

During the 2017 – 2018 academic year, the SSO section of JoLLE will feature essays by scholars such as professors, teachers, students, and administrators who are engaging with discussions around social justice issues and racism in education and in modern society. Please click here for more information about this ongoing series: http://jolle.coe.uga.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/SSO-October-2017_Editors-Note_1.pdf.

White supremacy? Yeah, it's real: Breathing in/justice-oriented teacher education

By Hilary E. Hughes, The University of Georgia

The story presented below is about white supremacy and teacher education and social justice and paradox and vulnerability and joy and hope and possibility. Just like those categories listed, then, it is indeed a story that is messy and complex and fraught with contradictions. There are no solutions to this story, no “aha” moments that turned my pedagogy on its head to then lead me to the promise land of preparing future educators. Instead, this is a sense-making story, a (perhaps under) theorized grapple of sorts, presented through multiple genres: dictionary entries, emails, journal entries, streams of consciousness, pictures, poems, and endnotes, all helping me illustrate the incredible complexities and contradictions of being a (white woman) teacher educator oriented toward equity and justice who works alongside mostly white preservice education students. I use multigenre writing in this piece because it offers me ways of seeing that others do not (Romano, 1995). It takes me places traditional academic writing cannot, allowing me more access to create a story in the way stories are *lived*—fragmented, paradoxical, and with plenty of interruptions (Hughes, 2011). Each genre in this piece, then, represents snapshots of those fragmented and paradoxical moments, both inside teacher education and just outside of it.

In order to talk openly and honestly about race in the United States it is helpful to begin with the understanding that it is white supremacist thinking and practice that has been the political foundation undergirding all systems of domination based on skin color and ethnicity.

—bell hooks, 2009

White (adj.) [waɪt] **Supremacy** (n.) [suˈpreɪməsi]

1. The belief or theory that white people are superior to other peoples, and should therefore have greater power, authority, or status;
2. A social system based on or perpetuating the political, economic, and cultural dominance of white peopleⁱ
3. Unlike race and racism, which does not overtly harm masses of folk in ways that causes direct damage, white supremacy is the covert ideology that is the silent cause of harm and trauma, for people of color and white people.ⁱⁱ

The week after white supremacists marched on #Charlottesville, I was talking with a middle school principal about how he was addressing the aftermath in his school. He explained that he had been making sure teachers were having conversations with students in their classes, talking to students throughout the day himself, and talking with teachers during their team planning meetings. The principal said he of course wanted to do more and was brainstorming different approaches he might take in the weeks and months to come. He spoke passionately about how he did not want the conversations about racism and bigotry and sexism and homophobia and classism and xenophobia to end in his school. He didn't want conversations to die simply because time passes between horrific events. Instead, this (white, male) principal was seeking out more ideas about how to take the temperature of his mostly black/African American and Latinx students: if they felt safe, and if not, what he could do to help them feel safer at school.

As he talked, I wondered how many of others were also having those conversations in our classrooms and schools. And if we *were* having those conversations, *how* were we having them and with whom? (e.g., Teachers and administrators? Teachers and students? Parents? Counselors and social workers?) And, were we only having them after events like #Charlottesville? If so, why? That wasn't a rhetorical *why*, either. Meaning, I wondered if people (teachers and administrators) simply feel too bogged down with other educational demands to necessitate the time for these extremely important conversations. Or do people use that as an excuse because it is too difficult/exhausting/overwhelming/scary/unknown/vulnerable to have

conversations about racial violence and white supremacy in the first place? Perhaps both?

As I was describing a (rant) [post I wrote on Facebook](#) (to white people) about white supremacy a night or two after #Charlottesville, the principal talked about how he felt those kinds of conversations (i.e., white supremacy, racism, bigotry, violence) were sometimes difficult to have with teachers, especially when he has to differentiate, so-to-speak (my words, not his) for white teachers. He explained how it felt awkward to him that he had to have conversations about racial violence with teachers of color in the same room as white teachers, because he knew what the teachers of color knew: that they had been having conversations like this their entire lives. The principal said he wanted to make sure the teachers knew the importance of creating safe spaces for *all* of the students in the school, but really, mostly the students of color. Again, he wasn't sure how some of the white teachers would take that.

Our conversation took me back to my Facebook (rant) post, because, as the two of us acknowledged during our conversation that day, most people who are *not white* in the United States—and black folk, specifically—have not only been having these conversations since they were born, they have also been learning how to live/survive in a white supremacist society that positions them in very specific, oppressive ways. I told the principal that day that I sometimes dream about offering professional development workshops on white supremacy for white teachers only. That might sound segregated (it is) or exclusionary (it is) or racist (it's not, in any way shape or form). But it's more about this: as a white teacher educator who is still a work in progress myself, it continues to deplete any reserve I think I have left when I have conversations with a room full of preservice education students about white supremacy or racism or racial violence, because, as you who are reading this already know, usually about 95% of them are white (and that's a generous percentage). Thus, the discussions I have with preservice teachers every semester are pretty predictable. Again, this is nothing new. The research literature has described the quandaries and complexities we face in teacher education for decades related to helping our mostly white, middle class, female, monolingual, Christian preservice students learn multiple perspectives about how the United States functions (cf., Conklin, 2008; Conklin & Hughes, 2016; Gay, 2010; Hughes, Moulton, & Andrews, 2016; hooks, 1994; Jones & Hughes-Decatur, 2012; Ladson-

Billings, 1995, 2001; Sleeter, 2015).

For me, though, it's not *just* about my mostly white preservice teachers; it's white people, in general. I've dreamed of having this kind of workshop, because what I've learned over the years—what people of color of, course always, already know—is that, more often than not, it is white people who (and I'm generalizing here):

- a) can only seem to understand the concept of *white supremacy* as a historical time period that was solely connected to Reconstruction at the end of the Civil War, the [Ku Klux Klan](#), and [Jim Crow](#). And because that time period is over (and we've had a black president) white supremacy surely cannot exist any longer (even though white supremacists are on the news almost monthly these days);
- b) are too afraid to talk about white supremacy (or racism or racial violence), because they fear that by acknowledging anything about white supremacy (or racism or racial violence), it will implicate them in the system of white supremacy, or as a racist, or as complacent in an oppressive and violent white supremacist system;ⁱⁱⁱ
- c) don't do more to challenge systems of oppression because we don't want to know any more than we already do about all of the bad things that are happening outside of our (white, middle classed) lived experiences. In other words, for some of us, it isn't our "lack of knowledge but our resistance to knowledge and our desire for ignorance that often prevent us from changing the oppressive status quo" (Kumashiro, 2009, p. 27);
- d) become defensive during conversations about white supremacy or racism or anything connected to oppressive systems (born out of white supremacy and capitalism and patriarchy), because it cuts too deep to the heart to hear something so awful about my own people--which then, deep in my psyche, I know means is really about me benefiting from these systems of oppression and violence ("even when my family didn't own slaves"). And if I acknowledge that I benefit from these systems and then I don't (want to) do anything about it, I look like an ass (or a racist or an oppressor or a

white supremacist, or, or, or...);

- e) come up with a multitude of excuses as to why this “liberal thought” or these conspiracy theories can “only be fueled by emotion and feeling, rather than facts.” Because, I mean, we’ve had a black president, for gawd’s sake! And look at all the black athletes and rappers who make millions now, and what about all the “blacks” who don’t even appreciate what this great country has “GIVEN” them?^{iv}

In other words, if I’m a white person (which I am)—even one who touts social justice (which I do)—I might not want to think about the idea that I both benefit from white supremacy and contribute to its perpetuation. Even if I don’t understand in that moment, or any other moment, that the discursive practices of white supremacy which are always, already working on and through me (and everyone else in the United States) are (one of) the reasons I don’t want to participate in “those kinds” of conversations. Those conversations are hard work. And as white people, we don’t have to engage in conversations like that—the difficult ones about white supremacy and who benefits from white supremacy—if we don’t want to. Because we are white. Again, not new information to many, I know. But perhaps to some. Actually, maybe a lot.

Moments (n.) [moh-muh nts] **of** (p.) [uhv] **crisis** (n.) [krahy-sis]

1. states of emotional discomfort and disorientation that call on students [and/or teachers] to make some kind of change;
2. sometimes visceral and noticeable, perhaps by way of expressing feelings of guilt or anger;
3. sometimes subdued and subconscious, perhaps as feeling discomfort but unable to name the feeling;
4. humans on the verge of some kind of shift, requiring opportunities to work through emotions and disorientation^v
5. Most weeks when I’m teaching undergraduate preservice teachers

Shortly after chatting with the middle school principal, I taught my undergraduate preservice teacher education course: a class that, while it might be considered diverse in social class, religion, and sexual orientation, is almost entirely white. Always trying to model different ways educators might approach current events in their middle grades classrooms, my co-instructor and I included a segment in the 3-hour class meeting where we talked about our responsibility as educators to have courageous conversations (Singleton, 2015) with our middle grades students about events like #Charlottesville. We reminded everyone (several times) that this kind of event wasn't anything new: racial and other kinds violence take place everywhere, all day and every day. It simply manifests differently, we reminded our students that day, depending on the context: a march, a murder, a post on Facebook, a conversation in a coffee shop, a glance, a head shake, an eye-roll, a newspaper heading, a Tweet, a thought, a presidential address, a classroom discussion can all be violent acts.

Violent acts^{vi}
permeate ~~all of our lives~~
#BLACKLIVESMATTER
WHITE SUPREMACY
nothing new
working on
and through
all of us
implicated
not just those who feel entitled
to march through the streets

Class that day felt really difficult for all of us, instructors as well as students. As it should have been. We talked about the events in #Charlottesville, about all of the other racial violence that takes place in our country, and what teachers can do differently in our classrooms, and all of us seemed to be having our own (disparate) moments of crises (Kumashiro, 2009). Some students seemed to understand and perhaps even accept the idea, even if only on a subconscious level, that we are all implicated in and affected by systems of white supremacy and patriarchy and classism, and, and, and... Others, however, did not. Well, maybe they understood what we were saying, but like many other white people in the United States, they did

not *want* to understand it. And they don't have to. Because they are white. (Unless they happen to be in one of my courses.)

There were plenty of “Yes, but-ers” who had questions based on their own cultural and historical locations that continue to influence how they perceive and live in the world (Jones & Woglom, 2016). Plenty of comments and questions related to first amendment rights; how “those kind of [white supremacist] groups” aren't *really* representative of how we function as a country; and “I don't understand how this could still be happening in 2017” reactions. Plenty of reminders (over and over) that we as teacher educators have our own moments of disorientation and discomfort—our own moments of crises—that call on us to make some kind of change. The kind of change that requires us to do more in teacher education to help future teachers (and ourselves) learn about systems of oppression and how they affect everyone, not just people of color and poor people.

I would be remiss here if I didn't mention that within all of those breathe-deeply moments we were experiencing in class that day, there were also some exhale into calmness moments. In other words, there were also those in class who absolutely *got it*. Whether it is because they *live* the oppression and violence we explore in our classes, or because they are open to learning differently—to feeling and seeing and recognizing and working against injustice, there were plenty of students who were present and affected and aware that day. Every day, actually.

All that said, I was reminded that day, and every day, that there is nothing “easy” about talking with (white) people about white supremacy and racial violence. Nothing. In any context. But I also reminded myself (and anyone who would listen after class) that if we are not teaching our (mostly white) future teachers about white supremacy and the systems that were created out of white supremacy, which continue to work on and through *all* of us, then those future teachers will go forth and continue perpetuating these practices and beliefs in their classrooms, day after day, year after year, just as we continue doing in teacher education.^{vii} As Gloria Ladson-Billings (2009) reminds us,

we all have ideal notions of what teachers are and should be. But ideal notions are just that: ideals. The real work of teaching is messy and complex. It does not conform to the neat conceptions of anti-racist,

anti-sexist, anti-homophobic, anti-oppressive education about which we theorize” (p. xviii).

Even when the work of teaching doesn't conform to our neatly theorized conceptions of anti-oppressive education (again and again), however, we have to remember to keep tossing the pebbles into the water. They may not go far in the beginning, but there will be ripples—we just might not get to see them (Yancy & hooks, 2015).

Racism (n.) [reɪ,sɪz(ə)m]

1. a belief that one's own racial or ethnic group is superior, or that other such groups represent a threat to one's cultural identity, racial integrity, or economic well-being;
2. a belief that the members of different racial or ethnic groups possess specific characteristics, abilities, or qualities, which can be compared and evaluated. Hence: prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against people of other racial or ethnic groups (or, more widely, of other nationalities), esp. based on such beliefs.^{viii}

It's everywhere, invading every space, every conversation I have with anyone. It's in the news and on the radio. In schools and out of schools. Race and racism discourse. Who's a racist and who's not? Who are the "most racist" out of all these white people enforcing systems of white supremacy? Who are the allies? And if they consider themselves so, what do they do in the name of "ally"? More importantly, who are the [co-conspirators](#)? Can I ever be one? I want to listen to and learn from black leaders and activists and scholars of color, but that alone doesn't constitute me as a co-conspirator. It simply makes me a learner. I want to cultivate the kind of yearning I have for racial justice in all of the preservice education students who come in and out of my life. But those encounters are so ridiculously brief. One or two semesters, three hours a week. Some "difficult" (read: uncomfortable) texts, some writing exercises, some disorienting conversations, some community experiences, some guest

speakers. Read, write, discuss, reflect, repeat. It's not enough.

So many white people in education working constantly in defense of themselves:

"I'm not a racist; I just have concerns about what this [black] person is doing. But if I say that then people will think I'm a racist."

Or...

"I chose to teach in this school (of mostly black and brown kids). Why would I teach here if I was a racist?"

And so many other white people *not* defending themselves and their comments about black folk and other people of color.

"We have so many of those ghetto black kids from the projects. If we could just get rid of that, we would be fine."^{ix}

Which is worse?

*Eeny, meeny, miny, mo
Catch a tiger by the toe
If he hollers, let him go
Eeny meeny miny mo*

Justice-Oriented Teacher Ed, 101:

Her^x: [This kind](#) of [social justice] content you're asking us to engage with doesn't really feel authentic for kids.

Me:  *Really?*

Because I'm pretty sure those worksheets they are filling out every day that have them guessing how many jelly beans are in a jar (on the worksheet and not even in an actual jar) aren't really feeling that authentic for kids either. I'm also pretty sure that having kids engage in social issues they are living every day will get them a little more jazzed than those jelly bean worksheets, don't you think? Give it a try and see what happens...

Her: So, maybe this kind of [social justice] content makes sense with social studies or language arts, but science is **black** and **white**, so I don't really see a need for it in science.

Me: You mean [this kind](#) of black and white science? Or [this kind](#)?

To: Student who believes science is black and white

From: Dr. Hughes

Dear Student Who Believes Science Is Black and White (among other things):^{xi}

What I feel like you are missing with this (extremely important) exercise we are having you all do with the [social justice across the content areas] book groups is practicing that thing we talked about when we met with you last month: being open to new and different ways of understanding how the world works. How the world functions and the systems we operate in, are so much more complicated and complex than our own individual lived experiences might ever allow us to see. And that's the point of education, to learn something different than when you came. :) I hope that's what you will provide for your future students: learning experiences that allow them to see multiple perspectives of how the world works/functions that move beyond their own lived experiences. (These are the kinds of conversations I'm really sad you'll be missing this week and next in class—so I thought I'd go ahead and write them here—you're welcome!)

I have a friend who is a scientist—a microbiologist in Boston. She is an amazingly brilliant woman. She was recently awarded a contract with a company in Germany to fund her continued trials with Type I diabetes research, so she can now take it to the human trials level. Why? Because she has discovered a cure—for real—for Type I diabetes. I was really interested in her work because I was married to a Type 1 diabetic and it was really difficult for me to understand how to help him (and me), so I learned everything I could about it for 5 years. Type I (if you don't know)

is not currently curable. It's a lifelong impairment and affects many more than just the diabetic, to say the least.

Thing is, for the past 5 years, my friend has talked to every company and government agency in the USA and none of them would fund her human trials research. Know why? Because—and they said this to her directly—companies who make everything Type I diabetics need to live make too much money off of that disease. Simply put, it would be a profit loss for our country if we found a cure for Type 1 diabetes. So my friend went to Europe instead and got her research funded, because she's interested in saving people's lives and improving their quality of life.

Point with all of this? Science is not black and white. It never has been and never will be. Power circulates in everything we do, think, and say. And because of that power, nothing can ever be black and white.

Let me know if you want to talk more about this.

*Cheers,
Dr. Hughes*

Post Script:^{xii}

One more thing: Learning is uncomfortable. It should be uncomfortable. It should not be a comforting process that simply repeats or affirms what we think we already know. Learning is

...a disarming process that allows [us] to escape the uncritical, complacent repetition of [our] prior knowledge and actions...Learning involves looking beyond what [we] already know, not by rejecting such knowledge, but by treating it paradoxically, that is, by learning what matters in society (and how it informs [our] identities, relationships, and actions), while asking why it matters (and how it can reinforce and challenge an oppressive status quo). Such a process cannot help to be uncomfortable. (Kumashiro, 2009, p. 32)

I know each time you come to class you experience moments of crisis, that you feel disoriented and uncomfortable, because we are introducing you to perspectives that you have not ever had to think about or acknowledge. My

hope is that we have put the necessary structures in place for you to work through those feelings. We, too, are works in progress.

...we might view social justice education as that which happens...only when we ourselves are still struggling with questions about the “what else,” “how else,” and “where else” that are involved in such teaching. Social justice education requires grappling with paradox, with partiality, and with the uncertainty and discomfort that often accompany such commitments

–Kumashiro, 2009, p. xxv-xxvi

Her: This [social justice content/pedagogy] is too hard. How are we supposed to even think about this when the only place we are talking about it [social justice pedagogies] is in this class?

Me (thinking to myself): *these feelings of resistance are central to the process of learning. Do not get frustrated with her wanting to quit. Do not view this resistance as a hindrance to her learning. Do not ignore these feelings she is having or shut them down, because they are real for her. Instead, think of other ways to help her be/become open to the idea that the resistance we all encounter when faced with difficult and uncomfortable situations can instead become part of our everyday existence, our everyday learning. Her desire for and resistance to learning can, in this class, become part of what she is learning. And part of what I’m learning alongside her. (Kumashiro, 2009)*

Me: We know this is difficult. Learning anything new is difficult. It’s supposed to be. And we are so incredibly excited about how you all are thinking and questioning and trying things out! If you want to be the ones who actually “make a difference” in education, then you have to change the systems of which you are a part. And this is just one way you might create a fissure in those oppressive systems.

Her: The school I’ll most likely be teaching in has mostly white kids so we won’t really have to think about these kinds of social issues.

Breathing in, I know I am breathing in.
Breathing out, I know I am breathing out.^{xiii}

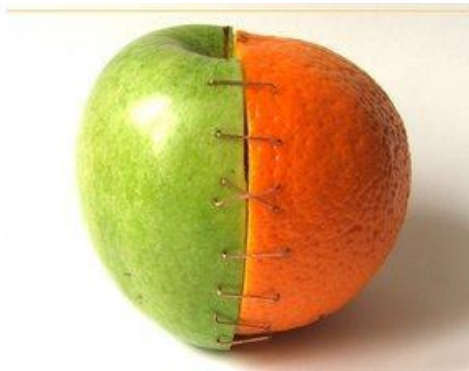
Me: Um, well I'd say it's those white kids who need you to be thinking about this the most, wouldn't you? I mean if we are talking about systems created out of white supremacy (and patriarchy and classism), then who do you think those systems benefit the most? I can promise you it ain't the black or brown folk. I mean, do you see *them* out there chanting, "You can't replace us!"?

Damn. Lost her...try again next week....

NEXT WEEK

Her: I mean, we keep talking about all of this violence that's being inflicted on people's bodies. But shouldn't we *also* be considering the violence that some people are inflicting on buildings—like looting and setting fires and things like that?

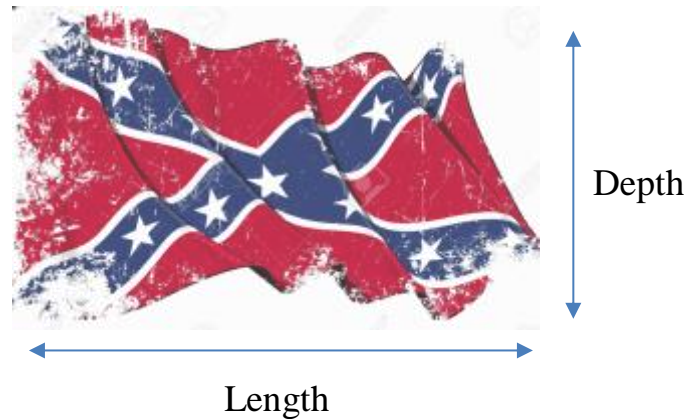
Me:



*...the fact that the classroom is fraught with challenges and constraints is not an excuse for failing to grapple with social justice issues and anti-oppressive pedagogies. Rather, **these challenges and constraints help us understand the dimensions and contours of our practices.***

—Gloria Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. xix

The dimensions and contours of my current teacher education practice...



Systems (n.) [sis-tuh mz]

1. an assemblage of things or parts forming a complex or unitary whole;
2. an ordered and comprehensive assemblage of principles, doctrines, or the like in a particular field of knowledge or thought;^{xiv}
3. white supremacy
4. patriarchy
5. capitalism

It's not about people
it's about systems.
That's what we have to teach
Systems
If you don't understand
Systems
and how they work
You only have your own lived experiences

to understand
to make meaning
to see the world
When you have the luxury
of being oblivious to history
Then you have the luxury
of not knowing how things work
of not knowing how systems work
People of color
don't have that luxury
You want to change the present?
understand the past,
change the present^{xv}

Teach. Breathe. Learn. Breathe. Learn. Teach. Breathe. Always Breathe.

Engaged pedagogy is physically, mentally, emotionally exhausting (hooks, 1994). More days than not I am frustrated and wonder if it's worth it—the work I continue doing on myself and my pedagogical approaches within justice-oriented teacher education. And some days I'm more than frustrated. I'm angry af. I seem to forget in those moments that I was once a twenty-three-year-old white woman who grew up with extreme privilege, who was also in a justice-oriented teacher education program and getting my world rocked on a daily basis. If we weren't learning about privilege in our teacher education program, we were learning about oppression. And while we were learning about oppression and privilege, we were also learning about change and advocacy. I think I cried at least four days a week for one year straight because of all of the new truths I was encountering on a daily basis. Some of the tears came from my newly established white guilt; other tears came from outrage: that I had both benefitted from and contributed to all of these oppressive systems and I had not recognized it sooner. I didn't have *moments* of crisis during my teacher ed program, I had *days and weeks* of crisis. We all did. And our professors—Drs. Angie Paccione and Barb McWhorter—never flinched; they never gave up on us.

When one of us came to a new understanding about patriarchy or white supremacy or sexism or classism or homophobia or segregation or, or, or... and our worlds were turned upside down, our professors embodied grace and love. They, too, might have been angry af in those moments when we were asking incredibly ignorant questions and making endless ignorant assumptions about whole groups of people, but they never once showed anger. They set us straight a time or twenty, don't get me wrong. But it always came from a place of love and intellectual challenge. I guess they knew if they didn't do that work with us during the limited time they had with us, then we might not have opportunities to do that work again. So, they kept showing up every day, believing in us and pushing us to think and live more deeply, more critically, more openly. And if they *did* experience anger when engaging in the difficult, messy work of teaching, I imagine they did what bell hooks learned to do from Thich Nhat Hanh: they used their anger as compost for their garden.

When meeting with Thich Nhat Hanh for the first time, hooks explained to Yancy (2015) that the first thing that came out of her mouth was how angry she was (which is actually a pretty funny image if you know Thich Nhat Hanh's work).^{xvi} hooks felt like she had encountered some kind of racism or sexism every step of the way when going to meet Thich Nhat Hanh and the only thing she could say when she opened her mouth was, "I am so *angry!*" Hanh's response? Hold on to your anger and use it as compost for your garden.

"Yes, yes, I can do that!" hooks said. "...if we think of anger as compost, we think of it as energy that can be recycled in the direction of our good. It is an empowering force. If we don't think about it that way, it becomes a debilitating and destructive force" (par 26).

I want to use my anger as compost for my garden. Encountering white supremacy, and all other systems of oppression and violence, provides me with plenty of compost. A life-time of compost. It's what I *do* with that compost that matters. Cultivating that compost into an empowering force for good, rather than a debilitating, destructive force—this is what I want to learn to do *alongside* the preservice teachers who come in and out of my professional life. For me, it's not really a choice—if I stay in this profession, then I have to do the work. And *this* is the work: sometimes it's shutting my mouth and listening to those who are

oppressed, hearing their stories of joy and sorrow; sometimes it's encouraging myself to read articles and blogs and books that explore the history of white supremacy and racial violence, even when it hurts; sometimes it's reading Thich Nhat Hanh to help me practice compassion, with myself and with others; sometimes it's pulling a preservice education student into my office to talk with them about whether or not education is the right place for them because I simply cannot imagine them being open to teaching and accepting *all* children; sometimes it's about sharing moments of my own ignorance with my students so they can observe my vulnerabilities as a white woman still learning and growing; and sometimes it's being angry af, but also trying to use that anger as my compost. This is the work. Teaching the systems. Examining the systems. Working together against the systems while living within them.

Teach. Breathe. Learn. Breathe. Learn. Teach. Breathe. Always Breathe.

References

- Conklin, H.C. (2008). Modeling compassion in critical, justice-oriented teacher education. *Harvard Educational Review*, 78(4), 652-674.
- Conklin, H.G. & Hughes, H.E. (2016). Practices of compassionate, critical, justice-oriented teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 67(1), 47-60.
- Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice (2nd ed)*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Hanh, T.N. (2001). *You are here: Discovering the magic of the present moment*. Boston, MA: Shambala Publications.
- hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- hooks, b. (2009). *Writing beyond race: Living theory and practice*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Hughes, H. E. (2011). *Phenomenal bodies, phenomenal girls: How young adolescent girls experience being enough in their bodies* (Doctoral dissertation). University of Georgia Electronic Theses and Dissertations database. Retrieved from: <http://www.galileo.usg.edu/express?link=getd^{xvii}>
- Hughes, H.E., Moulton, M., & Andrews, P.G. (2016). Learning through crisis and paradox in justice-oriented teacher education. *Middle Grades Review*, 1(3), Article 4.
- Jones, S. & Hughes-Decatur, H. (2012). Speaking of bodies in justice-oriented, feminist teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 63(1), 51-61.
- Jones, S. & Woglom, J.F. (2016). *On mutant pedagogies: Seeking justice and drawing change in teacher education*. The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.
- Kumashiro, K. (2009). *Against common sense: Teaching and learning toward social justice*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). But That's Just Good Teaching! The Case for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. *Theory into Practice*, 34(3), 159-165.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2001). *Crossing over to Canaan: The journey of new teachers in diverse classrooms*. San Francisco, CA: Josey Bass.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). Forward. *Against common sense: Teaching and learning toward social justice*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Romano, T. (1995). *Writing with passion: Life stories, multiple genres*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers.

Singleton, G.E. (2015). *Courageous conversations about race: A field guide for achieving equity in schools*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sleeter, C. (2015). Teaching for social justice in multicultural classrooms. *Multicultural Education Review*, 5(2), 1-19.

Wise, T. (2017). Beyond diversity: Pasadena City College. Retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tok7Do5JWq0&t=2089s>

Yancy, G. & hooks, b. (2015). bell hooks: Buddhism, the beats and loving blackness. *New York Times*. Retrieved from: <https://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/12/10/bell-hooks-buddhism-the-beats-and-loving-blackness/>



Hilary E. Hughes is an Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Theory and Practice at the University of Georgia. She can be reached by e-mail: hilary.hughes@uga.edu. Hughes' research interests include justice-oriented teacher education, youth culture, theories around the body, and doctoral education.

ⁱ <http://www.oed.com.proxy-remote.galib.uga.edu/view/Entry/421025?redirectedFrom=white+supremacy#eid>

ⁱⁱ hooks, 2009, p. 5

ⁱⁱⁱ *White silence is violence* is a concept I have been grappling with for a while now: [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#) are just a few of the reading lists and blogs with lots of wisdom that I've been working my way through...again and again, because these are the kinds of texts I need and want to read multiple times so they can continue to decolonize my mind (hooks, 2009). These are the kinds of texts that sometimes work on and through me as if the texts themselves are boring a hole through my already splintered soul. Meaning, it hurts to read them, but I have to keep reading them so I can *be differently* in the world.

^{iv} I could have added *at least* 10 more quotes from senators, governors, the current president, etc. where these (mostly white men) are incensed because of the lack of gratitude displayed by black athletes, politicians,



public figures, etc. Here is just one example—and he's not even referencing history accurately.

"We're sick of the silver-tongued people. How about John Lewis last week? Criticizing the president?" LePage said, "You know, I will just say this: John Lewis ought to look at history. It was Abraham Lincoln that freed the slaves. It was Rutherford B. Hayes and Ulysses S. Grant that fought against Jim Crow laws. A simple thank you would suffice."—Gov. Paul LePage

<http://www.kansascity.com/news/politics-government/article127043779.html>

^v Kumanshiro, 2009, p. 30

^{vi} Representative of random streams of consciousness that enter my head in the midst of teaching

^{vii} Ouch. Did that hurt? It hurts me too, which is why I have to continue reading and listening and learning from people who are not white—so I don't end up perpetuating all that I want to work against. Truth is, I *want to* believe I am a critical, justice-oriented teacher educator who is, somehow, creating small fissures in the white supremacist classist sexist homophobic patriarchal Teflon of at least a handful of our preservice education students' cultural and historical experiences. But most times I simply chalk myself up to a [SIW](#), an imposter.

^{viii} <http://www.oed.com.proxy-remote.galib.uga.edu/view/Entry/157097?redirectedFrom=racism#eid>

^{ix} I felt compelled to add this last comment because it was so illustrative of the overall piece. Yes, it's real, and came out of a white teacher's mouth this week (October 25, 2017). If you are surprised by this comment ("because it's 2017" or "because we had a black president and we now live in a post-racial society", then I invite you to read some of the sources I've listed in this piece in footnote #3. It's real and it is all around us.

^x I use "**Her**" throughout this section as a representative voice of the students in my classes who are most vocal with their resistance to justice-oriented education.

^{xi} This is excerpted from a real email I sent to a preservice education student in one of my courses.

^{xii} This was not part of the original email; it is what I wish I could have gone back and added.

^{xiii} Hanh, 2001, p. 32

^{xiv} <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/system?s=t>

^{xv} Wise, T. (2017). Beyond diversity. Pasadena City College. Retrieved from:
https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=tim+wise

^{xvi} A few of my favorite works by Thich Nhat Hanh: *Teachings on love*, *You are here*, and *Peace is every step*. Which reminds me, I need to read all three of them again. And again...

^{xvii} I do not consider this my “real” dissertation. The university would not allow me to submit the dissertation I wrote as a magazine in Microsoft Publisher, so I had to rip it apart and piece it back together in some random format that took the meaning from the text. If you’d like to view the actual dissertation that I wrote and defended, please click [here](#).