer advanced meaning to gatekeeping (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 11). As Berry and Stovall state, “our work, as critical race scholars, is to place in the forefront the stories that will promote racial justice in curriculum” (2013, p. 596). Combining these theories presents a conceptual lens limited in extant literature, explored in chapter 3.

Chapter 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

Since gatekeeping arises as a response to contextual factors, it is essential to establish an understanding of the literature behind these factors (Thornton, 2001). This chapter synthesizes theoretical and empirical research on three under researched bodies of knowledge: factors influencing decision-making, the role of race in classrooms, and teaching controversial issues. The foundation of decision-making research came in the 1970s (see Bishop & Whitfield, 1972; Shavelson, 1973; Shulman & Elstein, 1975). Since then, research has focused on decisions while teaching, versus decisions while planning, despite planning being where significant choices are made (Brown, 1998; Peterson, Marx, & Clark, 1978).

For clarity, these contextual factors are organized into levels labeled micro, meso, and macro (Figure 3.1) (Porrás-Hernández & Salinas-Amescua, 2013). An important factor, race, has been separated from this structure, as race ties all US society, transcending levels (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Milner, 2010).

Figure 3.1 Contextual Factors Organization



Source: Author

The boundaries are fluid, and levels influence each other, making a complex decision-making process (Barton & Avery, 2016; Grant, 2003). This review highlights research on US secondary SS teachers, as other locales, subjects, and grades introduces different contexts, and concludes with an overview of research gaps (Levstik & Tyson, 2010).

3.1 Micro

This layer is closest to teachers. Researchers have displayed two factors: teachers' pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) and teaching philosophy or goals.

Shulman (1986, 1987) is foundational on the importance of a teacher's PCK in decisions. Shulman (1987) argued decisions are made from the intersection of knowledge on pedagogical practices and content knowledge. PCK is key to decisions, as teachers are hesitant to include content if their PCK is low (Monte-Sano & Budano, 2012). This was highlighted in Wilson and Wineburg's (1988) research of history teachers with different undergraduate majors. Teachers' content selection remained stagnant and was influenced by educational background. However, they did not explore other factors, including other places teachers gain PCK. PCK can be informed by experiences, shaping content selection, as "what happens to teachers in their daily lives...often shows up in the curriculum" (Milner, 2005, p. 403). Employing gatekeeping theory, Fickel (2000) maintained that teachers' beliefs and personal lives "form the framework for decision-making" (p. 360) and teachers filter other pressures through personal experiences.

Research focusing on the impact of teaching philosophy stems from Massialas, Sprague, and Sweeny (1970), who observed that philosophies influence content selection regarding controversial topics. Like Evans (1988), who found content selection was based on goals, Grant (2003) offered a nuanced argument, by concluding that goals significantly influence how teachers approached the same topic. Even with all demographic factors being equal, teachers had differing goals and thus emphasized different content. Grant argued that by focusing on Shulman's PCK, researchers miss other factors. Like Fickel (2000), Grant acknowledged choices are filtered through a dominant factor, goals, but other factors can conflict, coining them 'cross currents'. In decisions, some factors advance while others recede depending on teachers' perceptions of their context.

Similarly, Barton and Levstik (2004) argued teacher philosophy is the foundation of decisions and other factors intersect from there. Goals are the critical variable to understand decision-making, as they "appear to have more impact on practice than their PCK" (p. 258). VanHover and Yeager (2007), employed a case study of one teacher's decision-making, and argue their finding complicates the work of Barton and Levstik because occasionally goals conflict with actual practice.

A study that focused on the inclusion of CRJC in a predominantly white school by Washington and Humphries (2011), concluded that "philosophy, perhaps more than the school environment, may influence decisions" although bias is a concern, since the participant was also a researcher (p. 110). Teachers are influenced by their PCK, background, and philosophy; however, teachers work in a school environment which complicates these factors.

3.2 Meso

This level encompasses factors outside the teacher yet inside the school. This can include students, resources, colleagues, administration, and the school climate.

Students' behavior and knowledge have been established as factors teachers consider when making decisions. McNeil's (1986) work is groundbreaking and describes decisions as "defensive teaching", where teachers simplify content to "control" student behavior. McNeil concluded that teachers avoid topics where behavior became capricious, sacrificing goals for compliance. In a more recent conception of McNeil's work, Sheppard and Levy (2019) explored the role of student emotions in planning, concluding that perceptions of how curriculum will be received emotionally shapes decision-making regarding controversial content.

Besides students, teachers make decisions based on resources. A critical resource is the curriculum map, often informed by state standards. Harris and Girard (2014; 2020) (and reinforced quantitatively by Girard et al., 2020) asked teachers to complete card-sorting tasks to identify "significant" events. While acknowledging the importance of Shulman's (1986) PCK, because "it is easier to teach something you know", researchers found that teachers consider the curriculum map, students, and local concerns when deciding content (2014, p. 220). This notion of significance was confirmed by Castro and colleagues (2015), noting that content must include "what students find relevant" to be significant (p. 136).

VanHover and Pierce (2006) studied the impact of curriculum maps on decision-making for beginning teachers, concluding that conceptions of instructional significance are influential and that school climates impact gatekeeping by observing content changes were made to meet the curriculum map. Cornbleth's (2001) work ties teaching climates to gatekeeping. Cornbleth conducted a two-decades long literature review, identifying five school climates that constrain decisions: conservative, bureaucratic, threatening, competitive, and pessimistic. These climates are the multi-faceted "prevailing conditions" that influence "what is taught, how, and to whom" (p. 75).

In a rare study exploring gatekeeping on controversial topics, Martell and Stevens (2018) utilized a survey to demonstrate a combination of meso factors. Employing CRT and Critical Feminist Theory, the survey explored inclusion of race-or gender-related current events and more than two-thirds of teachers reported a constraint from mandated curriculum, where CRJC was missing.

While students, the curriculum map, and the school climate, can impact gatekeeping, teachers are also influenced by grander factors.

3.3 Macro

Although outside the schoolhouse, “these milieus...can act as barriers” to CRJC (Misco, 2018, Section 3). Pressures from the community and accountability systems are macro influences on decisions.

Expanding her work, Cornbleth (2008), explored how climates manifest in the community. Teachers made changes in reaction to the community’s opinion by overlooking personal beliefs. She concludes, “even climates of opinion ‘out there’ in the community, nation, and world are...perceived/mediated by teachers” (p. 165). The power of community was confirmed by Byford, Lennon, and Russell’s (2009) survey, which found teachers agreed controversial issues should be taught, but excluded topics that would upset the community. Focused on teaching race, Evans and colleagues (2000) provided a cultural analysis to the omission of taboo topics, arguing that research is limited to rational explanations and society itself should be explored. By questionnaire, preservice teachers argued CRJC place “jobs in jeopardy” (p. 297) because it conflicts with the community.

Another macro factor that received heightened scholarly attention is accountability systems. The accountability movement has molded into the culture of schools and societal norms (Au, 2007). Research has demonstrated how the culture of accountability, ushered in by No Child Left Behind in 2001, has led to a national reduction in SS content (Au, 2013; Pace, 2012; Patterson, Chandler, & Dahlgren, 2013; Wills, 2007; Winstead, 2011). Testing regimes compel teachers to “teach to the test” by narrowing curriculum and restrain decision-making (Au, 2007; Grant, 2001; Segall, 2006). These tests and standards lack CRJC (Au, 2009, 2013). In Ohio, these systems have frequently changed, resulting in a reduction in SS testing⁹ (Hawley & Whitman, 2020). SS standards are well-defined by ODE, “but little is known about the ways teachers align [their] practice” to standards (Misco, Patterson, & Doppen, 2011, p. 3). Teachers respond to these influences differently (Grant & Salinas, 2010), as highlighted by the following studies.

⁹ Students in 6th through 8th grade have mandatory SS courses, but no assessment (ODE, 2018). To graduate high school, students must take American History, American Government, and Modern World History, while some schools offer extra courses. History and American Government are the only SS subjects to have an end-of-course exam (ODE, 2021). Ohio does not require students to acquire a specific score on the test to pass, but students must receive a minimum number of points cumulatively on all their end-of-course tests across subject (ODE, 2021). Some schools offer Advanced Placement (AP) courses for college credit, which have an end-of-course exam.

Journell (2010) explored whether assessments influenced a teacher's willingness to incorporate non-mandated curriculum. Despite having goals around current events, participants rarely included current events due to "the constant pressure" of assessments, for fear of being perceived as ineffective (p. 122). Hong and Hamot (2020) analyzed the Survey of the Status of the Social Studies data, which was conducted in 2010 by Fitchett and Vanfossen (2013). This remains the largest dataset of US SS teachers; however, it only asked about content taught, not what influenced those decisions. Teachers with high-stakes tests reported higher levels of curricular exclusion.

Focused on Ohio, Misco and colleagues (2011) studied the impact of Ohio's testing on preservice teachers' decisions. Nearly all participants aligned their content to the standards, felt rushed, and believed their choices were constrained. Testing had "a profound impact" (p. 7), causing teachers to cover topics at surface level. A recent Ohio-based study, Hawley and Whitman (2020) examined how a culture of accountability influence gatekeeping. Like Journell's (2010) finding, teachers forgo their goals to meet standards.

Teachers are faced with two major macro factors: community pressures and pressures from the accountability system. Managing these factors through their gatekeeping practice, teachers consider one last layer-race.

3.4 Race

Operating under the principle that race is socially constructed, this section explores how the racial identities of teachers and students and the racialized school culture, shape decision-making (Demoiny, 2018; Ladson-Billings, 2002).

Teachers

Teachers' racial identities emerge in decisions, and shape if curriculum is race-evasive or race-visible (Jupp et al., 2016; Milner, 2005). Chandler (2015) applies CRT to Shulman's (1986) PCK, conceptualizing "racial pedagogical content knowledge" (RPCK). RPCK is a teacher's knowledge and ability to teach race-related content (King & Chandler, 2016). Teachers have varying levels of RPCK which influences their ability to approach CRJC (Demoiny, 2018). Research has focused on how the racial identities of teachers of color influence content selection (see Branch, 2004; Dilworth, 2004; Fickel, 2000; Howard, 2004; Salinas & Castro, 2010; Subedi, 2008). These studies consistently found that BIPOC referenced their personal experiences with discrimination as reasons for teaching CRJC.

Comparatively, theoretical studies focusing on white teachers have argued that fear and low RPKC are reasons for avoiding CRJC (Chandler & McKnight, 2012). Fear creates discomfort and drives avoidance, leaving white educators unprepared (Milner, 2010; Sue, 2015). Empirical studies have mainly focused on white preservice educators of BIPOC students, finding that teachers' personal limitations, stemming from color-blind norms and lack of training, are reasons for avoiding CRJC (see Castro, 2010; Gay & Howard, 2000; Picower, 2009; Segall & Garrett, 2013; Sleeter, 2008). Studies with white in-service teachers are rare; however, three can be highlighted. Epstein (2009), although data collection occurred in the 1990s, described how white teachers in diverse schools excluded CRJC. Epstein attributed decisions to a lack of experience with discrimination and inadequate training. Conversely, Martell (2015, 2016), a white teacher, attributed his inclusion of CRJC to his experiences teaching BIPOC youth and personal beliefs. Alvarez and Milner (2018) analyze 336 white teachers nationwide who participated in an online survey. Although 90% of teachers believed race was important, teachers excluded CRJC because of fear and discomfort. When applying this to Bonilla-Silvia's (2014) framework, they argue this fear reflects colorblindness. While this research is insightful, it is limited since the sample does not control significant variables. For instance, the sample included both preservice and in-service teachers from all subjects.

While these studies are relevant, the focus on white teachers with diverse students is a different environment than white teachers with white students, which presents different factors (Harvey, 2018). One exception is work of Chandler and Branscombe (2015), who considered how white teachers in rural, white, and conservative Alabama taught about race. Researchers explained that for these teachers, race was not avoided due to ignorance or fear, but an active effort to exclude CRJC. Educators taught in a paradox, where teachers personally recognized that race was important, but then excluded it. Coining these contradictions as "a sort of schizophrenic teaching", this tension results in teachers subverting personal beliefs to reinforce the racial hierarchy (p. 71).

Students

As explained, teachers make decisions based on student interests and behavior. The student's race is included in that list (Epstein, 2009). White students can react with white fragility to CRJC, which can be a barrier educators consider (Razzante, 2020; Trainer, 2005). Sue (2003, 2015) explored how during racial discussions white students refuse to participate, divert the conversation, or dilute the topic's importance. To avoid this, teachers exclude CRJC. Teachers also have argued that the content is ignored because it is unnecessary when teaching white students,

dubbing race a BIPOC problem (Milner, 2005). Chandler (2009) explored the pedagogies of two white male history teachers. A theme that emerged was in classes with few BIPOC, teachers fear came “in an attempt to protect their students of color” (p. 273). Fearing white fragility may harm BIPOC, it was “safer” to exclude CRJC. Although theoretical research acknowledges that white students struggle with the content, academia has ignored exploring how teachers consider this.

School Culture

The influence of racial identities on decision-making, not only stems from individuals, but a racialized school culture. As Martell and Stevens (2018) describe, “the maleness and whiteness of SS is entrenched in...schools” (p. 284; Chandler, 2015). Research by Lewis (2001) in a predominantly white school was foundational in exploring this topic, due to its in-depth nature, taking a sociological approach. Due to these race-evasive practices, white teachers did not perceive race as important because there were few BIPOC. However, Lewis found that race is central to all school operations, in a “hidden curriculum” that reproduces the racialized social order (p. 782). These findings were confirmed in Milner’s (2005) exploration of an African-American teacher’s experience in a white, midwestern school. The participant described how “there ‘are cultural differences that exist’ in predominantly white teaching contexts” (p. 414). This unspoken culture favoring colorblindness was not only visible by student reactions, but by resistance from administration for her inability “to fall in line” (p. 416). Milner concluded that school culture shaped decision-making.

3.5 Limitations

This concluding section outlines research limitations and how this project can fill knowledge gaps.

This review reveals a sizable gap on educators researched. Research is hyper-focused on preservice teachers (see Alvarez & Milner, 2018; Harris & Girard, 2014; Hawley & Whitman, 2020; Misco & Patterson, 2007; VanHover & Yeager, 2007). This can ignore factors exclusive to in-service teachers. White educators, in white contexts, are also understudied. It is clear “that researchers do not fully understand the complex issues that surface when white teachers attempt to teach...race in SS classrooms” (Chandler & McKnight, 2012, p. 228). Given that over 80% of US teachers are white, and only getting whiter based on future projections, this is a critical knowledge gap and the notion that racism does “not exist in predominantly white settings is a fallacy” (Milner, 2005, p. 394; Love, 2019). Researching solely on how BIPOC address racism incorrectly delegates the responsibility of countering racism to BIPOC (Sue, 2015).

SS research also largely ignores race as a factor in curricular decisions (Branch, 2004; Lawrence & Tatum, 1997). A literature review between 1973 and 1997 in the US SS journal, *Theory and Research in Social Education*, found that 6% of papers explored teaching CRJC and a later review produced similar findings (Howard, 2003; Ho et al., 2017). As the norm of society is colorblindness, it is logical that research ignores race. However, doing so ignores a societal tenet (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1998). Colorblind research can have damaging effects by prioritizing white interests (Tate, 1997). As Milner (2007) explains, “when researchers do not...at least acknowledge race in their analyses”, discriminatory behavior remains hidden (p. 393). Similarly, given the sociopolitical climate, “there remains a need for race to be a prominent variable in discussions...in the next two decades” (Howard & Navarro, 2016, p. 268).

Ohio is overlooked, as only three studies focused there, but none study in-service educators (see Hawley & Whitman, 2020; Misco & Patterson, 2007; Misco et al., 2011). US decentralization fosters different factors based on locale. As sensitivity to topics change, it is important to explore CRJC since the present has seen a transformed sociopolitical environment, reducing the applicability of older studies (Barrie, 2020; Evans et al., 2000).

Lastly, there are methodological limitations of the extant literature. First is the use of single case studies, (see Castro et al., 2015; Fickell, 2000; Martell, 2016; VanHover & Yeager, 2007; Washington & Humphries, 2011) as they have limited generalizability (Lee, 1993). The second is the reliance on quantitative surveys, which is limited in providing contextual analysis (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2017). As explained by Cornbleth (2001), studies that expand “the list of factors may be useful...however...it does not tell which contextual factors are relevant or how factors interact” (p. 74). Although research is growing, “empirical studies lag behind theoretical” in exploring the factors influencing decision-making and this project aims to shrink these gaps with a fresh methodological approach, outlined in chapter 4 (Levstik & Tyson, 2010, p. 3; Brown, 1998).

Chapter 4: METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative methodology underpinned by critical realism (Creswell, 2011). A teacher's perception of influential factors is subjective to experience because "what teachers pay attention to (i.e., what counts as an influence) and the significance they assign it...are contextualized decisions that reflect a complex interpretation of social currents" (Grant, 2003, p. 184; Brown, 1998). This aligns with critical realism, which argues knowledge is "influenced always by a social interest" (Usher, 1996, p. 22). Qualitative design is appropriate for CRT which argues reality is socially constructed and "truths only exist for this person in this predicament at this time" (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 13). Qualitative design values experiential narratives, as "the experience of the individual can provide insight regarding silence about race in SS" (Branch, 2002, p. 107).

This research adopts a case study approach where each teacher is the unit of analysis and a case. A case study can be, "the means for understanding the unique everyday practice of teachers" (Hung, 2019, p. 568) as they are designed to focus on lived experiences (Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994). Therefore, an intrinsic case study is proper as it "permits an in-depth examination of factors that explain the present status and that may influence" an individual's behavior (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, & Razavieh, 2010, p. 456; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). This approach aligns with the theoretical framework as "case studies [are]...a rich source for understanding gatekeeping"; however, there are few (Thornton, 1991, p. 247).

4.1 Methods

The study used a non-experimental cross-sectional design, researching diverse educators to create a representative single 'snapshot' (Cohen et al., 2017). This aligns with the epistemological underpinnings, "which asserts that there is not one reality but rather multiple interpretations...of the world" (Misco, Kuwabara, Ogawa, & Lyons, 2018, p. 70). This research employed multiple methods of data collection: questionnaire, interview, and journal. Based off the CRT principle of "naming your reality" these methods center the participant and supply multiple avenues of expression (Howard & Navarro, 2016). These instruments support triangulation to improve credibility and dependability (Bryman, 2016; Yin, 1994). Each tool was piloted to improve feasibility, readability, and comfort (Girard et al., 2020). Fieldwork was completed remotely between January and March 2021.

Questionnaire

Teachers completed a background questionnaire (Appendix 1). This questionnaire gathered demographic and personal information; information regarding racial justice in their school; and information on their experience teaching CRJC. Overall, the questions were crafted to allow the participant to give insights to their context.

Interview

Each teacher participated in a one-hour, one-on-one online video interview via Zoom. Interviews can advance the existing research, as, “interviews can do what surveys cannot, which is to explore issues in depth [and] see how and why people” make decisions (Cohen et al., 2017, p. 506). Interviews used an open-ended semi-structured style for adaptability and the potential to gather unanticipated knowledge, to understand social realities which aligns with the methodology (Corbetta, 2003; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). Questions were based on existing literature (Appendix 2). Participants were asked about their inclusion of specific modern racial justice topics, events, or concepts (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 *Contemporary Racial Justice Topics*

<input type="checkbox"/> Affirmative Action	<input type="checkbox"/> Athlete-led protests (e.g. Colin Kaepernick)	<input type="checkbox"/> Black Lives Matter Movement	<input type="checkbox"/> Blue Lives Matter Movement
<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive dissonance	<input type="checkbox"/> Confirmation Bias	<input type="checkbox"/> Criminal Justice Reform	<input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Appropriation
<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental racism (e.g., Flint water crisis)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gentrification	<input type="checkbox"/> Hate Crimes	<input type="checkbox"/> Hate Groups
<input type="checkbox"/> Hate speech vs. freedom of speech	<input type="checkbox"/> Historical monument removal/Confederate flag	<input type="checkbox"/> Implicit bias	<input type="checkbox"/> Intersectionality/identity
<input type="checkbox"/> Mass incarceration	<input type="checkbox"/> Medical racism/ disparities in healthcare	<input type="checkbox"/> Microaggressions	<input type="checkbox"/> Modern (de facto) Segregation
<input type="checkbox"/> Police brutality/ discriminatory policing	<input type="checkbox"/> Protests for racial justice	<input type="checkbox"/> Racial profiling	<input type="checkbox"/> Racial representation in government or other leadership roles
<input type="checkbox"/> Racial representation in media/toys/books	<input type="checkbox"/> Racially motivated gerrymandering	<input type="checkbox"/> Racism/Discrimination	<input type="checkbox"/> Redlining
<input type="checkbox"/> Reparations	<input type="checkbox"/> School to prison pipeline	<input type="checkbox"/> Stereotypes/ Stereotype threat	<input type="checkbox"/> Systemic racism
<input type="checkbox"/> Voter suppression	<input type="checkbox"/> White privilege	<input type="checkbox"/> White supremacy/white supremacy attacks	<input type="checkbox"/> Whitewashing
Have you taught any other topics that you would consider “modern racial justice”? Please list here.			

Source: Author

Since the research covers a taboo topic as “white teachers are fearful when teaching about race” this format is particularly relevant since the interview can be more conversational, which breaks-down power structures, gaining participant trust (Chandler, 2015, p. 264; Frey, 2011). Interviewees “are free to respond from their own frame of reference” which aligns with gatekeeping (Ary et al., p. 392; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). Similarly, as a white woman and former SS teacher, participants are likely to feel more comfortable as evidence demonstrates that “white participants respond differently on racial matters” depending on the researcher and may be more

inclined to speak candidly to researchers in the same racial group (Segall & Garrett, 2013, p. 272; Picower, 2009).

Journal

Participants completed a reflective journal once per week for four weeks following the interview (Appendices 3-4). The journal enriched data, while also being an effective way to “examine specific experiences in natural contexts” (Hayman, Wilkes, & Jackson, 2012, p. 27). Since planning is where many decisions are made, it captures decisions at the source (Borko et al., 2008; Brown, 1998; Peterson et al., 1978). Journaling can benefit participants, as it invites reflection, which fosters continuous learning (Dreyer, 2015). Journaling also aligns with CRT, which favors using narrative forms of expression (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Salinas & Castro, 2010). Participants were asked to reflect on their content choices after completing their weekly lesson plans via Google Forms. Teachers outlined the content each week and explained factors they believe influenced them. The factors stemmed from literature¹⁰ and participants could create factors to expand beyond the researcher’s perception (Cornbleth, 2001). Factors were aligned with questions in the questionnaire and interview for triangulation (Lee, 1993; Shaw, Greene, & Mark, 2006). Four weeks covers the average unit length, while also providing enough data for saturation (Cunningham, 2009). Participants were informed not to change their content, since the exclusion of CRJC is relevant. A reminder email was sent at an agreed time with the Google Form and instructions to increase feasibility (Creswell, 2011; Hayman et al., 2012).

4.2 Sample

Fitting for qualitative research, this study retained a small sample size (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Non-probability, typical case sampling was used to recruit 9 teachers (Creswell, 2011; Bryman, 2016). Figure 4.2 outlines participant criteria.

¹⁰ (See Alvarez, & Milner, 2018; Brown, 1998; Byford et al., 2009; Guyton & Hoffman, 1983; Martell & Stevens, 2018; Milner, Delale-O’Connor, Murray & Alvarez, 2016)

Figure 4.2 *Participant Criteria*

Participant Criteria
1. Teach in Ohio since contextual factors, “can vary greatly by state” (Girard et al., 2020, p. 1);
2. Teach in a public school, as private schools have separate curriculum;
3. Teach for at least one school year, since beginning teachers face other unique challenges, and research with veteran teachers is lacking (VanHover & Yeager, 2007);
4. Teach secondary (6 th through 12 th grade) SS. While CRJC can be taught in every subject, SS is best suited (Howard, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 2002). All potential subjects within the social studies discipline were left open since there has been relatively little research in other disciplines such as sociology or economics, making them “untapped areas” (Chandler, 2015, p. 5);
5. Teach in a school with a predominately white student population (over 60% white, non-Hispanic). This percentage was established based on precedent set by the 2010 Survey of the Status of the Social Studies (Hong & Hamot, 2020). This was verified by the school’s demographic information online with ODE.

Source: Author

Teachers were from different districts to diversify the sample, yet still have parity in some components (Lee, 1993). An overview of participants and their schools is provided in Table 4.1. The content covered in each subject is explained in Appendix 5.

Table 4.1 *Demographic Overview of Participants and Schools*

Participant	Gender	Race	Education Level	Years Teaching	Grade	Subject	End-of-course exam	School % White Students	School % Economic Disadvantaged	School Community Political Makeup*	School Locale
Abby	Woman	White	Masters	12	7 th	-Early Civilizations	No	93%	20.0%	R: 61% D: 37.9%	Rural
Jessica	Woman	White	Some Masters	8	9 th	-Modern World History	No	87%	30.3%	R: 69.1% D: 29.3%	Rural
Cori	Woman	White	Masters	13	10 th 11 th 12 th	-Government -AP US History -US History	Yes	87%	22.4%	R: 67.3% D: 30.9%	Rural
Henry	Man	White	Bachelors	31	11 th 12 th	-AP Government	Yes	85%	19.5%	D: 54.1% R: 44.5%	Suburban
Andrew	Man	White	Masters	7	6 th	-Early Civilizations	No	78%	41.9%	R: 60.9% D: 37.5%	Suburban
Mac	Man	White	Masters	25	11 th	-AP Government	Yes	76%	27.4%	D: 66.5% R: 32.4%	Suburban
James	Man	White	Some Masters	16	11 th 12 th	-AP Government -Government	Yes	70%	47.0%	D: 57.5% R: 40.8 %	Urban
Shannon	Woman	White	Masters	22	9 th 10 th 11 th 12 th	-Psychology & Sociology -Modern World History	No	69%	48.0%	D: 57.5% R: 40.8 %	Suburban
Harper	Woman	White	Masters	7	11 th	-AP Government -Government	Yes	61%	37.0%	D: 57.5% R: 40.8 %	Suburban -Urban

*This figure refers the 2020 Presidential results from the county the school is located in. R signifies votes for the Republican candidate, Donald Trump, and D signifies the Democratic candidate, Joe Biden. Source: (Vestal, A., Briz, A., Choi, A., Jin, B., McGill, A., & Mihalik, L., 2021)

Source: Author

Although this research did not have specific racial requirements, only white teachers participated, which reflects the lack of diversity in the profession, as only 5% of Ohio’s educators are BIPOC (ODE, 2019). Teachers were contacted via email directly, allowing participants to speak without administrator influence (Usher, 1996).

Gaining access to the field was challenging due to COVID-19 and the sociopolitical context. CRJC is taboo in white spaces. Some teachers are afraid to voice their opinion and the insurrection by white nationalists on the US Capitol on January 6th, 2021, not only multiplied those fears but demonstrated their validity (Dalsheim & Starrett, 2021; Morabia, 2021). After consulting with the supervisor, the sampling strategy shifted from snowball sampling to criterion purposive sampling due to the heightened tensions. An undergraduate professor at Bowling Green State University in Ohio, who leads the SS student teaching seminar supported recruitment.

4.3 Analysis

Analysis aimed to provide a holistic examination per case and across cases in a recursive, multi-step process (Bryman, 2016). Interviews were transcribed and sent to each participant for member checks to enhance reliability and ensure trust (Patton, 1990; Creswell, 2011). Initial inductive coding centered around factors established in the literature review, using them as a framework for analysis (Appendix 6) (Ary et al., 2010). NVivo was used during coding to improve reliability (Cohen et al., 2017). Instances in the data that revealed factors implicitly or explicitly were coded and further analyzed by investigating context to develop patterns (Stake, 1995). Interviews and journal entries were coded separately per case, then refined into categories, comparing data sets for each participant for validity and triangulation. Frequency with which these codes appeared when incorporating CRJC, or did not appear when excluding CRJC, were considered (Patton, 1990). Relationships between the factors and the participant's context were explored per case, identifying major themes by counting frequency, noting patterns, and clustering (Ary et al., 2010; Bryman, 2016). Cross case analysis was then employed, to identify patterns transcending the cases and enhance transferability (Miles & Huberman, 1994). To ensure validity and reliability, practicing reflexivity, triangulating findings across instruments per case, and scrutinizing results for bias were used (Creswell, 2011). Findings were placed within existing research and theory covered in chapters 2 and 3 (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Findings were driven by participants' perspectives because, "teachers' perceptions of the context matter as much or more than objective measures" to understand their reality (Cornbleth, 2008, p. 159). Lastly, the critical realist positioning influenced the analysis as CRT was applied to the findings (Hawkman, 2020; Ledesma & Calderón, 2015).

4.4 Limitations

This research is bounded by specific limitations as this study occurred during COVID-19, making it an atypical school year. Factors not described may affect decision-making. The sampling

strategy and methodology raises limitations around external validity and generalizability. The study is contextually bound to Ohio. It is not the study's intention to demonstrate a nationwide perception but present a snapshot of a phenomena. The aim is to further facilitate scholarly dialogue and raise questions about other contexts, not provide a solution that ends the conversation (Girard et al., 2020). Relatedly, teachers are individuals, not a homogenous group with a unitary experience (Cornbleth, 2008). However, the research aims to demonstrate this complexity, not simplify it. Similarly, this research focuses on the subjective experience of each teacher, but given that gatekeeping is not standardized, "the operational detail of case studies can be more helpful than the more confidently generalizable virtue of quantitative analysis" (Thornton, 2001, p. 247).

A second limitation is that individuals who are already more comfortable discussing race are more likely to have participated, leaving the most extreme cases of gatekeeping unexplored (Milner, 2007; Tatum, 1992). However, a teacher's participation does not signify expertise. While gatekeeping practices of the most silent teachers may be underrepresented, it is compelling to understand these "more comfortable" teachers, as they were often reluctant to incorporate CRJC and found themselves constrained (Cornbleth, 2001).

Another limitation is this study's focus on one element of identity-race. It is important to acknowledge that race is woven into an identity web, such as gender, class, and sexuality (Tatum, 1992). Focusing on race does not mean to diminish other elements, but to acknowledge that each can "come into sharp relief when examined on their own" and efforts to understand intersectionality "means understanding each" identity element individually (Segall & Garrett, 2013, p. 267).

Lastly, there is potential for the social desirability effect since participants self-reported (Corbetta, 2003). Efforts were made to prevent this, by cross-analyzing data. Participants were asked for specific examples and follow-up questions. Response bias was also limited by articulating definitions and confirming understanding (Frey, 2011).

4.5 Positionality & Ethics

My motivations stem from my experiences as a SS educator who employed antiracist pedagogy in predominately white classrooms and growing up attending predominately-white schools. Witnessing the summer of 2020, I had a similar experience to Chandler (2015), who reflected,

"As the summer ended, marred by high-profile killings of unarmed, Black men-Eric Garner [and] Michael Brown...my thoughts were with SS teachers...as they grappled with how to teach race in 2014" (p. 4).

I found that conversations with colleagues led to discussions on teaching CRJC. These conversations and reflections were inspirations for this project.

My identities as a cisgender, white, working-class, Jewish, female, shape this research, as it is a lens through which I view the world, in a society in which structural racism benefits me. Analytically, everybody experiences whiteness differently, therefore I cannot assume my experience reflects another's (Lewis, 2004). It is important to acknowledge my activism with BLM, which is why I was drawn to CRT. Socialized as a white person, I have inherited intergenerational legacies of privilege, thus my antiracism is never perfect nor finished (Harvey, 2018). While I cannot measure the influence my identity has, I have considered this in my analysis and taken steps to reduce bias.

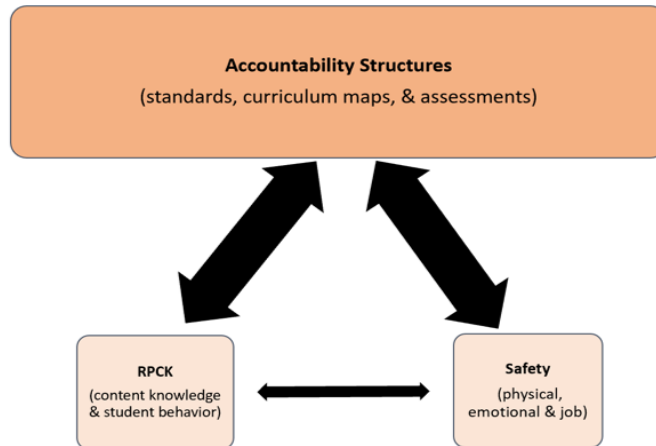
Given this positionality, to remain reflexive, I implemented Milner's (2007) Framework of Researcher Racial and Cultural Positionality because it supports education researchers in considering their racial positionality to reduce bias. The framework applies as, "dangers seen, unseen, and unforeseen can surface...in mostly white contexts, in largely homogeneous contexts, and in highly diverse settings" (p. 397). The framework provides racially and culturally grounded questions to engage with throughout research, organized as four features (Appendix 7). These nonlinear, but interrelated, features supported reflexivity.

This positionality could pose ethical challenges. Since the researcher has a similar background to the participants, data interpretation could be influenced. This was mitigated by reviewing coding structures, triangulation, and conferring findings with literature. Other ethical issues included that this research was conducted during COVID-19, which demanded flexibility and reflexivity. Given the heightened political tensions during fieldwork, sampling and data collection methods were selected purposefully. Informed consent was utilized with guarantees of confidentiality, anonymity, and non-traceability (Frey, 2011). Participants were informed of the research purpose, ethical protocols, and topics discussed (Appendix 1). Participants signed a consent form outlining privacy procedures, and consent was confirmed verbally before beginning the interview recording. Participants were informed they could withdraw anytime or skip questions and were reminded of the researcher's contact information to express concerns (Shaw et al., 2006). For privacy and confidentiality, participants were anonymized through pseudonyms (Corbetta, 2003).

Chapter 5: FINDINGS

This chapter presents findings with connections to Chapter 3 to answer the first research question. First, teachers' personal teaching philosophies enables them to include CRJC. However, philosophies can be undermined by three interconnecting, excluding factors: (1) accountability systems that drive conceptions of curricular relevance, (2) low RPCK, and (3) safety perceptions (Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1 *Interaction of Excluding Factors*



Source: Author

Like Cunningham (2009), this research rejects isolating factors, as “understanding classroom practice across settings requires consideration of interrelated factors” (Pace, 2011, p. 36). Although exceptionalities are highlighted, this chapter takes a group-centered, cross-case approach by illustrating commonalities, as participant voice resonates stronger collectively (Stake, 1995). In line with CRT’s emphasis on amplifying narratives, participants’ excerpts are featured.

5.1 The Enabling Role of Teaching Philosophy

Across participants, teaching philosophy is a factor driving the inclusion of CRJC as participants indicate it fulfills personal teaching goals. Cori, Henry, and Jessica, selected teaching philosophy as a factor in weeks where they included CRJC and did not select it when CRJC was excluded. Abby and Andrew, who did not teach CRJC in the four weeks, never selected teaching philosophy. Mac, Shannon, and Harper, who have philosophies based on teaching current events, selected “sociopolitical events” when they included CRJC, but did not select it on weeks where CRJC was excluded (Appendix 8). This suggests a teacher’s philosophy can be a key factor for the inclusion of CRJC.

Some participants express that CRJC fulfills philosophies around skill development. Abby, who teaches in the most segregated environment, notes she teaches CRJC to give students “*a different perspective than they are used to*”. Andrew hopes students appreciate different cultures. Henry includes CRJC because he wants “*kids to analyze issues in a thoughtful, critical way and these topics help students do that*”. Harper aims to expose students to current events and understand how policies impact society, observing, “*if content isn’t applicable, then it’s not worthwhile...students need to know what’s out there*”.

Other philosophies focus on developing “active” citizens. Mac’s philosophy aims to “*educate students so they’re informed voters*” and CRJC achieves that. Shannon’s philosophy centers on giving students the skills to act as change agents. She feels a sense of purpose, or moral responsibility, in teaching. She explains, “*I heard teachers saying, ‘I wouldn’t teach about the Capitol insurrection, because I don’t know how parents would respond’. I get that but it’s too important. I feel irresponsible if I don’t.*”

This sense of responsibility is the last type of philosophies. Teachers describe feeling responsible for teaching CRJC. Jessica, whose students have worn Trump flags as capes in school, reflects, “*I’m probably the only person that is going to have these conversations [with students], so if not me, it’s not going to happen.*” Abby and Cori, who also teach in conservative communities, echo these feelings. This sense of duty partly stems from their white identities. First, participants feel morally responsible in recognition of their privilege. Cori expresses, “*as a white woman, this is my job. I have a platform to teach history and I best be doing it from unheard points of view.*” James believes showing students that a white male can discuss CRJC can generate buy-in. James argues it “*shows not only minority students that you acknowledge what’s going on...but shows white students that while you may not experience it, it doesn’t mean it’s not important.*” Second, across age ranges, teachers express grievances about their miseducation and are motivated to better inform students. Mac believes CRJC is important for students because “*when I was growing up [classes] were white-centered.*”

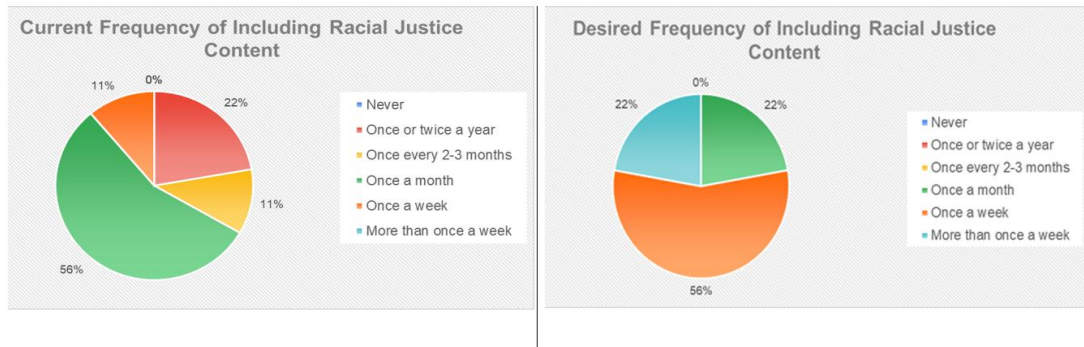
These findings are consistent with literature. Personal goals shaped by identity, are shown to drive philosophies which influence decisions (Epstein, 2009; Fitchett & Vanfossen, 2013; Misco et al., 2011). Rossie (1995), Hess (2002, 2009), Hess and Posselt (2002), and Washington and Humphries (2011), argue teachers incorporate CRJC to meet their goals of preparing students for democratic participation, “because it aligns with their conceptions of democracy” (Hess, 2010, Section 3). Barton and Levstik (2004) and VanHover and Yeager (2007) contend that the key factor

guiding gatekeeping is philosophy. Although scholars argue philosophy is a critical factor, this research aligns with Hawley and Whitman (2020), Journell (2010), McNeil (1986), and Grant (2003), who contend that philosophy can be circumvented when confronted with other factors.

Philosophies Thwarted

As presented in chapter 1, CRJC would help to meet the teaching goals mentioned by participants (Avery et al., 1992; Camicia, 2008; Castro et al., 2015; Hess & Ganzler, 2007; Martell, 2016; Ochoa-Becker, 2007). If teachers were solely influenced by philosophies, CRJC would likely be included more (Bonilla-Silva & Embrick, 2006; Milner, 2007). Participants express a desire to teach CRJC more than they currently are, which suggests that other factors are barring teachers from philosophy-based decisions (Figure 5.2).

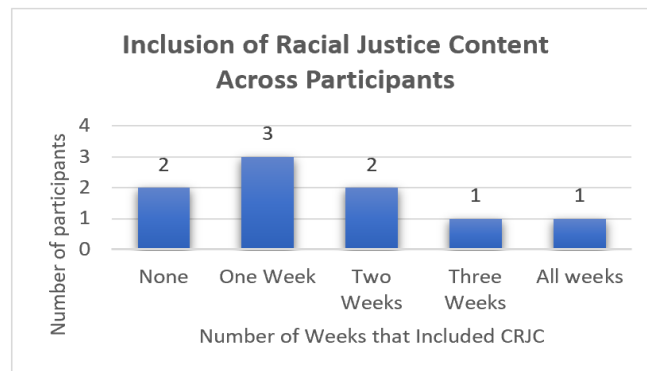
Figure 5.2 Participants' Frequency of Including CRJC versus Desired Frequency (n=9)



Source: Author

Participants' inclusion of CRJC was limited (Figure 5.3). After tracking lesson plans for four weeks, only one participant, Shannon, included CRJC each week, while two participants, Abby and Andrew, included none.

Figure 5.3 Inclusion of CRJC in Four Weeks, Across Participants (n=9)



Source: Author

This aligns with research, which has found that many white teachers say CRJC is important but are hindered by other factors (Alvarez & Milner, 2018; Byford et al., 2009; Hess, 2010; Journell, 2010). There is “dissonance between teachers' professed aims...and classroom actions” (Thornton, 1994, p. 226).

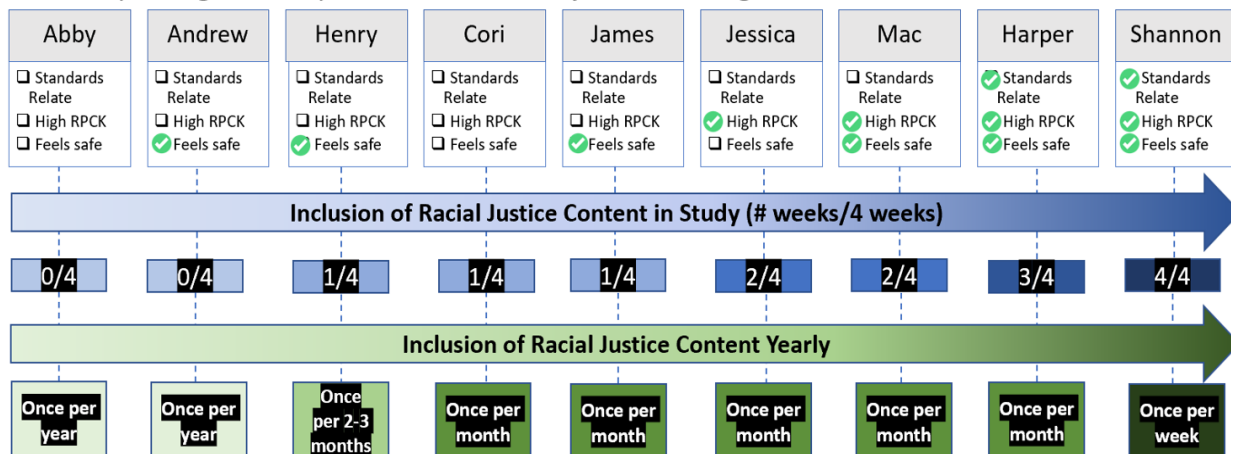
5.2 The Perceived Barriers of Accountability Structures, RPCK, and Safety

While participants cite their philosophies, other factors influence their decisions. There is a gap between goals and reality, as “studies suggest that teachers’ stated beliefs do not necessarily translate into classroom practice” (Barton & Avery, 2016, p. 1012). There appear to be three factors serving as barriers: accountability structures that drive teachers’ conceptions of curricular relevance, RPCK, and safety. For simplicity, these factors can be represented as questions participants ask themselves, consciously or unconsciously, when determining to include CRJC.

1. Does CRJC relate to the standards/curriculum map?
2. Is my RPCK strong?
3. Do I feel safe?

The more questions answered in the affirmative, the more likely the barriers are subverted, and the curricular gate opened to CRJC. This held true within the study, meaning the participants’ abilities to include CRJC within the four weeks, as well as their reported frequency of inclusion outside the study (Figure 5.4).

Figure 5.4 *Excluding Factors per Participant, in Relation to their Inclusion of CRJC in the Study and Yearly**, organized by lowest inclusion of CRJC to highest



Source: Author

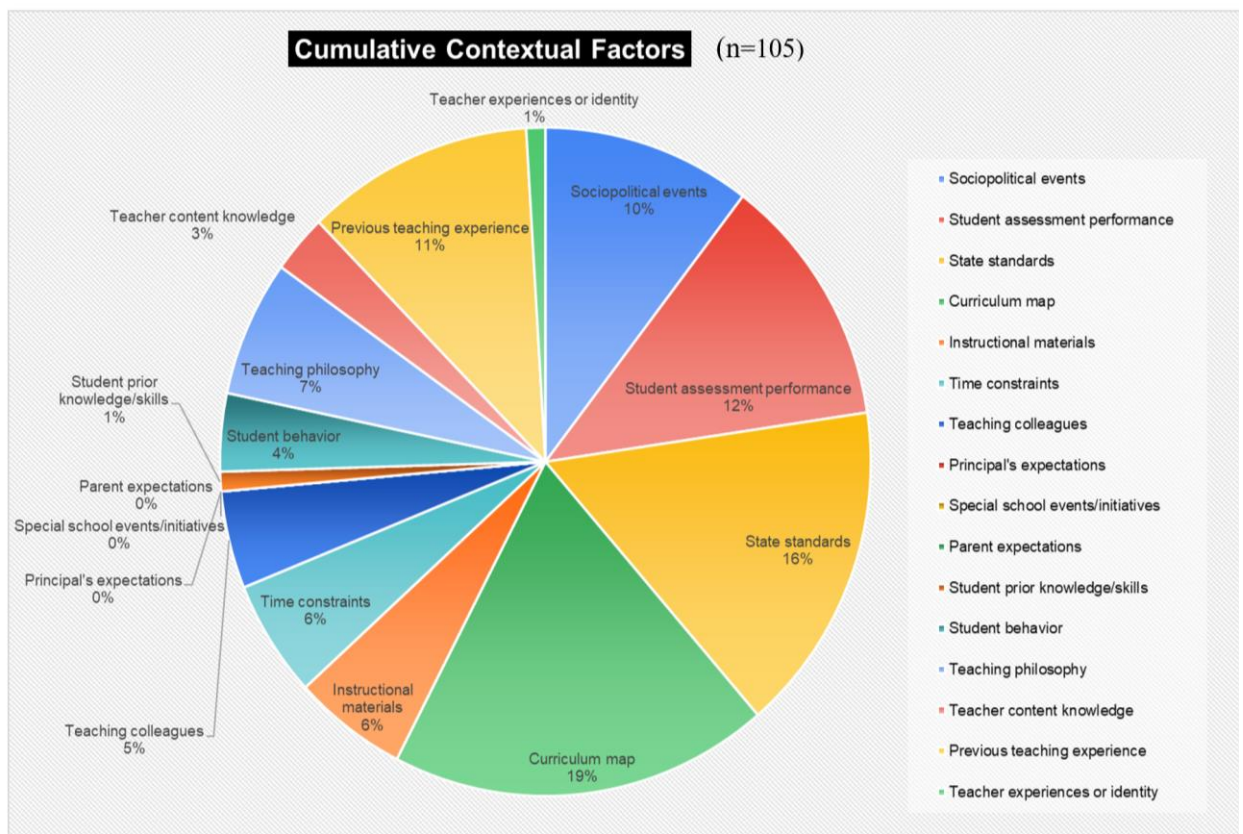
*Note: frequency indicators are self-reported from the participant

The answers to those questions are based on teachers' perceptions, not the researcher's assertions. The questions are in order of importance, with the first question holding weight. The three factors are interconnected, and mutually re-enforcing. The following sections will breakdown how the interaction of these factors facilitate the exclusion of CRJC.

Accountability Systems

According to participants, accountability systems serve as the strongest barrier. As seen in Figure 5.5, when asked to identify factors guiding their decisions once per week for four weeks, factors related to accountability (curriculum maps, standards, and student assessment performance) made up 47% of all factors indicated. When including "time constraints", which were interpreted by participants in relation to completing the standards, these factors made up 53%.

Figure 5.5 *Contextual Factors Identified in Journals*



Source: Author

As chapter 3 described, the "system of accountability [is] a powerful gatekeeping force" (Hawley & Whitman, 2020, p. 113) since end-of-course assessments and their standards or curriculum maps constrict content (Au, 2007; Crocco & Livingston, 2017; Grant, 2001, 2007; Hong & Hamot, 2015; Pace, 2012). Therefore, this internalized "sense of powerlessness prevents" teachers from deciding based on their "deeply held beliefs about teaching" (Kandel-Cisco &

Flessner, 2018, p. 299). Teachers feel limited in teaching content that would better meet their philosophy because instructional time is dedicated to the standards and content unrelated to the standards can be perceived as inefficient (Patterson et al., 2013; VanHover & Pierce, 2006). Meanwhile, standards lack CRJC, and this absence provides teachers “an easy reason to avoid teaching race” (Martell & Stevens, 2018, p. 285; Au, 2009).

When these factors are disaggregated by weeks where CRJC was included or excluded, a pattern appears (Table 5.1). Accountability factors were selected more when CRJC was excluded, making them critical gatekeeping factors. Conversely, teaching philosophy, and sociopolitical events (which were linked to philosophies) were more present when CRJC was included.

Table 5.1 *Factors when Separated by Inclusion or Exclusion of CRJC Across Participants*

Factor	Amount indicated when INCLUDING racial justice content	Amount indicated when EXCLUDING racial justice content	Total (n=105)
Curriculum map	3	17	20
State standards	5	12	17
Student assessment performance	7	6	13
Previous teaching experience	5	7	12
Sociopolitical Events	7	4	11
Teaching philosophy	4	2	6
Instructional materials	3	3	6
Time constraints	2	4	6
Teaching colleagues	2	3	5
Student behavior	4	0	4
Teacher content knowledge	1	2	3
Student prior knowledge/skills	0	1	1
Teacher experiences or identity	1	0	1
Principal's expectations/support	0	0	0
Special school events/initiatives	0	0	0
Parent expectations	0	0	0

Source: Author

This can be explained by teachers’ perceptions of relevance. Thornton (1991) argues teachers’ beliefs about what is appropriate or relevant shapes the content chosen. Girard and colleagues (2020) found that a topic’s “relevance” ranked most highly in decision-making, but in relation to student interests. In this study, teachers utilize their curriculum maps and standards as baselines from which to judge if new content is “relevant”, similar to Chandler (2009), who found that teachers exclude CRJC if it is not in the “natural flow of what’s going on” (p. 267; Grant 2001,

2007; Segall, 2006; Thornton, 2006). Thus, participants' judgements on the "relevance" of CRJC to the standards is an indicator of their inclusion or exclusion of the content.

Some participants view CRJC as largely irrelevant to the standards, so do not include it often. Abby does not frequently include CRJC due to the mandated curriculum. Abby explains, *"because I'm teaching ancient world history, teaching CRJC would be tough because it doesn't connect"*. Andrew relies on the standards, despite not having an end-of-course assessment in Early Civilizations. This stems from his administration, as *"they're very strict about adhering to the standards so if topics are not in my content, I don't see myself pausing what we're doing."* Every week in his journal, Andrew selected "state standards" and "curriculum map". Jessica, who teaches Modern World History, observes *"because America isn't covered often, it is challenging to organically"* incorporate CRJC.

Ideation of relevance is also expressed by teachers outside of history subjects. Some Government teachers, Mac, Henry, and James, describe how following the standards prepares students for the end-of-course exam. As Grant (2007) notes, this is unsurprising, as "tests suggest what should be taught" (p. 251). Mac feels there is some leeway, but for the most part, *"we're teaching to the test"*. As a result, it is challenging to include since he noted the standards lack CRJC. Therefore, he includes it *"if it's relevant to the topic"*. Like Mac, Henry is motivated to prepare students for tests, requiring him to cover the standards thoroughly. Henry feels challenged to incorporate CRJC since, *"there'd be an opportunity cost for"* teaching CRJC instead of mandated curriculum. Although James incorporates current events often, when considering new material, he will not *"bring it up if it doesn't really fit into the relevance of the class since there isn't time to go in a different direction [because] I'm trying to fit [CRJC] into actual standards"*. This struggle stems from a pressure James feels to quickly prepare students for exams.

Conversely, other participants perceive CRJC as relevant, and included it more often. This was true for Harper and Shannon, who covered CRJC the most during the study.

Harper, an AP Government teacher, noted that assessments and standards were factors in her decision-making. However, Harper perceives CRJC as directly relevant to the standards and views that according to the standards, *"I have to bring racial justice content in"*. To Harper, there *"are so many relevant examples of these different topics...deciding what to bring in...is difficult."* In her view, CRJC increases student engagement, which better prepares them for assessments. This line of thinking echoes Journell's (2010) finding, that covering of CRJC was influenced by "their

perceptions of how well their students would perform on the end-of-course assessment” (p. 112). Shannon’s Sociology and Psychology curriculum is guided by standards that “*are much more progressive than Ohio standards*”, but notes that even when teaching Modern World History, her approach remains the same. She explains, “*no matter what I’m teaching, I don’t feel like I have to approach it differently, because it comes from the same theories*”. Shannon views CRJC as foundational to curriculum.

While perceptions of standards largely account for participants’ decisions, two mutually-reinforcing, subfactors are present, RPCK and safety.

RPCK

A second barrier is teachers’ perceptions of their RPCK. If they believe their RPCK is strong, it enables CRJC, but if they feel it is weak it is a barrier. As explained in chapter 3, RPCK is more than just racial content knowledge, it includes knowledge about engaging students (Demoiny, 2018). Teachers report minimal professional development opportunities and few resources, regardless of age and training, except for Shannon. Most participants articulate how their RPCK was insufficient for a combination of reasons: low content knowledge (partly due to identity) and insecurity in managing students’ white fragility.

However, RPCK is re-enforced by and re-enforces the first barrier, accountability systems. Since teachers do not teach CRJC, they do not gain the knowledge on how to teach it, which keeps RPCK low in a self-fulfilling cycle or circular logic (Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.6 *Circular Logic of Standards & RPCK*



Source: Author

By following the standards, and viewing CRJC as not relevant to the standards, there is little institutional incentive to learn CRJC. If teachers feel pressure to complete the standards, learning new content conflicts with this and there are little resources available to do so. Since 11% of journal decisions were based on “previous teaching experiences”, this circular logic can include or exclude CRJC. If teachers do not have resources, or perceive their whiteness as a barrier, the cycle is exacerbated, as existing resources re-enforce the standards (Ross, 2006). Andrew, Abby, and Henry, who include CRJC the least, exemplify this.

Before he would teach CRJC more frequently, Andrew noted he would have to become more informed. In each journal entry, Andrew selected “previous teaching experience”, as a factor. This was reflected in the interview, as he noted being intimidated, since “*I haven't had to talk about it too much*”. If Andrew’s decisions are made based on previous teaching experience, but that experience does not include CRJC, it is challenging to gain comfort and RPCK to break through the cycle. Abby identifies her lack of knowledge as a reason for excluding CRJC. She points to her identity as a white woman, and her own racial blind spots as limiting, “*what I know and what I need to know to be able to teach it.*” Similarly, Henry reflects that as a white male, who grew up with limited diversity, some CRJC is harder to discuss. Therefore, if “*it's not something I understand very well, I'm not likely to bring it up.*”

Conversely, James identified content knowledge and previous experience, frequently in his journal. He explains that since he has some experience teaching CRJC, his familiarity compels him to continue. However, he is limited in adding more topics since if he does not know it and does not have time, he is less likely. James attributes a lower RPCK to his identity, saying that as a white male he will never be fully comfortable. He reflects, “*I feel I don't have experience, so I need to do my homework*”. This adds further work in a congested timeline.

Harper and Shannon, who have broken out of this cycle and include CRJC the most, report having high RPCK. Like Martell (2015, 2016), having teaching experience fostered high RPCK. They both describe their RPCK in terms of content knowledge, as well as having the skills to handle student reactions. Harper reflects, “*since I do it all the time, I feel comfortable in my content knowledge*”. Shannon feels exceptionally comfortable teaching CRJC and identified “previous teaching experience” often in her journal. She has become more comfortable as she gains more knowledge, and her experiences allow her to expand further. Shannon received specific training while completing her Master’s. She explains, “*I have experience and training doing this work. I can guide students in a successful way...this is where I thrive.*” Shannon argues experience allows

her to better handle adverse parent and student reactions and her modified “*approach has made all the difference*” in managing student white fragility.

Conversely, Jessica and Cori, attribute their discomfort with managing student behavior to low RPCK, despite feeling knowledgeable about CRJC. Teachers who feel uninformed on student management, will not select issues that may upset students, leading them to exclude CRJC (Hess, 2010; Sheppard & Levy, 2019). Jessica consistently mentions her anxiety around students’ reactions. If student behavior becomes too disruptive, then she is anxious about repercussions from administration, which will be discussed in the next section. “Student behavior” was a factor included in her journal only when she included CRJC. Jessica notes a decline in her inclusion of CRJC, which she attributes to the political environment in her conservative community. Jessica reflects, “*Students never shouted ‘GEORGE BUSH!’ down the hallway, but with this Trump rhetoric...I’m more uncomfortable. I know when I bring up this stuff, there’s a shout-out protest*”.

Cori argues the lack of general training addressing pedagogical practices for white students limits her. Since there are few students of color in her school, she is also conscious of doing further harm to them, like Chandler (2009). Due to the lack of training and access to resources, she does not have time to make curricular adjustments. Showing a connection between RPCK and teaching in more hostile environments she explains,

“I have tried really hard to find resources for conservative schools and nothing like that exists. White teachers are afraid to say ‘Help! We’re drowning here!’ I’m drowning because I don’t know how to fight this community.”

Teachers who feel more knowledgeable are more likely to include them because “it is easier to teach something you know” (Harris & Girard, 2014, p. 220). Byford and colleagues found that most teachers did not feel knowledgeable enough to teach controversial issues (2009, p. 169). White teachers particularly enter the profession with lacking RPCK, which appears in their practice (Alvarez & Milner, 2018). This includes a lack of understanding at the macro level, how race informs society, and a micro level, how race informs their personal experiences (Brown, 2011; McIntyre, 1997). This lack of knowledge fuels a lack of self-efficacy which limits comfort and confidence (Demoigny, 2018; Misco & Patterson, 2007). Like Journell’s (2011) findings, teachers had varying levels of RPCK regardless of years of teaching experience. Apprehension of behavior, while impacting RPCK, relates to the last barrier-safety.

Safety

The last question participants ask themselves relates to their perception of safety when teaching CRJC. Safety encompasses how teachers perceive their physical, emotional, and job safety. Safety concerns stem from reactions to CRJC which manifests in student behavior or parent backlash because “community climates of opinion (in this case, white supremacy or racism) are filtered through students” (Cornbleth, 2008, p. 164). This factor does not apply to all participants, but appears strongly with the participants in the rural, most segregated schools-Abby, Jessica, and Cori-while participants in more diverse schools explain how their communities enable them to include CRJC.

Over the last five years Cori has included less CRJC, “*because everything seems to hurt feelings*” with students and colleagues. Cori describes how the school resource officer¹¹ abruptly observed her class when she was covering police brutality because he was, “*interested in what I had to say*”. This act of intimidation prompted Cori to stop teaching that topic. Cori describes how her new principal notified her, “*all controversial issues must be Board approved*”. Cori notes that although there are not structures in place to implement this policy, she reflects, “*I will never go to the board or ask for permission to teach anything, I’ll just deal with the fallout*”. Directives such as this play some role in her decision making, as she is increasingly nervous.

Jessica describes how her “*very red community*” has an “*unwritten rule*”, where administration is supportive “*until it becomes annoying for them.*” She perceives the administration as “*hands-off*”, but there are tacit norms. She describes, “*there’s a friendly culture, but for teachers who have caused annoyances, it’s definitely less friendly*”. If student behavior becomes too disruptive, she is anxious about repercussions from administration, as it would “*violate the unwritten rule*”. She explains, “*when the 1776 Commission¹² came out, I went to my administrators and said, ‘I will quit before I do this’ and they said, ‘we would never expect you to do that’, so there’s support*” until it forces the administration to confront the community.

Abby has deep concerns about parent reactions, as her school often faces hostilities. Abby has experienced aggression from parents who called administration complaining about her

¹¹ A school resource officer is a police officer who is stationed at the school.

¹² In September 2020, President Trump created the 1776 Commission. This Commission, made up exclusively of men, none of whom were historians, but mostly politicians, was created to explore how to re-enforce a “patriotic education” in schools. A report of their findings found that teaching about slavery, progressivism, fascism, and racism, were direct challenges to “America’s principles” (The 1776 Report, 2021). Although the Commission was dissolved when President Joe Biden assumed the office of the Presidency in January 2021, the debate about how race is discussed in schools continues (Crowley & Schuessler, 2021).

incorporation of CRJC. She has seen an onslaught against her from the community on Facebook. She describes,

“I’m walking on eggshells. I don’t think BLM is political, but when you’re in a district where many people are considered conservative and they see issues as political, it’s difficult to teach...I would love to teach about Colin Kaepernick¹³. I have a lot of kids that love sports and I think they would connect with it...but I’ve got 10 kids that would go home and mix up what I taught, and I would get calls...and that doesn’t bother me...but...I guess it does, because I would be teaching it. I’d like to think it doesn’t bother me. I hope to keep bringing it in the small ways that I can, but most topics would be difficult to teach solely because of community reaction.”

This example demonstrates the evaluation between philosophy and other factors. For Abby, parental pressures can outweigh her teaching goals. Despite experiencing pressure, Abby notes having administrative support has enabled her to continue trying, yet these parent interactions weigh on her decisions.

Conversely, participants who perceive safety have an easier time introducing CRJC. A factor that allows Mac to teach CRJC is the support from his administration, colleagues, and community. He has seen initiatives from the staff to collaborate in making curricular changes to include more CRJC, with clear advocates in the building. Henry argues his ability to include CRJC partly comes from the “*freedom and flexibility*” from supportive administration. Similarly, Harper describes the many diversity initiatives in her school, the increasingly diverse student body, and an administration that is “*open to whatever I feel is necessary to teach.*”

Safety also re-enforces obedience to the standards, just as RPCK. Parallel to the finding of Hawley and Whitman (2020), some teachers viewed the standards as protection from backlash, since teaching standards means the accepted rules are followed. Thus, participants “work in” CRJC to the standards, since it is perceived as safe. Cori explains, “*the way I always backup what I teach is that it’s always from a standard*”. Teachers fear that the “community might think that teachers were engaging topics beyond their purview and...the resulting reaction would inhibit future credibility” (Miller-Lane et al., 2006, p. 34). Administrators can “compel teachers to teach-to-the state tests and adjust their instruction to curricular mandates” (Hong & Hamot, 2020, p. 74).

¹³ Colin Kaepernick is an African-American football player who, during the National Anthem, “took a knee” in 2016. Kaepernick would kneel or sit on the bench, instead of the traditional pose of standing and facing the flag, in protest of police brutality and institutional racism. This act of resistance spread to professional athletes of all races & genders in other sports, college athletes, and youth teams. “Taking a knee” faced backlash, as these athletes were branded as “unpatriotic, un-American, or ungrateful”, and white nationalists threatening to boycott games unless these protests were banned. At the end of the season, Kaepernick left the team, but the National Football Association blacklisted Kaepernick, and his football career ended, despite being an exceptional athlete. These protests continue today across sports (Demoiny, 2018; Faust et al., 2020).

Andrew reflects this by saying, “*my administrators would be supportive as long as I could correlate it to a standard so they could back me up.*” For some teachers, the need for safety can re-enforce the standards.

These findings emulate literature as “teachers in politically conservative communities are particularly likely to limit” CRJC (Barton & Avery, 2016, p. 1019). The desire to be viewed by administration as a professional can deter teachers from content that might provoke negative behaviors which require administration to intervene (Grant, 2003; Miller-Lane et al., 2006). Teachers are likely to be concerned about “student-related disruptions and conflict” since this can provoke parent backlash, threatening teachers’ perceived professionalism (Byford et al., 2009, p. 169). In these climates, the community can constrain teachers, causing educators to “feel afraid to teach controversial topics as their words may be misconstrued” (Kandel-Cisco & Flessner, 2018, p. 292; Cornbleth, 2001). Teachers who perceive consequences or have previously experienced consequences, limit their inclusion of CRJC (Evans et al., 2000; Washington & Humphries, 2011). Zeigler (1967) found that “the greater the perception of probable sanctions, the more likely the content will be excluded” due to community pressures (p. 101). When experiencing this fear, teachers put aside their philosophies to avoid controversy (Girard et al., 2020; Thornton, 1994). Teachers in more diverse settings, or where there is explicit administrative support tend to be less fearful (Chandler & Branscombe, 2015; Cornbleth, 2008; Martell & Stevens, 2018; Pace, 2011).

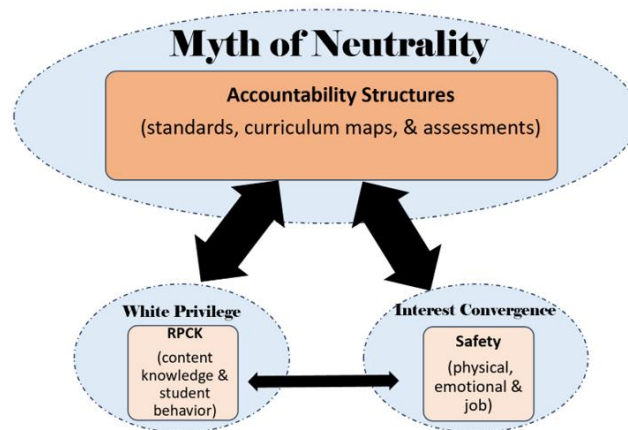
5.3 Conclusion

Although participants argue their philosophies allow them to include CRJC, their decisions are complicated by interacting factors: perceptions of curricular relevance to accountability systems, RPCK, and safety. Chapter 6 will analyze these findings through CRT to answer the second research question.

Chapter 6: DISCUSSION

Understanding decisions requires a comprehensive approach, as “teaching is a complex task, one that takes place within socially constructed contexts of schools as workplaces and social institutions” (Fickel, 2000, p. 36). However, “too many critical analyses of what is included and excluded in curricula...take the easy way out” by ignoring the racial constructs where decisions occur (Apple, 1992, p. 8). Given that “race/ism and whiteness shape every interaction, particularly within education”, it is necessary to interpret the findings presented in chapter 5 through CRT (Hawkman, 2020, p. 404). This chapter addresses the second research question and offers a nuanced theoretical explanation of the interacting gatekeeping factors by explicitly acknowledging their racialized nature (Sleeter, 2001). Three interacting CRT concepts operate behind the excluding factors: the myth of neutrality, white privilege, and interest convergence (Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1 *Critical Race Theory & the Interaction of Excluding Factors*



Source: Author

6.1 Myth of Neutrality

Most participants argue their decisions were largely constrained by standards. When applying CRT, the myth of neutrality can explain this. CRT argues neutrality cannot exist in a system that preserves a power structure favoring one racial group and is therefore a myth commonly believed by white people (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Lewis, 2001). As SS aims to produce “active citizens”, its’ curriculum has subjective political purposes (Apple, 1992; Zimmerman, 2005). The curricular aversion of CRJC is a political choice to “maintain hierarchies” because a “white-produced curriculum” is confined to white perspectives (Ross, 2006, p. 27; Martell, 2016, p. 94). An accountability system that requires standardized curriculum has a “pervasive goal [of] control: control of teachers, of students, of content” to maintain the status quo (Noddings, 2005, p. 9). Therefore, “neutral classroom instruction can never

exist” (Journell, 2011, p. 350). Maintaining the myth of neutrality is seen by participants in two ways: (1) it encourages teachers to value “neutral” curriculum, and (2) it allows whiteness to serve as the relevance benchmark (Bonilla-Silva & Embrick, 2006).

Internalizing this myth is logical as, gatekeeping theory reiterates that teachers interpret “social conditions, national-state-local priorities, and public and professional discourses” (Cornbleth, 2008, p. 165). White teachers fear CRJC, because they perceive it as abnormal and therefore deviant (Branch, 2002; Sue, 2015). This is the first way the myth of neutrality fosters the excluding factor of standards. If it is their professional responsibility to maintain neutrality, then content that is perceived as “nonneutral” is irrelevant. Staying “neutral” is important and following “neutral” standards achieves this (Chandler, 2009). Participants fit this mold as they were apprehensive to subvert norms of sticking to “objective” standards by teaching “subjective” CRJC, so CRJC is pushed aside to hide “behind the belief that they are telling a neutral narrative” (Chandler & McKnight, 2009, p. 220). This struggle between following philosophies versus standards is tangled in the neutrality myth.

Although data instruments never asked participants about disclosing their opinions, every participant brought up the importance of their neutrality, when referring to the standards or their philosophy. Harper reflects, “*I can't bring my opinions into class*”, while James explains,

“I try to stay neutral. My philosophy is, I don't care what their opinion is if they can justify their thinking...It can be challenging talking about Trump and trying to walk that fine line...avoiding where it comes off as critical because you shut out pro-Trump students. I want to avoid that.”

Taking a view of themselves as information vessels, Mac says, “*I'm only going to share information...I want to bite my tongue, but I have maintained neutrality*”. Andrew notes “*I don't want them to feel I'm influencing their lives in any way, so I need to be an unbiased yet accessible source of information*”. Shannon, who teaches CRJC most frequent, sees through the myth. She explains,

“I don't think that I have to be unbiased. If you're teaching about genocide, you should be anti-genocide...I'm not going to be unbiased...if others want to be neutral, they can. I can't and it's unfair to think teachers are unbiased, we're not.”

This myth also encourages teachers to view CRJC as irrelevant due to their racial identities as whiteness becomes the bar through which relevance is determined (Love et al., 2016; Harris & Girard, 2020). Since “whiteness is normative” in the standards and curriculum, content that conflicts with whiteness, is irrelevant (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 76). While all teachers

recognized the importance of CRJC, it was rarely included, but the lens through which teachers determine “relevance” is a white one (Martell & Stevens, 2017). Just as Chandler (2009) found that teachers “seem to view teaching about race as...outside the accepted norm” (p. 267), most teachers in this study referred to CRJC as “*tangents*”, “*outside of our curriculum*”, something to be “*sprinkled in*” or “*worked in subtly*”.

Although participants value teaching CRJC, they rarely do, participating in “a sort of schizophrenic teaching existence that is internally contradictory” (Chandler & Branscombe, 2015, p. 7). Teachers value a mythical neutrality while also valuing racial justice, but in the system of whiteness, they struggle to coexist as “inevitably, teachers are political actors, even those who try not to be” (Kandel-Cisco & Flessner, 2018, p. 293; Davies, 2021). In whiteness, upholding the myth of neutrality can be the safe option and when CRJC is seen as an add on to the “real” (i.e., white) standards, “white privilege is maintained” (Chandler & McKnight, 2009, p. 232; Sue, 2015).

6.2 White Privilege

The second excluding factor outlined in chapter 5 was a teacher’s belief their RPCK was insufficient. The accepted argument (see Barton & Avery, 2016; Epstein, 2009; Harris & Girard, 2014), that white teachers exclude CRJC due to unfamiliarity, must be interrogated further. Analyzing deeper, white privilege can explain low RPCK, referring to the advantages that are afforded to the dominant racial group (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Privilege is enacted in two ways: (1) teachers feign ignorance and use their “ignorant” status to put the responsibility of solving racism on BIPOC and, (2) teachers do not learn, since the standard curriculum privileges white perspectives.

As Davies (2021), Bonilla-Silva (2002), and Segall and Garret (2013) found, white people use their whiteness to justify their exclusion of CRJC by claiming ignorance or that it is not their place.¹⁴ As explored in chapter 5, some participants utilize this thinking, correlating their low RPCK to their white identity. Henry explains, “*micro aggressions are hard for me to talk about because I know what they are, but I don't experience them*” so he is less likely to teach about them. Abby wonders, “*being a white female...am I the person that should be teaching this?*”

¹⁴ The voices of BIPOC and all marginalized peoples must be lifted and centered. White people should not be the dominant voice in explaining racism. The justifications white teachers use to completely avoid CRJC, is what is being critiqued, as it unjustly places the burden of solving racism on oppressed people (Davies, 2021). Arguing that white teachers should not teach CRJC allows white supremacy to continue (Harvey, 2018).

Teachers invoke a paradox of whiteness, in which they cite their own race as a stance for not knowing about race-related issues. Invoking whiteness is an acknowledgement of the racial experience. As Segall & Garrett (2013) explain,

“It seems commonsensical for someone to need to know something to avoid it... While white teachers portend to know little about race...one cannot pretend that living surrounded by only white people and going to predominantly white schools in a diverse country...is simply haphazard...white teachers DO know about race and have benefitted from it knowingly” (p. 285-287).

The participants naming their whiteness as a barrier to a high RPCK, is not stemming from white ignorance, but rather a “*critical acknowledgement of race followed by a decision (conscious or unconscious) to*” exclude CRJC to circumvent discomfort or inconvenience, and maintain privilege (Chandler & Branscombe, 2015, p. 79). This paradox plays out in another line of thinking. As James observes being unfamiliar is, “*scary for teachers...they don't want to seem uninformed*”, but teachers frequently cover topics they do not or have not directly experienced (e.g., historical events or events in other countries). Some participants, particularly in the more diverse schools, identified how BIPOC staff or parents have been champions for including CRJC, or how it would be easier if there had more BIPOC staff. With this line of thinking, racism “operates within...protected secrecy” to which only BIPOC can unlock (Sue, 2003, p. 137). White people are absolved of their responsibility, can maintain their privilege of “not knowing” and argue it would be inappropriate for them to discuss racism, despite being the ruling racial group (Bonilla-Silva, 2002; Trainor, 2005). This would be like a guard claiming to not understand how the prison system works, since they were never the prisoner. The guard would not understand completely every element of the system, nor the prisoner’s perspective, but are we to believe the guard would have no knowledge of the system which gives her power?

While using their privileged positioning to avoid CRJC, teachers continue to privilege “official” curriculum dominated by the white perspective, which prevents teachers from feeling the need to teach CRJC (Salinas & Castro, 2010). What teachers in these instances are invoking is not a lack of knowledge, but their white privilege in not being required to learn the experiences of BIPOC (Lawrence & Tatum, 1997). Since whiteness is perceived as a neutral viewpoint, white teachers “do not talk about racism because whites do not have to: whites use their racial power to ensure” they never do (Davies, 2021, p. 7). It is privilege to not have to learn about the experiences of BIPOC, while BIPOC are required to know the white experience, as it is the standard curricular perspective (Chandler & McKnight, 2009). White teachers are not required to learn about the

experiences and perspectives of BIPOC in school or teacher training, which is then further limited due to continued segregation and the curricular logic between standards and RPKK described in chapter 5 (Alvarez & Milner, 2018; Misco, 2018). Self-proclaimed low RPKK “is a product of racist systems designed to meet white needs” by limiting opportunities to learn the BIPOC experience while absolving them of the responsibility of learning (Sleeter, 2017, p. 157).

Key to upholding white privilege is the last CRT concept, interest convergence.

6.3 Interest convergence

The final factor was participant perception of safety. When explored through CRT, this weighing of risks stems from interest convergence. Bell (1995) coined this principle, arguing racial justice is furthered “when it converges with the interests of whites” and without disrupting their daily lives (p. 21). Interest convergence occurs in tandem with white privilege, since it requires the dominant to relinquish power and overcome “fear that systemic changes will threaten them” personally (Sleeter, 2017, p. 157; Loutzenheiser, 2002). White teachers agree that CRJC is important and allows them to actualize their philosophy but are often unwilling to put this into action since it requires them to go against their self-interest, such as learn content, or risk backlash (Milner, 2010). Given this, “it is reasonable to ask, is it in the interests of the mostly white SS teaching force to teach...about race?” (Branch, 2002, p. 113).

For most participants, the answer, in the immediate context, is no. Some teachers, “believe that teaching controversial issues are important as long as it does not endanger their career” (Byford et al., 2009, p. 168). The classroom “operates to reinforce a belief in the desirability of maintaining the status quo” (Zeigler, 1967, p. 119). Teachers implicitly perceive it in their best interests to evade CRJC. This perception is then re-enforced by explicit safety threats. Teachers can act in ways that minimize the potential for student or community backlash, coined “defensive teaching” (McNeil, 1986). When this occurs, teachers are placing self-preservation over their philosophical goals. Where teachers perceived it to be against their interests, in that they would be guaranteed to upset students, community, and administration, they were less likely to include CRJC, which was the case for some participants. Cori noted that in classrooms where, *“I’m not having kids threatening me or parents emailing, I keep putting [CRJC] where I can, tiptoeing the line.”*

Just as Milner (2005) found that teachers who perceive hostile climates can feel pressure to “fall in line” (p. 416), this idea of “tiptoeing the line”, evokes defensive teaching, where CRJC was included when it was “safer”, or “hidden to students” less directly. Fear can influence “white teachers to abandon” CRJC in this way (Alvarez & Milner, 2018, p. 392). Participants describe

how they teach about white privilege “*but never call it that*” (Jessica), since using that direct language evokes white fragility. Abby explains, “*I’m trying to find lessons that are safe without parent or administrative backlash, but also trying to find that line that I can bridge with kids because they need to learn.*” Occasionally, “self-preservation trumps a well-reasoned argument” to include CRJC (Miller-Lane et al., 2006, p. 34).

Where teachers felt their context was safe, it was in their interest to teach CRJC, and they were more likely to surpass this barrier. For these teachers, they have “less” power to give up, since they are less likely to have consequences. Research has demonstrated that “it can be incredibly difficult, and professionally risky, to center race...without support” (Martell & Stevens, 2018, p. 284).

In addition to consequences, there are other factors, such as a lack of time and resources, which contradicts interests. Several participants lamented there is a lack of convenient professional development, resources, and time to improve RPCK, which positions learning the material as against their immediate interests. If teachers perceive teaching CRJC as walking through “*a minefield*”, where they are unsupported by administration and limited training, the system creates the conditions for it to be inherently against the interests of white teachers to include CRJC. Therefore, “it may not be the content itself that raises concerns, but the social and political substructure, that...bring about teacher protections-oriented postures” (Misco, 2018, Section 5).

Chapter 7: CONCLUSION

Although “SS should be where students grapple with racial inequity” and research demonstrates its’ benefits, white teachers often avoid it (Martell & Stevens, 2018, p. 274; Brunsmma, et al., 2012; Ochoa-Becker, 2007). However, research is lacking (Chandler & McKnight, 2012). Since most of the US teaching force is white and most white students attend racially homogenous schools, the research gap is illogical as it ignores one of the largest US teaching contexts, and dangerous as it refuses to implicate white people in the racial hierarchy (Love, 2019).

This research aimed to narrow this gap by exploring decision-making to understand factors that enable or serve as barriers for the inclusion of CRJC in predominately white SS classrooms in a politically-mixed state like Ohio. To do so, this study conceptualized teachers as gatekeepers who make decisions within sociopolitical and personal constraints (Hong & Hamot, 2015; Thornton, 1991). Through qualitative, teacher-led methods, this study found that while most participants include CRJC to fulfill their teaching philosophies, these ambitions are eclipsed by accountability systems that drive teachers’ perceptions of curricular relevance, RPCK, and safety. These excluding factors are mutually-reinforcing, with the accountability systems baring significant weight. Despite all expressing interest in teaching CRJC, participants rarely do. However, these decisions are informed by underlying structures, which in the US are embedded with racism and white supremacy (Milner & Laughter, 2014; Misco, 2018). Therefore, when applying CRT, the myth of neutrality, white privilege, and interest convergence, are behind these factors.

These findings contribute meaningful knowledge, given the contentious sociopolitical environment the fieldwork was conducted in, and the focus on the interaction between factors, versus studying them in isolation (Pace, 2011). These findings amplify teacher perspectives in ways constrained by literature, which is critical since teachers are significant actors in curriculum implementation (Ross, 2006). As one of the few studies that explicitly explores the role of race in decision-making in predominately white contexts, this research contributes a more complete picture of decision-making, provides new insights, and adds nuance to old ones.

Due to the limited nature of this thesis, only the most dominant factors were analyzed, and smaller, case-specific factors or anomalies were not analyzed. Participants were likely to already be receptive to teaching CRJC, which means different teachers with other factors are unexplored. The findings are context-bound and not generalizable past the cases studied, nor can it be assumed that these findings reflect the experience of all teachers (Barton & Avery, 2016). However, the

conclusions are broad enough that others can draw insights or utilize them as a starting point in other contexts (Stake, 1995).

7.1 Recommendations

Based on these conclusions, these recommendations¹⁵ are offered to address the excluding factors:

Professional Development

To address low RPCK, there is a need and demand, as emphasized by participants, for accessible and practical professional development targeting in-service white educators. Although participants self-educate, teachers should not be blindly incorporating CRJC, as this could harm students if mishandled (Lawrence & Tatum, 1997; Passe & Fitchett, 2013). It is important to not only provide teachers the knowledge and resources but prepare teachers to “negotiate and combat discourses and practices” in schools that re-enforce racial injustice (Milner, 2005, p. 415). This means giving teachers the “critical knowledge needed to shift from simply ‘seeing race as important’ to building a praxis-oriented approach that...disrupts racism” (Alvarez & Milner, 2018 p. 383). Considering chapter 6, it is important to avoid assuming teachers “lack knowledge about race and therefore, teacher education...should ‘teach’ race” (Segall & Garrett, 2013, p. 286; Gay & Howard, 2000). Instead, training requires reflection on racialized histories, its’ current manifestations, and how teachers and curricula are implicated (Hagopian, 2020; Hawkman, 2020). Training should foster safe spaces for collaboration, including mentorship, communities of practice, or coaching, as these are recognized levers for growth (Adler, 2010; Printy & Marks, 2004; VanHover, 2010). This should be a “career-long process of questioning and reinventing practices” through sustained reflection (Martell, 2015, p. 57).

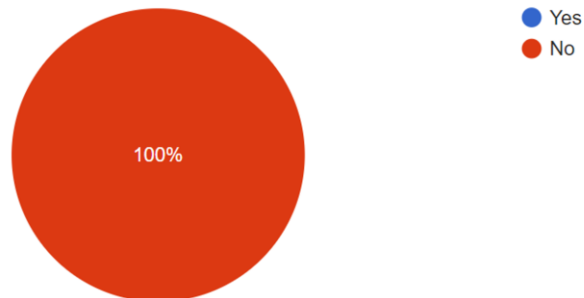
In addition to reflection, teachers should be made aware of their gatekeeping power and professional responsibilities to select meaningful content (Harris & Girard, 2020). As Thornton has argued, “the education of teachers as gatekeepers should be a primary mission of teacher education” (1991, p. 246). Participants have never been asked to reflect on their curricular choices and what influenced their choices (Figure 7.1). Teacher educators should draw awareness to the sociopolitical history and the forces behind curriculum development, as “building teacher awareness of external influences on education is acknowledging that teaching is political” (Kandel-

¹⁵ These recommendations are based on academic literature, my professional opinion, and the input of participants, as reforms should include the voices of those impacted.

Cisco & Flessner, 2018, p. 292). Since teachers are one of the driving forces behind curriculum transformation and implementation, activating their awareness can inspire reform (Boote, 2006).

Figure 7.1 Participant Experience with Curricular Reflection

Q: In your teaching career, have you been asked to reflect on your curriculum choices in this way before? (n=9)



Source: Author

Standards Reform

The resounding barrier identified was accountability systems. To change teachers' practices, it necessary to change what guides their practices (Barton & Levstik, 2004). Therefore, revising the content in state standards is recommended. Since districts create curriculum maps from standards, this would likely trigger reform at district levels. This should be led by a diverse coalition, with input from the community, students, teachers, teacher unions, or advocacy groups such as the NCSS to "push departments of education to rethink and expand standards" (Howard & Navarro, 2016, p. 356).

Civic Action

Since, "the institutions we rely on to effect the world's work" tend to keep the subordinated subordinate, it is important to provide recommendations for practitioners or civil society that do not rely on institutions (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 22; Tate, 1997).

Participants describe "toeing the line", yet teachers should, have direct conversations with administration to understand where that line is to ease safety concerns. If teachers feel it is unsafe, teachers should find colleagues, and approach administration as a collective or communicate with union representation. While this might be intimidating, it is important to remember that "verbal, visible, and constructive engagements for justice may reveal allies...we would not have recognized had we stayed silent" (Harvey, 2018, p. 282; Cornbleth, 2001).

Teachers "should seek the support of peers on similar journeys" in their district, nearby schools, or online (Martell, 2015, p. 58). As Shannon explains, "*seeing other people be successful in teaching these topics has been incredibly helpful*". Join or create online communities where

resources and advice can be shared about lessons, student behavior, handling backlash or approaching administration.

Teachers should apply pressure to local, state, and national forces that create standards and curriculum by petitions, staging protests, and organizing. Since most educators are white, and the nation faces a teacher shortage, teachers should not forget their collective power and advantage (Apple, 1992; Love, 2019). “While BIPOC organizers should be centered,” white educators must use their privileged status to stimulate awareness and support (Hagopian, 2020, p. 22; Harris & Girard, 2020). Teachers should no longer remain silent as “even if unintended, silence implies support for...and participation in the status quo” (Kandel-Cisco & Flessner, 2018, p. 292).

7.2 Future Research

Given the many questions raised by this small study, the complexity it reveals, and its limitations, scholars should explore these areas:

Since this study is bounded by its context, similar studies should be replicated elsewhere, or more micro-level explorations to create a national mosaic of information (Branch, 2002). Evidence must be gathered highlighting the teachers and schools where CRJC is implemented successfully and share the outcomes in a more amplified public forum, to normalize this type of teaching. These examples help inform and inspire policymakers, educators, and curriculum developers (Howard & Navarro, 2016; Sheppard & Levy, 2019).

Similarly, research should explore the most restrictive, conservative, white climates, to identify other barriers to correct them. It is important “for white scholars to problematize race in SS, to interrogate whiteness in practice and research” and explore the exclusion of CRJC to draw awareness (Ho et al., 2017, p. 353). By doing so, white academics galvanize their privilege by shifting research agendas towards racial justice, which could move policy, resources, and practice, as it is common “for one white person breaking silence to free others to do the same” (Harvey, 2018, p. 282).

Findings indicate that administration plays a role in gatekeeping. Therefore, more research with administration is needed to better illuminate the ways they support teachers and the relationship between administration and teacher gatekeeping. Similarly, impact research on efficacious professional development on teaching CRJC is necessary (Crocco & Livingston, 2017).

As a final reflection, studies exploring decision-making should employ reflective journaling. Journaling was a productive way to understand perspectives while benefiting

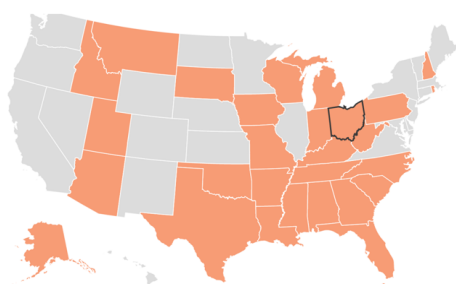
participants by facilitating personal reflection. Participants shared, voluntarily, their positive experience. For instance, Abby conveyed, “these Forms have made me reflect on how I can do more for my students when it comes to racial justice. Truly, this was a great experience!” Self-reflection “could culminate in a transformation” (Dreyer, 2015, p. 341).

7.3 Conclusion

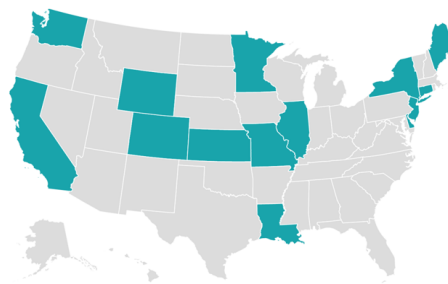
In the interim between fieldwork completion and submission, it can be argued this study became increasingly relevant, as the sociopolitical environment regarding CRJC has intensified (Crowley & Schuessler, 2021). Nationally, conservatives have weaponized SS, banning curriculum that engages with CRT, racism, or condemns white supremacy (Stout & LeMee, 2021). Ohio is identified in Figure 7.2 as one of twenty-eight states where state Republicans have introduced legislation¹⁶ pushing restrictions, and eight states¹⁷ have already passed legislation that bans teaching these topics (Ray & Gibbons, 2021).

Figure 7.2 Maps of States Restricting or Expanding Curriculum through Legislation*

Efforts in 28 US states to restrict education on racism, bias, the contribution of specific racial or ethnic groups to US history, or related topics



Efforts in 15 US states to expand education on racism, bias, the contribution of specific racial or ethnic groups to US history, or related topics



Source: Adapted from (Stout & LeMee, 2021)

*Note: Current as of July 22, 2021

The most trivial of consequences created by these laws, are the additional contextual factors that would need to be considered in research. A more serious consequence is the fact that the “failure to engage in critical discussions about race will only further polarize a nation with increasing racial diversity” (Howard, 2002, p. 30). In perhaps the grimmest of consequences, is the reality that today, tomorrow, and the day after, the police will likely murder 3 people, because on

¹⁶ Ohio has two pieces of legislation that will be debated in the next legislative session, House Bill 322, and House Bill 327. Both would ban state agencies and school districts from teaching “divisive concepts”. These concepts include, “An individual is inherently racist, sexist or oppressive, whether consciously or unconsciously; An individual bears responsibility for actions committed in the past by other members of the same race or sex; The advent of slavery constituted the founding of the United States” (HB 322, 2021). The law threatens to withhold funding if disobeyed (Hofmann, 2021). Ohio’s prominent teacher’s union, Ohio Education Association, State Democratic officials, as well as major school districts, have condemned the bill (*Ibid.*).

¹⁷As of August 10th, 2021, these states are Idaho, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Iowa, New Hampshire, Arizona, and South Carolina (Ray & Gibbons, 2021).

average, the police kill 3 people every day in the US ¹⁸ (Tate, Jenkins & Rich, 2021). Black men are 3 times more likely than their white counterparts to become one of these individuals, while in some cities, like Chicago, it is 6 times higher (Schwartz & Jahn, 2020; Sinyangwe, McKesson, & Elzie, 2021). While states further remove race from the standards, while white people continue to feel too uncomfortable confronting racism, while teachers face backlash for teaching racial truths, while these barriers for inclusion of CRJC continue to be fortified instead of dismantled, these statistics will continue.

This fiery resurgence of conservative attacks has made the “relationship between education and power visible”, because if teachers were not potential formidable forces for racial justice, the powers that be would not work so zealously to silence them (Apple, 1992, p. 4). After all, as James Baldwin (1973) professed, “a teacher who is not free to teach is not a teacher.”

¹⁸ Data on police violence is often deflated because there are no national databases, or federal oversight on reporting, relying on law enforcement to self-report (Sinyangwe et al., 2021)

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Appendices

1. Research Informational Overview, Consent Form, and Participant Background Survey

1



Research Background

Hello and thank you for your potential interest in this exciting research project! My name is Lainie Keper and I am a master's student studying Education Policy for Global Development. Originally from Chicago, I am studying at a consortium of four European Universities-the University of Glasgow, the Autonomous University of Barcelona, the University of Cyprus, and the University of Bremen. After receiving my bachelor's degree in integrated Social Studies Education at Bowling Green State University, I have been teaching for the last eight years in a variety of capacities, both internationally and in the US, most recently having the joy of teaching 8th grade US History in Seattle.



This research intends to explore how secondary Social Studies teachers make curricular-instructional decisions about teaching, or not teaching, content related to modern racial justice topics, racism, or white supremacy in the US. Particularly, I am focusing on educators who teach in a public school with a predominantly-Caucasian/White student population. This intentional design is due to a gap I discovered in academic research, which has, up until now, focused on teaching these topics to highly diverse student populations, or has completely ignored the perspective of teachers in the research.

This study aims to give voice to the lived experiences of our nation's educators, in this moment in time, as they navigate these topics with their students and better understand what is driving the decisions educators make while planning instruction. I believe that amplifying and creating space for teacher voice is a crucial way to accurately meet the needs of teachers and students. Your participation will contribute to expanding the knowledge base for the profession by sharing your views and experiences, while providing a safe space to reflect on your practice. I intend to use this knowledge to identify policies, trainings, and practices that are effective in supporting Social Studies educators.

With these objectives, I hope to interview 6-10 Social Studies teachers from across Ohio. To qualify, the participant must:

- teach a Social Studies subject in a public school in Ohio with a predominantly-Caucasian/White student population (over 60% of the student body)
- teach any grade between 6th through 12th
- have worked at their current school for over 1 year

If you do not meet these qualifications, but know an educator who does, I would appreciate your support in engaging with them to participate in this study. Due to COVID-19, I cannot actively recruit educators by visiting schools, or other face-to-face means, and would greatly value any assistance. Please contact me via email at lainkep@gmail.com for next steps.

Participant Confidentiality and Anonymity

Participation is optional and research will only be conducted with participants' full informed consent. If at any time participants no longer want to continue, this will be completely respected. Participants will be anonymised with all identifying features excluded and any information they disclose will be kept confidential. This includes your name, school name, and school district. Your school will not be notified of your participation and will be generalized in final written reports (e.g., "a small, suburban school in Northwest Ohio"). With participants' permission, interviews will be recorded for accurate transcription. All data collected will be kept in a password protected folder, that will be deleted after research completion.



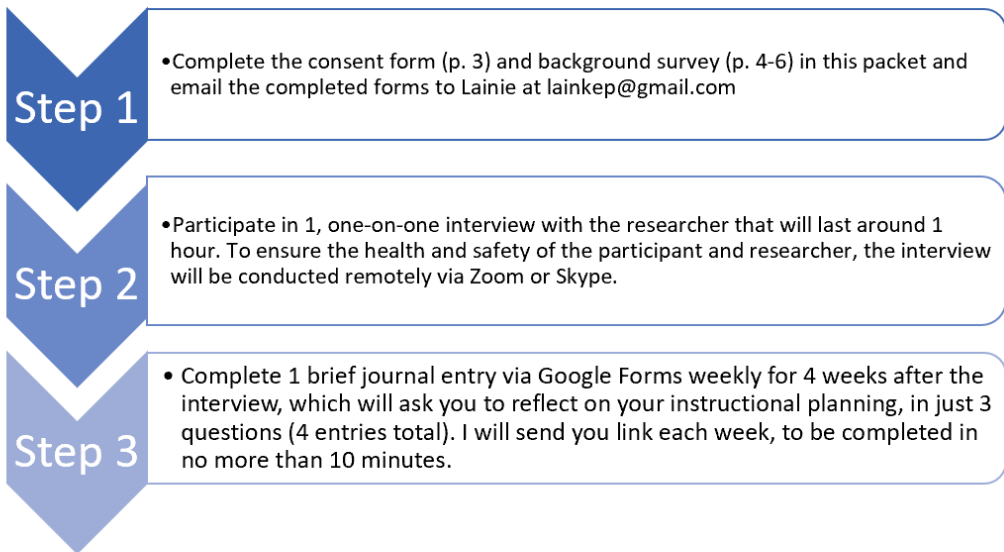
1. Research Informational Overview, Consent Form, and Participant Background Survey

2



What does my participation require?

In this research, participants are only asked to complete 3 steps, requiring about 2-3 hours of your time in total, by the end of March 2021.



How do I participate?

If you are interested in participating, all you need to do is complete the consent form (p. 3) and the background survey (p. 4-6) and email them back to me. |

If you have any questions or concerns, or wish to recommend another educator for this study, please feel free to contact me by email at lainkep@gmail.com or reach out by phone at 847-275-7261.

Thank you for your valued time and consideration,

Lainie Keper

1. Research Informational Overview, Consent Form, and Participant Background Survey

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Participant Consent Form

Informed Consent Statement

- I confirm that I have read the project overview, the research objectives, and the tasks I will complete as a participant. I understand that I am free to contact the researcher to seek further clarification and information.
- I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw from this research at any time or refuse to answer any questions without consequences of any kind.
- I agree to my video interview being recorded by the researcher for the purpose of accurate transcription of the participant's statements.
- I understand that a transcript of my interview, in which all identifying information has been removed, will be sent to me upon completion of the interview for my approval, where I can redact information and confirm transcript accuracy.
- I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.
- I understand that all information I provide will be treated confidentially and that my identity and place of work will remain anonymous in any report on the results of this research, by changing my name and disguising any information which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.
- I understand that all data I provide will be stored in a password protected file and will be retained for up to two years after the date of awarding of the dissertation grade.
- I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in the dissertation, presentations, or published papers.
- I understand that if I (the participant) inform the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm, they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.

With this understanding, I confirm that I willingly consent to participate in this study. I confirm that in the absence of a written or digital signature, the below details confirm my consent.

Participant First, Last Name: _____

Participant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Participant Contact Email: _____

Researcher First, Last Name: Lainie Keper

Researcher Signature: *Lainie Keper*

Date: 12/19/2020

Research Contact Email: lainkep@gmail.com

Researcher Phone: 847-275-7261



1. Research Informational Overview, Consent Form, and Participant Background Survey

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Background Information Survey

Please answer the following questions, which will help shape our interview and serve as baseline information.

1. Name: _____

2. Gender: _____ 3. Race/Ethnicity: _____

4. Outline your education background. Where did you go to University and what did you study?

5. What district and school do you currently work in? _____

6. How would you describe your school's community? rural suburban urban

7. How has your school adapted the delivery of instruction this year due to COVID-19?

8. Number of years at your school: _____ 9. Number of total years teaching Social Studies: _____

10. What grade level(s) do you currently teach? _____

11. What subject(s) do you currently teach? _____

12. Broadly, outline the curriculum covered during your course.

13. Describe how you work with your department when it comes to making decisions about what content you will teach. How many people do you collaborate with? How frequently? In your teaching team, how aligned are your curricula and daily lessons?

14. How much do you take into consideration or rely on state standards or state assessments when planning curriculum?

1. Research Informational Overview, Consent Form, and Participant Background Survey

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15. Have you intentionally taught any of the following topics? (By “intentionally taught” this study refers to a planned lesson, not an impromptu student comment that sparked a conversation). Please check all that apply. If you have not taught these topics, you are still able to participate.

<input type="checkbox"/> Affirmative Action	<input type="checkbox"/> Athlete-led protests (e.g. Colin Kaepernick)	<input type="checkbox"/> Black Lives Matter Movement	<input type="checkbox"/> Blue Lives Matter Movement
<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive dissonance	<input type="checkbox"/> Confirmation Bias	<input type="checkbox"/> Criminal Justice Reform	<input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Appropriation
<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental racism (e.g., Flint water crisis)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gentrification	<input type="checkbox"/> Hate Crimes	<input type="checkbox"/> Hate Groups
<input type="checkbox"/> Hate speech vs. freedom of speech	<input type="checkbox"/> Historical monument removal/Confederate flag	<input type="checkbox"/> Implicit bias	<input type="checkbox"/> Intersectionality/identity
<input type="checkbox"/> Mass incarceration	<input type="checkbox"/> Medical racism/ disparities in healthcare	<input type="checkbox"/> Microaggressions	<input type="checkbox"/> Modern (de facto) Segregation
<input type="checkbox"/> Police brutality/ discriminatory policing	<input type="checkbox"/> Protests for racial justice	<input type="checkbox"/> Racial profiling	<input type="checkbox"/> Racial representation in government or other leadership roles
<input type="checkbox"/> Racial representation in media/toys/books	<input type="checkbox"/> Racially motivated gerrymandering	<input type="checkbox"/> Racism/Discrimination	<input type="checkbox"/> Redlining
<input type="checkbox"/> Reparations	<input type="checkbox"/> School to prison pipeline	<input type="checkbox"/> Stereotypes/ Stereotype threat	<input type="checkbox"/> Systemic racism
<input type="checkbox"/> Voter suppression	<input type="checkbox"/> White privilege	<input type="checkbox"/> White supremacy/white supremacy attacks	<input type="checkbox"/> Whitewashing
Have you taught any other topics that you would consider “modern racial justice”? Please list here.			

16. Are any modern racial justice topics (from the list above or any other topics you believe to be relevant) mandated in your school or district curriculum guides/maps, state standards, etc.? If so, please explain.

17. Describe any training or courses you attended on teaching racial-justice topics in your teacher education program? In professional development? Have they been useful? Where has the bulk of your training come from?

18. Has your school or district held any initiatives on racial justice or related topics in the last few years? (e.g., guest speakers, information campaigns, field trips, student clubs, community forums, political actions, etc.) If so, please describe.

1. Research Informational Overview, Consent Form, and Participant Background Survey

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19. For confidentiality, your name will be anonymized through a pseudonym. Please select a pseudonym for your first name that will not be identifiable (e.g., using "Mel" if your real name is "Melanie").

20. What is your preferred date and time for our interview? Please list a few dates and times that work best for you in the next 2 weeks.

21. Which program do you prefer we use?

 Zoom Skype

Next steps?

1. Please send your completed survey and consent forms to Lainie at lainkep@gmail.com
2. I will reach out to you via email to confirm your participation in the study and confirm an interview time that works best for you. My goal is to work around your busy schedule.
3. If you have any questions or concerns at any time, or wish to recruit another educator to this study, please feel free to contact me by email at lainkep@gmail.com or reach out by phone at 847-275-7261.

2. Interview Guide

Teacher Interview Questions

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how much freedom do you have when deciding the content, you will teach. Why?
2. How frequently do you utilize current events in your curriculum? How do you decide which current events to teach and how do you bring them in?
3. To you, what is the purpose of social studies education? How do you see this reflected in your teaching?
4. In the survey you listed that you taught about _____. What was your motivation behind this lesson? Why teach it? Explain the context.
5. Was this planning process like other lessons?
6. Are there any of these topics that you would not teach? Why?

<input type="checkbox"/> Affirmative Action	<input type="checkbox"/> Athlete-led protests (e.g., Colin Kaepernick)	<input type="checkbox"/> Black Lives Matter Movement	<input type="checkbox"/> Blue Lives Matter Movement
<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive dissonance	<input type="checkbox"/> Confirmation Bias	<input type="checkbox"/> Criminal Justice Reform	<input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Appropriation
<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental racism (e.g., Flint water crisis)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gentrification	<input type="checkbox"/> Hate Crimes	<input type="checkbox"/> Hate Groups
<input type="checkbox"/> Hate speech vs. freedom of speech	<input type="checkbox"/> Historical monument removal/Confederate flag	<input type="checkbox"/> Implicit bias	<input type="checkbox"/> Intersectionality/ identity
<input type="checkbox"/> Mass incarceration	<input type="checkbox"/> Medical racism/ disparities in healthcare	<input type="checkbox"/> Microaggressions	<input type="checkbox"/> Modern (de facto) Segregation
<input type="checkbox"/> Police brutality/ discriminatory policing	<input type="checkbox"/> Protests for racial justice	<input type="checkbox"/> Racial profiling	<input type="checkbox"/> Racial representation in government or leadership roles
<input type="checkbox"/> Racial representation in media/toys/books	<input type="checkbox"/> Racially motivated gerrymandering	<input type="checkbox"/> Racism	<input type="checkbox"/> Redlining
<input type="checkbox"/> Reparations	<input type="checkbox"/> School to prison pipeline	<input type="checkbox"/> Stereotype/ Stereotype threat	<input type="checkbox"/> Systemic racism
<input type="checkbox"/> Voter suppression	<input type="checkbox"/> White privilege	<input type="checkbox"/> White supremacy/attacks	<input type="checkbox"/> Whitewashing

7. Your school does/does not have a mandate on this content. (If yes, how did this come about? How do you add on to this?) (If no, why did you choose to include it? What has allowed you to include it?)
8. On a scale of 1-10, how comfortable are you discussing topics around racial justice in class? Why? Have you included these topics throughout your career?
9. What concerns do you have about teaching racial justice content, if any?
10. What challenges do you face when planning lessons around these topics?
11. What are the supports/systems, tools, skills, or knowledge a teacher needs to incorporate racial justice content into the classroom?
12. Describe the level of support you feel in teaching these topics from your teaching colleagues.
13. Describe the level of support you feel in teaching these topics from your school administration, or even district administration.
14. Describe the level of support you receive from parents or the surrounding community in teaching these topics.
15. Do you see these anticipated reactions from other teachers, parents, or administration influence the way you approach these topics in class?
16. At the societal level, how do you see our current political and cultural context playing into this decision to teach these topics or how you approach these topics?
17. How do you see your identity or experiences playing into this decision or how you approach these topics?
18. What advice would you give to any teacher looking to start incorporating more racial-justice content into their curriculum?
19. Any other thoughts, comments you want to share, or questions?

3. Journal Task Weeks 1-3 (Weeks 1-3 were identical)

Planning Journal: Week 1

Directions: Please answer the questions below shortly after you completed your lesson planning for the upcoming week. It is okay if your lessons are not finely tuned at this point, as long as you have an idea of what content you will be teaching. Treat this like a journal, where you can write any doubts, questions, excitements, or reflections about your planning and anticipations about teaching this upcoming week. Thank you again for your participation. Please reach out if you should have any questions. Information provided in this journal will also be used as data for the research and quotations may be pulled from here.
Have a great week,
Lainie

* Required

Name *

Your answer _____

Briefly, what content are you planning on teaching this week? If you are including a racial justice topic, please be sure to mention it. *

Your answer _____

What factors are influencing your choices regarding the content for your lessons this week? Why are you covering this material? Please select the top 3 factors from this list that are the most influential in your planning this week. If you are covering a racial justice topic this week, please focus your thoughts around that. (Note: you may select "other" for all your factors to create your own if this better reflects your ideas!) *

- Cultural/political events at the larger societal level
- Your desire for students to perform well on standardized assessments
- Your desire to meet state standards
- Your desire to align with the curriculum map/sequencing
- Your access to instructional materials/resources
- Your teaching team/colleagues collaborative expectations or suggestions
- Your principal's expectations/support
- Your desire to do well on your own performance evaluations/observations
- Special school events/initiatives
- Your desire to meet parental expectations
- Student prior content knowledge/skills
- Your anticipation of student behavior/reaction
- Your desire to fulfill your teaching philosophy/personal beliefs
- Your knowledge/familiarity with the content
- Your previous experience teaching the content
- Your desire to work around time constraints
- Your personal experiences, background, or identity
- Other: _____

3. Journal Task Weeks 1-3 (*Weeks 1-3 were identical*)

Why are these factors influential this week? If you are covering a racial justice topic this week, please focus your thoughts around that. Explain EACH factor you indicated and the particular content in your plan it relates to. (Example: Factor-previous experience teaching the content-This week's content is mainly around the War of 1812. While planning, I was thinking a lot about my previous experience teaching the content, because last year's lesson had really low student engagement. I wanted to find ways to make the content more engaging, so I decided to add some content around the Star-Spangled Banner since students might connect with it ...) *

Your answer

Any concerns or doubts going into teaching this content this week?

Your answer

What are you looking forward to you about teaching this content this week?

Your answer



Submit

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

4. Journal Task Week 4

Planning Journal: Week 4 (Final entry!)

Directions: Congratulations! This is your final entry and task for this study! As such, I have added some overall reflection questions. Thank you again for all your participation. Please reach out if you should have any questions. Information provided in this journal will also be used as data for the research and quotations may be pulled from here. Have a great week,
Lainie

* Required

Name *

Your answer _____

Briefly, what content are you planning on teaching this week? If you are including a racial justice topic, please be sure to mention it. *

Your answer _____

What factors are influencing your choices regarding the content for your lessons this week? Why are you covering this material? Please select the top 3 factors from this list that are the most influential in your planning this week. If you are covering a racial justice topic this week, please focus your thoughts around that. (Note: you may select "other" for all your factors to create your own if this better reflects your ideas!) *

- Cultural/political events at the larger societal level
- Your desire for students to perform well on standardized assessments
- Your desire to meet state standards
- Your desire to align with the curriculum map/sequencing
- Your access to instructional materials/resources
- Your teaching team/colleagues collaborative expectations or suggestions
- Your principal's expectations/support
- Your desire to do well on your own performance evaluations/observations
- Special school events/initiatives
- Your desire to meet parental expectations
- Student prior content knowledge/skills
- Your anticipation of student behavior/reaction
- Your desire to fulfill your teaching philosophy/personal beliefs
- Your knowledge/familiarity with the content
- Your previous experience teaching the content
- Your desire to work around time constraints
- Your personal experiences, background, or identity
- Other: _____

4. Journal Task Week 4

Why are these factors influential this week? If you are covering a racial justice topic this week, please focus your thoughts around that. Explain EACH factor you indicated and the particular content in your plan it relates to. (Example: Factor-previous experience teaching the content-This week's content is mainly around the War of 1812. While planning, I was thinking a lot about my previous experience teaching the content, because last year's lesson had really low student engagement. I wanted to find ways to make the content more engaging, so I decided to add some content around the Star-Spangled Banner since students might connect with it ...) *

Your answer _____

Any concerns or doubts going into teaching this content this week?

Your answer _____

What are you looking forward to you about teaching this content this week?

Your answer _____

If you were able to include a lesson on a racial justice topic this past month, how did you think it went compared to your expectations of how it would go? (Please also mention the topic it was on)

Your answer _____

Throughout the entire school year, how often do you intentionally teach topics related to racial justice? *

- Never
- Once or twice a year
- Once every 2-3 months
- Once a month
- Once a week
- More than once a week

Throughout the entire school year, how often would you like to intentionally teach topics related to racial justice? *

- Never
- Once or twice a year
- Once every 2-3 months
- Once a month
- Once a week
- More than once a week

In your teaching career, have you been asked to reflect on your curriculum choices in this way before? (Please exclude any student teaching or experiences from teacher ed. programs) *

- Yes
- No

4. Journal Task Week 4

Any final comments or reflections, on your decisions to include, or not include, topics around racial justice you wish to share?

Your answer



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5. Social Studies Content Overview in Ohio (as mandated by ODE, 2018)

Grade	Subject	Content Area
6 th	Early Civilizations (Eastern Hemisphere)	“Students study the Eastern Hemisphere (Africa, Asia, Australia and Europe), its geographic features, early history, cultural development and economic change. Students learn about the development of river civilizations in Africa and Asia, including their governments, cultures, and economic systems. The geographic focus includes the study of contemporary regional characteristics, the movement of people, products and ideas, and cultural diversity. Students develop their understanding of the role of consumers and the interaction of markets, resources and competition” (p. 23)
7 th	Early Civilizations (Western Hemisphere)	“An integrated study of world history, beginning with ancient Greece, [Rome], and continuing through global exploration” (p. 25). Students learn about the feudal system, the Reformation, the Columbian Exchange, trade, and spread of major religions.
8 th	US History	“The study of European exploration and the early years of the United States until Reconstruction (1877). This study incorporates chronologic view of the development of the United States. Students examine how historic events are shaped by geographic, social, cultural, economic and political factors.” (p. 27)
9 th - 12 th	Modern World History	“This course examines world events from 1600 to the present. It explores the impact of the democratic and industrial revolutions, the forces that led to world domination by European powers, the wars that changed empires, the ideas that led to independence movements and the effects of global interdependence. The concepts of historical thinking introduced in earlier grades continue to build with students locating and analyzing primary and secondary sources from multiple perspectives to draw conclusions.” (p. 31)
9 th - 12 th	US History	“This course examines the history of the United States of America from 1877 to the present. The federal republic has withstood challenges to its national security and expanded the rights and roles of its citizens. The episodes of its past have shaped the nature of the country today and prepared it to attend to the challenges of tomorrow. Understanding how these events came to pass and their meaning for today’s citizens is the purpose of this course. The concepts of historical thinking introduced in earlier grades continue to build with students locating and analyzing primary and secondary sources from multiple perspectives to draw conclusions.” (p. 31)
9 th - 12 th	US Government	“Students examine the Founding Documents...and how the American people govern themselves at national, state and local levels of government.” (p. 3)
Source: Adapted from (ODE, 2018)		

6. Code List

CODE LIST		
MICRO	MESO	MACRO
Personal teaching philosophy/goals	Instructional materials	Sociopolitical Current Events
Teacher content knowledge	Teaching team/colleagues collaborative expectations	Standardized assessments
Previous experience teaching the content	Administration support	State Standards
Desire to work around time constraints	Performance evaluations/observations	Parent expectations
	Special school events/initiatives	Community Culture
Perceived teacher autonomy	Student prior content knowledge/skills	Curriculum Map
Teacher personal background & identity	Student behavior/reaction	Time Constraints

7. Milner (2007) Reflective Framework for CRT Researchers

<p>First Feature</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is my racial and cultural heritage? How do I know? • In what ways do my racial and cultural backgrounds influence how I experience the world, what I emphasize in my research, and how I evaluate and interpret others and their experiences? How do I know? • How do I negotiate and balance my racial and cultural selves in society and in my research? How do I know? • What do I believe about race and culture in society and education, and how do I attend to my own convictions and beliefs about race and culture in my research? Why? How do I know? • What is the historical landscape of my racial and cultural identity and heritage? How do I know? • What are and have been the contextual nuances and realities that help shape my racial and cultural ways of knowing, both past and present? How do I know? • What racialized and cultural experiences have shaped my research decisions, practices, approaches, epistemologies, and agendas?
<p>Second Feature</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the cultural and racial heritage and the historical landscape of the participants in the study? How do I know? • In what ways do my research participants' racial and cultural backgrounds influence how they experience the world? How do I know? • What do my participants believe about race and culture in society and education, and how do they and I attend to the tensions inherent in my and their convictions and beliefs about race and culture in the research process? Why? How do I know? • How do I negotiate and balance my own interests and research agendas with those of my research participants, which may be inconsistent with or diverge from mine? How do I know? • What are and have been some social, political, historical, and contextual nuances and realities that have shaped my research participants' racial and cultural ways or systems of knowing, both past and present? How consistent and inconsistent are these realities with mine? How do I know?
<p>Third Feature</p>	<p>(No guiding questions) The third feature is the use of narratives and including participant voice in the research, which therefore does not require questions for the researcher to reflect on, as it aims to center the participant instead.</p>
<p>Fourth Feature</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the contextual nature of race, racism, and culture in this study? In other words, what do race, racism, and culture mean in the community under study and in the broader community? How do I know? • What is known socially, institutionally, and historically about the community and people under study? In other words, what does the research literature reveal about the community and people under study? And in particular, what do people from the indigenous racial and cultural group write about the community and people under study? Why? How do I know? • What systemic and organizational barriers and structures shape the community and people's experiences, locally and more broadly? How do I know?
<p>Source: Adapted from Milner (2007)</p>	

8. Weekly Factors Identified in Participant Journal Responses

Reflective Journal Responses				
<i>Note: Boxes shaded in yellow Included CRJC that week and unshaded boxes did not</i>				
	Week 1 Factors	Week 2 Factors	Week 3 Factors	Week 4 Factors
Jessica	1. State Standards 2. Curriculum Map 3. Previous Experience	1. State Standards 2. Teaching Philosophy 3. Previous Experience	1. Teaching Philosophy 2. Previous Experience 3. Time Constraints	1. Sociopolitical Events 2. Student Behavior 3. Teaching Philosophy
Abby	1. State Standards 2. Instructional Materials 3. Student Prior Knowledge/skills	1. Curriculum Map 2. Instructional materials 3. Teaching Colleagues	1. State Standards 2. Curriculum Map 3. Sociopolitical Events	1. Sociopolitical Events 2. State Standards 3. Curriculum Map
Cori	1. State Standards 2. Curriculum Map 3. Instructional Materials	1. Curriculum Map 2. Instructional Materials 3. Teaching Philosophy	1. Student Assessment Performance 2. Curriculum Map 3. Instructional Materials	1. Student Assessment Performance 2. Time Constraints 3. Curriculum Map
Andrew	1. State Standards 2. Curriculum Map 3. Previous Teaching Experience	1. State Standards 2. Curriculum Map 3. Previous Teaching Experience	1. State Standards 2. Curriculum Map 3. Previous Teaching Experience	1. State Standards 2. Curriculum Map 3. Previous Teaching Experience
James	1. Teaching Colleagues 2. Previous Experience 3. State Standards	1. Teaching Colleagues 2. Teacher Content Knowledge 3. Time Constraints	1. Time Constraints 2. Curriculum Map 3. Teacher Content Knowledge	1. Student Assessment Performance 2. Teaching Colleagues 3. Teaching Philosophy
Harper	1. Student Assessment Performance 2. Curriculum Map 3. Time Constraints	1. Sociopolitical Events 2. Student Assessment Performance 3. Instructional materials	1. Sociopolitical Events 2. Student Assessment Performance 3. State Standards	1. Sociopolitical Events 2. Student Assessment Performance 3. State Standards
Shannon	1. State Standards 2. Teaching Colleagues 3. Previous Teaching Experience	1. Student Behavior 2. Teacher Content Knowledge 3. Previous Teaching Experience	1. Sociopolitical Events 2. Student Behavior 3. Previous Teaching Experience	1. Curriculum Map 2. Student Behavior 3. Time Constraints
Henry	1. Sociopolitical Events 2. Student Assessment Performance 3. Previous Teaching Experience	1. Student Assessment Performance 2. Teaching Philosophy 3. Teacher Experiences or Identity	1. Curriculum Map	1. Sociopolitical Events 2. Student Assessment Performance 3. Curriculum Map
Mac	1. Student Assessment Performance 2. State Standards 3. Curriculum Map	1. Student Assessment Performance 2. State Standards 3. Curriculum Map	1. Sociopolitical Events 2. Student Assessment Performance 3. State Standards	1. Sociopolitical Events 2. Student Assessment Performance 3. Curriculum Map