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ABSTRACT

MULTICULTURAL TEACHER EDUCATION AND PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' CONSTRUCTION OF THE MORAL SELF

By

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For years, multicultural teacher educators have labored to cultivate pre-service teachers' readiness to work with culturally diverse students. They seek to understand how pre-service teachers' reasoning about inequality, difference and diversity mediates their conceptions about working with diverse student populations and their commitment to educational equity for students from historically marginalized social groups. Following this literature, the present study explores these questions by investigating how pre-service teachers make sense of their own life experiences with social privilege and marginalization, as well as their work with low-income minority students through a service-learning project.

This case study was conducted in several sections of a semester-long social foundations class offered by the teacher preparation program at Midwest University (a pseudonym) as required credit for all pre-service teachers. It employed a mixed methods approach that included the collection and analysis of survey, interview, and observational data. Drawing on cultural toolkit theory (Swidler, 1986, 2003) from cultural sociology, I look at how pre-service teachers construct moral meanings to make sense of their privileged and marginalized social positions, how they reason students' behavior, attitude, aspiration and academic performance, and how they negotiate competing ethical considerations while managing to establish productive relationships with the students.

My analysis highlights the multiple and competing schemas that pre-service teachers simultaneously enact in their reasoning processes and the role of their images of the moral self in their efforts to fulfill competing ethical considerations involved in their work with students.

Research findings suggested that pre-service teachers enacted a moral notion of the self to justify their privileged and marginalized social positions. They tended to take an individualistic view on the moral meanings of their experiences of privilege and marginalization by interpreting these experiences as opportunities of making them *better people*. In their reasoning about students' characteristics, it was found that pre-service teachers used multiple interpretive frameworks that involved considerations of causal significance of both individual and structural factors as they sought to understand the ways students thought and behaved. Moreover, pre-service teachers' relationships with students and their conceptions of student needs were significantly mediated by their images of the moral self.

The present study suggests that in order for teacher educators to better prepare future teachers for working with culturally diverse students effectively, it is important to understand the moral underpinning of pre-service teachers' interpretations about their own life experience as well as children from marginalized social groups and incorporate their perspectives into curriculum design to better help them unpack their experiences.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Overview of the study

This study examines how pre-service teachers grapple with social and educational inequalities that they witness as they work, often for the first time, with diverse children and youth in urban schools and community organizations. This study is located in several sections of TE200 *Diversity, Power and Educational Opportunity, (*herein called TE200), a semester-long social foundations class offered by the teacher preparation program at Midwest University[1] as required credit for all pre-service teachers. TE200 students engage in a 20-hour service-learning commitment to working with children and youth who differ from them according to race, class, language and/or special needs in local area schools and community organizations.

Drawing on the cultural toolkit theory from cultural sociology, the study examines how pre-service teachers make sense of working with students from historically marginalized groups through a service-learning project in an effort to understand how engagement in such projects shapes the ways in which pre-service teachers think about teaching diverse students. Much of the literature on multicultural teacher education tends to emphasize either White pre-service teachers' resistance to learning about issues of diversity and equity or their changes in attitude about diversity over the course of one or two semester classes. The present study seeks to move beyond this either/or approach to illuminate the complex and often contradictory ways in which pre-service teachers make sense of their experiences working with diverse students. I argue that acknowledging this

[1] All names are pseudonyms.

complexity is important to helping pre-service teachers develop richer understandings of the issues of social difference and equity and how they shape teaching and learning.

In order to explore this complexity, I employed a mixed methods approach that included the collection and analysis of survey, interview and observation data. Using a concurrent embedded strategy, I used qualitative data as the primary database to investigate my research questions while incorporating quantitative data as the secondary database to inform, enrich and support my qualitative work.

Overview of the chapters

My dissertation proceeds in the following organization. In this chapter, I provide a brief overview of the study. In Chapter 2, I situate the study within the existing multicultural teacher education literature and discussed the theoretical framework that has structured the study. Chapter 3 details the research methodology of the study including selections of research sites and participants, data collection process and analysis procedures. I organized my research findings into three chapters. In Chapter 4, I examine how pre-service teachers made sense of their own privileged and marginalized identities. I focus my analysis on their construction of positive self-images (moral identities) embedded in their meaning-making of social difference and equity. Chapter 5 looks at how pre-service teachers understood the behaviors, attitudes and abilities of the diverse students who they worked with at the service-learning site. My analysis highlights the multiple and competing schemas that pre-service teachers simultaneously enact in their reasoning processes. In Chapter 6, I investigate how pre-service teachers negotiated their relationships/interactions with the students by examining their efforts to fulfill competing ethical considerations involved in their work with students. Finally, I reiterate the

findings, examine the theoretical issues relevant to the research of multicultural teacher education, and suggest directions for future research in Chapter 7.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE AND THEORY

Literature review

Over the past two decades, the concept of the "demographic imperative" (Banks, 1993a) has been used as the most prominent rationale for the implementation of and research on multicultural teacher education (Furman, 2008; Lowenstein, 2009; Sleeter, 2001a) It is commonly believed that the cultural mismatch, derived from the demographic disparities between the nation's predominately White, middle class teaching force and its K-12 student population, is one of the major factors that contributes to the under-achievement of students from historically underprivileged social groups, particularly, those from low-income racial minority households (Au, 1980; Delpit, 1995; Farkas, 2003; Lewis et al., 2008). Driven by the demographic imperative, many research studies on the work of multicultural teacher education usually begin with a backdrop statement much like the following: "the population of schoolchildren increasingly includes an array of racial, ethnic, and cultural groups,.....the racial composition of those entering the teaching force is overwhelmingly White European American;....the disparity between the nation's teaching force and its schoolchildren has enormous implications for the pre-service teacher education curriculum"(Cochran-Smith, 1995).

Though the demographic imperative provides a rationale for integrating multiculturalism into the nation's teacher education programs, it also tends to homogenize pre-service teachers as a monolithic group "who bring little or nothing to their learning about issues of diversity" (Lowenstein, 2009, p.167). The field's overwhelming focus on white pre-service teachers (Sleeter, 2001b) further also tends to

obscure the learning experience of racial minority pre-service teachers in teacher education classrooms (Montecinos, 2004). The present study responds to these problems. It seeks to (re)conceptualize white pre-service teachers as active learners with resources for learning about issues of diversity and to explore the experiences of pre-service teachers of color[1] in multicultural teacher education courses. In what follows, I review studies related to these two efforts.

Conceptualizing white pre-service teachers as active learners

In an early review article on preparing teachers for diverse learners, Grant and Secada (1990) noted that most of the then scholarship on multicultural education for pre-service teachers was not based on empirical studies and that "there is much that we do not know about how to prepare teachers to teach an increasingly diverse student population" (p. 420). As a response to their concern, the number of empirical studies has greatly increasing since then. Yet despite the growing research interest and programmatic practice devoted to the work of multicultural teacher education, "business as usual" in terms of the lack of concrete and consistent evidence to prove the influence of multicultural education on pre-service teachers' thoughts and practices seems to be a recurrent conclusion suggested by reviews of this body of literature over time (Gomez, 1993; Grant and Secada, 1990; Hollins and Guzman, 2005; Lowenstein, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 1999; Melnick and Zeichner, 1998; Sleeter, 2001b).

In a recent review article, Lowenstein (2009) argues that teacher educators' emphasis on their white, middle-class students' *resistance* to learning issues of diversity and the seemly ineffectiveness of current multicultural education attempts to *transform*

[1] I use the terms "pre-service teachers of color" and "racial minority pre-service teachers" interchangeably in my writing as they are two commonly used labels in the literature when referring to pre-service teachers whose racial identification are not White.

this population of pre-service teachers is largely associated with how teacher educators conceptualize their students as learners. As Lowenstein points out, the common conceptualization of white pre-service teachers in many studies of multicultural teacher education, seems to be driven by two problematic assumptions that white pre-service teachers are 1) a monolithic group and 2) deficient learners when learning about issues of diversity. Drawing on teacher expectation research, Lowenstein reminds us "to consider whether deficit views shared across teacher educators function as a kind of collective prophecy of teacher candidates' lack of performance around issues of diversity" (p.168). For this reason, she urges teacher educators to reconceptualize white pre-service teachers as active learners who bring valuable resources to their learning and to seek a pedagogy that fosters more engagement of white pre-service teachers in their studies of issues of diversity.

Although the conception of white pre-service teachers as monolithic deficit learners seems to be a dominant frame of reference in multicultural teacher education literature, some teacher educators have noticed the limitations and problems that the homogenizing and deficit assumptions engender and have begun to seek ways to identify and draw upon the cultural resources students bring with them to learn about and engage with issues of diversity and educational equity (Allen and Labbo, 2001; Allen and Hermann-Wilmarth, 2004; Cockrell et al., 1999; Hermann-Wilmarth, 2005; Obidah, 2000). For example, in seeking productive ways to address students' negative responses to educational foundations courses, Cockrell et al. (1999) note:

> Labeling [the students] as a sea of 'predominantly White, middle-class females" was simplistic and denied hidden forms of diversity and differences of opinion among them. Describing [them] as 'racist' or at least 'ignorant' probably occurred to us, but this blame-the-students position was also contradictory to our espoused

> values. Furthermore, we were concerned that in some cases initial negativity about diversity may have actually hardened as a result of our course (p.353).

Cockrell et al.'s candid reflection reveals the importance of acknowledging the reciprocity between teaching and learning and how teacher educators' negative assumptions about their students could hinder the work that they intend to accomplish. Similarly, Allen and Hermann-Wilmarth (2004) share their personal journey of learning to understand their students as complex cultural beings by interrogating their own stereotypes and deficit assumptions about the students, and also by reconstructing their own understanding about themselves as "privileged teachers of the privileged rather than bearers of the multicultural education standard" (p.222). They preface their article as follows:

> Excellent teachers whose students are failing do not blame the students; rather, they ask themselves, "What am I doing that contributes to this failure?"(Ladson-Billings, 2000). It stands to reason then that as teacher educators striving to be excellent, when we see our graduates struggle in culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse classrooms, we must ask ourselves, "What am I doing that contributes to this failure? More often we blame our students, especially our undergraduates. We blame what we often generalize as their race and class privilege, socially conservative or outright bigoted family values. [....] Most of all we rail against their resistance to multicultural teacher education. If we hear that "shoving it down our throats" line one more time, we might just do it." (p.214)

In order to reconstruct their understanding of students as complex cultural beings who have rich life history and various cultural experience that simultaneously shape their resistance to, ambivalence about, acceptance of and struggle with learning to address issues of privilege and oppression, Allen and Herman-Wilmarth sought pedagogical strategies that would allow them to hear their students' opinions from the perspectives of the students. They wrote their cultural memoirs with the students and experienced the vulnerability of self-disclosure that their students underwent in the work of interrogating

one's cultural traits. By positioning themselves as teachers and students , Allen and Herman-Wilmarth were able to see how their students' experience "expand [their] understanding of what it means to be a culturally relevant teacher by forcing [them] to expand [their own] understanding of how and why students occupy the class or religious positions that they do, and to develop empathy with their struggles to address both privilege and oppression." (p.220)

Along a similar line, Rosaen (2003) uses poetry writing as a pedagogical tool to engage her students in exploring aspects of their own culture. In describing her efforts of transforming her own curriculum, teaching and assessment practices to prepare pre-service teachers for diverse classrooms, Rosaen (2003) highlights her belief in engaged pedagogy through which teachers create participatory spaces for the students to connect their personal lives with the course materials as a way to foster meaningful learning. She views pre-service teachers' life histories as assets, rather than burdens, to be used to engage the students in exploring, questioning and retooling their frames of reference. Like other teacher educators who strive for culturally engaged teaching with their pre-service teachers through practicing what they profess (Allen and Herman-Wilmarth, 2004; Conklin, 2008, Obidah, 2000), Rosaen also believes such a practice in teacher education classrooms is important as teacher educators need to provide a model for their students in terms of ways to value and appreciate the knowledge and cultural backgrounds that their K-12 students bring to the classroom. In doing so, she found most of her students responded to the curriculum positively and were able to see the connections between their choice about classroom practices and the cultural influence of their life experience.

In general, teacher educators whose work supports the conception of "pre-service teachers as learners with resources" usually highlight the importance of teacher educators' reflection of their own preconceptions about their students (Allen and Labbo; 2001; Allen and Herman-Wilmarth, 2004; Lazar, 2004). When pre-service teachers' responses to the multicultural curriculum contradict the outcomes that the programs intend to achieve they ask, "what [goes] wrong in [our] teaching?" (Lesko and Bloom, 1998, p. 388) before placing the blame on their students (Lesko and Bloom, 1998; Conklin, 2008; Obidah, 2000). For these teacher educators, as much as they expect pre-service teachers to develop an activist mindset and carry it into their future practices in K-12 classrooms, they are cautious of not letting their moral commitment become an ideological imposition that causes " [pre-service teachers] to 'go underground' with the beliefs and commitments they actually hold" (Rosaen, 2003, p.1471). As Allen and Herman-Wilmarth (2004) conclude in their article "it is inadequate, ineffective, presumptuous, and unethical to enter [pre-service teachers' cultural constructions of themselves and those of others] wearing ideological hardhats, multicultural blueprints in hand" because "[teacher educators] too are under construction" (p.225).

Recognizing the need and experience of minority pre-service teachers

The demographic imperative provides a compelling rationale for teacher educators to help white pre-service teachers develop skills, knowledge and capacities needed to work with students from diverse cultural backgrounds. It also suggests the need for diversifying the current teaching force by recruiting more students of color into the profession (Case et al.,1988; Dandy, 1998; Haberman, 1989; Kirby et.. al., 1999; Quiocho and Rios, 2000). Although teachers of color are often regarded as more likely to

employ teaching practices compatible with minority students' cultural knowledge than are their white counterparts and more likely to commit themselves to teaching in communities with a high poverty rate than white teachers after adequate preparation (Haberman and Post, 1998; Hollins and Guzman, 2005), the task of preparing white pre-service teachers for diverse learners, to some extent, is different from the task of preparing pre-service teachers of color (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Rios and Montecinos, 1999).

Current multicultural teacher education paradigms are largely built upon research documenting challenges of preparing white pre-service teachers for diverse learners. We know much about what has been done by teacher educators to equip white pre-service teachers with skills, knowledge and capacities to work with a diverse student population, yet little is known about how to prepare pre-service teachers of color to work in culturally diverse schools and how they respond to issues of diversity. After reviewing 80 studies of various strategies of teacher preparation for multicultural schools, Sleeter (2001b) urges teacher educators to think about and look at issues facing students of color in predominantly white teacher education classrooms. As she points out: "the great bulk of the research has examined how to help young White pre-service students (mainly women) develop the awareness, insights, and skills for effective teaching in multicultural contexts. [....] For pre-service students of color in dominantly White programs, the overwhelming presence of Whiteness can be silencing" (p.101). The scant attention given to pre-service teachers of color in the research literature, according to Montecinos (2004), mirrors the limited attention they receive in their teacher preparation programs. Montecinos argues, "by excluding, silencing and ignoring the presence of pre-service

teachers of color, multicultural teacher education is, paradoxically, securing the norm of Whiteness in teacher preparation and undermining the principles of multicultural education" (p.168).

What does the literature tell us about what pre-service teachers of color experience multicultural teacher education courses? What do they think about issues of diversity? What do they need to learn about teaching students from diverse cultural backgrounds? The following provides an overview of the literature on pre-service teacher of color.

A common finding across studies of pre-service teachers of color documents the experience these students have of being tokenized by the dominant group as representative of their communities. Pre-service teachers of color enrolled in predominately white teacher education classes often felt the need to consciously manage their conduct in class because of this tokenization (Frank, 2003, DePalma, 2008). Some studies find that minority pre-service teachers experience feelings of alienation stemming from the lack of understanding of and appreciation for their perspectives among their white peers and sometimes from white instructors (Burant, 1999; Frank, 2003; Pailliotet, 1997). It is also not uncommon for minority pre-service teachers to feel compelled and responsible for educating the dominant group about their communities (DePalma, 2008; Kauchak and Burbank, 2003; Ztlow and DeCoker, 1994). Importantly, these feelings were, at times, intertwined with feeling of frustrations as well as responsibility (DePalma, 2008; Ztlow and DeCoker, 1994).

Although research studies suggest that pre-service teachers of color generally display a much stronger structural understanding of social inequality (Goodwin, 1994, 1997; Kauchak and Burbank, 2003) and are more activist-oriented in their thinking about

educational practices for low-income minority students than white pre-service teachers (Boyle-Baise and Sleeter, 2000; Kauchak and Burbank, 2003), some researchers caution that minority educators might internalize negative views on low income racial minority students and encounter difficulties working with these students by virtue of their own socio-economic status and schooling experience or their strong adherence to an achievement ideology due to their personal upward mobility (Boyle-Baise and Lanford, 2004). For example, Boyle-Baise and Lanford found that African-American pre-service teachers in their study held a firm belief in individual efforts and attributed poverty to individual flaws. For these African-American pre-service teachers, their personal experience of living through poverty and their eventual success in leaving the city housing project evidenced the pay-off of their hard work. While they were critical about educational challenges in relation to the racial discrimination facing African-American youth at school, they also held parents accountable for the children's education because "you can't blame society for bad parents" (Tanya, interview excerpt, as cited in Boyle-Baise and Landford, 2004, p. 62).

In another study focused on a cohort of minority pre-service teachers in a scholarship program aimed at increasing minority teacher recruitment, Boyle-Baise (2005) found that despite their interest in and aspiration for culturally responsive teaching, these pre-service teachers of color, like many of their white peers, also displayed a lack of confidence in their abilities to work in low-income minority communities. Like their white peers, they did not have a concrete idea about what "culturally responsive teaching" meant at a practical level. After an intensive engagement in community projects through service-learning, some of the pre-service teachers of color

expressed a sense of efficacy as they were able to connect what they learned in the university seminar to their work with K-12 students at the community center. This suggests that pre-service teachers' cultural knowledge and personal experience as members of racial minority groups do not automatically translate into pedagogical skills and knowledge without appropriate learning opportunities.

Drawing on Grant and Sleeter's (1993) model of five approaches for multicultural teaching, Rios and Montecinos (1999) examined a mixed group of 28 racial minority pre-service teachers about how they understood the purposes and goals of multicultural education and why they endorsed or rejected scenarios of corresponding educational practices that each approach entails. Rios and Montecinos' research findings suggest that Grant and Sleeter's conception of "multicultural education approach" received the most endorsement from these pre-service teachers. While a high number of pre-service teachers (20 out of 28) endorsed the idea of teaching about social justice in K-12 classrooms, only a few (4 out of 28) gave their endorsement to the "multicultural and social reconstructionists" approach. After a close look at participants' concerns with respect to the reconstructionist approach, Rios and Montecinos found that these racial minority pre-service teachers expressed their dislike for the focus on White privilege. They noted that everyone knows that Whites are privileged, to focus on the fact would neither make a difference nor would it allow for creating alliances with Whites or help empower the oppressed groups.

Similarly, Cozart (2009) was troubled by her African-American students' silence on issues of race in her Social Foundations of Education course. As one of the few African-American professors who taught in a predominantly white teacher education

program, Cozart initially expected her African-American students would feel empowered by her and voice their opinions in the discussion of race. Nevertheless, she was perplexed and frustrated by the silence of African-American students in her class. After recalling her own experience studying in a predominantly white teacher education program in the 1990s and her silence as a young African-American female educator at staff meetings when she taught in a predominantly white school, Cozart realized her students, just like her, needed to be taught how to reeducate themselves to eliminate the effect of miseducation that they were exposed to through years of schooling. Their silence was a manifestation of their internalized sense of inferiority, and without direction toward a deep transformation of their self-conception, these African-American young educators would not have the tools to make their understanding about racism into an asset for the reconstruction of schooling.

Taken together, these studies suggest that racial minority pre-service teachers' life experience might give them more insights into systems of power, privilege and oppression on the basis of race. Yet, their racial backgrounds and cultural knowledge do not automatically lead them to becoming agents of change with a reform mindset. Moreover, pre-service teachers of color, like their white counterparts, are possessors of multiple social identities. Their gender, social class and other aspects of social positioning in the society could further complicate their perspective on issues of diversity. Therefore, it is also important for teacher educators to not overlook the heterogeneity within pre-service teachers of color, and identify their potentials and needs with careful consideration of the resources and baggage that racial minority pre-service teachers bring in to a teacher education classroom.

My research builds on the research reviewed above. Like this literature, I conceptualize pre-service teachers as active learners. Similarly, the study purposefully includes pre-service teachers of color. Further, I pay close attention to the ways in which pre-service teachers hold multiple social positions, those that are marginalized positions as well as privileged. The research further extends the extant research by highlighting ways in which pre-service teachers make sense and interpret the meanings of their leaning about diversity. Much of the research in multicultural teacher education has been teacher educators' self-studies. Pre-service teachers' learning experiences, hence, are mostly investigated to examine course effectiveness in relation to the intended goals (Hollins and Guzman, 2005). There is still a need for more research on how pre-service teachers interpret and give meaning to their learning experiences to further our understanding about how pre-service teachers respond to efforts that attempt to influence their thoughts and actions in particular ways (Lowenstein, 2009; Melnick and Zeichner, 1994). As such, the present study seeks to fill in this gap by positioning pre-service teachers' perspectives at the center of inquiry. It looks for insights into pre-service teachers' multicultural learning by "authorizing students' perspectives" (Cook-Sather, 2002) in the interpretations of their experiences. In doing so, the study employs a cultural toolkit perspective as the analytical approach to the investigation of pre-service teachers' meaning-making process. In what follows, I will delineate the major arguments of cultural toolkit theory and how I use the theory to structure the present study.

Theoretical Framework

My dissertation study draws on Swidler's notion of "culture as toolkit" as a theoretical framework to examine how pre-service teachers make sense of social

privilege and marginalization through constructing meanings to their privileged and marginalized social identities, how they talk about low-income racial minority students who they work with at schools and community centers, and what they learn about themselves as a person and a future educator from their engagement in cross-cultural field experience through a service-learning project. In the following, I will first present an overview of Swidler's cultural toolkit theory. I will then explain how such a theoretical lens help illuminate the phenomena that I intend to explore through the present research.

Culture as toolkit

According to Swidler (1986, 2003), to think of culture as a toolkit is to think of the effect of culture on human beings' experiences as a set of capacities that people can draw on to make sense of their feelings, thoughts, behaviors, and actions within a given context. People deploy available cultural resources, including socially sanctioned values, ritual practices, conventions and ceremonies as well as habits, skills, and idiosyncrasies, to carry out certain kinds of actions in order to achieve intended goals and to justify their behaviors and social relations with others. Swilder argues the connections between cultural influence and social actions should be understood in a relational sense. On the one hand, individuals act as instrumental consumers who consciously make use of cultural resources to organize their ideas and behaviors for their wants and needs. On the other hand, however, individuals' ideas and behaviors are also shaped by the often taken-for-granted worldviews and normative assumptions embedded in the shared meaning systems without their awareness. As Swidler notes, "after all; people are often "used by" their culture as much as they use it" (Swidler, 2003, p.24).

In Swidler's toolkit model, individuals are understood as bearers of cultured capacities who constantly make active use of the available cultural resources to construct strategies of action and meaningful understandings of their experiences within the given contexts. However, the construction of strategies of action is not purely motivated and determined by one's preferences or wants. It is mediated through one's evaluation of institutional and structural constraints on his/her desirable outcomes, whether such an evaluation is carried out in the form of conscious decision or subtle common-sense. Moreover, individuals usually keep multiple competing, often times contradictory, frames of references on hold, which gives them the tools to shift justifications for their actions among the available approaches to the situations. For this reason, it is also very common that people carry out certain kinds of actions or express certain kinds of opinions not because they truly value or believe in what they do or claim, but because they act on what they think other people's interpretations of their action will be. Their assessment of the social meanings associated with their action in this sense, reflects the degree of conformity they grant to the perceived social expectations. That is why we find people usually present themselves in contradictory manners or profess socially worthy ideals that they don't actually enact or hold deeply.

Swidler identifies four prominent ways in which culture *imparts* capacities to social actors. First, cultured capacities[2] enable individuals to construct, maintain, and refashion certain kinds of self-image that people want to be recognized by themselves as well as by others. Second, cultured capacities help people to internalize skills, styles, and

[2] Cultured capacities refer to a variety of knowledge, information and worldviews that individuals acquire through participating in and acting on their social roles in various social institutions. The forms of cultural capacities and their effects on social actions usually manifest as and through the continuum of cultural meaning systems ranging from ideology to tradition to common sense (Swidler, 2003).

habits that enable them to perform appropriately in the social world. Third, culture marks group memberships, therefore, people often use cultured capacities to draw group boundaries, to relate to other group members, to differentiate themselves from others, and to establish alliances. Finally, culture offers ideas and images about what the world is like. People make use of culture to organize their lives around the beliefs they hold about how society works.

Swidler further explains the ways that people enact their cultured capacities and utilize cultural resources to organize their experience are very different in two types of situations, which she refers to as settled and unsettled times. During the course of unsettled times, individuals rethink and rework their existing assumptions and worldviews as they seek to manage unfamiliar social circumstances and role transformations. They still rely on old frames of reference to navigate new situations, yet their use of cultured capacities is no longer a taken-for-granted action, but rather a deliberate effort for the sake of better adjustment to new challenges. Under such circumstances people consciously examine their social position, their sense of self and their conduct in relation to their relationships with others, hence making the connections between cultural influence and social actions more obvious and concrete to examine.

Culture-as-toolkit and multicultural teacher education

There are several reasons that Swidler's conception of culture-as-toolkit provides a powerful analytical tool for my research purposes. First, despite the criticisms with regard to the conceptualization of "culture" in multicultural discourses (Hoffman, 1996), the concept of culture obviously lies at the heart of multicultural education. Much of the work in multicultural teacher education highlights the need of undoing white middle-

class pre-service teachers' bias against students from historically marginalized social groups. In this body of literature, pre-service teachers' bias is usually portrayed as manifesting the frames of reference and worldviews that they are socialized into within their white middle-class communities. With such an understanding, pre-service teachers' *culture* is perceived as having a negative influence on their work with students from different social groups because their actions and attitudes toward out-group members reflect the effects of their ethnocentric cultural traits. The problem of this formulation is the presumable deficit of the "*white middle-class culture*" that pre-service teachers bring to multicultural teacher education courses. It also ostensibly presents "culture as recipe for social behavior" (Hoffman, 1996, p.550) that determines how group members think, act, and feel. However, as Swidler contends, the effects of culture on social actions is accomplished in a relational process. That is, culture influences how people think, act and feel as much as how people use culture to organize their thoughts and actions. Pre-service teachers' perspective on issues of diversity, hence, should not be understood solely as an end product of certain cultural traits predetermined by their race or social class, but rather as an ongoing meaning-making process through which pre-service teachers form their various opinions by strategically drawing on the multiple interpretations they keep on hold.

Second, multicultural teacher education also highlights the need of cultivating pre-service teachers' cultural awareness by engaging them in the practice of critical self-reflection. The practice of reflection is widely used in teacher education. Despite its arguable educational value and undesirable ethical consequences (Fendler, 2003), it is commonly believed that the development of culturally responsive teaching is contingent

on pre-service teachers' ability to analyze how demographic categories such as race, gender, social class, sexual orientation and language etc. become a basis of inequality that largely determines the quality of education a student can obtain (Howard, 2003). The practice of self-reflection usually requires pre-service teachers to examine how their unearned advantage as members of dominant groups contributes to their personal accomplishment in contrast to their marginalized counterparts. Through writing journals and personal autobiographies, pre-service teachers are engaged in examining how their perceptions are shaped by their social positions as certain group members. As such, much of pre-service teachers' reflection involves their identity work in which they manage, construct and present certain kinds of self-image through the process of self-disclosure. In light of Swidler's toolkit theory, the work on the self involves individuals' enactment of both the moral worldviews they live by and their understanding of other people's moral judgment of their actions and thoughts. Therefore, the construction of one's self-image is indeed an ongoing negotiation with one's desires of wanting to be authentic in their conduct and wanting to attain social acceptance. If teacher educators believe that pre-service teachers' deep reflection on their social privilege is crucial to the enhancement of their sense of moral imperative for the educational of the marginalized groups, then we need to first ask what moral meanings pre-service teachers construct to make sense or justify their social positions. Rather than simply looking at how pre-service teachers talk about their privilege, we need to keep our ears open to the stories of pre-service teachers' marginalized experiences.

Finally, toolkit theory does not presume cultural coherence in human experience. Instead, it highlights the situational functions of social actors' self-contradictory,

disjointed and fragmentary accounts of their participations in the social world. For this reason, toolkit theory is a powerful tool for me to analyze pre-service teachers' multicultural experiences in a way that illuminates the multiple ways in which they grapple with and make sense of these experiences rather than moving to position the pre-service teachers along a developmental continuum that simplifies their experiences and tends to obscure their complexities and the learning that can indeed occur, though in quite unexpected and contradictory ways.

As previously noted, some scholars have noticed the limitations and problems stemming from the monolithic conceptualization of white pre-service teachers as deficit learners in the multicultural teacher education literature and sought alternative framing paradigms that would allow them to identify and build upon their students' potentials for multicultural learning. This present study echoes with the calling for a new conceptualization of pre-service teachers as learners with resources in the research of multicultural teacher education. It seeks to explore the complexities of pre-service teachers' reasoning behind social stratification, and differences by conceptualizing pre-service teachers as bearers of cultured capacities who simultaneously appropriate multiple competing frames of reference in their interpretations of social phenomena. Their interpretations might take place as conscious deliberations or expressions of common sense depending on their sense of settleness within the given circumstance. Moreover, in response to the calling for attention to minority pre-service teachers' experience, I include minority participants in the present study using the same conceptualization as delineated above. That is, I do not presume the ethnic background of

students of color will exempt them from the challenges that are involved in the task of learning to teach culturally diverse students.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

My dissertation project involves both quantitative and qualitative data. I employed what Creswell (2009) termed a "concurrent embedded strategy" of mixed methods for data collection and analysis. That is, I collected both quantitative and qualitative data roughly at the same time, but used qualitative data as the primary database to investigate my research questions while incorporating quantitative data as the secondary database to inform, enrich and support my qualitative work.

This mixed methods approach differs significantly from much current research both on multicultural teacher education and on attitudes towards diversity among the general US population. Current research on preparing teachers for diverse student populations is dominated by small-scale, mostly qualitative action research in the form of self-study located in one or two class sections (Hollins and Guzman, 2005; Sleeter, 2001a). In their review of multicultural teacher education research, Hollins and Guzman (2005) credit teacher educators for their efforts to improve their own practices through self-study research, yet they also point out that "many small studies carried out in the courses and seminars of individual instructors do not lead to a strong empirical research base that can be generalized across programs and institutions" (p. 510). Moreover, Feldman (2003) argues that although validity issues in qualitative research has been a debatable and difficult question to address, it is particularly challenging for self-studies to convince others the trustworthiness of their research findings because "when we engage in reflective processes that focus on ourselves (as in the construction of autobiographical narratives), we cannot be sure of accuracy of what we see" (p. 27).

Some studies use survey instruments to measure pre-service teachers' attitudes towards and beliefs about diversity. However, Pohan and Aguilar (2001) found that researchers often do not provide sufficient information to address validity issues of the survey instruments that they use to measure pre-service teachers' attitudes and beliefs. Also, while most instruments claim to measure pre-service teachers ideas about "cultural diversity", the notion of "cultural diversity" is primarily conceptualized in terms of race and ethnicity in the survey questions (Pohan and Aguilr, 2001). This leaves marginalization and inequality associated with other social differences such as social class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and language unexamined

Traditionally, survey questionnaires are the most popular instrument for attitude research (e.g. studies on prejudice, discrimination, stereotype, inter-group relation, political and religious ideology etc.) in other social science disciplines. Nevertheless, some cross-regional large-scale research on contemporary Americans' attitudes and understandings of race, religion, social class and other issues of diversity using mixed-methods techniques (Bonilla-Silva and Forman, 2000; Wolfe, 1998; Bell and Hartmann, 2007) indicates that the depth and breadth of analysis that a mixed-methods approach could offer would not be achieved by simply using quantitative or qualitative data alone. Although my dissertation project, by its nature, is a single case study (Ragin and Becker, 1992; Ragin, 1994) that focuses on one target subject (pre-service teachers enrolled in the same course) in one institution (Midwest University), by surveying the whole population of my target subject and conducting observations on and in-depth interviews with focal participants from multiple course sections, the strength of a mixed-methods study

allowed me to explore convergences in findings yielded from both datasets that could not be fully attained by a single methods investigation.

In this chapter, I will first explain the selections of research sites and participants. I will then describe the type of quantitative and qualitative data collected in this study. After that, I will delineate the procedures of data analysis. Finally, the chapter will end with a self-reflection on ways in which my own social identities shape my research conduct and relationships with the participants.

Research Sites

There were eighteen TE200 sections offered by the teacher preparation program at Midwest University in the spring semester of 2008. Among them, I identified four focal sections for my project from which I recruited a subgroup of 21 pre-service teachers to participate in on-site debriefing sessions and in-depth interviews. My selection of the four focal sections was guided by the following principles. First, I sought for a combination of sections taught by a diverse body of instructors in terms of their gender, race, class origin and teaching experience in TE200. The characteristics of instructors in terms of their cultural backgrounds and teaching experience were considered because instructors, in cultural sociologists' terms, are bearers of cultured capacities whose conduct and perspective presented in a classroom setting were inevitably shaped by their memberships in culturally defined groups. The general dynamics of a class, hence, were more or less affected by the characteristics of the instructor. My documentation and observation of four focal course sections suggested that each instructor did display their personal interest in different types of social discrimination as reflecting in their actual teaching. Their personal interest, to some extent, was in conjunction with their own life

history. For example, as a black-white bi-racial heterosexual male, Instructor Robert displayed a very strong sense of affiliation with the black community. He identified himself as a 'black man' and considered racism as the most severe discrimination in the American society. Robert positioned himself as an anti-racist activist and foregrounded issues of racism in his teaching. Renee's husband joined the country as a new immigrant with limited English proficiency in 2003. Witnessing linguistic discrimination and anti-immigrant sentiment that her husband went through gave Renee more insights into issues of linguisticism. As a result, her teaching focused more on language diversity and immigrant education. Temeka's teaching emphasized the educational need of students with disability. Growing up with a brother who was diagnosed with special education needs, Temeka displayed a strong interest, both personally and professionally, in the well-being of children with special needs.

Second, considering pre-service teachers' service-learning experiences varied according to the institutional contexts and the nature of service-learning assignments, I also sought for a mixed group of TE200 classes that carried out different types of service-learning project in both school-based and community-based sites. Finally, I considered both TE200 students' and instructors' willingness to allow me to document class sessions as a criterion for selecting the focal sections.

With these selection criteria in mind, I made initial contact with seven TE200 colleagues between late December, 2007 and early January, 2008 to communicate my ideas about classroom documentation with them and also to receive suggestions and feedback from them. I regarded such communication important to my research design as it was part of the process of "negotiating research relationships" (Maxwell, 2005), based

on which the quality of qualitative data of my study was determined. Although the course instructors were not directly involved in my study as research subjects, they functioned as "gatekeepers" whose attitudes toward the study played a role in my relationships with the research sites and their students. Furthermore, as a graduate teaching assistant on the TE200 instructor team, I did have more advantage to "gain access" (Maxwell, 2005) to my research population by virtue of the relationships I had with my colleagues. Yet such relationships did not automatically translate into open entries unless mutual communication and reciprocal relationships were made.

While all seven TE200 instructors agreed to be part of my project, two of them suggested I limit my visits and documentation to four specific class sessions due to the concerns of the potential disturbance that an outsider might cause to the class. In addition, one of the seven instructors was carrying out an experimental service-learning model that required students to do on-site service-learning only for the first four weeks of the semester and devoted the rest of their hours to designing ESL curriculum for the community organization. I ended up not including these three sections under the consideration of maintaining the consistency of my research conduct across all participating classes. As a result, I selected the rest of the four sections taught by colleagues who agreed to let me document their classes on a regular basis throughout the semester and who felt most comfortable with my presence in their classrooms. The first group of my participating instructors consisted of one white female, one white male, one Asian female and one multiracial male whose teaching experiences in TE200 range from one to six semesters. After the administration of the pre-test attitude survey on January 14th and 15th, student consent rate was considered in my final selection of participating

sections. Due to the low consent rate received from the Asian female colleague's section, I was advised by my dissertation director Dr. Anagnostopoulos to replace that section with the one taught by an African-American female colleague from which 70% student consent rate was received. Here I took the most rigorous definition to determine student consent rate. That is, the percentage of students who consented to participating in all parts of the research project which include: 1) filling out three surveys; 2) agreeing to be videotaped during class sessions; and 3) agreeing course papers to be used by the researchers. Students who gave partial consent to the project were not included in the calculation of consent rate. Table 3-1 details the characteristics of the participating instructors in my study and the enrollment and student consent rate received from their class.

Table 3-1: Instructor and student demographics of participating TE200 sections

	Robert	Tameka	Renee	Fred
Sex	Male	Female	Female	Male
Race	Multiracial	black	White	White
Class origin	Working class	Middle-class	Middle-class	Working-class
Teaching experience	1 semester	4 semesters	4 semesters	6 semesters
Class enrollment	20	17	18	23
Student consent rate	74%	70%	67%	68%
Student characteristics	1 black female; 6 white males; 13 white females	1 biracial female; 4 white males; 13 white females	7 white males; 11 white females	1 black female; 1 Asian-American female; 1 Asian-American male; 9 white males; 11 white females

Table 3-1 (cont'd)				
Number of class sessions observed	13	9	17	13
Personal focus	Race	Special education	Language	Gender

It needs to be noted that although I factored the characteristics of course instructors and service-learning placements in my selection of participating sections, my study does not look at how these characteristics function as context factors that shape pre-service teachers' perceptions of their multicultural learning experiences. That is, the dynamics of individual course section in relation to the demographic characteristics of student enrollment, course curriculum, instructor's pedagogical approaches, personal interest and areas of expertise were not examined in my analysis of pre-service teachers' accounts. By the same token, I did not investigate in detail the role of institutional organization of the service-learning sites in pre-service teachers' interpretations of their experience either. I positioned the course and service-learning placements mainly as research sites from which I recruited focal participants for the present study.

This is not to say, however, that TE200 and the service-learning project played no role in the ways pre-service teachers make sense of their experience. On the contrary, the course content along with the required field component provides important conceptual and experiential resources that pre-service teachers could draw upon to talk about their experience. In other words, my analysis of pre-service teachers' accounts highlights how pre-service teachers use the conceptual and experiential resources offered by the contexts to construct their reasoning rather than how specific contextual factors shape what pre-service teachers think. Although these two lines of inquiry share a common interest in

terms of exploring the interaction between social contexts and human experience, they are distinct from each other because of their underlying presumption about human agency in the research inquiry. Whereas questions concerning how contextual factors shape individuals' actions and thoughts emphasize the influence of environmental forces on social actors and hence, tend to downplay the role of individual autonomy in the construction of human experience, inquiry guided by questions that look at how individuals make use of available resources to organize their thoughts and actions, in contrast, foreground the prominence of individual agency in the analyses.

Research participants

There were 357 students enrolled in TE200 in the spring semester of 2008. Using an anonymous unique identifier approach (Reisbig et al., 2007) for data linkage across the three surveys, a final sample of 252 valid respondents was identified for a 70.6% response rate[1]. According to the surveys, 73% of the pre-service teachers in the sample were females, 27% were males. In terms of racial make-up, 89.7% were White, 1.6% were black, 2.4% were Asian and 6% identified themselves as bi- or multi-racial. In terms of self-identified social class identification, 3.6 % of pre-service teachers said that they were upper class, 43.7% identified themselves as upper-middle class, 40.5% were middle class, 8.7% were lower-middle class and only 3.6% self-identified as working class[2]. In addition to gender, race and class, other demographic data such as sexual

[1] The response rate for the first attitude survey (pre-survey) is 96.07% with 343 valid surveys received. For the service-learning survey, a response rate at 90.76% was received. The number of valid surveys is 324. Lastly, the response rate for the second attitude survey (post-survey) is 87.67% with 313 valid surveys received.

[2] It is worth noting that pre-service teachers' were asked to provide descriptions of their father's and mother's occupations in the pre-attitude survey. Since studies have found that Americans, compared to people in other developed countries, are more likely to classify themselves as "middle class" or to rate their socioeconomic status higher than their actual conditions. To better capture pre-service teachers' actual social class origin, I used Hauser and Warren's (1997) socioeconomic indexes (SEI) for occupations

orientation, religious affiliation, and schooling context were also collected through the surveys. The survey data shows that 91% of pre-service teachers identified themselves as straight, 3.6% self-identified as gay, still 5.6% of pre-service teachers sampled refused to indicate their sexual orientation even though they were fully aware that the survey was anonymous. As for religious affiliation, 45.6% were Christian, 26.3% were Catholic, 5.2% of pre-service teachers checked a religious affiliation other than Christian and Catholic, and 13% said that they did not affiliate with any religion (including those who self-identified as atheist or agnostic). In terms of schooling context, approximately 92% of pre-service teachers graduated from public high schools, 5.6% graduated from Christian/Catholic high schools, and the remaining 2.4% checked "others". Finally, in terms of the community context in which pre-service teachers' graduating high school located, 5.6% of pre-service teachers went to high school in urban areas, 64.7% in suburban areas, 23.3% in small towns and the rest,6.4%, attended school in rural areas. Most of the above demographic data was collected through the pre-attitude survey, which provided an overall portrait of the population from which my focal participants were purposefully sampled.

I recruited a group of 21 pre-service teachers from four selected sections for site observations and in-depth interviews. To obtain diversity in terms of participants' race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, schooling experience and service-learning site in the representation of the focal group, I used "purposeful sampling" (Maxwell, 2005, p.88) to select 21 focal participants. This strategy was used to deliberately select particular participants "in order to provide information that can't be gotten as well from other

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to score pre-service teachers' family SES (socio-economic status). Accordingly, 16.3% of pre-service teachers were classified as "lower-middle class" and 7.3% as "working class".

choices" (p.88). The methodological strength of purposeful sampling allowed me to capture heterogeneity that covered a range of variation in the population and examining cases that were critical to inform my theoretical lenses (Maxwell, 2005). The following explains more details about how I purposefully selected my focal participants.

Race was the first criteria that I used to recruit focal participants since issues of race remained the most dominant interest in the field of multicultural teacher education. There are approximately 80 students in total enrolled in the four participating TE200 sections. However, the demographics of student characteristics (see Table 3-1) indicate that among them only 5 students (6%) identify themselves as racial minority. In order to recruit a sufficient number of racial minority pre-service teachers in my sample so as to better compare and contrast their experiences with white pre-service teachers, I invited four of the five minority students who gave full consent to the project to partake in the qualitative part of the study, which made one-fifth (N=4) of the sample group was represented by minority pre-service teachers. It has to be noted that, I did not recruit the only Asian-American male student to be part of my study because of the level of disengagement he displayed in the class. During the first two weeks of my observation in Instructor Fred's class, I noticed that this particular Asian-American student always sat in the corner of the classroom and most of the time he surfed on the internet while the class was in session. He almost never participated in the class discussions unless he was called on by the instructor. Observing his disengagement led me to the second criterion for the participant selection, which was 'active engagement in the class discussions'. I applied this criterion mainly to my recruitment of white pre-service teachers who constituted more than 90% of the total enrollment. By 'active engagement' I mean pre-service

teachers had to show their interest in thinking about and delving into concepts pertaining to ways in which structural inequality affect individuals' educational opportunities as presented in the course materials whether they agreed or disagreed with the arguments. In other words, if a student presented a counter-argument that was grounded in his/her understanding of the course materials, I considered his/her thought sharing an active engagement in the class.

I assessed pre-service teachers' level of engagement based on my observations of their participation in both whole-class and small group discussions during my first two weeks of classroom visits. I eliminated those who rarely verbalized their opinions in both types of classroom discussion. This is not to say that I intended to classify pre-service teachers' "quietness" as a display of "disengagement", nor did I intend to equate "disengagement" to the act of "resistance" to the course content. There are various external factors that could cause a student's disengagement in class that are beyond a teacher's control. A college student might display his/her disengagement in one particular class because of his/her lack of balance in managing all the coursework with an equal attention. For this reason, I was cautious of not attributing students' disengagement in TE200 simply to their dislike of course themes. Moreover, I understand that a quiet student could be a thoughtful thinker whose opinion might not be heard in the context of public discussion. For example, these quiet students might provide a unique perspective not voiced by more active students who tend to feel more comfortable expressing their opinions and perspectives. However, one of the purposes of collecting various qualitative data is to implement data triangulation for better validity of the findings (Maxwell, 2005), such a goal would not be satisfactorily achieved if recruiting students whose opinions

were absent from the classroom discussions. That is, I recognized the limitation of such a recruitment criterion might engender and its potential impact on my research findings.

The third criterion that I used for purposeful sampling is to consider other dimensions of social identities in my recruitment of white participants. Although "white middle-class female pre-service teachers" remain the target group in the research of multicultural teacher education, we know very little about how gender and social class play a role in pre-service teachers' learning experience in such courses. It is often the case that the gender and social class make-up of the teaching force are stated along with race in the preamble of the research reports as a rationale for the implementation of multicultural teacher education, but then are overlooked almost altogether from the main body of analysis as a result of the primary attention given to race. While I do not deny the prominence of racial identity in the formation of one's worldview, I also believe that race alone should not be used as the singular factor in the examination of pre-service teachers' experience. For this reason, I recruited an approximately equal number of female (N=9) and male (N=8) white pre-service teachers with mixed consideration of their family's socioeconomic condition, schooling experience and sexual orientation. Since these characteristics could not be identified simply from one's outward appearance[3], I paid particular attention to the personal information that pre-service teachers brought up in class during the first two weeks of my classroom observation. Table 3-2 below outlines

[3] Although all the gay-identified pre-service teachers in my study never revealed their homosexuality in class, Marvin and Steven appeared to me as "stereotypical" gay men. Their understanding of heterosexism was concrete and insightful, which suggested the likelihood of them being gay themselves or being close to someone who was gay. Leo, on the contrary, appeared to me as a stereotypically masculine straight man. The disclosure of his homosexuality in the final interview was a big surprise to me, which had a significant impact on how I looked at pre-service teachers' personal narratives in relation to their social identities in my data analysis.

the major demographic characteristics of each focal pre-service teacher in the present study.

Table 3-2: Major Demographic Characteristics of Pre-service Teachers

	Social Class	Race	Gender	Religion	Sexual Orientation	Schooling Experience
Ashley	Middle	White	Female	Catholic	Straight	Private small town
Brian	Lower-middle	White	Male	Catholic	Straight	Public small town
Kyle	Working	White	Male	Buddhist	Straight	Both urban
Cathleen	Upper-middle	White	Female	Christian	Straight	Private suburban
Carl	Middle	White	Male	Christian	Straight	Public suburban
Danielle	Middle	Black	Female	Christian	Straight	Public urban
Julie	Middle	Asian	Female	Atheist	Straight	Public suburban
Jamila	Middle	Black	Female	Christian	Straight	Private urban
Kali	Middle	White	Female	Christian	Straight	Public small town
Jamie	Middle	White	Female	Christian	Straight	Public urban
Lacy	Upper-middle	White	Female	Non-religious	Straight	Public suburban
Grace	Upper-middle	White	Female	Christian	Straight	Public suburban
Stacy	Upper-middle	White	Female	Agnostic	Straight	Private suburban
Leo	Working	White	Male	Non-religious	Gay	Public suburban
Marvin	Middle	White	Male	Christian	Gay	Public suburban
Robin	Lower-middle	White	Female	Atheist	Straight	Both both
Steven	Upper-middle	White	Male	Christian	Gay	Public suburban
Sonya	Upper-middle	Biracial	Female	Christian	Straight	Public suburban

Table 3-2 (cont'd)						
Sharon	Middle	White	Female	Christian	Straight	Both urban
Tim	Middle	White	Male	Catholic	Straight	Public urban
Tucker	Lower-middle	White	Male	Agnostic	Straight	Public suburban

Data collection

Quantitative Data

For quantitative data collection, a pre- and post-attitude survey, and a service-learning survey were administered to pre-service teachers enrolled in TE200 during the spring semester of 2008. The surveys were administered in all sections of the course taught in that semester. This was 18 sections. The pre-survey was administered during the first week of the semester to capture pre-service teachers' entry attitudes toward issues of social stratification, cultural differences, discrimination and prejudice on the basis of race, gender, social class, sexual orientation and language. The same survey questionnaire was administered again during the last week of the semester to record pre-service teachers' exit attitudes after the completion of TE200. Survey items in the attitude survey were mostly drawn from the General Social Survey (GSS) Cumulative Datafile and were selected and organized by four major themes, i.e. issues concerning race relations, gender inequity, poverty, and language diversity.

The service-learning survey was also administered to pre-service teachers at the end of the semester to record their service-learning experience. Areas of interest that were covered in this survey included pre-service teachers' opinions about and perceptions of: 1) the effects of service-learning on their learning about diversity issues and course

concepts; 2) curriculum integration of service-learning and course materials in classroom sessions, and 3) factors that contributed to the challenges and accomplishments they experienced at the service-learning sites.

Qualitative Data

In addition to survey data, I also collected the following qualitative data for my study. Most of the findings that I will present in Chapter 4 to 6 were built upon my analysis of qualitative data collected from various sources including classroom discussions and interview transcripts, student papers, and my field notes.

1. Classroom observation:

I visited and documented (audiotaping and/or videotaping) each focal TE200 class once a week from January 28th to April 21, 2008. All together, I observed 52 class sessions of 80 minutes each in four sections. My regular visits and documentation allowed me to obtain a broader understanding of how pre-service teachers interpreted course concepts and what explanatory frames they used to reason the causes of educational inequity. Moreover, the impact of my presence, as a researcher, on the dynamics of the classes was lessened over time as students got use to my presence, and thus became less sensitive to the conduct of research in the classroom[4]. Finally, my regular and continuing presence in the classrooms helped me develop relationships with the 21 focal participants for on-site debriefing sessions and in-depth interviews. Maxwell (2005) contends, in qualitative studies, "the researcher is the instrument of the research, and the research relationships are the means by which the research gets done" (p.83). As I will present in the findings chapters, my relationships with the focal pre-service teachers

[4] There were a couple of occasions where students jested about "Shih-pei is taping this" when they used cuss words in their talk.

significantly contributed to the depth of information that my participants were willing to share with me.

2. On-site debriefing sessions and one-on-one interviews:

I visited each of the 21 participants 2-3 times at their service-learning site during the semester to observe their interactions with the students. Conducting site observations also allowed me to better grasp the context of learning environment and its institutional atmosphere in which pre-service teachers formed their opinions about learning to teach culturally diverse students. I conducted a 20-30 minutes debriefing interview with the participants after my observation during their service-learning sessions. My site observations were taken place under the permission of classroom teachers or program coordinators who served as my participants' service-learning supervisors. In addition to the on-site debriefing interviews, I conducted a 1.5 to 3 hours end-of-semester final interview with each participant during the last two weeks of April. My general questions for the pre-service teachers in the debriefing sessions focused on their reflections on incidents that they considered interesting, frustrating, challenging and puzzling during their service-learning sessions on the days I visited. Along similar lines, in the end-of-semester in-depth interviews, I asked participants to describe the major challenges and successes they encountered in their service-learning experiences throughout the semester, provide explanations for what caused or contributed to these challenges and successes, how service-learning related to their learning of course materials and concepts, and what they considered the most meaningful learning experiences from the service learning project. These interviews were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim for analysis. [5]

3. Course papers:

[5] See appendix A for the interview protocol.

In addition, I collected assigned work that pre-service teachers submitted to complete TE200 course requirements, including 4 to 5 service-learning journals, one cultural autobiography paper that asked pre-service teachers to reflect upon how their social identities, i.e., race, class, gender, etc, shaped and were shaped by their schooling experiences, and one service-learning final paper that required students to examine their service learning experiences in light of course concepts.

Among the four focal sections, three of them used thematic journal prompts developed by the course coordinator with minor revisions made by the instructors to meet the needs of the service-learning curricula used in each class. These journal prompts asked the students to think about their service learning experiences in light of the systems of privilege, and operations of schooling as they related to issues of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, language and ability. Analyses of student work allowed me to trace pre-service teachers' understandings of core course concepts, their relationship to the pre-service teachers' service-learning experiences, and patterns of pre-service teachers' reasoning about their experiences.

4. Field notes:

Finally, I compiled field notes while documenting classroom discussions. The purpose of these field notes was to record comments, viewpoints and opinions expressed by the students that could be further probed in my interviews with the focal participants to gain more insight into the rationale behind their perspective.

Data Analysis[6]

[6] I used quantitative research software SPSS 16.0 to assist my data analysis of survey data and qualitative research software NVIVO 7.0 to assist my work on qualitative data.

As previously noted, this project employed a concurrent embedded design. Accordingly, I gave priority to qualitative data in my data analysis and incorporated quantitative data as supplemental evidence to support qualitative findings when relevant. In addition, I also used quantitative data to inform my qualitative work during the course of data collection. In what follows, I will explain how these two parts of research work were connected in my study.

Quantitative data

The pre-attitude survey data was collected during the first week of the semester before I embarked on my work for qualitative data collection, therefore I was able to draw on some preliminary findings with respect to pre-service teachers' entry social attitudes to inform and refine my field observations and my interviews with the focal participants. One of the most salient attitudinal orientations that caught my attention was the ambivalence displayed by a significant proportion of pre-service teachers in their responses to questions concerning structural and personal factors in one's achievement. For example, while nearly 78% of pre-service teachers surveyed agreed with the statement "any person who is willing to work hard has a good chance of succeeding", only less than a quarter (24.4%) agreed with its corresponding reverse statement "differences in social standing between people reflect what people made out of the opportunities they had[7]" that was also designed to measure pre-service teachers' individualistic tendency. Moreover, when responding to the statement that emphasized individuals' responsibility for their personal outcome (i.e. "most people who don't get ahead should not blame the system, they really have only themselves to blame"), only

[7] Approximately 34% of pre-service teachers chose "neither agree nor disagree" in response to this statement, 41.5% said they disagreed.

25.3% of pre-service teachers said they agreed, 37.8% said they disagreed, yet the rest of 37.8% displayed an ambivalent attitude by saying that they "neither agreed nor disagreed". Finally, approximately half (48.4%) of pre-service teachers surveyed endorsed the idea that "America has an open society in which one's achievement in life no longer depends on one's family background, but on the abilities one has and the education one acquires", nevertheless, those who were ambivalent about or disagreed with the idea still constituted the majority (51.6%) of the total population. Among them, 20.2 % said that they "neither agreed nor disagreed with" the idea that family background was no longer important in one's achievement, 31.4% explicitly stated that they disagreed with it. Together, these divergent responses suggested that pre-service teachers simultaneously enacted multidimensional frames in their casual reasoning about social stratification. While the majority of pre-service teachers held an optimistic belief in the payoff of one's hard work, many of them did recognize that social rewards for individuals were significantly conditioned by many structural factors that were beyond a person's control. Although findings from the pre-attitude survey offered an important overview of pre-service teachers' attitudes toward different types of inequality issues, they were insufficient to provide insight into the nuances. Accordingly, I paid attention to pre-service teachers' enactment of multiple reasoning schemas in relation to their opinions about how and why inequality and differences in social standing exit, particularly, their explanations about how structural and individual factors shaped their life experience in contrast to their service-learning students when conducting classroom observation and interviews with the focal participants. This part of my research work yields much of the findings that I will present in Chapter 5.

It should be noted that the purpose of data linkage across all three surveys, as stated in my original research proposal, was to trace and monitor pre-service teachers' attitudinal changes before and after TE200. I was interested in investigating whether there were significant attitudinal changes displayed by pre-service teachers after the completion of a multicultural education course and how the changes correlated with their service-learning outcomes. Unlike previous studies that involved pre- and post-assessments and mainly drew their findings on aggregate data that can only represent the *group* sampled as a whole, the technique of data linkage allowed me to investigate attitudinal changes at the individual level. A data linkage between pre- and post-attitude surveys showed that every question received exactly the same response from a significant proportion of pre-service teachers in their surveys, ranging from 36.5% to 68.1%. The stability of pre-service teachers' opinion was even stronger when the notion of "change" strictly referred to "changes in the nature of one's opinion" (i.e. from "agree" to "disagree" or vice versa) rather than "changes in the degree of one's existing opinion" (e.g. from "agree" to "strongly agree"). When the narrow definition of "change" was used, only 4 out of 81 questions had slightly over half of pre-service teachers displaying an opposite opinion in the post-survey. Three of them were related to gender issues. The average percentage of the narrow definition of "attitudinal change" across all survey questions is 33.6%, which means the majority of pre-service teachers left TE200 with the pre-existing worldview that they came in with.

Pre-service teachers' entrenched worldview, as revealed by the survey data, was informative to my study in two ways. First, it suggested that my original interest with regard to the possible correlation between pre-service teachers' attitudinal change and

their service-learning outcomes might not exist. Second, although most pre-service teachers did not display major changes in their original opinions about social issues, minor attitudinal shifts in the degree of their existing perspective suggested that their perceptions were unsettled and made more complex by the course content and their field experience. For these reasons, rather than pursuing my original interest in exploring how pre-service teachers' "attitudinal changes" were shaped by and contributed to their service-learning experience based on quantitative survey data, I focused my analysis on qualitative data that could better help me understand how pre-service teachers' worldview and their perceptions of themselves and members of out-groups and in-groups were *unsettled* by a multicultural learning experience, which directly contributed to the structure and the substance of Chapter 6.

Qualitative data

To manage, condense and analyze the large amount of qualitative data collected from multiple sources including verbatim transcripts of class discussions, on-site debriefing sessions and in-depth interviews, course papers and field notes, I employed a content-specific coding strategy suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994). Such coding strategy requires researchers to create a list of thematic codes pertaining to the conceptual framework, research questions, hypotheses, and/or key variables that researchers bring to the study (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 58). In other words, my coding schemas were highly guided by the analytical frames that I used to conceptualize pre-service teachers' accounts with regards to their moral notion of the self in relation to their privileged and marginalized identities, their reasoning about students' attitude, behavior and achievement, and their negotiation with the competing ethical considerations of

effectiveness, caring and authenticity in their conduct as they learned to become a teacher. My data coding and analysis involves the work of *retroduction* (Ragin, 1994), which means working back and forth between the analytical frames that I used to explore the phenomena (deduction) and the *images and voice* that emerged from the data (induction). While I examined patterns of supporting evidence for my investigation and interpretation of the data, I also looked at negative cases that disconfirmed and challenged the initial analytical frames to better refine the categories and concepts. In doing so, I used the "constant comparative method" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) to compare similarities and differences between the supporting and negatives cases.
In what follows, I use *Chapter 4: privilege, marginalization and the moral self* as an example to delineate the work of retroduction involved in the process of my data coding and analysis.

My data coding and analysis of pre-service teachers' moral enactment of the self were accomplished through two stages. In the first stage, I made a data matrix that catalogued pre-service teachers' identity narratives into two broader categories "privilege" and "marginalization" by their corresponding social markers. As I looked across all the 21 cases for the initial coding, I noticed that the idea of *inversion* emerged from some pre-service teachers' experience of "privilege" and "marginalization" in which the advantaged and disadvantage attached to their social identities were inversely interpreted. For example, female students cited their gender as an advantage to them in school. This inverts or up-ends the disadvantage that is typically ascribed to being female in our society. The idea of inversion became negative cases that called for my attention. After examining these negative cases and their contexts, I further differentiated

the two-category coding schema of "privilege" and "marginalization" into a four-category schema that include "structural/situational privilege" and "situational/structural marginalization." These two categories took into consideration micro-situational power dynamics between different social groups. A typical example of inversion was when white pre-service teachers attending predominantly racial minority urban schools did not feel that they were privileged by their race. The inversion of their whiteness not as a privilege but as a disadvantage thus rested in the specific interactional context in which they were located. This is why I used the term situational. This also follows Collins' ideas of situational subordination (Collins, 2000).

In the second stage, I inductively identified a spectrum of moral characteristics that pre-service teachers ascribed to define their personhood from their accounts of their social identities. My coding decisions were made both on the basis of looking for key words or phrases used by pre-service teachers, as well as the general orientation of their accounts. For example, when a pre-service teacher uses words that have direct moral meanings such as *feeling grateful* for the unearned advantage he/she received, I give the code "gratitude" in accordance with the key-word principle. Along the line, when an account is given by a pre-service teacher to illustrate how coping with open discrimination or mistreatment against certain aspects of her/his categorical identities in social class, race, gender, sexual orientation etc. makes her/him a stronger person with a positive outlook on herself/himself and the social world, I code this piece of characteristic or personality trait as "resilient" to indicate the general orientation of that person's pride in her/his ability to become strong, happy and successful after overcoming the difficult situation.

The coding process at this stage was mainly inductive, however, I noticed that not all the accounts involved pre-service teachers' moral image of the self, which led me to examine accounts that did not involve clear moral manifestations. These accounts were negative cases for the phenomena I was interested in exploring. What was the implication of these negative cases? How could I use them to refine my analytical frames and conceptual ideas? By closely examining the differences between supporting and negative cases, I found the major difference between the two was "how *personal* the given examples are in pre-service teachers' accounts of their social identities". Accounts that lacked a clear moral manifestation of pre-service teachers' self-image mostly drew on group images available in the broader cultural repertoire without personal involvement. Accordingly, I further refined my conceptual ideas to distinguish these two types of accounts. I categorized accounts that were grounded in personal life experience as "personal testimonies" and those that lacked experiential elements as "formula stories". I built up my analysis of pre-service teachers' moral self with a focus on "personal testimonies" due to their relevance to my research question. The following section will discuss how I address validity issues in the present study.

Validity check

Quantitative data:

According to Fowler (2002), validity threats to survey research can be reduced in several ways. Firstly, for questions that ask respondents for their subjective measures, validity can be improved by avoiding ambiguous wording, ensuring the surveyed issues mean the same things to all respondents, and posing the surveyed issues in different question forms. Secondly, for questions that ask respondents for factual reporting,

researchers can reduce validity threats by making the questions understandable to the respondents and avoiding questions that the respondents lack knowledge to answer. Finally, the effects of social desirability bias should be carefully considered and controlled in survey research. As Fowler (2002) suggested, "it is best to design all phases of a survey instrument with a sensitivity to reducing the effects of social desirability and embarrassment for any answers people may give" (p.100). Several strategies are recommended in this regard including emphasizing the importance of accuracy in the introduction, using self-administrated data collection procedures, and assuring the respondents of the confidentiality and anonymity of their answers.

Although the first set of strategies is applicable to the attitude survey, they are not actually used to improve validity in this study because the surveyed items that I selected from GSS database and other existing research have been tested statistically by other researchers before they were used. To select survey questions that are most relevant to the study, Dr. Anagnostopoulos and I met multiple times to discuss and review each question in detail before the attitude survey was eventually assembled and finalized in late December, 2007.

In the service-learning survey, the majority of questions were designed to ask for factual reporting from pre-service teachers about their experiences at the service-learning sites and in their TE200 class. In order to reduce potential validity threats derived from inadequate content and wording of the survey questions, Dr. Anagnostopoulos and I invited a group of eight TE200 students consisting of three African-American females, two white females, two white males and one African-American male to come to pilot the

draft survey on December 7th, 2007. We then revised the survey questions based on the comments and feedbacks we received from the pilot group.

The last validity concern I would like to address is the effects of social desirability. In the study, I use several approaches to reduce potential validity threats associated with social desirability bias. First, I employed the anonymous identification method suggested by Reisbig and her colleagues (Reisbig et al., 2007) instead of asking for PIDs (student number) to construct participants' self-reported unique study IDs for data linkage across three surveys. Such identification method asks respondents to assemble their own anonymous ID by providing fragmented personal information only known to the person, hence significantly reduces participants' concern about the disclosure of their real identity. Second, when introducing the attitude survey to TE200 students, the survey administers (Adam Greteman and I) made it clear to the prospective participants that there were no "right" or "wrong" answers to the survey questions. Participants' honest opinions are important to and highly valued by the study. In addition, we also emphasized that all these questions do not represent the researchers' view nor do they represent the views of TE200. Finally, in order to monitor the effect of social desirability bias on respondents' answers, a brief version of Crowne-Marlowe social desirability scale (Fischer and Fick, 1993) is included in the surveys to measure the correlation between participants' attitudinal orientation, reporting on service-learning outcomes and the effect of their social desirability tendency.

Qualitative data:

There are several strategies that I used to improve the validity of the qualitative part of my study. First, I employed a participant observation approach that involves

intensive, sustained presence at the research sites during the stage of data collection. According to Maxwell (2005), sustained presence in the research settings could reduce potential threats to the validity of conclusions because it allows researchers to establish adequate trusting relationships with their research participants, hence reduces the effect of intervention on the subjects and the social surroundings from which the data is collected. Second, I sought multiple sources for the collection of *rich data* that allowed me to conduct data triangulation while identifying and examining patterns of phenomena relevant to my research investigation. Data triangulation reduced validity threats to my analysis. It enabled me to confirm interpretations across multiple sources of data and to identify and resolve contradictory findings across these sources (Maxwell, 2005; Yin, 1994). Third, I used a "quasi-statistics" strategy (Becker, 1970) to check the validity of conceptual categories identified from my inductive coding of student papers and interview data. I created data matrixes generated by qualitative research software Nvivo 7.0 to map out the frequency distribution of each initial code, merging the codes with broader theoretical schemas in accordance with definitions suggested by related literature. When the patterns of certain phenomena appeared to be salient in the data but could not be appropriately grounded in the literature, I conceptualized these salient issues using my own definitions to process my analysis. While there were a variety of phenomena relevant to my research questions, I chose the most salient patterns based on the numerical results derived from the data matrixes to construct and support my conclusions. Finally, I sought respondent validation (i.e. member checks) for validity check (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Maxwell, 2005). I invited my participants to give me feedback on my interpretations of their opinions in an effort to identify my unaware

biases toward my participants' perspective or possible misinterpretations of their opinions.

It needs to be noted that in my research proposal I originally proposed a 1 to 1.5 hours final in-depth interview with each participant. I designed a protocol with 11 semi-structured questions to conduct the interviews, but did not limit my conversation with the participants only to these prescriptive questions. My follow-up questions for individual interviewees in conjunction with their various responses to the standardized protocol indicate that the process of interviewing was an ongoing exploration of different concepts for alternative interpretation. Consequently, a new question "what would you say is the most important moral value to you in your life and why" with regard to pre-service teachers' moral values was added to the protocol after my conversation with Leo, my first interviewee for the final interviews, who identified himself as a working-class gay man. Leo was in his mid-thirties when my project was taking place. He had an associate degree from a local community college and came back to school for a bachelor degree majoring in history after years of working as maintenance staff for a senior apartment complex. My interview with Leo was an important turning point for the conceptual angle and focus that I later carried out in my data analysis. Before my interview with Leo, the idea of 'the moral self' never occurred to me as one of the analytical angles that I would use to examine pre-service teachers' conceptions of their social identities. Nevertheless, as I listened to Leo's stories about his upbringing in a working class household and struggle with discrimination against his sexual orientation, his enactment of a moral sense of the self to dignify and empower his subordinate identities captured my attention. Leo's personal narratives had several important implications for my data analysis as well as my

rethinking about the images of pre-service teachers presented in the current multicultural education literature.

On a very surface level, Leo is a white male, a recipient of white and male privilege that is often portrayed in multicultural education materials as a member of "dominant groups" who benefit from the injustice of social oppression against racial minorities and women. Yet his life experience with poverty as a working white and with heterosexism as a gay man usually did not receive as much attention as those given to discuss his privileged identities. If I were to put myself in Leo's shoes, how would I relate myself to the course content that focuses on issues of social privilege and oppression, but did not reflect my experience of marginalization in the curriculum or discussion? Would I feel enlightened or alienated by the class? During my observation in his TE200 class, Leo appeared to me as an active participant who always finished the readings, listened and responded carefully to other people's opinions, and offered his perspective in conjunction with examples from course materials, historical and contemporary events. He, however, never presented his insights into working-class struggle as an insider, nor did he talk about the gay-bashing incidents that he witnessed at school in a first-person voice[8]. Without making his experience of marginalization known by others, Leo would be perceived and interpreted simply as a white man, presumably a straight white man. From a qualitative researchers' standpoint, how much we know about our subjects will inevitably affect how we categorize them and what kind of concepts we might use to analyze our subjects. As Ragin (1994) noted, it is impossible to initiate a qualitative study without some preconceived ideas about our subjects that inform researchers why the subjects are worth studying and what concepts might be used

[8] These incidents turned out to be his personal experience as revealed in the interview.

to guide the investigation. Leo's disclosure of his social class background and sexual orientation inspired me not only to look into how my perceptions of each participant, in relation to how my preconceived ideas about their group memberships affected my interpretations of their opinions and my relationship with them, but also to examine how my participants' perceptions of me in relation to my social identities might affect the type of opinions they chose to share with me. Such self-examination of personal qualities in one's research conduct is important because researchers can rarely be detached observers (Rosaldo, 1993), therefore, it is the responsibility of researchers, as Peshkin (1988) contends, to "systematically identify their subjectivity throughout the course of their research" (p.17).

Researcher Role

As a female Asian foreign researcher who does not speak English as a native language, my visible social identities, more or less, appeared to the majority of my research participants as an obvious manifestation of multiple *otherness* that they were learning about in TE200. Although I never explicitly asked my participants whether they would interact with me differently if I were a different race, gender or simply just being an American, there were always moments of *referencing* or *neglecting* that emerged from my participants' statement that reminded me of the role of my subjectivity in the study.

Moments of referencing occurred when my participants sought an *insider's* perspective to assure their opinion about struggles and marginalization facing people of *my own kind.* During these moments, pre-service teachers included me as an exemplar in their talk, which often led to the question of boundary negotiation in terms of reacting to my participants' appropriately without letting my response become a disruption of their

opinions. More often than not, I carried out what I considered as the minimum intrusive response by simply giving a smile or nodding back when being engaged in moments of referencing. The power dynamics between me – the researcher, and pre-service teachers – the subjects, remained intact when the participants were satisfied with my non-verbal response to their referencing of my subordinate status and let the conversation flow. Nevertheless, they gained power over my conduct when persistently pressing me to *talk* about my experience of subordination. The following exchange between Marvin and me captures the nuance of power shifting between a foreign researcher and a native informant. In explaining why and how linguistic discrimination hindered his ELL students from being accepted and treated with respect in American schools, an English-dominant learning environment, Marvin clearly and forcefully expressed his attempt to include my experience to support his argument.

> Marvin: we live in a society at least America is a society that is based off of English only and you have to speak English to survive in this country to a large extent. I mean, there's like the exceptions to everything, like you can speak Spanish in a lot of different places and things like that but you know it's frowned upon in the middle-class work environment. Shih-pei you know that, I'm sure. That's not making, I mean, an assumption. Like you, I bet, are treated differently sometimes because of your accent. **[Shih-pei smiled, but did not intend to follow upon Marvin's comments, yet Marvin continued pressing her to *talk*]** I'm not even joking, I'm not trying to make the assumption but I'm sure you have had to deal with some personal experiences that like - dealt with language proficiency.
>
> Shih-pei: So, what are some of the situations that you think I have to deal with?
>
> Marvin: No, I'm sure that...everyone you've seen....it like you talk and immediately someone doesn't think you know what you're talking about just because you have an accent. I'm sure, am I right though in making... I'm not trying to make rude assumptions but I think that's a common thing that happens. Am I right? **[Marvin was waiting for Shih-pei's confirmation before he was willing to move on.]**
>
> Shih-pei: Sure, of course. **[Shih-pei felt the need to assure Marvin's point of view as she wished to move the conversation along.]**

> Marvin: Yeah exactly. They're like this lady ordering, okay, let's just say you go to a restaurant and you order something, like "Oh she can't understand the language, she doesn't know what she's talking about." Those are common things but you have a very good working knowledge of the English language so it makes it so much easier for you, which is really good. Obviously you're a doctorate student here and you can write papers and you're correcting everyone's grammatical errors but just because of the perception that people get off of your...just it's sad to say the accent. People assume things.

The above interview excerpt was a typical example of how my visible group memberships could have an impact on my interaction with the research participants during the interview that was beyond my willingness to be involved. It also exemplifies how I responded to such efforts in ways that I felt allowed the participants to state their ideas about social differences without me appearing to judge these ideas.

Whereas pre-service teachers' consciousness of my subordinate group memberships in contrast to their own underlay moments of referencing in which my role as an investigator was positioned by my subjects as the *investigated*, pre-service teachers' obliviousness to the differences between me and them, on the contrary, pushed me out of the scene as if I was not a member of the target group that might disagree with their perspective speaking from a dominant position. Ashley's assimilationist perspective with regard to her support of English-only movement in American classrooms provides an example of how she might not be aware that I, as a non-Native English speaker, could hold an opposite stance on the debates of language policies for ELL students at school.

> Ashley: I know I realize like that we don't have an official language but I mean it's clearly the accepted form of communication in America is English, everything is written in English, we speak in English. And I do think that it's...I mean if I went to France I wouldn't expect everybody to speak French I mean if I lived in France I would expect that I needed to learn French so that I could communicate and learn and purchase things you know you have to learn that stuff. Simply, like I had no knowledge of Navy or battleships before I worked in Pearl Harbor but I had to learn those things if I wanted to be more successful at my job. That's sort of the way I look at it. I do think it's challenging especially when your parents

> don't speak any English, they only speak Spanish but I also don't think that we should...I think we should make every effort to make it easier for people who don't speak English but we shouldn't make.... we shouldn't speak Spanish in an American classroom.

Although I had an opposite view on monoligualism than Ashley's, it was not my position as a researcher to challenge my informant's perspective. However, during my interview with Ashley, a self-identified hard-core conservative, I did notice that there were moments when I had to deliberately restrain my emotional reaction to her opinions in order to perform myself as an *objective* researcher.

Clearly, my subjectivity as a researcher as well as a member of subordinate groups (e.g. non-native English speaker) often yielded competing sentiments and considerations that simultaneously affected my conduct during moments of referencing and neglecting in the context of interviewing. Despite my personal dislike for being positioned as a "token minority" or being neglected as a "invisible minority", experiencing these moments were important to my research as they gave me the opportunities to examine how my subjectivity might affect the ways in which I approached and interpreted my research participants. Particularly, whether I unintentionally enact my personal preferences to favor or denigrate their opinions in my analysis.

During the course of my research process, I was more cautious of how I understood opinions that were in conflict with my own stance on the given issues. I, however, was less reflective of how I interpreted pre-service teachers whose perspective was aligned with mine as their opinions seemed to *naturally* make sense to me. This was particularly true in my interaction with Julie, the only Asian-American pre-service teacher in my study, whose parents were first-generation immigrants from my home

country, Taiwan. Since Julie and I could talk to each other in both English and Mandarin and had some shared cultural characteristics, I ended up having a closer relationship with her than any other participant in my study. Julie was very vocal and critical in her TE200 class, particularly, on the topics of racial and gender inequality. Her active participation in the class not only broke down the submissive Asian nerd stereotype, but also helped her classmates better understand Asian Americans' minority experience in the society[9]. Julie was open about sharing her thoughts with people, according to my observation and her self-description. Therefore, it did not occur to me how much our same ethnic background contributed to the information she chose to share with me until we had a discussion about her realization of the "subtle form of racism" in her through working with children of other minority groups. This led me to consider whether such conversations would take place if I were not Asian. A more significant question that followed was how I construct presentation of Julie's *confession,* which might not be disclosed otherwise and what the educational implication to be suggested by her experience. Admittedly, my analysis of Julie's case was often complexified by my reflection on my subjectivity as an Asian in which I experienced what Peshkin (1988) said "self and subject became joined" (p.17).

[9] For example, Danielle, the only African-American classmate in Julie's, talked about how Julie changed some of her preconceived ideas about Asian Americans:
Danielle: I just [think], sometimes it may be a little easier for them [Asian Americans]...than it is for me, for lack of better words, to assimilate. I still do think it's a lot easier but...I guess that was just my perception that they may not have experience some of the same things that I have and I was wrong (Danielle, 0423 interview, 2008).

CHAPTER 4

PRIVILEGE, MARGINALIZATION AND THE MORAL SELF

Introduction

In a recent article that builds on an analysis of reviews of research literature, Furman (2008) points out that the demographic imperative as reflected in the discrepancies between the teaching force and the student population have long been used as the common rationale for multicultural teacher education. Not surprisingly, most research and practice in this field overwhelmingly focus on preparing white, middle class teachers to work with racial minority students. Consequently, work that aims to promote multiculturalism is ironically tailored to the experience of a singular group and designed in ways that disproportionately focus on issues of Whiteness. Furman contends that research on Whiteness is still an important area for continued research. Nevertheless, in a world of rapid social change and increasing globalization, it is no longer enough for teacher educators to adhere to the legacy of ethnic studies movement and define multicultural education solely in terms of anti-racist education. As Furman concludes: "Voices, other than White voices, need to be heard in the research, but it may be detrimental if this call is taken to refer only to the voices of other races and not to voices that represent other languages, national origins, genders, sexual orientations, religions, abilities, or social classes" (Furman, 2008, p.68).

Furman's calling for more attention to other forms of social diversity in the field of multicultural teacher education is refreshing, yet it is not new to the field. Banks (1993b), for instance, wrote almost sixteen years ago that the neglect of diversity in the teacher population should be adequately addressed in research on multicultural education

because regardless of the fact that most teachers in the United States are white females, there is enormous diversity related to religion, social class, region and ethnic origin that is mirrored in the backgrounds of the teacher population.

Unfortunately, it is often the case that despite the variation in cultural backgrounds among white pre-service teachers, they are largely constructed in the literature as a homogeneous group unified by their obliviousness to systems of power and oppression, particularly, white privilege and institutional racism. Yet, most pre-service teachers, like most people in general, are simultaneously privileged and marginalized in one way or another, given the multidimensionality of one's identities and the contexts in which these identities are situationally experienced and enacted. A growing body of studies on Whiteness as a situated identity has revealed that white racial identity is indeed a complex social construct; the meaning of Whiteness "is imparted by the particular context in which white actors are located" (McDermott and Samson, p. 249, 2005). Making generalizations of white pre-service teachers solely as privileged individuals for their Whiteness not only inhibits the inclusion of diverse voices of other social groups that white pre-service teachers also belong to, but also overlooks the contextual factors that shape pre-service teachers' divergent experience with their Whiteness. Further, the focus on white pre-service teachers is indeed a form of exclusion of racial minority pre-service teachers, which leads to an unintentional consequence of what Montecinos (2004) terms the paradoxes in multicultural teacher education research, namely, students of color are positioned as objects while ignored as subjects.

This chapter seeks to engage in the listening of diverse voices from pre-service teachers' multiple social positions. In doing so, it explores how pre-service teachers talk

about their privileged and marginalized identities and how they make sense of their experiences of privilege and marginalization. Informed by the conceptual perspective of the cultural toolkit theory, I look at how personal experiences – one of the most readily used cultural resources that people draw on to make meaningful understanding of their social worlds – are mobilized by pre-service teachers to talk about their moral notion of the self in relation to their privileged and marginalized identities. I argue that pre-service teachers' sense-making of their experiences of privilege and marginalization is indeed an act of constructing their moral identities. For this reason, I pay particular attention to the moral enactment of the self that pre-service teachers perform to produce and affirm their sense of personal worth through narrating their identity stories.

I take privilege and marginalization as two distinctive human experiences sprouting from the same root. They are social rewards and sanctions given to individuals without their consent. Despite the nature of privilege and marginalization in terms of what people gain and lose simply because of what social group or category they can be placed into rather than what they work for, experiences of privilege and marginalization are important constituents of a person's life. For individuals to think of their experiences of privilege and marginalization is to create meaning to these significant elements of their lives that are, by and large, not under their control. Like any causal reasoning about "who gets what for what reason", it involves moral evaluation of one's deservingness (Loseke and Fawcett, 1995). Pre-service teachers' reasoning about their privilege and marginalization will more or less involve their evaluation of self-worth. It thus leads to questions of '*what kind of good person am I to deserve the unearned advantages I was*

given' and/or '*what kind of good person have I been made to be through managing the discrediting and/or mistreatment that I do not deserve to receive*'.

In what follows, I present my analysis of pre-service teachers' cultural autobiography papers and in-depth interviews. I will first discuss two different types of storytelling (i.e. *formula stories* and *personal testimonies*) that pre-service teachers used to compose their identity narratives. After that, I will focus on identity narratives that are grounded in *personal testimonies* to explore how pre-service teachers' sense-making of their experiences of privilege and marginalization mediates their construction of their moral selves. It is not to say that I regard first hand experiences as the only path through which pre-service teachers' sense of moral and social identities are connected. Rather, I believe that *formula stories*, as usually manifesting images of group stereotypes and collective solidarities available in the broader cultural repertoire, also play an important role in one's moral identities, which is often mediated by one's sentiments of group belongingness. However, as the data suggests pre-service teachers were much more certain and articulate about the moral implications of their social identities when they were able to utilize what they have had personally encountered to explain their perspectives of how social systems work, "personal testimonies" hence could better illuminate the phenomenon that I intend to explore. In other words, my decision with regard to focusing on "personal testimonies" was made for the purpose of analysis.

How do pre-service teachers talk about their privileged and marginalized identities?

Using an inductive approach, I identified two different types of identity narratives from my analysis of interview transcripts and cultural autobiography papers. They are distinct from each other by virtue of the type of cultural resources that pre-service

teachers used to present their stories. In the first type of identity narratives, pre-service teachers drew largely on socially circulating *formula stories* (Crawley and Broad, 2004; Loseke, 2001, 2007) to talk about what it meant to be members of certain social groups. Formula stories are usually accepted and presented as conventions that consist of collective rituals, normative assumptions, accepted sanctions, and stereotyped characters (Cawelti, 1972). They provide sets of readily used interpretive templates for social actors to identify how lived experiences can be defined (Loseke, 2001; Crawley and Broad, 2004). Formula stories are continually created, challenged, modified, and reproduced by social institutions, grass-roots forces and personal practices. They are widely circulated and promoted through the media; hence, powerfully mobilize and shape one's sense of cultural identities and his/her relational positioning in the social world (Loseke, 2007). In the second type of narratives, pre-service teachers used personal experiences in their storytelling in which they are the central character in the scene.

These two types of identity narratives are consistent with Bonilla-Silva's conception of "storyline" and "testimony" in his extensive research on the dominant racial ideology in the post Civil Rights era. According to Bonilla-Silva et al. (2004), "storylines" are "socially shared tales that incorporate a common scheme and wording" (p.556), they are mostly based on impersonal and generic arguments with little personal experience involved. When pre-service teachers used what Bonilla-Silva terms "storylines" to compose their identity narratives, their accounts tend to be "information/knowledge reporting" that rest on generic formula stories about social groups. In contrast, "testimonies" are "accounts in which the narrator is a central participant or is close to the character" (Bonilla-Silva et al., 2004, p. 557). When pre-

service teachers present their identity narratives in the tone of "testimony", they personalized formula stories and used their firsthand experience to support the authenticity of these *socially shared tales.* In the following discussion, I use the terms "formula story" and "personal testimony" to name and distinguish these two different kinds of identity narratives.

Formula stories

First-hand experience often provides solid reference for individuals to define and identify their social worth in contrast to others. Yet how people make sense of and locate their status as a member of certain social groups also relies considerably on the collective representation of the given groups. Whether individual members like or dislike, agree or disagree with the construct of group images of the collective "us", these images constitute rich *formula stories* (Loseke, 2001, 2007) circulating in popular culture, political speech, and social movements through which individuals develop a sense of what is expected of them and how they are evaluated collectively in the society. For this reason, pre-service teachers could speak of their acknowledgement of how their identities are privileged or marginalized by drawing on the formula stories of their group memberships that circulate within the broader social imaginary without believing that they have been personally affected by the positive and negative consequences associated with these identities.

Pre-service teachers relied on formula stories to make sense of their social identities when they had little or no substantive contact with out-group members in the given social category from which to draw personal experiences. Given the prevalence of residential segregation along the racial and socio-economic lines, it is not surprising that this type of narrative appears to be exclusively concentrated on social class and race. This

is especially evident in the narratives of racial privilege among white pre-service teachers who grew up in predominantly white communities. It should be noted that the notions of "unearned (demographic) privilege" and "luxury of obliviousness" (Johnson, 2001) to one's privileged status were two core course concepts that were generally introduced to pre-service teachers in the first two weeks of the class. Many white pre-service teachers thus were promoted to discuss their racial identity aligned with the notion of "whiteness as an overlooked and invisible privilege" (McDermott and Samson, 2005). To make the invisible privilege visible, white pre-service teachers talked about both their realization of the "luxury of obliviousness" and formula stories about the contemporary and historical plight of racial minorities to present their emerging acknowledgement of white privilege. The following from Grace is representative in this regard. In comparing her well-established gender consciousness with her newly developed acknowledgement of white privilege (and guilt), Grace delineated the differences in her awareness of gender and racial inequality in accordance with her marginalized and privileged status as a woman and a white person in one of the interviews.

> Grace: I feel like it's much more, it's easier to be sexist than to be racist. I think it's more accepted definitely. And you can see that in the way that they bash Hillary Clinton, but not Barack, oh no they stay away from him. Like, you know, it really really bothers me. [....] I think that things should be equal and obviously as a woman that's something that bothers me. [....] It's just something that affects me, so I think it's something that I'm conscious of. I think it's much harder to be conscious of the things that don't directly affect you and so that's something that we all need to fight for and strive for. I mean like it's even hard for people who are in areas of privilege just to acknowledge that they have the privilege because there's a lot of guilt surrounding that even though it's not your fault. Like my ancestors were over in Italy freaking picking grapes while slavery was going around (Grace, 0426 interview, 2008).

In the above passage, Grace clearly pointed out that her resentment toward sexism was due to its direct influence on her life as a woman. Yet, being part of the dominant

racial group who was not discriminated against based on her race, Grace was less sensitive in her reaction to injustice of racism on the same scale. As we saw in the interview excerpt, the formula story that Grace used to talk about her acknowledgement of white privilege was the idea of racism as the legacy of slavery. Nevertheless, by emphasizing the family's immigration history (i.e. "my ancestors were over in Italy freaking picking grapes while slavery was going around – I had nothing to do with it") while expressing her criticism of the continuing discrimination against racial minorities, Grace cast herself as the offspring of the "innocent" whites who was morally troubled by the baggage of guilt, on the one hand, but yet felt morally free from the responsibility, on the other hand, for the *problems* she (and her Italian ancestors) did not cause. In deploying what Bonilla-Silva and his colleagues called the story line of "I didn't own slaves" (Bonilla-Silva et al, 2004, p.564), Grace and other white pre-service teachers alike, were able to express their seemly objective discontent with racism while paradoxically reconciling themselves to the system that they claimed to disapprove. Moreover, while pre-service teachers did not deny the existence of white privilege, they did not see it as directly relevant to their personal life either. Such sentiment of "acknowledging" one's white privilege without "experiencing" it was exemplified by Brian's account. He noted in the cultural autobiography:

> The majority of my town was white people. My race never seemed to play a factor in my life growing up, as virtually every person I encountered had largely similar backgrounds. [....] Due to this overly bland community base, there is very little about my race that marks who I am as a person. In class we discussed how those who have privilege often don't see that they do. As I have a hard time writing about my race making a big deal on me as a person, this is probably due largely to the fact that since I am white, I have not had to endure any problems or hardships due to the color of my skin or the origin of my ancestors (Brian, cultural autobiography, 2008).

Brian's writing indicated that experiences of privilege and marginalization were inherently relational and comparative. Without a reference group physically present for comparison, privilege and marginalization can be understood by social actors simply as a piece of knowledge with little relevance to their personal lives.

Similarly, Jamila expressed awareness that being an African-American female made her marginalized in terms of race and gender. However, being surrounded by the African-American community for most of her life and raised in a household with several strong female role models present, Jamila expressed she was buffered from direct experiences of racist and sexist mistreatment. Therefore, she envisioned her marginalized identities as a black woman mainly through a generic sense of challenges she believed were faced by "most black women in the world" and that she would face someday. As she wrote:

> Growing up in the American society has not been a tremendous struggle for me in my life personally. But that does not mean I have not been affected by it. Granted, I am a black young woman, and as hard as it may be for most black women in the world, those various challenges have not come to me. I do not expect my life and struggles to be easy. I believe that the "reality of the real world" as my mother would say, has not necessarily hit me yet. You could possibly say that I am aware but blinded realistically. (Jamila, cultural autobiography, 2008).

Although coming to a predominantly white college, Midwest University, was a major transition for Jamila as it was the first time she had intensive interactions with white people, she did not believe she had encountered negative treatment based on her race by the time of the interview. For this reason, despite the fact that Jamila was able to draw on formula stories of racism encountered by the African-American community in

her depiction of racial identity[1], the link between acknowledgement and personal experience was absent both in her interviews and cultural autobiography.

In some cases, upper-middle class pre-service teachers drew on formula stories of the working poor to talk about their socio-economic privilege. Cathleen, for example, wrote about how Jonathan Kozol's book Savage Inequalities opened her eyes to "what the inner city public school systems look like and the inequalities that are there or that are anywhere outside of [my home town]" (Cathleen, cultural autobiography, 2008). According to Cathleen, growing up in a wealthy neighborhood where "everyone had nice homes and went on amazing vacations and had nice cars, clothes and toys"[2] and going to schools with other students who also "drove nice cars like Jettas, brand new trucks or the occasional Audi or BMW"[3], her knowledge of the real world was limited by her monolithic exposure to the lifestyle of upper-middle class people[4]. Although Kozol's writing enlightened Cathleen about the "harsh conditions, poor facilities and inadequate teachers"[5] that working class students struggled with as a result of socio-economic deprivation and made Cathleen feel somewhat uneasy with her inherited class privilege, such acknowledgement and discomfort did not have profound influence on Cathleen in terms of making her question the legitimacy of the status quo or recognize the direct relevance of structural advantages to her personal achievement. Conversely, Cathleen

[1] Binary tension is a common thread in the formula stories with respect to white-black relationships in the American society, which was clearly displayed in Jamila's racial identity narrative: "I was and will always be known as being "black" and just another minority trying to make my way up in society and having to prove myself capable of where I am going. That is the category that I will unfortunately never be put out of. The dominant race, which is Caucasian will always have power over the minorities" (Jamila, cultural autobiography, 2008).

[2] Cathleen, cultural autobiography, 2008.

[3] Cathleen, cultural autobiography, 2008.

[4] Cathleen noted in her cultural autobiography: "The socio-economic level of the school was averaged to be very high and none of us knew what the real world was like" (Cathleen, cultural autobiography, 2008).

[5] Cathleen, cultural autobiography, 2008.

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verbalized a sense of what Swidler (2003) terms "cultural skepticism" (p.14) to justify her doubt in social reform for a just society as she regarded the enterprise as an unattainable project in practice. As Cathleen concluded in her autobiography:

> Yes, I have been and continue to be privileged, and I may never know what it is fully like to understand the kinds of oppression faced by others or to reach a glass ceiling, and I am sure I will someday experience unfair things because I am a woman. However, that is not enough to get fired up over because we live in a fallen world and that is not going to change for a long time (Cathleen, cultural autobiography, 2008).

Cultural skepticism, in light of Swidler's (2003) argument, "ranging from suspended judgment, to doubt, to outright rejection" (p.14), is a common practice that individuals carry out to filter diverse viewpoints by which they are surrounded. It allows people to make choices about what perspectives to accept and how to interpret them because people can barely function if they keep themselves open to be persuaded by any given perspective that comes along (Swidler, 2003). Pre-service teachers' enactment of cultural skepticism in terms of rejecting what they considered "unrealistic", as typified by Cathleen's account, effectively eased their ambivalence toward viewpoints that might be incompatible with their existing worldview or speaking for interests in conflict of their own.

The above examples suggest that pre-service teachers' talking about their privileged and marginalized identities could be simply a display of their knowledge of the existence of social stratification. Without a distinctive reference group to compare with in their immediate social surrounding, little personalized meaning was generated by pre-service teachers out of what they *imagine* the real social world *is* like based on formula stories.

Personal testimonies

The formula stories discussed above showed that how pre-service teachers could talk about their privileged and marginalized identities without feeling that they have been personally affected by their group memberships. For the most part, however, pre-service teachers did often build their identity narratives on firsthand experiences. When pre-service teachers used their life experience to explain what they gained and/or lost simply by virtue of their social identities, their opinions were expressed largely in the form of personal testimonies. In what follows I introduce two types of personal testimonies, which I term "secondary testimonies" and "primary testimonies" that emerged from pre-service teachers' interviews and cultural autobiographies. When pre-service teachers' acknowledgement of their privileged and marginalized status was evoked by the experiences of their acquaintances, friends, and relatives, I categorized their accounts as "secondary testimonies" to signify their closeness to those experiences by virtue of their association with people in the subordinate groups. In the same vein, when pre-service teachers used their personal experiences to compose narratives in which they were the main characters in the scene, I categorized their accounts as "primary testimonies".

Secondary testimonies

In pre-service teachers' identity narratives, secondary testimonies documented what pre-service teachers learned about their privilege and marginalization through close observations on how their personal acquaintances were treated. Carl, for example, described how white privilege worked to his advantage in his retrospective telling of the differential treatment that his high school teacher gave to him and to his African-American classmate. Carl wrote in his cultural autobiography:

> [A]n African American named Robert and I had roughly the same issues with commas on an assignment in our English Three class. Our teacher suggested that

> he should come in after school to work with her, whereas for me, she just told me what I did wrong and I was free to go. If I had to wager a guess, this was due to the stereotype or the assumption that African Americans or colored individuals do not know English as well as Caucasians. In other words, it was likely that she viewed my mistakes as careless mistakes whereas for my classmate it was a lack of understanding of our grammar. [...] In other classes although, again, I thought nothing of it at the time, my teachers tended to give higher grades to white kids over the others. Perhaps this was due to us just being smarter, but I personally think it was because we were unafraid to talk to our teachers about our grades (Carl, cultural autobiography, 2008).

Carl's account is typical of pre-service teachers' secondary testimonies in which the stories of personal acquaintances function as a catalyst for their self-awareness. According to Carl, he did notice that teachers tended to give white students higher grades over racial minority students. However, it was not until the concept of "white privilege" was introduced to him did he acknowledge the role of race in the differential treatments given by the teacher to him and Robert, an African-American counterpart, on the same measuring scale. As delineated in the above passage, Carl's observations in high school later provided readily used resources for him to form a personal testimony in support of his argument about how his racial privilege directly contributed to his academic achievement.

Primary testimonies

In the primary testimonies, pre-service teachers presented their experiences of direct reception of discrimination or favoritism related to their group memberships or their affiliation with certain social groups. The following from Stacy with respect to her heterosexual privilege and encountering with negative reactions due to her active involvement in a gay rights advocacy group on campus is a typical example in this regard. Stacy wrote:

> While privilege directly relates to my experience on the basis of my race, I have also experienced privilege based on my sexuality. People constantly assume that I am straight. The ideology is that someone is "straight until proven 'wrong'." Even though I questioned my sexuality in high school, no one was aware of it besides a close friend or two. Had I been out, the school administration would have discriminated against me. This was another aspect of my identity that I did not realize I was privileged over until quite recently. At Midwest University, I joined PRIDE, an LGBTA group on campus, and I am currently the treasurer of the group. Since joining, I cut my hair short for comfort and easier maintainability, but I noticed a dramatic shift in other students' perspectives of me. The combination of knowing I was in PRIDE and seeing that I had short hair led people to automatically assume that I was a lesbian, an indicator of personal homophobia. In the past year, I have had more people ask me if I'm gay than I would have ever imagined (Stacy, cultural autobiography, 2008).

Stacy's account was built upon her firsthand experiences advocating for gays, lesbians, and transgendered people as a straight ally, which involves both her privileged status as a heterosexual individual and her subjugation to heterosexism as a symbolic member of the gay community. According to Stacy, the process of self-exploration of her own sexual orientation during adolescence was significant in developing her consciousness of heterosexist oppression. Witnessing her best friend receiving discriminatory treatments simply for his pride in embracing a gay identity[6] gave Stacy a powerful frame of reference based on which she could clearly envision her vulnerability if she were to disclose her possible bisexuality[7]. Stacey believed that because of the

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[6] "I attended xxx High School, and it was a requirement to take morality junior year. This was not the type of morality that Lawrence Kohlberg spent years researching and defining; it was the kind of morality that the Catholic Church deems appropriate for its members: abortion is wrong under all circumstances, premarital sex is a sin, not going to church and revering God in every aspect of your life will send you straight to hell. One of the major topics of the class was homosexuality and how immoral, unnatural, disgusting and all-around sinful it was. Not only is this blatant institutional homophobia, but it is also interpersonal homophobia. An instance of institutional homophobia that still lingers in my mind to this day relates to one of my best friends in high school. Alan was a proud, gay sophomore, and he had a wristband he was incredibly fond of. It said, "I love nerdy boys" on it, and one day when he wore it to school, he was told to remove it since it was "inappropriate" for school. If he had been a girl, I seriously doubt he would have been asked to remove it; plenty of other students wore wristbands with worse things on them (i.e. the anarchy sign)" (Stacey, cultural autobiography, 2008)

[7] Stacy noted in her cultural autobiography: "I have identified as heterosexual for most of my life. There was a short period during high school when I considered the possibility I was bisexual, but like many

assumption of "compulsory heterosexuality" (Rich, 1980) that deems everyone to be straight unless proved otherwise, she was free from heterosexist prejudice until being labeled as a lesbian for her participation in activist work that promotes equal rights for non-heterosexual identified people. Consequently, Stacy was unable to maintain the full scale of heterosexual privilege as she was frequently perceived as one of *the "Others"* whose advocacy for gay rights was considered a threat to the heteronormativity that underpins the social order[8]. In short, as we saw in Stacy's identity narrative, her personal encounters with heterosexism were the central elements of the story, which makes her account a primary testimony. The rest of the chapter will focus on personal testimonies for further investigation.

How do pre-service teachers make sense of their experiences of privilege?

In this section, I discuss three major types of moral sentiments: feeling grateful, feeling sympathetic, and feeling responsible. I identified these moral sentiments inductively from pre-service teachers' accounts about their experiences of privilege. These sentiments manifest pre-service teachers' presentation of *the morally good self.*

Compared to marginalization, privilege is the type of social experience that individuals tend to ignore or are unaware of. In his book *Privilege, Power and Difference*, Johnson (2001) elucidates reasons why members of dominant groups usually do not see privilege as a problem. According to Johnson's synthesis of related studies

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teenagers, I realized it was just a phase; my hormones were still going haywire" (Stacy, cultural autobiography, 2008).

[8] It is worth noting that Stacy was raised by very religious parents who, according to Stacy, did not accept homosexuality at all and were not supportive of her involvement in gay rights activist work. In my interview with Stacy, she talked about her heterosexuality actually buffered the tension between she and her parents. She said: "neither of my parents really support homosexuality in any way, they take the Church's view on it and so whenever we discuss it, my mom gets kind of snippy about it and like, "It's not right ever." But kind of everything else they kind of figure I'm old enough to make my own decisions and you know so…I mean, I don't think they're insanely happy about it but at least the comfort knowing I'm straight I guess that helps out" (Stacy, 0425 interview, 2008).

(2001), obliviousness to one's privilege could be both unintentional and intentional. It might be due to that dominant groups do not see that privilege exists in the first place because they do not have to or they do not want to lose what they have. It could also be due to the fact that they are prejudiced, therefore, accept the existence of inequity as normal social order or due to their fear of exclusion and attack from members of their own social groups. In TE200, pre-service teachers were engaged in dialogical conversation about how structural dominance and subordination in relation to how one's social identities shape one's life experience in general and schooling experience in particular. In other words, whether pre-service teachers were aware of the existence of privilege before the concept was being introduced to them, they were engaged in seeing its existence and thinking about how and why privilege worked (or did not work, from their perspective) in their life.

The process of making sense of one's demographic privilege involves both feeling and justifying his/her unearned advantages that are denied to members of other groups simply because of who they are rather than what they have done. It is a process of enacting a moral notion of the self as one's feeling and justification about privilege are essentially mediated by his/her thinking about issues of fairness and equity.

Gratitude for the inherited privilege

The moral sentiment of gratitude and appreciation was most prominent in pre-service teachers' accounts with respect to their experiences of inherited class privilege from their parents' socio-economic standing. In talking about their privileged status in relation to familial wealth and parental education, middle-class and upper-middle class identified pre-service teachers frequently enacted a *grateful self* to emphasize that they

did not take what they were given for granted. Compared to other types of demographic privilege, class privilege was personalized the most by pre-service teachers and was often depicted with solid examples. Marvin, who came from a household with both parents with advanced degrees in their profession and whose father had a successful career as a senior financial planner, was a good example in this regard. As he wrote in his cultural autobiography:

> Because of my family's social status and income, I was naturally given the tools to be successful in the society in which I live[9]. I was able to absorb both knowledge of language and culture that privilege me and have shaped my identity. I would not say that my schooling necessarily taught me about these advantages in life, I slowly became aware of them because my parents made me look at everything from an extremely fortunate point of view, which in due course influenced my attitudes toward life to be humble and make sure that I do not take for granted that opportunities I have (Marvin, cultural autobiography, 2008).

Like Marvin, many middle-class and upper-middle class identified pre-service teachers indicated that their consciousness of class privilege was rooted in their family education. Examples concerning childrearing practices that parents carried out to instill the sense of gratitude in their children for the type of living conditions in which they were raised frequently appeared in pre-service teachers' narratives. These practices included engaging children in charity projects to help the poor, telling personal self-made stories of rags-to-riches, and reminding children how fortunate they were to have the upper hand

[9] Marvin gave a concrete description of how his family income and status provided advantages to advance his education: "This familial income privileged me because it automatically allowed me to attend schools with smaller classrooms, higher test scores, and with high caliber teachers. This has been a true advantage for me, especially in terms of social capital, pragmatic mismatch and cultural capital. [.....] My mother was a part of the PTA (Parent Teachers Association) and talked regularly with my teachers. My mother also was a highly valued substitute teacher in our school district; therefore, she had many direct connections to the classrooms and could see how they were run. She was able to network herself in the district, which ultimately allowed for my education to be better because she took a more active and influential role in it. She chose which teachers I would be placed with. My mother also forced the principal of the school to place my twin brother and I in the same classroom" (Marvin, cultural autobiography, 2008)

from their parents. Lacy's active involvement in philanthropic service for "under-privileged families" is a typical example of the moral sentiment of gratitude.

> Shih-pei: So, how would you describe your social background, social class?
> Lacy: Upper, upper-middle class. Yeah, upper-middle class. And I mean, I've always been fairly aware of it, I suppose. I mean I knew that...the things that we wanted and needed like we had. I was definitely always - my parents always made sure I would have never have considered myself spoiled. I mean they always made sure that we understood that we were very lucky. I've always done a lot of like volunteering community things and been really involved with that. My mom and I started the clothing bank in Plymouth. So underprivileged families can either be referred by the school district or we have a lot of women and kids from First Step which is the women's shelter in my town. And there a couple different ways you can be referred. So, we...we started that and took it over with a couple people and it's moved. It's just in a room like in our high school but it's based entirely off of volunteers and all donations and everything (Lacy, 0422 interview, 2008).

As we saw in the above passage, Lacy enacted an image of a grateful self by emphasizing the influence of her family education that taught her to never consider herself spoiled and to understand that she was very lucky. Her awareness of class advantage was embedded in her parents' deliberate child-rearing practices by engaging their daughter in charity service to the *underprivileged,* Through the engagement in charity service, Lacy was able to witness the real life of poverty that children of low-income households were born into, hence, further reinforced her sense of gratitude to the inherited class. advantages.

It is worth noting that the majority of middle-class and upper-middle class identified pre-service teachers in my study were born to first-generation middle-class parents who grew up in working class households and made their way up the social ladder through hard work. For example, Lacy's father, the first college graduate in his immediate and extended families, who grew up in a lower class family that was faced "everyday with the difficulties of making ends meet, having enough food for a large

family and the responsibilities of taking care of siblings" (Lacy, cultural autobiography, 2008), and who eventually became the owner of a big construction company. Another pre-service teacher, Sonya – a daughter of an African-American dentist, whose father's success was a typical self-made story that underpinned Sonya's and many other Americans' belief in the continuing vitality of the American Dream, and it entails their endorsement to the achievement ideology. As Sonya talked about his father's life story in the interview:

> Sonya: My dad, he went to college here (Midwest University). He played football, he played in the pros for like a couple years and then he quit that and came back to school and became a dentist, and hearing his life story, his childhood was not easy. He came from a family that, he wasn't in poverty in general but he didn't have parents, he lived with his aunt. He had to, sort of, he had to work like four jobs and all this stuff. But I mean it wasn't easy for him and he had to work really hard to get to where he is (Sonya, 0422 interview, 2008).

For Sonya, hearing his father's story and seeing the contrast between her living conditions and those of the working-class students who she went to school with was an immediate lesson about class privilege that taught her "that I need to be careful with how I use it and to be thankful for it" (Sonya, cultural autobiography, 2008).

Although pre-service teachers, for the most part, admitted that their family background gave them an upper hand for personal development, and were humble with their inherited advantages from the parents, it was not uncommon to find moments of inversion in pre-service teachers' accounts in which they inverted the meaning of class privilege as a disadvantage because they believed that the label of "privileged" brought discredit on their achievement. Noticeably, pre-service teachers' enactment of a grateful self usually intertwined with their self-presentation as a hard worker whose achievement was helped, but not determined, by their home advantages. The following contention

from Sonya typifies pre-service teachers' mixed feelings with their class privilege. Sonya noted in her cultural autobiography:

> I come from a rural area where the social classes range from upper-middle class to working-class. Growing up in an upper middle class family made going school in my town a bit of a challenge. [...] Going to school where you get ridiculed for having "nice things" taught me to want to hide the fact that my family could afford such things. I also think that being upper-middle class gave me somewhat of an advantage over those with less money especially when it came to choosing a college. Although Midwest University isn't the most expensive school to go to, it's definitely not cheap. [...] This aspect of my identity also helped me to realize that there are people who can't afford college or who have to work to save money for it. This also helped spur my attitude toward getting good grades. Another stereotype that goes along with having money is that you never have to work for anything. I definitely wanted people in my high school to know that I worked for what I got (Sonya, cultural autobiography, 2008).

In Sonya's understanding, class privilege is a double-edged sword that, on the one hand, gave her the material resources that motivated her to *work hard* with an anticipated promise for the payoff of her efforts. On the other hand, however, Sonya perceived class privilege *a disadvantage* as the negative stereotype of *"rich kids never work for anything"* pressured her to *work harder* in order to prove her merit.

The above passages showed that the image of a grateful self not only enabled pre-service teachers to ease their negative feelings of being labeled as "spoiled children" who are selfish, narcissistic and individualistic, but also provided them with important symbolic resources to define their worth as well as defend their deservingness for what they were given.

Sympathy for the marginalized

Sympathy for the marginalized groups is another common moral sentiment that mediates pre-service teachers' sense-making of their experiences of privilege. Pre-service teachers' enactment of a *sympathetic self* is often accompanied by some sort of *victim*

narratives of their marginalized counterparts. While the image of a *grateful self* was mostly embedded in narratives of class privilege in which privilege is largely understood as material resources that enhance personal development, the image of a *sympathetic self* was mainly associated with narratives of white and heterosexual privilege in which privilege is understood as a protection from harm and/or mistreatment facing racial and sexual minorities. For example, in his reflection on white privilege, Steven sympathetically described how African-American students were alienated and discriminated against by virtue of the white supremacist mentality at his school. He wrote:

> As part of the racial majority in school, I never felt as if I had to prove myself to teachers, administrators or fellow students. However, I did observe the racial profiling which was prevalent within the school system. This was evident in class placement, disciplinary action and social interaction among staff and students. Most of the racial minorities that attended my school district were "Schools of Choice (SOC)" students, meaning that they lived in another community but paid to attend Pine Woods Schools. Many parents, teachers and some students attributed any discipline problem or low district-wide test scores to these SOC students, an easy scapegoat. Ultimately this created a racially convoluted atmosphere within the school. As a result, racial minorities were further alienated among the student body. Caucasian students were given the power, and minority students were pushed into the background. The racial minority students were rarely involved in extra curricular activities, nor did they spend time at many large-scale school events (Steven, cultural autobiography, 2008).

Similarly, Danielle made sense of her heterosexual privilege by pointing out the harassment gay and lesbian people were likely to face if they displayed affection in public. This enacts the moral sentiment of sympathy. As Danielle noted:

> Being a heterosexual I have come to realize that I hold and take advantage of a lot privileges that homosexuals do not have all the time. Privileges such as being able to freely talk about my significant other or be seen in public without being harassed for my sexual preference, etc. (Danielle, cultural autobiography, 2008).

The above accounts from Steven and Danielle typify how pre-service teacher' understanding of their privilege mediated by their sympathy for the blatant discrimination faced by their subordinate counterparts.

It should be noted that some pre-service teachers expressed a strong sense of altruism in terms of their desire and action to *help poor people* when talking about their class privilege. As we saw in the preceding section, Lacy's participation in charity is representative in this regard. Yet, such kind of altruistic sentiment was seldom expressed by pre-service teachers in their reflections on race and sexual orientation privilege. While pre-service teachers recognized that racial minority people and homosexual individuals were not given fair treatment and equal respect by virtue of their group memberships, this recognition did not lead pre-service teachers to problematize their White privilege and/or heterosexual dominance. In other words, through the moral enactment of a sympathetic self, pre-service teachers' vision of themselves as a *good* white person or a *good* heterosexual individual was narrowly satisfied by portraying themselves as not being racist or not being homophobic rather than being proactively anti-racist or anti-homophobia. Nevertheless, this is not to say that pre-service teachers did not see their adherence to the reactive mentality as problematic and indeed, not *good* enough. In fact, some honest critiques with regard to privileged individuals' reluctance to be proactively anti-racist or anti-homophobia given by the pre-service teachers in the context of classroom discussion revealed that they were cognizant of members of privileged groups could use their privilege to actively disrupt injustice against marginalized groups, but self-interested concern often inhibited them from doing so. For example, in explaining why it was often difficult for many whites to be anti-racist, Steven pointed out the crux of

the matter was not that they did not want to see the improvement of minorities, but rather they did not want to see that happen at a cost to them. As he said:

> Steven: they've [Whites] grown up with so many different rights. It's not that they don't believe that other people shouldn't have the same rights, but I think a lot of people are fearful that if, you know, rights are given and things are spread out they may lose some of the privileges that they have, and I think that's a really difficult concept for a lot of people to wrestle with" (Steven, 0313 class discussion, 2008).

Another pre-service teacher, Brian, explained his difficulty standing up for peers who were ridiculed for their sexual orientation and/or gender expression : "to watch stuff like that happen and to know that, as a kid in high school you could stand up for the kids and you should – but you never did because it would make you either a queer-lover or a queer yourself"[10] (Brian, 0414 class discussion, 2008). In this sense, the underlying logic of the sympathetic self is inherently utilitarian. That is, by acting sympathetic to the marginalized groups, members of dominant groups are, in fact, protecting their actual privilege.

Responsibility for the marginalized

The third type of moral sentiment that pre-service teachers expressed in their narratives about privileged identities is the sense of responsibility to stand up for their marginalized counterparts as allies. For members of dominant groups to carry out the act of standing up for the marginalized groups as allies means that they have to not only

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[10] Brian came from a small town where he described the social environment as "conservative" that was not tolerant of homosexuality. In fact, Brian had a close aunt who was a lesbian. According to Brian, growing up he knew his aunt always had "cool friends" coming to family occasions with her, but they were never introduced as his aunt's significant others to him. Brian *figured out* his aunt relationships with her girlfriends by himself in middle school and confirmed his suspicion with her older brothers. As Brian told me in the interview that he felt mad at the people who did not tell him the truth because they made same-sex intimate relationships look like a terrible thing that he could not know as a child. Brian said: "I'm like if it's such a terrible thing, why am I supposed to still love her, you know?" (Brian, 0418 interview, 2008). Brian never disclosed the information in his TE200 class or in his papers. He only shared the information in my interview with him when I asked him to talk about the course content that he could relate to the most. He chose the topic of sexual orientation as it helped him understand his experience.

recognize the injustice of inequality but also challenge the legitimacy of its social foundations. Their support for the marginalized groups is not motivated by their sympathy for the *Others* but rather by their criticism against the social order that bestows privilege on them. Because allies advocate for transformative changes in the existing social order and are not afraid of losing their privileged status as a result of the changes, they are often perceived as *sellouts* by their own social groups. As previously noted, the fear of being ostracized and criticized by in-group members is one of the reasons that members of dominant groups keep silent on the problem of privilege (Johnson, 2001). Brian's fear with regard to being labeled as a "queer-lover" or a "queer" if he was to confront heterosexist harassment of his peers provides a vivid example in this regard. That is to say, by choosing to ally with members of out-groups, the privileged individuals could no longer enjoy the full scale of power as they are more likely to receive prejudice and discrimination for their advocacy for the marginalized groups that they affiliated with.

The moral sentiment of responsibility derived from one's ally identity was expressed by three white female heterosexual pre-service teachers – Stacy, Robin and Sharon – whose accounts revealed their struggle with racial or heterosexual dominance by virtue of their strong sense of affiliation with the African-American or the gay community through their close relationships with members of the two groups.

Stacy, who we met in the preceding section, became a strong advocate for equal rights for sexual minorities after witnessing blatant heterosexist discrimination against her close gay friends over and over again. We have known from the previous discussion that Stacy's parents had a negative view on homosexuality and were not supportive of her

advocacy for gay rights issues by virtue of their religiosity. I asked Stacy how her parents felt about her participation in gay rights campaign. She said:

> Stacy: My mom was actually, was completely perplexed. She was like "why you do such a thing if you're straight". She didn't understand at all. She's...she felt like it was something that only you know lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, etc., etc., should be participating in. I kind of just say the whole like "well, you know, what about the Civil Rights Movement? They did need some white people to get their point across." And the Women's Movement did have men helping them out, so...and you know, I said "I just I have a lot of friends that I want to support." and I think it's something that's important and something that I feel like I can be knowledgeable about and tell people about. And so, after I kind of explained to her she was like "I guess that's an okay reason" (Stacy, 0425 interview, 2008).

Whereas Stacy was able to comfort her parents by showing them her heterosexuality to buffer the tensions over their opposite stance on homosexuality, she still faced the pressure of her parents' disapproval. Not to say all the negative reactions she received for being wrongly labeled as a lesbian. Nevertheless, rather than withdrawing her support for the gay community, Stacy was determined to be an ally who committed herself to the responsibility for promoting the well-being of non-heterosexual identified people. Stacy believed that like any other subordinate group needing strong support from the dominant groups to win the battle of equal rights, being a straight ally was the best use of her heterosexual privilege.

Similarly, Robin, who had black and white biracial half-siblings from her mother's first marriage, and Sharon, who was in a relationship with a bi-ethnic black-Indian male, both expressed frustration with white people who they perceived as ignorant of the persistent problems of racism. Unlike Stacy whose sense of responsibility as a straight ally was solidified and reinforced through her active involvement in organized campaign, Robin's and Sharon's white ally identity was mainly enacted at a interpersonal

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level within their relations with friends and family members. Moreover, whereas Stacy openly presented herself as a straight ally in her TE200 class when sharing her opinions on and experience with heterosexist prejudice, Robin and Sharon never disclosed their close relationships with racially out-group members within the context of class discussion. The information was first made known to me in the end-of-semester final interview that I conducted with Robin and Sharon. I later found out that they also disclosed the information in their cultural autobiography paper. Although neither Robin nor Sharon made any strong statement that directly revealed their commitment to the anti-racist enterprise as Stacy did to her anti-heterosexist endeavor, it does not mean that they did not have a solid sense of responsibility that compelled them to speak up for racial minority groups. Conversely, if we take a close look at what Robin and Sharon said about their almost speechlessness on the topic of racism in TE200 class, we will see that beneath the silence was their struggle with a sense of unfulfilled responsibility. In the rest of the section, I will present Robin's and Sharon's testimonies with respect to their entanglement with the duality of their white ally identity. I shall begin with Sharon's overall frustration with the class discussions on the topic of racism in her TE200 class.

In my interview with Sharon, she criticized the course readings for being too *simple* in terms of only aiming for convincing the readers that "oppressions do exist". Sharon took Johnson's book chapter *We're in trouble*, a required introductory reading on the social foundations of privilege, oppression and difference for students in Sharon's TE200 class, as an example and criticized: "I found it just so disheartening that he had to dumb his audience down or the fact where he'd be like, "You know oppression exists. You know racism exists in the world"; and that it was even more disheartening that that

article was enlightening to most of the class" (Sharon, 0429 interview, 2008). Sharon was frustrated by her classmates' comments that indicated their lack of knowledge about how racism operated nowadays and found herself trapped by the emotional turmoil by virtue of their naivety. She continued:

> Sharon: I think it's very quick on my part not so much judge but to get like angry and be like, "Why didn't you know?" And I think that has been my biggest kind of hurdle with the TE 200 class because I talked to Fred (note: course instructor) and it was one of our conversations where I was just like, "I want this conversation with them. I want them to have this conversation with me" (Sharon, 0429 interview, 2008).

Although Sharon expressed a seemly strong desire to have a conversation with her peers about racial discrimination and white privilege, yet based on my observation in the class, such a conversation never came along as Sharon was fairly quiet for the most part during the class sessions. I asked her if she felt compelled to have that conversation with her peers, why she never brought up her personal experience or, at least, her boyfriend's experience in class as a way to initiate the talk. Sharon responded:

> Shih-pei: Okay, but you never said, you never told the class your background like you came from a very diverse school and some of the experience you have with your African…I don't know if he's an African American or just black?
> Sharon: He's black and Indian.
> Shih-pei: Oh black and Indian. Okay, bi-ethnic, bi-ethnic boyfriend. You never shared that with your peers.
> Sharon: You know, but I think that also goes back to that environment was created where it would be said, but sometimes you just want to avoid the conflict because it also goes back as to what I said earlier Shih-pei where like looking at me I'm an identifiable white woman.
> Shih-pei: Yes.
> Sharon: So, it would come off and I don't know if it would come off to some people another way but I mean I wanted to avoid conflict because I caused enough in that class all the time.
> Shih-pei: Really? I didn't see that.
> Sharon: I caused a lot.
> Shih-pei: Okay.

> Sharon: I caused a lot[11]. But I mean I'm not the type of person to be like, "Well, I have a black boyfriend so I know what's going on in the world." And I mean and I think if I were to brought that up like, "Oh well I have a black boyfriend and he thinks this," like they would've been like, "Oh, well, she has a black boyfriend and she thinks she knows everything about what's going on," and that goes back to the idea of like white identity and that even though like I've had these experiences and I'm very open and very diverse, I'm still identifiable as a white woman (Sharon, 0429 interview, 2008).

Here we see that Sharon's sentiment of responsibility to speak up for racial minorities was discouraged by her tendency to avoid conflicts as well as the potential discredit she perceived to receive if she were to bring up her bi-racial boyfriend as a backup for her opinions. Perhaps, what discouraged Sharon even more was her boyfriend's comments on her anger toward her white peers. Sharon told me that she was baffled and frustrated when hearing her boyfriend saying that as a white person, she would never really get to know the life experience of racial minority people.

> Sharon: he and I had a long conversation because he knows that I have struggled with this class. And I think he has kind of reshaped a perspective for me because one of the days where I just came home and I was just so frustrated with class he just looked at me and he was just like, "Honey, you don't know." And I was like, "What do you mean?" and I was like, "I don't know? I've had all these experiences. I have this and I have this, and I have this in the background. And I'm shocked that people..., they just don't get it," and he's like, "Honey, I mean this in the most loving way." He was like, "You don't know because you have not walked in their shoes." And so I think if I were to walk up to someone randomly on the street and be like, "Well, I know this, and I know this, and I know this," there still is that difference in the color of skin that I think goes deeper than just like, "Okay, well, alright we get along now." And they're like, "Oh, okay, well, you know, you're well educated." Like it goes past that because of the color of my skin I have kind of had and I'm not going to phrase this the right way, I've had it easier and I haven't had to deal with the stigma that surrounds like the minority. So, as much as I have been exposed to a diverse background and exposed to every, you know, experience that I have been exposed to, there is still... is that one element that I am not a minority (Sharon, 0429 interview, 2008).

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[11] Interestingly enough, while Sharon perceived herself causing *enough trouble* in her class, as a participant observer, I didn't really get the feeling that Sharon's opinions caused any noticeable contention in class. In fact, compared to Danielle, Lacy, Julie and Tucker, who were in the same class with her, Sharon actually spoke much less than these four students.

Noticeably, there is a sense of powerlessness that underlies Sharon's frustration. The powerlessness of having to constantly be questioned and confronted by the skepticism of what-do-you-know-about-racism from both white and minority communities on her road to becoming an *active* anti-racist ally. Such sense of powerlessness reflects pre-service teachers' frustration with the caricature of their self-image as a white ally in the face of the seemly-entrenched racial boundaries. Sharon was not alone. The predicament that Sharon dealt with was also faced by Robin, a daughter of a mixed-race family.

Robin was raised in a racially mixed household with a white father who was an anti-racist activist during the era of Civil Rights Movement, a white mother who was married to an African American, and two black-white biracial siblings from her mother's first marriage. Moreover, she went to predominantly African-American schools with her siblings throughout her K-8 educational career and was exposed to the history of the African American community both at school and at home. According to Robin, growing up she had been engaged in frequent conversation about racial inequality with her family members, therefore, she was unaware that people often felt uneasy about the topic and did not expect to hear a white girl talking about racial discrimination against African Americans until attending a predominantly white high school. As Robin noted in her cultural autobiography:

> At McDonald people felt awkward discussing slavery and the Civil Rights Movement, as if it was something white people could not discuss without the presence or approval of African-Americans. On the contrary, in Northville the topics were discussed with pride (Robin, cultural autobiography, 2008).

Like Sharon, Robin often felt subtly questioned by peers in high school when she talked about the African-American community. Therefore, she would draw on her family and educational background to *legitimize* her viewpoint. Robin recalled her high school experience in the interview:

> Robin: Well, I guess during high school I was very open about like, "Oh I went to a school that was all African-American. Oh my brother and sister are African-American." Because a lot of [my peers] said we shouldn't be talking about this. And I was like "not talk about it? That's ridiculous." And so then, I felt like if I told people then they'd be like, "Oh okay. Well, I guess we can talk about it", you know, because you're "legitimate" or something (Robin, 0501 interview, 2008).

Later in the interview, I asked Robin a follow-up question with regard to her use of the word "legitimate".

> Shih-pei: You said earlier that when people know more about your family you feel that they see you as legitimate to talk about these things [racial issues]. Why you used the word "legitimate"?
> Robin: Why do I use it? Just because I think people...and I almost kind of, I don't know if I carry the same belief or not, maybe.... that people think unless you experience oppression yourself, then you don't know what you're talking about. And you know...I don't necessarily believe if that's true or not. Because have I felt oppression myself or have I been just really close? I mean my brother and sister they've experienced being called the N-word in a negative way versus the positive way and it's very hard for them to live....I think it was hard for them when they were younger to live in an African-American community but then to have white parents. I think that was hard for them (Robin, 0501 interview, 2008).

These personal testimonies reveal Robin's predicaments of being both an insider and outsider in the black and white communities. She grew up with her bi-racial siblings in an African-American community, yet speaks up for the community in the appearance of a phenotypical white that often invites reactions of surprise from members of both communities. Furthermore, Robin's testimony about challenges facing her siblings to be fully accepted by the African-American community as children of color with white

parents shows that the racial experiences that Robin and her siblings encounter manifest both the progress and the baggage of the race relations between blacks and whites.

Interestingly enough, while Robin would bring up her siblings as a base of *legitimacy* to support her opinions in high school, she never shared the information in her TE200 class. When asked why she never mentioned her personal experience and family background in class during the discussion sessions on race, Robin explained:

> Robin: I don't know I think like...well I don't know if a lot of people were really open to like talking about race so I didn't want to..., I felt like if I had brought that up I would have been like, "Well, I know more than you because I, you know, have been talking about it since I was five years old. And my brother and sister are black so I can say this and this and this." You know, I didn't want to use my brother and sister as an excuse to talk about it, and to seem all like high and mighty. You know what I mean? So I just kind of like, yeah, I just prefer not to talk about it. And also I think a lot of people would then kind of stereotype me, "Oh her brother and sister are black so of course she's going to think that you know blacks are oppressed and stuff like that." So, I don't want people to use that as an excuse for my opinions (Robin, 0501 interview, 2008).

Robin's concern with respect to being possibly stereotyped by her classmates[12] is very similar to the feeling that I heard from the racial minority participants in my study and also from the small number of minority students I worked with in my own TE200 class over the past several years. That is, the ambivalence toward the experience of tokenization that they were likely to encounter by virtue of their role as the *minority representative* in a predominantly white multicultural education class. More often than not, the act of tokenization was carried out by their white peers for *good intention* in the name of getting the *insider's perspective*[13]. Consequently, such a concern often affected minority students' conduct in the multicultural education class in terms of making them

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[12] There were 18 students enrolled in Robin's TE200 class. They all self-identified as white.

[13] For example, Jamila was singled out by one of her white female classmates as the "local expert of color" when inviting Jamila's opinions about whether she would be offended by a white person "acting black" (0324 class discussion, 2008).

either felt compelled to be more vocal in speaking for *their people*, or became quieter to avoid being pigeonholed by the dominant group. Robin was in a similar position. Yet, unlike the identifiable minority students whose presence would always be noticed even without an active participation in class discussions, Robin's white appearance allowed her to be *exempted* from the unwanted attention, which ironically was another form of white privilege that worked for Robin's advantage.

In this section, I discussed three major moral sentiments (i.e. gratitude, sympathy, and responsibility) that emerged from pre-service teachers' testimonies of their privileged identities. As we have seen in the above analysis, these sentiments were mediated by the pre-service teachers' enactment of the moral notion of the self that, on the one hand, allow them to construct their self-worth and deservingness as humble privileged individuals, and on the other hand, enable them to talk about of the plight of their marginalized counterparts as fair-minded persons. In what follows, I will explore how pre-service teachers make sense of their experiences of marginalization.

How do pre-service teachers make sense of their experiences of marginalization?

Demographic marginalization, like privilege, is given to group members without their consent. Making sense of one's unearned disadvantage often involves recalling unpleasant personal and/or collective history that could provoke much negative emotions. Compared to experiences of privilege, pre-service teachers' accounts of their marginalized identities show that experiences of marginalization provide them with richer materials to articulate their moral identities. Telling moral stories about one's negative experiences has been found to be a common practice that individuals use to maintain a positive self-image in the face of poverty (Morgen, 2001), racial discrimination (Lamont

and Fleming, 2005), chronic illness (Werner, Isaksenb, and Malterud, 2004; Rosenfeld and Faircloth, 2004), demanding work condition (Deeb-Sossa, 2007), and other forms of suffering in life (Shweder, 1990, 1997). In the pre-service teachers' narratives of marginalized identities, a common testimony that emerged centered on the idea that they had made themselves into good people by managing their 'marginalized identities'. There are two types of moral conceptions of the self that capture pre-service teachers' sense-making of their experience of marginalization. The first type I refer to as *"becoming a stronger and better person"*, which focuses on individual merit and worthiness in relation to one's sense of self-actualization. I characterize the second type of moral presentation as *"standing up for my people"*, which evolves from one's sense of collective responsibility and group solidarity to stand up for "people of my own kind".

It should be noted that marginalization was experienced differently by pre-service teachers given the nature of social contexts in which their social identities were marginalized. At a macro-structural level, privileged status is given to people who fall under the categories of dominant groups (i.e. Whites, males, Christians, native English speakers, middle class, heterosexual or able-bodied people) in one way or the other. In this sense, one's experiences of marginalization in relation to his/her subordinate group memberships are structurally defined, and affect the person, by and large, in the form of shared collective struggles. However, at a micro-situational level, members of dominant groups could experience marginalization as situational minorities when the power dynamics in the given environment do not seem to operate in their favor. For example, white students who attend a predominantly racial minority school might find themselves in a marginalized position. In fact, being a situational minority group, white students

would have to learn how to see themselves through the eyes of other racial groups that constitute the numeric majority at school and have the micro-situational power (Collins, 2000). In other words, marginalization can be context-specific experiences for members of dominant groups as a result of situational subordination.

Becoming a stronger and better person

Despite the fact that pre-service teachers' experiences of marginalization differ in their form, frequency, and degree of severity, pre-service teachers in my study largely portrayed the negotiation of marginalized identities as a path to self-actualization. They attributed personal qualities such as being compassionate, resilient, independent, persevering, genuine and well-rounded as well as their strong sense of honor and dignity to their successes managing disadvantage. The underlying conviction that '*whatever does not destroy me can only make me a stronger and better person*' appeared to be the most powerful sentiment that guided pre-service teachers' sense-making of marginalization.

The resilient self

For pre-service teachers whose social identities have been constantly under siege due to the historical legacy of institutionalized deprivation and the detrimental mistreatment or continuing stigmatization, the forms of marginalization they encounter often were associated with varying degrees of hostility. In such circumstances, their positive self-image was mostly mediated through the construction of a *resilient self*. The following personal testimonies from Danielle, Marvin, and Julie show us how the pre-service teachers enacted a moral self that emphasized a personal quality of resilience to confront open discrimination against their race, sexual orientation, and religious view.

Danielle: Racial discrimination does nothing but motivate me to continue to do my best

Growing up in a large racially segregated city in which African American residents constitute over 80% of the city's total population, Danielle did not have much contact with people outside her African-American community. Coming to Midwest University, a predominantly white school, was a big life transition for Danielle as she now felt constantly reminded that she was being judged and evaluated as a *black female.* Danielle wrote in her cultural autobiography:

> My freshman year I lived in Lyndon Hall, which is for the most part predominantly white, besides the football players. There were only four black young women who stayed on our floor. My roommate and I faced a few altercations because of our race. Once for instance, a group of girls on our floor wrote some very vulgar and rude statements on our door. Currently, I live in Washington Hall, but now I am the only black person on my floor. I have been harassed, so far, two times this academic year. These experiences do nothing but motivate me to continue to do my best in school and not be intimidated by the majority on my floor/community. I am only receiving practice for the real world as far as I am concerned (Danielle, cultural autobiography, 2008).

The above passage shows that Danielle empowered herself by conducting a self-image of being resilient in the face of racial bigotry. The resilient self was a positive identity that assured her that she could defend herself against racial bigotry and discrimination. Racism did not damage her self-worth. Rather, it made her a stronger person.

Marvin: Be positive, there's no point in constantly looking back at those negative things

Marvin, a gay-identified pre-service teacher who we met previously in the discussion of social class privilege, shared his personal journey of growing up gay in a heterosexist society and how his distressed life in middle and high schools shaped some of his most important personal attributes both in the interview and his cultural autobiography. He wrote:

> I grew up very closely with my twin brother. [....] In middle school we decided to be the first male cheerleaders. We thought it looked fun so, we signed up and tried out. It ended up being one of the emotionally hardest experiences in my life. At that time I had not understood that I was a homosexual and my brother definitely did not and does not identify as homosexual. We knew we would face some harassment, but never to the degree of what happened. We were kicked continually in the hallways, called every type of derogatory LGBT word imaginable, things on our locker would be hazed and ripped down, and it even got to the point that one kid flicked a ruler into my brother's back ripping open stitches from a small mole he had removed. We had very little support from teachers and staff. We even tried talking to the principle about the issue. It was ignored. I think we were too embarrassed to tell our mother because we were afraid that she would make a scene. I was in a school where oppression was being freely allowed and lightly handled. We were scared to walk in the hallways. We were treated differently and we were extremely targeted and uncomfortable. It was rough (Marvin, cultural autobiography, 2008).

Later in my interview with Marvin, I asked him what made him remain positive and optimistic after all the harassment and hostility he encountered during his adolescent years. He responded:

> Marvin: I've experienced a lot of really negative things in my life, and...I'm one of those people who put those negative feelings away and say let's come to those on a rainy day. So there's no point in constantly looking back at those negative things. [.....] I've seen enough of these negative things. There's no point in dwelling on them. I mean everyone does it, everyone gets into those times when they have to think about these things and that's why I'm positive because I want to be. And if I think about the other things it's just going to be depressing and what's the point of being depressed...there's no point (Marvin, 0429 interview, 2008).

Similar to Danielle, Marvin also sought an empowering narrative of his marginalized identity. He inverted his negative experiences by framing them as the crucial part in his development into a better person, a "*privilege*" that could not be obtained otherwise given his multiple privilege status bestowed by his whiteness, maleness, and upper-middle class background. As he concluded: "It is at this point in my life though that I look at these experiences as privileges because they taught me about life and taught me about some of the differences I hope to make as a teacher. These

experiences shaped my identity. I am a much more caring and compassionate human being because I can relate to people on many different levels of oppression and understanding" (Marvin, cultural autobiography, 2008).

Julie: Becoming more confident in standing up for what I believe

The last example from Julie reveals yet another type of social oppression – anti-atheist sentiment – that very often comes in the form of even stronger demoralization of one's worth; nevertheless, the detrimental effects of anti-atheist sentiment are largely overlooked or justified in the name of God[14]. Approximately one-third of the pre-service teachers in my study self-identified as "non-religious" people. However, only two called themselves "atheist" (i.e. people who do not believe in the existence of God). The rest indicated their disassociation with particular religious affiliations by either saying that they did not practice religion or claiming to be agnostic (i.e. people who believe that human beings cannot know whether God exist or not). Such a phenomenon mirrors what has been found in some national surveys that suggest while a significant portion of Americans claim to be non-religious, only a small percentage of people openly adopt an atheist identity (Hout and Fischer, 2001). According to Edgell et al (2006), this might be due to fear of outright disapproval and to the demoralizing social stigma attached to atheism in the U.S. society.

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[14] In the article *Atheists As "Other": Moral Boundaries and Cultural Membership in American Society* (2006), Edgell and her colleagues found that despite the increasing acceptance of religious diversity in American society, the boundary between believers and nonbelievers remains strong. According to Edgell et al, intolerance of atheists is largely rooted in moral and symbolic, rather than ethnic or material, grounds. Americans believe strongly that there is a close connection between religious faith and personal morality. Therefore, people who do not have any religious belief are usually regarded as immoral and untrustworthy. In fact, Edgell et al's study suggests that atheists are at the top of the list of groups that are most openly rejected from Americans both in public and private arenas. Survey responses indicate that Americans are least likely to elect an atheist candidate to public office and are unwilling to accept their own children marrying an atheist. It shows that atheists are one of the most stigmatized social groups in this Christian dominant society.

Julie described her frequent encounters with anti-atheism in her cultural autobiography as follows:

> Over the years I've only received negative responses to my religion (or lack thereof depending on your definition). I heard "You're going to hell," over and over again. In time I grew resentful and closed off any possibility of joining a religion, or at least any of the Western religions (Julie, cultural autobiography, 2008).

According to Julie, constant discrimination against her disbelief in a sacred power did not defeat her but only made her a more confident person who knew how to stand up for what she believed in. She noted:

> I think that to be atheist in this country makes you a minority. America is mostly Christian or some denomination of Christianity. I have a very bad opinion of Christianity thanks to a decent share of bad experiences as well as some fundamental principles of Christianity that I really don't agree with. I admit this is something that I'm working on. My attitude is as long as you don't try and convert me or disrespect other religions then it's all good. I definitely think that being an atheist drove me to speak up and stand up for what I believe in more. It is probably the first social issue that I learned to stand up for. I'm very comfortable with confrontation because of it. I think that people need to hear other voices, not just ones that mirror what they believe (Julie, personal exchange, 2008).

In addition, Julie believed that her experience of marginalization as an atheist also taught her the importance of forming opinions on the basis of careful consideration of contesting perspectives. As revealed in the above passage, although Julie personally did not believe in the existence of God, she did advocate for acceptance of religious diversity and mutual respect for divergent religious views. From Julie's perspective, religion itself does not cause discrimination; it is people who are doctrinaire and who try to convert others into their views or use religious doctrines to justify injustice that creates problems and oppression.

The dignity of the forgotten

Whereas the manifestations of racism, homophobia and anti-atheism often take the form of brutal intolerance, some marginal identities are expressed/reported/... by individuals in the form of neglect and under-appreciation. In such circumstances, constructing a sense of dignity became salient in pre-service teachers' narratives. Leo, a son of dairy farmers, thought his isolation and feelings of inferiority during his years in predominantly middle-class schools had an important impact on his view on class inequity. He recalled being singled out by a teacher in front of the whole class for his family's continuation in traditional dairy farming, an industry that the teacher considered outdated and economically worthless. Leo described his resentment towards the degradation in his cultural autobiography.

> When I was in sixth grade, the teacher asked if anyone's parents were farmers and I was the only one who raised my hand. The teacher went on to explain how farming was a thing of the past in this state and smart families were becoming part of the skilled workforce. I felt a lot of anger toward that teacher but also a sense of shame. To my thinking at that time, a teacher was a smart person who should be respected. This one was telling me that my family was stupid for continuing to being farmers (Leo, cultural autobiography, 2008).

Despite feeling resentful at being put down because of his parents' occupation, Leo was able to mobilize a positive self-image by comparing himself and his brother, children of hardworking workers, with a "spoiled" friend raised by wealthy parents in suburbia, who, according to Leo, was arrested for stealing his neighbor's property as a consequence of always having things handed to him on a plate.

> Leo: When we grew up on a farm, we did chores. I mean I can remember doing chores when I was like eleven, everyday. And it was a family business you had this feeling, to make this work we all got to do our part. At the same time my parents gave us a monthly allowance, you know, like wages, because they didn't believe that somebody should spend their time and effort and not get something for it. And of course there was no taxes taken out of it or anything like that. But we learned the value of work, of a good work ethic. My brother's friend, he lived in the suburbs, he got an allowance every week whether he did the chores he was

> supposed to or not. One day he's walking down the sidewalk, he looks in there in a neighbor's open garage, he's seeing cases of pop and he just took one. He walked into the garage, took one, and just walked out, got caught, got a record, and my brother told me this. And my brother isn't the most deep thinking person I've ever met and he says, he goes, "I thank god we were raised the way we were." And he goes, "We know better." (Leo, 0418 interview, 2008)

Leo employed moral evaluative criteria to position himself as superior to his wealthy peer. Through the creation of moral superiority to a representative of "people above", Leo empowered himself by instilling a sense of dignity in his working class identity.

Likewise, a sense of ethnic dignity was manifested in Julie's discontent with the "white-washed" representation of Asian Americans' experience in the mainstream racial politics.

> Julie: We're ignored! We're ignored! We're the ignored minority group! Just because we're not struggling with...class issues or financial issues, or educational issues. But doesn't mean we're not a minority. We still have, we still face...some...sort of...our experience still differ from white...mainstream...culture. And it's also different from black and Hispanic, but we're ignored, you know. Because there's part of white privilege that I definitely can relate to coming from middle class background, coming from Asian middle class background. So, but they call it white. That's why I refuse to identify with it. I'm NOT white. You can't make me white. (Julie, 0420 interview, 2008)

From Julie's perspective, Asian ethnic groups as a whole have a long history of not being treated with dignity due to the neglect of their experience of subordination to systems of white supremacy, which has long been veiled in the myth of Asian Americans as "honorary whites" who are immune to the effect of institutional racism (Tuan, 1999; Zhou, 2004). In the above passage, Julie's demand for dignity was powerfully displayed in her ending statement "I'm NOT white. You can't make me white".

Whereas class-based and race-raced marginalization is not equivalent to each other, the above testimonies from Leo and Julie show that the students shared a common

way of emphasizing part of their marginalized identity, whether be social class or race, as being forgotten and neglected.

The well-rounded self

Previously, I noted that members of dominant groups might attend to marginalization as a situational minority in a social environment where their presence and perspective do not represent the dominant view. Stories concerning one's experience with situational minority status were told mostly by white pre-service teachers who attended schools with high concentration of racial minority population. From their perspective, the definition of "majority" and "minority" had a different meaning in their school context where white students did not constitute the numerical majority. Experiences of intensive interracial contact and/or competition yielded available resources for these pre-service teachers to construct an image of a *well-rounded self* that indicated their knowledge and ability to connect with people of different races. This sense of well roundedness often intertwined with their pride in being an "enlightened white" in contrast to those who lacked exposure to other races and only made sense of the *Others* through the lens of stereotypes. Jamie's assertion was a typical example.

> It is one thing for a child to see "different" kinds of people on television, but only interacting with those of a fellow race. It is a completely different thing to be called "that little white girl" by a classmate in first grade, as was my experience. Through my classmate's differentiations, I found a quick way to realize that everyone is not the same. There was no clear-cut majority in my elementary school; we were all basically in a confetti pile of races and backgrounds. Having that opportunity allowed me to recognize (no opportunity to be ignorant) and also be more comfortable around "different" people from a very early age (Jamie, cultural autobiography, 2008).

Another white pre-service teacher, Tim, shared similar views with Jamie by comparing himself with his friend who, according to Tim, was uncomfortable with

African Americans as a result of growing up with limited exposure to diverse groups of people.

> Tim: A friend of mine went to Catholic school for most of his life and then came to Western. And when he came to Western he was very nervous around black people. And that's something that I've never really felt. But I guess if you grow up in a mixed community and everything you kind of don't make a big deal out of it (Tim, 0422 interview, 2008).

It is worth noting that white pre-service teachers' sense of enlightenment and well roundedness often mixed with their ambivalent attitude towards the idea of "white privilege". Such ambivalence was particularly salient when they felt they had been treated unfairly by racial minorities. Jamie, for instance, noted that faculty members in her school tended to show their favoritism towards students of their race, therefore, she was favored by white administrators, yet discriminated against by African-American faculty members.

> The faculty played their part, heavily favoring the "clean-cut" white students. In noticing this, it became an asset to "act white", and behave in a way that came off as more pretentious than educated. In doing this – the students were more likely to receive more cordial treatment from administrators. What came as a new arrival, interestingly enough, was the presence of black faculty members that showed clear racism against the whites. I can clearly remember a black vice principal, as I was waiting in line to get a tardy slip from her – handing passes to the three black kids in front of myself, yet as I arrived at the front of her desk I received a lecture on responsibility and a nice ticket to room 208 [translation: where the bad kids go for an hour, after being kicked out of class] (Jamie, cultural autobiography, 2008).

Nevertheless, from Jamie's perspective, favoritism on the basis of racial affiliation was more of a norm than an exception. As she put it:

> While special treatment was handed out in some areas, the realization that our race did not rule every aspect of our world was handed right back. Racist tension will always exist, but I would never complain about the balance my high school years gave to me. The white population never expected to be "on top". Where one side of the scale tipped, the other side would try to tip right back, and it really allows the student whom emerges from that school to grasp hold of the imbalance that rules our society (Jamie, cultural autobiography, 2008).

What her high school experience taught her was the nature of power relations among different racial groups was essentially fluid and its manifestation was, by and large, situationally determined. This realization served as a tool that Jamie used to frame her situational disadvantages in a positive light.

Standing up for my people

As we have seen in the preceding discussion, on a personal level, pre-service teachers' sense making of their experiences of marginalization is closely linked to the enhancement of personal qualities. On a collective level, however, to make sense of one's marginalized status means to make sense of the collective struggles one shares as part of a marginalized social group. It thus led pre-service teachers to construct their moral identities not merely in terms of making oneself a good *person,* but rather a good *group member.* The data suggests that *standing up for my people* was mostly used by pre-service teachers to construct a *collective* sense of the moral self. In this sense, pre-service teachers' sense of group solidarity and belongingness provided them strong motivation to promote their collective well-being. The following examples from Steven and Danielle are representative in this regard.

Being a white homosexual male from an upper-middle class household, Steven's experiences of marginalization is mostly related to homophobia and heterosexism, the type of social oppression often legitimized and tolerated and even accepted at school and in the society. This type of oppression can be easily internalized and become manifested in self-hatred, self-pity and distress (Allen and Oleson, 1999; Williamson, 2000). In his cultural autobiography, Steven recalled his suffering from internalized homophobia during his high school years.

> High school is a time where social acceptance is the top priority, so admitting to being gay was not an option for me. I had established a strong reputation, that at the time, I feared would be tarnished forever if my sexual orientation became known. Based on my involvement in musical and theatrical activities, I had already taken on the Gay stereotype and had been called a "fag" and "queer" by numerous acquaintances. In my fear of overt oppression, I completely denied any connection to being gay. Ultimately, I endured an internal confliction that directly affected my educational experience. My academics often took a beating as I suffered from depression and loss of sleep over my hidden sexuality. My interactions with peers, teachers, and my involvement in school were often tainted by consuming thoughts of being gay. Looking back, I see now that I was a victim of what Iris Young describes as an oppressive 'cultural imperialism' in her article "Five Faces of Oppression." I lived within a combination of fear and sadness: fear of oppression from others and sadness in myself for not living honestly and comfortably (Steven, cultural autobiography, 2008).

According to Steven, he began questioning how "normal" he was as early as the fifth grade. Yet, he kept his feelings to himself until college. He described feeling trapped by a hopelessness of being gay because it "was not part of the pre-meditated plan that had been created for me by my parents and surrounding community. The stereotypical homosexual lifestyle went against the concept of "normality" established by my surroundings and that petrified me" (Steven, cultural autobiography, 2008). After coming out of the closet, Steven turned his personal struggles into a strong commitment to advocating for gay-rights issues. He believed in the power of education for eliminating the prevailing biases and discrimination against sexual minority groups and envisioned his future teaching career as a long battle to fight for the wellbeing of non-heterosexual identified youth.

> The struggle of LGBT students continues to be forgotten or ignored by many teachers and administrations. I will make it *my* goal as a future educator to acknowledge and encourage the inclusion of LGBT issues in teacher training and curriculum planning. It is an intricate issue that scares many educators across the country because exposure remains limited. However, for the emotional, mental, physical, and intellectual well-being of students like myself, these issues must be addressed. (Steven, cultural autobiography, 2008)

Similarly, the following accounts from Danielle vividly capture her strong sense of commitment to speaking up for the African-American community. Such a responsibility, according to Danielle, was frustrating at times. But to be a responsible member of a racial group and a residential area that struggled with enduring prejudices and misrepresentation, Danielle knew that it is her duty to get *her people* heard through her voice.

> Attending Midwest University has been an experience all of its own. It was an adjustment to come from a predominantly black school to a predominately white school. In most of my classes I was and am still the only black minority. So, when the issue of race comes up, of course, I am the only voice to speak for my people. This responsibility can sometimes be frustrating, but I take it as an honor and privilege to attend Midwest and a duty to represent my community (Danielle, cultural autobiography, 2008).

When asked how this sense of responsibility to represent her community affected the way she conducted herself in college classrooms, Danielle said:

> Danielle: You're always on guard; you always have to make sure that you're on top of things or even further than the rest like ahead. Because the minute...you don't want, the minute you slack off you don't want that to be the representation that they keep in their mind for everyone and that's what some people tend to do a lot. "I had a class with this one black girl and she never read so I'm not going to study with her" because, you know, that can happen. So you don't want that...to be the picture that somebody has in mind when they meet someone else. So, you try not to give off those negative stereotypes because you don't want that to affect the way that they may treat someone else (Danielle, 0423 interview, 2008).

As revealed in the above passage, Danielle's sense of responsibility for her community not only influenced her conduct as an individual, but also extended to anonymous others who were part of the *collective "us"*.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I examined the moral meanings that pre-service teachers constructed to make sense of inequalities in their personal life. My findings suggested

that although pre-service teachers identified and criticized the fundamental structural problems of inequality, they tended to take an individualistic view on the moral meanings of their experiences. That is, the majority of pre-service teachers interpreted their experiences of privilege and marginalization as opportunities or trials to *become better people*. In describing their unearned advantages, pre-service teachers largely enacted the moral sentiments of sympathy and gratitude as a way to justify their deservingness. Because the moral enactment of a sympathetic and/or a grateful self often involved pre-service teachers' altruistic desire or action in terms of giving help or recognition to marginalized others, it thus enabled pre-service teachers to distinguish themselves as *good* privileged individuals from the *bad* privileged individuals who took their privilege for granted and were blind to, if not actively contributing to, the plight of the marginalized.

The moral enactment of positive self-images was even more salient in pre-service teachers' meaning-making of their experiences of marginalization. In describing their management of negative experiences as members of subordinate groups, pre-service teachers frequently interpreted the meanings of their unearned disadvantages as valuable opportunities that only made them stronger and better persons. Through enacting positive self-images in the face of their subordination, pre-service teachers were able to construct a sense of empowerment by positioning themselves as morally superior to their privileged counterparts.

While most pre-service teachers were conscious that their experiences of marginalization reflected larger social structures, only a few of them expressed their commitment to confronting systematic injustice facing the social groups that they

belonged to. These pre-service teachers felt strongly about their responsibility to stand up for *their people*. In other words, these pre-service teachers grounded their moral identity in their sense of group solidarity. For them, personal betterment could not be fully achieved without a significant improvement in the collective well-beings of their groups.

Chizhik and Chizhik's study (2005) found that pre-service teachers, regardless of their race, gender and social class, overwhelmingly label themselves as *privileged* even though they are not oblivious to the disadvantages associated with their subordinate social identities. Similarly, participants in my study also largely conceptualize their unearned disadvantage as the driving force behind their achievement. While pre-service teachers' positive attitudes toward their experience of marginalization manifest their enactment of individual agency in the face of unjust treatment (Chizhik and Chizhik, 2005), the inversion of negative experiences into positive ones in pre-service teachers' accounts could be partially due to the contexts in which their stories are constructed. Whereas the contexts of interviewing and reflective writing create the space for pre-service teachers to elaborate and explore their feelings and opinions about their positions in the stratified social systems, studies have found that respondents tend to present a positive picture of the self when they are asked about opinions, attitudes, evaluations, values or beliefs (Weiss, 1994). Further research is needed to address this limitation.

Finally, past research suggests that pre-service teachers tend to use moral logic to reason and justify social privilege and marginalization (Mueller and O'Connor, 2007; Mulvihill and Swaminathan, 2006; Solomon et al., 2005). Findings from this chapter in some ways resonate with this literature. Nevertheless, research studies that examine pre-service teachers' perspectives on inequalities mainly draw their conclusions on pre-

service teachers' accounts of the *privileged self* or the *marginalized others*. We know little about what pre-service teachers think about their own marginalization and other people's privilege and how their interpretations of the *marginalized self* or the *privileged others* reflect their moral reasoning about the social order. The present chapter, hence, is an effort to fill in this gap.

CHAPTER 5

MAKING SENSE OF THE STUDENTS

Introduction

It is widely suggested by previous studies that pre-service teachers' interpretations and understandings about working class minority students are largely biased and shaped by their ingrained beliefs in individualism (Ahlquist, 1991; Baldwin et al., 2007; Case and Hemmings, 2005; Gomez, 1993; Sleeter, 1996). More often than not, teacher educators put forward criticisms of "individualistic, resistant, and color-blinded white pre-service teachers" as a rationale for the implementation of multicultural teacher education. For example, one teacher educator began her article by saying:

> My students, who are prospective high school teachers, reflect many of the common attitudes held by the larger general population; that is, they tend to be fairly apolitical, individualistic, and non-confrontational, and most often they view situations and people from a personal point of view. My primary challenge as a White teacher educator is thus to intervene in such a way that my students do not reproduce in their teaching what they have experienced in their schooling (Ahlquist, 1991, p.158).

In a more recent article, two authors described pre-service teachers participating in their study in a similar vein:

> Most students in these courses are White women ages 18 to 25 from lower middle-class and middle-class families who have had minimal or no contact with people of color. This sample of White women is reflective of the public school teacher population in the United States. [....]Rather than confront issues of race and racism, these students tend to distance themselves from the curriculum in apparent acts of resistance. Failing to recognize and engage in self-reflection on race and racism, these future educators will undoubtedly carry hidden assumptions and prejudgments into their classroom interactions with students (Case and Hemmings, 2005, p.606-607).

As a result, much of multicultural teacher education research is built upon the presumption that pre-service teachers endorse individualistic beliefs and are oblivious to

the role of structural forces in personal outcomes. Yet, from the perspective of the cultural toolkit theory, people hold multiple and competing understandings of the social world that often involve a mixture of individualistic and structural considerations (Swidler, 1986, 2003).

In this chapter, I will use four types of attribution schemas (individualistic, culturalistic, relational, and structuralist), adapted from research on beliefs for causes of social stratification (Bobo, 1991; Kluegel and Smith, 1981; Smith and Stone, 1989), to conceptualize pre-service teachers' reasoning about demeanor, aspirations and achievement of low-income minority students they worked with in community-based educational programs and school settings. An ample body of research has found that people seldom rely exclusively on one type of causal reasoning to explain and make sense of the complexity of the social phenomena (Anagnostopoulos et al, 2009; Cerulo, 2008). These four types of causal reasoning schemas, hence, shed some important light on the present study as it allows me to look beyond the prevalent presumption of individualistic tendencies of pre-service teachers in the current multicultural teacher education literature.

Several major questions that guide this chapter are how do pre-service teachers describe low-income racial minority students who they work with at their service-learning site? What kind of characteristics do they notice about students' ability, behavior, attitude, demeanor and aspiration? To what causes do they attribute these characteristics? To answer these questions, I examine both pre-service teachers' written work (service-learning journals and final reflection paper) and interviews I conducted

with each participant. In the discussion that follows, a brief overview of each attribution schema is presented.

Individualistic Schema

The central tenet of the individualistic scheme is the idea that individuals are ultimately responsible for how far they can go in their lives. It is believed that one's social standing and mobility are determined by personal traits such as drive, skill and efforts. Because these traits are achieved, not ascribed, and opportunities of achievements are open to anyone who is willing to work hard, hence those who take good advantage of opportunities succeed; those who don't, fail. From the perspective of individualistic schemas, individuals are responsible for their outcomes because they have full autonomy over their decisions and actions.

When pre-service teachers' reasoning emphasizes students' personal traits as the driving cause for their behavior and attitudes, performance and expressed aspirations, I assigned the code "individualistic". Jamie's description of Natali's perseverance in doing math problems exemplified the use of an individualistic attribution schema. As she noted in her journal: "I worked one-on-one with the most adorable and sweet-hearted girl named Natali, who struggles with the math material. It has nothing to do with the fact that she does not want to study it or learn. – It's simply that math just isn't connecting with her right now. But she tries SO hard! And, together, we were able to get through the entire list of math problems" (Jamie, SL journal #2, 2008). The above reasoning was individualistic; Jamie thought the reason why her assistance to Natali was so efficient was due mainly to the Natalie's own effort and drive to overcome the difficulties.

Culturalistic Schema

Causal explanations that build on a culturalistic schema also emphasize the role of personal traits but blend them with structural considerations. From a culturalsitic perspective, there is a reciprocal relationship between personal traits and structural forces. It is suggested that members of certain social groups display certain characteristics in common across individuals, due to the cultural environment they are socialized into. Lewis' (1959) culture of poverty theory, suggesting that 'the poor get poorer' because of their adaptations to the impoverished life condition, represents a typical culturalistic approach to the causes of poverty.

Despite the unsettled criticism for its essentialist fallacy, culturalistic understandings of out-group members are widely accepted and often used as a folk theory by ordinary people to make sense of social differences. Nevertheless, it often reinforces stereotypes and reproduces biases of "the other". In her description of an Afghan girl's demeanor, Julie presented a good example of the use and misuse of a culturalistic schema as she wrongly attributed the girl's arrogant attitude to the cultural influence of the Indian caste system. "The girl, her personality is stronger. So, she shoves the other kids, talks back, that kind of attitude.....at first I thought she was Indian. You know Indians have that class system; the highest class have that kind of, "I'm better than you" attitude. But...she's not." said Julie (Julie, 0326 interview, 2008).

Relational Schema

Relational reasoning looks at students' behavior and attitudes as reciprocal responses to teaching conduct and teacher-student relationships. These factors are external to students' control, but are considered crucial for their influence on students' thoughts and actions. The following from Tucker is a typical case of relational reasoning.

In Tucker's reasoning, students' disruptive behavior reflects their lack of respect for their teacher, which is due to the teacher's expression of her dislike for the students. As he noted:

> Many students would often tell me that they are the worst class that this particular teacher had; they said they knew this because "the teacher told them so." I also would hear many of the substitutes that I worked with refer to this class, as "the worst one of the day, and that there was no helping them." I feel that by being constantly bombarded with degrading comments such as that, many of the student felt that they were truly inferior and thought of themselves in a way that they could not be helped, thus they gave up (Tucker, final reflection, 2008).

Using a relational schema, Tucker explained students' disengagement and disruption in class as reflecting how they were treated by the teacher.

Structuralist Schema

The last reasoning schema – structuralism – emphasizes structural factors in the causal explanations of students' behaviors and achievement. 'Structural factors' in the present study refers specifically to social dominance and subordination, unearned privilege and marginalization attached to ascribed or semi-ascribed characteristics i.e. social class origin, gender, race, sexual orientation, language, disability and national origin. Robin, for example, attributed students' low educational and career aspirations to their socio-economic disadvantages. She wrote in her journal:

I asked a student what he wanted to be when he grew up. His answer was, "to clean houses." The assignment we were working on was coming up with reasons to learn how to read, so I had to come up with some reason why his future profession would require reading. I was completely astonished that this boy had such a realistic picture of the world that he could not imagine being anything else but a housekeeper. [....] The teacher often assumes that the students' parents do not have high qualification jobs. I've

heard her use examples of jobs like housekeepers, cashier, and janitor but never doctor, lawyer, or police officer. She seems content about the students' home life and low standards for learning and living. The fact that this teacher doesn't have high expectations and that a student strives to clean houses is most likely a factor of their social class (Robin, SL journal #3, 2008).

Such an acknowledgement of ascribed inequalities as the basis of individuals' achievement manifesting in pre-service teachers' structuralist reasoning marks the fundamental difference between structuralist and culturalistic causal attribution. That is, while individuals' modes of thinking and behaving, from the perspective of culturalistic reasoning, embody collective attributes of their social groups, it is the horizontal notion of "difference" not the vertical notion of "inequality" that constitutes group distinctiveness as it does in structuralist reasoning.

An analysis of the course papers and interview transcripts indicates that pre-service teachers' reasoning involves a mixed use of different types of attribution schemas. Table 5-1b and 5-1c show that none of the 21 pre-service teachers in this present study constructed simplistic understandings about what they observed from and experienced with students by only considering the effects of individual or structural factors in their reasoning process. In what follows, I will present examples to further illuminate pre-service teachers' enactment of each reasoning schema.

Table 5-1a: Overview of Attribution Schemas Used by Pre-service Teachers

	Interviews	Journals/papers
Individualistic	46	34
Culturalistic	25	16
Relational	59	26
Structuralist	37	44
Total frequency	**167**	**120**

Ta

Ash
Bri
Kyl
Cat
Car
Dar
Jul
Jam
Kal
Jam
Lac
Gra
Sta
Leo
Mar
Rob
Ste
Son
Sha
Tim
Tuc

Tab
lear

Ash
Bria
Kyl
Cat
Car
Dar
Julh
Jam
Kal
Jam
Lac
Gra
Sta
Leo

Table 5-1b: Attribution Schemas Used by Pre-service Teachers in Interviews				
	Individualistic	Culturalistic	Relational	Structuralist
Ashley	3	0	0	1
Brian	1	3	0	0
Kyle	4	3	1	3
Cathleen	2	0	10	6
Carl	2	2	0	1
Danielle	1	3	8	0
Julie	1	4	4	1
Jamila	1	0	0	2
Kali	2	0	3	1
Jamie	9	1	7	1
Lacy	2	2	7	3
Grace	2	0	0	3
Stacy	2	1	0	3
Leo	1	1	0	0
Marvin	4	1	0	2
Robin	3	1	8	4
Steven	1	0	0	3
Sonya	2	1	2	1
Sharon	1	0	0	1
Tim	1	1	0	0
Tucker	1	1	9	1
	46	25	59	37

Table 5-1c: Attribution Schemas Used by Pre-service Teachers in Service-learning Journals and Papers				
	Individualistic	Culturalistic	Relational	Structuralist
Ashley	3	5	0	1
Brian	1	0	0	2
Kyle	3	0	0	0
Cathleen	0	2	5	3
Carl	1	2	0	3
Danielle	2	0	2	2
Julie	2	0	2	0
Jamila	2	0	0	2
Kali	2	0	2	0
Jamie	4	1	3	1
Lacy	2	1	1	2
Grace	1	3	0	6
Stacy	1	0	0	3
Leo	0	0	0	2

Table 5-1c (cont'd)				
Marvin	2	1	0	4
Robin	2	0	4	1
Steven	1	0	0	4
Sonya	2	1	3	2
Sharon	1	0	0	3
Tim	1	0	0	0
Tucker	1	0	4	3
	34	16	26	44

Individualistic Reasoning

Similar to what most of the current literature suggests with regard to pre-service teachers' tendencies to make individualistic explanations about low-income minority students' behavior, attitudes, aspirations and academic performance, my analysis also shows that individualism is the dominant schema that pre-service teachers draw upon to characterize their students. However, unlike past research, which finds that pre-service teachers largely employ individualistic causal explanations to criticize students' academic disengagement, disruptive behavior, and low aspirations, my data shows that pre-service teachers used an individualistic schema to form both positive and negative views of students. That is, while pre-service teachers at times attributed students' non-conformity and disinterest in learning to personal factors such as personality and motivation, they did, indeed, praise students for their personal strengths in terms of intelligence, efforts, social skills and also abilities to handle challenging life conditions. Pre-service teachers praised the students when they showed their attempts, efforts, and capacities to overcome the structural barriers against them. They criticized their students, however, when they regarded the students as not making good use of their abilities to achieve as much as they are capable of achieving. These two types of individualistic reasoning both involve pre-

service teachers' assessment of the influences of structure and agency on students' attitudes and behavior, and the extent to which these attitudes and behavior reflects students' commitment to advancing their personal development. In the discussion that follows, I will present examples of pre-service teachers' positive and negative evaluation of their students when using an individualistic schema.

The power of human agency

Rather than overlooking the effects of structural disadvantages such as poverty, language barrier or learning disability on students' achievement and general outlook on life, I found pre-service teachers frequently admired students for their resilience and social savvy in the face of life hardships. In fact, much of pre-service teachers' positive opinions about the students' capacities to manage impoverished life conditions involve self-reflection on their inherited privileges and their self-confessed inability to manage the amount of difficulties that the students live with in everyday life. Several pre-service teachers noted that the students were more socially mature than they were at the same age given the students' experiences of managing to survive social and economic deprivation. Stacy, for example, clearly connected the level of maturity and resilience she observed among the refugee students with their perseverance amid various hardships they encountered before and after a final resettlement in the United States. She said in the interview:

> Stacy: I definitely feel like they were a little bit more...worldly than I was at that age. But I'm sure and that make sense because especially if they're first generation immigrants or refugees, I'm sure that they have had a lot more worldly experience than even I have at this point in my life.
>
> Shih-pei: Why do you think that makes sense?
>
> Stacy: I guess well, because you know I feel like my entire life I've really – like I do have my own jobs and you know I do buy a lot of my own stuff, but I have had like [a] fairly easy life. Like if I was really in trouble, all I would have to do is call

> my parents and say you know, "I really need help. Either lend me some money or come get me, whatever." And it wouldn't be a problem. But you know these kids grew up in refugee camps or were like forced out of their homes or whatever and like to me that's just...I mean I think that if that had happened to me I would be like really cynical and just like untrusting of everyone and I look at them and they're like happy and like just intelligent and everything. And it's like they handle it well and I can't even really imagine what they've gone through because I have really no idea what it's like to live in a refugee camp or to be a refugee (Stacy, 0425 interview, 2008).

By comparing herself with the refugee students, Stacy displayed her acknowledgement of social impediments to these students' development and more significantly, her endorsement to the power of human agency. The exercise of human agency, according to Stacy, enabled refugee students to maintain an optimistic outlook on life and to counter the negative effects of structural forces on their well-being.

Similarly, another pre-service teacher, Jamie, portrayed her fourth graders as savvy social actors who were sensitive to their surroundings and knew how to work the people around them so as to make their needs meet. Such social skills and sensitivity, from Jamie's perspective, manifested students' agency in terms of their attempts and efforts to seek out opportunities that were not automatically handed to them in their families and the overcrowded classroom due to the scarcities in resources. Jamie noted in one of the debriefing interviews after my site visit:

> Jamie: I think some of them may come from situations where they have to be more vocal about what they want – as opposed to kids that come from other families where their needs are served based on the parents and their assumptions. Like "here's your bottle of water", "here's your dinner with all the food groups represented". These kids may have to ask what they want, they have to let their needs be more known. Some kids have everything on a platter and just handed to them. So I think, in that way, they recognize what sort of things they need to do to get what they need, and that goes beyond just food and shelter.
>
> Shih-pei: Did you see that in the class today?
> Jamie: I see that in the class everyday. Everyday with those kids.
>
> Shih-pei: So, for example?

> Jamie: Um, okay just as a bare minimum example. They try to follow directions, Joey today had his hand up for a long time waiting for Mrs. Neff to notice; then he started to do the "Mrs. Neff...Mrs. Neff...Mrs. Neff..." thing, finally when he put his hand up again – it was only up for a second – and she was like "Joey has a question". Through that he realized that putting his hand up the way he was "supposed to", wasn't getting him the attention that he needed, but when he alerted her over and over, he was able to get her to look over, and now he knows that is what he needs to do (Jamie, 0415 interview, 2008).

The above passage shows that Jamie perceived students' perseverance in making their needs known as an enactment of determination that empowered students to maximize their personal gain. Moreover, their perseverance was portrayed as the type of survival skill that children grew up in well-off households would not be able to develop because of their sheltered upbringing. Here we see that the logic behind pre-service teachers' praise for students' strengths is very similar to how they make sense of their marginalized social identities as I delineated previously in Chapter 4. That is, the mentality of "life hardships that do not destroy you can only make you a stronger person", which, in some ways, paradoxically justifies social inequalities by inverting the meaning of social marginalization as a gain and privilege as a loss.

The unfulfilled self-projects

The data indicates that pre-service teachers presented individualistic criticism mostly in situations when they regarded students as not performing their full capacities. In other words, pre-service teachers had a relatively low level of tolerance when students did not take advantage of their personal strengths to advance their progress. Kali's frustration with her students not making their best efforts out of their potential was a typical example. She delineated her disappointment in our conversation.

> Kali: I know that they can do that, but they're not focused, they're not trying, they're just sitting there. And I'm like, "Come on. Like you can finish this whole thing in five minutes but you're not trying." And so then I get frustrated.

Shih-pei: What do you think why they're just not trying?

Kali: I don't know. I actually discussed this with one of the other girls that does service-learning the same time I do yesterday. There's a couple kids in the class who are very smart. They know they can finish their work in a short amount of time. And I don't know, maybe it's the attention - they'd rather just get the attention so they goof off. You know they'll goof off for half an hour and when they see that recess is in five minutes they're like, "Alright, I better buckle down and do this because I can't go to recess if I don't have this done." And so they'll finish it and it really only took them the five minutes but they've been working you know for thirty-five minutes. And you're like, "Come on. You could've been learning. You could have had another assignment to start or you know you could have been doing something useful with that time. But instead you goofed off until you knew you had to finish it." That's frustrating.

Shih-pei: Why that's frustrating? I think these kids are pretty smart.

Kali: I guess.

Shih-pei: They do enough to get by. Why is that frustrating?

Kali: It's especially frustrating because that's the human way of doing things. Everybody does that, everybody just does what they have to do to get by, and that's not helping anybody you know. It's almost like, I don't know, it's like self-hindering to do that to yourself. And you don't think about it like that, you're like, "Well I'm still getting this done. I'm having a good time while I'm doing it." But you know you're still hindering yourself, you're holding yourself back from something more. And I mean...what's more might just be another math sheet that maybe the rest of the class wouldn't get to but you know in the long run that might help you. That might be, I don't know, that might be better for you anyway. But you know they don't see it like that, they just want to have fun and hang out.

Shih-pei: Did you ever talk to the kids that they can do more that they're more than capable of doing more math worksheets?

Kali: Oh yeah. I tell them that, "I know you can do this. I've seen you do this. Just why aren't you doing it?" They don't care (Kali, 0423 interview, 2008).

The above passage exemplifies pre-service teachers' individualistic reasoning with regard to their dissatisfaction with students for not making good use of their personal capacities.[1] As exemplified by Kali's opinion, pre-service teachers perceived

[1] Brian's accounts provide another good example. He wrote in his service-learning journal: "It's sad really. A lot of the students at the boys and girls club seem to try to ignore the future or when asked about it they admit that they will never be more than what their parents are. However there is a lot of potential in the group to become so much more than what they see. Most students have cultural capital of how first to interact with one another, and talk their way into or out of situations. They have as what I refer to as "Street Smarts" if nothing else. Those of you who have seen Tommy boy (yes I am using Chris Farley to describe

students' tendency of doing the minimum to get by instead of committing to their best efforts for a long-term personal project in life as a form of self-hindrance that will come back to haunt them in a long run. Kali's criticism such as "do that to yourself", "hindering yourself", and "holding yourself back" indicates the underlying individualism in her causal reasoning in terms of individuals' responsibility to make right decisions for their personal advancement. By the same token, individuals are also responsible for the negative consequences of the wrong decisions they make to hinder their potentials. From Kali's perspective, the wrong decisions that her students made including doing less, goofing off and wasting their time and talent had no one to blame for but themselves.

Culturalistic Reasoning

Culturalistic reasoning puts emphasis on personal qualities but sees these qualities as inherited cultural traits that signify one's memberships in certain social categories. It is built upon the presumption that individuals of the same cultural group are distinct from other people because of their shared characteristics: attitudes, beliefs, practices or modes of behavior (Pierik, 2004). When pre-service teachers use a culturalistic schema to make sense of students' attitudes and behavior, they draw their reasoning mainly on stereotypical generalizations about the social groups that the students belong to. For example: working class people use a more direct tone when they speak, adolescents are self-centered and obsessed with socializing, African Americans have more upfront demeanor, and boys are more rowdy than girls, etc. Although cultural groups are largely constructed and perceived as internally homogeneous and externally bounded units, the

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this point) know that street smarts are knowing what people need to hear or want to hear to see your point of view. This is one powerful skill that almost all the students at the boys and girls club have as well as others that are more individual skills (Brian, SL journal #3, 2008).

fact that people are bearers of complex and multiple social identities makes it a common phenomenon for pre-service teachers to make overlapping culturalistic attribution in their reasoning. As we will see later in this section, pre-service teachers' inference about African American students' directness in their manner involves essentialist perceptions of both the culture of African American community and the culture of the working class. In other words, pre-service teachers perceived "black talk" or "African-American language" as a cultural marker that differentiated them from the students not only in terms of their race but also in terms of social class. In the following discussion, I will first discuss singular culturalistic reasoning in which pre-service teachers foreground the influence of one certain aspect of students' social identities on their behavior and attitudes. After that, I will discuss the plural culturalistic reasoning that involves two or more categorical memberships.

Singular culturalistic reasoning

A typical example of singular culturalistic reasoning is the notion of "acting one's age". Many pre-service teachers attributed students' attitudes and behavior to the shared characteristics of their age group. When pre-service teachers used age to make sense of the students, they often perceived students' attitudes and behavior as products of their developmental stage that every child, regardless of their gender, race, social class, would have to experience before they enter adulthood. This type of age-related attribution was more commonly used by pre-service teachers to characterize teenaged students rather than younger elementary children, which might be due to the highly visible representation of teenagers in the media. Like many other cultural groups, the collective images of teenagers as a culturally distinct group are mediated, reinforced and

reproduced by many socially circulated *formula stories* of teenage subcultures in terms of their clothing style, music taste, social relationships, mentality, and worldview. These formula stories and one's own personal experience together provide rich materials for pre-service teachers to construct meaningful explanation for their observation on their teenaged students. Tucker, for example, attributed students' lack of interest in Mrs. Smith's history class to their age. As he wrote in his service-learning journal:

> I noticed that many of the kids in the classroom had a very low attention span. Many of them didn't listen to the teacher for more than a few seconds before starting up a conversation with their friends. I got the impression that school was not the most important thing on many of these children's minds. I however feel that school isn't the most important thing on most sixth grade classrooms across the nation. Middle School is a time when kids are busy developing their first major social groups. It is a time when having the most friends is more important than learning about history (Tucker, SL journal#1, 2008).

Rather than framing inattentive and talkative students as troubling individuals, Tucker interpreted students' disruptive behavior as a common characteristic shared by most teenagers at the same developmental stage[2]. Such a culturalistic understanding of students' behavior shaped Tucker's service-learning experience in important ways. On the one hand, Tucker recognized that as a young adult pursuing an advanced degree for his future career in college, he has developed the type of mindset that was very different from that of middle schoolers in their view on education and social relationships. However, a relatively small age gap between Tucker and the six graders still gave him an advantage of refreshing his memory of adolescent culture so as to connect with students on that age level. Tucker noted in the interview: "with a lot of the kids it was just they

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[2] Similarly, when I asked Danielle to explain the sassiness of a girl who she worked with in a small tutoring group, Danielle responded to me by saying that the girl was just a regular thirteen-year old, "[t]hey think they know everything. That's about it that I can think of right now. They're just in that middle stage" (Danielle, 0402 interview, 2008). Danielle understood the girl's demeanor as a reflection of the traits of teenagers as a group.

like talking about rap music and stuff. And I have listened to that - I do listen to that still so I can talk about that with them" (Tucker, 0425 interview, 2008). On the other hand, Tucker noticed that when teachers failed to recognized their teenaged students as a group of adolescents with unique cultural characteristics that were different than their own, they often applied a deficit view on the students, hence conducting their instruction in a threatening manner that only led to more tension and conflicts. The following excerpt from my interview with Tucker after one of my site visits provides an example:

> Tucker: [....] last week the sub...it was like a horrible thing to say, he – after the class was over, he's like, "Oh these kids they're just a bunch of young criminals."
>
> Shih-pei: He said that to you?
>
> Tucker: Yeah, after everyone had left the class, which I was like, I mean, I wasn't going to say anything to him. I didn't know if that was really my place – I kind of just went along just to see where he was going to go with it all. And he was just resaying that, he was mad like, "They're criminals." Like there's no hope for them.
>
> Shih-pei: But what did the kids do?
>
> Tucker: Kids stuff. I mean, yeah, they talked back but I mean, who doesn't? I wouldn't peg them as criminals. They were talking back. They're not...they're not – I wouldn't say they're misbehaving I just feel like kids at that age are fidgety. And they hate the fidgeting – the teachers, the substitutes; and Mrs. Smith hates it, too. I noticed even though I've only been with her twice. Kids like playing with their pencils when she's talking – all this I feel like is a normal thing to do and they hate that. She's always shooting them looks and they're always getting like yeah like reprimanded for like fiddling (Tucker, 0404 interview, 2008).

The above passages show that Tucker founded his culturalistic reasoning about students' conduct in the classroom on the underlying idea of "kids at that age do things like that". He constructed the racially mixed working class six graders who he worked with in Mrs. Smith's class as a culturally distinct group not in terms of race or social class, but rather, in terms of their age. In doing so, Tucker perceived students' inattentiveness and talkativeness as normal behavioral patterns among most members of

the same age group. He sought to connect with these 12-year old young adolescents through his knowledge of pop music, a cultural characteristic that once marked his identity during his adolescence. Although Tucker has exited adolescence, being a college sophomore in his early adulthood still gave him a sort of post-adolescent status that made him believed that he was more relatable to the students in contrast to the older teachers. In responding to my question "what do kids like about you", Tucker said: "I'm not just this old lady teacher that they have nothing in common with. I think that's one thing. I feel like everyone, often my experience in school, everyone seems to like the younger teachers better because you can almost relate to them on a lot of things" (Tucker, 0425 interview, 2008), which again reveals that Tucker characterized the students as well as their cultural differences from the teacher, first and foremost, in terms of their attributes as members of different age groups.

Plural culturalistic reasoning

Plural culturalistic reasoning appears when pre-service teachers' inferences about students' conduct involve consideration of cultural influences from two or more social categories that students belong to. The best example that typifies plural culturalisitc reasoning is pre-service teachers' perceptions of communication gap that highlights social boundaries between them and the African American students in terms of differences in language use, race and social class.

The issue of a communication gap was one of the most salient cultural differences that most pre-service teachers reported experiencing in their interactions with their students. Ashley, a white pre-service teacher who worked with a group of predominantly African American girls at the Boys and Girls Club, wrote in her service-learning journal:

> The girls at the Boys and Girls club definitely speak a lot different than I do. Their accent, speech patterns, etc. are a lot different than mine. I feel like sometimes, like Delpit suggested, that whites and blacks give instructions differently. [.....] I am not speaking their "language" and they're not speaking mine. We're at a bit of an impasse as it is difficult to communicate what each other wants. Where do we go from here? (Ashley, SL journal #4, 2008)

Ashley's experience "we're at a bit of an impasse as it is difficult to communicate what each other wants. Where do we go from there?" was not an uncommon predicament among pre-service teachers in general. In the end-of-semester service learning survey across all 18 course sections of TE200, pre-service teachers were asked to evaluate the extent to which different types of perceived difference between them and their students contributed to the challenges they encountered on a 4-point scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 4 (a lot). Difference in communication and interaction styles was rated as one of the top factors that contributed to pre-service teachers' challenging experiences. Approximately 20% of pre-service teachers said that it contributed 'a lot' to the challenges they encountered at the service-learning site, 42% said 'some', followed by 27% said 'a little', and only about 10% of pre-service teachers said 'not at all'. Putting together, slightly more than 60% of pre-service teachers noted a significant effect of differences in communication styles on their experiences with the students.

My participant observation in TE200 classes and analysis of pre-service teachers' service-learning papers and interview transcripts indicate that pre-service teachers frequently attributed communication challenges in their interactions with the students to the incompatibility in speech patterns among members of different social groups. However, pre-service teachers' sense of speech patterns as an indicator of group differences was mainly built upon a binary mode of group classification. They conceptualized inter-group differences in ways of speaking as a dichotomous divide

between blacks and whites, and between lower and middle class people. Drawing on a culturalistic understanding of students' speech patterns, many pre-service teachers perceived students' aggressiveness and directness in their verbal expression and interactions with others as manifesting the influence of "African American culture" and/or "the culture of lower class". Carl, for example, noted in the interview.

> Carl: They [African Americans] are a lot more direct and they have a kind of gag going on that I guess could be related to sports perhaps. Such as if you ever watched football or sports programs you might see guys hitting other guys on the butt or something like that. In the same way I noticed that the kids of African American decent were not afraid to hit each other in class and it was like a joke to them. They would threaten each other and I couldn't really tell if they were serious about it but I think they were in certain degrees. Even one of the teachers, the head, I wish I could remember her name, she was like the head the program, she was African American. One time of the.... some of the students I think her name was Britney, she was not behaving whatsoever and this teacher or this instructor, this principal, the leader, threatened that she was going to get a belt and discipline her and of course Britney just toss this off and of course the leader returned a good minute or two later with a leash in her hand and that definitely got her to be quiet. So, I'm curious as to whether or not these individuals actually follow through with these threats and if they do I have a feeling they have for some reasons they don't get in trouble. I think it's because they see people of the same culture as perhaps their own family. They feel that they should be respected at the same degree whereas I'm a Caucasian male if I were to do it, it might be considered abuse or racism (Carl, 0428 interview, 2008).

Later in his final reflection paper, Carl wrote about his unsuccessful attempt to adapt a "black communicative style" in order for better responses from the African American students. He wrote:

> Unlike the lady in charge of the Boys and Girls Club, I was not raised in a troubled neighborhood and could not connect in that regard. To make up for the deficit that was only getting bigger, I made an attempt to switch my speech pattern to a black communicative style, as it has been documented to be effective in working with African American students. In other words, I adapted a more direct speech pattern, as it is a part of the culture of the lower class and, incidentally, the African American culture as is hinted by the fact that low income black and Latino students compose 80 percent of the population in America's 51 largest urban cities. I began stating things blatantly, like "Turn down your music Denise" and "Hey! That wasn't a nice, apologize," but the responses I received

> weren't any better than before. They followed my instructions, but what I accomplished never had a permanent impact. The next day, sometimes as soon as I turned my back, what I viewed as bad behavior would start up again (Carl, final reflection, 2008).

Although Carl did not receive the type of responses he intended to achieve by taking on "a black communicative style", his depiction of "black communicative style" clearly captured his culturalistic perceptions of African American students' manners of speaking as cultural performance that signified their membership in the black community as well as their upbringing in working class households.

Another pre-service teacher, Julie, also presented a plural culturalistic understanding in her reasoning about elementary students' different responses to Ebonics-speaking college volunteers as opposed to her, who spoke Standard English. Julie noted in an interview:

> Julie: I noticed it was really funny, because even though there's two girls that are white, that are in the REEDs program, but since they grew up in a lower class. So, they talk like, you know, not Standard English. And there's also....there's two black girls, one's in the REEDs program, one's in service-learning, and they also – one of them I'm pretty sure she grew in middle class at least. But, you know she still speaks black talk, Ebonics, whatever you want to call it. The kids seem to listen to them more. The two white girls that speak more low class or whatever you want to label. But they seem to listen better to people that talk like them.
>
> Shih-pei: Hold on I got really confused. The black girls...
>
> Julie: There's two black girls and two white girls. The two black girls speak Ebonics and the two white girls also speak Ebonics – black talk.
>
> Shih-pei: Oh, they also speak "black talk"— the white girls also speak black talk.
>
> Julie: Yeah. But even though they're white, the kids seem to listen better than let's say to me.
>
> Shih-pei: Oh, compared to you.
>
> Julie: Or compared to the other white guy, the other white girl, the other Asian guy. They listen to those four.
>
> Shih-pei: Okay, I got you, go ahead.

> Julie: So, I thought that was really interesting, so I say the biggest thing...I guess the biggest aspect for me that is least in common with them is class (Julie, 0420 interview, 2008).

According to Julie, Ebonics, which is also known as "African American vernacular", is the language widely used by African-American and working-class people, therefore, for Ebonics-speaking college volunteers, their language signals their similarities with the low-income African American and Latino elementary students either in terms of their racial identity or in terms of their social class background. For this reason, the students were more responsive to the Ebonics-speaking volunteers as they gave instructions in ways of speaking that the students were familiar with. In order words, speech patterns as a marker of one's group memberships facilitate or inhibit communication, by and large, through speakers' sense of familiarity with the underlying social norms embedded in the language.

In a culturalisitc understanding, speech patterns are regarded as an indicator of one's group affiliations because they mediate social norms that are accepted and practiced by the group members and are reproduced through the process of generational socialization. For many pre-service teachers, the way they speak reflects the cultural influences from the social surroundings they grew up with in middle-class neighborhoods with high concentrations of white population who speak Standard English as a daily practice. By the same token, the ways low-income and minority students verbalize themselves also reflects their exposure to the cultural influences of their communities that are mainly constituted by working-class people with a relatively high concentration of African American population.

Many pre-service teachers in my study talked about their reluctance to correct students' language both in terms of writing and in terms of communication due to their concern for stepping in on students' culture or being regarded as ignorant about "black culture". Lacy, for example, talked about her experience of being corrected by the students when she tried to correct their language. She noted in the interview:

> Lacy:...a lot of things like language wise they would tell me that I didn't understand them. What was...[pause]. I think the word actually was... 'teaches' when they should've used 'taught' and they were writing a sentence and one of the girls wrote, "So-and-so teaches someone," and it was supposed to be "taught" and so I told her to correct it and she told me that it was a "black word" and I didn't know what to say to that" (Lacy, 0420 interview, 2008).

The student's response to Lacy's correction of her language represents the type of embarrassing situation that pre-service teachers tried to avoid. Not to say that there was a deeper concern for potential conflicts associated with race and social class differences that discouraged pre-service teachers from adjusting their way of speaking to a firm and direct tone. Like Carl noted in the previous interview excerpt, as a Caucasian male he did not feel entitled nor did he feel safe to perform a black communicative style as the head of the Boys and Girls Clubs did. If he were to do it, it might lead to him being labeled as a racist. Through the lens of culturalistic perspective, pre-service teachers perceived communication challenges that they encountered with the students as cultural boundaries that were difficult to transcend. Yet, beneath the language gap was their stronger sense of impermeable differences in race and social class that underlie their sense of separation from the out-groups.

Relational Reasoning

The third type of schema that pre-service teachers used to reason students' attitudes and behavior focuses on the effects of reciprocal relationship between teaching

and learning on the learners. Through the lens of relational schema, pre-service teachers interpreted students' attitudes and behavior as reciprocal responses to teachers' instructional styles and their commitment to supporting students' learning. The data suggest that pre-service teachers who performed their service-learning duties in classroom settings frequently drew their reasoning on teacher-student relations to make sense of students' disruption, disengagement, defensiveness, and despair observed in class.

More than one-third of pre-service teachers in my study provided academic assistance to students in regular classrooms during school hours as their major service-learning responsibility. During the first few weeks of my participant observations in TE200 classes before I began my site visits, I noticed that this group of pre-service teachers expressed more concern for the negative atmosphere of the learning environment to student learning than those who performed their duties at community organizations or school-based after-school programs. Although concerns for negative learning environment were ambiguously brought up by the pre-service teachers during class discussions in the college classrooms, pre-service teachers did not provide much details with respect to teachers' instructions and interactions with the students. It was not until I started site observations did the environmental contexts become concrete and clear to me[3]. My visit to pre-service teachers at their service-learning sites largely increased their willingness to share their true feelings with me. In my on-site debriefing interviews with pre-service teachers, many of them were open about their disapproval of how the students

[3] For example, during my observations in Mrs. Wallace's classroom, I was literally shocked by her entire demeanor. Two things that were particularly striking: firstly, she made sandwiches during class time and then ate her sandwiches in front of students while she was teaching; secondly, she screamed at and scorned the students all the time in my presence, which suggested that she cared very little about how other people might think about her teaching.

were treated by the teachers[4]. Their criticism, however, often involved a mixed feeling of sympathy for the teachers. From their perspective, students' negative attitudes and behavior manifested teachers' low-expectation and disinterest in teaching, which, according to some pre-service teachers, sadly reflected the teachers' chronic dissatisfaction with their work conditions at under-resourced city schools[5]. However, students' negative attitudes and behavior in turn created a cycle of tension that further exacerbated the already strained teacher-student relationships, therefore, caused frustrations to the teachers. For example, Cathleen who did her service-learning in Mr. Jones' classroom, a veteran teacher with 20-years teaching experience in the same school district offered the following testimony when asked to explain why "there's so much despair in the classroom".

> Cathleen: I think that the kids get really frustrated because they'll have a legitimate question that they want to ask him, or they put effort into something, and he says, "Well, that's not very good." today when he told, it was Kay, that was the little girl [to rewrite her essay] and she said, "I don't want to write this over again." And he said, "Well, I love to hear that students don't want to write anything for me." ..... It didn't lead to anything more, because usually it leads into "Go to the office" or you know "You can go take your things and go sit in the hall." .....Tyrus, he was the other one who's suspended, he's gone today. He was the one who said, "I want to kill myself." Like, "dying would be better than living. I just want to bleed to death." I said, "Tyrus, why do you feel this way?" And "It's because I'm not respected. Nobody respects me. I'm not going to respect them. Mr. Jones doesn't respect me. My parents don't respect me. Nobody respects me." So, I know where a lot of that stems from. I feel like Juan is in the same boat, because there is no respect for him either. He's kind of just treated "well, that's Juan, he's going to be Juan." Like his desk is even separated from the rest of the class [by the teacher] (Cathleen, 0327 interview, 2008).

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[4] Their initial hesitance is, in part, due to the assumption of me not being able to fully comprehend the real situations happening in the classroom if I did not see them in person. Cathleen, for example, said to me in the debriefing session after my second visit: "I'm so glad you [were to] see this, because I was like "she probably won't believe some of the stuff that he says or does" (Cathleen, 0403 interview, 2008).

[5] In after-school programs, pre-service teachers often attributed students' disinterest in academic assignments to the nature of 'after-school' time. For them, 'after school' was leisure time that made students' lack of interest in learning justifiable because there was no mandate for the students to complete the assigned work as contrary to what was normally required in school classrooms.

Every time I talked to Cathleen, she always expressed a strong sense of sympathy for the students. She sympathized with the students for being subject to Mr. Jones' harsh treatment and disdain on a daily basis. However, she also sympathized with Mr. Jones, whose cynicism, according to Cathleen, was a reflection of his own sense of powerlessness to the increasing work demands required by the school district[6], a district that has been struggling with the pressing financial crisis and potential sanctions under NCLB for years. Cathleen noted in one of my interviews with her:

> Cathleen: He's been in that school for like twenty years. This is like his twentieth year of teaching. So, I mean, I can tell there's a lot of burn out with a classroom that's constantly changing students. I mean, they had a student die in the classroom six months ago. Just constant things are happening all the time that just make for a really difficult atmosphere to teach in. So, I see why he is because he's probably burnt out. I'm sure he's frustrated. I know that Capitol school district is not the easiest district to be working for right now[7]...[.....] I just think I saw the effect that somebody like him has on a child learning or lack of learning. His attitude in the classroom like his.....just overall bitterness. I think he's just really bitter about so many things. He just doesn't care. So, he just doesn't care. So, it's... I mean he tells students that he doesn't like them. Like he told me on Thursday he was like, "go back to the computer next to the girl that I don't like right now." You know, like he says that and the whole class hears it. He should not be teaching. So...I see that and it's like "okay I'm not going to be like that", but I understand how he got to that point just because I'm sure he's frustrated, he's burnt out. Like I'm sure that he's seen a lot of bad things going on with the students at school and he's gotten such a negative view of them, a negative view

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[6] Mr. Jones' complaint about the school district was revealed by Cathleen in an interview, "he was just complaining and saying that, "The CSD doesn't know what it's doing right now and they better come in here and I'll talk to them." (Cathleen, 0429 interview, 2008).

[7] Like Cathleen, another pre-service teacher Robin, also pinpointed the institutional factors that underlay Mrs. Wallace's negative attitudes toward her students and her job. In my last interview with Robin, she told me that she wanted to pursue a teaching career in urban schools because she wanted to give back to the community where she grew up and received her K-8 education. However, Robin's service-learning in Mrs. Wallace's classroom was more a warning than an encouragement to her aspiration for urban teaching because "I'm so afraid of becoming her that would just be the worst thing possible, I think", said Robin (Robin, 0501 interview, 2008). She continued: "I don't know why Mrs. Wallace wants to be a teacher honestly because she just really, just hates her job. So, I just kind of think I've learned that you're going to come in contact with people who don't want to be in the situation you want to be in. I'm sure it would be really hard working at Maple and working with such a diverse group of students that need so many different things... ,are so below the average...you know level of...so I'm sure it's hard working in that school. But at the same time just being really positive could really help so much more" (Robin, 0501 interview, 2008).

> of teaching. And the students, oh yeah this is the other thing, the students always, well, not always but a couple of them had made comments like, "Mr. Jones has a disease because he's white." (Cathleen, 0429 interview, 2008)

The above passages from Cathleen typify the ways in which pre-service teachers utilized relational schemas to make casual explanations of students' non-conformative behaviors. Drawing on an relational understanding, Cathleen attributed students' non-conformity and frustrations to Mr. Jones' overall bitterness as presented in his teaching conduct[8]. Not only did Cathleen personally experience what she called the prevalent despair in a classroom where there was a lack of mutual respect between the teacher and the students, but she also noticed that there was a subtle racial tension that undermined the teacher's credibility and authority in his students' eyes. It should be noted that although Cathleen speculated Mr. Jones' "being white in a very dominantly minority classroom affects things too because he probably has this view of 'I'm better than them'" (Cathleen, 0429 interview, 2008) and overheard students' comments that seemed to imply Mr. Jones' negative attitudes as being racist, she did not elaborate the causes of negative relationships between Mr. Jones and his students within a structuralist understanding in terms of racial prejudice and conflicts. It would be too simple, however, to conclude that the absence of structuralist articulation concerning the power struggles between the dominant and the subordinate racial groups in Cathleen's reasoning is a piece of evidence of her underlying colorblindness. From a cultural toolkit perspective, not all competing reasoning schemas have equal influence on individuals' sense-making

[8] Similarly, Robin interpreted the prevalence of defensiveness and disengagement she observed from the third graders in Mrs. Wallace's classroom as a defense mechanism in the face of the immense amount of degradation they experienced everyday at school. As she explained to me in the following: "I feel like you have to be a little defensive towards that, sometimes you have to be like "Well whatever. I don't care." You know what I mean? Because if you get that every single day that will really tear you down almost if you take it like seriously all the time, you know what I mean? So yeah you see that a lot. .....So I think they have to meet that with some sort of attitude back (Robin, 0416 interview, 2008).

process. While individuals generally acknowledge the existence of alternative explanations for a given social phenomenon, they tend to foreground the types of interpretive frames of reference in their reasoning that generate the most compelling explanations for them. In such an understanding, Cathleen's emphasis on the role of environmental conditions rather than racial stratification in the relations between Mr. Jones and his students indicates that the relational schema, compared to the structuralist schema, allows her to obtain a better grasp of why students behave negatively in class.

Relational reasoning also appears in pre-service teachers' explanations about the connection between teachers' conduct of "defensive teaching" (McNeil, 2000) and students' academic disengagement. According to McNeil (2000), defensive teaching is the type of teaching strategy that teachers use to reduce student resistance or avoid conflict. When teachers teach defensively, they do not set high expectation for students but rather seek the minimal institutional requirement. Lacy's observation in Ms. Carson's eighth grade social studies class provides a good example. She delineated the negative impact of defensive teaching on students' attitudes and behavior as follows:

> Lacy: I think the reason there are so many people being disruptive and finding other things to do is because they're not interested in what's going on in the class. I think the reading level is a severe thing that changes that because...when the only assignment every single day is reading from the book and all of them tell me they can't read, there's not a whole lot for them to be doing you know. I don't necessarily believe them. I think that they've been told too many times that they're in special ed and that they can't read.....just the other day when Ms. Carson told me that the one girl read at a first grade level, I didn't see that at all. She had read to me before.....I don't think for a reading assignment in eighth grade to only be four pages out of a textbook and for them to not be able to get through it, it makes no sense. I don't think... to keep doing it every single day makes any sense either. I don't know why you wouldn't just take the time to...I don't know it was just really discouraging to.... every single day just show up and for Ms. Carson to give me an assignment but then tell me they probably wouldn't get through it – that's what would happen is that she'd tell me what they had to read but like not to worry if they didn't finish the questions because they never

> do. It just really confused me because I didn't understand how that made any sense[9] (Lacy, 0420 interview, 2008).

According to Lacy, the amount of disruption and disengagement she observed from Ms. Carson's students was the relational consequences of her lack of efforts to engage them in meaningful learning. Ms. Carson's low expectation for the students and deficit view on their learning abilities not only affected her own teaching conduct, but also transmitted to her students as reflecting in their sense of low self-esteem. For Lacy, the relational schema provided her a solid base to construct persuasive explanations of students' disruptive behavior as negative responses to poor teaching was further convinced by her own schooling experience. As Lacy noted, her passion for learning and commitment to pursuing a teaching career was a debt to her own teachers' dedication and encouragement. If teachers could inspire their students so profoundly, they could, likewise, discourage their students to an equivalent extent[10].

Similarly, Danielle, a public school graduate from one of the biggest urban school districts in the United States known for its reputation of being a troubled and poor school system, expressed the same concern for the low-expectation she witnessed in Mrs. Gonzales' sixth grade classroom.

> Danielle: They [the students] don't read. They don't like reading. I hate reading but I always knew that it was something that I had to do, they don't. They don't like it, they don't do it. It's like pulling teeth with them to get them to actually sit

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[9] Lacy later explained why Ms. Carson's teaching did not make any sense to her. First of all, she had never experienced this teaching style throughout her educational career. Secondly, she could not imagine someone who wanted to be a teacher and then allowed oneself to "let the kids slide by more and more every single day and to be okay with over half of your class failing" (Lacy, 0420 interview, 2008)

[10] In the end, Lacy reiterated her frustrations with Ms. Carson's class as follows, a vivid illustration of defensive teaching: "I just don't understand how it makes sense like I said to give them the same assignment everyday knowing that they're not going to get through it and knowing that they struggle with it and don't enjoy it, you know, to make it not anything that's even the least bit relevant or interesting. And it just seems like a lot of busy work and a lot of doing stuff for the sake of being able to put something in the grade book, which doesn't make a difference to them anyways because most of them are failing the class, so the grades obviously don't matter." (Lacy, 0420 interview, 2008)

down and read. And it's even harder to get them to comprehend what they just read. That's a big difference. We could comprehend and I don't think that...they're incapable of it. I think that they haven't had someone to help them to make them comprehend.

Shih-pei: Do you think they don't take their work seriously because they don't care or no one...[interrupted by Danielle]

Danielle: They're...yeah they're not made to care.

Shih-pei: They're not made to care?

Danielle: Yeah. When I say that if the teacher doesn't care about the level of work that they do, after a while they're not going to care about the level of work that they do. So, it's not all their fault that they don't care, it's something about the teacher (Danielle, 0423 interview, 2008).

Danielle's opinion about "students need to be made to care" captured her use of a relational schema to make sense of students' seemly disinterest in reading. From a relational perspective, the level of commitment that students put into their work reflected the level of commitment that teachers were willing to devote to supporting them. Therefore, Danielle believed that the reason why students did not care about their work was because they did not see teachers care about them in the first place[11].

Structuralist Reasoning

The last type of attribution, structuralist reasoning, foregrounds the influences of social dominance and subordination on the ways in which individuals conduct themselves, manage their social relationships, envision and organize their personal life project. In a structuralist understanding, individuals are perceived as occupants of different social positions within the matrix of hierarchies. Significantly, their action and worldview are largely conditioned by their positioning in relation to their privileged and

[11] It is worth noting that unlike other pre-service teachers who were educated in well-funded private and public schools recurrently expressed their sympathy for the urban students, Danielle did not display much sympathy for the students nor did she portray the students as victims of a troubled school system. Instead, she was pragmatic in her views on what the students needed from the teacher and what the teacher failed to provide, but at the same time she also demanded students to take on their responsibilities.

marginalized social identities. Pre-service teachers placed emphasis on the role of structural forces rather than individual agency in students' attitudes and behavior when enacting a structuralist schema for causal reasoning. Their reasoning reveals an acknowledgement of the power structure of social hierarchies and the disempowerment faced by members of subordinate groups.

Social class

Among all the categorical dominance and subordination in relation to social group makers, class disadvantage in terms of economic deprivation and social discrimination against the poor appeared as the most dominant attribution in pre-service teachers' structuralist reasoning about students' behavioral issues and low aspiration for educational attainment. Approximately half of pre-service teachers in my study thought that class-based structural constraints severely impeded upward social mobility of working class children. While they still believed in education was the great equalizer that individuals could achieve through hard work, they also lamented the fact that attending school in run down buildings with outdated textbooks and facilities made it difficult for students to generate interest and enthusiasm in education. The following account from Lacy is representative in this regard. She noted in the interview:

> Lacy: I get the impression that a lot of the students didn't know why they needed an education. And so like I said just for me to be growing up and that to always be what I was taught was one of the most important things, it was just a very very different situation to be in when there are so many outside factors, I mean, I don't even necessarily blame them, you know. After talking to them and being in the school and seeing how they're treated and hearing more about their everyday lives I don't blame them that - that's the impression that they get. But it is a hard thing to adjust to.... But, yeah, mostly resources, like it just really bothered me that books were out of date and there was only the one classroom set and you had to...she [the teacher] had to keep like so close track of all the books and they were being stolen all the time or left places or messed up and there wasn't really anything else to do. There was like a box of colored pencils that they all shared

> and everyone came to class like with nothing, they just showed up, you know. I can't ever imagine going to class without a notebook or a pencil or anything like that. And...so just kind of the...it was just so much based on like you show up and you get credit for being there you get credit for watching movie and it's not connected in any other way (Lacy, 0420 interview, 2008).

Although Lacy repeated her frustration with students' low educational aspiration several times in the interview because she believed that "any one of them would be capable of...getting into a school, having a job" (Lacy, 0420 interview, 2008), yet as we see in the above passage, she clearly enacted a structuralist understanding of students' antipathy toward schooling. For Lacy, students' prevalent antipathy toward schooling in terms of "not feeling like you needed to be there or not feeling like graduating from high school would change anything in your life, would affect how you thought about it" (Lacy, 0420 interview, 2008) was a whole new phenomenon and also a very different kind of mentality for her to comprehend[12]. Nevertheless, putting the blame on students did not help her explain why "most of the students, if not all the students, [she] worked with were operating with the understanding that they were not going to go on in school" (Lacy, 0420 interview, 2008). Rather than seeking an individualistic explanation, Lacy attributed the problem to external factors that were beyond students' control. Especially, troubles concerning inadequate educational resources to serve students' academic needs.

It is not uncommon for suburban pre-service teachers to compare the amount of resources provided for students at their own schools with those they saw at the service-learning site to support their reasoning about how socio-economic factors handicapped

[12] Lacy: "me and my friends growing up there was no question we would go to school. We would carry on in school, we would go to college - that was never like a "maybe" thing, there was always an assumption that we would go to a university. In the same way, there's an understanding, I feel, in my [service-learning] class that they won't. So, I think that's a very different thing to operate with" (Lacy, 0420 interview, 2008).

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working class students, hence caused certain kind of behavioral issues. Steven, for example, wrote in his final reflection.

> Working at Western High School, I have been able to gain a closer look into the effects of limited school funding. My school district was fortunate enough to benefit from the many luxuries of sufficient funding. Textbooks were consistently updated, after school programs were thoroughly financed and every classroom was equipped with every resource imaginable. [....] On a grand scale, Western is by no means at the bottom of the funding spectrum, but the lack of efficient resources is evident. The books that many of the students brought in with them were outdated and mundane. The books were older than those that I was exposed to in middle and high school. How can sufficient and proper learning take place with textbooks that are severely outdated? [....] Truly the only discipline issues that I encountered while at Western came as a result of a dispute over resources. Students would fight about who would get the last set of headphones to listen to a program on the computer, and many students would fight just to get a chance to sit at a computer that worked in the first place. Paper was scarce, so if one student happened to have some, it would most likely be stolen by others, further causing an issue (Steve, final reflection, 2008).

As discussed in the preceding chapter, feeling grateful was one of the common moral sentiments that pre-service teachers expressed in talking about their class privilege. Similarly, in their structuralist explanations with regard to funding discrepancies between the rich and the poor school districts, many suburban pre-service teachers, like Steven, also talked about how "fortunate", "grateful" and "lucky" they were to be educated in well-funded suburban schools[13]. For pre-service teachers, class advantages they received from home and school gave them an upper hand to fulfill their potential with a promise that their hard work would pay off. Conversely, students who did not have such kind of advantages were given the short end of stick that consequently hindered their personal development.

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[13] For example, Grace said in an interview: "I was definitely really lucky and there's definitely a huge disparity between the high schools in G-xxx [home town] and the high schools in D-xxx [adjacent urban neighborhood]" (Grace, 0426 interview, 2008). Similarly, Cathleen noted in her final reflection: "My first impression of the school and the classroom I was in were that of surprise and appreciation for not having to have gone to a school like this" (Cathleen, final reflection, 2008).

It should be noted, however, although pre-service teachers criticized the negative consequences of funding shortage that plagued students' educational rights and life opportunities, they did not suggest redistribution of resources between the rich and the poor districts as a potential solution to the problem. In other words, while pre-service teachers thought "under-resourcedness" was a compelling issue to be remedied, they did not see *over-resourced* schools in which "every classroom was equipped with every resource imaginable" was the other side of the coin. This indicates the underlying utilitarianism in pre-service teachers' thinking about socio-economic inequalities. That is, the improvement of the poor should be made without a cost to their interests.

Another aspect of structural constraint that pre-service teachers noticed was the social discrimination against the working poor that impeded working class students in the form of *anticipating failure*. Sonya, who grew up in a middle-class small town comparing students at her high school, who were expected to succeed, with the Harvey students, who were anticipated to fail in an interview. She noted:

> Sonya: I just think that there was this expectation of a lot of kids in my school that right after high school you go to college, you know, and that's just what you do... I had a really big group of friends and all of us are in college. I think yeah we all are. I mean in different states; one of them in California, one of them in Oklahoma. So I think of the people that I associated with it was just something that you did. You know you go to college and you get a good job and, you know, it's just kind of like this ladder. But here [at Harvey] I think it's different. I think that it's like you work really hard and nothing comes of it, you know. Or there's just not that expectation that you're going to be successful. That you're going to have that opportunity or you're not going to have the resources. You know, because I mean... I feel like all of my friends knew we're going to be able to get financial aide, we're going to be able..., you know, grandparents and our parents are going to help us pay for this stuff (Sonya, 0327 interview, 2008).

The above passage typifies pre-service teachers' observation on the discouragement of anticipating failure faced by working class students. As Sonya pointed

out, the Harvey students were double-handicapped socio-economically at two levels. On the one hand, college education was a luxury to these working class students because their families could not afford to it. This creates a sense of pessimism that leads the students to believe that even if you work really hard, nothing would come of it. On the other hand, the institutional logic of Harvey[14], Sonya believed, was set up to produce workers rather than professionals. The idea that all students should go to college was not an institutional expectation nor was it promoted in Harvey High School. Therefore, the school hinders rather than encourages upward intergenerational mobility of the working class.

Gender

In addition to class inequality, several pre-service teachers drew on gender inequality between men and women to make sense of male students' dominating demeanor and their lack of respect for female peers and college volunteers. Cathleen, for example, was offended by a male student's direct inquiry about her sexual activity and attributed his action to an internalized patriarchal mindset. She wrote in her final reflection paper: "I refuse to be dominated by men however I do not have the strength to fight endlessly. When Denior, one of the boys in my class, made a derogatory remark to

[14] A few weeks after our conversation, Sonya wrote a reflection journal that further explained how the institutional logic of different school contexts affected students' educational experience and outcome. She noted: "A few weeks ago Shih-pei came to Harvey to talk to me about my experience there. She asked me about Harvey in comparison to the high school that I went to and once I thought about it my answer surprised me. I really don't think that there were many kids at my high school that were that different from the kids at Harvey in terms of their attitude about school (which is one thing that I thought would be a big difference) I think the biggest difference comes when you compare the environments of the schools. I think Harvey high school is a lot more focused on discipline and obedience. I think that environment might give kids the idea that the teachers don't really care about their academic success. In my high school, at least while I was there, the biggest focus, it seemed was on learning and getting educated for college. I feel like there were a lot of kids at my high school that didn't care about school and that didn't think they would go to college or even graduate, but they always had people there to help them if they wanted it. I think that maybe at Harvey these kids don't think anyone cares or that anyone is willing to help them. (Sonya, SL journal#7, 2008)

me, I was slapped in the face at how this macho thinking starts so young. I no longer feel as though actions like his should be expected and accepted. I am disheartened by the disrespect women as a whole experience" (Cathleen, final reflection, 2008). Cathleen's account typifies pre-service teachers' use of a gender-based structuralist schema to reason male students' behavior. For these pre-service teachers, gender inequality was evident in their service-learning site, yet was often overlooked and perpetuated by educators because they tended to give boys more attention and tolerate their misbehaviors more than girls' without much awareness[15]or did so under the belief that "boys will be boys"[16]. When teachers failed to recognize their favoritism toward male students, pre-service teachers like Cathleen believed that they reinforced gender inequality by making the hierarchy a norm to accept.

Race

Lastly, race-based structuralist reasoning was used by pre-service teachers who worked in a predominantly African-American after-school program at the Boys and Girls Club to make sense of some students' confrontational persona. This group of pre-service teachers consists of two white males, one white female and one African American female[17]. Both the whites and the African American talked about experiencing a power

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[15] Tucker's observation on Mrs. Smith's attention to her male students provides a good example. He wrote in the final reflection: "I have estimated that nearly eighty percent of the teacher attention throughout each class period is dictated towards the boys, even if her body is turned to the girls her head continues to look at the boys. Due to the fact that she gives more attention to the boys they dominate most of the conversation in the classroom, and thus gain a higher sense of self-confidence, because no matter what they say they get the attention that they want" (Tucker, final reflection, 2008).

[16] Cathleen's experience in Mr. Jones' classroom, again, provides a vivid example. As she noted in the interview: "the boys in the class will say anything to the girls. I mean the girls will complain to me all the time like, "So-and-so said this to me" - he's saying like really dirty things. And I'll tell Mr. Jones that and Mr. Jones will say, "Boys will be boys" (Cathleen, 0429 interview, 2008).

[17] These four pre-service teachers were the focal participants in my study. They were part of the larger group of nine people from the same TE200 section who carried out their service-learning duties at the Boys and Girls Club. The sentiment of "white as minority" was also expressed by the other five white pre-service teachers who were not part of the target group of my study.

shift in terms of privilege and marginalization in relation to their race given the racial make-up of the program. Jamila, the African-American pre-service teacher, recalled her reassuring feeling with the Boys and Girls Club during her first visit to the site in her final reflection.

> When walking into the facility, I saw many kids standing around waiting to get something to eat. They all were black, except for maybe 2% of them. Realizing this gave me a sense of relief because I felt I wouldn't have to change for anyone. I would not have to think outside of the box or try to portray to be "better" than the stereotypes that a lot of people have of blacks all over the country, especially those from urban areas (Jamila, final reflection, 2008).

In contrast, white pre-service teachers were uncomfortable with the environment where they were the *racial minority*. Ashley's discomfort is a typical example. She noted in an interview:

> Ashley: in my hometown there's no black people. I mean, I never spent any time around them and even here in my undergrad, I mean, I didn't have really any on my floor in the dorms and I wasn't really friends with any. So, pretty much I've only really been around white people. So, being in a classroom where I'm only one of the six white people – well, not even that many. One of four.., five – sometimes if the Professor was there. It was kind of not scary, I wasn't ever like in fear of my life or anything, but you know it's not comfortable, it's really uncomfortable especially the first couple of weeks when no one knew what the hell we were doing making web pages. And just not knowing what you're supposed to do and if they're going to even listen to you. So, yeah, I just guess uncertainty about everything coupled with being where it was... and being white and a minority, I wasn't used to, I guess (Ashley, 0426 interview, 2008).

Pre-service teachers' structuralist reasoning about students' behavior in relation to situational dominance and subordination on the basis of race is best exemplified by an incidental tension between Ashley and Denise. During her second week of service-learning, Ashley received a derogatory remark from Denise, an African American girl who was one of the regulars in the after-school program[18]. Rather than confronting

[18] The incident was first unfolded by one of Ashley's TE200 classmates, but later Ashley gave the full story to the class as follows.

Denise, Ashley chose to ignore the remark instead. However, she harbored a sense of fear throughout the course of her service-learning in the program. In her final reflection, Ashley situated her structuralist understanding of her tension with Denise within the context of race relation between blacks and whites at both macro and micro levels. As she wrote:

> Denise grew up in a very different environment than I did. [....] By my being white and Denise being black I have more privilege than her. She no doubt recognizes this, as the people who have told her what to do throughout her schooling career have overwhelmingly been white women. The media images she is confronted with show ideal perfection as a blonde, thin, white woman. [.....] These negative reinforcements of who is privileged and who is not are constantly affecting her ideas of white women. [.....] My prejudices definitely played a major role in how I viewed my service learning experience, especially after the first day. So ingrained was I in the idea that I was normal and everything else was not, I did not even think that the students at the BGC would be looking at me and ascribing characteristics to me. I did not think they would have stereotypes or even prejudices about white people. As we were driving home, Erin mentioned that she wondered what they were thinking about us. I thought a lot about that comment, and I truly think that Denise's ideas about the type of person she thought I was played a major role in her comment. (Ashley, SL final reflection, 2008)

Ashley was cognizant of her white privilege in the society at the larger scale after experiencing the situation where "being white is being a minority" (Ashley, 0426 interview, 2008). She realized that being a member of the dominant group, she was privileged to be oblivious to what African Americans might think of whites. The power

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Ashley: Um, no, okay so like, there is too many of us there – and there were only like, eight kids there. And Erin was sitting at a table with the not-nice girls and there was an empty seat; Annie was like "Why don't you sit right here"? I'm like, 'okay', so I go to sit – and her bag is there. So I am like, "can I move your bag"? But of course, she has her headphones on because why would you pay attention or do anything you're supposed to do? (facetious) So I just like moved it and set it right next to her, and she looks at me and she's like, "cunt". I'm like – okay! Sweet...
Cathleen: What did you say to her?!
Ashley: I didn't know if I heard her correctly, by the time I realized what she had said, I was like, "are you serious"? Like, I didn't know how to react. I didn't want to freak out because, first of all, she is just going to like – I thought she was just going to deny it anyway. So, I was just like, I was just so appalled. (0225 class discussion, 2008)

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shift in the positional status Ashley underwent at the Boys and Girls Club gave her the opportunity for the first time in her life to see herself through the eyes of the "others"[19].

Our understanding of white pre-service teachers' discomfort with the loss of racial privilege at the Boys and Girls Club would not be complete without bringing in Jamila's insights. Like two sides of the same coin, Jamila's feeling of being privileged for her status as a member of situational dominant group at the Club was as solid and evident as her white peers' apparent disadvantage. As Jamila noted in her final reflection:

> Most of the children in this program have privilege, not just me. Most of them are accepted because they are black and come from mostly the same economic background. With that being rooted in them as being acceptable, anyone not in that category automatically does not get treated with the same kind of respect. For example, in our class discussion, a white female got called a "cunt" by one of the female black student's in the program. She was not respected by her at all and quite frankly did not care about the consequences that may have come later on, if any. Now whether that name calling was about race or just because the student did not like her, it was very disrespectful and her privilege of being white worked against her. This example shows just how privilege is organized in social groups and judged by them as well. Although in society, white is privileged, being in smaller groups of people who are not the same race, gender or other binary can work against a person, all because they are the "odd ball" and do not identify with that particular group of people (Jamila, SL final reflection, 2008).

Jamila's perception of how the power relation operating between blacks and whites at the Club was opposite to what it actually was in the mainstream society resonated with her white peers' opinions. While Jamila thought Denise's disrespectful attitude towards Ashley could be a random issue between two individuals, she also believed that Denise's confrontational demeanor was an assertion of her dominant status in the after-school program. From Ashley's and Jamila's perspective, a person's

[19] Ashley wrote in one of her service-learning journals: "I honestly never even thought about my race until I started my tenure at the BGC. I definitely felt like a minority when in the room for the first time, but it still never crossed my mind that the girls and boys there would view me in a certain way because I was white. Having discussed it in depth in class, it's obvious, through the dialogic encounter, that both they and myself are categorizing each other based on race. In general, I felt that my being white was a hindrance to my success with the students" (Ashley, SL journal#5, 2008).

dominant and subordinate status changes depending on the power dynamics in the given social setting. Since one's demeanors often mediate his/her sense of status, Denise's status as part of the dominant group in the Boys and Girls Club thus gave her the privilege to freely express her emotions without having to worry about the consequences of her behavior.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I drew on the theoretical perspective of cultural toolkit theory (Swidler, 1986, 2003) to explore how pre-service teachers make sense of working class minority students by looking at their causal explanations of students' demeanor, behavior, attitudes and aspirations. I identified four types of attribution schemas that pre-service teacher drew upon to reason about students' characteristics. Each type of reasoning involved pre-service teachers' consideration of the weight of individual and structural factors and their causal significance to the ways in which their students think and behave. My findings suggested that pre-service teachers did not enact solely one type of schema in their reasoning about the students. Rather, they kept multiple interpretations on hold and gave weight both to external and personal factors that affected students' attitudes, behaviors and abilities.

As revealed in the interview data and pre-service teachers' course papers, individualistic and structuralist schemas appeared to be the two dominating frames of reference used by pre-service teachers to talk about their students both in the interviews and the service-learning journals/reflection papers. Pre-service teachers' tendency to make individualistic evaluations of students' characteristics resonates with much of the existing research that has found individualism to be vital in American culture and deeply

rooted in the general public's worldview (Bellah et al., 1985). The salience of structuralist reasoning in pre-service teachers' accounts, to some extent, reflected the tenets of TE200 and the conceptual perspective offered by the course materials, which highlighted the structural underpinning of social and educational issues. Understandably, the course curriculum provides rich conceptual resources for pre-service teachers to identify and articulate the connections between structural conditions and individual outcomes. There was also a certain level of instrumental consideration related to the course grade that encouraged pre-service teachers to construct structuralist reasoning, particularly in the course papers, as a way to demonstrate their understanding of the course materials. This is not to say that pre-service teachers' individualistic reasoning is more "authentic" than the structuralist ones. Rather, it suggests that TE200 gave pre-service teachers the language to elaborate structuralist perspectives that tend to be less visible and/or play a secondary role in their general conceptions about the social order.

Pre-service teachers' enactment of individualistic and structuralist schemas manifests their use of cultured capacities acquired from their exposure to the dominant cultural ideology and multicultural education curriculum in a somewhat prescriptive manner. Their culturalistic and relational reasoning, however, suggests a more impromptu use of resources related to the course curriculum and their experiences at the service-learning site. Culturalistic and relational explanations of students' characteristics were mostly found in my interviews with the pre-service teachers. Many of these interviews were conducted in a debriefing format right after my field observation during pre-service teachers' service-learning hours. During the debriefing sessions, pre-service teachers talked about their overall experience with the students on the days I observed

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including incidents/moments that made them feel excited, rewarded, frustrated or puzzled. As a participating observer, I also asked pre-service teachers to explain how and why they approached and interacted with the students in certain ways based on my observation. In the debriefing interviews, pre-service teachers' interpretations about the students were more impromptu and less refined than their opinions expressed in the course papers. However, these immediate debriefings captured pre-service teachers' initial reactions to the critical incidents/moments that might have a more profound impact on their view on working with diverse students in under-resourced environment in the long run if these initial ideas evolve into personal beliefs. Many incidents/ moments that puzzled or frustrated pre-service teachers were related to the perceived differences between them and the students and the observed defensive relationships between the teachers and the students, which highlighted the relevance and usefulness of culturalistic and relational schemas in the making of causal explanations.

Noticeably, it was not uncommon for pre-service teachers to draw on course concepts in their culturalistic reasoning, which in some ways, suggested that pre-service teachers' culturalistic perspective might be an unintentional byproduct of TE200. While TE200 does not intend to foster an essentialist view on cultural differences among different social groups, the course curriculum does foreground the importance of developing sensitivity and awareness to other cultures different from one's own, which could lead pre-service teachers to perceive "cultural differences" as rooted in some sort of essence that marks in-group/out-group distinctions.

From the perspective of cultural toolkit theory, people hold multiple contesting and contradictory perspectives in their understanding of a given social phenomenon with

mixed considerations of the individual and structural causes of it. However, as Swidler (2003) contends, these competing interpretive frameworks are not equally appealing to social actors in every situation. Findings presented in this chapter resonate with the toolkit model of reasoning. The analytical power of toolkit theory, in this sense, allows us to better capture the complexities of pre-service teachers' interpretations about low-income minority students that are often overlooked in current literature.

CHAPTER 6

NEGOTIATING MOMENTS OF UNSETTLEMENT

Introduction

One of the most heated debates among educational researchers is whether multicultural programs actually change pre-service teachers' biases and misconceptions about students who possess cultural characteristics different from their own. Although some studies suggest that changes in pre-service teachers' attitudes and beliefs were evident in the outcomes of formative evaluations or post assessments (Brown, 2004; Cho and DeCastro-Ambrosetti, 2005; Weisman and Garza, 2002), others say that such perceptual *changes* are often limited and surface, short termed and not transformed into actual practices (Grant and Koskela, 1986; Gomez et al., 2000, Melnick and Zeichner, 1994). This lack of supporting evidence for a long-term impact may be due to factors such as lack of institutional commitment, unsupportive administration, and a shortage of material resources to implement a multicultural education (Grant and Koskela, 1986; Sleeter, 1995).

Much of our understanding about the effects of multicultural education courses on pre-service teachers' beliefs and practices is obscured by the polarized debates over the question of "can multicultural teacher education make a change?" What is frequently revealed, but less articulated by past research, is the phenomenon that pre-service teachers do not process and digest multicultural education concepts in a consistent manner. Their reactions range from outright rejection to transformative embrace and everything in between. Rather than using new ideas to replace or reconstruct the old ones, pre-service teachers are likely to integrate newly acquired information into the

knowledge they already have (Phillion and Connelly, 2004; Gomez et al., 2007). Like most people, pre-service teachers embrace and accept new concepts that are compatible with their existing worldview, distancing themselves from those that are incompatible with but harmless to their understanding of the social order, and resisting those that are perceived as threatening to their belief systems. Furthermore, these competing conceptions of the social world are not mutually exclusive; rather, they occur simultaneously in shaping pre-service teachers' multicultural learning experiences. Unfortunately, driven by the rhetorical emphasis on *change,* the research on multicultural teacher education tends to overlook the complexities of pre-service teachers' mixed attitudes toward multiculturalism, and instead casts learning outcomes into an either/or dichotomy. Either pre-service teachers change their attitudes or they do not.

Using a cultural toolkit perspective, this chapter will examine "moments of unsettlement" (Swidler, 2003) that pre-service teachers underwent within the contexts of service-learning to capture the complexity of their perceptions of multicultural learning experiences. According to Swidler (2003), individuals experience unsettlement when attending to unfamiliar situations or undergoing major transformation. Their taken-for-granted conception of the social order and habitual ways of thinking and acting are unsettled as they encounter new situations that call for different strategies of action. Swidler (2003) argues that people possess different kinds of *cultural capacities* and use them differently to organize and rationalize their feelings, thoughts and actions during periods of settlement and unsettlement. Cultural capacities, as Swidler (2003) explains, refer to a variety of knowledge, information and worldviews that individuals acquire through participating in and acting on their social roles in various social institutions. The

forms of cultural capacities and their effects on social actions usually manifest as and through the continuum of cultural meaning systems ranging from ideology to tradition to common sense. Under unsettled circumstances, people tend to rely on ideologies, i.e. sets of "articulate, self-conscious belief and ritual system aspiring to offer a unified answer to problems of social action" (Swidler, 2003, p.99), to construct strategies of action and language they need to give meanings to their action. In contrast, when people are embraced by settled lives, they draw on common sense and tacit knowledge to provide explanations of and justify their experience without a second thought.

Although university multicultural education courses and field experience might not lead pre-service teachers to experience "major transformations" in their pre-existing ideas about the social world, they create opportunities for pre-service teachers to be *unsettled* as they expose pre-service teachers to unfamiliar ideas, people and social environments. Past research has told us such kinds of learning opportunities could, more or less, shake up pre-service teachers' existing worldview (Fry and McKinney, 1997; Wiest, 1998). Yet pre-service teachers generally do not experience these opportunities as if they are undergoing major transformation. Pre-service teachers, for the most part, still live by their prior visions of the teaching profession and the image of their teacher self (Mesler and Shaver, 2005). In other words, they have fairly settled ideas about what kind of teachers they want to be and what type of schools they want to teach in/at.

My analysis of moments of unsettlement focuses on the troublesome experiences that pre-service teachers encountered during their service-learning. To identify these moments, I looked at dilemmas that emerged from the tensions between the three competing desires that pre-service teachers intended to fulfill while working with

working class minority students. These three desires are the desire to be effective in instructing the students, to show they care for the students, and to be true to their own self-image. The fulfillment of each desire involves different types of ethical considerations upon which pre-service teachers construct justifications for their feelings, thoughts and action. Accordingly, I further conceptualize the moral underpinning of each desire as *the ethic of effectiveness, the ethic of caring, and the ethic of authenticity.*

The chapter proceeds, first, by an overview of the three competing ethical considerations involved in the process of learning to teach children of the *Others* through service-learning. I will then discuss how pre-service teachers experienced and negotiated the tensions between the competing goals of the ethics of effectiveness, caring and authenticity. I pay particular attention to how pre-service teachers explained and justified what they learned about themselves and about teaching and learning from their relationships with the students. In doing so, I identify two major types of unsettlement to present my findings. The first type of unsettlement focuses on pre-service teachers' introspection on their personal qualities as they became aware of their unconscious prejudice against low-income minority people. Pre-service teachers talked about how their positive self-images were challenged through a close examination of the negative assumptions and stereotypes they ascribed to the students. Because such experience of unsettlement was mostly expressed by pre-service teachers in the form of self-realization, therefore, I refer it as *realizing the hidden-self* in my discussion. The second type of unsettlement occurred when pre-service teachers managed to establish and/or negotiate their relationships with the students. This process involved pre-service teachers' measurement of appropriate closeness and distance they intended to maintain in their

interactions with the students as they sought a balance between the competing ethics that they strived to fulfill.

After presenting my analysis of moments of unsettlement that pre-service teachers experienced during their service-learning, I will then discuss how a multicultural service-learning experience informed pre-service teachers' career preferences in terms of the types of school they would like to teach at in the future. In particular, I will look at how pre-service teachers justify their preferences by incorporating new experiences and ideas that they acquired through the service-learning project into their current aspirations for their teaching career. One of the purposes of engaging pre-service teachers in working with students from marginalized backgrounds through service-learning or other types of field experience is to inspire and cultivate pre-service teachers' commitment to teaching at schools that serve predominantly low-income minority students. However, the effects of early field experience on pre-service teachers' outlook for their future career is almost absent in the current multicultural teacher education literature. My study, thus, intends to fill this gap by investigating how pre-service teachers talked about their career preferences in relation to what they learned from their service-learning project. More importantly, examining pre-service teachers' justifications will help us understand how their justification is mediated by a complex consideration of the ethics of caring, effectiveness and authenticity.

The ethics of effectiveness, caring and authenticity

In his article *On the Nature of Teaching and Teacher Education*, David Labaree (2000), a leading historian of education in the United States, pinpoints one of the major factors that makes teaching a difficult practice is that, unlike many professional

practitioners (i.e. doctors, lawyers, and accountants) who are generally expected to maintain an emotional distance between themselves and their clients when performing their service, teachers are expected to accomplish their teaching task through establishing an emotional bond with students (Labaree, 2000). According to Labaree (2000), teachers are asked to obtain emotional bonds that forge what sociologists term *primary relationships* with students in order to gain the compliance needed for the accomplishment of the curricular goals. However, teachers are also asked to be emotionally neutral while teaching a specific curriculum and assessing students' academic performance. They are expected to objectively evaluate students' learning outcomes based on universalistic rules of procedure and not be affected by their emotional bonds with their students. Such a role expectation of being object produces the type of role relationships that is *secondary*. The nature and the goals of these two types of role relationships are inherently contesting with each other; therefore, expecting teachers to fulfill the demands of the competing role expectations while carrying out their duties would inevitably lead them to face "the problem of emotion management" (Labaree, 2000, p.229). Labaree (2000) argues that the problem of emotion management is one of the major sources that contributes to the uncertainties of teaching effectiveness, which further compounds teachers' practices as the measurement and the meaning of effective teaching also reflect the tensions between the different role expectations for a teacher. Accordingly, for someone who wants to be good at teaching, he/she would have to develop remarkable capacities for the management of these tensions (Labaree, 2000).

Although the nature of service-learning is not comparable in length, organization and intensity to classroom teaching, it does engage pre-service teachers in the process of

learning-to-teach as quasi-educators in educational contexts. Through providing academic assistance to students, pre-service teachers are given the opportunities to experience the complexity of role expectations and also to try out their ideas of teaching with the students. Informed by Labaree's argument with respect to issues of emotion management and uncertainties of teaching effectiveness, I use the terms "the ethic of caring" and "the ethic of effectiveness" to capture pre-service teachers' consideration of and experience with the emotional aspect of teaching in the pursuit of a sense of effectiveness with the students. Whereas the enactment of an ethic of caring in teaching practices is more than giving nurturance to students or the making of emotional attachments (Noblit, 1993; Nodding, 1998), my conversations with pre-service teachers show that such a conception of caring appears to be a dominant principle that guides their actions. Likewise, when pre-service teachers expressed concerns for their effectiveness, they primarily focused on their ability to help students accomplish the assigned task and to make students listen to their instruction.

In addition, I used the term "the ethic of authenticity" to refer to pre-service teachers' concerns for their own image of the self and desire for a sense of authenticity in their conduct while interacting with the students. My interviews with pre-service teachers revealed that the ways pre-service teachers approached students were largely mediated by the self-image that they live by. As we will see in the following analysis, much of pre-service teachers' learning from their service-learning project was acquired through the process of reflecting, rethinking, and reclaiming the meaning of *who they are* and *what they want to be* as they manage to maintain their self-image that was challenged or

disturbed by their service-learning experience, particularly, their interaction with the students.

It needs to be noted that although these three goals are competing for pre-service teachers' attention to be fulfilled, they do not contradict each other. Pre-service teachers wrestle with the tensions while striving for a balanced satisfaction with all three areas. As the following analysis will reveal, pre-service teachers experience the strongest frustration when they found none of the goal is accomplished at a satisfactory level. Nevertheless, they feel mostly empowered when there are able to manage the demands of being a caring, effective, and authentic educator in a congruent manner.

Realization of the hidden-self

As one of the most culturally diverse countries with national traditions deeply rooted in democracy and individualism, the rhetoric of respect for individuality, differences, and the freedom of choice gives Americans a language to talk about what good "diversity" has been doing to the U.S. society. Whereas Bellah and his associates (1985) criticize the rhetoric of cultural pluralism in the U.S. as "lip service given to respect for cultural differences" (1985, p.206) that does not engage Americans deeply enough in thinking about the relationships between groups that are different in their socio-cultural origins and economic standing, the idea that "diversity" has good effects on the betterment of the society as a whole is still a dominant ideology that many Americans claim to embrace. Wuthnow (2006) argues that "[t]hrough schooling and the mass media, Americans learn that diversity is a good thing, and are encouraged to embrace it" (p.36). Not surprisingly, the sentiment of *celebrating diversity* was expressed by all the pre-service teachers I talked to. In addition, their cultural autobiographies indicated that many pre-service

teachers believed that they were accepting and respectful for people of different cultures and felt proud of themselves for their open-mindedness and appreciation for social differences.

Whether people actually practice what they preach, their self-images, to some extent, provide guidelines for their behaviors. When individuals act on their desirable self-images in familiar social situations, they often do not need to question whether their actions match the personal morality they claim to enact because they are embraced by the affirmative environment that allows them to *just act themselves.* In other words, people, for the most part, do not feel the need to ask "do I really believe in what I profess and practice what I preach" unless they are confronted by an unfamiliar environment that compels them to do so. The first type of unsettlement – realization of the hidden-self – occurred when pre-service teachers re-examined their positive self-images by looking at their unconscious prejudices, biases and stereotypes for different social groups that were revealed to them through their service-learning experience. Pre-service teachers came to the awareness of their own negative attitudes toward members of different social groups when realizing that being accepting and respectful of the *Others* was a deliberate act they had to work towards rather than a personal quality in their possession. The following story from Cathleen, a white, upper-middle class female pre-service teacher, is a typical example.

Cathleen, a devoted Christian, presented herself as always trying to live by her faith and defined herself, first and foremost, as a *servant* in terms of her religious identity. The ultimate purpose of her life was to *selflessly serve* others so as to glorify Jesus Christ[1]. She perceived herself as a caring, accepting and selfless person who was always willing

[1] Cathleen, 0429 interview, 2008

to help and understand other people, in particular, those less fortunate than her. Cathleen defined the *service* component in 'service-learning' as "an act of humility on the servers' part", in which "you place somebody else's, their wants and needs, above yours to better themselves, giving to them rather than yourself"[2]. With such a moral commitment in mind, Cathleen approached the students with patience and empathy that they did not receive from their teacher, Mr. Jones. She took interest in students' personal life and consistently encouraged them when they refused to do their work. By being perceived and accepted by her fifth graders as a 'nice college student' who cared about them and wanted to help, Cathleen was quite successful in performing her self-image as a caring and selfless service-learner for the *less fortunate* students.

However, about halfway through the semester, Cathleen began to experience an increasing dissatisfaction with Mr. Jones. She felt overwhelmed and helpless by Mr. Jones' sarcasm and negativity toward her and the students, by the institutional problems that severally suppressed students' development, and finally by her own unwanted stereotypes about racial minority children from low-income households. As she noted in her final reflection:

> In this bleak classroom I began to be confronted with the stereotypes I had created or accepted in the 20 years of my life thus far. I grappled with the inner turmoil I experienced as I felt convicted of my selfish views and the affect they were having on students in this classroom. Every time I let my narrow interpretation of the world influence the interactions I had with the students I noticed the distance I created between us. I also noticed the negative views I carried as we worked together, becoming impatient and attributing their failures to who they are. (Cathleen, final reflection, 2008)

Cathleen fears that her experiences have led her to care less for students, a selfish move that threatened her moral identity. At the same time, caring less provided Cathleen

[2] TE200 class discussion, January 28, 2008.

with an escape from her sense of despair. In our debriefing conversation a week before her last service-learning shift, Cathleen said to me: "it's almost to the point where, today I was kind of like, I don't really want to be here anymore. It's really overwhelming" (Cathleen, 0417 interview, 2008). I asked Cathleen what made her feel so overwhelming. She continued:

> Cathleen: These stories.... Like their background, their families, where they come from, the experiences that they already been put through. The level, like their education level like some of these kids can barely read and they are going into middle school next year. The comments that they make to me that I'm noticing. In the beginning I didn't really pick up on it – I don't know what they're talking about. But now that I'm noticing like certain boys making certain comments to me. And seeing that play out, how they're treated, how they treat other kids. Yeah just the whole experience is just really overwhelming. I just feel like a misfit.
>
> Shih-pei: Tell me more.
>
> Cathleen: Like I can't...before I was just like I can relate to them. There's certain things I can relate to them on, we're friends. But sometimes it's just like, I just feel like I can't relate to them. I just come from such a different background, such a different experience. I've never dealt with experiences like this so how do I encourage them? How do I support them? Like...what am I to them? Will they take me seriously? I don't know what to be for them. And I think that because of their dislike of their teacher, I mean even LaToya was like, "I like you. You're my favorite college kid. I don't like the other college kids." So, there's like a pressure to be the nice one. And while I'm willing to fill that role, how do I go about it? How far do I go with it when I'm leaving next week? I don't know (Cathleen, 0417 interview, 2008).

Here we see Cathleen wrestling with multiple tensions derived from the unsettlement of the moral identity she had long used to define her self-image and worth, the self-doubt of her ability and effectiveness in supporting the students, and the fear of not being respected by the students. Working with students in a very challenging environment, presenting the image of being a caring and understanding person was no longer a taken-for-granted habit of acting *herself*, but rather a deliberate effort to fulfill the role of *being the nice one.* Cathleen was overwhelmed by the distress of *feeling like a misfit* as reflected in her frustration of feeling incapable of relating to the students. She

wanted to withdraw herself from the dilemma of wanting to ease her distress by distancing herself from the emotional needs of the students, yet felt obligated to place the needs of the students prior to her own. The tensions of the competing desires were well-captured by Cathleen's series of self-questioning. On the one hand, she tried to detach herself from the students by persuading herself to believe that the support and encouragement she could offer might be limited and irrelevant to the students' needs given the drastic differences in their life experiences. On the other hand, she seemed to further engage herself with the students by showing her willingness to look out for their wants and needs that were ignored by the teacher and other college volunteers. Cathleen's feeling of bearing the *pressure* to be the nice one manifested both her struggle with maintaining a self-image as a selfless servant and managing the burden of caring by virtue of her emotional bonds with the students.

Minority pre-service teachers' realization of personal biases

Case studies of white pre-service teachers that resemble Cathleen's experience have been extensively discussed by education researchers. Some researchers see the struggles that white pre-service teachers undergo as a symptom of "white guilt", an inevitable developmental pain before the final completion of positive white identity is achieved (Howard, 1999; Lawrence 1997). Others see it as evidence of "white resistance", a stubborn refusal that highlights their entrenched sense of white supremacy (Brown, 2004; Schick, 2000; Sleeter, 1996). Despite the intensity of scholarly focus on white pre-service teachers, I want to note, that such daunting realizations of one's previously unknown biases against low-income minority students is not unique to this group. What is under-examined in the current literature is how self-consciousness of race- and class-related

prejudice is developed and experienced by *racial minority* pre-service teachers as a result of multicultural education. In fact, the so-called *'racial minority'* in the sense of majority/minority dichotomy, is a much more complex combination of heterogeneous subgroups. Despite the shared (but not the same) subordinate status with regard to their positioning in the racial stratification systems, as social actors whose participation in the society shape and is shaped by a multidimensional social order, racial minority teachers are also holders of value-charged perceptions and group stereotypes. A neglect of their experience thus makes the picture incomplete. Through the following personal testimonies from Julie and Danielle, we are able to obtain some insights into how pre-service teachers of color confronted their own biases toward members of different races and social classes.

"I found out how racist I am"

In responding to my question "what did you learn about yourself from service-learning?" Julie, an Asian American, to my surprise, immediately responded with a candid self-reflection – "how uncomfortable I was with blacks and Hispanics". She went on explaining:

> Julie: How uncomfortable I was with blacks and Hispanics. I...growing up it was mostly white. And then Asian, so I didn't have any interactions with blacks or Hispanics, I mean we had, in my high school we had more black people than Asian people. But the crowd I hang out with you know, that I had classes with were Asians and whites. So I found out how uncomfortable I was...being with you know. And I hate to admit it, when I was coaching, I wouldn't think twice about hugging a white kid, but when I first went into the school. Well, part of this was I wasn't as comfortable with black students, another part of it was, they told you..:.you weren't supposed to touch the kids. Yeah, but I hate to admit I found out how racist I am kind of. It's a really good experience for me, because I finally got to interact with black and Hispanic crowd. And I'm comfortable now. I don't care about hugging my little black student or my little Hispanic student you know. I really enjoyed experience even though it was really frustrating, it was rewarding at the same time. I just really enjoy working with the kids.

> Shih-pei: So, I'm curious because even though you hate to admit it, you recognize how racist you were. What did you learn about blacks and Hispanics?
>
> Julie: I didn't learn anything new about them that I would say. Like about their culture so much. But it's just like...we talked about how in class there's an explicit of racism that we think racism and then there's a more subtle [form]. I never knew I had the subtle form of racism in me, because I was never put in an environment with a lot of black and Hispanic people. Well I have but in those situations I was...I think justifiably uncomfortable because I was in an unsafe environment (Julie, 0428 interview, 2008).

The above passage indicates that Julie's realization of her subtle form of racism was provoked by looking closely at her hesitance to hug black and Hispanic elementary kids in the after-school program. Hugging – the expression of caring and affection – used to be a taken-for-granted action that Julie carried out to establish relationships with younger kids on her swimming team. Nevertheless, in the context of service-learning where Julie worked with a similar age group as she did before, she found herself uncomfortable with the physical contact with the students and troubled by the change in her behavior. I asked Julie to further explain what she meant "the subtle form of racism" she had in her and why she perceived it as the root of her discomfort.

> Shih-pei: So, you mentioned the subtle form of racism. What was the subtle form of racism you used to have and why you thought it was the root of your discomfort with the students?
>
> Julie: I'm still uncomfortable with black students...well people even though...there's no reason for me to feel threatened, not threatened but uncomfortable, you know. Like if I was in downtown Detroit, it's justifiable that I'm uncomfortable, I feel unsafe in that environment because it is an unsafe environment. But, you know, I'm in a classroom with kids, you know. There's no reason I shouldn't feel comfortable other than...unless you know some kid...is openly hostile. But most kids aren't hostile to me. So, I have to deal with that. I had to learn to deal with that. And I think I did it alright (Julie, 0420 interview, 2008).

The logic that underpinned Julie's self-analysis of her discomfort, as revealed in the interview excerpt, was whether there was any reasonable factor other than her

unconscious racism in the given environment that could possibly cause a feeling of discomfort. Julie believed that such external factors did not exist in her classroom. Therefore, the only explanation that made sense to her was her own biases toward the blacks and Hispanics, a problem she had to learn to overcome in order to connect with the students.

It should be noted that although Julie attributed her hesitance and discomfort to her hidden racist attitude toward blacks and Hispanics in the final interview, the realization was gradually formed and eventually achieved through an on-going process of rethinking her positive self-image as an anti-racist advocate[3]. The following passage from my early conversation with Julie showed that she was baffled by her discomfort with the physical contact with the students, but attributed her feeling more to the restraint of university policy on service-learners. At that point, Julie considered race a possible factor that might contribute to her behavioral change, yet she did not see it as central to her problem.

> Shih-pei: do you find yourself react to or interact with these kids differently given their race.
>
> Julie: I admit I did. I noticed I was a lot more...uncomfortable initially for physical contact. Like...oh I don't know if that has anything to do with race though. General they look more dirty, like their clothes are older you know and stuff like that. So, that might translate to they're not as hygienic or clean. So, maybe that's why I don't want to touch them. But, I don't think I really had a problem with that. Back when I did coaching or stuff like that. Kids would come up and touch me all the time, try to get me wet, you know, hug me. I never had that problem. But initially when I came here, especially with my little "trouble-maker" and another girl, she's well-behaved but she gets really touchy-feely sometimes. She's just coming up and grabbing me you know, right off the bat. I think also, why I had the huge problem was you know they [note: the university's service-learning coordinators] tell you not to touch the kids initially. I don't know why they tell you that. I think they're afraid of lawsuits. But you know, don't touch the kids. Don't have that much physical contact. You know, so when the

[3] According to Julie, holding a solid ethnic pride in her Asian heritage was essential to her moral worth. By being vocal in her discontent with the model minority stereotypes as honorary white and her critique of white privilege, Julie dwelt in an unquestioned self-image as a passionate fighter against racism.

> kid comes and touch me I was like "Oh my God. I'm going to get sued" (Julie, 0326 interview, 2008).

From Julie's perspective, the policy was "irrational" because "how can you have any relationship if you're not allowed to touch" (Julie, 0326 interview, 2008). Julie's statement indicated that she regarded an appropriate physical contact like hugging was a positive to her work with younger children as it nurtured the emotional ties between her and the students. As she concluded: "you know, once the kids established a relationship with you, they were more likely to listen to you. They had some kind of respect for you, they knew who you were" (Julie, 0420 interview, 2008).

Here we see that Julie's exploration of the root of her discomfort of physical contact with the students involved her considerations of the ethics of effectiveness, caring and authenticity. Julie believed that in order to be effective in her work with the students, she needed to establish emotional ties with them in the first place, which could be accomplished by giving students a friendly hug. However, when such a simple action turned out to be a deliberate effort, it led Julie to realize her unconscious racist attitude towards blacks and Hispanics. As revealed in the above passages, although Julie sought different explanations for her hesitance to have physical contact with black and Hispanic students, she eventually identified her stereotypes of black and Hispanic people to be the decisive factor that contributed to her behavior. Such a new realization was an unsettlement of Julie's own image as an anti-racist advocate who was free from racial biases. Rather than denying or hiding her biases, Julie chose to *deal with* them in an honest manner. By admitting her biases and showing her efforts to remove the effects of "the subtle form of racism" on her interaction with the students, Julie demonstrated her

desire for being authentic in the principle of being "true to yourself and stand up for what you believe in" (Julie, personal exchange, 2008).

"I thought that they were bad students because they did not want to learn the information the way I thought they should"

Similarly, Danielle, an outstanding graduate from urban public schools, talked about how she learned about her "culturally imperialistic" assumptions about students from low-income households, the unknown biases that were made noticeable to her by her service-learning experience. This section delineates Danielle's experience.

Danielle was an African-American female pre-service teacher who spent her entire K-12 educational career in an urban school district and came in to the teacher preparation program with a strong commitment to urban teaching. Unlike suburban pre-service teachers who were often *shocked* by the drastic differences between urban and suburban schools when they first went to their service-learning sites, Danielle's schooling background gave her a sense of familiarity with Midland Middle School where she worked with a student population similar to those from her own schooling experience. For Danielle, her service-learning at an urban middle school was not an adventure that exposed her to *different* educational contexts, but rather a preparation for her future career in an urban school. Danielle did not anticipate any cultural shock when she first came to Midland Middle School for her service-learning project, nor did she expect to experience anything new in an environment that she was familiar with. Like Julie who was unaware of being a racial minority herself did not immunize her from the racist ideology that pervades US society, Danielle did not recognize that her commitment to urban teaching in working class communities did not free her from deficit view on

children from low-income households until she had the opportunity to work with them closely through service-learning. The notion of "cultural imperialism" was brought up by Danielle to pinpoint her negative stereotypes about her students. I asked Danielle to explain how she would be culturally imperialistic toward students who were prototypically more similar than dissimilar to her. She said:

> Danielle: Coming from a household where...your mother has...education beyond high school can affect the way that you see things a ton. It can affect the way that you go about a lot of things. For example, when I came here [Midwest University] I knew how to put my schedule together because I had a mom who went to college. I knew the deal of how to write an essay and not get a 2.0 on it because my mom studied English. You know just those and understanding that and not taking for granted that everybody has those privileges. So I have to be sensitive to the fact that this child may not know how to write a full sentence because his mother doesn't know how to write a full sentence. So I can't be like, "Well, why don't you know how to do that? This is basic," you know. So, I have to be sensitive to that and not be...not be...deficit in how I go about helping them. Like "well, I know how to do this so you should know how to do this." That's my understanding of cultural imperialism; taking for granted that everyone is like you and expecting them to be like you and know the things that you know when they don't. (Danielle, 0423 interview, 2008)

Danielle's self-reflection on her deficit view of the students she was working with was an ongoing process of *reminding* herself to be aware of how her biases might inhibit her from effectively helping the students. As shown in the following, in the process of *reminding oneself*, Danielle actively drew on a professional ethic that emphasized effectiveness in an attempt to retool herself. As she noted:

> While doing my service learning I try to think about the ways that I may see my students and how that may affect the way I try to assist them. Thinking about my initial framing of the couple of students that I work with I have come to the conclusion that the students do not want to or care about learning the material taught [.....] My thinking was initially deficit because I thought that something was wrong with the students. I thought that they were bad students because they did not want to learn the information the way I thought they should. I found myself constantly comparing my experiences in the seventh grade with theirs and thinking how I was a "better" student. I began to think that these students would not go further than high school if they made it that far. I knew that this was not a

> healthy or accepting attitude to have if I was going to be a successful teacher in the future. So, to solve my deficit way of thinking I tried to see my students in a different light outside of my middle-class window. (Danielle, SL journal #2, 2008)

For Danielle, the central indicator of establishing a successful teaching career was whether she could be a *helpful* teacher, capable of enhancing student learning to the maximum extent (Danielle, 0423 interview, 2008). To achieve that goal, she would have to learn to understand students from their social position. As an African American, Danielle had the advantage of being able to relate to racial minority students given their shared status as subordinates in the racial stratification system. However, as a middle-class American, she felt distanced from poor and working-class students. Danielle saw this distance as inhibiting her effectiveness. In her journal, Danielle provided a vivid example that illustrated how reframing her view of one working class student allowed her to be a more effective teacher.

> Just by changing and expanding my lens I found a way to motivate and help my student. My second student has difficulty reading aloud, and at first I saw her as being illiterate. But, when reframing her I saw that she was only nervous and just needed to slow down. So in order to help her I would have to practice patience and help her realize that she does know the words. I help her by breaking up the words, for example she had difficulty with the word "unite" so I covered the "u" and said "when you are texting and you say good..." and she said "nite" then I told her to add the "u" and she read "unite!" By taking her out of the illiterate frame and placing her in a nervous frame I was more efficient in helping her. As a result of my reframing I am broadening my views of how students learn, especially students at different class levels and of different races. I plan to find ways to relate to any type of student and not see them as deficit because they do not learn or function like me. (Danielle, SL journal #2, 2008)

'Being helpful' was more than a characteristic that Danielle applied to envision her professional role in educational contexts, it was, indeed, a moral image that she lived by to define her worth. As Danielle told me, the most important principle that she lived up to in her life was "helping someone whether it be in their education, whether it be in their

daily life" because "it feels good to help someone else" (Danielle, 0423 interview, 2008). Prior to her service-learning in an urban school, Danielle had no doubt that her success as a student in an urban school system would make her an effective urban teacher who can help students succeed as she believed her schooling experience would give her insights into their needs and wants. Through working closely with low-track middle schoolers from low-income working class families, Danielle was introduced to a much more complicated picture of urban teaching. She was clearly unsettled by the new experience, yet by actively engaging herself in thinking of ways to be a *helpful tutor* – a blended consideration of her self-image as someone who was willing to help and her teaching effectiveness – Danielle chose to use a new strategy of action i.e. *reframing*, to assure her personal authenticity as well as her qualification as a future urban teacher.

Negotiating relationships with students

Whereas moments of unsettlement in relation to one's realization of the hidden self was often experienced by pre-service teachers as inward tension, which might not be translated into observable outward displays; the experience of unsettlement in relation to negotiating relationships with the students was much more tangible as it often manifested in pre-service teachers' actual practices during service-learning. In this section, I examine pre-service teachers' negotiation of social distance and private zones in relation to their relationships with students as well as their justification for their actions. Examining how pre-service teachers talk about and construct appropriate distance/closeness, physically and emotionally, in their relationships with the students opens an important window for us to understand how their consideration of the ethics of effectiveness, caring and authenticity shapes their actions. My site observations and conversations with pre-service

teachers about their interactions with the students suggest that most pre-service teachers believed that emotional attachment with students was one of the crucial factors in fostering positive service-learning experiences. They acknowledged the need to make themselves personable as a way to form relationships with the students. However, what was equally salient in their talk was the idea of creating and maintaining distance from students to present a professional demeanor. Pre-service teachers felt most comfortable and successful with their students when the emotional attachments were strong enough to make the students follow their instructions but the social distance was far enough to protect their image as a professional figure.

My analysis of pre-service teachers' accounts with respect to their relationships with students shows that pre-service teachers placed the notion of "professionalism" in the foreground when seeking to construct distance from the students, whereas they emphasized the notion of "caring" when looking for a sense of closeness. The data also suggests that whether pre-service teachers relied on the ideas of "professionalism" or "caring" to organize their actions, their actions were fundamentally guided by the same goal, that is, to be effective in their work with the students.

In the following discussion, I use the terminologies "rhetoric of professionalism" and "rhetoric of caring" to conceptualize the underlying themes that emerged from pre-service teachers' justifications for the approaches they chose to interact with students. It needs to be noted, though, that my use of the word "rhetoric" is limited to its literal meaning that does not involve any methodological purpose or implication: That is, while I intend to use the literal definition of rhetoric as "acts of persuasion" (Symon, 2000; Watson, 1995) to underscore the persuasive element of pre-service teachers' explanation,

I do not deploy any specialized methodological techniques with respect to rhetorical analysis in my data analysis.

Rhetoric of professionalism

In the literature, the concept of professionalism in teaching usually refers to the quality and standard of practices, which is different from the idea of professionalization, i.e. efforts and attempts to improve occupational status and standing of teaching (Hargreaves, 2000). Scholarly attention to teachers' professional identity in relation to their ideas of professionalism, hence, often focuses on how teachers talk about "the quality of what they do; and of the conduct, demeanor and standards which guide it" (Hargreaves, 2000, p.152). Past research has found that teachers' construction and self-presentation of professionalism are highly contextualized due to the variance of local teaching contexts, including the characteristics of local collegial communities and student populations (Helsby, 1995; O'Connor, 2008; Shacklock, 1998; Talbert & McLaughlin, 1994).

In classroom teaching, teachers' sense of professionalism and evaluation of their practices often involve complex consideration of both a specialized knowledge base for teaching and service ethics in terms of their moral commitment to student learning (Talbert & McLaughlin, 1994). However, the nature and the scope of academic assistance that pre-service teachers provide at their service-learning sites do not offer such complexity. Therefore, when pre-service teachers talked about *being professional*, their definition of professionalism was largely reduced to maintaining a "professional demeanor" in terms of presenting themselves as competent service providers with little, if any, emotional involvement in the relationships. Jamie's view of professionalism was a

typical example. Drawing on Jamie's story, the following discussion illustrates how pre-service teachers used the notion of professionalism to justify their distance from the students and why they felt the effectiveness of their work needed to be achieved through an emotional detachment from the students.

Growing up in a predominantly white middle-class suburban town, but attending schools in the adjacent racially mixed working-class urban neighborhood, the City of Pillar, through a school choice program, Jamie described the 4th graders who she worked with in Mrs. Smith's classroom as "the kinds of kids I went to school with" (Jamie, 0318 interview, 2008). Doing her service-learning at a school in Pillar School District made Jamie feel at home, nothing seemed to come as a surprise other than the amount of physical contact she received from the female students. As Jamie noted:

> Jamie: They all seem so emotionally needy. I constantly get hugs, constantly touched. One girl always has to touch my arm when I am talking to her. One girl liked to play with my hair – which I stopped. She said it was because it was soft, so when I think about it – she's black, she has completely different hair than I do – but she can't be playing with my hair in the middle of a social studies lesson, it's just weird.
>
> Shih-pei: Why is it weird?
>
> Jamie: It is weird on so many levels! That crosses any sort of student-teacher professionalism. I would not walk up to my boss and say 'your hair is pretty, I'm just gonna twirl it in my fingers' (laughing). It's strange to me that they feel comfortable enough to do that. The most I would even do with my elementary teacher, I would like link my arm with hers when we were walking out to recess. One day a girl laid her head in my lap! I was like "oh my god! Sit up!" It's the girls, it is particularly the girls, they are just so needy for physical attention and I have no clue why! (Jamie, 0422 interview, 2008)

In order to enforce boundaries of professionalism, Jamie explicitly instructed the students that such behavior was inappropriate. However, as we will see in the following passage, she also struggled with her move of not showing the affection that the students were looking for. In other words, Jamie acknowledged that the students expected her to

be a care giver, but she was unwilling to meet such an expectation as it conflicted with her self-image as an educator.

> Shih-pei: So, did you ever tell them explicitly that it was not appropriate?
>
> Jamie: I did. I had to start doing that as of the past couple weeks, I finally said "you know what? Guys, I can't hold your hand during lessons, you can't lay your head in my lap – all the other kids would try to do so, too" sort of thing. The kids will just keep making attempts and you feel bad, you want to be able to show them the affection that they need, but that is not my role, my role has never been to mother these kids. (Jamie, 0422 interview, 2008)

Jamie mentioned the rules about physical contact that she was taught in the orientation, yet her avoidance of such contact given by the students seemed to involve very little concern of going against the *rules* contrasting to her concern of going against the *role*. I asked Jamie what her role was if she was not in the position of showing affection to the students. She continued:

> Shih-pei: What's your role?
>
> Jamie: To teach the kids! To tutor them in their geometry homework – not to be a mom. Can you imagine how difficult it would be to try and be a teacher with the idea that 'oh I am going to be a mother to my 120 students this year'? No. I can guide, I can be your friend, I can talk to you – but I can not be a mom to all these kids. It's not my job. So, I don't know. I don't really think about how I make sense of it, I just don't feel like that is appropriate. (Jamie, 0422 interview, 2008)

Clearly, Jamie held a very strong opinion about what a teacher's professional responsibility should be and used that lens to envision herself in a teaching context. She defined teacher-student relationships as a limited and utilitarian work relation that should not involve much personal affection. For Jamie, meeting a child's need for emotional attachment was a mother's job to be carried out at home. It was inappropriate for a teacher to show his/her affection to students as it blurred the boundaries between the function of home and school, the responsibility of a care giver and an educator, as well as

boundaries between private and public domain in which non-professional and professional role relationships were expected to find their space to be enacted.

Jamie's deliberate efforts to construct physical and emotional detachment from the students manifest her negotiation with the competing concerns for students' needs for affectionate relationships, her perception of effective teaching and her self-image as an educator. Jamie believed that students would not stay focused on their homework if they were constantly seeking her attention. Therefore, to be an effective tutor, she needed to keep the students on task by not fueling their desire for attention. Furthermore, Jamie defined the role of an educator as affection-limited. She perceived the display of affection as a manifestation of mothering, which was in conflict with her image of the teacher-self. The example of Jamie shows us how pre-service teachers use the notion of professionalism to construct justification for their intentional detachment from the students. It is not to say that pre-service teachers who place a great emphasis on teacher-student professionalism intend to be indifferent and withhold emotional support for their students. On the contrary, their firm adherence to the boundaries of professionalism might be an important indicator that suggests the intensity of unsettlement they undergo by virtue of their sensitivity to the needs of the students and the challenges they face meeting these needs.

Rhetoric of caring

Whereas some pre-service teachers, like Jamie, circumscribed their role by forging very limited personal relationships with students, others were more open to developing some sort of emotional bonds in their interactions with the students, whether they genuinely wanted to or not. Approximately half of the pre-service teachers I talked to

held a somewhat naïve anticipation of their initial encounter with students. They anticipated being welcomed by students with open arms and being recognized by students with enthusiastic appreciation. Understandably, when reality did not happen as anticipated, they were troubled, perplexed and sometimes stressed out by the disinterest displayed by the students. The significance of personal attachments, hence, was brought to the foreground as the pre-service teachers explored strategies of action to smooth over their work with students.

I use the term 'rhetoric of *caring*' to underlined their desire and attempts to connect with students. Whether these attempts were made through the exchanging of personal stories with students, dressing in casual clothes to present themselves as relatable to students, or "playing silly" to motivate students etc., all these actions shared one commonality i.e. they were carried out for the purpose of narrowing the distance the pre-service teachers perceived between themselves and their students. It should be noted, however, that the notion of *caring* was used to highlight pre-service teachers' purposeful attention to the creation of personal attachments while negotiating rapport that was crucial for productive outcomes, regardless of whether there was genuine regard for students behind those attempts or not. For the purpose of my analysis, I look at how pre-service teachers draw on the notion of caring to construct justification, questions concerning whether they truly believe in what they profess is beyond the current inquiry. In the following discussion, I will present Jamila's experience as an example to depict ways in which the rhetoric of caring was consciously mobilized to guide pre-service teachers' actions.

Jamila, the only African-American service-learner in an all African-American after school program, talked about her initial unsettlement ensuing from the unfulfilled expectancies of her encounter with the students in her journal. As she wrote:

> Coming into this "service learning" thing, I expected to be tutoring and helping kids to want to actually learn about their school work. With the kids of the Boys and Girls Club, they seem to not be doing school work. Since it is an after school program, I think they want to just relax more and have freedom, but then that makes it harder for me to try to do my "job" and help them with their projects. I mean, I enjoy helping them when they ask me to, but when they don't it's really weird trying to get a response out of them (Jamila, SL journal #1, 2008).

During her first four weeks of service-learning in the Boys and Girls Club, Jamila was troubled and frustrated by not having any deep interaction with the students as they seemed to "stay glued to the computer and don't ever take their eyes off of the screen" (Jamila, SL journal#1, 2008). Despite her dissatisfaction with being neglected by the students, Jamila pushed ahead her attempts to reach out, but the interactions, as depicted in the following passage, still confounded her.

> Now don't get me wrong, I have taken steps to talking to them and try to get on their "level" sometimes, and yes they do laugh and seem to feel relaxed around me, but there is still something missing from them and me and I still haven't figured out what it is yet. (Jamila, SL journal #1, 2008)

Through weeks of trial and error, Jamila finally hit the spot in terms of connecting with the students the way she wanted. She spoke with great excitement during our debriefing interview in the sixth week about being able to find a lot of things in common with the students and knowing that they enjoyed her presence. Jamila noted: "I even asked Camille today, like I told her, "You know when we first came I didn't think you guys liked us." And I was like, "You weren't talking to us." And she was like, "Well, we didn't know you guys but after a while we found out you were really cool" (Jamila, 0325 interview, 2008).

For Jamila, what motivated her to keep trying different approaches to reaching out to the students was her strong faith in the principle of "people will respect you as long as you show them respect", which was further evolved into her belief in the pedagogical ideal of "kids will listen as long as they can relate" (Jamila, 0429 interview, 2008)[4]. Similar to Jamie whose distant manner in her interaction with the students was a strategy of action guided by the concern for her effectiveness in helping the students finish their tasks, which was closely tied to her image of the teacher-self; Jamila's focus on emotional closeness was also grounded in her desire for effective instruction and her perception of the role of a teacher. Unlike what we saw in Jamie's example that the notion of professionalism was used by pre-service teachers to define the role of educators mainly as service providers, the following from Jamila typified pre-service teachers' perspective of teachers as care givers.

> Shih-pei: What were the challenges you had to deal with when you worked with these kids?
>
> Jamila: When I worked with the kids I think the challenge was getting them to listen to me, having that authority but not being...the dictator and the...
>
> Shih-pei: What do you mean by dictator? This is the second time you use the word.

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[4] I asked Jamila since her beliefs in "mutual respect" had a significant influence on how she interacted with others, what she did to gain students' respect. Jamila explained:
Shih-pei: I know that gaining students' respect is a very big theme for you in your service-learning experience because the other day when Robert (the course instructor) asked the class "what you get out of the service-learning?" and you said "respect". So, what were some of the things you did to get these kids to respect you?
Jamila: I listened to them. When they were talking to me I made sure I had good eye contact with them, let them know and then when they told me things about themselves or about their families or about their siblings, whatever, I made sure that I asked questions and let them know that I was interested and I want to know more. When they talked about their music I let them know, "I listen to this music. And have you heard this?" And they knew what I heard, tell them about it, and then you know like just have a mutual connection with them. ....it's the fact that you gained the respect for being interested in what they're doing, you know what I'm saying? ..... You know kind of try to relate it to them even if I don't, let them think it does and that respect will come. I feel like that respect will come (Jamila, 0429 interview, 2008).

> Jamila: not dictator, like being over them like the leader, the head executive, the head person in charge. Like I could say, "Stop doing this and stop doing that," and they would listen. It would be hard for them at first, like when I first came in and said, "Okay, you guys listen," they're not going to listen to me. I haven't earned their respect yet so why should they listen to me. Who am I to tell them, but by being there and you know talking to them it gave me more...not more privilege it gave me a better...chance to you know tell them, "You should do this. You need to do this. Stop doing this," and they would listen because I understand them, they know who I am now. So, it's just like if you have a teacher in school and you listen to your teacher because they've been there and they care for you and they give homework and they teach and they tell you what to do (Jamila, 0429 interview, 2008).

The above passage shows that Jamila's desire for effective instruction and students' respect were simultaneously achieved through forging a caring relationship with the students. Jamila believed that by listening to the students and showing her understanding of them, they would respect her as an authority in return. The analogy Jamila made between her role at Boys and Girls Club and the role of a classroom teacher showed that she envisioned herself in educational contexts, first and foremost, as a care giver[5].

Here we see that Jamila attributed her initial difficulties to work effectively with the students to her lack of emotional bonds with them. She wanted to help the students with their projects, but her instruction was ignored and her help was not always wanted by the students. Rather than limiting her role as a service provider who offered help only when the students asked for it, Jamila chose to engage them on a personal level through

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[5] In fact, Jamila's own image of being a care giver was even broader than her self-image as an educator. My interview with Jamila showed that caring for others was a personal quality that she felt proud of. Also, a life philosophy she practiced to define her moral worth. When I asked Jamila what was the most moral important value in her life, she said:
Shih-pei: what would you say the most important moral value to you in your life?
Jamila: [....] I feel like that's my whole thing like be happy, smile, make a person feel better, don't bring them down. And yes some certain kids might have privileges, some people may be underprivileged, some may be minorities, some people may be the majority, but I feel like if we all work together, you know, it'll be a better place. Even things like encouraging somebody walking down the street, don't know them, putting a smile on their face, you know what I mean? Like I think that can help everybody at one point in their life. I feel like I want children to just get the best education possible because the children now are our future and so if they don't' have the education and if they don't have the skills to succeed in life, where are we going to be? So, do onto others as you would have them do onto you, I go by that all the time (Jamila, 0429 interview, 2008).

creating a sense of closeness. Compared to many other pre-service teachers who struggled with tensions among the competing desires that they managed to fulfill during their service-learning, Jamila displayed a more holistic satisfaction with her experience by virtue of her success in making herself *relatable to* the students in ways that also fulfilled her own image of the self as well as her perception of effective teaching. As she concluded: "working at the Boys and Girls Club was so fun. The whole experience I would do it over again five million times only because I feel like it benefited me because I feel like that might be how I experience teaching. I might get into it, get into a classroom, and just not like it, but I feel like as you continue to go, you continue to work on it, continue to work with it, and continue to challenge yourself with different areas and aspects of teaching that it'll be enjoyable for you, you know and that it'll grow on you" (Jamila, 0429 interview, 2008). Clearly, working with students of the same race in the type of environment where she grew up, Jamila perceived her service-learning experience as a mirror of her future teaching experience. My conversation with Jamila indicates that she expected to embark on a teaching career at a predominantly African American school in an urban area. Therefore, Jamila was able to see the direct relevance and long-term benefit of this early field experience to her future career. However, not all the pre-service teachers in my study envisioned themselves to start off their career at a school that served student population similar to those who they met at their service-learning site, then what they thought the connections between this field experience and their future teaching? The following section will explore this question.

Future career: giving back to where I belong

There are several goals that service-learning in TE200 intends to achieve. First, it intends to promote pre-service teachers' awareness of social differences in relation to issues of educational inequity; second, it intends to enhance pre-service teachers' sensitivity to the needs and experiences of students with disadvantaged backgrounds; and third, this early field component intends to inspire pre-service teachers to take an active role in education for low-income children in under-resourced schools. As much as teacher educators long for these goals to be fulfilled, the actual outcomes might suggest otherwise. What do pre-service teachers say about their leaning experience with regard to these ambitious pedagogical agendas? Does service-learning increase their sensitivity to social inequity, commitment to working with disadvantaged students, respect and acceptance for social differences? Where do they want to teach after having had a first-hand experience working with students from different social and cultural backgrounds in under-resourced educational settings? More importantly, does an increase in expressed awareness of structural inequality, commitment to social justice, and acceptance of cultural differences also increase pre-service teachers' willingness to take on the responsibility of educating low-income students in schools low on educational resources?

Before we listen to the voice of focal participants, I examine survey data to explore what pre-service teachers' say in response to these questions on a larger scale. The end-of-semester survey about pre-service teachers' service-learning experiences shows that among the sample of 324 respondents 41.7% said that service-learning enhanced 'a lot' of their understanding of social inequality in relation to educational issues, 36.1% said that it enhanced 'some', 18.2% said that it enhanced "a little", and the rest of 3.4% said

"none at all". As for the extent to which service-learning enhanced pre-service teachers' sensitivity to cultural diversity, 45.4% of pre-service teachers checked 'a lot', 32.4% checked 'some', only about 21% said that the influence was "a little" or "none at all". In terms of the effect of service-learning on pre-service teachers' sense of responsibility to work with disadvantaged students, 32.7% of pre-service teachers said "a lot", 41% said "some", and approximately a quarter of pre-service teachers said the effect was "a little" or "none at all". All together, the majority of pre-service teachers agreed that service-learning had a positive impact on them in terms of enhancing their awareness of social issues, sensitivity to cultural differences, and sense of responsibility to students with disadvantaged backgrounds. However, when being asked if service-learning increased the likelihood that they will choose to teach in an under-resourced school, the answers 'a little' (39.2%) and 'none at all' (24.1%) constitute the majority of the responses. Finally, when the question "service-learning makes me realize that I'll prefer to teach in a community similar to where I grew up" was posed to pre-service teachers, over half of pre-service teachers checked either 'a lot' (23.1%) or 'some' (30.2%). A break-down (See Table 6-1) by pre-service teachers' schooling experience shows that those who graduated from suburban and small-town high schools displayed a stronger tendency for "going back", whereas the majority (77.3%) of urban school graduates displayed little or no interest in teaching in a community similar to where they grew up. It has to be noted that pre-service teachers in this group were mostly white[6]. These numbers suggest that while experiential education through service-learning does contribute to positive

[6] Among 22 pre-service teachers who graduated from urban high schools, 13 were white, 5 were African-American, and one was Asian-American. There were two pre-service teachers identified themselves as white and Hispanic bi-racial and one as multi-racial. In the sample of 17 pre-service teachers who reported little or no interest in going back to teach in an urban community, 12 were white and two were white-Hispanic bi-racial.

attitudinal shift, it does not seem to mobilize much potential for future action as far as the effect of counterbalance is concerned. How do pre-service teachers' concerns for their teaching effectiveness, their relationships with the students and their self-image as manifesting in their envisioning of future career help us understand the discrepancy? More importantly, in order for teacher educators to better understand the effect of field experience on pre-service teachers' multicultural learning, we need to know how pre-service teachers draw on their service-learning experience to talk about these concerns and justify their career preferences. The following personal accounts from the focal pre-service teachers will give us more insights into why service-learning experiences, in some ways, confirm pre-service teachers' preferences to teach in communities similar to where they came from, if there is a choice.

Table 6-1: Influence of Service-learning Experience on Pre-service Teachers' Future Career Preference by High School of Origin

Service-learning is a reality-check for me to realize that I will prefer to teach in a community similar to where I grew up in the future

	A lot	Some	A little	Not at all	Total
Urban	2 9.1%	3 13.6%	9 40.9%	8 36.4%	22 100%
Suburban	41 20.9%	70 35.7%	55 28.1%	30 15.3%	196 100%
Small town	23 31.5%	18 24.7%	20 27.4%	12 16.4%	73 100%
Rural town	7 26.9%	6 23.1%	6 23.1%	7 26.9%	26 100%

Almost all the pre-service teachers I spoke to had very clear ideas about what kind of teacher they would like to become and how the image of the teacher-self was shaped by their personal schooling experiences. Not surprisingly, the majority (65%) of the pre-service teachers envisioned their teaching career in ways that reflected their apprenticeship of observation at school. One common theme emerged from pre-service

teachers' explanation about why they preferred to teach in a school that was similar to where they graduated from; the idea that they could be most helpful and effective working in an environment that they felt familiar and comfortable with because they knew the needs of the students. The following account from Carl was representative in this regard.

> Carl: I'd like to start at something similar to the high school I've been growing up in which maybe back home, maybe even in the high school I graduated from. It doesn't need to be predominantly Caucasian but it would be nice to have at least half, I don't think I could handle going with a predominantly African American school right off just because the cultural difference would be much too much for me just right off. Even with another year or two of college I don't think I could adapt that quickly. So if I were to be able to do that and be able to come up with a basic curriculum then I think... I yeah that would probably be best. And then if I were to move over to an urban setting where it's usually more predominantly African American I could adjust that curriculum to better suit the needs of those students. But I think it would be better to start off at somewhere where students have more in common with me than to be thrown into that situation (Carl, 0428 interview, 2008).

The statement of "*better suit the needs of those students*" reveals Carl's underlying adherence to the idea of effective teaching. He was aware that being an effective teacher meant being capable of tailoring the curriculum and instruction to meet the needs of students. However, in order for a teacher to be effective in addressing the needs of students of "*the Other*", he/she has to be strong and knowledgeable enough to transcend the cultural boundaries, which, according to Carl, "would be too much" for him to start off his teaching career. Consideration with regard to the ethic of effectiveness makes Carl's desirable career route a *right thing* to do as students would benefit the most, according to Carl, from a teacher who has the competence prepared to address their needs. By foregrounding a concern for teaching effectiveness, Carl was able to justify his

reluctance to teach in a predominantly African-American school as a matter of timing rather than an act of avoidance[7].

Likewise, pre-service teachers from urban areas also benefited from their service-learning experiences as these experiences yielded available cultural resources for them to assure the career route they preferred to take. Tim, a graduate from a racially diverse, low-income urban high school in the Pillar School District, was a typical example. Although he did his service-learning in the same school district where he received his entire K-12 education, it did not give Tim many new ideas about the school system. He was further convinced that giving back what he was given to students attending urban schools was his call.

In my interview with Tim, he sarcastically referred to himself as "a *product* of inner city schools". When being asked what kind of school he would like to teach at in the future, Tim said he would like to work at a place similar to his high school where there was a need for good teachers who can see the potential of students to do better[8]. "I think I would really like it if I could affect students so that they go above what society might expect of them" Tim said (Tim, 0422 interview, 2008). According to Tim, the society generally expected to see urban school students do poorly, so did the students themselves

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[7] In much the same vein, Lacy envisioned her teaching career in different school contexts in a sense of "*timing*", but unlike Carl, she saw herself in the position of teaching in an urban school as a start-off of her career because "I'm younger and have a lot of energy and have a lot of optimism" (Lacy, 0420 interview, 2008) to help students develop their great potential. Yet, Lacy admitted that eventually she would like to teach at a school similar to the one she went to because "I would've really enjoyed teaching an upper level political science class though in a high school, you know, in a high school like I went to" (Lacy, 0402 interview, 2008).

[8] Similarly, Danielle's commitment to giving back to the urban community she grew up in was also assured by her service-learning experience. As Danielle said with confidence that service-learning taught her that she can do it. She noted: "Even though it is horrible right now. I want to go to DPS. And I plan on teaching high school just because people have given up on public schools a lot. And I don't think it's fair for the students who can't go anywhere else to have to be subjected to mediocre education. So if I have the resources, if I have the qualities of a teacher who is at a suburban [school], I want to give that to the students in an [urban] public school." (Danielle, 0423 interview, 2008)

have internalized the pervasive deficit assumption about their inability to succeed. They were confined to negative images, such as drug using, fighting, low test scores, and rundown buildings, of their districts and schools as portrayed in the local media. Tim said:

> Tim: there have been kids I have known throughout my school career who kind of, if they get on the wrong track they'll end up, kind of just, not dropping out but kind of showing up half the time, maybe getting into drugs or something. And I think that a lot of that has to do with they don't see....options to go beyond that because of what they see as a portrayal of Pillar School District. And I think something what I'm really proud of the district for is that our former superintendent, I don't know anything about the new one, but Dr. B was always, she always focused on the positive whenever she was talking to students and she could kind of change the way you looked at Pillar as something that was doing better than anyone said it could. And I think that was very helpful. I think the expectations and the perceptions do make a real difference in how much a student will apply themselves in school (Tim, 0422 interview, 2008).

In responding to my question concerning the challenges facing urban school students that called for his commitment, Tim reiterated his frustration with the infliction of low expectations and negative perceptions of urban schools. While he thought "money matters" and the unequal distribution of funding undoubtedly made a big difference in the quality of education that different schools could afford between those in wealthy and poor communities, he believed teachers' commitment to developing their students' potential was a more crucial factor in determining whether students could go beyond what they were expected to achieve. Tim recalled his own schooling experience:

> Tim: I always hear about funding issues and I'm sure that makes a big difference but it didn't make the difference in my education because you know where there were good teachers there were good classes. So I'm sure it's a very real problem and it'd probably be better if we had more funding but it hasn't affected me hugely (Tim, 0422 interview, 2008).

It should be noted that the motivation behind Tim's aspiration for devoting himself to urban schools that need good teachers was very different from the suburban pre-

service teachers I talked to who also expressed a similar aspiration for urban teaching. When suburban pre-service teachers said that they would consider teaching in urban schools because the students needed good teachers, their motivation, by and large, lay in some kind of "savior mentality"[9] with the assumption that they can make changes in students' lives by giving them the type of *good teachers* they did not have. The following from Ashley provides a vivid illustration in this regard.

> Shih-pei: Since you went to private schools throughout your education career, so what kind of school would you like to teach at in the future?
>
> Ashley: This is a quandary I've been thinking about a lot actually. Having taken this class of course there's a part of me that's like, "Man, I want to change the world. Work in an urban school and be a good role model for those poor kids that have shitty teachers and come from a crappy home life." And then there's the other part of me that's like I want to be in the safe private school where I'm given my curriculum and I'm not challenged but I'm allowed to talk about God and be safe in the suburb I guess (Ashley, 0426 interview, 2008).

Nevertheless, Tim's personal experience revealed that urban schools did have good teachers who were committed to student learning, but their efforts were often overlooked and underappreciated. As he noted:

> Tim: I feel like I was very well prepared. I don't know if that's, it's probably not a universal inner-city school experience but I know that Pillar High School prepared me for the world because of some really good teachers, that they really made a huge difference and I know that on a personal level people don't really care about this type of thing and you know (Tim, 0422 interview, 2008).

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[9] In his final reflection paper, Tim revealed his discomfort with the savior mentality he encountered in the TE200 class. He wrote: "Something about this TE 200 class has made me very uncomfortable, and I'm not entirely sure what it is. It's not that the idea of social inequalities bothers me—I've been aware of their impact for some time, and the new things I've learned from this class I have accepted openly. And it's not as if my time in service learning confronted me with realities I'd rather not acknowledge—I babysat kids in the computer lab of an elementary school much like my own. No, I think that my discomfort has more to do with the idea that I went to school in the very district that our program is swooping in to save. [.....] At one point a peer of mine in the course said something to the effect that it was sad that those on the lower end of the economic scale would never know anything about life on the flipside of the class divide. I remember that I disputed that, and he ended up saying that life bound to be *different* for a kid from, say, Pillar High School, where he did his service learning, and the more privileged environment of Osward. I assume he was unaware that I had graduated from Pillar in June of that year" (Tim, final reflection, 2008).

As a result, Tim was inspired to give back what he was given. He expected and envisioned himself to be one of the good teachers he met at high school who cared for and were supportive of their students' need.

Our understanding of how the ethic of effectiveness was mobilized by pre-service teachers to justify their career preference would be incomplete if we overlook their consideration of *the ethic of authenticity*. This chapter will thus end with the following discussion on pre-service teachers' desire for *wanting to be themselves* in relation to their thinking about teaching effectiveness.

Like Carl, many middle-class-identified pre-service teachers found communication to be a daunting task when cultural differences came in to the scene. They talked about difficulties of getting students listen to them and being ineffective in their attempt to advise students. Drawing on the course knowledge, most pre-service teachers learned to attribute their ineffectiveness in communication to the differences in the styles of speaking between working class and middle class. The below passage from Carl's journal nicely captured the common dilemma that was frequently brought up by pre-service teachers in the university class across the four TE200 sections I observed. Carl wrote:

> All right, so, I admit that I fall into the stereotypical middle/upper class, at least according to Delpit's description. I say this because when ever I instruct the kids, I find myself doing so indirectly. For example, during my last service learning experience I was working with a group of kids that were put in charge of gathering pictures that shows what their class is doing or has done. In other words, pictures of ways to conserve energy, what will happen if we don't, and pictures that give basic information about the Green City group (location, members, etc.). Keeping in mind these are middle school kids and knowing that a camera in their hands could result in catastrophe, the instructors assigned me to the group to help keep them on task.
> My problem, as is hinted above, was that every time I gave them an instruction it was indirect or in the form of a question typical of middle/upper class individuals. To state an example, I said, "Should we get started" after six minutes of dilly-dallying. Although this probably hastened their decision (still took about a

> minute) to get to work, it probably would have been faster if I gave them a direct command. I only say this because of James' example. He is an African American male and an instructor at the Boys and Girls Club. Whenever James makes an appearance, he makes his presence and his desires known, and the kids (who are also African American) immediately set to work to satisfy him. (Carl, SL journal #4, 2008)

When I asked Carl why he was so reluctant to give "direct commands" to students if he knew that directness was a culturally relevant way of speaking to be effective in his communication with working class students, Carl explained:

> Carl: I feel like I have to be a bad person. I feel like I have to be mean. It just seems just because of the way I've been raised whenever I'm direct it feels like a command and it feels like they have no choice in the matter – which I believe everybody should always have a choice as to what they want. I feel like this would sort of interfere with their creativity if I were to say like if I were to want to make a suggestion like, "Perhaps this color would work better. I mean this picture would work better if this part were blue." If I was more direct and just said, "Hey that should be blue," or something they might take it as an idea but...just due to how I was raised.... I'd just feel like I'm telling them what to do as opposed to...guiding them I guess. (Carl, 0428 interview, 2008)

The emotional turmoil, thus, emerged when pre-service teachers felt being caught in the dilemma of *wanting to be effective* and *wanting to be the way they are.* The turmoil and dilemma grew when the accomplishment of effectiveness was perceived to be achieved through the loss of one's individuality, and accommodating other people's culture seemed to suggest suppressing the culture of one's own. In order for the seemly competing goals to be both achieved, seeking a teaching environment that is familiar and comfortable for one's career hence provides a satisfactory and justifiable answer, if not perfect.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I explored pre-service teachers' negotiation with the competing ethical considerations involved in their service-learning work as they managed to

maintain appropriate relationships with the students. My findings suggested that pre-service teachers, regardless of their schooling experiences and demographic characteristics, all encountered various ethical conflicts as they sought to balance a sense of teaching effectiveness, positive relationships with the students, and a sense of authenticity in their self-image and conduct. In negotiating these conflicts, pre-service teachers experienced moments of unsettlement that surfaced their habitual ways of thinking and acting. As such, they sought modifications to strategies of action to retool themselves in the face of new challenges.

In addition, my findings suggested that pre-service teachers' learning experience from TE200 and their service-learning site seems to have double-edged meanings to their future career aspiration. On the one hand, the majority of pre-service teachers in the present study thought the seminars in conjunction with experiential education helped them better grapple with social and educational inequalities and gave them new insights into the competing demands involved in the teaching profession. On the other hand, when asked to talk about their preferable educational contexts in which they would like to start their teaching career, many pre-service teachers used their service-learning experience to justify rather than challenge their pre-established aspiration. In this sense, service-learning made available cultural resources that pre-service teachers could use to confirm their ideas about the types of teachers they wanted to become and the educational contexts in which they believed would provide the opportunities to do so.

As revealed in the preceding discussions, pre-service teachers experienced a sense of alienation when trying to adapt to new ways of speaking and acting that were regarded as *responsive* to the *culture* of the students. Whereas they acknowledged the importance

of making themselves relatable to the students, their feeling of losing an authentic sense of self often created discomfort and distress that frustrated their willingness to work with culturally different students in the future.

Pre-service teachers' need and desire for being true to themselves as individuals with particular cultural traits, is largely overlooked by current multicultural teacher education literature. Such neglect might be partially due to teacher educators' neglect of heterogeneity in their students (Lowenstein, 2009). Findings from the present chapter suggest that while teacher educators endeavor to prepare pre-service teachers to be culturally responsive educators for their future K-12 students, there is also a compelling need for teacher educators to be culturally responsive to their students so as to better identify the difficulties that trouble pre-service teachers and address their concerns in ways that are relevant to their needs.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

For years, multicultural teacher educators have labored to cultivate pre-service teachers' readiness to work with culturally diverse students. They continue to work to identify and understand the various factors that shape the process and outcomes of pre-service teachers' learning in multicultural teacher education courses. In doing so, teacher educators have investigated what conceptions pre-service teachers hold about social inequality, how they perceive people of different cultural backgrounds, especially from marginalized social groups, how they explain individuals' success and failure, and more importantly, how pre-service teachers' reasoning about inequality, difference and diversity mediates their ideas about working with diverse student populations and their sense of responsibility of teaching for justice and equity (Cochran-Smith et al., 2004; Hollins and Guzman, 2005; Sleeter, 2001a). Following the ample body of scholarly discussions in this literature, my dissertation project seeks to explore these questions by looking at how pre-service teachers make sense of their own life experiences with social privilege and marginalization, as well as their work with low-income minority students through a service-learning project.

I began with an analysis of the moral meanings that pre-service teachers constructed to make sense of social privilege and marginalization in relation to their life experience. I argue that by giving moral meanings to their privileged and marginalized social positions, pre-service teachers were able to view their unearned advantage and disadvantage from a positive light. Consequently, the moral justification gave pre-service teachers a tool to criticize the unjust nature of social stratification without fundamentally

problematizing its structural underpinning. My investigation addresses the gap in the current literature by foregrounding pre-service teachers' voices emerging from their multiple social identities. Existing studies on pre-service teachers' conceptions of social stratification in relation to their social positioning tends to overlook the significance of pre-service teachers' marginalized social identities. By neglecting pre-service teachers' multifaceted subjectivity, researchers have largely developed a monolithic conceptualization of pre-service teachers as *privileged* individuals who are limited in their ability to reason about the social order from a structural perspective. Such a view limits scholarly attention to the competing frames of reference that pre-service teachers simultaneously use to reason about educational inequalities. My study shows that pre-service teachers use multiple interpretive frameworks to reason about students' characteristics, which involve considerations of both personal factors and external factors outside individuals' control. Moreover, findings from the present study suggest that pre-service teachers' construction of relationships with students is significantly shaped by their conceptions of the moral-self.

In this chapter, I will first present two cases, Danielle and Cathleen, to illuminate the connections between issues discussed in previous chapters. After that, I will discuss the value of cultural toolkit theory to examine what Cochran-Smith (2003) terms "the knowledge question" (i.e. questions concerning pre-service teachers' attitudes, beliefs and conceptions about diversity; experiences and factors that influence these beliefs, and changes in beliefs after program experiences) in multicultural teacher education. Lastly, I will conclude by suggesting potential directions for future research.

Danielle and Cathleen are selected for in-depth discussion because their experiences are representative of different concerns in preparing new teachers for diverse learners. This includes both the need for diversity in the teaching force and the need to prepare the mainstream teaching force to teach diverse students effectively. In addition, Danielle's schooling experience in an impoverished inner-city neighborhood and Cathleen's experience in a wealthy suburban community represent contrasts of educational stratification along racial and socio-economic lines.

Two Cases: Danielle and Cathleen

To examine how Danielle's and Cathleen's moral notion of the self in relation to their privileged and marginalized social identities connected with their interpretations about students' characteristics and their experience with students, I organize my synthetic discussion along the following lines. I will first present Danielle's and Cathleen's construction of the moral self as it related to their race and social class. I focus on race and social class because these are the two major social markers that signify the marginalized status of the working class racial minority students the pre-service teachers worked with at local urban schools. Therefore, their conceptions of how race and social class shaped their own life experience will help illuminate the pre-service teachers' conceptions about children who were disadvantaged in both areas. For this reason, I will then discuss how Danielle's and Cathleen's moral sentiments underlie their interpretations of the students and the role they choose to take on in accordance with their perceptions of the students' need.

Both Danielle and Cathleen considered class-based advantages such as family income and parents' educational attainment to be the most important contributor to their

academic achievement, which, they believed, would reward them with better social standing in the future. Like most middle-class identified pre-service teachers in the study, Danielle and Cathleen enacted an image of a *grateful self* by highlighting their appreciation for the socio-economic resources their parents could afford, which gave them an upper hand in life. This sentiment of gratefulness for one's class advantage was well captured by Cathleen's initial reaction to the rundown building at her service-learning site, Woody Elementary School, noting that she felt *lucky* not having had to attend a school like this as a child. In contrast, for Danielle, the infrastructure of Midland Middle School was similar to the public urban schools she attended for her entire K-12 educational career. Danielle grappled with class disparities at a more personal level than Cathleen when she observed discrepancies in academic ability between herself and the students she tutored. Her observation of these discrepancies reinforced her appreciation for being *fortunate* enough to have an educator for a mother.

Whereas Danielle and Cathleen experienced some commonality in their moral selves with regard to social class, their moral selves and enactment of those selves differed significantly with regard to race. In her attempt to make sense of her white privilege, Cathleen constantly expressed a strong sense of sympathy in her descriptions of injustice facing racial minority groups. She sympathized with the newly arrived Latino and Cambodian populations who were not welcomed by the White residents in her historically white hometown, felt sorry for students attending poorly equipped inner city schools, and uncomfortable with her family members' racist comments against African Americans over the dinner table. In other words, what was underlined in Cathleen's account of her racial privilege was the moral enactment of a *sympathetic self*, the self-

conception that allowed Cathleen to differentiate between the *good* and the *bad* white individuals. Danielle, on the other hand, foregrounded her sense of responsibility for the collective well-being of the African-American community in her account of her marginalization as an African American. For Danielle, education was still the key to the betterment of the African-American community. She perceived her future teaching career as contributing to this betterment. The moral enactment of a *responsible self*, hence, was clearly manifested in Danielle's career aspiration to teach in urban schools.

As I argued in the preceding chapters, the moral notion of the self that pre-service teachers constructed to reason their social positions largely involved their relational conceptualization of their privileged/marginalized counterparts. Without an intention to make any causal explanation that suggests pre-service teachers' conceptions of the moral-self function as guidelines for their relationships with the *others,* I, however, would like to argue that their self-images, if examined closely, do play a role in how they conceptualize and approach students. Using Danielle and Cathleen's cases as examples, the following discussions will illustrate such connections.

Previously, I noted that both Danielle and Cathleen attributed their academic success to the direct benefits inherited from their parents' socio-economic status and educational attainment. Danielle's and Cathleen's appreciation for their class privilege indicated their acknowledgement that students who were not advantaged by their parents' social standing might not achieve as much academically. Such an understanding was clearly expressed in their reasoning about students' under achievement. Rather than blame students' academic failure as their personal faults, Danielle and Cathleen were cautious of not measuring the students based on their own learning experience because

their students did not receive as much *home advantage* (Lareau, 2000) as they did. Moreover, in reasoning about students' educational disengagement and underperformance, both Danielle and Cathleen highlighted the external factors that handicapped student learning. In particular, they considered teachers' attitudes to be decisive in this regard. Consequently, relational reasoning, as revealed in Chapter 5, appeared to be the dominant interpretative framework in Danielle and Cathleen's accounts. However, Danielle's and Cathleen's relational interpretations were distinct from each other according to the focus of their concern. While Danielle foregrounded her concern about the negative effect of defensive teaching employed by, Mrs. Gonzales, the teacher she worked with in service learning, Cathleen worried the most about students' emotional well-being under the shadow of her teacher's, Mr. Jones' negative demeanor and degrading language. Whereas the difference in the focus of Danielle's and Cathleen's central concern might be related to the differing teaching practices they observed, underlying such a difference on a deeper level was, indeed, their conceptions of the *moral self.*

In Danielle's case, Mrs. Gonzales' defensive teaching, reflected in her low expectations for her students, represented the type of educational problem that motivated Danielle to pursue a teaching career. Danielle's career aspiration, as previously noted, was driven by her sense of responsibility for promoting the collective well-being of *her people* through education. Despite her middle-class upbringing, the working class minority students at Midland Middle School and Danielle shared many characteristics in common. They were the group of people Danielle identified with as, in her own words, "*my people*" and the ones that Danielle felt responsible for helping achieve academically.

Witnessing Mrs. Gonzales not provide the students the quality education they needed for better life chances concerned Danielle, as she perceived students' lack of academic readiness contributing to the continuing collective immobility of *her people*. Both Danielle's criticism about Mrs. Gonzales' teaching (or in Danielle's words, *not teaching*) and her efforts to help the students thus involved the underlying judgment of responsibility mobilized by her moral enactment of a *responsible self.*

Unlike Danielle who can identify and be identified with the students on the basis of a sense of *we-ness*, Cathleen's position in relation to students at Woody Elementary School was mutually defined by the sense of *otherness*. Mr. Jones was the "one of *us*" to Cathleen, according to their common race and social class attributes. Cathleen's self-conception as a privileged white, upper-middle class individual was grounded in her sympathy for the *less fortunate*, which led her to identify the needs of students at Woody Elementary School, first and foremost, in terms of their emotional well-being. Noticeably, the enactment of a *sympathetic self* was prevalent throughout her service-learning in Mr. Jones' classroom. As noted before, the enactment of a *sympathetic self* allowed pre-service teachers to forge a sense of differentiation from the *bad privileged people* who were indifferent to and/or caused the plight of the marginalized. In Cathleen's case, such differentiation was evident as manifested in the drastic contrast between her patience and Mr. Jones' rudeness toward the students. Consequently, the more degrading language Cathleen heard from Mr. Jones, the more sympathetic she felt for the students who were subjugated to Mr. Jones' power and had to endure the distress caused by his negativity.

Pre-service teachers' moral conceptions of their privileged and marginalized social positions not only played a role in how they conceptualized students who were socially and culturally disadvantaged by their race and socio-economic origin, but also mediated how they identify the needs of the students and the roles they take on to meet the students' needs. Because the roles that pre-service teachers take on involve competing ethical considerations related to their concerns for the self and others, it thus engages pre-service teachers in negotiating their self-images while negotiating their relationships with the students. In Danielle's case, her self-image of feeling responsible for helping students gain a grasp of the materials led her to position herself as an academic mentor; whereas in Cathleen's case, her sympathetic self was translated into the role of a care giver. For Danielle, being a good academic mentor meant being able to provide effective help to assist student learning. Accordingly, *the ethic of effectiveness* appeared to be the most important ethical consideration in Danielle's relationship with the students. As for Cathleen, the role of a care-giver compelled her to foreground *the ethic of caring* in her interactions with the students.

The enactment of a *responsible self* through working with urban youth at Midland Middle School empowered Danielle, as revealed in previous chapters, by reassuring her career aspiration to become an urban teacher, a goal grounded in her sense of group solidarity as a responsible member of the African American community. As Danielle witnessed students under her tutelage progress in comprehending the learning material, she obtained positive reinforcement of her self-image and secured a sense of authenticity in her conduct. Cathleen, on the contrary, felt disempowered by her role as a care-giver for the less fortunate students. The enactment of a *sympathetic self* in Cathleen's

interaction with the students was motivated by her self-conception as a member of the *privileged groups*, which highlighted a sense of separation from the marginalized counterparts. As a result, the more she tried to relate to the students on a personal level by caring for their needs, the more alienation she experienced; the chasm between her and the students grew, becoming seemingly unbridgeable to her. Cathleen was emotionally burdened by her sympathy for the students in part because maintaining a sympathetic self inhibited her from transcending the boundary even though she expressly desired to do so. Through the above synthetic discussions of Danielle's and Cathleen's cases, I presented the connections between pre-service teachers' moral notions of the self and their interpretations of K-12 students' behavior, attitude, and academic performance. In addition, I also showed how their conceptions of the moral self mediated their primary concern for students' needs and the ways in which they managed their relationships with the students. In what follows, I present a theoretical discussion to reiterate the value of cultural toolkit theory in research on pre-service teachers' multicultural learning.

Theoretical Discussion

I shall begin my theoretical discussion by asking the very fundamental question that many cultural anthropologists and sociologists have strived to answer in the past decades: "in what ways are culture and social actions connected?" How culture influences human beings' attitudes, behaviors, feelings, and thoughts has been at the center of debates about the definition of "culture" itself. Among the divergent theoretical visions in the field of cultural theory, two major, yet arguably polarized, theoretical approaches, i.e. culture-as-system versus culture-as-practice (Sewell, 1999) are largely used as frames of reference to compare and contrast the work of cultural analysts. From

the perspective of culture-as-system, culture has independent causal influences on human social life by imposing a relatively coherent and fundamental meaning system that allows human action to make sense to actors (Sewell, 1999). The role of culture in human experiences, hence, is understood as a precondition whereby social actors carry out actions to meet the needs of social integration. The culture-as-practice perspective, in contrast, highlights the autonomy and capacity of individuals to actively draw on incoherent and contradictory cultural elements for personal purposes. According to culture-as-practice theories, social actors actively deploy discourses and narratives within social contexts and institutional arenas to motivate, justify and make sense of their own actions (Swidler, 1986; 2003).

Although the notion of culture sits at the heart of multicultural education, questions concerning how the concept is conceptualized and used to shape the discourse of multicultural education remain under-examined (Hoffman, 1996). Understanding the underlying conceptual underpinning of "culture" is particularly crucial to research that explores pre-service teachers' attitudes, beliefs and conceptions about diversity in relation to their multicultural learning because it shapes, implicitly or explicitly, the ways we identify what "cultural competence" pre-service teachers need to work effectively with diverse student populations and what they learn from the teacher preparation courses that intend to help them develop such competence.

McAllister and Irvine (2000) synthesize various definitions of cross-cultural competence from the literature. According to their synthesis, a cross-culturally competent person possesses cognitive, affective, and behavioral characteristics that allow him/her to grow beyond the *psychological parameters of one culture*, to be open to accept and

appreciate the differences between different cultures, and to be committed to combating racism and other forms of prejudice and discrimination through developing appropriate understanding, attitudes and social action skills (McAllister and Irvine, 2000). What underlies this formulation is the assumption that "culture", as reflected in its members' attitudes, behaviors and thoughts, exists and operates as a coherent interpretive or meaning system through which individuals acquire relatively homogeneous, if not exactly the same, worldviews shared by other members of the same group. Culture, in this sense, is conceptualized as essentialized differences that define social groups as discrete units. The type of cultural competence that pre-service teachers need to transcend group boundaries hence depends on the kind of *cultural beings* they are classified into. In multicultural teacher education, pre-service teachers are conceptualized as cultural beings, first and foremost, in terms of their race and social class identifications. It is often assumed that if a pre-service teacher is white and from a middle-class household, then he/she is considered lacking competence to understand students of different racial and social class groups, since the white and/or middle class cultures offer the type of worldview that is distinctive from, and incompatible with the worldviews of racial minority and working class cultures.

In addition, Sleeter's (2001b) review of multicultural education research suggests that studies addressing pre-service teachers' development of cultural competence for teaching diverse learners commonly involve the tasks of improving pre-service teachers' attitudes toward cultural differences and raising their awareness about racial inequalities. Taken together, the work of multicultural teacher education is largely built upon the assumptions that the majority of pre-service teachers constitute a homogeneous group

unified under the *meaning system* of white, middle-class cultures and that the ultimate goals of multicultural teacher education are to undo the negative effects of this culture on their future work with low-income racial minority students. Lowenstein (2009) criticizes these assumptions as fallacies that mask the complexities of pre-service teachers' worldviews and capacities through homogenizing and deficit lenses.

Few people would deny the distinctions in collective traits among different social groups and the need for pre-service teachers to be knowledgeable about variations in frames of reference held by other groups, as well as the social, economic and political conditions within which these frames of reference evolved. However, pinpointing what pre-service teachers need to learn to be culturally competent by highlighting how they are handicapped by the culture they were socialized into through the essentialist lens of culture-as-system only steers us to look at their limitations rather than their potentials.

Moreover, a culture-as-system approach to the development of cultural competence suggests a stage-by-stage model of attitudinal shift through which one's old frames of reference are replaced by a new system of thinking, knowing, and acting. Progress in competence-building is thus considered linear and measurable. A major flaw of the stage theory is that it assumes pre-service teachers' attitudes, opinions, and perceptions are guided by a somewhat distinctive and coherent logic that makes stage classifications possible. Yet, if we look carefully at pre-service teachers' narratives, we find that pre-service teachers' stories often consist of competing and contradictory assertions that lack coherence and consistency (Baldwin et al, 2007; Goodwin, 1997; Lawrence, 1997). This makes developmental typologies a weak analytical tool to gain

insight into the sophistication and complexity of pre-service teachers' multicultural learning experiences.

If the paradigm of culture-as-system limits our understanding of pre-service teachers' perceptions and learning about issues of diversity, then, what would their experiences look like through the lens of culture-as-practice? From the perspective of culture-as-practice, culture provides individuals a collection of "tools" as means for the performance of action (Sewell, 1999; Swidler, 1986, 2003). As we have seen in the preceding discussions, pre-service teachers strategically drew on socially rewarded moral values to empower and justify their social positions, moved around among different explanatory schemas to make sense of their students, negotiated competing ethical demands to manage relationships with students, and utilized both their existing ideas about teaching and new insights acquired from their service-learning experience to justify their career aspiration. This dynamic process of pre-service teachers' use of cultural elements to construct the meanings of their life histories and multicultural learning experiences would not be well captured by the "culture-as-system" theory, since the role of individual agency would be largely overlooked in the analyses.

It should be noted that, while cultural toolkit theory highlights the performative nature of cultural influence on individuals' actions, it does not deny the institutional aspect of culture in terms of its influence on individuals as systems of symbols and meanings. Moreover, whereas the toolkit theory endorses the power of human agency, it also acknowledges that the exercise of human agency is conditioned and shaped by the norms and rules that dominate the given social institutions. For example, through the lens of toolkit theory, pre-service teachers' "code-switching" in terms of adopting the

working-class communicative style while seeking effective communication with the students is to be understood as a strategic practice of *other people's culture.* Yet, despite acknowledging the need to speak in a manner that is compatible with the students' culture, their discomfort with the authoritative tone of speaking indicates the influence of the *middle-class culture* they grew up with, which does not appreciate "authoritativeness" as it is considered detrimental to the rights of individual choice. If we interpret pre-service teachers' ambivalence with their act of code-switching simply as developmentally immature in their competence to work with students from different social classes, then we will fail to capture the relational nuances that exist between one's autonomy to make use of culture and one's adherence to the meaning systems that culture offers.

Future Research

There are several potential directions for future research that I would like to propose for scholarly attention and my own continuing work in this area. First, further investigation is needed to explore the role of contextual factors related to the dynamics of university multicultural education courses (e.g. demographic characteristics of students enrolled in the class, curriculum focus and instructors' pedagogical approaches) in pre-service teachers' learning about issues of diversity. I noted in the methods chapter that although I factored instructors' characteristics in terms of their socio-cultural backgrounds and areas of interest/scholarly expertise in my selection of the research sites, my present study did not look at how pre-service teachers' opinions might be shaped by the areas of focus emphasized by their course instructor nor did I examine how their opinions might be influenced by their peers' points of view. For example, as a black-white bi-racial male with a strong interest in engaging students in thinking about racial

inequality, Instructor Robert's phenotypical characteristics and his pedagogical agenda might be more likely to prompt his students' attention to issues of race than students enrolled in Renee's class who might be more sensitive to linguistic discrimination given the instructor's expertise in that area. Similarly, the presence of students of color or gay students could make conversations about white or heterosexual privilege very different from what might be discussed in a classroom where everyone is presumably white or straight. Hence, future research on intra-class comparison is needed to examine the effects of classroom dynamics on pre-service teachers' multicultural learning.

In addition to classroom dynamics of the university course, there is also a need to investigate the effect of contextual factors related to field placements where pre-service teachers carry out their experiential education. Two major factors are particularly significant in this regard: the nature and organizational arrangement of the institutions and the demographic characteristics of student population served by the institutions.

As I noted previously in Chapter 5, the relational reasoning schema was disproportionately used by pre-service teachers who performed their service-learning in regular classroom settings. It was mostly used to explain students' academic disengagement and disruptive behavior as consequences of negative teacher-student relationships. The salience of relational interpretations presented by pre-service teachers working in regular classrooms as opposed to those who worked at community-based or school-based after-school programs could be due in part to the organizational nature of school and community settings. While teaching and learning are highly institutionalized in schools, the same level of institutionalization rarely defined the relationships between educators and learners in community organizations. Moreover, students are mandated to

go to schools, yet are enrolled in extra-curricular academic programs on a voluntary basis. Therefore, students' relationships with educators or other authoritative figures in the after-school programs are often not as rigidly defined as they are in schools.

The effect of the demographic characteristics of the student population on pre-service teachers' learning about teaching diverse learners should be examined with further differentiation. For example, pre-service teachers' level of sensitivity to racial differences might differ according to the racial make-up of their service-learning site's student population. Such a phenomenon has been partially captured by white pre-service teachers' feeling of being *situationally marginalized* as a *white minority* in the predominantly African-American after-school program at the Boys and Girls Club. While all the white pre-service teachers in the present study experienced being a *numerical minority* at their service-learning site, and acknowledged the significance of *difference* in terms of *race* between them and their students, the *feeling of marginalization* was never reported by white pre-service teachers who worked with a student population consisting of a mixture of racial minority groups. More studies are needed to explore how pre-service teachers' sense of in-group/out-group boundaries mediates their experience with culturally diverse students.

Lastly, there is a need for conducting longitudinal research to trace the long-term effect of early multicultural field experience on pre-service teachers' attitude toward teaching culturally diverse learners. Although positive influences of multicultural field experiences on pre-service teachers' learning about issues of diversity have been well-documented (Baldwin et al., 2007; Boyle-Baise, 1998, 2002; Calabrese-Barton, 2000; Cooper, 2007; Koulish, 2000; Wade, 1995; Wade and Anderson, 1996; Wiggins et al.,

2007), we know little about how an early field experience working with diverse learners might be used by pre-service teachers to inform their view on their career or teaching practice in the long run. Findings from the present study indicate that pre-service teachers might use their early field experience to support their pre-established career aspiration. For example, we have seen previously from Carl's case that using a language of "disqualification", Carl admitted that he would not want to teach in a culturally diverse environment because he was *incapable* of transcending the cultural differences between himself and the students in these environments. Again this reveals the importance of getting to know what pre-service teachers think, and of incorporating their perspectives into curriculum design so that we can help them unpack their field experiences.

Appendix A: In-Depth Interview Protocol

1. Can you tell me a little about your background? Where did you grow up? How would you describe the schools you attended in your hometown? What kind of student you were in school? When did you first consider teaching as your career and why?

2. How would you compare your tutees' schooling experiences with your own experience at school?

3. What have you found interesting about your service-learning experience?

4. What were your expectations about the tutoring program prior to beginning your service-learning? Were your expectations correct? Explain.

5. How would you characterize your tutees in terms of ability, behavior and effort?

6. Can you describe a challenging situation with a student or group of students? Why was this situation challenging for you?

7. Can you describe a situation with a student or group of students that made you feel successful? Why did this make you feel successful?

8. What educational issues have you learned about because of your involvement in service-learning? How has becoming aware of these issues affected your views about teaching?

9. What have you found helpful to you in terms of working with your tutees? With disadvantaged youth more broadly?

10. What have you learned about urban education from your engagement in service-learning at an urban school?

11. What have you learned about yourself from service-learning? What do you consider the most rewarding/frustrating experience from this project?

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