LEARNING TO TEACH IN FREEDOM SCHOOLS: DEVELOPING PRACTICES AND IDENTITES AS EDUCATORS AND ACTIVISTS

By

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ABSTRACT

LEARNING TO TEACH IN FREEDOM SCHOOLS: DEVELOPING PRACTICES AND IDENTITES AS EDUCATORS AND ACTIVISTS

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This study examines how program interns participating in the Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools—a national-community collaborative program for under-resourced communities—learned to teach through their participation in a national training institute and activities and learning opportunities at their local site. College-aged young adults known as "servant-leader interns" are the teachers in this context. At the national training and throughout the Freedom School program at their local sites interns are a part of various training and learning opportunities centered on engaging their students in the Freedom Schools curriculum. Such opportunities include curriculum training sessions, child development workshops, and daily site debriefing meetings. The author used ethnographic methods and worked within an interpretive paradigm to explore the topic in this study, because the intent was to describe the development and learning of the interns as teachers engaging in opportunities for learning. The data set included observations and fieldnotes from national training sessions, interviews with the site coordinator and national trainers, field notes and audio taped conversations from the daily debrief meetings, intern journals, and national and site documents and artifacts. Through inductive, thematic analysis, this study documents how interns learned to become educators and activists at Freedom School. Key to this process was the interns' induction into a social justice movement; programmatic efforts to develop intern stance and agency

as educators; and the various ways in which interns were supported in their development. The nature of the national training institute is highlighted along with examples of the activities, learning opportunities and sources of support at both national training and the local site. Finally, the author discusses the usefulness of such an analysis in that providing a profile of Freedom School training presents an alternative model of teacher preparation and development grounded in notions of culturally responsive teaching, teaching for social justice, and preparing teachers for diversity.

To all those on whose shoulders I stand,

especially Rachel Harrison and Claude William Jackson

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction:

Telling the Freedom School Story

> It is important to tell our story. We must tell our story before someone else does and gets it wrong.
>
> -Dr. Betty Ward-Fletcher

> You are writing the chapters of the Freedom School history. You have been chosen. Get tired if you must, but don't you quit.
>
> -Caroline Coleman

Origin of Study

When I entered the doctoral program, I had no idea what my dissertation would be about. I only knew that if I were to conduct and write an admirable study, then I had to write about something important to me and something that I was passionate about. Well, that list was pretty long considering the fact that I had left the classroom in frustration after six years of elementary teaching. I entered the doctoral program knowing that I had valuable experience as a classroom teacher and that my initial task was to somehow find a way to connect my teaching experience with a research agenda. I took courses to expand and focus my own learning of teacher development and teacher learning in addition to exploring questions from my teaching experience that I brought with me to the program. By the end of my first year in the program, I had a strong interest in urban

teacher development in general and a growing interest in the professional development of urban teachers. However, I still did not have an idea for a study.

The summer after my first year as a doctoral student, I interned at the Children's Defense Fund in Washington, D.C. Although I worked in the Education and Youth Development division, I was quite curious about the status of the Freedom Schools program. Periodically, I would check in on the Freedom Schools staff and see what they were up to. I made an amazing discovery. The program had not only expanded in size, but they were still operating off many of same fundamental tenets that I had experienced eight years prior. All of my memories came flooding back, and I began remembering a time in my life when I was a Freedom Schools intern. I remembered how the program helped me find my voice to speak up for children who were marginalized in our American education system. I felt as though my voice had previously been silenced as I experienced my teacher preparation program at a predominantly white institution. Many times I was the only person of color in my education classes, so I felt as though I didn't have the support to boldly challenge notions of schooling, teaching, and learning that were entrenched in that program. However, serving as a teacher in Freedom Schools equipped me with new ideologies and new ways of articulating the fact that teaching was a political act and I had a responsibility to recognize that and act upon it. I went into my last year of college with a renewed confidence and assurance that I was meant to be an educator.

I left the internship in D.C. that summer determined to try to bring Freedom Schools to the city in which I now lived. On the one hand, I had been in schools in the area from my work with the university, and I knew that this was something the children

really needed and could benefit from. I saw classroom libraries void of books that represented children of color and their cultures. I also saw children of color who were being overly tested (and I believe as a result were not interested in reading). On the other hand, I also felt as though I *had* to experience the program again. I desperately needed a dose of that same excitement and motivation that I had as an undergraduate student. I needed to renew my commitment to the Freedom Schools Movement and CDF's larger movement for social justice. I needed to feel as though my transition from practitioner to researcher was going to matter. Ultimately, the local school district agreed to sponsor a Freedom Schools site for one hundred students, and I served as the site coordinator.

I was encouraged to pursue whatever research interests I had and to design a pilot study to conduct at the site. After becoming reacquainted with the program, I realized how much support was provided for the interns who were teachers in this context. So, I designed a pilot study around the professional development activities of the interns. This pilot study launched my research into the Freedom Schools program. After searching the literature and talking with the national staff, I learned that over the decade or more that this nation-wide program had been operating, there were little if any empirical studies documenting the program. This was surprising considering my own experiences in the program and its impact on my development as a teacher. In addition, I knew this program had so much to offer education researchers, teacher educators, teachers, and preservice teachers. I had to find a way to marry my interest and excitement for Freedom Schools, my commitment to using my research as a political activity, and my interests in urban teacher development.

Consequently, my reasons for conducting this study were three-fold: personal, political, and academic. First, for personal reasons, I am truly passionate about the Freedom Schools program, and I believe in their vision. I can testify to the impact of the program on my development as a classroom teacher and education researcher in addition to the impact that I have witnessed for others (including interns, students, parents, and communities). So, I wanted to connect my personal educative experiences to education research. Second, it has been theorized that teaching is a political act. I subscribe to that notion and expand upon it by proposing that education research is also a political act. What we choose to study, how we study it, and the conclusions we make as researchers have significant political implications connected to power and how it is distributed and engaged in the world of education and life in schools. It is my intent to recognize this in my work and explicitly challenge and disrupt the status quo in education research. Lastly, I wanted to work to expand the academy's notions of what counts as education research. I encountered some researchers along this study's journey who doubted or snubbed the relevance of this work to teacher education. Initially, I was discouraged by some of these remarks; however, they later became the impetus for working to make a stronger case for my work. I believe that this study shows that education and learning (including learning to be a teacher) is not confined to the walls of a traditional classroom or school building. There are lots of meaningful contexts outside the confines of public schooling that can offer insight to the work we do inside the buildings. As of this writing, there are several other researchers across the country conducting studies on various aspects of the Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools, and I am honored to be one of them.

Background and Purpose of the Study

The Mississippi Freedom Schools

SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) was the first organization of the Civil Rights Movement controlled by university students. "By late 1963, strategic thinking in SNCC was increasingly concerned with 'parallel institutions.' If existing institutions did not meet the needs of Black Mississippians, what kinds of institutions would?" (Payne, 1995, p. 302). SNCC conceptualized several projects to take place in the summer of 1964, known as The Mississippi Freedom Summer Project (later known as Freedom Summer), to assist African American communities in Mississippi with community planning and voter registration. The long term goal of Freedom Summer was to transform the power structure of Mississippi. Freedom Summer produced an important milestone of the Civil Rights Movement-- Freedom Schools.

Freedom Schools grew out of the civil rights struggle and were influenced by other preceding movement educational programs such as the Highlander Folk School established by Miles Horton and the Citizenship Schools developed by Septima Clark. The Highlander Folk School had been fostering the development of grassroots activists since the 1930s. "Highlander's model of participatory education was based on the conviction that responses to oppression had to grow out of the experiences of the oppressed" (Perlstein, 1990, p. 306). Septima Clark was a veteran school teacher who worked at Highlander after being fired for civil rights activism. The aim of the Citizenship Schools was "to create involved citizens, not just voters" (Payne, 1995, p. 75). While the Mississippi Freedom Schools were inspired by other movement

educational programs, the creation of a system aimed at youth activists rather than adult activists set them apart.

Efforts to devise an alternative to Mississippi's poor education for Black students began in 1963 with Charlie Cobb, an aspiring writer, Howard University student and SNCC member. The 1964 Mississippi Freedom Schools were the brainchild of Charlie Cobb. Cobb proposed that the Summer Project "do something to address the impoverished nature of the education typically offered Black students in Mississippi" (Payne, 1997, p. 4). He realized that for black folks schools in Mississippi served as institutions of oppression. "Cobb outlined his premise that Mississippi schools were inadequate, that black students in them received an education in every way inferior to that available elsewhere, and that, in consequence, they were victims of a pervasive 'social paralysis'" (Rothschild, 1982, p. 402). Cobb hoped that Freedom Schools would "both provide a true education for a few and demonstrate to blacks throughout Mississippi that just such schools could be created" (Perlstein, 1990, p. 303). He also believed that a change in power structure and a real democracy would have to begin with the young people. Freedom Schools were then also needed to transform young people into active, critical participants of their society (Chilcoat & Ligon, 1999). Freedom Schools were seen as a political organizing tool, and "the schools would become what SNCC called a 'parallel institution' and would produce students able to work for social change" (Rothschild, 1982, p. 403).

The Summer Project brought nearly 1,000 mostly White volunteers to the state of Mississippi that summer. The volunteers were expected to run voter registration campaigns, operate community centers and conduct Freedom Schools (Payne, 1997).

More than 650 students from around the country volunteered to teach in Freedom Schools. The volunteers who were to become the Freedom School teachers were trained at a week long orientation program in Oxford, Ohio. The activists consistently stressed the political nature of Freedom School teaching:

> Jane Stembridge advised volunteers that although each student would be different, all would possess "scars of the system," such as cynicism, distrust, and lack of academic preparation, as well as a knowledge of "how to survive in a system that is out to destroy you." (Perlstein, 1990, p. 314)

The volunteers received training and information on Mississippi politics, race relations, black history, and practical safety rules. Each volunteer also received information about the community where they had been assigned: its power structure, economic situation, and physical circumstances. The volunteers were told that their most important task was "to encourage the students to discuss problems and ask questions so that students would begin to appreciate their intrinsic importance as people' (Rothschild, 1982, p. 406). The Freedom School curriculum included a core curriculum of black history and philosophy of the movement, projects and discussions aimed at helping the students examine themselves and their environment, and special interest classes such as foreign languages, higher mathematics, art, and drama. The organizers had estimated that 1,000 black students of high school age would attend the Freedom Schools. In actuality, over 2,500 students showed up ranging in age from seven to seventy, and the number of schools increased from 25 to 41.

The history of the Mississippi Freedom Schools and their significance as a model of schooling for social change and developing participatory democratic practice has been

documented (Chilcoat & Ligon, 1999; Payne, 1995, 1997, 2003; Perlstein, 1990; Rothschild, 1982). For example, scholars have written about the Freedom School model of schooling and curriculum as a practical example for implementing critical pedagogy in the day-to-day practices of public schooling (Chilcoat & Ligon, 1999). Furthermore, connections and implications have been made between the 1964 Freedom Schools' model, pedagogical tenets, and curriculum to current schooling and curriculum reform efforts (Chilcoat & Ligon, 1999; Chilcoat & Ligon, 2001; Payne, 2003). Specifically, scholars have explored how Freedom School teachers implemented the curricula in their classrooms and viewed the results of their teaching as a model for social studies instruction. However, there is limited empirical work documenting a new wave of Freedom Schools created by the Children's Defense Fund. With the exceptions of the mentioning their existence (Payne, 2003), documenting the CDF Freedom Schools vision (Clayton-Robinson & Sally, 2001), and examining an historical perspective of the factors leading to the development of the Mississippi Freedom Schools and the CDF Freedom Schools (Powell, 2001), relatively little empirical work has been done on the current Freedom Schools in regards to education research.

A New Wave of Freedom Schools

The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) is a non-profit child advocacy organization that has been advocating for the rights and needs of children especially poor and minority children and those with disabilities for more than 30 years. The mission of the Children's Defense Fund is to ensure every child a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start, and a Moral Start in life and the successful passage to adulthood with the help of

caring families and communities. The Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools are modeled after the 1964 Mississippi Freedoms Schools. CDF founder, Marian Wright Edelman, was directly involved with the Civil Rights Movement. Mrs. Edelman, a graduate of Spelman College and Yale Law School, began her career in the mid-60s when, as the first Black woman admitted to the Mississippi Bar, she directed the NAACP Legal Defense Fund office in Jackson, Mississippi. In 1968, she moved to Washington, D.C., as counsel for the Poor People's Campaign that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. began organizing before his death. Through the establishment of the Children's Defense Fund, Mrs. Edelman continued her service in furthering civil rights. CDF's Leave No Child Behind Movement® encompasses current day Freedom Schools.

Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools™ programs are partnerships between the Children's Defense Fund and community organizations, churches, and public and private schools to provide literacy-rich summer programs in communities where those opportunities are limited or nonexistent. Freedom Schools serve children in grades K-12 for five to eight weeks and integrate reading, conflict resolution and social action in an activity-based curriculum that promotes social, cultural, and historical awareness.

College-aged young adults known as "servant-leader interns" are the teachers in this context. At the national training and throughout the Freedom School program at their local sites interns are a part of various training and learning opportunities centered on engaging their students in the Freedom School curriculum. Such opportunities may include curriculum training sessions, child development workshops, daily site debriefing meetings, and site coordinator observations.

The interns are the focus of my study. My objective is to understand how and in what ways they are supported in their teaching and development as teachers. In order to gain understanding into their learning and development, it is important to understand and describe the nature of the national training activities, activities at the local site, and the curriculum and program standards in which the interns engaged. The general research question guiding this dissertation project is: Given the context of Freedom Schools, an institution designed for social justice in education for children of color, how are interns trained to be teachers within this institution?

Theoretical Framework

To address these questions, I adopted the theoretical constructs of sociocultural theory as a theoretical lens through which to make sense of the social and cultural nature of learning to teach at Freedom Schools. Sociocultural theory views the learner and learning as situated in a social plane where learning emerges within cultural practice (Cazden, John, & Hymes, 1972; Dewey, 1938/1997; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rogoff, 1995; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988; Vygotsky, 1978). People learn as they interact with and interpret their world within their culture and in their social group. The person's environment and purpose provide the sociocultural context within which they construct or make meaning By employing a sociocultural frame, I am choosing to focus on describing the nature of particular settings and practices with which participants engage as a part of their everyday life in Freedom School.

Lave and Wenger (1991) theorize that learning is a social activity. Learning is influenced by the individual's participation in the particular practice in addition to the

individual's participation and interaction with the people, activities, community and artifacts involved in the practice. Lave and Wenger outline their evolution of theory by making distinctions from apprenticeship to situated learning and from situated learning to legitimate peripheral practice. One salient point is that learning is going to take place regardless of whether or not there is a structured or intentional venue. "Learning through legitimate peripheral participation takes place no matter which educational form provides a context for learning, or whether there is any intentional educational form at all" (p.40). The Freedom Schools interns are learning and being socialized into the practice, into the community and the context whether there are visible mentors or not.

In the concept of *situated activity*, "There is no activity that is not situated. It implied emphasis on comprehensive understanding involving the whole person rather than 'receiving' a body of factual knowledge about the world; on activity in and with the world; and on the view that agent, activity, and the world mutually constitute each other" (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p. 33). Putnam and Borko (2000) explore what the situative perspective on the nature of learning might offer researchers seeking to understand and improve teacher learning. Three conceptual themes central to the situative perspective are that cognition is: (a) situated in particular physical and social contexts; (b) social in nature; and (c) distributed across the individual, other person, and tools. This theory proves useful for the work of this study, particularly in considering teacher learning through national training experiences and local support of Freedom School interns. Since, the interns will be participating in activities grounded in the three conceptual themes central to the situative perspective, "the situative perspective thus focuses researchers' attention on how various settings for teachers' learning give rise to different kinds of

knowing" (p. 6). Thus, a view of learning to teach from a sociocultural perspective considers the context within which interns participate and develop. It seeks to understand how interns interpret who they are in relation to others, and how interns learn to process, interpret, and participate in their Freedom School world.

Significance of the Study

The dismal history of public schooling has demonstrated a failure to improve schooling experiences and the academic achievement of students of color, particularly African American students (Perry, Steele, & Hilliard, 2003; Murrell, 2002). Additionally, teacher preparation programs continue to struggle to adequately prepare teachers for urban schools (Murrell, 2001) which are more likely to have larger populations of students of color. Just as the 1964 Freedom Schools after which they are modeled, Children's Defense Fund Freedoms Schools are serving as parallel institutions and providing a counter-narrative to such educational malpractice for students, parents, communities, and the servant-leader interns who serve as teachers. The current day CDF Freedom Schools continue to illuminate this aspect of an important part of the Civil Rights Movement. Just as their predecessors, they are responding to the failure of existing institutions to meet the needs of Black children with new kinds of institutions.

I believe my work will challenge traditional teacher preparation ideologies and contribute to new ways of thinking about teacher preparation, especially urban teacher preparation by highlighting what might be learned from the Freedom Schools model. Freedom Schools serve as counter-narrative to typical teacher preparation by envisioning the preparation of teachers for social justice and culturally responsive pedagogues as a

part of the learning and practice of teaching, rather than as something that occurs as an addition or outside of it. In other words, becoming a participant in a social justice movement is different than learning a script of best practices for social justice teaching. A profile of Freedom School can offer:

- an alternative model of teacher preparation and development grounded in notions of culturally responsive teaching, teaching for social justice, and preparing teachers for diversity.
- lessons that problematize traditional conceptions of the roles of teaching and schooling used by parallel institutions like teacher education programs (as typified in the literature)

Such lessons, based on the example of how Freedoms Schools prepare interns to become educators and activists, are highly relevant at a time when teacher preparation programs are fighting to maintain their existence (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2001) and searching for ways to adhere to the expressed need for culturally responsive teachers (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Gay, 2000) and social justice educators (Cochran-Smith, 2004).

Outline of the Dissertation

In Chapter Two, I situate this study within three areas of literature. Drawing on literature about teacher learning, teaching for social justice, and culturally relevant teaching and pedagogy, I examine the theories and examples of practice and offer suggestions on how such work can be expanded by what can be learned from the Freedom Schools program particularly about how teachers are developed be culturally relevant pedagogues and learn to teach for social justice.

In Chapter Three, I explain the methodology and the design of this study. I also describe ethical considerations of insiders conducting qualitative research.

Chapter Four is a detailed description of the Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools model. I discuss the framework and under girding themes and key components of the program as disclosed by the program itself, explain the organizational leadership of the program, and give a brief description of the reading curriculum and narrate a typical day at Freedom School. I then provide a description of the national training model. Lastly, I describe the local sponsor of the site in this study.

In Chapter Five, I describe the nature of the national training institute by recounting what took place focusing particularly on what the Freedom Schools program hoped to accomplish at the training and the kinds of assumptions made about the interns. I begin by asserting that the nature of the training itself is a type of induction. I describe two salient themes of this induction- learning history and being embraced. I then explore the expectations held by the program and trainers for servant-leaders and describe how these expectations were a part of the nature of the training. The chapter concludes with reflections from the interns on how they are thinking of their commitment to service beyond the summer.

In Chapter Six, I describe components of the national training institute that particularly focused on the social and cultural practices of learning to teach. The description includes contexts and practices that provided learning opportunities for the servant-leader interns which focused on understanding developmental needs of children, how to prepare the classroom environment for students, and learning how to teach the reading curriculum. Juxtaposed with the descriptions of the learning opportunities are

perceptions, reflections, and insights from the interns about how they made meaning of and within such contexts and practices. The chapter concludes with reflections from the interns about how they are thinking about the roles of schools and teachers in relation to their previous and developing ideas after their teaching experience within Freedom School.

In Chapter Seven, I describe the various ways in which servant-leader interns were supported in their development as teachers both at the national training and at their local site. This chapter gives explicit attention on the kinds of deliberate support intended by the Freedom Schools program and the kinds of support that the interns created or initiated on their own.

Chapter Eight concludes the dissertation by first reiterating the purposes of the study and then summarizing the study's major findings. The chapter concludes with a consideration of implications based on the findings of this study for research and practice along with personal thoughts on directions for future research on Freedom Schools.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Literature

This review of literature examines three themes- teacher learning, teaching for social justice, and culturally relevant teaching. The first theme is important to the study because it emphasizes the idea that Freedom Schools are doing the work of preparing teachers to teach. The latter two concepts are themes accentuated in the Freedom Schools training and curriculum and therefore permeate the findings of this study.

Teachers play a vital role in Freedom Schools as in traditional schooling. Teachers have a great deal of power and influence in classrooms. It is teachers who engage and interact with students the majority of their time spent in schools. Teachers make hundreds of decisions on a daily basis (Jackson, 1968) that affect the schooling experience for children. Teachers decide who does or does not get called upon; who receives words of praise and encouragement or words of insult and rejection; and who is able to see themselves in the images displayed in the classroom and curriculum.

Similar to the 1964 Freedom Schools, CDF Freedom Schools serve as a counter-narrative for students, parents, communities, and the servant-leader interns who serve as teachers in contrast to the continued inadequacies of public education for children of color, particularly African American children, and poor children. Therefore, investigating the ways in which teachers are prepared to teach children who have been traditionally marginalized (i.e. children of color and poor children) in schools is very important and fundamental to twenty-first century education reform and the improvement of education and experiences in schools for such students.

This study investigates the preparation of teachers for and in a parallel schooling context. Moreover, this study may offer points of contrast for teacher learning, culturally relevant teaching, and teaching for social justice as offered in traditional teacher preparation programs. Each major area of the review asks critical questions attempting to uncover epistemological and sociocultural notions of teaching and schooling. The first section reviews literature about teacher learning and asks: Who is a teacher anyway? And what do teachers need to know?

Teacher Learning

As teaching has moved in the direction of past and current reform calls towards professionalization, conceptions of the knowledge base for teaching have also evolved and been theorized. The assumption of this reform is that there is indeed a knowledge base for teaching that consists of "a codified or codifiable aggregation of knowledge, skill, understanding, and technology, of ethics and disposition, of collective responsibility- as well as a means for representing and communicating it" (Shulman, 1987, p. 4). Shulman (1987) aptly pointed out that the characteristics for such knowledge base had rarely been specified. He highlights the fact that there is great complexity in understanding what teachers need to be effective teachers. Shulman cautions against a technical image of teaching. "We have an obligation to raise standards in the interests of improvement and reform, but we must avoid the creation of rigid orthodoxies. We must achieve standards without standardization" (p. 20).

Proponents of the professionalization movement and standards reform in teaching, Darling-Hammond, Wise and Klein (1999) dispute the often presumed assumption by the

public that little special knowledge is needed for successful teaching. They argue that teachers who have completed a full preparation program for licensure are in fact more highly rated and successful with students than those teachers without full preparation. They note that:

> a number of studies have found that in comparison to beginners who have completed a teacher education program, teachers who enter teaching without preparation are less sensitive to students, less able to plan and redirect instruction to meet students' needs (and less aware of the need to do so), and less skilled in implementing instruction. (p. 21)

Ball and Cohen (1999) suggest that we can improve teacher knowledge and classroom practice through teacher education. While they critique the ineffectiveness of professional development and the lack of opportunity for teachers to learn more about curriculum, students and teaching, they argue that even when teacher education programs are effective, the cultures of schools destroy preparation. They suggest that teachers need to recognize their own biases and need to know subject matter, reasoning in the field, how children learn, cultural background/community, and pedagogy. While this suggested list is expansive, what teachers need to know in order to be effective often gets condensed into three canonical categories - knowledge, skills and dispositions. (Sometimes "attitude" is an added category or replaces "dispositions.") The following is a brief exploration of these categories and how they have been defined.

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions

In their work with a state professional licensing board, Darling-Hammond et al. (1999) outlined what teachers need to know in regards to knowledge, skills, and dispositions. They gave simple summaries of what was included in the categories:

- *Knowledge* about people and social organizations, cultures, epistemology, specific disciplines, human growth and development, communication and language, scientific inquiry, and research on effective learning and teaching
- *Skills* associated with assessment, planning, instruction, evaluation, social behavior management, and role modeling
- *Dispositions* toward self, toward the learner, toward teaching, and toward the profession

The authors go on to provide more information about what characterizes these categories.

Thus, professional knowledge includes:

> a grounding in the many areas that provide an understanding of students and their learning, such as physical, cognitive, and psychological development; of the nature of human intelligence, learning, and performance; and of the influences of social experience, context, and culture. It also includes an understanding of schooling, curriculum, and teaching, including social, philosophical, and historical foundations of education; of pedagogical theory and practice; and of ethical requirements of teaching. (pp. 38-39)

Teaching skills include:

> the abilities to transform knowledge into actions needed for effective teaching- for example, abilities to evaluate student thinking and performance in order to plan appropriate learning opportunities; abilities to critique, modify, combine, and use instructional materials to accomplish teaching and learning goals; abilities to understand and use multiple learning and teaching strategies; abilities to explain concepts clearly and appropriately, given the developmental needs and social experiences of students; abilities to provide useful feedback to students in constructive and instructionally helpful ways, and so on. (p. 39)

Teaching dispositions are:

> the orientations teachers develop to think and behave in professionally responsible ways- for example, to reflect on their teaching and its effectiveness and strive for continual improvement; to respect and value the needs, experiences, and abilities of all learners and to strive to develop the talents of each to the greatest extent possible; to engage with learners in joint problem solving and exploration of

> ideas; to establish cooperative relationships with students, parents, and other teachers; to keep abreast of professional ideas; and to engage in broader professional responsibilities. (p. 39)

The authors further note that these conceptions of knowledge, skills and dispositions are closely aligned with those developed by NBPTS (the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards) and INTASC (Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium). Both of these institutions influence the ways in which teachers are prepared in university-based programs and then licensed at the state level. Given the descriptions of these categories, what kinds of preparation matter in university-based programs and how do the above outlined notions of knowledge, skills, and dispositions surface in such preparation?

What Matters in Traditional University-Based Teacher Preparation?

After examining recent reviews of the literature on teacher education (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005), three elements of pre-service teacher preparation appear as fundamentals of preparation programs. They are subject-matter courses, (foundations of) education courses, and field/clinical experiences.

Teacher education programs are premised on a variety of traditions- one being academic which sees teachers as scholars and subject matter specialists (Ladson Billings, 1999; Wideem, Mayer-Smith, & Moon,1998). In a review by Wideem, Mayer-Smith, and Moon (1998) the authors report that the traditional model of teacher education views learning to teach as a process of acquiring knowledge about teaching. Virtually all of the studies reviewed were conducted within the theory and practice setting of this traditional model of teacher education.

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) make a similar critique in their review regarding knowledge. Cochran-Smith and Lytle proposed three knowledge generating ideologies for teachers "based on images and assumptions that underlie methods on the educational purposes that drive various teacher learning initiatives" (p. 251). *Knowledge-for-practice* is based on the premise that teachers who know more teach better. The source of knowledge comes from outside sources such as university-based researchers. The emphasis is on "what" not "how." Knowing more leads to effective practice. Therefore, in this notion there is a knowledge base for teachers which emphasizes acquisition of content area knowledge. *Knowledge-in-practice* emphasizes knowledge in action. The knowledge that teachers need to teach well is embedded in the exemplary practice of experienced teachers. And finally, in *knowledge-of-practice*, knowledge generation and knowledge use are regarded as inherently problematic; it is always open to discussion. Knowledge is regarded as not existing separate from the knower and is constructed in the context of use. Knowledge teachers need to teach well emanates from systemic inquiries.

It is also argued that teachers must have an understanding (or knowledge) of the students they teach (Borko, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1999b). However, mainstream teacher preparation programs, in general, have not prepared teachers to be responsive to diverse cultural concerns (Dilworth, 1992; King, Hollins & Hayman, 1997). Ladson-Billings (1999b) notes that the idea of diversity in teacher education programs is embraced as long as it does not require any fundamental attack on the status quo structure. Few schools and colleges of education require that students seeking admission to teacher education exhibit any knowledge, skills or experiences related to diversity. Furthermore, "two of the most intractable areas of weakness seem to be institutions' inability to attract and retain a

culturally diverse student body and the absence of culturally diverse faculty" (Ladson-Billings, 1999a, p. 94).

Ladson-Billings (1999a) posits multiple research needs in regards to kinds of preparation teachers need to teach in culturally diverse classrooms. One suggestion relevant to this dissertation study is:

- We need more information about the specifics of courses, readings, assignments, and pedagogical strategies that work to prepare teachers for diverse classrooms

Summary of Teacher Learning

The critical questions for this section of the review were: "Who is a teacher anyway? And what do teachers need to know?" According to the reviewed literature, an effective teacher is someone who has gone through a formal (in most cases university-based) teacher preparation program, is licensed, and operates from a knowledge base comprised of particular knowledge, skills and dispositions. Based on the reviewed literature, scholars are not necessarily opposing the fact that there is or should be a specific knowledge base for teaching or that effective teachers need to undergo some type of comprehensive preparation program whereby they will learn subject-matter and pedagogy; however, they are suggesting that this knowledge base needs to be expanded and more inclusive of knowledge, skills and dispositions that support effective and successful teaching of historically marginalized children. Thus, an investigation of what it means to be a teacher at Freedom School and notions of teacher knowledge and preparation for Freedom School (e.g. What do Freedom School teachers need to know?) can offer insight to the larger conversation on differing views of essential teacher knowledge and what it means to teach.

Given the call to investigate the kinds of teacher preparation needed to teach in culturally diverse classrooms, in the next section, I will briefly look at two paradigms that have explicitly called attention to meeting the needs of historically marginalized students. These two paradigms serve as cornerstones for the next two major themes of this review.

Multicultural Education and Critical Pedagogy: A Brief Look at the Historical Influences of Two Paradigms

It is necessary to briefly outline the historical standing and contribution to education research and praxis of multicultural education, and critical pedagogy. These two movements have examined issues of educational inequities and have attempted to push the field further in thinking about such issues. The subsequent major themes of this review, culturally relevant teaching and teaching for social justice, have their roots in multicultural education and critical pedagogy and build upon or expand notions of meeting the schooling needs of historically marginalized students.

Multicultural Education

While multicultural education began as a reform movement with a commitment to educational equity and a stance against racism, there are two seminal movements that preceded it. According to Banks (2004), the ethnic studies movement and the intergroup education movement were important historical precedents to the multicultural education movement. He clarifies that the intergroup education movement is "an important antecedent of the current multicultural education movement but is not an actual root of

it... the current movement is directly linked to the early ethnic studies movement" (p. 12).

Banks (2004) contends that a major goal of multicultural education is "to reform schools and other educational institutions so that students from diverse racial, ethnic, and social-class groups will experience educational equality" (p. 3). He conceptualizes five interrelated dimensions of multicultural education: (a) content integration, (b) the knowledge construction process, (c) prejudice reduction, (d) an equity pedagogy, and (e) an empowering school culture and social structure. Elsewhere, Banks and Banks (1995) further explicate the concept of equity pedagogy and clarify what it means for curriculum reform and classroom teaching and learning. They define equity pedagogy as "teaching strategies and classroom environments that help students from diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural groups attain knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to function effectively within, and help create and perpetuate, a just, humane, and democratic society" (p. 152). The authors go on to say that "helping students become reflective and active citizens of a democratic society is at the essence of our conception of equity pedagogy... an education for equity enables students not only to acquire basic skills but to use those skills to become effective agents for social change" (p. 152). As noted by Banks (2004), the field of multicultural education has spanned more than two decades in education research, and scholars continue to theorize its role in moving the field toward more just and equitable notions and forms of schooling and teaching (Banks & Banks, 2004). However, it is recognized that "there is a tremendous gap between theory and practice in the field... theory development has outpaced development in practice, and a wide gap exists between the two" (Banks, 2004, p.3).

One critique of multicultural education in general has been that it is not "radical" enough and not as concerned with confronting issues of power and race in radical ways. The fact that multicultural education theorists stress that multicultural education is for *all* students, not just students of color contributes to its "soft" perception of enacting social change. This has caused critics to ask: Who is multicultural education really for? Is it in actuality a reform for White children to be "aware" of foods, festivals, and the contributions of people of color? Scholars in this movement counter this critique with one of their own by asserting that the theoretical aims of multicultural education are not being implemented in the ways in which they advocate. They protest that many school and university practitioners have a limited conception of multicultural education, "viewing it primarily as curriculum reform that involves only changing or restructuring the curriculum to include content about ethnic groups, women, and other cultural groups" (Banks, 2004, p. 4). Thus, multicultural education has been reduced in practice and curriculum to ethnic additives or cultural celebrations (Banks 2004; Nieto 1999).

Jenks, Lee and Kanpol (2001) assert that the literature on multicultural education generally divides itself into three theoretical frameworks: conservative, liberal and critical. The authors posit that *conservative multiculturalism* assumes that the conditions for justice already exist and need only be evenly apportioned:

> Conservative multiculturalists ignore the importance of difference in favor of an ideology of cultural homogeneity. While frequently using such language as *success for all, inclusion, empowerment, and equity*, they do so within the context of an assumed assimilatory educational process in which differences are expected to melt away... The conservative agenda includes a commitment to the same academic standards for all students and the belief that cultural differences need not play a significant role in their achievement. (p. 91)

They go on to write that *liberal multiculturalism*:

> accents the need for diversity and cultural pluralism and the acceptance and celebration of difference... while humanistic and progressive in intent, this approach nevertheless masks the conflicts and contradictions inherent in our society... moreover, insufficient consideration is given to power constructs, control issues, and "official" knowledge. (p.92)

Lastly, the authors describe *critical multicultural* education and maintain that it:

> Seeks justice by focusing on the relationships between equity and excellence, on one hand, and race, ethnic, and class configurations on the other hand... For the critical multiculturalists, knowledge is not value-free but shaped culturally, historically, ethnically, and linguistically... curriculum must be transformative, and educators as critical multiculturalists must enter into a democratic dialogue with each other to develop programs that promote critical reflection and inclusionary knowledge. (Jenks, Lee, and Kanpol, 2001, p. 93).

Other scholars have nominated the notion of models and forms of multicultural education (McLaren, 1994; Grant & Sleeter, 1997) similar to that of Jenks et al. Accordingly, these three conceptualizations of multicultural education offer useful theoretical frames to analyze not only the multicultural education literature but also the literature on teaching for social justice. They also offer useful lenses to investigate the kinds of knowledge, skills and dispositions deemed valuable to teacher preparation programs who proclaim to subscribe to preparing teachers to teach in ways that deviate from traditional pedagogy and best practices but rather aim at developing practice to best serve historically marginalized and oppressed children. Conceptions of critical multiculturalism are further explained elsewhere (Kanpol & McLaren, 1995), however what is interesting is how this notion of multicultural education draws upon tenets from critical pedagogy which is briefly described in the next section.

Critical Pedagogy

The notion of critical pedagogy, the concern with transforming oppressive relations of power in a variety of domains that lead to human oppression, finds its origins

in critical theory. Critical theory disrupts and challenges the status quo. According to Kincheloe (2005), critical theory is difficult to describe because: (a) there are many critical theories, not just one; (b) the critical theory tradition is always changing and evolving; and (c) critical theory attempts to avoid too much specificity, as there is room for disagreement among critical theorists (p. 48).

As Kincheloe (2005) notes, since the establishment of critical theory, there are several scholars (Antonio Gramsci, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Stanley Aronowitz to name a few) whose work have contributed to the shaping of critical pedagogy. One scholar recognized as having an important influence on shaping critical pedagogy is Paulo Freire. Freire, a Brazilian scholar, is most noted for his theoretical work with terms such as humanization/dehumanization, conscientização, banking education, and problem-posing education. Freire (1970/2000) asserts that humanization is the people's vocation. "This, then, is the great humanistic and historical task of the oppressed: to liberate themselves and their oppressors as well" (p. 44). Freire contends that only the oppressed and those who are truly united with them can bring about liberation, and this liberation must happen through the praxis of their quest for it. The *pedagogy of the oppressed* is explained as "a pedagogy which must be forged *with*, not *for*, the oppressed (whether individuals or peoples) in the incessant struggle to regain their humanity" (p. 48).

Freire focuses on the relationship between teachers and students. He claims that "education is suffering from narration sickness" (p. 71), meaning that teachers have historically perceived their work to narrate reality to students and in Freire's words "fill" the students with the contents of this narration. "Education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor... In

the 'banking' concept of education knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing" (p. 72). Freire suggests that the counter narrative to the banking system is problem-posing education. Problem-posing education entails the process of humanization where the relationship between teacher and student is not one of give and take but instead "they become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow" (p. 80). As Richard Shaull writes in the forward to *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*:

> There is no such thing as a *neutral* educational process. Education either functions as an instrument that is used to facilitate the integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, *or* it becomes "the practice of freedom," the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world. (p. 34)

Critical pedagogy, then, is constructed on the belief that education is inherently political; thus, proponents of critical pedagogy understand that every dimension of schooling and every form of educational practice are politically contested spaces. Critical pedagogy maintains that

> The classroom, curricular, and school structures teachers enter are not neutral sites waiting to be shaped by educational professionals. Although such professionals do posses agency, this prerogative is not completely free and independent of decisions made previously by people operating with different values and shaped by the ideologies and cultural assumptions of their historical contexts. The contexts are shaped in the same ways language and knowledge are constructed, as historical power makes particular practices seem natural- as if they could have been constructed in no other way. (Kincheloe, 2005, p. 2)

Critical pedagogy is dedicated to the alleviation of human suffering. Therefore, advocates of critical pedagogy are "especially concerned with those groups and individuals who are suffering, whose lives are affected by the sting of discrimination and poverty" (Kincheloe, 2005, p. 11). Other key tenets of critical pedagogy include:

- Critical pedagogy is enacted through the use of generative themes to read the word and the world and the process of problem posing.
- Critical pedagogy is interested in maintaining a delicate balance between social change and cultivating the intellect- in other words a critical pedagogy is not only interested in social change but also in cultivating the intellect of teachers, students, and members of the larger society
- Critical pedagogy is interested in the margins of society, the experiences and needs of individuals faced with oppression and marginalization
- Critical pedagogy is cognizant of the importance to understand the context in which educational activity takes place
- Critical pedagogy is dedicated to resisting the harmful effects of dominant power
- Critical pedagogy is aware of and opposed to contemporary efforts to build a new American Empire around the world

Given this terse outline of key tenets of critical pedagogy, it is apparent why critiques of "softness" of multicultural education have caused a push for a more radical agenda that specifically deals with a serious look at issues of power and empowerment. However, scholars such as Nieto (1999) do not necessarily believe that multicultural education and critical pedagogy are at odds and explore links between critical pedagogy and multicultural education. Nieto concurs with the criticisms of multicultural in that the ways in which it has been manifested in schools primarily adheres to a celebratory approach. Nieto posits that if multicultural education is going to make a real difference in student learning then it needs to be situated within a more critical perspective. She cites Sleeter and McLaren (1995) who propose that "multicultural education and critical

pedagogy are natural allies because both concern ethical and political issues that engage the world critically and challenge power relations" (p. 107). Nieto also asserts that critical pedagogy "also implies *praxis*, that is, developing the important social action predispositions and attitudes that are the backbone of a democratic society, and learning to use them to help alter patterns of domination and oppression" (p. 104). Therefore:

> Viewing multicultural education critically complicates the question of pedagogy and curriculum; it encourages teachers who are interested in transformative education to rethink what and how they teach, and to constantly question their decision. The major issue is not to make particular strategies, approaches, or even content prescriptive, but rather to *examine critically the environment in which those strategies and curriculum are played out.* (p. 108)

This section has briefly described key tenets of multicultural education and critical pedagogy. As previously noted, these three movements have examined issues of educational inequities and have attempted to push the field further in thinking about such issues especially as they pertain to the schooling experiences of children of color and poor children. In the next section, I will explore the second major theme of the review, teaching for social justice. The critical questions asked are: What does it mean to teach for social justice? How has teacher education recognized social justice and sought to advocate for such teaching?

Teaching for Social Justice

In education, social justice has a connotation of social change (Ayers, Klonsky & Lyon, 2000), righting education inequalities in the U.S. (Sleeter, 1991), and promoting revolutionary and democratic thinking (Ayers, Hunt & Quinn, 1998). Several scholars have depicted the grim conditions of schooling for historically marginalized student

populations, that is, children of color and poor children (Kozol, 1991; Noguera, 2003). Dilapidated school buildings, the historical academic achievement gap between white students and students of color, having the least qualified teachers, and operating with no or limited resources are but a few conditions that too many historically marginalized children bear in their K-12 schooling experiences.

According to Zeichner (2003), social justice is currently a major agenda for the reform of teacher education (inclusive of recruiting, preparation, and retention). The social justice agenda has been going on for many years and has been encouraged by the work within organizations such as AACTE, ATE, and NAME (Zeichner, 2003). The aim has been to place the preparation of teachers for cultural diversity at the center of attention. Advocates of social justice in teacher education operate within varying parameters. Some are in traditional undergraduate university-based programs. Others are working outside of traditional colleges and universities and have implemented alternative certification programs.

Zeichner positions the social justice agenda along with the professionalization agenda and the deregulation agenda as operating within a framework that is based on the "demographic imperative," that is, the growing ethnic and racial diversity of the public school children population in contrast to the monocultural make up of the teaching force. These agendas also recognize the gap in educational quality. The agendas, however, offer very different resolutions on how to remedy the current situation of inequality and injustice in public education. More importantly, for this review, is the fact that perspectives of social justice evident in the scholarship on teaching for social justice also vary. Using the three reform agendas examined by Zeichner along with the three

frameworks from the various forms of multicultural education (conservative, liberal and critical), I categorize and analyze the various perspectives of teaching for social justice.

Conservative Stance on Teaching for Social Justice

The professionalization agenda is concerned with "the quest to establish a profession of teaching through the articulation of a knowledge base for teaching based on educational research and professional judgment" (Zeichner, 2003, p. 498). According to Zeichner, the main argument is that "the inequities and injustices that exist in public education can be remedied by raising standards for teaching and teacher education and by greater investment in teaching and public schooling" (p. 499).

I categorize this as a more conservative stance on teaching for social justice. While the effort to provide highly qualified teachers for all students is commendable, especially in high-poverty schools where students are more likely to be taught by non-credentialed teachers, the fact remains that the knowledge base for what teachers need to know remains unquestioned and what preparations programs have been doing (i.e. "business as usual") remains the benchmark. As Zeichner aptly points out, the teaching standards commonly used (e.g. INTASC performance assessments in teacher education programs) "do not adequately incorporate" the substantial body of literature on the identification of the attributes of teachers and instructional strategies such as culturally responsive teaching. "The performance assessments that have been used to evaluate teachers' work do not always value the attributes and skills of some effective teachers" (p. 501). Additionally, "there is the issue of keeping people out of teacher education programs who are trying to come into the system from an uneven playing field" (p. 500)

which is ironic considering that this agenda is promoting an even playing field with teachers for all students.

Also in this category is the deregulation agenda. While theoretically, this agenda is at odds with the professionalization agenda, it ignores the importance of pedagogical knowledge and cultural differences as playing significant roles in learning to teaching. The deregulation agenda is concerned with breaking what its proponents see as a monopoly of colleges and universities on initial teacher education programs. "The argument is made that subject matter knowledge and teachers' verbal ability are the main determinants of teaching success, and it is asserted that much of what is offered in professional education methods and foundations courses can be learned on the job through an apprenticeship" (Zeichner, 2003, p. 503). So, basically this agenda asserts that there is no canon or knowledge base for learning to teach. Proponents of this agenda have encouraged different kinds of alternative certification option which include (a) "missionary" programs such a Teach For America, (b) private for-profit alternatives such as Edison, and (c) school-based alternative routes in which districts prepare their own teachers.

The problem with this agenda in regards to teaching for social justice is similar to that of the professionalization agenda. "There is no mention at all in the deregulation proposals of the need to develop teachers' intercultural sensitivities and competencies so that they can be effective with all students including those who have cultural and linguistic backgrounds different from themselves" (Zeichner, 2003, p. 506). The focus is more on providing a panacea for the achievement gap rather than looking to research and critically analyzing causes for such inequities.

Liberal Stance on Teaching for Social Justice

The perspectives in the literature of teaching for social justice that fall within this category are similar to those in this same category for multicultural education. These are multicultural scholars who are acknowledging that teaching is a political act and that teachers should make a conscious choice to teach for social justice, yet there is little recommendation for broader political work. Additionally this kind of advocacy is limited to operating at the level of teacher education classrooms with individual instructors. As McDonald (2005) notes, "research on the integration of social justice is limited. Much of this work focuses on integration within individual courses rather than across programs" (p. 420).

Similar to critiques of the liberal stance in multicultural education, there is a tremendous gap between what we know from research (theory) and what is done to promote teaching for social justice. In *Learning to Teach for Social Justice*, Darling-Hammond, French, and Garcia-Lopez (2002) lay out a framework for learning to teach for social justice and social change that entails a) making diversity a priority in preservice teacher education, b) teachers understanding their identity and how that affects how they teach, c) teachers understanding student lives as well as their (student) learning and d) teachers developing an equity pedagogy. However, the text comes up short in explicating how the framework is actually enacted coherently during teacher preparartion. The text provides narratives of participants who have been taught or espouse to teach in this way and descriptions of what teaching for social justice looks like in practice; yet, there is

little information provided on how this operated within the larger context of teacher preparation.

Critical Stance on Teaching for Social Justice

According to Noguera (2003):

Educational problems in poor inner-city neighborhoods cannot be addressed without also responding to the social and economic conditions in the communities where schools are located... we cannot address educational issues in a vacuum, and we cannot treat all schools or children the same when we know that life is much harder for some children than for others. (p. xiii)

Zeichner (2003) echoes Noguera in asserting that "it is clear that any solution to the problems of inequality and injustice in public education will need to address the larger contexts in which teaching and teacher education exist" (p. 509).

It appears as though scholars who advocate this type of analysis of the larger society in which schools and teachers are situated advocate for a more critical stand on teaching for social justice and move beyond aims of increased achievement on standardized tests. A more critical stand on teaching for social justice entails at the very least working in communities with community members and being a part of larger political movements. As Westheimer and Kahne (1998) note, "*Participatory* democracy stands in contrast to *procedural* democracy. In the latter, citizens maintain the right to vote and take part, while in the former, they actually do take part" (p. 2). This idea of participatory democracy via involvement in larger political movements is echoed by Kohl and Cochran-Smith. Kohl (1998) asserts:

> In a society where there is too much institutionalized inequity and daily suffering, you have to understand the importance of being a part of larger struggles. It is not enough to teach well and create a social justice classroom separate from the larger community. You have to be a community activist as well, a good parent, a decent citizen, an active community member. (p. 286)

Similarly, Cochran-Smith (2004) notes:

> We need to be a part of larger movements for social change and demonstrate to others that social justice itself is a valid outcome and an essential purpose of teacher preparation that runs much deeper than traditional measures of achievement but that in the final analysis, deeply undergirds the future of our society (p.168).

A Case in Point

McDonald (2005) proposes that we take a look at how teacher education programs implement social justice in an integrated fashion across the entire program and the opportunities that teacher candidates have to learn how to teach for social justice. McDonald situates her work within literature that proposes "new approaches to multicultural education and diversity [which] have suggested that programs that integrate a social justice orientation across program settings are likely to fare better" (p. 419). She looked at two elementary teacher education programs that espoused to make social justice and equity central to the preparation of prospective teachers.

Her study revealed two broad findings. First, these programs intended to integrate social justice. The fact that the programs had the will and intent to address social justice suggest that "formal structures such as program missions and course goals and purposes may frame actual practice" (p. 426). Second, the implementation of social justice varied in practice along some specific dimensions that inform prospective teachers' opportunities to learn. McDonald identified the two specific dimensions as opportunities to learn that varied in their emphasis on *conceptual* and *practical* tools. She found that

"teachers' opportunities to learn conceptual tools far outweighed their opportunities to learn practical tools" (p. 427). She notes that "this suggests that including practices may require different types of knowledge, resources, and supports than those required to integrate conceptual tools related to social justices" (p. 427).

This case is important to note in the investigation of this dissertation project because it raises similar, fundamental questions for teacher education programs, notions of learning to teach for social justice, and using sociocultural theory as a framework for understanding it all.

Summary of Teaching for Social Justice

The critical questions for this section of the review were: "What does it mean to teach for social justice? How has teacher education recognized social justice and sought to advocate for such teaching?" According to the reviewed literature, there are multiple meanings of "teaching for social justice." I analyzed such views as falling within a conservative, liberal, or critical perspective. Regardless of the perspective, most of the literature reviewed situated the need to teach for social justice around the demographic imperative and how we need to prepare White teachers to teach poor students, English language learners, and students of color.

Thus, an investigation of what it means to teach for social justice at Freedom School and notions of a social justice at Freedom School can not only offer insight to the larger conversation on differing views of what it means to teach for social justice, but also on how the need to teach for social justice should be framed. Should we advocate teaching for social justice in teacher education because there is a cultural mismatch between the

teaching force and the diverse student population? Or should we advocate teaching for social justice for some other larger socio-political reasons as suggested by Noguera (2003) [see p.20].

Collectively, the work cited has provided considerable insight into the larger conversation advocating learning to teach for social justice as component of teacher preparation. This study attempts to expand on such scholarship and supplement traditional limitations by looking at how teachers are prepared to teach for social justice within a larger movement working from the assumption that becoming a participant in the movement is different than learning a script. In other words, when one is participating in a social justice movement there is a localized connection with larger sociopolitical issues such as social and economic conditions. Thus, in the case of education, there is an explicit awareness that schools are linked to the broader society and therefore are not politically neutral. This differs from more static notions of effective practice wherein participants can be led to believe that regardless of the sociopolitical and sociocultural milieu, if they follow certain practices they are guaranteed certain results.

In the next section, I will explore the third and final major theme of the review, culturally relevant teaching. The critical questions asked are: What is culturally relevant teaching? In what ways is this pedagogy integrated into teacher preparation programs?

Culturally Relevant Teaching and Pedagogy

Geneva Gay (2000) notes that "although called by many different names, including *culturally relevant, sensitive, centered, congruent, reflective, mediated,*

contextualized, synchronized, and responsive, the idea about why it is important to make classroom instruction more consistent with the cultural orientations of ethically diverse students, and how this can be done, are virtually identical (p. 29). Gay posits that culturally responsive teaching is a response to what she terms as the "achievement dilemma." That is, too many students of color have not been achieving in school as well as they should (and can). Gay provides five assertions that undergird her thinking of how to respond to the achievement dilemma. The assertions are: culture counts; conventional reform is inadequate; intention without action is insufficient; strength and vitality reside in cultural diversity; and test scores and grades are symptoms, not causes, of achievement problems.

Ladson-Billings (1994) also explores the notion of culturally relevant teaching. She notes that "Almost forty years after the Supreme Court decision declaring separate but equal schools to be illegal, most African American students still attend schools that are in reality segregated and unequal" (p. x). She defines culturally relevant teaching as "a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes. These cultural referents are not merely vehicles for bridging or explaining the dominant culture; they are aspects of the curriculum in their own right" (p. 17-18). Ladson-Billings outlines these practices as entailing three main aspects- teachers' conceptions of themselves and others, how social interactions are structured in the classroom, and teachers' conceptions of knowledge. She uses personal vignettes and examples from her research to compare and contrast culturally relevant teaching practices to assimilationist (traditional) teaching practices. In so doing, she recognizes the affect that classroom teachers have over the

implementation of curriculum and the overall education of students. She suggests that some changes need to take place not only in the way we train teachers, but also with university teacher educators and the induction process for new teachers. She suggests that "we must organize the school in more supportive ways" (p. 136).

Scholars have written about how teacher education in America has been reactive in its response to the growing diversity of the K-12 student population (King, Hollins, & Hayman, 1997). The typical response of teacher education programs to prepare teachers for such diversity has been simply to add on courses and leave the rest of the curriculum intact (Dilworth, 1992; King, Hollins, & Hayman, 1997). Melnick and Zeichner (1997) note that "most teacher education programs acknowledge in principle the importance of pluralistic preparation for teachers, but in practice most actually represent a monocultural approach" (p. 23). They go on to cite that efforts to reform teacher education to better prepare teachers for diversity are hindered by the lack of commitment to cultural diversity and the cultural insularity of the bulk of the education professoriate. Subsequently, Zeichner (2003) cites as a major limitation of the social justice agenda is the lack of capacity in the teacher educator group to do the job:

> There has also been a problem with developing a more ethnically diverse group of teachers educators... Even if we know a lot about the attributes and instructional strategies that teachers need to be successful in the public schools of today... we need to have culturally responsive teacher educators who are able to develop these capacities in prospective teachers... most teacher education programs continue to operate on the belief that developing interculturally competent teachers is primarily a matter of reading things and discussing them on campus or of placing student teachers in culturally different schools for field experiences. (p. 510)

"Research findings and classroom practices to date indicate that culturally responsive teaching does improve achievement. The only problem is that such classroom practices are relatively few" (Gay, 2000, p. 201). Murrell (2002) suggests that teachers,

particularly those who teach African American children, have had difficulty in applying the culturally relevant framework. He proposes the difficulty is twofold:

> First... developing culturally responsive practice is difficult when you are at the beginning stages of understanding the historical struggle for quality education for African American children. Secondly, for many teachers it is too difficult to avoid dichotomization of "mainstream" versus "African American" cultural experience. (p. xxxvi)

Despite the scholarship that has defined and theorized culturally relevant teaching and pedagogy and has documented the salience of such a pedagogy for ethnically and linguistically diverse students (Gay, 2000; Howard, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Lipman, 1995) the bottom line is that most teachers don't know how to teach in culturally relevant ways, and given the make-up of the education professoriate and the commitment of education institutions to diversity, teacher educators don't know how to teach preservice teachers to teach in such ways.

Villegas and Lucas (2002) suggest that in order to move the field beyond the fragmented and superficial treatment of diversity, teacher educators need to reconceptualize their approach to educating teachers. They suggest that this can be done by placing diversity at the center of the teacher education curriculum:

> By *curriculum*, we mean the learning experiences offered to prospective teachers not only in education courses but also in arts and sciences courses and in field experiences and practica in communities and schools. We contend that without conceptual coherence across these learning experiences, derived from a common vision of teaching and learning in a multicultural society, prospective teachers may never see the relationships among key ideas or make the connections between theory and practice they will need to become effective teachers. (p. xiv)

Villegas and Lucas assert that there are six constructs to their curriculum proposal for preparing culturally responsive teachers. They include: (1) gaining sociocultural consciousness; (2) developing an affirming attitude toward students from culturally

diverse backgrounds; (3) developing the commitment and skills to act as agents of change; (4) understanding the constructivist foundations of culturally responsive teaching; (5) learning about students and their communities; and (6) cultivating culturally responsive teaching practices.

Murrell and Diez (1997) also offer insight for preparing teachers to be culturally relevant pedagogues by recommending an ability-based epistemology that would prepare preservice teachers to "learn how to learn" in diverse settings:

> Rather than viewing professional knowledge required for teaching effectively in diverse settings as content material to be studied, we view this knowledge in terms of abilities to be developed- what teachers must *actually do* in order to develop culturally responsive teaching practices and professional sensibilities. Prospective teachers, therefore, develop their conceptions of effective, culturally responsive teaching out of their own teaching experience and assessments of their own teaching practice, not out of text material about multicultural education. (p. 127)

Gay (2000) posits that another obstacle to implementing culturally responsive teaching on a larger scale is due to the practice of *professional volunteerism*:

> Teacher educators, inservice staff developers, administrative and supervisory personnel, policy makers, and accrediting agencies must stop promoting or tolerating the idea that dealing with ethnic and cultural diversity in the educational process is a choice or that teachers can attend to ethnic diversity in their classrooms and professional development if they have any time left after other tasks are accomplished. Nothing is further from the truth. If the patterns of achievement among ethnic students of color are to be reversed, culturally responsive teaching preparation and practice have to be required of everyone. (p. 204).

Summary of Culturally Relevant Teaching and Pedagogy

The critical questions for this section of the review were: "What is culturally relevant teaching? In what ways is this pedagogy integrated into teacher preparation programs?" One of the main premises of culturally relevant teaching and pedagogy is that

it uses the students' own culture to help them achieve academic success. Proponents of culturally relevant teaching and pedagogy have identified sets of knowledge, skills and dispositions that are needed in order to teach in this way. It is clear from the literature (Ladson-Billings, 1994) that culturally relevant pedagogues embody these particular kinds knowledge, skills and dispositions through their (a) conceptions of themselves and others (e.g. teachers help students make connections between their community, national, and global identities versus homogenizing students into one "American" identity); (b) their social relations with students, families, and communities (e.g. teachers encourage students to learn collaboratively and students are expected to teach each other and be responsible for each other versus encouraging competitive achievement and students to learn individually, in isolation); and (c) their conceptions of knowledge (e.g. knowledge is not static. It is continuously recreated, recycling and shared by teachers and students versus knowledge is static and is passed in one direction from teacher to student).

Based on the literature reviewed, teacher education in general has not made a commitment to preparing teachers for diversity and therefore has not embraced culturally relevant teaching and pedagogy as a viable integrated component of preparation programs. The literature also suggests that in order for teacher education programs to integrate culturally relevant teaching and pedagogy into their programs, they must build their capacity to do so which includes possessing an ethnically diverse education professoriate. Therefore, this study attempts to expand on the scholarship of preparing teachers to be culturally responsive pedagogues by illuminating how this kind of teaching and pedagogy is taught to the servant-leader interns at the national training institute.

Conclusion

This review of literature examined three themes- teacher learning, teaching for social justice, and culturally relevant teaching. As explained at the beginning of this chapter, these three themes are salient to the study because they emphasize the fact that Freedom Schools is doing the work of teacher preparation- specifically to teach for social justice and in culturally relevant ways. This examination of literature helps frame the analysis and findings of the study.

One point this review highlights is that culturally relevant teaching and teaching for social justice are not new notions in teacher education. These concepts have emerged from an educational history that includes multicultural education and critical pedagogy. In recent years these strategies have taken center stage in discussions of education reform as colleges and schools of education consider ways in which to reform their programs to meet the needs of underserved children in our nation's public schools. As noted in a previous excerpt from Jenks et al. (2001), competing agenda reforms are using similar language of "equity," "success for all," and "social justice" to push their reform agendas which aim at assimilation and dismantling the monopoly that colleges and schools of education have over teacher preparation (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2001) rather than critically analyzing the power structures that promote and perpetuate schooling inequities. Therefore, it is imperative for teacher preparation programs to clearly assert *how* they are preparing teachers to teach for social justice and in culturally relevant ways. Such clarity is needed in order for schools and colleges of education to differentiate themselves and what they are doing inside the academy to educate teachers for a diverse,

democratic society from those outside of the profession who are using similar "equity" language but have ideologies about teacher preparation that are conflicting with meeting the needs of students who have been historically marginalized in our nation's schools.

Given what we know about teacher learning, teaching for social justice, and culturally relevant pedagogy and teaching, absent from or limited in current discussions on teacher preparation are specific ways in which teacher preparation programs implement teaching for social justice and teaching in culturally relevant ways and the learning opportunities that prospective teachers have to learn how to teach for social justice and in culturally relevant ways. This dissertation project will offer empirical understandings of how this is done at Freedom Schools. Given what we know from the literature, this study will challenge traditional teacher preparation ideologies and contribute to new ways of thinking about teacher preparation particularly as it pertains to teaching for social justice and teaching in culturally relevant ways. Such an analysis can also contribute to better understandings of how this can be done in traditional teacher preparation programs.

In the next chapter, I describe the ways in which I designed the study, collected data across the contexts of Freedom School, and analyzed data in order to investigate the research questions.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methods:

Investigating the Freedom Schools Program and Its Participants

Rationale for Methodology

Qualitative methodology assumes that meaning is context specific and that definitions and frames are built over time through cultural practices (Bogden & Biklen, 2003). "Qualitative researchers go to the particular setting under study because they are concerned with context. They feel that action can be best be understood when it is observed in the setting in which it occurs. These settings have to be understood in the historical life of the institutions of which they are a part" (Bogden & Biklen, 2003, p. 4). Qualitative research is also concerned with process rather than simply with outcomes or products. I used ethnographic methods and worked within an interpretive paradigm to explore the topic in this study, because the intent is to describe how Freedom Schools organize for, and how the interns experience, becoming teachers through professional activities at the national training institute and professional activities at their local site. An approach concerned with process allows for exploration of questions such as: How do people in this context negotiate meaning? How are definitions formed?

In interpretive research, the interest is in social construction of reality as individuals interact in social scenes (Geertz, 1973; Mehan, 1982; Merriam, 1998). "Ethnographic field research involves the study of groups and people as they go about their everyday lives" (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995, p. 1). Ethnography is a kind of interpretive work focused on understanding culture through thick description. "The

ethnographer's goals are to share in the meanings that the cultural participants take for granted and then to depict the new understandings for the reader and for outsiders" (Bogden & Biklen, 2003, p. 28). The participants in the study are the ones who made meaning of this particular context and its practices, and it was my objective to understand how they made meaning and what meaning they made.

Research Questions

The general research question guiding this dissertation project is: Given the context of Freedom Schools, an institution designed for social justice in education for children of color, how are interns trained to be teachers within this institution? Specific inquiries explored in this project include the following questions:

I. National Training and Local Support

National Training

- What is the nature of the national training?
- What assumptions about interns are evidenced by the curriculum and pedagogy of the training (e.g. background, motivation, identity, politics)? What assumptions about learning to teach or teaching for social justice are evidenced by the curriculum and pedagogy of the training? What are program expectations for how interns are to engage the reading curriculum?
- How do, if at all, the activities at national training provide learning opportunities for interns?

Local Support

- What is the nature of support for interns at the local site?
- What assumptions about interns are evidenced by the kinds of support given at the local site? What assumptions about learning to teach or teaching for social justice are made?
- How do, if at all, the activities and practices of the teaching community provide learning opportunities for interns?
- What is the nature of the connection, if any, between activities and principles at national training to the activities and practices at the local site?

II. The Nature of Intern Participation and Learning

- What were interns' previous experiences with teaching?

- How did intern participation vary across activities in the teaching community?
- How did the interns participate and contribute to the practices of their teaching community?
    - What kinds of tools, if any, are interns developing for participating in a teaching community (e.g. engaging in meaningful dialogue, sharing experiences and ideas in a professional manner)?

Site Selection

There were two locations in which this study was conducted- the national training institute and the local Freedom School site. There is a two-week national training that takes place for Freedom School sites across the country in June before the sites begin to operate. The training is specifically for interns and site coordinators. Components of this training key to my study were activities and practices that were perceived by organizers to support intern learning and development as teachers and make obvious connections to local activities that support intern learning and development as teachers.

The Freedom School site for this study was the Mount Calvary Community Development Corporation Freedom School in East Point, Georgia (Atlanta). The Freedom School was physically located in the fellowship hall and Sunday school classrooms of a church. The site served approximately 50 children in grades K-5. I selected this site for my research because Freedom School interns engaged in a practice centered on student learning, curriculum and teaching. The interns engaged in some form of a more responsive teaching practice, one that is consistent with socio-politically informed visions of effective urban school teaching (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Murrell, 2002). Gay (2000) asserts that teaching is a contextual and situational process. "As such, it is most effective when ecological factors, such as prior experiences, community settings, cultural backgrounds, and ethnic identities of teachers and students

are included in its implementation. This basic fact is often ignored in teaching some Native, Latino, African, and Asian American students, especially if they are poor" (p. 21). Freedom School acknowledges this truth.

Conducting this study provided an opportunity to investigate the happenings within the training of the interns and then the sustained support within their teacher community. My interest was in how the interns participating in the Freedom Schools program learned from their experiences at national training and learned together through the activities of the teacher community available as part of their program.

Participant Selection

The Freedom School staff at the local site consisted of an executive director, a project director (in this case one person served in both roles), a site coordinator, and six servant-leader interns. The focus of the study is on the interns, the site coordinator, and the national trainers because they were the ones who were consistently involved in the training and local activities.

Interns are college-aged young adults who are at least 19 years old or have completed at least one year of college. They are responsible for teaching the curriculum at Freedom School in addition to serving as leaders of the afternoon activities and other special events, which may include parent workshops. Qualifications (as noted by the national program) for being an intern include:

- Solid commitment to children's advocacy
- Ability to motivate others
- Interest and ability to work as a part of an intergenerational team
- Strong appreciation and understanding of individual cultural history and the willingness to be open and respectful to other cultures
- Current voter registration

- Willingness to strive for excellence in all areas
- Ability to think critically and analytically
- Strong interpersonal skills and commitment to the character, humility and servant leadership ethics of Ella Baker

These qualifications were assessed at the local level by the executive director, project director, and the site coordinator.

The six interns at the Mount Calvary CDC Freedom School were all African American and included three females and three males. Additionally, they all were attending or had previously attended historically Black colleges and universities (refer to Appendix A). The interns were either attending college in Atlanta, were from Atlanta or both. Four of them were enrolled in undergraduate programs. Sydney had just graduated with her undergraduate degree and was enrolled in graduate school for the fall. Cornell was the eldest of the group and a graduate student in divinity studies with a background in business management. None of the interns were teaching majors or in education-related fields. Three of the interns, Martin, Kyndall, and Tim, knew each other previously and, in fact, attended the church where the Freedom School was located. For all of the interns this was their first experience working with the Freedom Schools program.

The site coordinator is responsible for the managing the daily operations of the site and ensuring that interns have necessary materials and support for the classroom and students. Qualifications for being a site coordinator are the same as those required of interns including:

- Experience managing large groups of children, college-aged young people, and parents
- Familiarity with the culture and dynamics of the community

Dr. Collins was the site coordinator for the Mount Calvary CDC Freedom School. She had been working in education for over thirty years. Her background was in secondary special education. She held a doctorate in education and was an education consultant and an adjunct professor at two universities. This was her first experience working with the Freedom Schools program. Dr. Collins told me that she and Reverend Rachel (the executive and project director of the site) had worked together on other projects and that was how she had been contacted to assume the site coordinator position.

National trainers train local *Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools* staff by providing programmatic and technical support at the two-week national training. Some of the trainers are a group of Freedom Schools consultants and others are Ella Baker Trainers (EBTs). Consultants may serve in other areas of the CDF movement (such as serving on committees) or may have been former interns and site coordinators. EBTs are servant-leader interns selected by the national staff (through an application process) to assist in Freedom Schools training. Qualifications for EBTs are similar to those of interns and site coordinators. Elijah was the only EBT in my study. He had a wealth of experience in Freedom Schools. He was a former Freedom Schools student, junior servant-leader intern, servant-leader intern, and site coordinator.

The primary role of the all the participants in this study was to engage in the activities of the Freedom School as they were required to do by the program's expectations. The additional time or activity required of the interns, site coordinator, and trainers for the purposes of this research was participation in interviews or the questionnaire.

Researcher Role

I have previously served as a servant-leader intern and a site coordinator for two different Freedom School sites; therefore, I am very familiar with the program's structure and operating principles. I also conducted research centered on describing the professional development practices at one of those sites. Based on the experience of being in the dual role of researcher and administrator, my intent for this study was to have the opportunity to study the site without the added administrative responsibilities. I wanted the opportunity to be in a position where I could go "deeper" with data collection by being a part of the research settings of this project from the beginning to the end primarily as a participant observer. It was imperative that I observed as many instantiations of intern participation as possible in order to illustrate a clearer picture of the social practices in which they were engaged.

Considering my previous experiences with Freedom School, it was my intention to be a resource for this site. I take this stance in accordance with Walker's (1999) claim that "researchers today must see themselves as having a responsibility not only to research and report educational problems but to assist in solving them" (p. 225). As a participant observer, I was immersed in the world of the participants in order to understand the meaning they were making of their experiences (e.g. how meanings emerge through talk and collective action). Therefore, I understood that "in learning about others through active participation in their lives and activities, the fieldworker cannot and should not attempt to be a fly on the wall" (Emerson et al., 1995, p. 3). It was not my intention, nor could I have even attempted, to be detached and completely neutral from the phenomena being studied. Yet, I understand that there are implications and

consequences of my presence. Because of this, I intended to be sensitive and perceptive of how I was seen and treated by others. For example, serving as a resource entailed sharing my experiences and expertise with the program; however, I discouraged interns from viewing me as an authority figure for decision making at the site.

As a participant observer at the national training and at the local site, I went mostly everywhere the participants went. I was present for many of the various training sessions at national training including the foundations workshops, IRC Labs and evening sessions. The daily debrief meetings began at the national training, and I was present for and participated in all of those meetings. At the local site, I occasionally attended and participated in Harambee (a morning assembly for the site), was present in classrooms even when interns were not scheduled to be formally observed for research purposes, taught classes during the afternoon activities portion of the day, and attended and participated in the daily debrief meetings. My role along the participant-observer continuum varied depending on the situation. For example, there were times during the debriefing meetings or training workshops when I actively participated like a group member offering suggestions and comment without being prompted. And there were other times, when I was intensely focused on writing field notes and only participated and responded when prompted.

Ethical Considerations

An ethical dilemma that I encountered while writing up the study was in relation to my own researcher reflexivity and how that will affect how my work is read by others; "we interrogate in our writings who we are as we coproduce the narratives we presume to

collect, and we anticipate how the public and policy makers will receive, distort, misread our data" (Weis & Fine, 2000, p. 59). There are two trains of thought along the same lines that I consider to be important to note. First, is my own connection and history as an *insider* with the Freedom Schools program. Second, is my *cultural* connection and history with the Freedom Schools program.

In writing up my study, I intend to disclose and make clear my history and connection with the Freedom Schools program as an insider (i.e. I have been an intern and a site coordinator. Also, besides my current research I am a part of a group labeled "external evaluators." This latter role entails being a reviewer for Freedom Schools site applications, being a presenter of the program at meetings with potential sites, and the fact that the program has an explicit interest in my research). Therefore, in a formal sort of way, I continue to be a part of the "we" in the Freedom Schools movement. Furthermore, I was a participant observer with intentions from the start of being a resource to the community that I studied. It is clear in the data that I indeed had an active participatory role in the community. In fact, my role as "community member" often trumped my role as researcher in the way I was perceived by the participants. For example, several times Dr. Collins explicitly stated that I was a part of the group or the family.

Secondly, there is the obvious cultural connection in regards to my identity as an African American that connects me with the majority of the people participating as activists in the Freedom Schools movement and the communities in which the sites are/ have been situated- past and present. When I write about the historical foundation upon which the current CDF Freedom Schools are built, I am writing about my own cultural

history. There I have had to make some decisions about the use of "we" and "they" in my writing. As I think about the stories and the history that contributes to the socio-historical socio-political context of my study, I automatically feel a connection (a sense of belonging to this history). However, in writing for an audience of "outsiders," and/or those who may be skeptical of how I present the data (and therefore might misread the data) I am very conscious as to how my identity is connected to the "we."

Let me be clear and note that I *do not* perceive my cultural and community insider roles to be problematic in regards to constructing and conducting a quality research study. In fact, tenets of culture-centered research methodology support research within (as a part of) the collective experience of the participants:

> Transubjectivity allows the researcher to become part of the collective experiences of the participant(s). In this manner, the researcher experiences a duality of self that is reflexive, reciprocal, and transformative. Personal commitment, personal contact (Physical and spiritual), and personal responsibility to the collective is part of the research process. (West-Olatunji, 2005, p. 331)

However, I am conscious of how others may perceive them to be problematic. Therefore, the dilemma is centered on how I choose to negotiate my presence in the writing.

So, in the write-up of this study, I chose to distance my presence in the description of the contexts. However, since I constructed the interviews to be more like conversations and I participated in conversations during the debrief meetings, I include my presence (either my own talk or references to me) in the dialogue.

Data Collection Procedures

The data for this study were collected over a four month period (May-August 2005). I was present at the national training (10 days) and at the local site four days per week for the entire duration of the program (6 weeks). Decisions about data collected were based on the relevance to inform the research questions. Data collected included fieldnotes of training sessions, daily debriefings, and classroom observations; audio taped conversations from the daily debriefings; two individual interviews with each intern and the site coordinator, a questionnaire from a national trainer; and national training and site documents and artifacts (see Table 1). All collected data were labeled and organized by date and by activity type (e.g. data collected at daily debrief meetings were labeled: 06/05/05, Daily Debrief Fieldnotes or 06/05/05, Daily Debrief Audio Record).

Because of the brief extent of the program (6 weeks/ 30 days), the data collection period was an intense process. At the local site the reading curriculum was taught between 9am-12pm. During this time, I conducted at least two classroom observations of each intern over the course of the program. The daily debrief meetings occurred at the end of the day beginning at 3:30pm and lasted for approximately one hour. I audio recorded the daily debrief meetings everyday that the site is in operation except on Fridays. Because the site was located in Sunday school classrooms of a church, on Fridays the interns had to pack up their materials and make the rooms available for weekend activities hosted by the church. Because of this, there were no debrief meetings held on Fridays. On a weekly basis, I collected and copied relevant site documents and artifacts. In the site coordinator's office space at the site, she set up mailboxes for the

staff and included one for me. When she disseminated information to the staff, she always put the same information in my mailbox.

Observations

Observations allowed me to examine the activities of the national training and the local site and the various ways in which interns participated across contexts. In making observations and taking fieldnotes, I adhered to suggestions by Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) which included jotting down details of what I sensed were key components of observed scenes or interactions and jotting down concrete sensory details about actions and talk.

I observed the interns as they participated in the national training sessions. I paid particular attention to the kinds of information interns were given about the Children's Defense Fund, Freedoms Schools, the reading curriculum, and larger socio-political issues. I also focused on ways in which interns learned to teach the curriculum (how and with what?). I observed, audio recorded, and then transcribed the discussions of the interns and site coordinator as they participated in the daily debrief meetings both at national training and at their local site. I paid particular attention to the kinds of questions and issues that were raised by the interns. My attention was focused on the kinds of questions asked of the site coordinator and the ways in which she addressed interns' questions and concerns.

At the local site, I observed the interns teaching various components of the reading curriculum (e.g. opening activity, cooperative group activities). During these observations, I focused on the types of strategies and the kinds of language used by

interns in their teaching. I looked at ways in which the interns engaged the children in the curriculum and their overall rapport with the children (e.g. How does the intern greet, call on, and talk about children? How does the intern respond to examples provided by the children in discussion?).

Interviews

Interns were asked to be interviewed twice. Due to the long days and tight schedule at the national training, the first interview occurred after national training back at the local site at the beginnings of the program. The second round of interviews took place towards the end of the program. The site coordinator and national trainers were asked to be interviewed at the national training. However, because of the packed schedule, only the site coordinator could find time to participate in an interview at the national training. I approached the consultants and trainers who worked with the interns in this study and asked if they would be willing to respond to the interview questions in the form of a questionnaire. I received consent and responses back from one Ella Baker Trainer. I interviewed the site coordinator a second time after the completion of the program. The interviews ranged from 40 minutes to one hour in length and were audio recorded. I tried to conduct them more as a discussion rather than a formal interview.

The purposes of the interviews and the questionnaire for the site coordinator and trainers were to:

1. Engage the national trainers and site coordinator in a conversation about intern learning and their roles in supporting intern learning.

2. Gain understanding of how program standards (e.g. child advocacy, social justice, culturally responsive teaching) are viewed by national trainers and the site coordinator.
3. Gain understanding as to how trainers and site coordinators view the national training and local professional development as adding to intern knowledge and their views on how the content of the training affects intern thinking about teaching the Integrated Reading Curriculum.
4. Give national trainers and the site coordinator an opportunity to provide relevant feedback about the program in terms of operation, curriculum, experiences, intern growth and experience as a member of a community and other related areas.

The purposes of the interviews for interns were similar to those given for the site coordinator and trainers. The following are examples interview questions asked of the interns:

First Interview

1. To what extent are you developing tools for teaching? (Probe: What ideas, if any, are you developing about the role of *language* and *culture* in teaching?)
2. What are your current ideas on connecting what you learned from national training with what is possible in classrooms?
3. Has your thinking been challenged in any ways? How has your thinking been challenged in the way you think about teaching?
4. What questions do you have now or what direction do you think your learning needs to take?
5. What supports do you need from the program to foster your progress?

Second Interview

1. To what extent have you developed tools for teaching?
2. Have you had the opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue and critical inquiry related to your developing teaching practice (curriculum, teaching and learning strategies, and student expectations)? Give examples.
3. What are your current ideas on connecting what you have learned in your experience with what is possible in classrooms?
4. How have the activities of this community helped develop your thinking about your own practice?
5. When you think about your learning in the program, what are some of your thoughts about *what* you've learned and *how* you learned?

Other Data Sources

Other data sources included national and local documents, intern journals, records of site coordinator's observations of interns, and artifacts. Examples of collected documents included the national training manual and the Integrated Reading Curriculum guide. Intern journals were voluntarily kept throughout the program by the interns for the purposes of my research and were requested at the end of the program. Four interns gave me their journals. These artifacts added to providing a backdrop and macro-context for the study.

Table 1. *Summary of Data Set*

Data Source/Activity Type	**Data Type**	**Quantity- How much? How many?**
Observations of National Training sessions	Fieldnotes and artifacts	Observe all of the sessions that the interns from the site attend Approx. 3 to 4 sessions per day over the course of a week
Observations of Daily Debriefing Meetings at National Training and at Local Site	Fieldnotes Audio record	Observe and record all meetings Total: 26 meetings
Classroom Observations	Fieldnotes	Observe each intern at least twice teaching different components of the curriculum Total: 10 observations
Site Coordinator Observations	Artifacts	Record of Site Coordinator's observations of interns Total: 4 observation records
Interviews with Interns	Audio record	Two interviews per intern- one at the beginning of the program and one at the end Total: 12 interviews
Interviews with Site Coordinator	Audio record	Two interviews- one at the beginning of the program and one at the end Total: 2 interviews
Questionnaire from a national trainer	Written response	One questionnaire given at the end of National Training Total: 1 questionnaire
National Training and Local Site documents and artifacts	Documents and artifacts	As many of anything I could collect from both sites

Data Analysis

The fieldnotes, audio records and transcripts, observation forms, journal entries, and national and site documents were labeled and dated as collected. In analyzing the data, my intent was to understand how interns were supported in practice through their

participation in activities and learning opportunities and what was learned from their participation in these activities. I began by first conducting a thorough read of the data. Then, mainly through content analysis of field notes, interviews, and collected documents and artifacts, I came up with two main thematic units of analysis (in sync with the research questions) that cut across the data. These units of analysis included interns' identity (claimed by them and ascribed by others) and ways in which interns were supported (as claimed by them and ascribed by others).

I continuously scrutinized emergent codes as additional data was analyzed, thus, providing the closest fit between data and analytic themes. For example, fieldnotes were probed for ways in which the interns were trained and informed about their roles and responsibilities as Freedom School teachers. A content analysis was conducted on documents and artifacts collected for assumptions about the interns as evidenced by the documents. For example, documents and artifacts collected at national training were reviewed for goals and objectives of the national training, definitions and stances of social justice, and explicit explanations of the purposes of the training sessions. Additionally, the questionnaire and the interviews were transcribed and analyzed for various information such as interns', site coordinator's, and trainer's perspectives on their perceived roles and responsibilities within the program and their background experiences with children and teaching. The relationship between the research questions, data collection methods and plans for analysis are illustrated in Appendix B.

Finally, out of concern for capturing participant perspectives accurately I employed several techniques during analysis and write-up that lend themselves to supporting the study's validity and reliability (Bogden & Biklen, 2003; Lincoln and

Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1998). They include prolonged engagement and persistent observation, triangulation, peer examination, member checks, and providing an explicit audit trail of how data were collected and analyzed. Consequently, I was at the site almost everyday for duration of the program. I describe the activities and practices observed in depth in this chapter and in forthcoming findings chapters. I used multiple sources of data to come to the findings. I presented several pieces of analysis for peer review and examination in research groups and at conferences. Copies of the transcripts and/or findings were made available to all participants. Participants were asked for their comments in regards to the accuracy of their participation and perspective as displayed by the transcripts and/or findings. They were also asked for feedback on the findings report. The participants who responded noted that all results and conclusions were acceptable to them.

Conclusion

In this chapter I described the ways in which I designed this study, collected data across the contexts of Freedom School, and analyzed data in order to investigate my research questions. The study is qualitative in nature and therefore has systematically attempted to understand a particular case of a phenomenon (i.e. learning to teach in Freedom School). I have described methods that align appropriately with this methodology which included collecting descriptive data, inductive analysis, and an emphasis on understanding the participants point of view. In the next chapter I provide a detailed description of the Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools model. I also describe the national training model and give more information about the local sponsor of

the site in this study. Such descriptions are rich in nature and provided to give the reader as much understanding of the program as possible in order to make sense of the study's findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

Freedom School Is What?

Leader: Freedom School is what?
Audience: Red hot!
Leader: Freedom School is what?
Audience: Red hot!
Everyone: Freedom School is r-e-d with a little bit of h-o-t. Freedom School is r-e-d, RED, h-o-t, HOT. Red hot, red hot, RED HOT!

This chant is just one of many that one would hear at a Freedom School site in the mornings during Harambee (morning ritual), in the classrooms, or during recess. Many of the cheers and chants bellowed during these times of the Freedom School day exude the pride that the students, interns, and other participants feel about their beloved Freedom School. Because the intention of this dissertation is to understand how and in what ways program interns are supported in their teaching and development as teachers, it is important to provide a rich description of the Freedom Schools program, the national training model, and the local sponsor of the site in this study. This description provided in this chapter should serve as a cornerstone for understanding the particulars of the contexts in this study and for making sense of the assertions made in following chapters.

First I provide an illustration of the Freedom Schools program. I discuss the framework and under girding themes and key components of the program as disclosed by the program itself, explain the organizational leadership of the program, and give a brief description of the reading curriculum and narrate a typical day at Freedom School. Next, I provide a description of the national training model. I begin by discussing the framework of the training and then illustrate the course of study for the training. Lastly, I

describe the local sponsor of the site in this study. This description presents an example of the types of organizations that sponsor Freedom Schools and highlights the work of this particular agency and how the Freedom School program corresponds with the work that they do[1].

The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) Freedom Schools Model

As fore mentioned in the introduction and the review of literature, the current day CDF Freedom Schools are modeled after the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Schools. So, the basic concept of providing a quality, alternative educative experience for children, especially Black children, remains a core tenant of the CDF Freedom Schools program. Additionally, the contemporary Freedom Schools are an initiative of the Children's Defense Fund and a part of CDF's Leave No Child Behind Movement, therefore, it's important to note that the Freedom Schools program is situated within a larger movement. For that reason, the principles and objectives of the Freedom Schools are intertwined with the principles and objectives of the larger CDF movement. The mission of the Children's Defense Fund is to leave no child behind and to ensure every child a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, and Safe Start, and a Moral start in life and the successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities. The CDF Freedom Schools program implements all of the thrusts of the mission of Children's Defense Fund (see Appendix C).

At the 2005 national training, the site coordinators and the national Freedom Schools staff participated in an exercise in which they brainstormed what they thought to

be core beliefs of the Freedom Schools program. According to their list, CDF Freedom Schools:

- is an enrichment model, not a deficit or compensatory model; at Freedom Schools, children are respected and cared for as a sacred gift from God
- is an intergenerational model
- sets high expectations for all children, parents, staff, and community
- attends to and celebrates culture/heritage, emphasizing the study of history, embracing our children's gifts of language, music, the arts, and spirituality
- depends upon and supports the role and involvement of parents in their children's education
- emphasizes service and leadership
- extends our understanding of service and leadership to include and expect appropriate attention to social action
- acts as a parallel institution, helping children and families deal with the day-to-day realities of their schools and communities
- incorporates the philosophy of non-violence
- recognizes and affirms spirituality
- exemplifies confidence
- enjoys fellowship and community with others around a mission to serve the needs of children and families
- avoids making assumptions about children's families
- is inclusive, engaging children in cooperative group activities and building a sense of community
- helps each of us to learn appropriate behavior that benefits the community as a whole
- exudes an atmosphere of love
- ain't easy to make real
- promotes a love for learning
- exposes our children to new challenges
- offers our children a "high energetic alternative" to the drudgery of many other schools
- embraces children
- promotes conflict resolution skills in adults and children
- encourages dialogue and welcomes the voice (and perspective) of children
- takes the time to get the job done

While this list continues to be a work in progress, it is evident that the contemporary Freedom Schools are indeed continuing to blaze a trail that was ignited over forty years ago. Furthermore, this list explicates dimensions of group and individual identity that are expected of the entire community. Such characteristics will be elaborated upon in

following chapters as I describe the training and development of the interns as educators and activists. Also important to note is that many of the ways in which the site coordinators and the national staff conceptualized the work that Freedom Schools does and the role that it serves in the lives of children and families are also manifested in the lives of the interns, as I will show.

Organizational Leadership

In continuing with this description of the Freedom Schools model, it is also important to understand the organizational leadership and hierarchy of Freedom Schools. As stated earlier, the Freedom Schools program is an initiative of the Children's Defense Fund. It originated within a division of CDF known as the Black Community Crusade for Children (BCCC). The BCCC seeks to weave and reweave the rich fabric of community that is the cornerstone for healthy development of Black children: to tap into and strengthen the strong Black community tradition of self-help; to rebuild the bridges between generations and between the Black middle class and poor; to assist and galvanize current Black leadership around specific goals for children; and to identify, train, nurture, link, mobilize, and empower a new generation of effective, young servant-leaders on behalf of children. Currently, BCCC is no longer the coordinating body of the Freedom Schools program. Freedom Schools is a direct service program and initiative of CDF. Freedom Schools is a separate division of CDF reporting directly to Mrs. Edelman. Among their many responsibilities, the CDF Freedom Schools national staff manages the program at the national level. They recruit new Freedom School sponsors, conduct national training, and evaluate new and existing sites.

At the local level, every site is staffed with an executive director, a project director, a site coordinator and interns. It is analogous to the chain of command in schools where you have a superintendent, district/area administrator, a principal, and teachers. The executive director and the project director are usually from the sponsoring organization in regards to employment (in this case the community development corporation) and they are not necessarily on site everyday because of their other work obligations. They do administrative tasks such as secure funding for program operation, maintain site finances, maintain communication between the site and CDF, do the hiring and firing of staff, supervise the site coordinator, and so forth. The site coordinator is on site every day and serves in a role akin to that of principal. The site coordinator manages the day to day activities of the site and provides guidance, support, and constructive feedback to interns. The interns are the teachers at Freedom School. They teach the Integrated Reading Curriculum to a class of no more than ten students, serve as Harambee leaders, facilitate afternoon activities, and serve at parent workshops.

Key Program Components

The Integrated Reading Curriculum (IRC), parental involvement, intergenerational leadership, and community involvement and social action are key components to the Freedom Schools program. The Integrated Reading Curriculum is the heart of the program. The overall theme of the IRC and the Freedom School program is "I Can and Must Make a Difference." From this overall theme, weekly sub-themes consist of I can and must make a difference in my: Self, Family, Community, Country, and World:

> The IRC is meant to be an activity-oriented curriculum. It is designed to excite, motivate, stimulate, arouse, expose, inspire, delight, enchant, and rejuvenate! It is not designed to teach the mechanics of reading. The goal set forth in the guide[1] is to help readers and non-readers fall in love with the books: the stories, the characters, the pictures, the ideas, and the values; and to give non-readers an overwhelming desire to read- which is a basic step to doing it. (Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools Ella Baker Child Policy Training Manual and Action Guide, 2005)

Class sizes at Freedom School follow a 10:1 ratio of students to teachers. Interns are expected to organize the physical environment and manage the Freedom School classrooms around the following basic components: a reading circle, work stations, welcome sign, daily schedule, weekly themes, class expectations, lyrics to theme song, display of children's work, Freedom School books, daily lesson agenda, and graphic organizers. These expected components are designed to give children positive spaces for learning and cooperative activities. According to the training manual, "it [the room set-up] maximizes learning, creativity, engagement and healthy group dynamics. The Freedom Schools classroom is unique and a hallmark of the Freedom Schools program."

Freedom Schools believes that parents are the most important partners in their children's education. Therefore, Freedom Schools offer parents support and skills they need to help their children succeed such as: how to support their children's learning and development; how to become more effective partners with schools in the education of their children; and how to become better advocates for their children's needs. Parents are required to demonstrate their commitment to the program and to their children's education by active participation in Freedom School activities and attending weekly workshops. The local sites are responsible for providing relevant workshops to meet the particular needs of the parents they serve. For example, a local site may survey the

[1] The Summer Integrated Reading Curriculum Guide

parents at their orientation to see what kinds of services are needed. Then using such feedback, the local site may provide a parent workshop on how to help children with homework. It is also hoped that the families of the children in the Freedom Schools program will continue to work together to ensure that the hopes of their children are nurtured through parental involvement and support and community-wide advocacy.

Freedom schools also believe in promoting principles of intergenerational leadership. It is expected that all staff members will train and work as a team and share in the decision making process at all levels. This also entails providing opportunities for staff and community members to learn from each other regardless of age. Using college-age interns is also a part of enacting intergenerational leadership. Children can identify with the servant-leaders as role models close to their age that can offer valuable insights into their life experiences.

Strong community support is important to the Freedom Schools program. Local sponsors are responsible for informing the community about crises facing children and the ways that Freedom Schools provide alternatives. Local sponsors should also seek out members of the community to volunteer and serve at Freedom School. Freedom Schools also believe that anyone (parents, children, interns) with the drive and desire to have an impact and make a difference can cause social change. Social action is a key component of the entire program. It is an integrated component of the IRC and there are several resource books about social action in the site library. Additionally, site coordinators and interns work with students to identify an issue or concern in which the entire site will take action on. For example, a site may identify their issue to be community clean-up and

beautification. The site would then follow suggested guidelines for taking action (see Appendix G) on that issue.

A Day in CDF Freedom Schools

The Freedom Schools operate for a full day beginning at 8:00 a.m. (see Appendix D). All Freedom School sites daily provide at least two meals and snacks for the children. The meal times provide an opportunity for community members to come in and assist by preparing and serving food or fellowshipping with students. Breakfast is served from 8-8:30 a.m. Following breakfast is Harambee (see Appendix E). Harambee is a Kiswahili word which means "let's pull together". Harambee is a time when children, staff, family, and community members come together to celebrate themselves and each other. The components of Harambee are the read aloud, theme song, cheers and chants, recognitions, moment of silence and announcements. Harambee lasts for approximately 30 minutes, and children are then dismissed to go to their classrooms (which consist of no more than ten students) where they engage in the Integrated Reading Curriculum (IRC) with their teacher for the next three hours.

As the morning draws to a close, DEAR Time (Drop Everything and Read) is announced and lasts for approximately fifteen minutes. During DEAR Time, children select books from the Freedom School library or ones that have been approved from home to read and enjoy on their own[2]. Students and staff then join each other for lunch and recess for approximately one hour. After recess, the children spend the remaining two hours of the day engaged in afternoon activities facilitated by the interns and community members that are well-planned and related to the themes presented in the

[2] Approval is based upon the book appropriateness in regards to content.

IRC. Such activities may include field trips, computer lab, dance, program "finale" preparation, social action, storytelling, and music. The children are dismissed at 3:00 p.m. and the staff then meets for the daily debrief meeting. During the daily debrief meeting, the staff discusses the day's successes and challenges and works together as a team to plan and share in the decision making process. In addition to this daily routine, there are weekly parent workshops held in the evenings which interns and the site coordinator attend and in some cases facilitate. There is also a culminating production known as the finale at the end of the program.

National Training: The Ella Baker Child Policy Training Institute

The Freedom Schools national training is officially called the Ella Baker Child Policy Institute. At the national training site coordinators and interns are trained in community service, social action, advocacy, and program management and implementation. The service model of youth leadership development is enacted through character building, leadership development, intergenerational mentoring, policy awareness, and conflict resolution training. As stated by the Freedom Schools program, one of the main goals of the training is to train a new generation of servant-leaders and foster a commitment to long-term advocacy for children and the communities where they live. The hope is that these young leaders will continue their commitment and use their experiences to develop ongoing programs to address children's needs in their communities.

It is important to note that local training for interns and site coordinators is required of sites before and after the national training. Local training before national training typically involves orienting the staff to the Freedom schools program. It may also include national training preparation, CPR training, orienting the staff to the community, and program planning. Local training after the national training may consist of debriefing the national training experience, follow-up training on particular program components (e.g. teaching the IRC), reinforcing topics or ideas introduced at the national training, site and classroom preparation, and final planning and scheduling.

Servant-Leadership Development

The term servant-leader was coined by Robert Greenleaf (1977). The idea came out of reading Herman Hesse's *Journey to the East* (1956) about a mythical journey of a band of men. Among them is a man named Leo, known as the party's servant. Leo was actually the leader all the time, but he was servant first. According to Greenleaf (1991), the servant-leader is servant first, as Leo was portrayed. Being a servant-leader begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead.

Servant-leadership development is a key goal of the national training for Freedom Schools. The goal is to develop servant-leaders and to teach them how to put their leadership skills into action. At Freedom Schools and within the movement to leave no child behind, servant leadership involves serving, empowering, and advocating for positive social change through community service and child advocacy. Freedom Schools

looks to the ethic of servant-leadership inspired by the actions and life work of civil rights leader, Ella Baker (hence the formal name of the training).

Ella Baker was known as a leader behind the scenes of the Civil Rights Movement. She helped organize two salient groups of the movement- SCLC (Southern Christian Leadership Conference) and SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee). Ella Baker played a pivotal role in creation of SNCC and was involved in Freedom Schools throughout the South. She was affectionately called *Fundi*. Fundi is a Swahili word. It is a name given to someone who masters a craft and then generously and unselfishly shares his or her knowledge and skills with others.

> Ella Baker was concerned with the plight of African Americans, but she was also passionately committed to a broader humanitarian struggle for a better world... Ella Baker was a movement teacher who exemplified a radical pedagogy, similar to that of Latin American educator and political organizer Paulo Freire. She sought to empower those she taught and regarded learning as reciprocal. Baker's message was that oppressed people, whatever their level of formal education, had the ability to understand and interpret the world around them, to see that world for what it was and to move to transform it. (Ransby, 2003, pp. 5-7)

The trainers at the national training are known as the Ella Baker Trainers (EBTs). The Ella Baker Trainers are current and past interns who have been selected by the national Freedom Schools staff to assist in training local program staff and to provide programmatic and technical support. They exemplify standards of excellence, and embrace the philosophy, spirit, discipline, and vision of the CDF Freedom Schools program.

Course of Study

The national training is two weeks in length, and it is held at the Children's Defense Fund Haley Farm™ in Clinton, Tennessee. Haley Farm is the former property of

the late author Alex Haley[3]. CDF now owns the farm and considers it the home of the Leave No Child Behind Movement® where they host trainings, conferences, spiritual retreats, and other programs. In the words of Marian Wright Edelman, "Every movement needs a home- a place to rekindle the spirit, to learn new skills, to meet people who share a common mission, to debate and discuss, and to build a sense of community." Visitors to the farm are greeted by the farm's staff exclaiming their mantra "welcome home."

Site coordinator training. The first week of national training is dedicated to the training of site coordinators. Site coordinators also attend an orientation along with executive and project directors at Haley Farm several months prior to the summer training. The training of the site coordinators focuses on equipping them to be efficient leaders at their sites and trainers and supporters for the interns both at national training and back at their local sites. This is carried out through studying theory and components of the Freedom Schools program, elements of the current CDF movement, particulars of the Civil Rights Movement, and policy and crises affecting children through a series of workshops and activities. Although, this portion of the training was not the focus of my data collection, I want to expand on the description here with two examples of an activity and workshop that I participated in.[4]

The site coordinators were given the task of developing welcome kits for their interns. It was explained that developing welcome kits for the Freedom Schools interns was a way for the site coordinators to reinforce and model the ideals of community support within Freedom School. They were also modeling for the interns how they should prepare for, welcome, and invite their students to Freedom School. Site coordinators were

[3] Most notably known for his book *Roots*.
[4] I arrived at Haley Farm two days before the interns arrived, so I was able to participate in some sessions with just the site coordinators.

asked to prepare to greet and welcome their interns in several ways. This included, but was not limited to: creating door tags for the dorm rooms; creating a site banner to be showcased at the opening ceremony; writing a welcome letter; and assembling goodie bags (containing candy treats, words of inspiration, pens, etc.). Because I had no interns to prepare for (and it became known that I had artistic skills), I was engaged in helping the site coordinators with these tasks.

The national director of Freedom Schools presented a workshop to the site coordinators on language and its purpose as the theme for this year's training[5]. She gave some background on herself by saying that as a doctoral graduate student, she studied with Dr. Geneva Smitherman at Harvard. She used Smitherman's work to lay the foundation for her presentation. She highlighted three key themes on language that coincide with the work of Freedom Schools. First, Black English is a systematic rule governed language. Such language is integrated in the reading curriculum and should be validated by staff at the sites as an authentic language of African Americans. She elaborated on this point by discussing two key public cases: *King vs. Ann Arbor School District* and the 1996 Oakland, California School Board decision to recognize Ebonics and use it as a teaching tool. Her second point was that the staff of Freedom Schools had a charge of using "our language" as a bridge to the language of wider communication. She read excerpts of Smitherman's book, *Talking That Talk: Language, Culture and Education in African America*. Her final point was that Freedom School is about literacy but it is also political. We have to advocate for our children and their heritage to be recognized in schools and education policy. She noted that the current national education

[5] The theme of the 2005 national training was "Nommo: The Power of the Word."

legislation has created a situation where test writers, test scorers, and test analysts are making money "off the backs of our children."

Intern training. The second week of the national training is devoted to training the servant-leader interns. A week is a short time to get "everything" in, so the schedule is intense. Interns experience fifteen hour days for the duration of the training. Because the size of the group increases tremendously when the interns arrive (there were approximately 650 interns in 2005), facilities on the farm are not at capacity to handle such a large group. Therefore, the University of Tennessee and the Knoxville Convention Center serves as training sites in addition to the farm. Similar to the site coordinators' training, the interns also study theory and components of the Freedom Schools program, elements of the current CDF movement, particulars of the Civil Rights Movement, and policy and crises affecting children through a series of workshops and activities.

The basic components of the training for interns and the schedule of events is outlined in Appendix F. These components will be elaborated upon in the findings chapters.

The Local Sponsor

In selecting Freedom School sponsors, CDF seeks organizations that have a demonstrated record of responding to the needs of children and families in their communities. Furthermore, they look for sponsors who have a demonstrated record of developing alliances, coalitions, and collaborative relationships with other local groups

that work on behalf of children and families. Also, important is the fact that each program site must be able to operate at no charge to families.

Freedom School sponsors are an array of community-based organizations across the country committed to serving children and families in their communities. In 2005, there were seventy-six Freedom School sites in twenty-three states. Freedom Schools are sponsored by a variety of organizations including churches, community centers, schools, local Urban Leagues, community development corporations, school districts, university colleges and departments, and CDF regional offices. There are also a few unique sponsors. For example, in Missouri and Kansas, there is a sponsor known as the Kansas City Freedom School Initiative. This group received a grant from the Kauffman Foundation to create and sustain multiple Freedom Schools in these states.

About Mount Calvary Community Development Corporation

The sponsoring organization for the Freedom School in this study was Mount Calvary Community Development Corporation. Mount Calvary CDC is a non-profit, faith-based organization and outreach center created and spearheaded by Mount Calvary Baptist Church located in a southern metropolitan city. Mount Calvary CDC's mission states:

> Guided by the principles of divine love and service, our mission for the outreach center is to provide a safe and supportive environment for women and children experiencing homelessness. We encourage spiritual growth, responsible decision making, and economic independence.

The objectives of the Mount Calvary CDC and outreach center are to improve the spiritual and economic well-being of the Community; to develop a project that comports with the national incentive to provide community revitalization through faith-based

initiatives; and to provide supportive services for women and their children experiencing homelessness.

Given the mission and objectives of the CDC, programs directed by the CDC are of the outreach type in nature. Some of their signature programs include a family mentoring project, a children's holiday outreach project, a housing counseling program, and a comprehensive program that offers case management, employment, professional etiquette, housing, education, spiritual guidance, and life skills training. In the summer of 2005, Mount Calvary CDC added Freedom School to their program initiatives. Not only did the mission and objectives of Freedom Schools align with the mission and objectives of the CDC, the Freedom Schools program was also a program that was already well-planned and well-laid out for sponsoring organizations encompassing everything that the CDC wanted to provide for children and parents in the surrounding community. The executive director of the CDC, Reverend Rachel, who also served as the project director for the Freedom School site, noted this as one of the reasons she was interested in bringing the Freedom Schools program on board as a part of the CDC's programming.

Conclusion

The reader should keep in mind that the contexts of this study- the national training institute and the local Freedom School site- are complex spaces of activity and social and cultural practices. As stated in the beginning of this chapter, the description of the Freedom Schools model provided in this chapter is meant to serve as a cornerstone for understanding the particulars of the contexts in this study and for making sense of the assertions made in the following chapters. In the next chapter, I offer a description of the

nature of the national training institute by recounting what took place focusing particularly on what the Freedom Schools program hoped to accomplish at the training and the kinds of assumptions made about the interns related to social justice training. The next chapter will enhance the brief description of the training provided in this chapter by providing the reader with a more in depth depiction of the social and cultural practices that occur in this context.

CHAPTER FIVE

A Summer of Service... A Lifetime of Commitment: Becoming Activists

We who believe in freedom cannot rest
We who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes

That which touches me most is that I had a chance to work with people
Passing on to others that which was passed on to me

To me young people come first, they have the courage where we fail
And if I can but shed some light, as they carry us through the gale

The older I get the better I know that the secret of my going on
Is when the reins are in the hands of the young, who dare to run against the storm

-Excerpts from *Ella's Song* performed by Sweet Honey in the Rock
Words and music by Bernice Johnson Reagon, 1981
Based on the words of Ella Baker

"A Summer of Service... A Lifetime of Commitment" is a slogan that can be found on Freedom School t-shirts and other paraphernalia. It is also a past theme of the national training. Servant-leader interns sign up for and anticipate being activists and leaders for children and their communities for the summer. Yet, they also receive the tools and a supportive network to pursue a continual and sustained commitment to children, communities, and social justice. I find this phrase to be appropriate for the title of this chapter in which I explore the induction for the interns' summer of service and the preparation for their lifetime of commitment.

In this chapter I describe the nature of the national training institute by recounting what took place focusing particularly on what the Freedom Schools program hoped to accomplish at the training and the kinds of assumptions made about the interns. I begin by asserting that the nature of the training itself is a type of induction. I describe two

salient themes of this induction- learning history and being embraced. I then explore the expectations the trainers and site coordinator had of servant-leaders and describe how these expectations were a part of the nature of the training. The chapter concludes with reflections from the interns on how they are thinking of their commitment to service beyond the summer.

Induction into the Movement

The Merriam-Webster dictionary lists several definitions of the word *induction*. Hence, depending on the context, the nature of induction can mean and be different things in different situations. I'd like to focus on induction as a kind of process- particularly a kind of process that entails joining or installing. Since this project is also an account of interns becoming teachers, I'd like to make a distinction between how I am using the word induction and how it has been traditionally used in the discourse of teacher education. When thinking about teacher education and the career span of teachers, the nature of induction is generally recognized as being a particular phase of the teaching career span. Feimen-Nemser (2000) notes this as such as she considers teacher learning over time in her explanation of the teaching continuum. "Teacher induction is often framed as a transition from preservice preparation to practice, from student of teaching to teacher of students" (p.21). She goes on to point out that, "induction happens with or without a formal program and is often an abrupt and lonely process" (p. 24). Feimen-Nemser identifies some of the central tasks of teacher induction to be: (a) gaining local knowledge of students, curriculum, and school context; (b) designing responsive curriculum and instruction; (c) enacting a beginning repertoire in purposeful ways; (d)

creating a classroom learning community; (e) developing a professional identity; and (f) learning in and from practice.

The kind of induction that I am considering for the Freedom School interns is similar to teacher induction as described by Feiman-Nemser in that it is a process. However, it differs in some ways. First, while interns are indeed serving in the role of teachers in the program, there is no prerequisite of any kind of teacher training or teaching experience needed to assume their roles as teachers in the program. So, the purposes of the training are not associated with assisting interns to pursue careers in teaching, rather assisting them to engage in the practice of teaching as a means of activism. Second, Freedom School training is intended to be a very formal program with a set of planned learning opportunities for interns. The interns are joining and being installed into a movement. The movement is the reason for the training, and a goal for the training is furthering the movement. Becoming activists and learning about their role in this movement for social justice is a top priority for their training and a process of induction. Finally, the set of learning opportunities that contribute to the practices and identity formation of what it means to be an activist and a servant-leader are the central tasks of intern induction for the Freedom School training.

History Matters

Part of being an activist in this movement is knowing history. A major goal and theoretical underpinning of the national training was to engage interns in opportunities for learning the history of three movements. These movements include the Civil Rights Movement, the overarching CDF Leave No Child Behind Movement, and the Freedom

Schools Movement. Having the interns understand the CDF movement alongside the current Freedom Schools movement and its origins in the Civil Rights Movement and also to be able to connect the purpose of their work to that history was an explicitly stated goal of the training:

> Participants will examine the history and philosophy of the CDF Freedom Schools program within the context of the Civil Rights Movement; study the work of Ella Baker; develop skills to empower children and youth through the CDF Freedom Schools movement; and examine and celebrate the contribution of youth in the Civil Rights Movement. (Training Manual and Action Guide 2005)

Providing interns with opportunities to learn about these specific events of history was enacted throughout the training.

Learning about CDF history and its Leave No Child Behind Movement, the Civil Rights Movement and the explicit connection between the CDF Freedom Schools and the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Schools began the very first day of training at the opening ceremony. During the opening ceremony the national director welcomed the interns and told the audience:

> ...CDF Freedom Schools today stand on the shoulders of and are modeled after the great work of people like Ella Baker, Fannie Lou Hamer, the SNCC workers of 1964, Medger Evers, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X and others too numerous to name in my allotted time. We know that we can and must make a difference because these and others have not only made a difference in our lives, but have made a difference in the course of world history. (Opening Ceremony- 6/5)

In that same ceremony, interns viewed a video that depicted the history of the Children's Defense Fund and watched a dramatization performed by the Ella Baker Trainers which interpreted and illustrated the training theme of *Nommo*[6]. Hence, the relevance and importance of history was made explicit and emphasized from the very beginning.

[6] Nommo is an African concept that has survived in African American culture as a belief in the power of the word- "the awareness that the word alone alters the world" ([Jahn, 1961, p. 125] in Smitherman, 2000, p. 54).

One of the sites at the national training provided an implicit intertwining thread of opportunity for learning history. There were three sites over the course of a week where the national training for interns took place- Haley Farm, University of Tennessee, and the Knoxville Convention Center. The interns were intentionally brought to Tennessee to go through portions of their training and graduation ceremony at Haley Farm. Haley Farm is considered the home of the Movement to Leave No Child Behind. In her welcome address at the opening ceremony, the director of the Freedom Schools program illuminated the historical importance of the farm. In her speech, the director refers to the farm as "historic." Referencing the farm in this way was intended to give the interns the sense of how important and special it is to have the opportunity to be on the farm. The director also talked about the farm's preceding owner and namesake. She noted that by holding the training at the farm, Freedom Schools was illuminating the impact of the work of Alex Haley:

> Alex Haley combined the best of two worlds. By traveling to Africa and sitting at the feet of the Griots of his tribe, hearing the spoken words of these learned men, he captured in writing for all of us to read, the knowledge and significance of our African heritage... On Monday and Tuesday, and on Saturday at our graduation, we will be at the historic Alex Haley Farm. And isn't it fitting that the Children's Defense Fund who now owns Haley Farm, is able to carry on this great work at Alex Haley's farm further illuminating the impact of the work of this great man who helped all of America understand the significance of Africa- humanity's mother country- and the important role that Africa's children play in redeeming the soul of America. (Opening Ceremony, 6/5)

Interns spent two days on the farm during the training. One day consisted of teambuilding activities (including climbing a 60 foot tower) and workshops focused on CDF priorities, organizing the Leave No Child Behind Movement, and site preparation and program planning. The other day spent on the farm was for the graduation ceremony which included meals and fellowship before and after. During both of these days spent at

the farm, interns were inundated with history lessons and artifacts. For example, on the day they were there for the teambuilding activities and workshops, interns were physically moving all over the farm. For the most part, the team building activities were held outdoors, but the workshops were held in buildings on the farm that serve as monuments of great pride for the movements. The Langston Hughes Library and the Riggio-Lynch Chapel are two examples of such structures. From dedication plaques and photos hung on the walls, interns saw the legacies of the people for whom the buildings were named continued through cultural and historical icons such as Maya Angelou, Dorothy Heights, Nikki Giovanni, and Hilary Clinton. At the graduation ceremony they heard words of encouragement and pride for the work they were going to do from CDF founder Marian Wright Edelman. They heard too from Unita Blackwell, the former mayor of Mayersville, Mississippi (the first Black woman mayor in Mississippi) and Civil Rights icon. So, the environment and planned activities at Haley Farm afforded the interns opportunities to learn about these movements of social justice and to reflect on the role that others played in building these movements.

Another opportunity where history was explicitly relayed to the interns was on a daily basis in the evening "Nommo" sessions. As stated earlier the theme of the training was *Nommo: The Power of the Word.* This theme of the power of the spoken word was grounded on Geneva Smitherman's work and a sub-theme of exploring liberation through literacy. On the training agenda under the theme was an excerpt from Smitherman's *Talking That Talk: Language, Culture and Education in African America* (2000):

> "All activities of men, and all the movements in nature, rest on the word, on the productive power of the word, which is water and heat and seed and Nommo, that is, life force itself... The force, responsibility, and commitment of the word, and the awareness that the new word alone alters the world..." In African culture, a

> newborn child is a mere thing until his father gives and speaks his name. No medicine, potion, or magic of any sort is considered effective without accompanying words. So strong is the African belief in the power and absolute necessity of Nommo that all craftsmanship must be accompanied by speech. (p.203)

I previously noted that the Ella Baker Trainers performed a drama presentation during the opening ceremony that interpreted and illustrated the theme of Nommo. Their performance emphasized the fact that the word represents the past, present, and future in addition to pointing out that the word must be written. The idea that the spoken and written word is powerful was made clear at this presentation and then continued each evening with other presentations, discussions, and a variety of panelists. Each evening's session was entitled *Nommo* and then followed with a sub-theme. Examples of evening session titles are:

- Nommo: Understanding the History of the Freedom Schools Movement;
- Nommo: Children & Youth in the Movement and the Caring Adults Who Supported Them;
- Nommo: The Freedom Schools Model- A Culturally Relevant Pedagogy; and
- Nommo: Author's Night at Café de Freedom Schools- Connecting the Written and Spoken Word.

While some of the titles make an obvious connection to the historical content of the presentations, almost all of the evening sessions had within the content of presentations a historical component. The following is a synopsis of one of the evening Nommo sessions.

At the first evening Nommo session, the national director of Freedom Schools gave a presentation that included discussions on bondage gear used for slaves; religion's contribution to literacy; the connection between literacy, liberation, and social justice;

SNCC; the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Schools; and the conception of CDF Freedom Schools. She began by asking the audience "what does it mean to have a liberal arts education?" She said that she didn't want the answer then, but she would come back to it at the end of her talk. At the end of her talk she returned to her question and entertained some response from the audience. She answered her own question by stating that it was "an education fit for a free person." She then introduced the audience to Charles Cobb who is credited with coming up with the idea of the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Schools. Mr. Cobb spoke about the people involved in SNCC and how they considered themselves to be the children of Ella Baker. He also spoke about the education system of Mississippi and how it was a whole system designed to keep Black people ignorant and uneducated. He said that he thought that schools today are still set up to give a sharecropper's education. After Mr. Cobb spoke, a film, *Fundi: The Story of Ella Baker*, was shown. Following the film was a question and answer session with Mr. Cobb and the audience. Given the rich context and opportunities provided for learning history, Elijah, an EBT, aptly noted:

> National training is a very educational and inspirational. It gives people an opportunity to get educated on parts of their history they might not have been too informed about. It also motivates people to self-educate. When you see all the things that are not taught in school, it inspires a lot of people to go out and find out more. (8/26)

The evening Nommo sessions had the interns thinking not only about the history lesson itself, but also about how they wanted to share the information with the Freedom School students and also how they were making connections across time relevant to themselves and the children they would be serving. We see this occurring in the following episode at a debriefing meeting where there was discussion centered on

elements of that evening's Nommo session particularly focusing on a film about a children's march and the discussion and personal accounts from panelists:

> Dr. Collins: ...I want everybody to tell me something that really impacted them today and why and where you think that can take you in Freedom Schools...
>
> Sydney: Definitely the movie- that documentary about the children's march. Like that just really stirred up so many emotions and gave us a deeper and stronger drive for what we're going to be dealing with this summer and kids just everywhere. I think they're so lost and they have a sense of complacency in today's world and they just don't know the amount of power they really have. I think it's important for us to instill that in them at Freedom School and push them in that direction.
>
> Dr. Collins: Do you think kids could relate to that movie?
>
> Sydney: Definitely. I think if we try to parallel it to something in today's society. I just think that would have such an impact on kids for them to take that same type of energy and apply it to something in their world. Like the negative portrayal of African Americans in the media or music. Using the same type of action that they did about segregation in that day and age.
> >
> Jaichelle: ...I think it would be beneficial to the show the film we saw today because not only is it the Black history you never learned- like they teach you about Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks- but that's it. But this is like, "no, this is really what happened." And so to hear the stories and see those people now and to see the footage for me, being from Mobile, that was so close to home. And to know that so many people from Mobile got on buses to go to Birmingham.
> >
> Tim: What really impacted me I guess was the speakers themselves because they gave us a lot of personal experience that I really didn't know about. Like I didn't know there was another little girl that survived. I knew they had to face racism and a lot of things, but I didn't know they were so close to it. And they gave a lot of information about how they survived and what they did. (Debrief meeting, 6/7)

Not only were the interns learning elements of history unknown to them before, they were also working to make sense of this new knowledge and how it could and would inform the work they were to do in the movement. A focus on learning history as a part of their induction into the movement is summarized by the national director's words to the interns at the opening ceremony:

> Your ability to communicate the rich history of struggle and achievement by African Americans and other people of color- and all people who struggle with us against the injustice and oppression we know too well in this country will motivate in others a commitment to engage in constant struggle for freedom and justice, especially for children and the poor. (Opening Ceremony, 6/5)

The Discourse of "We"

Upon arriving at the national training, interns were immediately embraced and included in this movement for social justice in a way that had powerful implications for how the program defined the purpose of their work. From the moment the interns were welcomed by the national staff and the Ella Baker Trainers at the opening ceremony to the graduation ceremony where they are given their charge by Mrs. Edelman, there was a strong sense of a togetherness akin to that of family and referred to as "we" that permeated the training. The discourse of we was explicated in three salient ways- the political we, the communal we, and the transcended we.

First, there was the *political we*. This is the sense that "we" are in a struggle or a crisis. Again, the opening ceremony set the stage for the purpose of the training and the work that would be done at local sites throughout the summer. This hinged on the idea that the work that the interns were doing was a part of a solution to a crisis. This crisis was characterized as an educational crisis amongst children of color. The message was crystal clear. Children of color, especially Black children, are not only failing in schools, but this failing is also a catalyst for a whole host of problems that children of color could potentially face. Therefore, as the national director stated over and over "we need Freedom Schools:"

> In 2005, when only 40% of white 4th graders, 15% Latino 4th graders, and 13% of black 4th graders can read at grade level- we need Freedom Schools. Today when 38% of Native American students, 35% of black students, 20% of Latino students, and 15% of white students are expelled from school under ridiculous and unjust

> zero tolerance laws- we need Freedom Schools. Today when a significantly higher proportion of black men will go to prison than go to college- we need Freedom Schools. Today when a black male child has a 1 in 10,000 chance of earning a Ph.D. yet has a 1 in 13 chance of going of prison before he is 20- we need Freedom Schools. Today when a black female child has a 1 in 16,000 chance of earning a Ph.D. yet has a 1 in 50 chance of going to prison- we need Freedom Schools. Today when we spend almost three times as much on prisoners than we do on children in school- we need Freedom Schools. Today when state governments are predicting the number of prison cells to build according to elementary school test scores- we need Freedom Schools. (Opening Ceremony, 6/5)

Another attribute of the discourse of we was the *communal we*. That is "we" is composed of you joining us. While it was made clear that Freedom Schools had a long history within a larger social justice movement, the interns were given the message that the movement continues when they join up with others and carry on the torch of freedom:

> We in the Children's Defense Fund are energized by your presence and are pleased that you have joined us in this great movement for social justice- our Movement to Leave No Child Behind... For those of you who have just now joined the Freedom Schools family, we say welcome- and roll your sleeves up for a week and a summer of the best hard work you've ever known. (Opening Ceremony, 6/5)

Both the political and the communal we were also explicated in the curriculum (content) of the training through everyday social practices such as cheers, chants and songs. *Ella's Song* (see excerpt at beginning of chapter) is one of many songs played at the national training during meal times, in the auditorium before evening sessions, and during breaks. The chorus is sung and echoed throughout training- "we who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes."

Finally there was the *transcended we*. The first two uses of the term "we" are imposed by the program and its curriculum. This third use is evidenced in the ways that the participants appropriated and made sense of the first two in their talk with each other. I refer to it as the *transcended we* because it is a combination of the first two along with

acknowledgement of agency. In the episode from the debrief meeting on page 90, we see Sydney using the transcended we as she responds to Dr. Collins' question. Later in that same meeting there are other instances of the transcended we. Cornell responded to the conversation that had been going on about how they could use the movie about the children's march with the children at their local site. Dr. Collins responded to an occurrence brought up by one of the interns. At the evening session during the question and answer period, an intern from another site stated that he felt "we" (Freedom Schools) should be doing more than *just* reading with the students. Dr. Collins clearly felt as though the young man had not yet recognized the political work ingrained within Freedom Schools:

> Cornell: ...Try to find something that's going on in the community now- a living struggle... We don't have to go back then to see what we could be doing now. Let's look at now. What's going on now?
>
> Dr. Collins: ...And in my mind we're doing so much more than *just* reading. You know when I heard that, I was like well wait a minute! We're doing social action. We're doing conflict resolution. We're doing parent meetings. We're doing a lot! And we're doing that *through* the medium of reading. He sounded like he missed that. (Debrief meeting, 6/7)

High Expectations for Servant-Leaders

The interns' process of becoming servant-leaders and/or furthering their development as servant-leaders begins with high expectations from the program, the Ella Baker Trainers, and the site coordinators. The program's mission, goals and objectives, and course of study for the training established particular standards and expectations for developing interns into the roles of servant-leaders. The Ella Baker Trainers and the site coordinators played pivotal roles at the training in the interns' development as servant-leaders. They had the most responsibility for training and supporting the interns as they

went through this training process. Dr. Collins and Elijah, an EBT who had been with the program for a number of years, both recognized their roles of supporter to the interns. They noted:

> First of all I feel that I should be the major support system. Somebody that they can come to for any aspect of what they are trying to accomplish- whether it be curriculum related; whether it be a personal issue that they're grappling with; whether it's just a general question about anything. I think that I should be the general person they attach themselves to. I should be the authority in terms of what we're trying to achieve. I should be knowledgeable about the books, about the curriculum, about the standards that are set. I should know the kids. I should know their strengths, their challenges. Anything that will affect what they're trying to accomplish, I should be an authority on that. In order for me to do that, I have to be well-versed. It's sort of like a quasi-guardian over them. Making sure that they feel safe and secure in what they do. (Dr. Collins, 6/8)

> I consider my role in the Freedom School Movement, as an Ella Baker Trainer, as a resource person for interns. I see my role is to preparing interns, to the best of my ability, on how to be an effective intern in Freedom School. (Elijah, 8/26)

This role of supporter at the national training entailed holding high expectations of the interns. Dr. Collins and the EBT were consistent with the expectations held by the program in addition to emphasizing a few of their own. Among the expectations of the interns held by the program, the Ella Baker Trainers, and Dr. Collins, were those of commitment, service and leadership, and caring.

Commitment

Becoming servant-leaders and/or developing further as servant-leaders was a serious matter that required great commitment from the interns. The seriousness of this commitment was explicated through a roles, responsibilities, and commitment contract which the interns had to agree to and sign before attending the national training. The program asked the interns to make a formal commitment to their overall work in Freedom

Schools and to how they would conduct themselves at the national training. This overall formal commitment entailed:

- Doing my part to further the goal to Leave No Child Behind
- Acting as a role model for children in my care and conducting myself in ways that show self-respect, respect for others, responsibility to myself and others, honesty, a love of learning and excellence, and an ethic of service.

The formal commitment as to how they would carry themselves during the national training included:

- Being on time, alert, and present for all training and sessions
- Abiding by all rules and regulations applicable to training sites
- Completing all assignments to the best of my ability and on time

Once they were at the training, interns were reminded of their commitment and why it was important for them to live up to it. At the opening ceremony, the national director told them:

> Your presence here today and your participation with us this week is a demonstration of your consciousness of the time in which we live; and your desire to give back to the children and families in your community. And this is a good thing. (Opening Ceremony, 6/5)

Even after being explicitly asked to make a commitment to the work of the movement and to the program, at national training interns were still realizing that they had made a commitment and exactly what this commitment entailed. During a debrief meeting, Martin told the group that something "hit me today." He realized how much of a commitment has to be put into this work. He said that the sense of meaning that he got today about such a commitment was "that in a way this work is a form of ministry."

Service and Leadership

Referring back to the notion of a servant-leader, one who is servant first and then leader, the program's formal expectations of the interns were quite explicit and based on the goals of the movement to Leave No Child Behind. The movement seeks to serve children and ensure every child a healthy start, a head start, a fair start, a safe start, and a moral start in life with the successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring adults and nurturing communities. In turn, the interns are expected to serve children by carrying out this mission and "serve as teachers, role models, and mentors for their younger brothers and sisters" attending the Freedom Schools program. Building on ideologies from the Civil Rights Movement, the Freedom Schools program believes in the power and necessity of the young to make a difference. At the opening ceremony, the national director told them:

> However, even more important are the things you will do with the children, young adults and parents at your local Freedom School sites. Your actions this summer will be even more important than the fact that you showed up here today. At Freedom Schools you will be in a position to make a difference in several other individuals' lives. Your enthusiasm about books and ideas and reading will spark desire for learning in those you teach; enabling them to never again be a victim of their own ignorance or the oppression of others... At a time in the history of the country, when 14 million people live in extreme poverty in the richest country in the world, your service at Freedom Schools will ensure that thousands of children receive nutritious meals each day while in your care and are offered the opportunity to know they are loved and capable of achieving great things. (Opening Ceremony, 6/5)

Furthermore, in a letter to the interns printed in the curriculum guide, Mrs. Edelman writes:

> I am very proud of you. By choosing the path of servant-leadership, you are accepting the charge to make a difference in the lives of children and their families. You are making a great contribution toward building the Leave No Child Behind® movement, by mentoring, teaching, challenging, inspiring, and nurturing children. Remember, you set the standard of excellence. The children you will be serving will be watching you. Love them, respect them, and honor

> them as the perfect children of God that they are, and in return you will see them flourish. (Curriculum Guide, p. iii)

The greatest model of this kind of service and leadership in the Freedom schools program was demonstrated by the Ella Baker Trainers. The Ella Baker Trainers were regarded as role models for the servant-leader interns. The interns were told to watch the EBTs and learn from them:

> You will meet our Ella Baker Trainers, see in them our highest model of service and leadership and know that hard work- when shared with others- turns into sweet satisfaction. (Opening Ceremony, 6/5)

Elijah corroborated this notion when he noted on the questionnaire that:

> Trainers can help interns progress in the program by first modeling the right behavior and attitude that you should have in the Freedom Schools environment. Then they can encourage the interns to do the same. (8/26)

Caring

The idea that a characteristic of being an activist in this movement was to care was told to the interns throughout the training. When asked about her expectations for the interns in an interview at national training, Dr. Collins said:

> Well... and this may seem very simplistic. My expectation is for them to do the very best that they can do with the knowledge they have. I don't have any budding teachers. I don't have people who have been trained all along this. So, if they have the heart to do it; they care about the kids; they really want to do it; they have an enthusiasm for it; and they are giving it their all in terms of helping, I'll be satisfied. Because I'm expecting mistakes. I'm expecting confusion. I'm expecting for them to totally mess up sometimes but that's what this is all about. But if they're doing it in the spirit of love and caring, then they are fulfilling what I need right now. And you know me and God will help them get developed. [laughs] Like I said that may sound a little simplistic, but that's really how I feel. (6/8)

She reiterates this belief of caring to the interns at a debrief meeting. The interns were discussing some of the challenges they were anticipating in teaching the curriculum to the children based on their own struggles in the training sessions. Dr Collins said to them:

> And you know, this comes with time and experience and you're going to be growing with this. It takes teachers 10 and 15 years to master this kind of thing. You know... I'm still learning stuff and I've been in the field for 30 years. I'm still *learning* stuff. It never stops. So, you're going to be ok, and one of the reasons you're going to be ok is because you care. All of you all care. I don't expect the first week [for] you all to have it all together. You know like I was telling Tambra; there are going to be some screw-ups; there are going to be some mistakes; there are going to be some confusion. You forgot something, you know... It's just the way it's going to be. But I am convinced that you all care. You're so genuine. You want to do this right. And that's the main ingredient we're looking for. You've demonstrated to me that you are very serious about this. You're not playing. And that's what we're here for- to support each other. (6/9)

At the graduation ceremony, Mrs. Edelman exuded praise and pride for the work that they would be doing on behalf of children, families, and communities. One of her poems was printed on the graduation program as a stark reminder of what it takes to be servant-leaders. This poem entitled, *I Care and Am Willing to Serve* (see Appendix H), was recited several times during the training and really sums up the program's theory when developing servant-leaders which is anyone who cares and is willing to serve can make a difference.

In the first interview after national training, in response to a question asking what were his thoughts about connecting what he is learning or has learned with what is possible in schools, Martin said:

> I think one of the biggest things is establishing a relationship with the kids where they can respect your authority on one hand and a sense of genuine sort of compassion that you have for them on the other. Because I think if they know that you care, then they'll want to be there even when it's boring sometimes. And I think that that goes a long way because when people- especially younger kids- know that they're loved then... speaking from my own personal experience when

> I was a kid- I know that kept my attention. And from what I've been hearing some of the kids say, they seem to get the impression that the other interns and I care about them as well.

Now What?: Serving Beyond Freedom School

To reiterate, this was the interns' first experience with Freedom Schools. Almost all of the interns noted in the interviews or in personal conversation that they did not fully comprehend the scope of what they were going to be doing and what they had gotten themselves involved in until they arrived at the national training. They said that even though they had went through a great deal of information about their roles and responsibilities and working with children at their local training prior to going to Tennessee, they still were overwhelmed and did not comprehend the kind of the experience they were about to have. Sydney said that she sort of felt as though she went in blind from the beginning. Other interns had similar comments:

> Kyndall: ...to be honest, I really didn't have a clue at local training because I guess we were just getting adjusted and learning what Freedom Schools was about. (7/05)

> Jaichelle: Coming into this, I thought I was going to be like a camp counselor, because I was a camp counselor last year... like in no sense an educator. I just made sure we went to the pool and kids didn't get hurt. Made sure they watched the movie quietly. It was like babysitting. I didn't really realize or learn what I was going to be doing until I got to national training. And I came home feeling overwhelmed in a sense, but so empowered- so honored to have the privilege to be able to teach these children. (6/27)

Even Elijah, an EBT, noted that the experience can be overwhelming for first year interns:

> A lot of interns have never been in an environment like Freedom school. They never knew such an environment existed. (8/26)

In accordance with Elijah, from my own experiences in Freedom Schools, I have seen how interns can be completely overwhelmed by elements of the environment at the national training. Unfortunately, many of the interns have never been in spaces where they have seen so many Black youth gathered for a common purpose of social action. Despite the efforts of local training to inform and prepare them for their work for the summer, when interns arrive at national training they are amazed at how many other young people who look like them chose to spend their summer making a difference in their communities.

Yet, despite feelings of being overwhelmed and trying to make sense of a plethora of information and an intense experience in a short amount of time, several of the interns noted that they were indeed trying to figure out their next move in regards to service after Freedom School. In other words, they were beginning to think about their "lifetime of commitment." This kind of thinking began to happen soon after they returned to their local site and began teaching:

> So, I don't know... just an obligation to continue- I feel like I want to serve. Like I feel like I want to go into a whole 'nother different direction as far as my career and working with education from more of an administrative standpoint, so that this trickles down not only to our Freedom School kids but in public schools. I think this is something that can definitely be implemented and integrated into all programs nationwide. So, that's my new charge. (Jaichelle, 6/27)

> Freedom School is only six weeks and I'm thinking like well once I finish with these teaching techniques, where do I go from here? What's the next step I can take for another group of kids. What can I do from here to keep this going? And also at the same time, for the kids here I don't want them to go back to the same usual routine that they were doing before Freedom School. How could they go about keeping this instilled in them? (Kyndall, 7/05)

> ...you know what's the next step that we can take next after this. It's been such an incredible journey for it just not to stop here. I know you were telling us about some other opportunities that occur at Haley Farm with the Children's Defense Fund, and I guess just inquiring more about those opportunities. Looking into

> starting sites in other areas where it's needed. Just looking into taking that next step. (Sydney, 7/06)

Jaichelle, Kyndall, and Sydney are all trying to make sense of their new roles as servant-leaders and how that translates beyond their summer of service into their lifetime of commitment as activists. They feel as though they have had an incredible experience up to this point playing an active role in making a difference in their community and in the lives of the children and families they served. They are not even at the half way mark of their program and they are already questioning themselves as to what will be their next move serving beyond Freedom School.

In the interviews, I did not specifically ask them how they were thinking about their activism beyond the summer. The questions that prompted these responses were questions asking them how they were thinking about what they learned, how they learned, and what direction they thought their learning needed to take. There is a sense of empowerment in these statements. These young people feel as though they are making a difference. It may be the feeling of empowerment that is in fact pushing them to think about their agency beyond the summer. Jaichelle said, "It's more like an ownership of what my responsibility is. That's something that the program has taught me."

Discussion

The findings in this chapter point us to better understandings of what it means to develop young people as activists. Becoming an activist within Freedom Schools entails a certain degree of agency and commitment on the part of young people and a certain degree of commitment and support on the part of the program.

Clearly history matters. Knowing and understanding the history of the movement and its purpose is key to development as an activist. The generation of African Americans from the civil rights era has been critical of today's youth's conceptions and understanding of that era and the sacrifices made that allow doors to be open to them today (Payne, 2003). The focus on history in the Freedom Schools training demonstrates a commitment from the program of not giving up on today's youth but in fact empowering them by connecting them to their history. There is a need to enlighten the interns about the history of the CDF Freedom Schools, its connection to the Civil Rights Movement, and the role and contribution of youth and children in the movement, so they will know from whence they came and how important it is for them to move ahead in positive, helpful ways. The torch is being passed and the young servant-leaders in Freedom School are accepting it boldly.

Being an activist in this movement means that one is a part of a larger, collective community; and the community has set high expectations and standards for participation. This movement is concerned with educating and uplifting the whole child. Children don't come in pieces. Every child is a part of families and communities and entire socio-political and socio-historical contexts. Freedom Schools recognize this and attempt not to view children families and communities in deficit ways, but to include them in the problem-solving, to bring them to the table in more collaborative ways. The Freedom Schools' induction process includes providing young people with a history, embracing them into a movement and holding high expectations of them in hopes of empowering them for their summer work and to serve beyond their summer of service.

In traditional teacher preparation programs, or even programs that subscribe to notions of preparing teachers for social justice, what sorts of ways are they inducting preservice teachers into roles as activists? If teaching is a political act, then in what ways are teachers equipped with political tools? In what ways are their political histories being interrogated? What are they bringing with them and how are they making sense of it? The expectations in Freedom Schools are high, but so is the support (see chapter 7). What would it mean if teacher preparation programs held such high expectations of their pre-service teachers? The organizers of Freedom Schools are not afraid to send interns home. If you are not about the business of the movement, then this isn't the place for you. Martin noted that national training seemed to be sort of a "shake-down" process. The work is too important. The children are too important.

Scholars are exploring dispositions for teaching and more specifically teaching for social justice (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Irvine, 2003). What if you just held very high expectations and stuck to them? The students would either rise to meet the expectations or figure out that this wasn't what they signed up for. In addition, teacher education programs shouldn't be afraid to counsel people out of teaching. The work is too important, right? The children are too important.

Conclusion

This chapter explored how interns become activists while learning how to teach at Freedom Schools. I described portions of the national training institute and the process of inducting the interns into a social justice movement. In the next chapter I explore another aspect of learning to teach at Freedom Schools that focuses on how interns learn to teach

the curriculum in culturally responsive ways. It is important to continue to note that although I have separated portions of the national training for the purposes of analysis and writing, these activities were all happening simultaneously and in overlapping ways within the context.

CHAPTER SIX

I Can and Must Make a Difference:

Programmatic Efforts to Develop Intern Stance and Agency as Educators

> We must not, in trying to make a big difference, ignore the small daily differences we can make.
>
> -Marian Wright Edelman

"I can and must make a difference" is the overall theme of the Integrated Reading Curriculum (IRC) and to a great extent a mantra of the Freedom Schools movement. This theme emits a powerful message to the servant-leaders and students who engage in the curriculum; a message that exudes the fact that students and servant-leaders are capable of creating social change within theirselves, their families, communities, country, and the world. As evidenced in Chapter 5, the servant-leader interns were inducted into a movement for social justice by means of being embraced by those already in the movement through the discourse of "we." This chapter continues to describe the program's training and development of servant-leaders by illuminating elements of the national training institute that focus attention on developing the capabilities of the interns to be teachers and the role of the movement to help them maximize this potential. One salient theme that strongly emanated from the analysis in this project is the fact, similar to how the Freedom Schools program serves as a parallel institution for K-12 students and provides a curriculum of empowerment for students, the overall program and national training also serve as a parallel institution and provide a curriculum of empowerment

experiences for the servant-leader interns. So, in order for the interns to be able to teach the curriculum and build a sense of agency with the K-12 students centered on the fact that they "can and must make a difference," the program provided opportunities to build that same sense of agency for the interns.

In this chapter I describe components of the national training institute that particularly focused on the social and cultural practices of learning to teach the reading curriculum (the IRC). The description includes contexts and practices that provided learning opportunities for the servant-leader interns which focused on understanding developmental needs of children, how to prepare the classroom environment for students, and learning how to teach the reading curriculum. Juxtaposed with the descriptions of the learning opportunities are perceptions, reflections, and insights from the interns about how they made meaning of and within such contexts and practices. I particularly focus on what interns thought about the ways in which they learned to teach the curriculum. These understandings from the interns illustrate a more complete depiction of how interns constructed meaning of how they learned to teach that curriculum in addition to how they were expected to engage in that curriculum as teachers.

Who Must Teach the Children?

While service and leadership are expectations of what it means to be a servant-leader (see Chapter 5), the Freedom Schools program also recognized that interns made a choice to be servant-leaders. In welcoming the interns to the training, the national director told them "we... are pleased that you have joined us in this great movement for social justice." In so doing, many of them also chose to venture outside of their intended

career paths and make a difference in the lives of children by teaching. None of the interns from the Mount Calvary Freedom School were education majors (see Appendix A). The servant-leader interns are not required to have any background experience with children or teaching (see Chapter 3). They are not required to be education majors in college or any other teaching related field. Yet, in one week the servant-leader interns are trained to teach a powerful curriculum designed to promote social, cultural, and historical awareness. So, what does this say about the program's design for who must teach the children?

The qualifications for interns are based around what sorts of characteristics and dispositions they have towards child advocacy, leadership, and service, particularly serving children and communities as determined by the hiring staff of the local sponsor (see Chapter 3). Another specific qualification for servant-leaders is to be of college age. To stipulate a qualification based on age signifies that the Freedom Schools program believes in the capabilities and the power of college-age young people to be the teachers in this context. An objective of the training was for interns to "develop skills to empower children and youth through the *CDF Freedom Schools* movement; and examine and celebrate the contribution of youth in the Civil Rights Movement." Depicting youth as leaders in enacting social justice was evident in several ways during the training.

One evening, during a Nommo session, the interns viewed a video of a documentary on a children's march that occurred in Birmingham, Alabama in1963. The video depicted how children in Birmingham protested against segregation and went into the streets to march when the adults would not because of fear. They were attacked by dogs, sprayed with hoses, and arrested, but they kept persisting. After the video was

shown, interns then had an opportunity to listen to a panel of presenters who were young people at the time of the movement. They told stories of how they believed that their actions would make a difference, and that children and young people of all ages have the power to make a difference. Hollis Watkins, a noted civil rights activist from Mississippi, told the interns "Don't allow fear to prevent you from doing and overcoming what you know needs to be done." Another presenter asked the interns, "What kind of person do you want to become? What kind of world do you want to live in? Now what are you willing to do to become that person? And what are you willing to do to create that world?"

The importance of education in the lives of the children they were to serve and the emphasis on literacy, or more specifically, liberation through literacy, was also emphasized at the national training. As explained previously (see Chapter 5), the theme of the national training was *Nommo: Power of the Word.* The sub-theme, which was printed on the training manual, was *Exploring Liberation Through Literacy.* An example of when this sub-theme was explicitly explored occurred during two of the evening sessions. One session was entitled "Nommo: The Freedom Schools Model- A Culturally Relevant Pedagogy" and the other was "Nommo: Author's Night at Café de Freedom School- Connecting the Written and Spoken Word." In both of these sessions there were presenters who spoke of the history of literacy with Black people. One presenter talked about the importance of literacy for Black slaves who had been freed. He told the audience that "to NOT know the history of your ancestry before being enslaved is to remain enslaved... when kids say that articulating words and reading is acting white, they don't know their history. To be literate and articulate is to be African."

The importance of education and the importance of interns using their agency to make a difference in the lives of children is further underscored in the following excerpt of a letter found in the beginning of the curriculum guide written to the interns by Mrs. Edelman. She writes:

> You are going back to your communities to save the world and to save our children. Our children are starving for nourishment, for love, for guidance, for a safe place to grow and play. The Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools® program has created a new vision for what we can do for our children. We are building a new sense of community and a new expectation of possibility. Education is the pre-condition to survival in America today. Therefore, investing in children is not national luxury or a national choice. It's a national necessity. Children have been neglected for far too long. It's time to stand for children. We must demand that they be a priority and that all children are provided with a quality education and all families are given the opportunity to prosper. We can and must make a difference in the lives of children! (Curriculum Guide, p. iii)

Understanding the role of youth in the movement meant understanding their own potential to enact change. In other words, who better to teach and lead the youth than young people themselves?

Martin wrote early on in his journal about the experience at national training and explicitly mentioned that he viewed himself as a child advocate:

> I enjoyed national training thoroughly. It was a tremendous pleasure meeting different college-aged folks with similar goals and professional aspirations. The love for child advocacy and genuine compassion for little ones both in and out of the classroom. The experience left a profound impression on me to say the least. (6/16)

While I did not specifically ask the interns whether or not they embraced this identity as an advocate or how they viewed the work they were doing and learning to do, in the second round of interviews, many of the interns made statements and comments that provide glimpses of their thoughts and perceptions as to how they acknowledged that the

program impacted them and how they were making sense of the effect the program had on them and on their agency to enact social change:

> I'm making a difference... it [Freedom Schools] makes me feel like I'm important and like I'm worth something. (Kyndall, 7/26)

> I had a wonderful six weeks... I just feel so blessed and fortunate for this experience. I feel like my summer was truly, truly time well spent because of the learning and the growth that I was able to make personally and also the lives I've touched, not only in the classroom but with the other interns and junior interns as well. It's just something I wish everyone could experience. (Jaichelle, 7/25)

> It's definitely kind of made me kind of reconsider my future goals as a whole in terms of what direction I'm trying to go in and in which ways I feel like I can be more effective in this world as a whole. It's been an incredible experience from day one and like everyday it's a new journey- not just as a job but as a personal growth process as well... It's just been amazing, absolutely amazing. I can honestly say it's been one of the best opportunities and experiences in my entire life. I've been working since I was fourteen and I can't even say that I've had a job that I've enjoyed this much. And I've worked with kids before but I don't think it really allowed me to be as effective as this program has... This opportunity has offered you to be in a classroom teaching- not just about some school stuff- but just life lessons and that in itself has been just incredible. (Sydney, 7/25)

> This is something that I want to do- not only here, but throughout the world. Getting these so-called urban kids to think outside the box- to think they can travel further than their bus line... It has helped a lot with my future goals. It actually gave me like a little tester... Because the experience is definitely not for the money. [laughs] It's for the experience. To see these kids and what they've gained from it and what we've taken from it and what the community has gained from it in general is worth more than an old paycheck. (Cornell, 7/28)

> It [Freedom Schools] instilled in me a pride that I've never felt before. It has given me the strength to determine my own destiny, to become a dreamer. And to really take my life into my own hands. I feel as if this experience has been one of the best in my life... We're doing a great thing in Atlanta. We're blazing trails... we're paving the way for other schools to come... All schools should be like Freedom Schools. They should take something from Freedom Schools. (Tim, 7/27)

These excerpts show that the interns are clearly acknowledging some agency and feeling of empowerment and drawing connections between those feelings and their experiences in Freedom School.

Preparing Servant-Leaders to Teach at Freedom School

The portion of the training that specifically trains the interns on how to teach the reading curriculum illuminates what the Freedom Schools program views as essential or rudimentary to notions of teaching and schooling. In the following section, I take a closer look at the curriculum (the content) and the pedagogy (how) of preparing the interns to teach at Freedom School. Providing interns with an understanding of the Freedom Schools model and how to teach the IRC were explicitly stated goals of the training:

> Participants will understand the essential elements of the Freedom schools model, especially the Integrated Reading Curriculum and its successful implementation.

As previously described (see Chapter 4 and Appendix F), the national training occurred across the course of a week. The schedule of activities across the week was heavily concentrated. There were four days (at least 6 hours per day) devoted to preparing the interns to understand developmental needs of children, to prepare the classroom environment for students, and to teach the reading curriculum. The workshops that occurred on these days were referred to as Foundation Workshops and IRC Labs. The content (curriculum) of these workshops can offer ideas of what the Freedom School program considers as notions of essential knowledge for teaching and learning how to teach.

Foundation Workshops

One full day at the national training, the interns attended three two-hour workshops- Classroom Management, The Model Freedom Schools Classroom, and The Developmental Needs of Children. Given the umbrella title of these workshops and the timeframe, they held an important position in establishing notions of essential knowledge for teaching. These workshops occurred before the interns began learning how to teach the IRC. Consultants outside of the national CDF staff and the Ella Baker Trainers facilitated most of the foundation workshops. They held such credentials as being former or current principals, teachers, educational consultants, education program developers and curriculum writers. The interns from the Mount Calvary site (as well as interns from other sites) were split up for these sessions. In other words, they did not attend each session as a group. So, for example, Martin and Kyndall may have attended the Model Classroom workshops at the same time that Sydney and Cornel attended the Classroom Management workshop. Interns knew what workshops to attend and when based on a schedule posted on the backs of their nametags.

Based on my observations, the workshops were interactive in design and presented the interns with a great deal of information while at the same time allowing for discussion used for clarification and the sharing of ideas. The following is a shortened description from the Developmental Needs workshop that I observed:

The presenter had an agenda posted near the front of the room. It read:

<u>Agenda</u>
Introduction
Setting the stage
Child Development Part 1
Break
Child Development Part II

Goal Setting/Vision
Where are we now, self-reflection

As people came into the room, he smiled and greeted them even shaking some of their hands. After everyone got settled, he introduced himself. He told the group that he was a former teacher and principal, and that he had been in education for over 30 years. He passed out index cards and asked for participants to respond to the following "personal inventory:" What are your skills, talents, interests, and needs? He asked that they write "one thing that you are committed to ensuring that children get as a result of being under your care." He gave participants about 5 minutes to write. He then told them to put the cards aside, and they would come back to them at the end of the session.

The facilitator then told the group that they were going to do an activity called "Describe Me." He split participants into groups according to an age level of the children they would be teaching (i.e. 5-7 years olds). He said that he preferred they go to the group working with the age level that they would be teaching that summer. They were told that their task was to describe children at the age level they were assigned. He gave each group a set of guiding questions to facilitate their description and discussion for the task. The questions for group included:

- What are our morals?
- What do we feel? How do we express our emotions?
- How do we think? What are we studying in school? How do we make sense of the world?

After working in groups for about 20 minutes, the presenter passed around a "cheat sheet" for each group and age level. The groups had about 15 minutes to finish up after which they took a short break. The last hour of the workshop was spent with each age level group reporting out to the larger group on their discussion and the answers to the questions. After each group reported out to the whole group, participants were given an opportunity to ask questions or add to what was said based on their own experiences with children.

This description of the Developmental Needs workshop is representative of the design of the other foundation workshops. Interns were asked their opinions and ideas related to topics of discussion and their knowledge was validated as being worthy. Interns were given the opportunity to learn new material while being *actively* engaged in the knowledge construction process. None of the consultants or trainers simply lectured the interns or adhered to teaching notions of "banking" (Freire, 1970/2000).

The content of these workshops, were perceived to be relevant and needed by the interns. Later that evening at the debrief meeting, interns were responding to what they thought of the foundation workshops. The following is an episode of the discussion:

> Kyndall: I just want to say that I really enjoyed the classes earlier today. Because I was kind of feeling like- well I understand a little bit but I needed more. You know more information. And it really helped to meet people- the interns who have been here for a while. They really were helpful and very supportive. So you know now when Freedom School begins, I'll be more prepared...and it'll make the kids feel confident to know that they are in good hands...
>
> Dr. Collins: So, what I hear you saying is that you were a little disjointed in your thinking at first, and now after the classes that you have had-
>
> Kyndall: It really helped to have better understanding about the things you should do in the classroom- the things you can do.
>
> Dr. Collins: So now you have a sense of how to set the classroom up, some tips on classroom management?
>
> All the interns are nodding and saying mmm-uh
>
> Dr. Collins: Did you all do you all do the child development class as well?
>
> All interns: Yeah.
>
> Dr. Collins: Was that helpful to you?
>
> Kyndall: Very helpful.
>
> The other are interns nodding.
>
> Dr. Collins: And believe me, they only gave you a smidget because there are whole semesters of classroom management and child development and that type of thing. And I'll be providing you all with information all along that you can use and things you can consider using in your classroom... anybody else?
>
> Jaichelle: ... the thing that was more beneficial for me wasn't so much from what I learned from the facilitators, but from the other students in the class- like the ones who are like veterans at this. We came up with themes ideas, different ways you can decorate your classroom... and these are things that like honestly I hadn't really thought about...They were all telling stories and reliving moments and I really feel like I really got excited about what I was going to be doing. So, for me that was a breakthrough because I was like, wait a minute, I'm really going to

> have my own classroom. I'm really going to have these responsibilities... so we were all exchanging and growing from it and that was good because I felt like I came away with a lot of stuff...

From this portion of the conversation, we see that two interns, Kyndall and Jaichelle, valued the knowledge content of these workshops as well as the peer support within in them. Their responses were representative of those in the data set. At this debrief meeting which took place after the day of Foundation Workshops, all of the interns either commented on how helpful the workshops were and gave specific examples or indicated (through head nods and mmm-uhs) that they were in agreement with what was being said.

IRC Labs

As previously described, the Integrated Reading Curriculum (IRC) is the heart of the program. The IRC is taught and learned in Freedom School classrooms and designed to promote learning. Every Freedom School classroom has to have particular components (see chapter 4). The interns write lesson plans and turn them into the site coordinator for review before they teach the lessons. While there is room for flexibility in regards to creativity, lesson plans are generally comprised of the following components: an opening activity, main activity, cooperative group activity, conflict resolution/social action activity, and a closing activity (Appendix I).

The IRC Labs were facilitated by the Ella Baker Trainers and consultants who were former servant-leader interns, Ella Baker Trainers, or site coordinators. There were a total of six IRC Labs over the course of three days (lasting at least 6 hours per day, see Ch. 4, Appendix F). Similar to the foundation workshops, the IRC Labs were informative and interactive in design. The lab sessions that the Mount Calvary interns were involved

in also included interns from another Freedom School site. So, there were approximately 18 interns in the session including their site coordinators. The following is an extremely condensed description of the first IRC Lab which focused on providing the interns with an introduction and overview of the curriculum and how it would be taught to them through the technique of modeling:

> Holly began by welcoming everyone to the session. She passed around colored construction paper and markers. She asked that we take a piece of paper to make a name plate for ourselves. She told us to fold the paper in half and write our name on one side and one word describing what we are bringing to Freedom School on the other side. She gave us some time to complete the task and then we went around the room and reported out. Holly then introduced herself and told us that she has been involved with Freedom Schools for 11 years.
>
> Holly directed the group to turn to page 31 in the training manual. She referred to and then explained the overall theme of the IRC and the weekly sub-themes. During this time, interns asked questions- mostly those of clarification. For example, Martin asked, "If we're on a particular week and a child gets off topic or takes the conversation in another direction, should we bring it back to the theme?" Holly responded by saying that she wanted to put that question in the "parking lot." She explained that the parking lot is an idea/concept of acknowledging a student or person's question/thought but deferring it until another time.
>
> Holly asked the group to take out their curriculum guides. She directed them to look at the table of contents on page i. She then directed them to look at the book list on page vii. During this time, Tim asked, "Can people add to the book list?" Holly responded, "Absolutely." She encouraged them to be as creative as possible. She emphasized that the curriculum is not designed to teach children how to read, but "we can foster and develop a love for reading."
>
> Holly told them that she is going to begin modeling the various components of the IRC lessons in order beginning with the Opening Activity and the Main Activity. She began by explaining the "one mic rule." The one mic rule means that only the person with the mic (microphone) is allowed to speak. She pulled out a toy microphone and the interns laugh and giggle. She then walked over to the Daily Agenda that she has displayed on chart paper. She told the interns that they are going to read a book called *The Talking Cloth*.
>
> She began asking the group questions about key concepts or themes in the book (e.g. What is cloth? Where does cloth come from?). She took out a large piece of fabric and spread it out in the center of the circle. She invited the group to come and touch it and examine it. She then asks them questions about the cloth (e.g. How does it feel? What does it look like? Does the pattern mean anything?). She sent them back to their seats and read the story. Periodically she would stop

> and ask questions about the story or illustrations. After she finished reading, she divided the whole group into smaller groups for the cooperative group activity.

The above account describes how interns are first introduced to the IRC. The trainer began by showing the interns how to use their training manual and curriculum guides as resources. During this time interns asked questions and she answered some immediately while others she asked to be put on hold for another time. She then began modeling the components of the lessons putting the interns in the position of learners. What is important to note is the fact that this was the beginning of the pattern for the remaining IRC Lab sessions. Holly would model a component for the interns, putting them in the position of learner, and then they would divide up into groups and model that same component to everyone. So the interns saw each component modeled at least five times (once by Holly and again from each small group). As the interns modeled the components of the lesson, Holly and the site coordinators were observing and taking notes on their teaching. After a group had finished modeling, Holly, the site coordinators, and other interns would provide instant feedback to the group members.

In addition to Holly giving the interns opportunities to raise questions during the IRC Labs, Dr. Collins also encouraged the interns to pay close attention to what Holly was doing as she modeled the IRC for them. At the debrief meeting following a day of IRC Labs, Jaichelle made a comment about the need to keep kids engaged and how she thought that Holly did a good job of that. Martin responded by asking how that is done. Dr. Collins responded to Martin by telling him to watch Holly:

> ...part of that is you have to watch everything that woman [Holly] does and everything she says... she is modeling those approaches for you... I'm going to be helping you with these things... you've got to pay attention... be able to pick up on it by watching... taking notes... (6/9)

Coinciding with drawing interns' attention to the modeling, Dr. Collins also asked them questions to help them reflect on what they had seen and experienced. In one episode from debrief meeting after a day of IRC Labs, Dr. Collins asked the interns, "What about her [Holly] affirmations? Did she make you feel important?" All of the interns responded with "yes" and then some of them gave examples. Sydney said "She [Holly] walked around and listened to the conversations the groups were having... she put stickers on their posters." Cornel noted that "She went with the comments and allowed the conversation to go there." Kyndall added that she thought they were given a reasonable amount of time to work together in their groups. Dr. Collins was posing questions to engage the interns in some level of reflection about what they had seen (via modeling) and what they had experienced during the IRC Labs. Other aspects of reflection will be explored in the forthcoming section.

Sankofa: Looking Back to Move Forward

Sankofa is an Akan[7] word that means, "We must go back and reclaim our past so we can move forward; so we understand why and how we came to be who we are today." This metaphor seems appropriate in describing a major pedagogical technique used in teaching the interns how to teach the curriculum in the IRC Labs. Through the learning opportunities of the national training interns engaged in learning experiences that prompted series of reflections. This reflection- or looking back- occurred in two different ways. First, interns compared their own childhood experiences with schooling to what they were learning as teachers of this "new" kind of curriculum. Second, interns reflected

[7] Name of a major language spoken in Ghana

upon what it was like being in the position of the learner (or the child) in order to learn how to teach the curriculum.

Reflections of Childhood Schooling Experiences

As the interns continued to experience the curriculum of the national training institute, they also shared their thoughts and with each other during the debrief meetings as to how they felt about their experiences and how they were making meaning of such experiences. Often, the interns would talk about their own schooling experiences and use those experiences as a lens to filter the new knowledge they were learning about teaching the IRC. In an episode of conversation at one of the debrief meetings, Cornel and Martin made the following remarks:

> I think we can see how this curriculum is coming alive and how we have so much of a free will or so many options to actually do that. And it always makes me wonder where was this type of instruction when I was in school because the boring books and teachers that are just dry... um there's an electricity in the sessions where we're actually able to go out and come up with these ideas to expound and make this curriculum come alive. (Cornel, 6/9)

> Every time I go to another one of these sessions it makes me appreciate the commitment that my elementary school teachers, in particular, had on me because of the commitment level required and the relational investment. Because a lot of times you don't- not a lot of times but more often than not, you don't see the return of what you're doing. And a lot of times it seems like your work may be in vain. And just the fact that- I was just listening to what Cornel said... I can't say that I didn't have [that] experience. I very much had [that] experience. I was very blessed. I went to a Black private school and the teachers were very innovative in their teaching style. And I received a lot from that. And so this has given me a greater sense of a charge to be accountable and respectful and to give something back out of what I have received. (Martin, 6/9)

Cornel and Martin were coming from two different perspectives in their responses. In his excitement of the possibilities that the IRC has to offer, Cornel was also

expressing a bit of frustration about his own schooling experiences. He was wondering why he didn't have this kind of experience a learner in school. Instead he tells us that he had boring books and dry teachers. His reflection of these unfavorable kinds of experiences in his previous schooling experiences doesn't sour him, but rather further motivates him to make the curriculum come alive. Martin, on the other hand, says that he cannot relate to Cornel's experience because his schooling experience was more aligned with the principles of Freedom school. He said that as he attends the sessions he is more appreciative of what his teachers did for him. Martin's reflection on his sense of being blessed and being appreciative motivates him to provide similar experiences for the children he will work with in the summer.

Some of the interns reflected on their childhood schooling experiences in different ways. Rather than using their reflection as a means of motivation, some interns used their reflection as a way to analyze their own learning needs and anticipate the needs of children. Later in that same debrief meeting, Jaichelle said that she wished she had this in elementary school. She said that she used to do her work quickly and then let her mind go off in wonder; however, during that day's IRC Lab, she couldn't even fall asleep (something that she had been used to doing in the past) because she was so engaged. She told her colleagues to pay attention to those students who are off in another world because doing something as simple as standing up and stretching can keep them engaged.

Through this reflection, we see the interns making connections between their experiences from the IRC Labs and their own schooling experiences. Some of them were seeing themselves as learners and maybe even more specifically seeing the learners they were when they were children. Some were comparing their educational experiences as

young learners with what they were doing and learning in the curriculum training session. In both of these kinds of reflection the interns were drawing upon their own experiences in order to position themselves as educators.

Reflecting on Child-Like Behavior and Interests

Another kind of reflection that occurred amongst the interns was that of *how* they learned to teach the IRC. This sort of reflection did not emanate from discussions at the daily debrief meetings as previously described, but rather it was prompted by my interview questions. I asked the interns to think about their overall learning in the program and tell me some of their thoughts on what they had learned and how they had learned. The responses were consistent in naming *how* they had learned. They all noted that they learned to teach the IRC because they were put into the position of being a child-like learner:

> I appreciated the way we learned at training where we actually were in a situation where we were students. And the instructor treated us as if we were students. (Jaichelle, 6/27)

> Well, actually the three day part when were doing the actual modeling in the classroom and taking a part in the classroom in general. I guess we were kind of role playing each one and going through each one. It really kind of put you in the mentality of a child. The instructor was great because she really- you had to check yourself, like ok, I'm still really an adult at the end of the day. But she just put you in that mind set so you kind of get the perspective of a child and how a child learns. So when you get in the classroom- it was pretty much an easy transition- cause you're already kind of prepared for that mindset... which I think is so necessary (Sydney, 6/30)

> And the way I learned was actually being a child and hands-on workshops and training that threw me back into a child's mind. So, that was something that was very important. (Cornel, 7/28)

In a similar manner, Kyndall said in her second interview that she felt as though she were reliving her childhood in ways she hadn't done before:

> Also as a child I was used to reading like a book in front of me...this is kind of like a relearning, reliving experience, and I guess just a whole 'nother way of reliving my childhood. Things that I didn't know, I can now look at as a missing piece of the puzzle that I've completed. (7/26)

The interns learned the curriculum by engaging it as if they were Freedom School students. It put them in a position to think about the lessons as they experienced them. They also had the opportunity to think about why they were or were not enjoying an activity and whether or not the activities and discussion were interesting and truly engaging. The idea of using reflection as a pedagogical tool was also noted by Elijah, an Ella Baker Trainer, on his questionnaire:

> I have challenged the interns' thinking by allowing them to reflect back to the time period when they were the age of the scholars they will serve. This makes them aware of the type of language, learning styles, and the overall mindset of the average child that particular age. (8/26)

This kind of reflection can contribute to how they think about the lessons that they themselves would plan and deliver. Or as Tim pointed out, it can help you think about what kind of teacher you are or what kind of teaching style you have:

> I learned that everybody teaches different because they learn different. And also like I said people use their words and language differently. Some people talk a lot and say a lot of stuff when they could just say a few words and move on to the next thing. People teach differently. Some people are really laid back. Some people are really in your face. (7/27)

Conclusion

Learning to teach in Freedom Schools is complex. The notions of teaching and schooling by the program center on empowerment and agency. The interns chose to spend their summers serving children in their communities and the program works to ensure that they believe that they truly can make a difference. In Chapter 5 we see this

happening through inducting the interns into a movement. In this chapter we see this happening by assuring them first, that they are the ones who must teach the children.

The ways in which, the Foundation Workshops and the IRC Labs were conducted, illuminated some things about the Freedom Schools program's philosophy on teaching and learning. The program describes itself as being culturally relevant and subscribing to a culturally relevant pedagogy. I am assuming that this is true because my intent in this project was not to evaluate this claim, but rather to understand how interns then learn to become culturally relevant pedagogues. Considering the findings presented in this chapter, the ways in which the Freedom Schools trained the interns can lead us to think about how we prepare teachers to be culturally relevant pedagogues. I will talk more about this in Chapter 8, but for now I'd like to briefly think about some of techniques used by the trainers and site coordinators- question-posing, discussion, modeling, and reflection.

These techniques are clearly evidenced throughout this chapter in the fieldnotes and transcript excerpts. The Freedom Schools program uses these sorts of techniques as a means of accessing empowerment and agency. With these techniques the trainers and site coordinator offer the interns an opportunity to experience the kind of learning (and schooling) that they want them to provide for the students who will attend the Freedom Schools during the summer.

In order to learn how to teach well, one must see it and experience it. Considering the fact that most of the servant-leader interns are African American, if they attended public schools, then chances are that they had experiences like Cornel and Jaichelle; experiences that were contradictory of the ways that are promoted by the Freedom

Schools vision. So, instead of giving them more of the same, Freedom Schools has to put them in a position to experience the learning so that they will be in a position to provide that experience for the children they will serve at their local sites.

Now that we have learned about the ways in which the interns are trained to be activists and educators, we will now look at the ways in which they are supported in these roles. In the next chapter, we will look at the kinds of support structures and opportunities provided to interns by the program and those kinds of supports the interns created on their own.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Ujima: Sources of Support for Teacher Development at Freedom School

Support: the act of bearing the weight of or strengthening

-wordreference.com

Ujima is one of the seven principles of Kwanzaa meaning collective work and responsibility. It is a way to build and maintain our community together and make our brothers' and sisters' problems our problems and to solve them together. This concept seems appropriate in thinking about the kinds of emergent and intentional support for the servant-leader interns and the ways in which they find and make meaning of support for their practice. The first two findings chapters of this dissertation described the ways in which interns were trained to be teachers and activists at the national training institute. This chapter specifically focuses on the ways in which interns were supported in their development as teachers both at the national training and back at their local site. It is important to note that although I have separated the findings for analysis and writing purposes, all of these social and cultural practices are intertwined and working together across the contexts of this project. Hence, some of the data presented in earlier chapters also support the assertions of this chapter.

We have already seen glimpses of the kinds of support provided to interns. In Chapter Five, we saw how Elijah, an Ella Baker Trainer, and Dr. Collins viewed themselves in the role of "supporter" for the interns. In Chapter Six, we saw glimpses of how the interns considered the interaction and feedback of their peers to be supportive

and a valuable resource for them. In this chapter, the various kinds of support for interns will be described and further elaborated upon in order to clearly depict the ways in which servant-leader interns are supported in their development as teachers in Freedom School.

In this chapter, I describe each type of support and provide evidence of how interns were making sense of how they experienced the support. The Freedom Schools model requires two types of formal support practices for the interns- site coordinator observations and daily debrief meetings. Based on document analysis and personal knowledge, I have constructed brief descriptions of the purposes for each of these kinds of support. These descriptions will appear in the following sections of this chapter. Considering the fact that interns come to Freedom Schools from various backgrounds and experiences, and are not required to be teaching majors or in an education-related field, the ways in which they are supported in their development as teachers, caregivers, role models, leaders, and social justice activists in the classroom are important. Moreover, the findings in this chapter can lead us to better understandings of the kinds of support needed to prepare and sustain teaching for social justice and teaching in culturally relevant ways.

Sources of Support

Again, for the purposes of analysis and write-up, the sources of support are separated in categories, but they too are complex structures and spaces, intertwining and overlapping, and full of social and cultural practice often occurring simultaneously. Therefore, as I insert excerpts from the data, the reader will see that the interns experienced these kinds of support in multiple ways often occurring simultaneously.

Site Coordinator

Building and maintaining community through ongoing communication. From the very beginning, Dr. Collins saw her role of site coordinator as being imperative to the growth and development of the interns. During the first interview at Haley Farm she described her plans for providing the interns with support once they were back at the local site:

> I plan to constantly be in communication with them. Talking with them between classes- during breaks; before things actually start in the morning; during lunch after; even outside of debrief. I'm even the type of person that will give them a phone call... "you know I didn't really get a chance to talk to you about xyz the way I wanted to, but I thought that maybe we could have a 5 minute conversation about whatever." You know I'll email them. I'll talk to them informally. Then of course we will have our debriefing. I plan to have different handouts for them everyday. Something that's not too long but something that- it may just be a phrase that says "a good teacher does dah dah dah" or "I like the way you did dah dah dah. Do more of it because that's making you the best teacher ever." I don't want to overwhelm them but I would like to be consistent with feedback, so that they're always finding out more. You know I'll give them different ah-hah moments when they come in the morning. It may just be something in their little boxes that may be a word of wisdom kind of thing- something that they can reflect on for the rest of the day. I may give them a piece of candy, and the candy might represent something that a teacher is. You know something like that. Just constantly be in communication with them and just be available. I'll be visiting their classrooms sporadically- not just at a time when I'm supposed to be evaluating- but just sitting in and sometimes participating. You know I might even say something when I'm in there like "Wow, you know kids you all have a great teacher. Didn't she just do a good job with dah dah? Let's do a good job chant for her." To keep them reinforced so that they will know that a particular tactic that they used was a good tactic. They might not even realize it. Then I may draw their attention to it at the daily debriefing meeting. "Did you realize what you did?" (6/8)

True to her word, Dr. Collins did many of those things and communicated with the interns in several ways. She set up mailboxes in her office space for the interns, herself and me. At least three times a week, she delivered information regarding some topic or

concern that emerged during the daily debrief meetings. For example, during one meeting the interns were talking about children in their classes diagnosed with ADD or ADHD. Many of the interns noted that they did not know the difference between these two labels or the associated behaviors of children who are diagnosed. Dr. Collins talked to them about these labels and then throughout that week, she put information (handouts, pamphlets) in our mailboxes. This was typical of how she followed up the conversations at the debrief meetings with further information for the interns.

Dr. Collins also communicated with the interns via email and the telephone. She required the interns to email their lesson plans to her a week prior to when they were to teach the lessons. She gave them feedback electronically and sometimes followed up with conversations. The interns appreciated her open communication with them. They felt as though they could go to her and be honest about their problems, concerns or struggles. Hence, the kind of communication that the interns and Dr. Collins engaged in embodied the principle of ujima. This is evidenced in the ways in which Dr. Collins established a nurturing rapport with them and explicitly invited them to come to her as a means of collective problem solving. As noted by Jaichelle, this kind of communication made her feel welcomed and comfortable talking with Dr. Collins:

> Dr. Collins is like "oh I'm going to help you. I'm going to give you some extra stuff. I'm going to pull you over to the side"... She's just so welcoming. And I remember before we started our first week, she gave me a call over the weekend. And I was like who is this. And she said "It's Dr. Collins. I just want to know how you're feeling and what things are you thinking about. Do you have any type of fears? What are you looking forward to?" And I go into my whole little thing. And it was just really good to be able to just talk to her before. So just really welcoming more than anything else in the world. She's supportive. She very, very informed. She knows everything. You know there's no situation that you present where she seems like she falters. She can just tackle everything. Just the sense that

> you can just come and talk to her and never feel like there's a wall or there's like a sense of formality. (6/30)

Passing on knowledge. Dr. Collins was well respected by the interns. The interns also acknowledged her academic credentials and viewed her as being very knowledgeable about teaching, schooling, and children:

> I keep referring to her [Dr. Collins'] academic credentials because I just think it really helps that she understands the science and the practical application of what it means to be a teacher. And she's seen a lot of these different situations in various forms. So she understands how what she has learned in the academic realm transcends and goes beyond cookie cutter applications. (Martin, 6/30)

> As far as other techniques in each of the activities that are broken up in the reading curriculum, she pretty much provided her assistance on that. And with each of the scholars in the classroom, she knows their history. Like the young lady I mentioned in debriefing, she provided information about ADD and ADHD. And she's always in her office for any other concerns, questions, or comments. So yeah, she's really provided a lot of help. She's always giving us pamphlets and other things. And like I said asking us if we have any questions. (Kyndall, 7/05)

> Dr. Collins has always been there to support us. And everything she has given us in terms of feedback has been effective. And you just kind of have to open your mind to the fact that she's done this before and she has experience so she knows what she's talking about. Because we know that she cares about us so much and we know that everything she has to say to us is just to better ourselves and making sure we're making the proper steps in this program and to make sure that we are being effective in each child's life. (Sydney, 7/25)

The interns viewed Dr. Collins' knowledge as a resource, a kind of support. Even though this was the entire staff's first time working for the Freedom School's program, the interns valued the previous experiences and knowledge with children and schooling that Dr. Collins brought with her to their community. As Martin noted, Dr. Collins was able to transfer and apply her knowledge for this particular setting and stay consistent with supporting the interns in the Freedom Schools way (that is, in ways that serve as a

counter-narrative to traditional K-12 schooling and thus how novice teachers are supported in such spaces).

Observing, guiding and participating. Site coordinators are expected to observe each intern "regularly" during the Integrated Reading Curriculum time block using the national evaluation instrument. There are no specific time lengths for these observations. Based on my personal knowledge of the program, content analysis of national documents and personal communication with the national Freedom School staff, the intent of these observations was:

- To allow the site coordinator to see and critically think about the interns' practice so that s/he can understand how to better support all interns in their work
- To give the interns feedback about their practice so that they can be reflective about that practice and think about the ways in which they want to develop and are developing in addition to informing the site coordinator of the kinds of support they need

At the beginning of the project, my intent was to observe Dr. Collins conducting these observations. However, "real life" didn't allow for this. Dr. Collins did not make a schedule for the observations, and she was always in and out of classrooms, therefore, it was hard for me to know or anticipate when she was going to conduct an observation. At the end of the program she did give me some examples of the written observations. In the second interview, I asked interns what their thoughts were regarding these observations:

> I think with the observations and debriefing meeting you get the chance for the site coordinator to come and look at your teaching styles and how you approach the IRC and definitely give that feedback to you which just helps you grow even more in terms of how you're teaching the IRC to the scholars. And the debriefing you get to get ideas from other people and you know branch off of what they did

> and get more ideas for something new with your scholars as well. You also find out things that did work or things that didn't work and you can make certain adjustments later on as well. (Sydney, 7/25)
>
> With the site coordinator observations, it's always strange because you're doing your own thing and she comes in and you're like "ooh, she's here." So, you kind of want to make you're on your Ps and Qs and everything's structured, but at the same time the kids really don't care that she's there. So, you can't all of a sudden shape up. So, it's just kind of getting to see yourself for who you really are. Because even if you're just in your own world teaching and working with the kids, you're not as conscious of your behavior or even your stance and your personality and the things that you're saying and the way that you look at people. When she comes in the room, you automatically start- it's like holding a mirror up to yourself. And you're like oh did I just say that... So, it kind of was like well if I had to make that change right in the middle when she came in what was I like before. Is this a behavior that I'm slipping into on a regular basis? I don't think it's so much her saying "well you need to do this or you need to that. And I saw you doing this or I saw you do that." It's more like her coming in and saying "hey..." And a lot of times she doesn't say anything to you. You just kind of know. I think that's something that very important, but at the same time if she did say something- and she has said things to me as far as observations- the way that it's interpreted is very positive and you can receive it well. You don't feel like everything that you're doing is negative or all you're hard work is not considered. It's just something that's a suggestion that you can take it and say "oh ok I can handle this. I can do this." (Jaichelle, 7/25)

Just as children and students need (and many times request) affirmation and gentle, constructive criticism in their learning process, so do servant-leader interns. Interns in the study noted how helpful their site coordinator was in their overall development as servant-leaders, but they especially appreciated the ways in which she supported their development as teachers. Interns noted that she was in and out of their classrooms on a regular basis. While in their classrooms, she would conduct formal observations in addition to sitting with the students and asking them questions about what they were doing, assisting during the lesson by helping interns explain concepts in their lessons, and co-teach portions of the lesson.

By observing, guiding and participating alongside the interns, Dr. Collins once again embodied the principle of ujima. She established a rapport with the interns that let them know that they were not alone in this process. The community was not designed for them to "sink or swim." When she came into their classrooms, she was there to assist, help and support them. As Jaichelle noted, her classroom visits were not intended to intimidate the interns but rather give them important feedback and suggestions so that they could think and reflect on their teaching practice.

Daily Debrief Meetings

As noted in previous chapters, the daily debrief meetings began at the national training institute and they are a required component of the Freedom Schools model. The expectation is for them to occur daily at the conclusion of each day that the site is in operation. Again, based on my personal knowledge of the program, content analysis of national documents and personal communication with the national Freedom School staff, the intent of these meetings was:

- To build community amongst the staff
- To work together as a team and to share in the decision making process
- To create a space where interns and the site coordinator can discuss the day's successes and challenges as a community in a supportive environment
- To use the staff community -collectively- as a resource to assist interns in the growth of their classroom practices and their growth as servant-leaders.

Constructing community norms. At the national training institute the meetings were held in Dr. Collins' room, in the cafeteria, or outdoors. Once back at the local site, meetings were routinely held in an interns' classroom. The participants in this study (the site coordinator and interns) began constructing the norms of this activity at the debriefing meetings held during national training. Such norms included: discussion (on just about anything such as students, parents, the community surrounding the site, teaching strategies, lesson planning), question-posing by both the interns and Dr. Collins, community building (which was inclusive of praise and recognitions from both the interns and Dr. Collins), planning for site activities, problem solving, and eating.

Dr. Collins usually opened the meetings by asking everyone how their day went. Sometimes she would ask specific questions such as "Tell me about some creative things you are doing in your lesson planning?" In many instances, Dr. Collins began the dialogue, but the interns would "own" the topic and direct the conversation. The interns felt quite comfortable responding to her questions and sharing their thoughts during these meetings:

> I don't feel uncomfortable sitting in the debriefing saying "I have a problem. These students are causing problems. This is something that I need help with." Because I feel like everyone is so embracing. No one is going to be like shhh... that's petty. (Jaichelle, 6/30)

> Because in this setting [the daily debrief meetings] the interns- the 6 interns of which I am one- get the chance to say what's going on. And I've been using that as a platform to talk about my behavior management issues... And so being able to bounce between interns and what we're doing in the trenches so to speak day to day and Dr. Collins, if we can continue the warfare analogy, being a wise, old veteran decorated with medals and such, it helps to be able to draw from the wealth of both of those. (Martin, 6/30)

> Here in debriefing we definitely have the chance to put everything out on the table and really just get to learn from a whole 'nother spectrum. Like hearing

> everybody else's questions and dealing with their children, you have a chance to ask questions yourself...you and Dr. Collins as resources... (Sydney, 6/30)
>
> I look forward to debriefing. It's a lot of fun. I think we like to have fun. Even though it's about business and we can definitely go in there and handle business but to have a good time and enjoy ourselves. I've never been to like such a meeting where we're talking about things that happened during the day and trying to get feedback and take care of what we need to do and still have fun. Yeah, I look forward to them. They're great. They're very supportive for everything that we do... It's almost like a bonding experience. Every since national training when we first starting debriefing, I think it was that intimate setting in dorm rooms debriefing and having meetings or sitting down at maybe lunch or dinner to debrief. It's definitely kind of putting you back into that nurturing environment, just kind of pulling us more together as a family. I think the relationships extend beyond just being professional colleagues. Like it's so much deeper than that. (Sydney, 7/26)

The norms of participation for the daily debrief meetings created an environment- a community- of ujima. The sense of collective work and responsibility filtering through the norms of participation allowed the debrief meetings to be all that they were to the participants. The comments from the interns are a reflection of this. Jaichelle's comment shows us that everyone was valued in the group and therefore, their problems and concerns were of importance to the community. She noted that no issue brought forth was considered petty. Martin certainly felt as though the debrief meeting provided a certain kind of space or "platform" for him to talk with his colleagues and draw upon them as resources of support. Sydney noted that the debriefing gave her a space to learn from other people's questions. She also felt as though the debriefings provided a kind of "bonding experience" for the staff. Again, there was an energy of collective work and responsibility that allowed for all of the participants to feel as though they were valued and compelled them to value others.

As several of the interns have noted, the debriefings also served as kind of space where they could bring issues and concerns from their classrooms and teaching. In

addition, there were times when Dr. Collins brought issues and concerns to the debriefings about the interns or the group as a whole. She also did this on an individual basis. Whether addressed during debrief or individually, interns generally felt as though they received feedback well:

> And as far as the debrief meetings, I think it's always heard to take in criticism when someone is saying you didn't do this right, you didn't do that right. But for the most part we've been very open to suggestions, open to criticism. And we've also been very open to bringing our problems to the table- to the forefront. Because a lot of times people sit back and wait for someone to call them on something, whereas we're kind of saying "although no one else knows, this is the problem that I'm having." And you're not afraid to say that. It's been helpful. I really have learned a lot, and I have an appreciation for the other people that I work with. (Jaichelle, 7/25)

In an interview, Cornel confirmed the value of the debrief meetings as a way to mediate a personal issue that he had with another staff member:

> To be honest, had there not been a debriefing, there probably would be one person I wouldn't even speak to. 'Cause I could have easily avoided that person had I not had to constantly be around them. Which is fine because, because that kept me on focus with dealing with people on a professional level anyway. It had nothing to do with my personal feelings. So, I'm old enough to understand that part. But you know sometime when you work with some people, once you've written them off you can write them off and close the book. But the fact that we had debriefings, we had to constantly be embraced. Which is very important because like I said just because one teacher doesn't like another doesn't mean that the teachers can not just associate with one another because we are all teaching the same kids. So we have to be in a relationship. (Cornel, 7/25)

Overall, the debrief meetings provided interns with opportunities to engage in dialogue (specifically about students and their teaching practice), raise questions, and ask for help. Interns also found the daily debrief meetings to be a space of collegial support, knowledge building, and community. It was viewed as a type of "safe space" where they could bring issues to the table and not feel as though they were being judged but rather

receiving gentle, constructive criticism. One intern described the debrief meetings as being more like a "think tank" because they are able to share and "feed off" of one another. Another intern described it as space where critical thinking took place.

Peers and Colleagues

Peer support at national training. At the national training institute, the interns from the Mount Calvary Freedom School were building relationships with each other and making connections with other interns from across the country. The Mount Calvary interns had met each other at their local training before coming to the national training. However, as Jaichelle noted during one debrief meeting that took place at the training, they were getting to know each other better and establishing trust while at national training:

> We've gotten to know each other better... the whole trust thing... I trust the other interns... I trust people to pull me over for constructive criticism. (6/09)

In an interview, Kyndall also noted that while at national training she had gotten to know the other interns she would be working with over the summer better:

> Well as far as national training I got to know each other intern more personally. I really connected with them and got to know another side of them. Not just their expectations for Freedom School, but just how they go about their life day to day. And I kind of felt more comfortable with them because I felt like I wasn't alone. This was like their first time and my first time so we have something in common- experiencing something new together. And I think we've grown. Now we're all comfortable with each other. We know each other now. We pretty much can do anything around each other so... just to do that it's nice. It's really good. I really enjoy it. (Kyndall, 7/05)

As they participated in the workshops and the IRC labs, the interns also had an opportunity to hear from and listen to the experiences of servant-leader interns who had

been a part of Freedom schools before. Many of the experienced interns were in the positions of the novice interns (in regards to being new to Freedom Schools) just one summer ago (or more), so they were eager to share the things that they had learned and give advice. Portions of the following excerpt were previously shared in another chapter, but it also illustrates the point that the interns were learning from each other and therefore their peers became a source of support for them:

> The thing that was more beneficial for me wasn't so much from what I learned from the facilitators, but from the other students in the class- like the ones who are like veterans at this. We came up with themes ideas, different ways you can decorate your classroom... and these are things that like honestly I hadn't really thought about...They were all telling stories and reliving moments and I really feel like I really got excited about what I was going to be doing. So, for me that was a breakthrough because I was like, wait a minute, I'm really going to have my own classroom. I'm really going to have these responsibilities... so we were all exchanging and growing from it and that was good because I felt like I came away with a lot of stuff. (Jaichelle, 6/07)

In this excerpt, we see that Jaichelle is excited about all that she had learned from her encounter with the experienced interns in the workshops she attended. She felt as though they got her thinking about things that she hadn't considered before (such as her real responsibility to be a teacher). She also had opportunities to brainstorm ideas for her classroom with them and felt as though she walked away more informed.

This kind of sharing is a part of the kinds of opportunities that the interns have as they engage with one another at the national training. From my previous experiences in the program, I know that this doesn't just apply to interns. When the site coordinators meet for their training before the interns arrive, there is also a lot of sharing that takes place. People are eager to tell what has worked for them and things they wish they had done better. Similar to the spirit of ujima that was evidenced in the daily debrief

meetings, this same spirit filters through the conversations of the interns as they meet and converse with other interns from across the country. They all are a part of the Freedom Schools family and that entails a kind of collective work and responsibility that extends beyond one's local site.

Peer support at the local site. Once back at the local site, the relationship building continued amongst the interns. They realized how dependent they were upon each other in multiple ways. There were different components of the model that some of them could relate to better or more easily than others. For example, the interns had to post particular items in their classrooms (see Chapter 4). Some of the interns had more artistic ability than others, so they took on the responsibility of making signs and charts for others' classrooms and the overall site. Another example is the way in which they helped each other with lesson planning. Interns would share their ideas for activities with one another and make sure that the site coordinator knew that they needed enough materials for all of their classes to do certain projects. There were also instances where interns would combine their classes for certain lessons and team-teach with one another. These are but a few examples of the ways in which the interns engaged in collective work and responsibility with each other at their local site.

When asked in the interviews what they thought about progressing through the program with their peers, most of the interns reported that their peers served as a good support system for them in multiple ways:

> I think that it has helped as I said to have interns who have done this before [work with children] share their experience... So, they understand how to connect with kids. (Martin, 6/30)

I think I have a really good support system. Like I enjoy our debriefings. Dr. J is amazing- more than amazing. The support I'm getting from the other interns- just the suggestions, the pats on the back. The "I actually understand what you're going through" type of situation. And my story is just as bad as yours. It kind of makes you feel like I'm not in this alone and somebody else did something in their classroom that worked. They're suggesting it to you. I can try it. So that's the direction my learning is taking. I have Dr. J who has been giving us handouts and paperwork and suggestions that's written, and also pulling you over to the side and saying, why don't you try this. (Jaichelle, 6/27)

I think we were all called together for like a higher purpose. It's just kind of weird how we like all fell into place and just automatically clicked with one another. And I think we're all helping each other learn and grow as we each learn with every step that we're taking in the program. I guess every since like local training, we've all just meshed together into like one family and we're always looking out for each other just in everything. It's more than just having a co-worker. It's more like having a family now- like a Freedom School family. (Sydney, 6/30)

There's a lot of positive things that I've learned from the other interns. Just seeing how they interact with the scholars and their teaching styles that they bring to the table. And the biggest thing is allowing personality to lead. So that's been one of the biggest things. We've gotten along very well. We all help each other out. We're all trying to get through this with productive results. So, it's been pretty good. (Cornel, 7/06)

Well, the biggest thing is everyone has to have a common denominator. And the common denominator was the kids and making sure the kids learned something. So with that we went in and we were able to talk about things that went well and things that didn't go well and ask for help. If someone said something that everyone else knew was obviously not the correct thing to say, it wasn't a blast session to try to embarrass that person. We waited for that person to say what they had to say, and then we just came back and said "you know this might be a good way of doing this." And the reason why that happened was because of that common denominator. We didn't want to discourage anyone from asking questions and learning. As well as we were all in the same boat. You know this was our first year doing this. (Cornel, 7/25)

Across the comments from the interns, we see that the support they gave to one another entailed: sharing their experiences; giving suggestions, praise and encouragement; understanding; helping each other learn; supporting and engaging with each other like family; and learning from each other's individual teaching styles.

Once again, this is reflective of the principle of ujima in regards to building and maintaining the community. In this case, fostering productive relationships with colleagues is a part of building and maintaining community. We saw earlier how Dr. Collins was committed to doing this with the interns. Now, we also see how the interns on their own without prompting from Dr. Collins made these sorts of connections with each other. Both at the national training and at the local site, the interns became a source of support for each other.

Discussion: A Freedom School Teacher Community

Notions of communities of practice (also referred to as learning communities) are well documented in the literature related to teacher learning and school reform (Achinstein, 2002; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Gallucci, 2003; Grossman, Wineburg & Woolworth, 2000/2001; Little, 2002; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001; Wenger, 1998). A basic rationale for communities of practice is that it provides a venue for and supports ongoing teacher learning. Therefore, the findings in this chapter point us to better understandings of the kinds of support we can offer prospective teachers as they engage in opportunities to learn to teach for social justice.

As noted by Jaichelle and Sydney, their community (of practice) offered a kind of safe space that encouraged and cultivated critical thinking:

> I've really enjoyed the debriefings in the sense that I feel like it's a real sense of community and we kind of lean on each other. And it's a really safe space but at the same time you learn so much. We're taking it seriously as in "oh I'm having this problem, can you help me" and someone else can say "oh, you should do

> this." It's really beneficial. We're really learning from each other as far as the interns. We're also learning from the site coordinator. (Jaichelle, 7/25)
>
> Like I said kind of open your mind to a whole 'nother level of thinking- critical thinking especially. And how to deal with certain different situations. It serves as a base to kind of develop creativity skills as well. Hearing how other people approach different situations and how other people approach different [parts of the] curriculum. And helps you kind of think about ways that you can improve and ways that you can also put different types of creative spins to different types of things. It's been a nurturing environment. Just everything within this community has definitely seemed like a nurturing environment. Nothing is like degrading or trying to put you down or anything. Everything is just about goals and moving forward as a person so that you can in turn be a positive impact on somebody else. (Sydney, 7/25)

This chapter provided a depiction of a Freedom School teacher community of practice and highlighted practices that occurred within this community. As I have stated previously in this chapter, these various kinds of support are all occurring within this community made up of the interns and the site coordinator. Whether they were at national training or back at their local site, they built a community of practice (inclusive of teaching and learning) amongst themselves. The findings offer a pathway to understanding that what the Freedom School interns learned is not a static subject matter but the very process of being engaged in, and participating in developing an ongoing practice (Wenger, 1998).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I described and examined the various sources of support provided to the interns. In the next chapter I will conclude the dissertation by summarizing the purpose of the project and highlighting key themes.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Themes Revisited and Lessons Learned

Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.

-James Baldwin

In this chapter I will first summarize the purpose of the project. After which, I will reiterate and briefly describe the major findings of the study. I will then discuss how these findings connect to the reviewed literature and also to the larger phenomenon of teacher preparation. In conclusion, I will suggest implications for research and practice based on the project's findings.

Summary of the Project

The purpose of this dissertation project was to understand how and in what ways the servant-leader interns were supported in their teaching and development as teachers at Freedom Schools. In order to gain understanding into their learning and development, it was important to understand and describe the nature of the national training activities, activities at the local site, and the curriculum and program standards in which the interns engaged. The general research question that guided this dissertation project was: Given the context of Freedom Schools, an institution designed for social justice in education for children of color, how are interns trained to be teachers within this institution? Specific questions explored in this study included the following questions:

I. National Training and Local Support

National Training

- What is the nature of the national training?
- What assumptions about interns are evidenced by the curriculum and pedagogy of the training (e.g. background, motivation, identity, politics)? What assumptions about learning to teach or teaching for social justice are evidenced by the curriculum and pedagogy of the training? What are program expectations for how interns are to engage the reading curriculum?
- How do, if at all, the activities at national training provide learning opportunities for interns?

Local Support

- What is the nature of support for interns at the local site?
- What assumptions about interns are evidenced by the kinds of support given at the local site? What assumptions about learning to teach or teaching for social justice are made?
- How do, if at all, the activities and practices of the teaching community provide learning opportunities for interns?
- What is the nature of the connection, if any, between activities and principles at national training to the activities and practices at the local site?

II. The Nature of Intern Participation and Learning

- What were interns' previous experiences with teaching?
- How did intern participation vary across activities in the teaching community?
- How did the interns participate and contribute to the practices of their teaching community?
    - What kinds of tools, if any, are interns developing for participating in a teaching community (e.g. engaging in meaningful dialogue, sharing experiences and ideas in a professional manner)?

This study does not deal with traditional pre-service teachers in a university-based program or an alternative route to certification program. Rather, the study focuses on providing a profile of the ways in which Freedom Schools carry out teacher preparation in an alternative schooling context involving college-age young adults whose intent is to make a difference in their communities. In this context teaching is a means of activism for these young people, not necessarily a chosen career path.

The project was situated within an interpretive paradigm because, as a researcher, I was concerned with process rather than simply with outcomes or products. Interpretive methodology allows researchers to focus on the social construction of reality as individuals interact in social scenes. I employed sociocultural theory as the lens through which to make sense of the social and cultural nature of learning to teach at Freedom Schools, because I wanted to specifically focus on the nature of particular settings and practices with which participants engaged as a part of their everyday lives in Freedom School. The literature reviewed entailed examining concepts of teacher learning, teaching for social justice and culturally relevant teaching because these themes emphasize the work that Freedom Schools are doing in regards to teacher preparation. I resisted situating this work within the literature for service-learning because that was not the intent nor the purpose of service for the interns involved in this study. Certainly there could be some connections for service-learning, but that was neither the purpose of this study nor the intent of the participants.

Themes Revisited

The study revealed several findings about the ways in which Freedom Schools go about preparing the servant-leader interns to teach for social justice and the ways in which they were supported in their development. In the following sections I will restate the findings of this study and discuss how these findings connect to the reviewed literature and also to the larger phenomenon of teacher preparation.

Becoming Activists

In chapters five and six, parts of the nature of the national training institute were analyzed and discussed. In chapter five, I described how at the national training the interns in this study participated in a kind of induction process for becoming activists in a national social justice movement. Major findings revealed that this induction process was an intended formal program with a set of planned learning opportunities for interns (e.g. opportunities to learn and understand the history of the movement). Collectively, the set of learning opportunities contributed to the practices and identity formation of what it meant to be an activist and a servant-leader and also provided the central tasks of intern induction for the Freedom Schools training. Moreover, the way that interns were embraced into the movement through the "discourse of we" was also part of the induction. The interns in this study were thinking beyond there summer of service and trying to figure out how to proceed with their lifetime of commitment.

These findings coincide with the literature that promotes a more critical stance for teaching for social justice (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Kohl, 1998). This stance advocates that teachers should be activists; that is, that they should become part of larger movements for social change. This notion of teaching for social justice challenges traditional teacher education to expand its vision of who a teacher is and what kinds of knowledge, skills and dispositions are needed by teachers who teach for social justice. Knowledge about the history of social justice movements, skills on how to enact social action, and dispositions towards serving beyond one's classroom are all reflected in the kind of teacher preparation for social justice offered by Freedom Schools.

Teacher preparation at Freedom Schools also challenges traditional teacher education to consider how they frame the need to teach for social justice. At Freedom

Schools, the need to teach for social justice is framed within larger sociocultural, sociohistorical and socio-political issues. In Freedom Schools, it is not simply about teaching for social justice in response to "the demographic imperative", but rather about the causes of the current state of education for children of color and, given what we know, how we go about solving this problem. At Freedom Schools we see that the preparation of teachers for social justice is a part of the learning and practice of teaching. Social justice is not an add-on or a matter of learning a script of best practices, but rather it is the very work of teaching.

Programmatic Efforts to Develop Intern Stance and Agency

In chapter six I continued to explore the nature of the national training institute and specifically examined elements of the national training that focused on developing the capabilities of the interns to be teachers and the role of the program to help them maximize this potential. As I detailed, there is an objective on the part of the Freedom Schools' program to develop college-age young people as teachers in Freedom School. The program provided the interns with opportunities to learn about other young people from the Civil Rights generation and the 1964 Freedom Summer who made a difference in their communities. The findings reveal that the interns in this study did indeed acknowledge some agency and feelings of empowerment due to their experiences in Freedom School. Through the analysis of the workshops that the interns attended to learn how to teach the IRC we saw how the Freedom Schools trainers used techniques such as question-posing, discussion, modeling, and reflection. Specifically, we saw how reflection emerged as a tool for developing the interns as teachers. First, it prompted

interns to compare their own schooling experiences to what and how they were learning to teach at Freedom School. Second, reflection was used a tool for the interns to think about what it was like to be in the position of the learner in order to learn how to teach the curriculum.

The findings in this chapter speak to McDonald's (2005) claims from her study in which she found that "teachers' opportunities to learn conceptual tools far outweighed their opportunities to learn practical tools" (p. 427) in preparation programs that espoused to prepare teachers to teach for social justice. In other words, even if there are strong social justice themes within coursework, there seems to be a gap between the understandings gained in coursework and the lived, practical experiences offered to prospective teachers. Given her findings, McDonald suggests that "including practices may require different types of knowledge, resources, and supports than those required to integrate conceptual tools related to social justices" (p. 427). Hence, preparation programs may be providing prospective teachers with conceptual tools such as opportunities to learn about particular aspects of teaching from a social justice perspective but are falling short with providing strategies that teach them *how* to implement this kind of teaching. This is similar to the call by Ladson-Billings (1999b) for further research on the specifics of pedagogical strategies that work to prepare teachers for diverse classrooms. Furthermore, as a part of their curriculum proposal for preparing culturally responsive teachers, Villegas and Lucas (2002) suggest cultivating culturally responsive teaching practices.

The techniques (question-posing, discussion, modeling, and reflection) that the trainers used with the interns to teach them the IRC provide one response to researchers'

call for insight into the pedagogical strategies for teaching from a social justice perspective and in culturally responsive ways. As I stated in chapter six, the Freedom Schools program uses these sorts of techniques as a means of accessing empowerment and agency. With these techniques the trainers and site coordinator offer the interns an opportunity to experience the kind of learning (and schooling) that they want them to provide for the students who will attend the Freedom Schools during the summer.

Sources of Support

Chapter seven revealed detailed descriptions and understandings of the kinds of emergent and intentional support provided for the interns to assist in their development as teacher-activists. The site coordinator emerged as a significant source of support for the interns in this study. Dr. Collins built and maintained a sense of community through ongoing communication; passed on knowledge; and observed, guided, and participated in teaching. It was clear that the interns viewed her as a valuable resource for their development in the program. The daily debrief meetings also proved to be a significant resource for intern development. These meetings provided the space and opportunity for interns and the site coordinator to build community amongst the group and to support one another in the spirit of ujima. The chapter also revealed that the interns' viewed their peers and colleagues, both at the national training and at their local site, as another source of support. Fostering productive relationship with their peers was a part of building and maintaining their community.

In addition to particular knowledge, skills and dispositions towards teaching for social justice, being a teacher at Freedom Schools also encompasses being a part of a

community of practice. The literature on teaching for social justice and culturally relevant teaching can be expanded and more inclusive of the idea of communities of practice; that is, dealing with individual pedagogical practice is not enough. Teachers need to learn to be with and learn from other teachers and individuals who are part of their local community of practice. The idea of a teaching community within Freedom Schools demonstrates how a community of practice can support and provide further opportunities for the development of socially just and culturally relevant pedagogy.

Lessons Learned: Implications for Research and Practice

What lessons emerged from this study on Freedom Schools? How can these lessons inform the contemporary conversation about teacher preparation that will meet the needs of historically marginalized students in our nation's public schools? Additionally, how can these lessons advance the work that Freedom Schools is doing in their alternative model of teacher preparation?

In the introduction to this dissertation (see chapter one), I talked about how the current CDF Freedom Schools serve as a parallel institution and a counter-narrative. Freedom Schools it is designed to serve a parallel institution meaning that they are challenging traditional notions of schooling for students of color, particularly African American students, by providing a model of their own on how to effectively educate children of color. The idea of Freedom Schools serving as a parallel institution and a counter-narrative deals with how they are questioning a system (the educational institution) and developing their own institution that is standing in opposition and

intentionally countering the larger society's ideology about K-12 education including how we prepare teachers to teach ethnically diverse student populations. This counter-narrative of schooling considers that "in the post-Civil Rights era, the school is usually conceptualized singularly as an education institution, failing to understand that for African Americans, it must also function as a cultural, social, and political institution" (Perry, 2003, p. 99).

Implications for Practice

The findings from chapter six in regards to developing intern stance and agency urge us to look at the recruitment efforts of traditional teacher preparation programs to recruit more prospective teachers of color. Murrell (2001) contends that there are "Black and Hispanic students who are struggling to find meaning and opportunity in education and who are beginning to see teaching as a way of being active agents in the development of their communities" (p. 57). Irvine (2003) discusses recruitment and retention strategies for prospective teachers of color entailing recruiting teachers from predominately ethnic high schools and Black and Latino churches that have Sunday school and after-school programs. She further suggests that prospective teachers of color need financial and other support systems. Based on the findings of this study, I am suggesting that we expand these ideas to include developing teacher stance and agency amongst prospective teachers of color. It is neither sufficient nor beneficial to students of color to recruit more teachers of color into the profession if they come with no sense of the importance of how they can use their agency to enact social change. They have to believe that they can and must

make a difference in the lives of children, families, and communities they will serve through their teaching practice and commitment to larger social justice movements.

The findings of this study also offer implications for practice for the Freedom Schools program. As described in the study, the training is a powerful induction into the social justice movement(s) of the Children's Defense Fund. The interns in this study were "first-timers" to Freedom Schools therefore, it is important to consider their experiences when thinking about the ways in which the program could improve. It was described that the interns in this study found their peers at national training to be a source of support. One suggestion may be to develop a listserve or an additional link on the Freedom Schools website where interns can stay connected with each other throughout the summer and beyond. Keeping these young people, who are intentionally being developed as the next generation of servant-leaders, connected through communication would be a powerful political tool for the movement. This kind of communication could also serve as a way to continue the identity development of "we" that was a major part of the induction into the movement.

Implications for Research

In order to advance the conversation about the ways in which we go about preparing teachers to teach for social justice and in culturally responsive ways to better meet the needs of children who have been historically underserved in our public schools we need to give further attention to alternative teacher preparation models such as Freedom Schools. As evidenced in this study, Freedoms Schools provided a formal teacher preparation program with a set of planned learning opportunities for interns.

Further research is need to fully explicate the techniques used in teaching the interns how to teach the IRC. A recent review on pedagogical approaches in teacher education (Grossman, 2005) summarizes the research on:

> How we teach prospective teachers and on how various approaches used by teacher educators might affect what teachers learn about teaching, including what they come to know or believe about teaching, as well as how they engage in the practice of teaching itself. (p. 425)

As acknowledged by the author, the review did not exhaust the possibilities for how teachers are taught. "The list also does not include the use of modeling in teacher education, another widespread practice about which there is little systematic research" (p. 426). Nor was there any mention of the other techniques (question-posing, discussion, reflection) used by the Freedom School trainers.

I am also suggesting that we also look further at the ways in which Freedom Schools work to support the development of the servant-leader interns. The findings suggest that supporting the interns' in learning to teach was a communal act; one that encompassed the principle of ujima- collective work and responsibility. A well-planned preparation curriculum and fine pedagogical techniques worked in conjunction with providing systematic support for intern development. We need to examine the differences as well as the similarities between various types of communities of practice in which teachers (including Freedom School teachers) are engaged to further our own understandings of what is possible in regards to teacher learning and teaching practice through participation in such contexts.

Lastly, as a part of the Freedom Schools' research agenda, I suggest investigation into compiling data about who the interns are as they enter the movement through the

Freedom Schools program and who they become as they carry their experience into their futures. While teaching is the medium for activism at Freedom Schools, I am curious to know how many interns pursue "credentialed" teaching careers and how their identities as teachers and their teaching practice is influenced by their Freedom Schools experience.

Conclusion: Are We Ready to Learn from a Counter-narrative?

In thinking about the counter-narrative that Freedom Schools provide, we also have to consider what types of teacher preparation and development have historically and currently been used to make this counter-narrative possible? Traditional teacher preparation "has yet to produce a system of teacher education that successfully, and in sufficient numbers, prepares teachers for effective work in diverse urban school settings" (Murrell, 2001, p. 1).

Collectively, these findings challenge traditional notions of teacher learning and what kinds of knowledge, skills and dispositions are needed by teachers. This profile of Freedom School offers the very notion of what kinds of guidance and opportunities are needed for preparing effective urban teachers. In this vision the teacher is much more politically conscious. The findings in this study show that there are multiple lessons that can be learned from the Freedom Schools counter-narrative. The question remains: Are we ready to learn from them?

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Intern Profiles

Intern	College	Year Just Completed	Major	Race/Gender	Age	Place of origin and Location of college
Martin	Douglas University	Sophomore	Business Management/ English minor	African American Male	19	From Atlanta and attending college in Virginia
Tim	Anderson Young University	Sophomore	Mass Media Management	African American Male	19	From Atlanta and attending college in Atlanta
Sydney	Hillman College	Senior	Psychology & Religion	African American Female	22	From North Carolina and attending college in Atlanta
Cornell	King Abernathy Theological Center	1st year of graduate school	Divinity & Pastoral Care	African American Male	26	From Delaware and attending college in Atlanta
Kyndall	Anderson Young University	Sophomore	Biology	African American Female	19½	From Atlanta and attending college in Atlanta
Jaichelle	Hillman College	Junior	Political science/ Pre-Law	African American Female	21	From Alabama and attending college in Atlanta

APPENDIX B

Research Questions, Data Sources, and Analysis

Research Questions	Data Sources	Method of Analysis
I. National Training and Local Support		
What is the nature of the national training?	-field notes and observations of training sessions for SCs and interns -national training documents and artifacts (e.g. training manual) -national trainer questionnaire	-identify ways (how and with what) in which SC and interns are trained and informed about the program & their roles and responsibilities -review documents and artifacts for goals and objectives of the national training -analysis of trainer questionnaire for perceived roles & responsibilities for supporting intern learning during training
What assumptions about interns are evidenced by the curriculum and pedagogy of the training? What assumptions about learning to teach or teaching for social justice are evidenced by the curriculum and pedagogy of the training?	-field notes and observations of training sessions for SCs and interns -national training documents and artifacts -national trainer questionnaire	-identify training sessions and look for ways in which the program standards are addressed -review documents & artifacts for definitions and stance towards social justice -analysis of questionnaire for expectations of interns held by trainer
How do (if at all) the activities at national training provide learning opportunities for interns?	-field notes and observations of training sessions -national training documents and artifacts -national trainer questionnaire -interview with SC at national training -transcripts from debrief meetings at national training	-identify spaces (the context & content of such spaces) provided and intended for intern learning (e.g. training sessions, evening sessions) -analysis of interview and questionnaire for explicit and implicit explanations of the purpose(s) of training sessions -analysis of debrief transcripts for discussion themes
What is the nature of support for interns at the local site?	-field notes and observations of local community activities -national documents and training manual -field notes and transcripts of daily debrief meetings -intern journals -both interviews with site coordinator -site artifacts	-identify ways interns are supported (how and with what) in teaching and implementing program standards -review national documents for goals of local support -review site artifacts for content of support -analysis of debrief transcripts for types of feedback given by SC and interns (peers) -analysis of interview with SC for perceived roles & responsibilities for supporting intern learning at local site

What assumptions about interns are evidenced by the kinds of support given at the local site? What assumptions about learning to teach for social justice are made?	-national documents and training manual -field notes and transcripts of debrief meetings -both interviews with SC -national trainer questionnaire -site artifacts	-review of documents and training manual for direction on local support -analysis of SC interviews for plans on supporting interns -analysis of debrief transcripts for discussion themes
How do (if at all) the activities and practices of the teacher community provide learning opportunities for interns?	-both interviews with interns -both interviews with SC -field notes and transcripts from daily debrief meetings -intern journals	-analysis of intern interviews for thoughts on what they did as a community and how they participated -analysis of SC interview for thoughts on how the staff interacted as a community and resource for each other -analysis of debrief transcripts for instances of question posing by interns and SC and how questions were addressed by the group -analysis of journals for mention of interactions and dialogue with staff & explicit mention of what they report they learned
What is the nature of the connection (if any) between activities and principles at national training and activities practices at the local site?	-field notes and observations of training sessions for SCs and interns -national documents and training manual - site artifacts -debrief transcripts and fieldnotes -intern journals -both interviews with SC -both interviews with interns	-identify activities and practices referred to at the national training sessions for use at the local site -review documents and artifacts for ideas and suggestions for local support -analyze debrief transcripts and fieldnotes for structure and method of meetings. -analyze journals for references to national training -analyze interviews for references to national training
II. The Nature of Intern Participation and Learning		
What were interns' previous experiences with teaching?	-intern interviews -intern journals -SC interviews	-analysis of interviews for background experience with teaching and children -analysis of journals for background experience with teaching and children -analysis of SC interview for her prior knowledge of interns' background
How did intern participation vary across activities in the teaching community?	-interns interviews -intern journals -SC interviews -field notes and transcripts of daily debrief meetings	-analysis of intern interviews, intern journals, and SC interview for thoughts on participation with the staff and in group activities -analysis of debrief transcripts for patterns in participation
How did interns participate and contribute to the activities of their	-intern interviews -intern journals	-analyze intern interviews and journals for mention of the

teaching community? What kind of tools (if any) are interns developing for participating in a teaching community?	-SC interviews -field notes and transcripts of daily debrief meetings	teaching community and their participation -analyze SC interview for her comments and thoughts on intern growth and participation in the community -identify in the fieldnotes ways in which the interns participated in the community

APPENDIX C

The CDF Mission and the Freedom Schools Program

Standard of program Quality	Standard Description	Incorporation of the Indicator into the CDF Freedom Schools Program
Healthy Start	A *healthy start* means that every child deserves to start life with a healthy body and mind.	All CDF Freedom Schools summer programs are required to provide two nutritious meals (breakfast and lunch) and one snack to each child, each day. These meals must meet USDA standards for summer program operation.
Head Start	A *head start* means that every child is entitled to quality care and early education- the "head start" they need for a strong beginning in life.	Reading is one of several keys that unlocks the door to a child's potential. At CDF Freedom Schools sites, children read an outstanding collection of books reflecting a wide variety of experiences, cultures, and characters. The overarching themes of the curriculum is "I Can and Must Make a Difference" with subthemes including "I Can and Must Make a Difference in My: Self, Family, Community, Country, and World." The CDF Freedom Schools curriculum promotes skills in reading, cooperative learning, critical thinking, social action, conflict resolution, and discussion skills.
Fair Start	A *fair start* means that every child grows up in a family and community that is economically secure; has supportive parents; and that an ethic of fairness is reinforced throughout the community and particularly at the CDF Freedom Schools sites.	A vital component of the CDF Freedom Schools program is regular parent participation. All parents are expected to serve in some capacity at the program site (in the classroom, on field trips, during afternoon activities, etc.). Parents also attend weekly workshops, giving them the opportunity to share and receive valuable information on child care, health care, advocacy, promoting healthy families, financial management, employment, stress

		reduction, home ownership, entrepreneurship, and other relevant topics. Local programs are active in the Movement to Leave No Child Behind through information dissemination and building partnerships with churches, schools districts, and community-based organizations that support their efforts on behalf of children and families.
Safe Start	A *safe start* means that every child deserves to be protected from violence and to be cared for in a nurturing, permanent family and supportive community.	All local program staff are required to undergo background checks. Local program sites must meet all applicable state and/or local health and safety regulations. In order to foster a positive environment for self-discovery, program sponsors ensure that the local site is a safe haven for children.
Moral Start	A *moral start* means that every child is taught the enduring values of honesty. Hard work, discipline, responsibility, and respect for self and others. The CDF Freedom Schools program embraces a morality that teaches us to respect every child as God's gift.	CDF Freedom Schools programs are staffed primarily by college-aged young people who serve as positive role models and mentors. These Servant-Leaders are committed to excellence and use creative teaching strategies to engage children in ethical thinking and conflict resolution. Children learn by example the values of honesty and hard work, and the importance of investing in their community.
Successful Passage to Adulthood	With the help of caring families and communities, children will grow to adulthood with the physical, mental and moral health required to contribute responsibly to society and model servant-leadership in their community.	CDF Freedom Schools programs serve children ages five to 18, and identify, train, nurture, link, mobilize, and empower a new generation of Servant-leaders to work on behalf of children.

APPENDIX D

Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools™
Recommended Daily Schedule

8:00- 8:30 a.m.	Breakfast with Children and Staff
8:30- 9:00 a.m.	Harambee Time!
9:00- 10:30 a.m.	Integrated Reading Curriculum Reading, Conflict Resolution, Social Action
10:30- 10:45 a.m.	Morning Break
10:45- 11:45 a.m.	Integrated Reading Curriculum, continued
11:45- 12:00 noon	D.E.A.R. (Drop Everything and Read) Time
12:00- 1:00 p.m.	Lunch with Children and Staff Outdoor Free Play/Story Time
1:00- 3:00 p.m.	Afternoon Activities Arts and Crafts, Sports, Computer lab, Field Trips, Games, Rehearsal for Summer Finale, etc.
3:00 p.m.	Dismissal
3:30 p.m.	Daily Debrief Meeting (staff)

APPENDIX E

Harambee Time: Let's Pull Together
Components and Explanation of Harambee

Harambee is a Kiswahili word that means "let's pull together." Harambee is a time of informal sharing when children and staff come together to celebrate themselves and each other. This session must be limited to 30 minutes and should energize both students and staff and create a positive atmosphere. Parents and community leaders are also encouraged to participate.

Read Aloud- Guests from the community are invited to come and read to the students. The guest reader tells the students about themselves, their role in the community, etc. The read aloud time exposes students to the site library, allows people from the community to visit and see what the Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools program is all about, and demonstrates to students that reading is important to everyone.

Theme Song- Has a positive message, allows the group to move around and focus on positive experiences.

Cheers & Chants- reinforces positive messages; gets the group energized for the day

Recognitions- This is a time to recognize special occasions, accomplishments, etc. At this time the group would sing Happy Birthday to anyone celebrating a birthday. The recognition time allows time for students and staff to have their "moment in the spotlight."

Moment of Silence- This is a time to acknowledge a higher power. Students should reflect on yesterday's activities and focus on making the upcoming events of the day positive and productive.

Announcements- any schedule changes for the day, field trips, or special events should be announced at this time.

Appendix F

Basic Components and Schedule of Intern Training

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Interns arrive and check in at the dormitories on University of Tennessee's campus **7:00pm** Opening Ceremony **9:15pm** Site Debrief Meetings	**9am-5pm** Teambuilding and Workshops for Group 1 Foundation Workshops for Group 2 **7:30-9:30pm** Nommo-Evening Session **9:45pm** Site Debrief Meetings	**9am-5pm** Teambuilding and Workshops for Group 2 Foundation Workshops for Group 1 **7:30-9:30pm** Nommo-Evening Session **9:45pm** Site Debrief Meetings Optional-choir rehearsal	**9am-5pm** IRC Lab-Introduction, Overview, and Modeling IRC Lab-Intern modeling of Opening Activity **7:30-9:30pm** Nommo-Evening Session **9:45pm** Site Debrief Meetings Optional-choir rehearsal & talent show rehearsal	**9am-5pm** IRC Lab-Intern modeling of Main Activity IRC Lab-Intern modeling of Cooperative Group Activity **7:30-9:30pm** Nommo-Evening Session **9:45pm** Site Debrief Meetings Optional- choir rehearsal & talent show rehearsal	**9am-5pm** IRC Lab-Intern modeling of Closing Activity IRC Lab-Debrief on intern learning and training **8:00pm** Call to Action **9:45pm** Stepshow	**10:00am** Site Debrief Meetings **12:30pm** Lunch at the Farm **3:30-5:30pm** Graduation Ceremony **6:00pm** Dinner at the Farm **10:00pm** Talent Show **11:30pm** Celebration	Check-out and depart for home

APPENDIX G

Suggested Steps for Taking Social Action[8]

Identify your issue or concern. What problem do you want to tackle?

Learn all about it. You can't adequately address a concern if you have not fully explored it. Contact the Children's Defense Fund for help.

Brainstorm solutions. Compile several different ways that you could address your problem.

Find your support. Find people who feel the way that you do about the problem that you have chosen to address.

Learn who is on the other side. Find out who is against your proposed solution.

Publicize. Tell everyone that you are trying to solve the problem that you have identified.

Fundraise. You don't have to have a million dollars, but fundraising to support your solution can be helpful.

Follow through. Adhere to your plan and do what you said you would do.

See if your plan is working. Perform periodic evaluation to see if changing your approach or tactics would be helpful.

[8] Information taken from CDF Freedom Schools Training Manual and Action Guide 2005

APPENDIX H

I Care and I Am Willing to Serve

By Marian Wright Edelman

Lord I cannot preach like Martin Luther King, Jr.
but I care and am willing to serve.

I cannot sing like Fannie Lou Hamer
Or organize like Ella Baker and Bayard Rustin
but I care and am willing to serve.

I am not holy like Archbishop Tutu,
Forgiving like Mandela, or disciplined like Ghandi
but I care and am willing to serve.

I am not brilliant like Dr. W.E.B. DuBois or
Elizabeth Cady Stanton, or as eloquent as
Sojourner Truth and Booker T. Washington
Or turn a poetic phrase like Maya Angelou
but I care and am willing to serve.

I do not have Fred Shuttleswprth's and Harriet
Tubman's courage or Franklin and
Eleanor Roosevelt's political skills
but I care and am willing to serve.

I have not Mother Theresa's saintliness,
Dorothy Day's love or Cesar Chavez's gentle tough spirit
but I care and am willing to serve.

God it is not as easy as it used to be
To frame an issue and forge a solution
but I care and am willing to serve.

My mind and body are not so swift as in youth
And my energy comes in spurts
but I care and am willing to serve.

I'm so young nobody will listen
I'm not sure what to say or do
but I care and am willing to serve.

I can't see or hear well speak good English,

Stutter sometimes, am afraid of criticism
And get real scared standing up before others
but I care and am willing to serve.

Lord, use me as Thou will today and tomorrow to help
Build a nation and world where
No child is left behind and everyone feels welcome.

APPENDIX I

Major Components of the IRC Lessons[9]

Opening Activity (15 minutes)
This component serves as an introduction to the lesson. Its purpose is to motivate the students and stimulate their interest in the book under study.

Main Activity

- Levels I & II (30 minutes)
- Levels III & IV (45 minutes)

The purpose of the main activity is to engage children in reading and discussing the book under study.

Cooperative Group Activities

- Level I & II (1 hour and 15 minutes)
- Level III & IV (1 hour)

Cooperative group activities allow students to work in groups at work stations. These activities should be related to the book and/or the theme.

Conflict Resolution/Social Action Activity (20 minutes)
The IRC outlines which lessons have a specific focus on conflict resolution and/or social action. The conflict resolution and social action activities allow students the opportunity to apply decision-making strategies to practical situations and may be extended into the afternoon or next day.

Closing Activity (10 minutes)
This offers closure to the day's lesson.

[9] Information taken from the CDF Freedom Schools Training Guide and Action Manual 2005

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[1] Information about the Freedom Schools program for this chapter is taken from several Children's Defense Fund documents such as the CDF Freedom Schools Program Operating Principles 2004, the Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools Orientation and Training manual 2004, and the CDF Freedom Schools Ella Baker Child Policy Training Manual and Action Guide 2005 along with the Children's Defense Fund website. It is important to note that much of the language used to describe the program in this chapter is taken directly from these sources.