Consciousness of Race, History, and Culture

Ellen Durrigan Santora
University of Alabama

The real history of black activism in the South is found in the substantive accomplishments of common people, accomplishments grounded in traditions of community mobilization and organization and the long-term development of leadership within the ranks of ordinary women and men. In part, the legacy of Ella Baker and Septima Clark is their belief that people who learn to have faith in themselves collectively are capable of forging a liberatory vision that will sustain them in challenging and overcoming oppression. According to Jacqueline Jones (1985), teaching had always stimulated southern black women's active commitment in the fight for social justice. They could hardly overlook the obstacles their slave ancestors had to overcome in order to become literate. Even after emancipation and the involvement of northern missionaries in black education, educating black children evoked the admonishment of white southerners. Consequently, African American teachers were energized by the reality of Jim Crow to perform their duties with a sense of their own and their students' blackness. They pioneered on a "frontier of racial group consciousness" (Jones, 1985, p. 144).

As a contemporary African American feminist educator, bell hooks[1] (1989) acknowledges the presence of what she calls a pedagogy of liberation in her favorite high school teacher, Miss Annie Mae Moore. As an African-American teacher in the South's segregated public school system, Miss Moore was:

> Passionate in her teaching, confident that her work in life was a pedagogy of liberation (words that she would not have used but lived instinctively), one that would address and confront our realities as black children growing up in the segregated South, black children growing up within a white-supremacist coulture. Miss Moore knew that if we were to be fully self-realized, then her work . . . was . . . to teach us an oppositional world view — different from that of our exploiters and opressors, a world view that woudl enable us to see ourselves not through the lens of racism and racist stereotypes but one that would enable us to focus clearly and succinctly, to look at ourselves, at the world around us critically—analytically—to see ourselves first and foremost as striving for wholeness, for unity of heart, mind, body and spirit . . . .
>
> Their work was truly education for critical consciousness . . .
>
> [For] to teach in a way that liberates, that expands consciousness, that awakens, is to challenge domination at its very core.
>
> (pp 49-50)

Consideration of hook's narrative elicits an important question concerning the history of African American education -- What frames did black teachers in the South use to mold their students' liberatory visions? As seen through the theoretical lens of African American feminist epistemology, the answer may be as complex and varied as the context and the personalities involved.

This paper uses two narratives, one of an Africa American teacher and the other of a student, alongside the ideas of W. E. B. DuBois and Carter Woodson to better understand those factors which influenced the development of a critical black consciousness in students during the decades prior to the Civil Rights Movement. Because my own lens is distorted by my positionality as a white working class northerner who was recently appointed as a faculty member at a major southern university–one that played an adversarial role in the 1960s battle for the emancipation of African American people–the message of the researched came slowly.

While influenced by the rural poverty of upstate New York and the religious and gender marginalization I had experienced as a youth, I had never known racial discrimination and political disenfranchisement. I was an outsider to the culture I researched; I had never walked in the shoes of an African American teacher, never taught in a segregated school. I could speak with authenticity only in the respect that, as a teacher I, too, had shared in the joys of African American students' inquiry and discovery of the relevance of their own traditions to mainstream academic tradition. I had seen their black consciousness become a part of what defined the social studies and language arts curricula experienced by all my students.

As I undertook this study, historians (e.g., Anderson, 1988; Bullock, 1967) confirmed my initial beliefs about the potential for African American education to develop a collective and critical black consciousness. I reasoned that black education, along with black churches, black organizations, and the black press, must have played a major role in igniting the spirit of liberation that evolved into the African American Civil Rights Movement and that, perhaps, the black consciousness and black history movements provided significant frames for this transformation of consciousness. Thus this narrative is grounded in my search to justify or rectify a believable yet somewhat impetuous theory based upon concepts derived from Paulo Freire's (1970/1983) education as praxis and bell hook's (1989) liberatory practices as they might be applied to education in the Jim Crow South prior to the time of desegregation.

This paper then is a co-narrative of African American educators' efforts to engage students in the construction of a collective consciousness of race at a critical time in their history, 1920-1970, and how that story enlightened my own understanding and deepened my empathy with the penetrating significance of racism in the lives of oppressed people. I conclude that white educational leadership in the world of apartheid both confronted and permeated the culture of the Deep South and, when coupled with the growing attention of middle class blacks

to white values of individual progress and success, intervened to alter the transformative potential of a curriculum of black life, black culture, and black consciousness.

The evidence, while elusive and sometimes contradictory, suggests that both the black consciousness and black history movements challenged mainstream interpretations of history and therefore elevated the spirit of some black schoolchildren. However because the development of racial consciousness was impeded by Jim Crowism, traditions of accommodation, and the creeping influence of a white culture of individual success on middle class blacks, these movements may have contributed less than one would think to the liberatory infrastructure which supported and sustained southern blacks' participation in and leadership of the Civil Rights Movement.

My research focuses on the dual roles of autonomy within a segregated world and leadership in the struggle for social justice and equality within the larger political, social, and economic structures of a culturally pluralistic America. Through an examination of ways in which teachers and students experienced schooling, social justice, and studies of black history and life prior to the court ordered de-segregation of schools, this case study inquires into the potential of a culture-centered curriculum for the emancipation of marginalized groups. In so doing, it engages both the initiatives of great men like Carter G. Woodson and W. E. B. DuBois and the reality faced by African Americans who sought strength from the ability of ordinary people to mobilize in support of a movement. In so doing, it tells the story of teachers who, working at the community level, defined the meaning of black studies and racial consciousness with their students from within the context of racial oppression. It challenges us to understand the essential nature of oppression and ways in which it alters the ability of ordinary people to effect extraordinary change.

Theoretical Grounding

In doing this research, I blend the historiographic traditions of African American womanist[2] history with those of a more traditionally constructed history. By using and quoting extensively from narrative sources generated by African American teachers and students as found in their autobiographical writing and oral history interviews, I grant primacy to the interpretive or subjective side of history; however, to complete the narrative, I align these teachers' and students' experiences with the traditional texts of scholars and educators–texts which emanate from a modernist paradigm whereby objectivity was claimed by masculine scholarship and authorship. Through the methodology employed in researching and writing this chapter, I view knowledge as subjective and conditioned by one's positionality and personal reality and afford scholarship a place along side practical experience and intuitive understanding in the construction of teachers' pedagogical content knowledge as it related to the teaching of black history and culture to black students in the South's segregated black schools.

Racial Consciousness: The Coalescence of Movements

Today we assume that students come to school with a cultural identity that is either conscious or unconscious. Darder (1991) theorizes that many students possess bicultural identities; they identify in varying degrees with both their primary or familial culture and the larger, more dominant culture. The degree to which they affirm their ethnic identity influences their emancipatory interests and empowerment. However during the Jim Crow era, the South's African American students confronted negative cultural images of themselves, images constructed by whites and visible in the attitudes of white educators and the representations and omissions of textbooks written under the guidelines of white publishers.

In Black Boy, Richard Wright (1935/1945) recalls the human emotions connected to his emerging black consciousness.

> Had I been conscious of the full extent to which I was pushing against the current of my environment, I would have been frightened altogether out fo my attempts at writing . . .
>
> I was becoming aware of the thing that the Jim Crow laws had been drafted and passed to keep out of my consciousness . . .
>
> In me was shaping a yearning for a kind of consciousness, a mode of being that the way of life about me said could not be, must not be, and upon which the penalty of death had been placed. Somewhere in the dead of the southern night my life had switched onto the wrong track and, without my knowing it, the locomotive of my heart was rushing down a dangerously steep slope, heading for a collision, heedless of the warning lights that blinked all about me, the sirens and the bells and the screams that filled the air.
>
> (Wright, 1934/1945, pp. 185-187)

During the first few decades of the twentieth century, two black historians, W. E. B. DuBois and Carter Woodson, initiated the slow process of reconstructing and invigorating a racial consciousness among black people and especially black youth at both the pre-collegiate and collegiate levels. They emphasized the contributions of African Americans to the development of American society as a means of combating white racism and as a way of instilling a sense of racial pride in the younger generation (Trotter, 1998). According to Joe Trotter (1998), "By overturning demeaning stereotypes, scholars of black history believed that they could help to complete America's unfinished revolution . . . " (p. 4).

W. E. B. DuBois, Dual Consciousness, and Racial History

DuBois, an Atlanta University professor and political activist, was a pioneer in the fields of black history and sociology. Many considered him the "father" of modern sociological research. He insisted that black colleges and universities assume responsibility for constructing a positive black consciousness by making students aware of their heritage and potential. He believed that African Americans would develop their full potential through group solidarity or a consciousness of themselves as responsible members of the black race who possessed an active sense of and duty to social justice. DuBois also argued that "the possibilities

and advancement of that human being in the world where he is to live and earn a living is of just as much importance in the teaching process as the content of the knowledge taught" (DuBois, 1930/1973, p. 78 as cited in Noffke, July 9-11,1998, p. 3). He encouraged the development of curricula which would teach black students to use their scholarship to seek solutions to the "Negro problem" (DuBois, 1933, 1935).

In his quest to develop proud, self-confident black men and women who would act as leaders in "uplifting the race," and developing its unique cultural "originality," he stressed the importance of focusing on the world of blacks within the broader context of the classical liberal arts curriculum. Troubled by the need to balance or justify the black scholars' double consciousness and identification with their "oppressed race" and their "oppressing country" (DuBois, 1968, p. 169), DuBois felt leadership must be grounded in knowledge related to both. His was a vision of black men and women graduating from college demanding for themselves and their race all the rights and privileges of first-class citizens (Wolters, 1975). Feeling the progress of black people was directly tied to the development of a critical consciousness of race, he opposed the accommodationism of Booker T. Washington fearing that dependence on philanthropy, conciliation, compromise, patience, and skilled industrial work would perpetuate the despair that existed within the "Veil of Color" and secure the subordination of a culture and mystique that were uniquely black (DuBois, 1903/1968). Blacks, DuBois (1897/1970 as cited in Greene, 1988, p. 93) said, needed to seek work, culture, and liberty simultaneously. He believed, that in time, these ideals would converge and that a higher meaning would be found by fostering the traits of black people. In his early writing, he argued that someday, on American soil, "two world races may give each to each other characteristics which both so badly lack" (DuBois, 1903/1968, p. 52).

In addition to teaching and writing, DuBois was an influential activist who argued that black people would continue to face difficulty as long as white people remained in charge of black education. "The time has come when the claims of colored men for the presidency of our Negro schools [colleges and universities] should be considered and considered on the same terms as the claims of white men" (DuBois cited in Wolters, 1975, p. 43). For DuBois, the advent of the 1920s brought the time for turning white domination into black-white cooperation for the good of black students racial and cultural consciousness. As a popular spokesperson for black self-determination, he became a catalyst for the mood of the New Negro as it was demonstrated in student rebellions of the 1920s in black colleges and universities throughout the South (Wolters, 1975).

Kathleen Redding Adams, a student, described DuBois's. "He tried to get over to us what we are going into now, and that is the history and understanding of the African, the different African countries and tribal life" (Hill, 1991, vol. 1, p. 148). His belief in the power of black history was punctuated by his recognition of Negro History Week as the greatest single accomplishment to come out of the Black Renaissance (DuBois, 1940).

While the Hampton-Tuskegee model perpetuated respect, practical skills, manual labor, and a subservient work ethic, W. E. B. DuBois advanced an agenda of African American leadership in opposition to racial injustices and denial and abridgment of civil rights (DuBois, 1903/1968). DuBois's critique was situated within the fertile tradition of a classical higher education such as that established at private historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) founded by a variety of northern churches and missionary groups. It was these private black colleges that most aggressively moved the standard of the black consciousness movement into teacher education and thus into pre-collegiate and vocational education programs.

The Promises of Black History and Culture

Carter Woodson was interested in synchronizing the humanistic approach to education with the need for a history that was relevant to the black experience. He constructed his scholarship on the foundation built by W. E. B. DuBois. The educational theories of Woodson, founder of the Black History Movement, challenged the institution of black schooling's assumption that African Americans should have the same education as members of the white race. He doubted that African Americans could succeed on their own terms if they continued to believe in the natural superiority of whites, a premise, he believed, of white education. In The Mis-education of the Negro, Woodson(1933/1990) challenged white education for black students on three fronts. He abhorred the control exercised over black minds through the elevation of white accomplishments and the academic obliteration or degradation of black achievements. Black studies would correct the racial biases that permeated white scholarship. Second, he declared that industrial training programs such as those offered at Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Institute, intended to economically "uplift" African Americans, were useless. He charged that they either taught skills for jobs which could not be secured by black men and women because of their race, or they trained black men and women in outdated skills. Third, he was dissatisfied with the classical educational programs which promoted discontent with one's own people and ignored the need for "social uplift" (p. 17). "The present system under the control of the whites trains the Negro to be white and at the same time convinces him of the impropriety or the impossibility of his becoming white" (p. 23). Disheartened by a growing class of educated black men who adopted the values and beliefs of the white middle class, Woodson said, "The only question which concerns us here is whether these 'educated' persons are actually equipped to face the ordeal before them or unconsciously contribute to their own undoing by perpetuating the regime of the oppressor" (p. xi). Measured against this standard, he found that many black professionals were more interested in making money than in improving the conditions of African Americans (Woodson, 1934). Woodson goals were not only to document and teach about black experiences and achievements, but through his scholarship and genius for organization and dissemination, he also hoped to invigorate African Americans' sense of personal and racial identity, instill in them a consciousness of their membership in a racial community, and remind them of the positive power of solidarity and resistance in confronting social change.

Frances Mary Albrier describes Woodson, the professor, and the program he taught at Howard University.

> When I met Carter Woodson, it was at Howard. Carter Woodson talked to students about black history and their ancestry.
>
> He said we should look into our backgrounds of the history that we are losing and we should look into our backgrounds in slavery and in Africa. He talked a great deal about roots, as Alex Haley does today.
>
> . . . He would tell us about the homeland, Africa—about the Zulu tribes and other tribes that the American Negro people belong to . . .
>
> He often said to me, "You should talk more to your grandmother and get the history of where she came from, [sic] and he talked to me about Africa . . .
>
> [In recounting the meaning of his lessons to her, Albrier said,] we lost a lot of history by not recording it. If I had known now, I'd have gotten quite a bit of history, because there were a lot of old black ladies who lived near us and who knew their histories and African background . . .
>
> My grandmother always said that she was *Somebody* and she came from being *Somebody* (emphasis in original). My grandmother knew more of her history than she told us. I wasn't aware of the facts to question her as I would today. She had a feeling of pride in her background that gave her life meaning. Many people lost that pride because they didn't know their history.[3]
>
> (Hill, 1991, vol. 1, pp. 244-245)

Woodson's greatest legacy to the public school education of African students is his founding and involvement with the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History (ASNLH) and its off-springs, *The Journal of Negro History*, *The Negro History Bulletin*, written solely for K-12 teachers, and Negro (Black) History Week. Through the popularization of black history among both black and white Americans fostered by the ASNLH, its activities and publications, Woodson and other black historians hoped to bridge the gap between academic scholarship and the needs of ordinary African Americans for a collective racial identity. The fact that most of the programs initiated by the Association are still with us today (Goggin, 1993) bears witness to their success.

Understanding that schooling was only a small part of the education of African American communities; the worldviews of DuBois and Woodson led them outside the institution to see its effects on their race and its culture. They saw young people being educated to maintain their role in the caste system, to accommodate themselves to the larger culture, to constrain themselves in their socioeconomic and civic endeavors. But they also saw the need for education to exist outside as well as inside the classroom. They saw the power of studying African American culture and work both historically and ethnographically. They believed that education had to be accountable for social reconstruction; they viewed education as a form of praxis (Freire, 1970/1993).

Picking up the Threads of my Own Story

These messages are powerful and convincing. Could training a black leadership by using their own history and culture discourage self-centered ideas of progress and success and encourage collective responsibility for the good of the African American race? Woodson and DuBois grounded my belief in the potential efficacy of a black studies curriculum in encouraging the development of a black consciousness based on a shared understanding of the history of the black race as a dialectic of negotiated opposites: oppression and resistance, slavery and emancipation, subordination and solidarity, prohibitions and progress, experiencing intolerance and practicing tolerance, and segregation and self-determination.

How could DuBois's and Woodson's criticism of the white curriculum and their descriptions of the needs of black folks for knowledge of the life and culture of African Americans fail to ignite the consciousness of each and every black teacher? Realizing that revolutions have, in part, been shaped by emerging theories about the plight of the underclass, the subordinated, and/or the colonized, I believed black studies would demonstrate the value of a common history of black oppression as well as black contributions in girding southern black teachers and their students for the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and 1970s. In my naiveté, I somehow envisioned a "take-it-and-run" appeal. In part that happened; in part, it did not.

Case Studies in the Development of Black Consciousness in Jim Crow Classrooms

Black history and black studies moved into the curriculum of both historically black college and black public high schools in the "South during the 1930s as a result of converging forces that sought to resist the racial subordination of white paternalism and the oppression of Jim Crowism and to racially "uplift" African Americans through the re-invention, reconstruction, and re-focusing of race consciousness, unity, leadership, and self-reliance from within the black community. Teachers' awareness of textbooks' inadequate attention to the history and culture of African American people and increased access to more culturally relevant knowledge through college and university programs and ASNLH publications expanded their capacity to develop black studies programs and supported their efforts to develop a sense of black consciousness and solidarity among their students.

Moving this discussion of black history and culture into the African American classrooms of the South, takes us from more traditional historical approaches to a black feminist epistemology that grounds its analysis in multiple narratives highlighting the richness and diversity of ideas and the complexity of reality. This epistemology refuses to recognize the accomplishments of a few exceptional individuals over a cacophony of voices. Such an epistemology battles the silencing

of subordination and tolerates the instability of constructed theory (Collins, 1991). A spokeswoman for black feminist thought, Patricia Hill Collins (1991), like her male predecessors, recognizes that education is politics and sees black teachers exercising a special responsibility to the black communities they served. She views that responsibility as one that nurtures students' developing black consciousness.

A web of three interconnected themes characterized the tapestry of teachers' and students' narratives about teaching and learning black history: an activist-oriented curriculum was constructed from students' self-perceived needs and experiences; the sociopolitical and institutional contexts of learning help situate the role of curriculum in the community and the school; and teachers' capacity to build a common black consciousness among their students was shaped by the teachers' socioeconomic and sociopolitical ties to the community. The meaning of these elements and their interconnectedness will emerge as I focus on two contrasting narratives as case studies in invigorating an embattled consciousness of race, history, and culture: a Hampton lab school teacher's description of her black studies unit and a Selma, Alabama, students' description of his civic teacher. The experiences of this teacher and student and those meanings will be used to underscore ways in which the contexts of teaching and learning shape teachers' strategies as well as students' educational experiences.

Black Studies at the Hampton Phenix School: Curriculum, Consciousness, Context, and Connections

Tamah Richardson's third graders, Lugenia G. Fuell's ungraded class, Lacy L. Truehart's fourth grade class, Grace Jenkin's fifth graders, Cecilia Potter's sixth grade students and Beulah Spellman Rowe's seventh grade boys and girls were indeed fortunate. In 1931, they were students at the George P. Phenix Training School, a laboratory school associated with Hampton Institute. An integral part of Hampton's teacher preparation program and supervised by Virginia's Department of Education, the school offered African American students an opportunity to learn from educational strategies developed within an academically cooperative teaching environment. This was the school where Hampton prepared its prospective black teachers to enter segregated schools. Teachers and student teachers were encouraged to use the Institute's ample facilities to enrich their own and their students' educational experiences (Ross, 1934; Swift, 1932).

The students who attended the Phenix School studied about Negro life. They read books by Carter Woodson, W. E. B. DuBois, and Booker T. Washington; they read black folktales and the poems of Phyllis Wheatley, Cullen Countee, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Langston Hughes, and James Weldon Johnson; they listened to the music of Marian Anderson, Harry T. Burleigh, the Jubilee Singers, and Paul Robeson; they learned about African folktales, African music, and African lifestyle; and they studied the lives and contributions of black men and women such as Crispus Attucks, Benjamin Banneker, Thomas Fuller, Frederick Douglass, George Carver, Maggie Walker, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, and Frances E. W. Harper (Curriculum Units, Phenix School, 1932-1934).

Attention to students' and the community's emerging black identity and their consciousness of black history and culture are evidenced in the themes captured by teachers at the Hampton University lab school as they implemented black studies units with their students. Among these themes are: connecting the curriculum with the community context by exploring and disseminating black history outside the classroom; stimulating one's own and encouraging students' self-reflection and consciousness of a unity that includes a sense of responsibility for other members of the black race; eliciting students' creativity and self-expression by involving them in curriculum decision-making and authentic cooperative activities; and using narrative sources to empower students as they construct and reconstruct black history (Curriculum Units, Phenix School, 1932-1934). The university campus was for its day, the ideal environment for a school with a progressive ideology of interracial interdependence and understanding; it fit with the accommodationist tradition of its university setting. Most of the teachers at Phenix School and most of its students were middle class blacks.

Each day the school's wide entrance and high, columned portico welcomed approximately 600 students. Unlike the creosoted exteriors of many of the other black schools along the southern coast (Clark, 1962), the Phenix School's trees and shrubs gave a sense of unity to its building and grounds. Decorative lighting, a balconied auditorium, ample library, paneled exhibition cases and a tiled fountain also set it apart from other black schools in the South. True to the industrial education tradition of Hampton, the Phenix School housed two large home economics rooms, a clothing room, fitting room, demonstration room, and a foods laboratory. With plenty of room for playgrounds, an athletic field and garden plots, the school was viewed as a gathering place for students (Swift, 1932). The school's presence within the university environment must have invited an elitist desire among its faculty to be on the cutting edge of both black and white school curricula.

Tamah Z. Richardson Recounts her Third Grade Class's Trip to Africa

Tamah Richardson was a teacher in the Phenix school. She believed in building upon students' experiences. In 1932, she undertook an eight-week unit in which her third grade students used interdisciplinary strategies to explore Africa with a special concentration on the Congo. After learning that there were "five groups called races, and that they were named according to color–black, brown, red, white and yellow" (Richardson, 1932a, p. 373) -- the students were "anxious to find out to what race we belong. After finding out that we belonged to the black race, instead of the brown, as we had thought, we planned with our teacher to take an imaginary trip to the central part of Africa" (p. 377).

As the students planned their imaginary journey to Africa, they became interested in many of the usual details about far away places. They researched the answers to their questions at the Hampton Institute Library. Some children brought books from home. They used pictures sent from the library, a sand table, articles made by African students, books, and newspaper clippings to aid them in visualizing life in the Congo. Participating in an

approach that sounded much like Dewey's (1938) experiential learning, the students planned and made most of the props for a dramatized version of their imaginary trip. They listened to African stories, wrote letters, made trips to the Institute's museum and the greenhouse, wrote riddles, authored rhymes, composed songs, wrote illustrated stories, made and placed designs on African pottery, made musical instruments, dressed dolls like the people of the Congo, constructed an African village, acted out different aspects of African life, and memorized original African folk tales. They listened to talks by local experts. The children shared what they learned by planning, chronicling, and presenting their intellectual journey in the form of a school program. Each group's or individual's "performance" related to a different aspect of their study. They invited their parents and the other children in the school to attend (Richardson, 1932a).

The following student accounts cited by Richardson (1932a; 1932b) help us to explore the development of their dual consciousness of themselves as descendants of black Africans and as black Americans:

> I learned from Rev. Louis Jordan, a missionary who had made four trips to Africa, that the twenty slaves from Africa who landed in Jamestown in 1619 were our forefathers–Dora Mitchell
>
> . . . . I learned from Miss Zomelo's talk that all the people in Africa are not uncivilized. There are three classes of people. The civilized people live as we do. The half civilized and the primitive people do not–Eddie Banks
>
> (Richardson, 1932a, p. 378)

With their first awareness of colonial oppression outside the United States, Samuel Turner and Louis Minor reported:

> Miss Zomelo said in Africa she had to speak two languages in school. She started with her own language and when she got to the fourth grade she had to speak English. If she forgot to speak English, she had to pay two cents.
>
> (Richardson, 1932b), p. 423)
>
> I learned from Reverend Jordan's talk that the people in Africa need our help. They need schools. I learned that our pennies in the missionary box at church help the missionaries in Africa. This will help me to remember to put pennies in the missionary box each Sunday–Louis Minor.
>
> (Richardson, 1932a, p. 378)

Richardson observed the students developing a greater connections to all people of their race including:

> (1) An understanding of many experiences previously unknown to them through first-hand contact with people and material from Africa; (2) a rather unified body of information about the African people; (3) a feeling of nearness to the African people; (4) some unsolved problems which they are anxious to pursue further about their own race; (5) a desire to do what they can as children to help missionaries on the field.
>
> (Richardson, 1932b, p. 426)
>
> They also had begun to show a great interest in the African people and, most of all, had started something that would not stop with the ending of the unit; namely, a desire to find out more about their people across the sea.
>
> (Richardson, 1932a, p.376)

By 1935, Richardson expanded the unit to include the story of the "Progress of the Negro" in America. To gather information students made several visits, in small groups, to the oldest Negro and a former slave who lived in the community. They tapped parents and grandparents for what knowledge they could provide. As they continued their study of "Negroes in America," they sought responses to questions that demonstrated their increasing awareness of themselves as members of a subordinated race, but one which had always been actively engaged in the progress of their country (Richardson & Rivers, 1935).

At their own request, the children also studied accomplished members of their own community, and they created family trees. "They reported with pride the occupation of their parents" (Richardson & Rivers, 1935, p. 8). They discussed "race relations problems," contacting the Conference on Education and Race Relations in Atlanta, Georgia, for material. They shared their findings with a group of third-graders in North Carolina and published some of them in their school newspaper. Their concern about the education of the Negro is exemplified in letters sent to North Carolina:

Phenix School
Hampton, Virginia
February 7, 1935

Dear Friends:

I am very glad to tell you about one thing that interested me in the study of the Negro. Frederick Douglass was born a slave. At the age of eight he was sent to Baltimore where he learned to read from a white woman. When the lady's husband stopped her he learned from white boys in the streets, and from signs on the wharves. He became a great man.

Yours truly,
CALVIN COOKE

(Richardson and Rivers, 1935, p. 10)

Barbara Nelson wrote of her grandfather:

> My grandfather's name was William B. Weaver. He was born in Winston, N. C. . . . He came to Hampton to school. After he left Hampton Institute, he went to Gloucester County to teach, but found no school for

Negroes so he started one in an old log cabin. He taught in the log cabin for a long time. He started a larger school in Capahosic, Virginia, in Gloucester County. The people raised money and helped him.

He and his wife taught at this school for twenty-six years. The sent many students from there to Hampton Institute. They left Gloucester in 1904 to start the Weaver Orphan Home in Hampton, Virginia, for Negro girls and boys. He and his wife worked together with the orphans until he died in 1929, and now his wife, Annie B. Weaver, is still running the Weaver Home. — Barbara Nelson

(Richardson & Rivers, 1935, p. 24)

The children were also cognizant of the importance of religion in providing strength of character as evidenced in a poem about her grandfather by Susie Thornton.

Zion Baptist Church was founded by this man
A place where we gather each Sunday to praise
The One who gave grandfather the courage to stand
Through days of slavery His name to raise —
Susie Thornton

(Richardson & Rivers, 1935, p. 24)

Bill Parker's two poems about slavery demonstrate the role of the curriculum in shaping student's perceptions. The ironic contrast between the poem written at the beginning of his study of black history and the one written at the end bears witness to the ideology of accommodation that marked The Phenix School and Hampton Institute, as well as many other historically black institutions.

My Poem of Great-,Great-grandfather

When my great-, great grandfather was a slave
They'd whip him to death if he didn't behave
They made him carry cotton by the ton
And even shipped his little son
They didn't teach him to read or write
Or even let him our of their sight.
Now do you think it was right
To whip poor great-grandfather with all their might?
— Bill Parker

Now that I learned that some masters were good
The wouldn't whip them if they could
The good masters were not bad
And when the slaves died they felt sad.
One day when a slave was being buried
The old master got on his clothes and just hurried.
— Bill Parker

(Richardson and Rivers, 1935, p. 25)

The Phenix School, an elementary and secondary school, was special in many ways. It was a university lab school for many of Hampton's departments not just its education program. Its students applied for admission. Many of the students' parents were members of Hampton's faculty and staff. A model for other schools, both in terms of its architecture and its curriculum, its teachers had a direct relationship with the university faculty, worked with each other collaboratively, and felt responsible for the betterment of their community. Nearly all teachers had degrees and about 20% of them had Masters of Arts. They regularly attended summer institutes all over the country and some of them taught summer school at Hampton. It was, without a doubt, a progressive school with exceptional funding, located in a community that was capable of supporting its purpose. These institutional factors helped shape its curriculum and its black studies units–units that showed racism as an historic fact of life yet failed to account for the need for liberatory practices and non-charitable social action in the students' own environment. Teachers at Phenix, unlike those at other black schools, had time to plan challenging activities that were developmentally appropriate because they only taught one or two grade levels. Unlike most other black schools in the south, Phenix teachers did not have to build fires in the winter, carry in the water, or clean up the school on weekends. Most important, however, was the fact that they only answered to, received their support from and were encouraged by black administrators, black parents and a black community. They had the support and encouragement for and could attend to matters of curriculum, consciousness, cooperation, context and connections.

John Shields and the Power of Praxis

John Shields lacked much of the support given the Phenix teachers. His school, the victim of severe inequities in funding and teachers' salaries, received approximately $4.44 per student for the 1933-34 school year, the same year in which Richardson described her black studies unit, and had he been teaching in 1933-34 he would have received an annual salary of a little more than $138[4] (Eddins, 1997). One of only 44 black high schools in Alabama in 1933-34 (Eddins, 1997), Selma, Alabama's Knox Academy, where Shields taught, was a three-story brick building which had been condemned as unsafe. By the late 1940s two-by-fours blocked the stairway to the third floor, and plaster often fell on students seated at their desks on the second floor. However because of its previous attachment to the Presbyterian Church, its campus was still a cut above the average for blacks in Alabama (Chestnut, 1990). Shields responded to a black building administrator but a white superintendent and Board of Education. Between the 1930s and the 1960s, the black teachers association that represented Knox Academy teachers worked very hard for equity in teachers' salaries, better access to jobs, and improved working conditions.

Selma, best known perhaps for the Selma to Montgomery voter registration marches of the 1960s, overlooks a bend in the Alabama River, 160 miles north of Mobile Bay and about 90 miles southwest of Birmingham. Located in the Black Belt, so called because of its rich soil, Selma had once supported a lively slave trade. Dallas County, in which Selma is located, produced more cotton than any other county in Alabama. In 1930, most of the black residents of Dallas County labored on white-owned

property. Dallas County and Selma were home to J. L. Chestnut who attended Selma's black high school during the closing hours of World War II. Many of his classmates had left school to fight in the war. Regardless of its largely black population, the city was dominated by white landowners, banks, merchants, major businessmen, lawyers, and wholesale grocers. The overwhelming majority of black people were disenfranchised because voter registration mandated literacy testing, poll taxes, and vouching. Typical of the Deep South and especially the Black Belt, Selma was rigidly segregated. However, unlike other nearby towns, Selma had a large black middle class and was near a center for black higher education. African American youth attended Selma's black elementary school and black high school from November to March; during the remaining months, they worked in the cotton fields. Paternalistically, white Selmians considered their town an exemplar in race relations (Chestnut & Cass, 1990).

For John Shields, pedagogy was praxis. Memorialized by J. L. Chestnut, Jr. in Black in Selma (Chestnut & Cass, 1990), Shields was to Chestnut, a Selma attorney, what Miss Annie Mae Moore was to bell hooks. Unlike hooks who remembered many praxis-oriented teachers, Chestnut only remembered one teacher - a teacher whom he characterized as a misfit. "Shields was a highly unusual teacher. Way, way ahead of the times, he was teaching black history, and was bluntly critical of Selma's black leaders, especially preachers" (p. 43).

Because what we know of Shields is embedded in Chestnut's story (1990), it is important to know something about Chestnut, himself. He grew up in middle-class, black Selma where his father was a storekeeper. He always knew he would attend college. While his world was circumscribed by apartheid his mother's powerful will and her ability and willingness to call upon white "friends" to fulfill her own and her family's needs interrupted any feelings of inferiority that he might have had. However, he learned early in life about the power of white people.

> Whenever a whit person came into my father's grocery store—especially a policeman or a woman—I noticed the atmosphere shift. My father and his friends . . . would quiet down and everything would get a bit edgy and unnatural.
>
> (p. 21)

His father and his friends, ironically, responded in the same manner whenever black ministers and schoolteachers would enter the store–the implication being not necessarily one of respect, but instead, one of distrust stemming from the ministers' and teachers' presumed connections to the white power structure.

As a child, Chestnut (1990) was protected from racist encounters. He learned the lessons of "separate but equal" at home.

> I can't imagine any black child of five in Selma in the late 1930s expecting to be invited to a white child's party or allowed to break the code of color in any way. No black parent would have been foolish enough to let his or her child harbor illusions that certainly would lead to disappointment and probably to trouble.
>
> (p. 21)

Chestnut (1990) grew up appreciating the value of education and knowing that receiving a worthy black education required constant vigilance. In his case, it was his mother's vigilance.

> She was determined that I would become somebody—preferably a doctor. When I was going into the second grade, the school ran out of spelling books. My mother borrowed somebody's and copied it all by hand. I learned to read and count at home. She didn't trust the teachers.
>
> (p. 26)

While his mother taught him how to get ahead in the Jim Crow South, his father taught him to be wary of white people, "'If you can help it, don't work for them. Work for yourself'" (Chestnut, 1990, p. 26). Chestnut grew up to become an attorney who represented civil rights demonstrators in court. He was present when state troopers attacked Selma marchers on the Edmund Pettus Bridge on "Bloody Sunday," March 7, 1965. John Shield's story is a part of J. L. Chestnut Jr.'s autobiographical narrative.

Shields' teaching closely approximated what we know today as critical pedagogy. It was about the uses and abuses of power and leadership. He was especially critical of the community's three ministers who, he thought, abused their power with the black community. Chestnut (1990) quotes him, "'Why are you looking up to these preachers? Don't you see how they're running errands for whites'" (p. 43).

His classroom extended out into the community in both pedagogical and informal ways. Students came to him for help when they had difficulties with those in power. When their need for a place to play baseball on Sunday afternoons was blocked by the Tabernacle Baptist Church's minister, Dr. Jemison, they turned to Shields for help. The police chief had informed Chestnut and his friend that they could only play in a city park called "the pool" if it was okay with Dr. Jemison, the church's minister. Jemison responded with an abrupt "No." Shields sent them to the Reformed Presbyterian minister, Claude Brown, who, upon hearing of their prior conversations with the Police Chief and Jemison, quickly placed a call to the mayor on the boys behalf. The boys played baseball in "the pool" the following Sunday afternoon. Shields laughed when the boys returned with their news saying, "'I told you so.'" Chestnut describes what he learned from this episode:

> Right there, I saw the hard cold truth of power in Selma: the white community picked the black community's leaders . . . I'd seen but never thought about the fact that when blacks got white approval this added to their stature in the black community . . .
>
> Shields had been saying how, for little crumbs of power, black preachers and other leaders could be counted on "to keep the natives in line"— to cool off potential uprisings and to preach that blacks should clean up their own back yards rather than challenging

the system. By their example, these black leaders sent that message that to get along you go along.

> Any black leader who started criticizing the status quo would find no more morsels of power thrown his way by white Selma, and this, in turn, would cut down his influence in black Selma . . . Shields had been talking about it, but here I had a chance to peep on the inside for myself. I saw and understood the nakedness of black leaders.
>
> (Chestnut, 1990, pp. 44-45)

Shields was originally from South Carolina and had attended Raleigh, North Carolina's Shaw University (Chestnut, 1990), one of several black universities that had undergone an emotionally charged protest leading to a transformation that, in the twenties, replaced white academic leadership with black (Wolters, 1975). Perhaps because he had been educated at a university that emphasized a classical education and black consciousness or because he was a very private individual, Shields was considered different from the other faculty members at Knox Academy. He was characterized as a loner and an outsider (Chestnut & Cass, 1990). Most of the other teachers did not have a college education outside of taking summer courses at Alabama State College, a black college in Montgomery that suffered from the financial ills of state-administered black educational institutions throughout the Deep South. He lived his life in a way that said he did not fear white power. According to Chestnut (1990), he had no friends, he lived in "a junky place, crammed with books" (p. 45), and he didn't believe in God.

Expressing surprise that Shields was never forced out of Knox Academy, Chestnut (1990) wrote, " What the man taught was remarkable for his place and time. In that black school in Selma, Alabama, in the 1940s, he denounced white people, attacked the church, and criticized most black leaders in town" (p. 46). "Shields tore into the central underpinning of the South" (p. 46). He taught that segregation was not natural that it was, instead, white men exploiting black people. He challenged his students to question their way of life. He asked his students why he, a black man, should be required to teach civics when he could not even vote. He brought his rhetoric into the reality of students' lives, telling them that white people who lived in big houses overworked blacks and paid them hardly enough to support their families. He attacked the physical conditions of the school itself. He compared Knox not with other black schools but with the city's much grander white school with its gymnasium, tennis courts, science labs and landscaped yard. He asked his students why that was. He taught that the police in Selma, with their deserved reputation for cruelty, were the henchmen of the whites–there to maintain the status quo. He told his students, to "'look around!'" "'If your leaders are leading, where [italics in original] are they leading'" (p. 48)? He accused these leaders of being the instruments of oppression, "'like the straw bosses'" (p. 48) during the times of slavery.

He attacked the ideology of individual accomplishment within the middle class black community while asserting the belief that emphasizing the individual was self-defeating for the race as a whole. Echoing DuBois and Woodson, he believed that uplifting the group, the whole race, and overthrowing the system were the only viable goals. "'You will never rise by yourself. You've got to bring the group with you'" (Chestnut, 1990, p. 125).

Shield's brand of black studies was different from Richardson's. While Shields was concerned with curriculum, consciousness, context and connections, his was a pedagogy of resistance, a form of praxis which employed the curriculum to arose students' critical consciousness of their own and their community's stake in issues of power and oppression. Shields empowered his students by connecting them with the community and igniting their individual and collective resistance to the duplicity of middle class blacks who were used by white patrons to maintain the status quo. He reached into the consciousness of students by going against the grain of black middle class culture; he criticized their icons and battered their beliefs in the power of individual success (Chestnut, 1990).

Both Shields and Richardson were influenced by their social, political, economic, and institutional contexts–Richardson to conform to a middle class ideology of accommodation and Shields to resist the subtleties of classism and racism that were closest to him through emancipatory teaching. Richardson had a comfortable position with much prestige. She was part of a cooperative venture in progressive education, and she found professional fulfillment in her engagement with and her students' exploration of black history and life. On the other hand, Shields was underpaid; he worked in a condemned school; he was an outcast and a loner, reared in a different culture, and better educated than his colleagues. According to Chestnut (1990), he was nurtured by his ability to foster in his students a critical consciousness of their shared identity as black men and women. While successful with some students, Chestnut gave us the impression that many others just wrote Shield's off as a frustrated intellectual. Yet it was he who sensed the transformative power of education and used it to empower those who would listen. Years later his students remembered him as they confronted their fears of reprisal and became active in the voter registration drive that led to the civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery.

Ecological Influences on Teachers' Transformative Powers

African Americans have always been aware of the transformative power of education. Forbidden by the slave codes to learn to read or write, slaves sensed the significance of an education to their freedom by the very tenacity with which their masters enforced these prohibitions (Litwak, 1998). Astute slaves witnessed the association of literacy with power and wealth among the better class of southern whites. "White folks can do what they likes, for they know so much more'na we," exclaimed a freed slave to a white teacher in South Carolina" (Litwak, 1979, p 473). From the earliest days of emancipation, education was venerated as the only road to true freedom.

Teachers in the South between 1930 and 1960 had inherited a long tradition of social activism originating with their earliest efforts to establish schools where there had been none, to start the process of educating an illiterate population of freedmen. Later their social activism sustained them as they replaced missionary teachers from the North and asserted the sovereignty

of black people over their own educational system. To some students, like Alice Walker, an African American teacher's political activism spoke loudest when "she taught by the courage of her own life" (Walker, 1983, p. 38). This was the tradition that brought Septima Clark, in 1917, to organize her students at Avery Normal School to canvas the black community for signatures on a petition demanding that the city of Charleston hire black teachers (Clark, 1962) and later supported her as she set up Citizenship Schools in Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, and Tennessee (Brown, 1990).

This knowledge of black teachers' social activism reinforced my original expectations that educators had played a role in building the foundations upon which the Civil Rights Movement was constructed and that the building blocks had included the study of black history as an effort to encourage a sense of racial identity and consciousness. Three factors, however, gradually converged to awaken me to the distortions created by the white middle class lens through which I viewed the evidence related to southern black teachers' teaching about the black experience.

The first indication of these distortions came slowly as my mind nagged at me to seek out the stories civil rights workers had about the liberatory practices of their black teachers. What did they remember about schooling and did those memories uncover the emancipatory power of teachers who taught about the culture and the history of black people. I had previously noted that both traditional and contemporary histories of the civil rights movement were curiously silent about the role of southern black public school teachers in preparing students as Civil Rights activists. Yet Bullock (1967) and Anderson (1988), historians of African American education, had both suggested the power of education in stimulating civil rights activism. I sifted through the narratives of civil rights leaders (e.g., Carson, 1992, 1998; Davis, 1974; Hill, 1991 Payne, 1995; Young 1996) and found very little written about their teachers. Through omissions, this seemed to contradict the suggestions of Bullock and Anderson, the intentions of DuBois and Woodson, and my own beliefs. Was this another case of historical amnesia, a failure to acknowledge the role of ordinary people in producing extraordinary change?

The second factor that tore at my beliefs was elicited by the narrative of two women, who, at the age of eight, had joined the Selma voting rights marches. Selma, Lord, Selma provided some of the most revealing evidence of at least a temporary and localized fragmentation of black consciousness among teachers. Sheyann Webb, one of the two young marchers, talked about how she rightfully feared the way her teacher would react to her missing school to attend meetings and participate in the marches, even when Martin Luther King was there (Webb and Nelson, 1980).

> I was the only one missing school (p. 25).
>
> The door creaked loudly when I turned the knob; all eyes were on me as I came in. There was a pause: Then: "Sheyann Webb! Where have you been, young lady?" Mrs. Bright is looking at me. She glances at her watch. "You know what time it is?"
>
> I didn't know. I shook my head.
>
> "It's twenty minutes past one. Where have you been?"
>
> "Over there," I said.
>
> "Over where? The church?"
>
> "Yes, ma'am."
>
> "You were over at Brown Chapel?" Louise Bright was upset with me. "Don't you know what kind fo meeting they're having over there? That's a voting-rights meeting, child. That's not for children like you. Don't you know there might be trouble—might be folks put in jail. You want to be put in jail?" . . .
>
> The lecture went on and I remembered all the kids looking at me and I was so embarrassed . . .
>
> (p. 7)

Although the city was alive with civil-rights activity, the teachers, who themselves had been denied the right to vote, were reluctant to support their students' involvement in the marches.

Knowing the power of teachers as role models for the community, the leaders of the marches persisted, through the black teachers' association, in soliciting their involvement. The president of the association spoke to them saying they should be out there demonstrating for their right to vote instead of letting their students and the working-class people do it for them (Chestnut & Cass, 1990). Finally on Friday, January 22, 1965, NBC cameras witnessed 125 of Selma's black teachers marching to challenge a Jim Crowism that had denied African Americans free access to the ballot box. Sheyann had this to say about the teachers:

> The word was spreading like electric: "The teachers are marching! The teachers are marching.
>
> . . . I looked about me and saw scores of other children running about the apartment complex shouting news that Mr. Somebody or Old Mrs. Somebody was marching. Could you believe it? And yes, I had seen Mrs. Bright there too.
>
> (Webb & Nelson, 1980, p. 35)

When the teachers arrived at the courthouse, instead of being admitted to register, they were met by Sheriff Jim Clark and his deputies, the white superintendent of schools, and the white school board president. Superintendent Joseph Pickard and members of the city school board urged the teachers to turn around and told them they were setting a bad example for the children. Confronted by both black and white authority and discovering that voter registration had been closed down for the afternoon, they allowed themselves to be led off to Brown Chapel without gaining access to the rolls (Webb & Nelson, 1980).

Upon their return to Brown Chapel, the nerve center of

the Selma movement, they greeted their students while singing "This Little Light of Mine."

> And they were all smiling; kids were shaking hands with their teachers and hugging them . . . Some of the women teachers were crying, they were so elated. Mrs. Bright spotted, and rushed forward, hugging me. She appeared to be in a mood of triumph. She laughed, she wiped at her eyes, she hugged me again.
>
> (Webb & Nelson, 1980, pp. 34-37)

There was a standing ovation. The teachers had burst forth from the prison of their fears. They had once again broken the chains of bondage and declared their freedom to all. In spite of their earlier reluctance and because of teachers' historic roles as community leaders, their march opened avenues for the participation of all blacks, regardless of class, in the struggle to gain access to the Dallas County Courthouse and assert the voting rights promised them by the Fifteenth and Nineteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution (Webb & Nelson, 1980). Webb and Nelson's recounting of the teachers' participation in the Selma marches suggests a general malaise had existed among many black teachers who appeared to have originally made a conscious decision to distance themselves from the social activism of the time.

Finally, Chestnut (1990) and Foster (1997) confronted me directly. The complexity of the issue which overt participation posed for black teachers was clearly stated in both oral and autobiographical sources. Teachers were frightened–frightened for their jobs. Most black teachers, by the 1960s, were part of middle class black society, having won many of their battles for pay equalization. When confronted with the impending desegregation of schools, many feared losing their positions to their white peers. Sustaining the popular belief among whites that white teachers were better educated and thus better qualified than their black peers, white boards of education decisions between 1954 and 1970 displaced 31,504 black teachers in seventeen southern and border states (Foster, 1997, p. 87). Since teachers were subject to boards of education's authority, participation in demonstrations and marches would attract attention that would reflect negatively on their retention.

In *Black Boy*, Richard Wright (1935) reminded me that this was not unique to the sixties generation of teachers. Power had existed over teachers in the 1920 and 1930s. He recounts the problems he faced from both his mother and his high school principal as he began to write. His mother chastised him, "'Son, you ought to be more serious . . . . You're growing up now and you won't be able to get jobs . . . . Suppose the superintendent of schools would ask you to teach here in Jackson, and he found out that you had been writing stories'" (p. 185)? His mother's warning foreshadowed a confrontation with his high school principal who refused to allow him to deliver his own commencement address. Instead the principal wanted him to deliver one that had been prepared for him. Fearing his speech would be offensive to the white people in the audience, the principal threatened Wright with a refusal to hire him back into the school as a teacher if he delivered his own speech.

Recognizing the power relationship that existed between black teachers and white boards, J. L. Chestnut, Jr. argued, "[T]he ties they had to the white ruling hierarchy made them [one of] the least likely group[s] of all to become involved" (Chestnut & Cass, 1990, p. 154). There was too much at stake. DuBois and Woodson had suggested much earlier that black college graduates were succombing to white values for individual success; perhaps, aside from need, this too contributes to their reluctance to risk hard-earned teaching positions. Therefore, unlike the teachers at Selma, most did not march as an act of solidarity, were not present as teachers in the Citizenship Schools nor were they active in the voter registration drives. During the Civil Rights Movement, black public school teachers in the South, as a group, did not model social action in demonstrable ways. This reluctance extended, no doubt, back into the years of the depression and affected their ability to encourage a sense of black consciousness among their students.

This discussion extends my research into ways teachers and students experienced curriculum related to black history, black culture and black consciousness beyond my original intention because it is important to the "confessional tale" (Van Maanen, 1988) which accompanies these historical narratives. As I worked my way through the multitude of questions which confronted me during the course of this research, I had a deeper encounter with my own racial consciousness, my consciousness of ways in which my membership in a larger white culture blinded me to the constant and often overwhelming threats posed to those who lived on the margins. This inquiry opened my mind to my own culture of whiteness, to biases that were hidden from my view. It is an important tale to tell because it is one that the vast majority of white people must confront if we are to engage in deeper cross-cultural interactions. It is also important because it provides a rationale for engaging in cross-cultural research. Researchers always learn about themselves through their research; for some, like me, cross-cultural research such as this can result in an epistemological epiphany.

Social injustice invades every aspect of the lives of those it touches creating a culture that responds in ways invisible to those of us living within the larger culture. The lives and careers of DuBois and Woodson, both middle class black men, were grounded in the belief that a racially relevant education could light the torch of a second emancipation. I constructed my illusion from my experiences as a white, working class teacher of African American students and from the ideologies of DuBois and Woodson. But Shields and the teachers of Selma lived the reality of southern apartheid that I had never faced. Because ideologies are grounded in the prevailing human ecology, they have their own histories, histories that, in the case of Shields and the teachers of Selma, presented obstacles to a praxis that would lead to emancipation.

This evidence suggests that in the Deep South a liberatory pedagogy that emphasized the black experience and a heightening of black consciousness was seriously weakened as a result of the threats of Jim Crow authority, white hegemony over the hiring and firing of black public school teachers, and a long tradition of accommodating those in power. Teachers believed that accommodating white administrators and others in positions

of power would gain them appointments, protect their positions, and ultimately enhance their own power within the community. As a result unlike the teachers at Hampton's Phenix School who had the encouragement and support of their institutions, their colleagues, and their communities, the transformative practices of teachers like John Shields were considered dangerous and teachers who engaged in them taught on the racial and cultural margins of their institutions.

Endnotes

[1] Born Gloria Watkins, hooks spells her pen name with initial lower case letters.

[2] "Womanist," was first used by Alice Walker to describe Black feminists who were "critically" concerned about the interests of all people, men and women of all races and classes (Ladson-Billings, 1996). Women within this tradition acknowledge having little or no experience with "femininity" as a social and cultural ideal reserved primarily for middle and upper class women.

[3] In the interview, Albrier engages in a recursive discourse. I have reconstructed the sequence of Albrier's talk for greater accessibility to her thematic connections. This is a technique often used when one writes narrative research (Seidman, 1991)

[4] These figures are based on the per capita expenditures per student and the average annual elementary teacher salaries for Dallas County, Alabama in 1933-34 as cited in Eddins (1997).

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Chall, M. interviews of Frances Mary Albrier, November 14, 1977 through March 2, 1978 as part of the Regional Oral History Office's California's Women Political leaders Oral History Project. Volume 1, pp. 169-535.