

Critical Race Studies in Education: Examining a Decade of Research on U.S. Schools

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In this article, the authors critically synthesize how Critical Race Theory (CRT) as an emerging field of inquiry has been used as a tool of critique and analysis in K-12 education research. The authors point out that CRT has been used as a framework for examining: persistent racial inequities in education, qualitative research methods, pedagogy and practice, the schooling experiences of marginalized students of color, and the efficacy of race-conscious education policy. The authors explore how these studies have changed the nature of education research and stress the need for further research that critically interrogates race and racism in education.

KEY WORDS: Critical Race Theory; racism; urban schooling.

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INTRODUCTION

Lord, how come me here...

There ain't no freedom here, Lord...

They treat me so mean here, Lord...

They sol' my chillen away, Lord...

Lord, how come me here...

I wish I never was born!

Excerpted from a Traditional African American Spiritual

The phrase “Lord, how come me here” is a woefully arresting statement that captures the essence of what Frederick Douglass called the “dehumanizing character of slavery”. The anguished speaker goes on to tell of the conditions in which s/he finds him/herself: “There ain’t no freedom here.” This statement points toward the inherent contradiction of existing in bondage in a nation founded on the principles of freedom and equality. “They sol’ my chillen [children] away” captures the depths of the physical, psychological and spiritual torment experienced by those in bondage. This spiritual, like many others, offers a rich analysis of the social conditions of a people denied the basic rights to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” as dictated in the Declaration of Independence most likely written around the time this song was composed. Further, it deeply contextualizes and brings into focus our troubled history as a nation obsessed with race. The sense of hopelessness and anguish expressed in the phrase “I wish I never was born!” might accurately capture the sentiments of many even today, particularly low-achieving racially marginalized students stuck in under-resourced, miserably poor schools in communities where the threat of violence both physical and psychological is a constant worry. It captures what Cornel West refers to as “nihilism in Black America” (West, 1993), which is not simply a resigned hopelessness but a sincere and earnest frustration with why racism persists nearly 150 years after slavery ended and over 50 years after *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954) became the law of the land. As we reflect back on the challenges of the civil rights era of the 1960s, many of us are still asking the question, “*How come we here?*” perhaps as a way of begging the question, “*Why does racism persist?*” We believe that Critical Race Theory (CRT), an analytical framework on race and racism in the law and society, helps to shed light on this important question. This review draws attention to more than a decade of legal, historical, and empirical research on CRT in education.

In the review, we will chart the development of the area of study known as CRT in education.¹ In doing so, we will examine the range of studies that use CRT as a method to examine the impact of race and racism in K-12

schools. We do not attempt to examine all the research that explores race in education. Our review is limited to those studies that specifically use CRT as a theoretical and/or methodological framework for exposing the effects of racism in K-12 schooling contexts. We reviewed several types of studies. Many of them were data-based empirical studies. However, a number of them were reviews of the literature or they were conceptual studies that sought to expand the theory by extending it to other areas. We explore how these studies have impacted and shaped the field of education over time. We also talk about where the field must go if it is going to continue to impact how we frame the problems facing minority youth in U.S. schools and develop transformative proposals for change. In particular, we examine the critical race research in the field of sociology and how we believe it could further shape and influence the development of the field.

HISTORICIZING CRITICAL RACE THEORY

Critical Race Theory begins with a number of basic insights. One is that racism is normal, not aberrant, in American society. Because racism is an ingrained feature of our landscape, it looks ordinary and natural to persons in the culture. Formal equal opportunity rules and laws that insist on treating Blacks and whites (for example) alike, can thus remedy only the more extreme and shocking sorts of injustice, the ones that do not stand out. Formal equality can do little about the business-as-usual forms of racism that people of color confront every day and that account for much misery, alienation, and despair (Delgado, 1995a, p. xiv).

The aforementioned description of CRT as a critique of racism in the law and society emerged as a race-based critique growing from the National Critical Legal Studies conferences that took place at the Harvard and UC–Berkeley Law Schools in the early to mid 1980s (Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, & Thomas, 1995; Lawrence, 2002). This group of law professors and students began to question the objective rationalist nature of the law and the process of adjudication in U.S. courts. They criticized the way in which the real effects of the law served to privilege the wealthy and powerful in the U.S. while ignoring the rights of the poor to use the courts as a means of redress. Out of this evolving critique of the role of law in society, a second strand of critical scholarship emerged through the writings of Derrick Bell, Mari Matsuda, Richard Delgado, Angela Harris, and Kimberle Crenshaw. These scholars argued that the critical legal studies (CLS) movement did not go far enough in challenging the specific racialized nature of the law and its impact on persons of color. These young legal scholars of color, many of whom eventually became the architects of CRT as a political scholarly movement, made several distinct claims that gave shape and emphasis to their arguments:

- (1) Racism has been a normal daily fact of life in society and the ideology and assumptions of racism are ingrained in the political and legal structures as to be almost unrecognizable. Legal racial designations have complex, historical and socially constructed meanings that insure the political superiority of racially marginalized groups;
- (2) As a form of oppositional scholarship, CRT challenges the experience of White European Americans as the normative standard; CRT grounds its conceptual framework in the distinctive contextual experiences of people of color and develop through the use of literary narrative knowledge and story-telling to challenge the existing social construction of race; and
- (3) CRT attacks liberalism and the inherent belief in the law to create an equitable just society. CRT advocates have pointed out the irony and the frustrating legal pace of meaningful reform that has eliminated blatant hateful expressions of racism, yet, kept intact exclusionary relations of power as exemplified by the legal conservative backlash of the courts, legislative bodies, voters, etc., against special rights for racially marginalized groups (Bell, 1988; Crenshaw et al., 1995; Delgado, 1987; Matsuda, 1987).

Critical race theorists argued that the law, particularly civil rights law of the 1960s was targeted to combat overt forms of racism characterized by grossly offensive and/or violent behavior toward others because of their race. This era was also characterized by legal segregation and socially sanctioned forms of discrimination in public institutions. The moral authority of the civil rights movement served to weaken this form of racism in the U.S. The power of the law was a vital tool in helping to eliminate classical racism, so most white European Americans have a professed distaste of overt discriminatory actions against any racial group. However, one of the main arguments of critical race theorists has been that while classic forms of overtly violent racist behavior has subsided, everyday racism has arisen. This type of racism can be characterized as those mundane practices and events that are infused with some degree of unconscious racial mal-intent. It can also be described as those institutional policies and practices that are fair in form but have a disproportionately negative impact on racial minority groups (Lawrence, 1987). The actions associated with everyday racism are also subtle, automatic, non-verbal exchanges that are seen as derogatory slights by persons of color. Furthermore, everyday racism, in the form of microaggressions, is incessant and cumulative as practiced in the everyday actions of individuals, groups, and institutional policy rules and administrative procedures. In this way, critical race theorists called attention to the existence of structures in the broader society that were created and

maintained by a tradition of inherently racist practices (Crenshaw et al., 1995).

Critical legal theorists of color exposed the ways in which these social, political and legal practices not only informed how institutions in our society were governed but led to significantly negative outcomes for racially oppressed people in our society. They critiqued a color-blind view of the law, which suggested that the law was objective and race-neutral. Even more important, they called into question our society's stance on democracy, freedom and justice for all. According to Matsuda, Lawrence, Delgado and Crenshaw (1993), there are six unifying themes that define the movement.

1. CRT recognizes that racism is endemic to American life.
2. CRT expresses skepticism toward dominant legal claims of neutrality, objectivity, colorblindness, and meritocracy.
3. CRT challenges ahistoricism and insists on a contextual/historical analysis of the law ... Critical race theorists ... adopt a stance that presumes that racism has contributed to all contemporary manifestations of group advantage and disadvantage.
4. CRT insists on recognition of the experiential knowledge of people of color and our communities of origin in analyzing law and society.
5. CRT is interdisciplinary.
6. CRT works toward the end of eliminating racial oppression as part of the broader goal of ending all forms of oppression (p. 6).

Since its inception, some CRT legal theorists have tried to make this foundational analysis somewhat malleable by trying to avoid a strict adherence to a singular line of criticism against the law and society regarding race (Hayman, 1995). For example, Delgado (2003a) argued that at its inception, CRT focused on the aforementioned points as they related to the materialist conditions of racism and its legal, socioeconomic and political impact on Blacks and other minority groups. Further, he maintains that intellectual shifts took place within the movement to focus more on discourse, media images, and symbols as codes of analysis. Some of the latest research in the critical race tradition addresses Delgado's important criticisms.

Toward a New Critical Race Theory

As CRT has evolved, it has begun to take up new discourses and offer new challenges to legal doctrine in American jurisprudence. Carbado (2002) identifies two strands within CRT that he refers to as first-generation and second-generation scholarship. He argues that the first generation of CRT

scholars such as Bell (1979, 1980a, b, 1985, 1987) Delgado (1984, 1987, 1988a, b, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1995a, b), Crenshaw (1988), Crenshaw et al. (1995), Williams (1987, 1991), Harris (1993) and Angela Harris (1994) focused mainly on the material manifestations of racism as a way to argue for social justice and focused much-needed attention on the inclusion of the subjugated voices of racially marginalized peoples into the debates on race, racism, the law and society. The second generation of scholars have taken Bell, Delgado, Williams and Crenshaw's ideas and extended them to address issues of gender, ethnicity, language, culture, sexuality and other key markers of difference.² These works borrow heavily from post-modernism, post-structuralism and critical theory to focus more attention on teasing out the multi-varied meanings of race and its interaction with other forms of domination. This new hybridity is clearly laid out in *Crossroads, Directions and a New Critical Race Theory*, edited by Valdes, Culp, and Harris (2002). This work seeks to shift CRT in a new direction by discussing how CRT as a legal framework of analysis interfaces with concepts of identity (e.g., gender, sexual orientation), the impact of globalization on understandings about race, critical post-colonial thought on race and racism, critical race activism and the development of coalitions across difference. For example, Valdes has discussed how upper class gay males from Latin American countries may come to the U.S. as gay non-racialized persons, but when they come to a racially polarized city like Miami, they might be placed in a racialized group and face racial discrimination and homophobia. However, he points out that their social class position allows them entry into other sectors of the city's political economy that are off-limits to Miami's low income population.³ Valdes et al. (2002) argue for using this new form of CRT as a way to think about race and other areas of difference as a set of shifting bottoms and rotating centers, where not one category (e.g., race, social class, sexual orientation) dominates, but where there are multiple ways in which they operate. These ways of thinking about race can become potential avenues of solidarity for common legal causes. These tendencies are also reflected in the 2nd edition of Delgado and Stefancic's (2000) edited book *Critical Race Theory: The Cutting Edge* which more fully explores LatCrit theory which explicitly explores the role of race, nation, language, culture and ethnicity in shaping the experiences of Latino/as in the U.S. and abroad. Delgado and Stefancic (1997) have also written *Critical White Studies: Looking Beyond the Mirror* (1997) which examines how Whiteness as a social and political construct has helped maintain and sustain the White supremacist project. This work also lays out specific roles Whites can play in ending racial subordination. Carbado and Gulati (2003) argue that initially, CRT as it was conceived was an effective tool in terms of articulating the nuances of racism in a legal theoretical sense, particularly in terms of formal and informal

barriers to job entry, law school admission, etc. In addition, they argue that CRT has helped to articulate a conception of race that is operationalized as a social construction at the larger level of institutional entry. Yet, CRT has not been as effective in terms of “paying attention” (p. 1760) to the interpersonal way in which race is produced and the new approaches in CRT begins to deal with this issue. For example, Carbado and Gulati (2003) emphasize that:

CRT often ignores the racial productivity of the “choices” people of color make about how to present themselves as racialized persons. As a general matter, CRT’s race-as-a social construction thesis does not include an analysis of the race-producing practices that reflected in the daily negotiations people of color perform in an attempt to shape how (especially white) people interpret their not white identities (p. 1760).

Therefore, Carbado and Gulati make the case for using CRT with a combination of law and economics. They believe that it is important to use CRT with a more nuanced analysis that combines CRT analysis and the use of econometric principles to show how and why race is operationalized within the economic sphere of the workplace. Carbado and Gulati argue for using CRT with law and economics to explore the ways employers will use, for example, “ideal racial profiles” of model minorities in a consumerist culture where race is commercialized. From Carbado and Gulati’s perspective, second generation CRT analysis needs to focus on the development of workplace identity and the interactions of class, gender, sexuality and race in forming a unique set of experiences for men and women in the workplace.

As we have shown, CRT has also evolved from its early focus on African Americans and the impact of the law on Black–White relations, to examining how issues related to the law, immigration, national origin, language, globalization, and colonization are related to race. From this line of critique formed the LatCrit and critical Asian American legal studies movement that called for a critical race theory specific to these groups of color (California Law Review, 1997; Chang, 1993, 1998). For example, the LatCrit movement is grounded in the use of narrative-storytelling as a tool to examine how other aspects of race, ethnicity, language, and national origin converge to otherize and politically disenfranchise Latinos/as in the U.S. For example, Haney Lopez (1996) argued for using a critical race lens to assess the experiences of Latino groups in the U.S. even though they comprise different ethnicities and nationalities. Lopez pointed out that under the legal construction of race and citizenship law, “White” has historically stood not only for members of the White race but for a set of concepts and privileges associated with it, while Black has been defined by the legal denial of those privileges. According to Lopez, many Latinos don’t occupy neatly defined

racial categories. Instead, they often stand at the intersection. He critiques the Black–White paradigm in order to illustrate the ways in which Latinos, while constituting a broad spectrum of ethnicities and nationalities, remain a racialized group subject to different types of racial discrimination. The backlash against Spanish and the “English only movement” as well as periodic ideological attacks—that are psychological, political and economic in nature—on immigration provide clear evidence of this phenomenon which often manifests itself in violence (p. 1216).

Critical race feminism has also emerged as an area of study that focuses on women of color and their connection to the law and public policy’s impact on their lives as women, both in the U.S. and in an international context of race, gender and nationality (Wing, 1997). Crenshaw (1991) elaborated on how critical race feminism differs from CRT in that it examined policies such as the 1996 Welfare Reform Act and the implications and impact of that law on women of color.⁴ Critical race feminism calls on women to form coalitions with artists and activists in local communities to push for change that will benefit women of color and their families in local contexts. Berry and Mizelle (2006) have used critical race feminism as a lens through which to re-center the experiences of women of color in the academy. In that sense, they use the framework as a way to not only ground the racialized and gendered experiences of women of color, they offer some important insights about the nature and impact of multiple axes of domination on the lives of these women. The book represents an important development in both the legal and education fields.

The critical Asian American legal studies movement called for a type of critical race discourse specific to Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (Chang, 1993; *California Law Review*, 1997). Asian American Critical Race Theory borrows from post-structuralism for a critical reading and traces the use of language and the law to create Asian Americans as “honorary Whites” whose fears can be played against other racial groups regarding affirmative action and admission to elite public universities in California. Yet this group can also have the law used against them, as it was in the Japanese internment camps during WWII and in current immigration law. Chon (1995) challenged the use of post-structural interpretations for the Asian American/Pacific Island experience, however, because post-structuralism tends to invalidate the normative moral and political claims of “truth” about racism. They believe that the narrative voice of Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders needs to be seen in its validity under critical race theory in terms of seeking the “truth” about racism against Asian Americans.

A GENEALOGICAL HISTORY AND EXAMINATION OF STUDIES IN CRT AND EDUCATION

As CRT rose to prominence in the early 1990s, education scholars began to use it as a tool for explaining existing inequalities in education (1994; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Tate 1997). Yosso, Parker, Solorzano and Lynn (2004) linked the origins of CRT and education literature beyond legal discourse to ethnic studies, Marxism, feminism, cultural nationalism and other disciplines. She argued that the set of perspectives, propositions and questions that extend from these discourses for the basis of what we now recognize as CRT in educational research and theory. Before scholars in education began to actively use CRT as a tool for analyzing racial inequality in education, much of the literature that addressed issues of inequality and schooling addressed either class (Bowles & Gintis, 1976) or gender (Weiler, 1988). Studies in critical and feminist pedagogy, for example, gained prominence in the mid to late 1980s with the work of scholars such as McLaren (1989), Giroux (1983), Darder (1991, 1993), Weiler (1988), Fine (Weis and Fine, 1993) and many others. Scholars of color began to challenge these discourses on the grounds that they ignored race and culture (Gordon, 1995). For some time a growing corpus of research in multicultural education had used culture as a vehicle for analyzing and theorizing about schooling conditions diverse students (Banks, 1971; Banks & Banks, 1995). However, there were serious debates about whether or not multiculturalism or other culture-centered frameworks paid enough attention to issues of inequality and the centrality of race (Ladson-Billings, 2003a; Sleeter & Delgado Bernal, 2002). Education scholars who eventually began to use CRT in their research may have been more heavily influenced by ethnic studies paradigms such as Afrocentric education (Asante, 1991; Lee & Slaughter-Defoe, 1995; Shujaa, 1995) and Chicano education (Valencia, 1997). Linked, of course, to these “race-based epistemologies”, as they were referred to in an influential article published in 1997 by Scheurich & Young, were Black feminist thought (Collins, 1991) and Chicana feminism. The work of critical race studies in education scholars was also heavily influenced by these traditions (Delgado Bernal, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1999). In that regard, critical race studies in education emanates from many epistemological traditions. Noting that some of its traditions are acknowledged while others may be unacknowledged, the CRT genealogy provides an important research tool to draw on the strengths and learn from the weaknesses of previous frameworks (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001).

As we have shown thus far, critical race studies in education is multidisciplinary in its origins, grounded in its legal critique as well as borrowing partly from diverse traditions in education such as critical pedagogy, Black

Studies, Chicano Studies, Black feminist and Chicana feminist thought, as well as multiculturalism and multicultural education.⁵ As we will show, not only is this work diverse in its origins, literature in this area has covered a wide range of areas within education in K-12 and higher education contexts to studies of teaching and teacher education to critical race examinations of bilingual education, criticisms of multicultural education and other curriculum and instruction issues. In this section, we will also review the inroads that CRT has made into education leadership, policy and research, from its use as an interpretive tool qualitative research methodology to race-conscious legislation in higher education.

Framing CRT and Explaining its Relevance to Education⁶

Critical race scholars have worked over the past decade to explore the theoretical and methodological significance of CRT and its role in as well as its links to education theory and practice. In particular, they have explored how critical race studies in the law can specifically be applied to studies of race and education. This has been important given CRT's recent entrée into the field. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995), for example, put forth a set of propositions connecting "race and property as a central construct" toward understanding the "property functions of whiteness" in relation to schooling (pp. 58–59). Their critical race analysis "move[d] beyond the boundaries of the educational research literature to include arguments and new perspectives from law and the social sciences" (1995, p. 48) and demonstrated the centrality of racial inequalities in U.S. schools. Through their analysis they illustrated how racism was a persistent historical and ideological construct that could account for inequalities such as dropout rates and school suspension rates for Blacks and Latinos. They also made important links between property values in the U.S. and the quality of schools. They illustrated how poverty and low social status is racialized with Blacks and other people of color routinely having access to "property" with low value. This, in turns, affects the inherent "value" of the schools attended by those students. Their analysis broadened and provided theoretical grounding to the work of education scholars like Jonathan Kozol (2005) who offered rich descriptive narrative accounts of poor schools in urban areas that were attended, for the most part, by students of color. In short, they were arguing that CRT—with its insistence on exploring both the ideological and material manifestations of racism—could be used to explain the important connections between race and class in American schooling. Unlike previous studies of race and education that were merely descriptive of racist acts, policies, curriculum or teachers and administrators, they helped to explain how a critical analysis of racism in education could lead to the development of new

ways to think about the failure of schools to properly educate minority populations.

Soon after the publication of the article “Toward a Critical Race Theory of Education” in 1995, Tate published a review of CRT that explained the history and theoretical significance of CRT in education research in great detail. Even more important, he connected the history of CRT as a nascent field of inquiry in the law to education research on or about “the other”. Here, he explains:

Both educational research and the law have often characterized ‘raced’ people as intellectually inferior and raised doubts about the benefit of equitable social investment in education and other social services. This paradigmatic kinship built on conceptions of inferiority suggests the need for a theory that explicates the role of race in education and the law (Tate, 1997, p. 202).

After explaining the rationale and the historical precedents for CRT, he discusses the intellectual terrain in which CRT exists. Tate suggests that CRT as a theory of race and racism in the law was influenced by fields like sociology, theology, political science and education. In particular, he argues that significant pioneers in those fields like James Cone, Joyce Ladner, James Banks and others dared to think outside the box and challenge racism in their fields. While CRT is interdisciplinary it also owes much to its predecessor in the law: Critical Legal Studies, which is, based on Marxian and Gramscian critiques of the social order. Legal scholars Patricia Williams and Richard Delgado articulated the strongest critiques of CLS, arguing that rights-based discourse in the law helped bring about significant changes in the law for African-Americans. In addition, Delgado argued that the informality and lack of structure in CLS could lead to more discrimination for minorities. In addition, CLS’s rejection of incremental reform, its over-reliance on reason and ideology and its use of the notion of false consciousness were also problematic for Delgado (1984, 1987). Finally, CLS paid little attention to issues of race and racism (Crenshaw, 1988; Delgado, 1988a, b). Instead class was the major tool of analysis. Similar critiques have been levied against critical theorists in education (Ellsworth, 1989; Gordon, 1995). Numerous education scholars—mostly women and scholars of color—have critiqued critical theory’s racial blind spots (Leonardo, 2004; Lynn, 2004) with regard to addressing inequalities in education. CRT scholars began to formulate a discourse that focused on issues of race and racism in the law in the same way that education scholars began to formulate a critique of race and racism in education (Crenshaw, 2002; Tate, 1997). Tate’s historical analysis of CRT helped show how both CRT and educational research and theory are linked. This was important since CRT was relatively unknown to education scholars at the time.

Taylor's characterization of CRT helped illuminate even more links between CRT and critical race research in education. In 1998, Edward Taylor published "A primer on Critical Race Theory" in the *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* that described the history of CRT and discussed how it operates as a form of oppositional scholarship that exposes, debunks and challenges the myth of white normativity in the law. He argued that CRT was a kind of "scholarship of the people" that centralized the experiences of nonwhites in the academy. This way of framing CRT helped link the discourse to legal scholars of color who insisted on examining racism in the law. It helped establish more clearly the notion that CRT was by, for and about people of color who understood racism from multiple vantage points. Not only had these scholars studied these issues at an intellectual level, they had experienced them personally. This experiential component became a significant aspect of CRT and education research and theory. Although Tate's (1997) work described the intellectual roots of CRT, Taylor's accessibly written article helped to more clearly identify the discourse as one that had originated and remained in communities of color. This may explain why—even today—the overwhelming majority of scholars who employ CRT as a tool of analysis in the law and in education are scholars of color.

After the publication of these three influential articles, several articles were written that explained, defined or framed CRT and its connection to education. For example, Ladson-Billings' "Just what is Critical Race Theory, and what's it doing in a *nice* field like education" (in Parker, Deyhle, Villenas, Crosland, & Nebeker, 1998; Parker, Deyhle & Villenas, 1999), which examined how CRT could be used to examine curriculum, instruction, assessment, school funding and desegregation in education (1999, pp. 20–26). By arguing that CRT had the capacity to challenge and change the terms of the debates in educational scholarship on race, she gave further validity to CRT as a valid construct through which others could explore the perennial problems in education. Lynn and Adams (2002) explored CRT's origins and then discussed its development in the field of education. In doing so, they also explored the history of critical educational research and showed how, as Tate (1997) had shown, race continued to be under-theorized in education. They attempted to move the discourse "towards exemplification of the many ways in which CRT ... currently shape(s) educational research and enable(s) education scholars to analyze educational outcomes that might otherwise remain hidden from view" (p. 88). In essence, they put forth a call for CRT to move beyond analysis to action. This "call to action" would later be explored more fully in the work of Parker and Stovall (2004) who explore how CRT can move from theoretical explication to action that impacts the lives of disenfranchised people of color. Similarly, Bartee and colleagues (2000) used a CRT class seminar

at the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign in 1999 to become involved in the protests in Decatur, Illinois over the treatment of African American high school students who were expelled because they became involved in an incident at a football game. The expulsions of these students symbolized the growing race and class tensions in East Central Illinois schools as well as the increasing inequities levied against African American students and parents. The authors discuss how they used CRT as a “call to action” to not only analyze and critique racist actions taken against African American students in a predominately white school district, but to get involved in the work of social change. This represents a new and exciting turn in critical race studies in education that takes seriously the notion that CRT is a scholarship of, by and for the people that not only engages intellectual concerns about race but encourages scholars to “roll up their sleeves” and take action when necessary.

While many articles sought to frame CRT and identify its possible use in education, others attempted to more clearly situate it within the current discourse on race, culture, ethnicity and schooling. In 2002, Sleeter and Delgado Bernal explored how CRT has influenced research on multicultural education. In the article, they illustrated clear connections between CRT, multicultural education and anti-racist studies which emanated from the UK. They argue that CRT and education—with its origins in the U.S.—can significantly enlarge current debates in multicultural education over the continuing significance of racism in education. In another article published that same year, Lynn (2004) explored CRT’s connections to other “race-based epistemologies” such as Afrocentricity and discussed the way the two perspectives inform each other and create a more holistic approach to studying educational inequality. He argued that while CRT and Afrocentricity have major differences, they share important commonalities such as the challenge to racist practices and the call to construct new methods and ways of conducting research. These studies have played an important role in helping newer scholars understand not only the nature of CRT but the specific ways in which the theory can be used to help illuminate as well as solve educational problems. In short, studies that have framed CRT and its relevance to education have:

- (1) Drawn important historical links between the work of critical legal scholars and education scholars concerned about racism in education;
- (2) Helped illuminate CRT’s role as a “scholarship of the people” that was by, for about people of color;

- (3) Drawn links between CRT and other “race-based epistemologies” (Scheurich & Young, 1997), and shown how CRT can add to current debates over the links between schooling and inequality; and
- (4) Pushed critical race scholars in education to view CRT and education scholarship as both as a form of academic scholarship as well as a form of activism. In short, these publications have provided opportunities for scholars influenced by a wide range of traditions to explore CRT more deeply and link it to educational policy and practice more broadly. In addition, they have provided newer scholars with a “road-map” for thinking within and beyond the current the boundaries of critical race research in education. In other words, they have provided a framework for how one might use CRT as a way to illuminate or solve existing problems in education. However, by pushing against those boundaries, these studies have challenged CRT in education scholars to expand their notions regarding what it means to conduct research that has relevance to and for the lives of the disenfranchised.

Not only have CRT and education researchers explored CRT's connections to education, they have used CRT to explore specific issues in education such as: qualitative research methods, pedagogy and practice, the schooling experiences of marginalized students of color, and the efficacy of race-conscious education policy. Critical race scholars in education critically interrogate the role of race and racism in all aspects of their work and stress the need for further research that continues in this regard.

CRT and Qualitative Research in Education

Critical race scholars in education have made important contributions to the study of qualitative research in education. While calling attention to the inherent racism in qualitative research, they have offered new visions for how to conduct qualitative research in education that is sensitive to the needs of marginalized communities of color. In a special issue of the *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* in 1998, Parker along with Deyhle, Villenas and Nebeker (Parker et al., 1998; see also Parker et al., 1999) addressed a variety of issues relevant to educational research and practice. They explored issues such as: Native American sovereignty and education history, the development of a “first nations” methodology in qualitative research, Interest-Convergence theory and Affirmative Action, the legal history of academic tracking in U.S. schools, and racial identity and consciousness. This series of articles, which later became a book, explored the significance of race, nation, culture, language and the significance of its link to the qualitative investigation of

communities of color in the U.S. Even more important, these articles illustrate how experience—particularly experience with oppression—plays an important role in shaping one's subjectivity and hence his or her ability to conduct research in certain contexts.

Ladson-Billings also explored how CRT helps to inform debates about the relevancy of "ethnic epistemologies" in qualitative research (2000). She historically situated CRT within in a multidisciplinary context and made specific recommendations for how CRT can be employed to help us challenge "mainstream orthodoxy" in educational research and practice. She outlined the benefits of a CRT approach to qualitative research:

The "gift" of CRT is that it unapologetically challenges the scholarship that would dehumanize and depersonalize us. ... In CRT the researcher makes a deliberate appearance in his or her work ... The deeply personal rendering of social science that CRT scholars bring to their work helps break open the mythical hold that traditional work has on knowledge ... CRT helps to raise some important questions about the control and production of knowledge...particularly knowledge about people and communities of color (p. 272, 2000). She outlined how CRT might be viewed as both theory and method that guides how we view the research context, but also shapes how we conduct research in that setting.

Another journal special issue explored how CRT could influence and shape qualitative research (Lynn, Yosso, Solórzano, & Parker, 2002). These articles explored such issues as: how ethnic or race-based⁷ epistemologies shape and influence our research agendas, how we can use CRT to construct a critical race method in education research, and how traditional research in education demeans and devalues the lives and experiences of students of color. Parker and Lynn (2002) examined the ways in which qualitative studies examined race in educational research and further discussed the utility of using CRT as a tool to not only transform our research practices but also to provide alternatives to inherently racist research practices that further marginalize communities of color. Of particular relevance was the development of a critical race methodology for conducting qualitative research that was articulated by Solórzano and Yosso (2002a, b, c). They define a critical race methodology as:

... a theoretically grounded approach to research that (a) foregrounds race and racism in all aspects of the research process; ... (b) challenges the traditional research paradigms, texts, and theories used to explain the experiences of students of color; (c) offers a liberatory or transformative solution to racial, gender, and class subordination; and (d) focuses on the racialized, gendered, and classed experiences of students of color. Furthermore, it views these experiences as sources of strength and (e) uses the interdisciplinary knowledge base of ethnic studies,

women's studies, sociology, history, humanities, and the law to better understand the experiences of students of color.(Solórzano & Yosso, 2002c, p. 24).

According to the authors, a critical race methodology in educational research can provide the necessary impetus for significant changes in the way that communities of color are studied and written about. Parker, along with Lopez (2003), further explored the link between CRT and qualitative research methodology. The book includes discussions regarding issues such as: racial identity and personal narrative in writing and conducting research on race; the invisibility of marginalized communities of color in the research process and the role that CRT can play in helping to enhance research methodologies and race-conscious policies in higher education. Another special issue of *The International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* (Marx, 2003) explores how whiteness can be used as pedagogical construct through which to more deeply examine the role of racial identity for white scholars conducting qualitative research. Scholars in this special issue ask questions such as: (1) Can CRT can be used as a tool by white researchers to deconstruct traditional inherent racist forms of qualitative research in order to reconstruct newer more socially just methods? And (2) What is the role of white educational researchers and practitioners in creating research that helps move us toward a more just society (2003). Qualitative critical race researchers in education have moved beyond post-modern and critical theory to explore issues of identity, culture, language, and nation impact the research process. Even more important, they have explored how the local knowledge of communities of color shapes our understanding about the best ways to conduct research in oppressed communities. Finally, they have begun to articulate how social science research on race along with the personal narratives or *testimonios*⁸ of communities of color can be used to construct a critical race method that provides specific guidance about how to conduct research that is sensitive to the needs of these communities. Brayboy (2005) has discussed the idea of tribal-CRT that combines the critical race theory legal critique of racism and the law with the stories of tribal nation groups. He argues that narrative and storytelling constitute the “theory” of tribal nations and that this should be given legitimacy as an interpretive lens to view and critique racism against American Indians in education.

CRT and Teaching: Toward Critical Race Pedagogies

CRT literature that examines teaching looks at the practices and beliefs of teachers in K-12 classrooms. They have used CRT as a means through which to explore the experiences of teachers and students of color in U.S. classrooms. They have also used the knowledge that teachers of color of

possess to construct “critical race pedagogies” that construct a critique of racism in education while also putting forth some ideas about how to address race and racism in the classroom. Solórzano (1997) was one of the first scholars to publish an article in an education journal that used CRT as a framework for exploring teacher education. His first paper in this area, “Images and words that wound: Critical Race Theory, stereotyping and teacher education” uses CRT as a framework for exploring this country’s racist history and then links this analysis to a discussion about the state of teacher education. Finally, he makes important recommendations regarding the ways teachers can challenge the “racial stereotyping” of k-12 students of color in the teacher education classroom. Ladson-Billings (1999, 2005) used CRT as a means to review the “teaching for diversity” literature in teacher education. She argued, as she had in the past (1998) that while the “teaching for diversity” literature had a number of strengths, issues of race were not at the forefront of many of those discussions. In the final analysis, she illuminated the work of critical race pedagogues in education who attempted to openly and consistently address issues of race in their work. By exploring the work of teacher educators, she situated teacher education within a critical race analysis that not only offered a critique of practices that ignore or demonize race and racial dialogue, but also outlined the specific ways in which some teacher educators—namely Black women teacher educators who employ critical perspectives on schooling and inequality—teach in ways that acknowledge and take stock of issues of race and racism in education. This work, along with her work on culturally relevant pedagogy (1994, 1995) opened the door for forthcoming discussions about the important links between CRT and liberatory teaching practices. Lynn (1999) used CRT as a framework to explore the beliefs of “progressive” African American teachers. He found that teachers’ beliefs about: the necessary links between race, class and gender, the importance of confronting racism in their schools and in their classrooms and their commitment to utilizing their classrooms as spaces through which they could help children appreciate their culture were consistent with themes in CRT that speak to interconnections between race and other axes of domination as well as CRT’s political/activist commitment to ending racial inequality (1999). Borrowing from the work of Ladson-Billings (1994, 1995), Foster (1998) and others he coined the term “Critical Race Pedagogy” as a way to describe the nature of pedagogical practice that is grounded in the struggle to end racism and other forms of subordination. In the same vein, Iseke-Barnes (2000) used CRT as a way to “decolonize” mathematics education. The author suggests that ethnomathematics—a way of teaching math that considers more deeply issues of ethnicity, culture and language—might help math educators to address inherent racial blind spots and biases in mathematics. Revilla and

Asato (2002) used CRT as a tool to explore how the implementation of California's "English-only" laws affected the teaching of Latino/a students. They examined the contradictory implementation strategies for Proposition 227 with a focused case study of its impact on teacher beliefs and classroom practices in one schools. The authors take a close look inside several formerly bilingual classrooms where California public school teachers attempt to deal with the aftermath of anti-bilingual legislation. Lynn (2002) used CRT as a tool to explore (1) how the literature on teachers and teaching has viewed African American teachers, males in particular; and (2) how African American male teachers envision teaching as a social change strategy. In short, he argues that African-American male teachers view teaching as a form of "racial uplift" (Ladson-Billings, 1995). He discusses how this view of teaching is consistent with those of earlier Black women activists who viewed teaching as part of the struggle for social and political change on behalf of all African Americans (Johnson, 2000). Morris (2001) looks at African American teachers' critical race perspectives on enactment of desegregation policy in St. Louis, Missouri public schools. In doing so, he examines the way African American teachers were affected by school "integration" and how this may have caused more harm to the African American community than we may have understood. He argues that school leaders must look to African American teachers when making important decisions about how to best improve schools.

Incorporating perspectives of previous scholars on CRT and pedagogy, Writer (2002) draws on CRT as a tool to explore the history of American "terrorism" against Native-Americans and then proposes specific pedagogical strategies that can help educators use CRT as a tool to help students become critical of media representations of Native Americans. In addition, Writer (2002) makes suggestions about how teachers can help students rethink notions about terrorism in order to more fully understand the Native American condition in the U.S. In relation to the research on teachers, Lopez (2003) has explored how CRT can be used to help us re-think traditional models of educational leadership by focusing on how race is "silenced" in schools. He argues that a fuller engagement between educational leadership discourse and the "politics" of race in schools would help to develop better leadership practices. In a recent book, Ladson-Billings (2003b) examines policies that impact the teaching of Social Studies in U.S. classrooms. She explains:

This volume is designed to make race a centerpiece of our understanding about social studies. The contributors discuss the way the curriculum, the profession, the policies and even the new embrace of technology confirm to a racial script. By employing critical race theory, the contributing authors prevent readers

from casting their gaze [in] some other direction to explain the persistent inequities we find in our schools and in the society (p. 8, Ladson-Billings, 2003b).

Not only do the chapters examine and critique race-blind social studies pedagogies, they use CRT as a method to critique curriculum and policy that shape classroom practice. The book represents an evolution of CRT studies that focus on pedagogy in the way that it links policy and practice.

In general, critical race studies of teaching and teacher education call attention to racist classroom practices that not only marginalize students of color but they address the ways in which local and national policies impact teaching in America's diverse classrooms. They ask important questions such as: "How does racism shape and influence how teachers interact with minority youth?" and "How can a critical interrogation and understanding of race and racism transform our classroom practices?" Hence, the development of a critical race pedagogy is a way of addressing inequalities in classrooms as well as providing some information about the best way to move forward in order to transform our classrooms into places where minority students might thrive. Much of what critical race pedagogues do is based on information provided by critical race scholars whose work focuses on the lives of marginalized students.

The Lives of Marginalized Students

A number of CRT scholars focus on the lives of students of color. Chief among them is Garret Duncan (2002a, b), who uses CRT as a way to explore the social conditions for Black males in "integrated" supposedly successful schools. In his ethnographic studies of a large high-performing high school in the Midwest, Duncan draws on CRT to ethnographically and theoretically explore how African American boys can be placed "Beyond Love" in a school that is otherwise recognized for its wonderfully caring and supportive atmosphere. The author uses CRT to tease out the inherent contradictions in schooling for African American males. To that extent, Duncan's story is one about the subtle but painful microaggressions that lead to feelings of inadequacy and eventually decreased levels of performance in school for Black males and other racially marginalized students in schools.

Other CRT scholars have used CRT as a tool to examine the resources that students bring to school in their quest for survival in difficult and unsupportive environments. Borrowing from Luis Moll's "Funds of Knowledge" (2001) approach, Delgado Bernal (2002), for example, uses

CRT as a way to explore the cultural wealth that Mexican-American students bring to school. Citing the ways schools devalue and ignore students' cultural wealth, she cites pertinent examples of the ways in which schools could better employ student knowledge about their own lives as a way to improve achievement. In a similar manner, Fernandez (2002) uses CRT to help explain and describe the resiliency of a Puerto-Rican American youth attending a large urban public school in the Midwest. She uses a series of ethnographic interviews with this youth as a means to explore his life history and his views about the meaning of education. She finds that he has strong beliefs in the value and importance of education. She laments about the degree to which schools force students to act against their own personal beliefs about the inherent value of education. Similarly, DeCuir and Dixon (2004) used CRT to analyze the impact of racism on the lives of Black students at a predominantly White private school. They used CRT to critique a "whiteness as property" space of the school research site, and to conduct interviews with the Black students who attended this school in order to obtain their perspectives on how racism impacted their daily lives as students. For example, the concept of interest convergence (i.e., where Black civil/social rights are only token given only when Whites have a decided self-interest gain, Bell, 1980a, b) was part of DeCuir and Dixon's CRT analysis. Some of the Black students who were recruited as athletes were also academically gifted, yet they were seen by the larger student body and administrators as only good to enhance the sports status of the school. In addition, DeCuir and Dixon's use of CRT in this integrated school showed how the concept of colorblindness worked through the school's administration as they downplayed a racial incident with disciplinary ramifications, while Black students were the only ones subjected to school rules of "racelessness" with no outward displays of Black pride and culture during graduation ceremonies. The importance of their work lies in the power of CRT to uncover how racism works against Black students at elite school settings and poses larger questions about how counter-narratives can provide evidence of the effects of racism in schools.

In addition to uncovering how racism shapes the schooling experiences of students of color in U.S. schools, CRT scholars whose work focuses on the lives and experiences of students of color have also explored successful schools and their impact on students of color. Grounded in Bell's (1987) notions about how schools must be culturally grounded and connected to the communities in which they exist, Morris (2004) conducted research on successful Black schools. Morris argues that a major part of what makes these two schools successful is a strong connection between the school and the family/community. The school welcomes Black parents; the teachers and administrators work cooperatively to create successful bonds with the

students and their families and create connections with the school communities in which they are located. Second, there is a strong presence of teachers who care about their students and their academic and cultural success and knowledge-building. Finally, there is a love and respect for the students. This creates a school climate that fosters learning and a sense of community. Morris chronicles how students of color flourished in this supportive and loving context (Morris, 2004).

Critical race studies in education scholars whose work focuses on the lives of marginalized students demonstrate how CRT can be used to give voice to students who would otherwise remain nameless and voiceless. Not only are the experiences of these students illuminated and brought to life, CRT helps to connect these experiences to the experiences of others sharing similar plights. It also illuminates the ways in which these students' experiences with oppression symbolize important social, cultural and political struggles in the larger society. This is important given our society's tendency to blame children of color and their families for their failure in school when schools are woefully inadequate and lacking in the necessary resources to help the majority of children become successful in the larger society. Critical race scholars in education make this point abundantly clear. However, Morris's work illustrates that using CRT as a tool to study student's lives may also lead us to think more forthrightly about the kinds of environments that *do* support the emotional, social as well as the intellectual development of students of color.

CRT and K-12 Education Policy

Educational policy scholars have used CRT to explore the history of race-conscious educational policy in the U.S. In addition, they have examined how practices, beliefs and ideals in education have affected racially marginalized students over time. In 1993, for example, Tate conducted a "Critical Race Analysis of the Proposed National Assessment in Mathematics". He not only introduced CRT to the education community, he also used it as a tool to expose the racist underpinnings of standardized testing in the U.S. (Tate, 1993). In another article (1995), he uses CRT to critically analyze "opportunity-to-learn standards" on mathematical teaching and learning in urban schools. He argues that such standards are inadequate if they fail to take into account the rapid changes that are taking place in the field of mathematics, more generally. In addition, he argues that issues of instruction, culture and the economic and policy context of districts must be considered before educators can successfully implement such standards. He published a number of other articles that critically analyzed math policy and curriculum that sometimes employed culture-centered frameworks as a way

to explore mathematics teaching in urban classrooms or to develop models of “culturally relevant teaching” in mathematics (1994). In addition, Tate, Ladson-Billings, and Grant (1993) used a mathematical model to explore the hidden costs of *Brown*. These authors conduct a historiography of the *Brown* decision that uses Kimberle Crenshaw’s (1988) notion of expansive versus restrictive reform as a way to explain the impact of the *Brown* decision on racially marginalized communities. According to Crenshaw, the expansive view of reform sees reform as a way to address historical wrongs, while the restrictive view casts reform as only addressing present needs and concerns. They argue that the 1954 *Brown* decision, while it purported to address historical racial wrongs, did not have a vision for crafting a sound educational future for African Americans (Tate, Ladson-Billings, & Grant, 1993). In a more recent study, Love (2004) explored how *Brown* relied on majoritarian notions of “white intellectual superiority” as a way to seek support for its plans to strike down *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1899). She constructs a “critical race counterstory” that explores the failed efforts of African Americans to overcome the achievement gap problem (2004). In doing so, she helps explore how racism remained at the core of decisions to integrate schools in 1954. Even more important, she illustrates how this has impacted schools today.

Other education policy scholars use CRT as a tool not to examine educational policy specifically, but to examine specific discourses, practices and beliefs that have given shape to oppressive curricula in schools. Yosso (2002) and Jay (2003) use CRT as a tool to deconstruct curricular hegemony in education. For example, Yosso (2002) conducts a critical race analysis of traditional forms of curriculum and its impact on Chicano/a students. She illustrates how CRT can be used both to deconstruct and to rebuild a curriculum for Chicano/a students. Yosso provides an in-depth overview of CRT perspectives on curricular structures, processes and discourses, in order to critique traditional curricular forms in the U.S. She also draws on CRT and LatCrit Theory to reconstruct a more socially just Critical Race Curriculum. In a similar manner, Jay (2003) uses CRT to argue that we must re-examine the hidden racial curriculum of schooling. She suggests that while schools often argue for progressive multicultural curricula, they severely limit the “transformative possibilities” of these curriculum policies. She critiques multicultural education’s lack of attention to this contradiction and challenges multiculturalists to be mindful of this contradiction.

In general, k-12 education policy studies on CRT have analyzed the history of race-conscious education policy and examined its impact on present day arrangements in schools. They have, for example, employed a variety of methods to explore and critique the creation and subsequent implementation of *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954). Even more

important, they have used their critical race critiques of Brown to explore how beliefs about how notions of white intellectual supremacy have given shape to current discussions of the minority achievement gap. In addition, they have explored the ways in which curriculum as education policy and practice has not only failed to connect to communities of color but has failed to consider the perspectives that children of color bring to school. Yosso's development of a critical race curriculum, as mentioned previously, forces us to consider how racism has shaped both the development and the implementation of school curricula. Even more important, it asks us to consider new approaches to understanding not only the contributions of various groups but how to create a more inclusive environment in schools.

Critical Race Studies in Education: Looking Toward the Future

As we have shown, critical race studies in education questions a range of assumptions and tenets upon which schooling rests like: (1) We live in a fair and just society; (2) Schools are the great equalizer of the races; and that (3) Race can only be used only as a descriptor in to merely describe, analyze and examine educational inequalities. Not only do they question these assumptions, they actively seek to create more humane discourses, structures and institutions aimed at creating a society that is free of racism. Critical race scholars in education have transformed the way race is understood and addressed in debates over the links between schooling and inequality. Race is no longer viewed as a secondary or tertiary unit of analysis that gives way to class or gender as explanatory tools of analysis. Even more important, they have relied on the legal scholarship on race in the U.S. to illustrate the important ways in which race acts as a structural phenomenon along side and sometimes in concert with other structures of domination such as class and gender to transform the way in which we understand racism's impact on a number of areas including education policy, teaching and teacher education, qualitative research and lives of racially marginalized students of color. This is important given Ladson-Billings and Tate's important reflection in 1994 that race was "untheorized" in the field of education. Some twelve years later, there exist an abundance of articles, books, special journal issues that illustrate the multiple ways in which race and racism can be understood and used as tools of transformation in education.

SOCIOLOGY AND ITS POTENTIAL IMPACT ON CRITICAL RACE STUDIES IN EDUCATION

While some would suggest that critical race scholars in education must dig even deeper into the "legal literature" on race in the law in order to

accurately represent CRT, we believe that the field must be interdisciplinary—moving beyond the law and borrowing from fields such as sociology. As we have argued, much of the work of critical race scholars in the law is indelibly shaped and influenced by sociologist, W.E.B. Dubois whose seminal works *The Souls of Black Folk* and *Black Reconstruction* influenced an entire generation scholars with interests in exploring the sociological meanings of race in the U.S. context. Dubois had a vision that sociology could be utilized as means through which to further explore the Black condition in the U.S. and help us to move toward racial equality (1980). He was committed to fashioning both an intellectual and political movement to examine race and racism through intensive empirical study of the social conditions of African Americans. Contemporary sociologists such as Joe Feagin (Feagin, 2000, see also Feagin & Vera, 1995) L. Janelle Dance (2002), Amanda Lewis (2003) and Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (2001, 2003, see also Doane & Bonilla-Silva 2003) have been engaging in some of the most innovative and provocative research on race in the academy.

Eduardo Bonilla-Silva has critiqued what critical race theorists refer to as the “the color-blind rationale” in his sociological analysis of the evolution of racism and “race-talk” in the U.S. In doing so, he pushes for a more comprehensive structural framework that explores the ways in which race operates in the contemporary post-civil rights era. This contemporary structuralist perspective calls for an examination of racism as an ideology that is part of a larger racialized social system that apportions “differential economic, political, social, and even psychological rewards to groups along racial lines; lines that are socially constructed” (Bonilla Silva, 1997, p. 474). He also (2003) describes the ideology of color-blind racism which, he argues, utilizes hidden codes to mask racist ideas and practices. Second, he contends that racial stratification is becoming increasingly complex with lighter skinned and phenotypically white persons of color ostensibly taking up the status as “honorary” or “secondary” whites who further support and give credence racist practices that exclude the majority of darker skinned persons. The colorblind rationale is substantiated and propelled by this phenomenon. This provides further justification for how and why deeply racist thoughts, actions can remain hidden and the deficiencies of racial minorities are explained in cultural rather than racial terms (Bonilla Silva, 2003). Critical race scholars in education might use Bonilla-Silva’s work to strengthen existing arguments about the primacy and ever-changing nature of race and racism in America’s classrooms where children of color are consistently viewed as lacking the necessary social and cultural capital to be successful in schools.

In addition, to deepening our understanding of the ever-changing nature of race and racism, sociologists of race use quantitative methods—construed

by many as positivist in their very orientation (Onwuegbuzie, 2000)—to actually measure and quantify racial discrimination. While the majority of critical race scholars in education tend to employ qualitative methodology in their work, critical race scholars in education could use quantitative methods to measure racism's impact on students of color.⁹ Sociologists of race have historically used quantitative practices such as multiple regression analyses, natural experiments and audits to study and measure racial discrimination in the labor market and in housing (Holzer & Ludwig, 2003). These studies have led to the development of decades of hard "evidence" of racial discrimination in these key arenas. Holzer and Ludwig argue that similar studies might be conducted in the education arena in order to not only show the relationship between student characteristics and teacher practices, for example, but to show how teachers and others make decisions about the education of students of color that are based on race.

Some education scholars have employed experimental design methods as a way to measure racial inequality in education. Based on the work of sociologists like Walter Allen, Mitchell (2001) used an experimental design to test whether or not race would influence teachers' decisions about which students belonged in an advanced algebra course. Teachers were told that they had been invited to choose 12 students to participate in the course. They had photographs and academic profiles of 36 randomly selected students who were white, Asian and African American. There were two groups of students: a high achieving group and a gifted group. Within both groups, there were equal numbers of Blacks, Asian Americans and whites. The study found that more than 73% of the teachers selected white and Asian males for participation in the course, even when their overall academic profiles were inferior to those of more academically capable Black students. Even worse, more than half of the teachers who made biased decisions only examined the profiles of Asian American and white students when making their final decisions about who should participate in the course. The study offers irrefutable evidence of teacher bias against African American students. Studies such as this one have much to contribute to our understanding of how race operates in America's classrooms. As society becomes increasingly diverse and racism becomes more and more difficult to investigate, explore and understand, we will need to rely on a variety of methods, disciplines and epistemological traditions in order to render effective and transformative analyses of and solutions to racial inequities in education (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Onwuegbuzie, 2000). Given sociology's history of evidencing discrimination in the larger society, critical race scholars in education could stand to gain a great deal from this area of study.

Sociologists of race deeply contextualize race and racism by historicizing race within the context of unequal social relations. Next, they help to shed light on the inextricable links between race and class and explore how race can be manipulated and constructed to benefit certain groups and disadvantage others. Like critical race theorists in the law, sociologists of race call for a deeper understanding of racism that locates it at the very center of social, political and economic relations in society. In addition, sociological analyses of race force us to view race as a malleable social construct that fluctuates and changes in character over time with shifting economic and political realities. Finally, sociologists use a variety of methods to measure racial discrimination in the broader society that have impacted federal policy on housing and employment discrimination.

Borrowing from both critical race theorists in the law and sociologists of race, Critical race studies in education could be defined as a critique of racism as a system of oppression and exploitation that explores the historic and contemporary constructions and manifestations of race in our society with particular attention to how these issues are manifested in schools. Critical race studies in education then—like critical pedagogy—is ultimately concerned with employing multiple methods and borrowing from diverse traditions in the law, sociology, ethnic studies and other fields to formulate a robust analysis of race and racism as a social, political and economic system of advantages and disadvantages accorded to social groups based on their skin color and status in a clearly defined racial hierarchy. Critical race scholars in education are concerned with how schools act as racial stratifiers. They are committed to conducting both qualitative and quantitative research that exposes racist beliefs, practices and structures in schools and the broader society. However, they are also committed to using their critiques as a basis to create more equitable and humane discourses, practices and structures that will enable racially marginalized students and other school people to overcome and ultimately destroy existing obstacles to their freedom.

TOWARD A CRITICAL RACE PRAXIS

We believe that a redefining of critical race studies in education might lead toward the development of a critical race praxis in education and society that calls on progressive race lawyers to work with other scholars and community activists to attempt to bring consensus among different racial groups of color in order to see common ways in which they can use the law and political pressure to advocate for shared communities of interest (Yamamoto, 1997). For example, the problem of inequities in school funding in California in general and in San Francisco in particular is an

avenue for coalition building in the post-Brown era through CRT-praxis as multi-racial groups link along race and social class lines in order to legally challenge state school funding and city inequities for education. Other examples of continued critical race praxis could include: more scholarship on the hidden costs of racism, more litigation against the re-segregation of our society and our education system, transactional work, direct representation and services, community organizing, and using equity audits to detail the gaps in education services to students of color and provide avenues for remedies. Critical race studies in education and CRT lawyering have both offensive and defensive goals. Under offensive goals, the use of litigation can seek to expand the Supreme Court's definition of racism and racial injury. By defensive goals, what is meant is the use of the law and education to safeguard the set of race-specific protections currently recognized at law (through the 2003 affirmative action U.S. Supreme Court decision) and which are under attack from both the private U.S. citizenry and U.S. government. A critical race praxis in education in the post-Brown era attempts to address the shortcomings of the contemporary civil rights movement and combat the continued erosion of civil rights victories that were won in the 1960s. More than 50 years after the Brown decision, racism is far from gone in our schools. Students of color continue to ask the question "How come we here?" in search of some solution as to why they continue to be disadvantaged on the basis of skin color and social class. The disparate allocation of resources will continue until we are willing to look beyond our decisions and not only use research to examine the effects of those decisions but assume the responsibility to enact corrections as well. Critical race studies in education in the post-Brown era will help in that regard.

NOTES

1. The journal *Race, Ethnicity & Education* recently devoted an entire issue to an examination of critical race research in education. The issue included a review of the literature in CRT and education that included an analysis of some of the CRT and education studies published in the last 10 years (Dixson and Rousseau, 2005). The authors skillfully interwove critical race legal scholarship with relevant education studies to examine how critical race research in education has explored race and racism through the use of voice, color blindness, and notions of equality. The authors argue that, in their opinion, many of the articles they found only "alluded to the legal antecedents of CRT" and because of this they only "included articles that built upon or were clearly tied to the legal literature and tenets of CRT in education as suggested by Ladson-Billings and Tate" (p. 10). In this review, we recognize the important contributions that Ladson-Billings and Tate and others have made to the development of this field. As we illustrate later on in the review, they can be credited with founding this area of study. We also examine how CRT has moved into other areas of education research, from qualitative study and the emphasis on narrative and counter-story, to its

impact in analyzing and interpreting the effects of educational policies and practice in K-12 and higher education settings.

2. The categories "first generation" and "second generation" are used only as way to illustrate how CRT has evolved since the publication of Tate's important article in 1997. We recognize that there may be significant overlap and even points of contradiction. For example, Delgado (2003a) claims that second generation scholarship is marked by a persistent focus on "discourse analysis" rather than racism itself. However, it is important to point out that one of the earliest publications in the CRT literature *Critical Race Theory, Assaultive Speech and the First Amendment* (Matsuda et al., 1993) offered an in-depth analysis of the role of hate-speech in the propagation of racial inequality in the U.S. Moreover, while Tate (*personal communication*) argues that educational research in CRT is more influenced by second generation scholarship in CRT, Carbado argues that educational research, at least as it was represented by a set of papers published in the journal *Equity & Excellence in Education* (Lynn & Adams, 2002), reflects the arguments made by first generation CRT scholars. Although these areas reflect some movement and growth within in CRT, they may not necessarily reflect the nature of CRT in education research, which we will discuss in greater detail later.
3. Personal Communication, talk given at Race and the Law Conference at the UCLA Law school, (February 2000)
4. Personal communication at the Tanner Lecture Series at the University of Utah, March 1996.
5. It has been argued that critical race theory fails to draw on previous landmark works of (for example) Black scholars and activist such as W.E.B. Dubois and Carter G. Woodson. Furthermore, CRT can be seen as falling short at making current positive change in the interest of people of color to combat the reality of racism and social class exploitation (Delgado, 2003b). While it is beyond the scope of this essay to comment extensively on this debate, we will show how CRT has influenced a wide range of areas of focus in education.
6. Parts of the section were taken from Lynn and Adams (2002). *Critical Race Theory and Education: Recent Developments in the Field. Equity & Excellence in Education.*
7. In 1997, Scheurich and Young wrote an article where they described Critical Race Theory, Black Feminist Thought and Afrocentricity as race-based epistemologies that challenged racism in qualitative research. In an article published in 2000, Ladson-Billings refers to Critical Race Theory as an "ethnic epistemology" because it is borne out of the experiences of "ethnic" peoples. We will use the term race-based epistemology since critical race studies in education is ultimately about engaging important questions of race of racism in education, the law and in the broader society.
8. In 2001, the Latina Feminist Group jointly wrote a book entitled *Telling to Live: Latina Feminist Testimonios* on Duke University Press. The term "testimonios" means telling the story of one's life. These stories are usually tales of "loss and liberation", to quote Sara Lawrence Lightfoot. They also speak to the storyteller's experiences with injustice and oppression.
9. Numerous higher education scholars have used quantitative methods to offer a critical race analysis of higher education. In particular, Dolores Delgado Bernal and Octavio Villalpando (2002) have used trend data in higher education to show how higher education is racially segregated with scholars of color being heavily concentrated in a few fields such as education. This article does not explore the research in higher education.

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