



Representations of the Racialized Experiences of African Americans in Developmental Reading Textbooks

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Race plays a major role in the lived experiences of African Americans. Consequently, race significantly impacts the identities and educational experiences of African American college students—many of whom require developmental reading courses. These courses, which are gateway courses in higher education, should address race along with reading skill development to increase engagement and success among African American students. This study investigates developmental reading curriculum, as exemplified by developmental reading textbooks, to determine how African Americans and their experiences related to race are represented and framed. Using Critical Race Theory as the theoretical framework, I conducted a qualitative content analysis of reading selections in a sample of five of the most recently published, top-selling developmental reading textbooks. Along with the findings of this study, the implications for developmental reading pedagogy and African American student engagement and success are discussed.

Research indicates that as a result of racial disparities within the educational system, African American college students too often enter college needing additional preparation for academic success (Gay, 2000; Hale, 2001; Moore, 2001; Murrell, 2002; Thayer, 2000; Tinto, 1993). In light of this, these students are more likely than their White counterparts to place into developmental reading coursework (Attewell, Lavin, Domina, & Levey, 2006; Boylan, Bonham,

& White, 1999; Kinzie, Gonyea, Shoup, & Kuh, 2008). This is particularly important as “reading abilities strongly influence performance in other academic tasks and subjects” (Gay, 2000, p. 130). Specifically relating to developmental reading coursework, Zhang (2000) asserts that students requiring remediation in reading are much less likely to persist to degree completion than students who need remediation in math or writing. The role of developmental reading coursework in student persistence decisions has also been explored by the National Center for Education Statistics (2005) that cites the need for remediation in reading as the most serious barrier to degree completion because reading difficulties are often reflective of general literacy problems that may inhibit mastery of the content in other subject areas. As enrollment in developmental reading coursework increases among African American students, the need for more effective and relevant reading pedagogies becomes more salient.

Race, Identity, and the Educational Experiences of African Americans

Literacy research emphasizes a holistic approach whereby students engage in skill development through meaningful reading, writing, and thinking activities that are relevant to their lives and experiences (Degener, 2001; Freire, 1970, 1991; Gay, 2000; Hale, 2001; Paulson & Armstrong, 2010; Williams, 2008, 2009; Wood, 2003). Particularly relevant to engagement and persistence among African American students, Kinzie et al. (2008) suggest that institutions tailor developmental coursework to the specific social, cultural, and educational characteristics of these students since they have the highest enrollment in these courses. Furthermore, they implore developmental educators to adopt a “talent development” philosophy, curriculum, and instructional practices that honor the experiences of these learners and view the talents and skills that they bring into the classroom as assets rather than deficiencies (Kinzie et al., 2008). For example, developmental reading instructors should assign readings that speak to the students’ experiences. This practice is supported by Gay (2000) and Hale (2001) in their research on culturally relevant pedagogy and the effective education of African American students. In order to tailor developmental reading curriculum and pedagogy to the needs of African American students, instructors must understand the factors that are most pivotal to the students’ academic success and persistence.

Several researchers cite the salience of race, racism, and racial identity in the educational experiences and outcomes of African American students (Gay, 2000; Hale, 2001; Jennings & Lynn, 2005; Lynn & Parker,

2006; Moore, 2001; Murrell, 2002; Patton, McEwan, Rendon, & Howard-Hamilton, 2007). While college student development theory and research offers some examination of these issues, Patton et al. (2007) draw attention to the limited "use of language about race and considerations of the roles of racism in students' development and learning" (p. 39). In light of this situation, they advocate for a critical race perspective in theory, research, and practice pertaining to higher education and student development.

As it is used in educational contexts, Critical Race Theory (CRT) is defined as "an interdisciplinary attempt to approach educational problems and questions from the perspectives of women and men of color" (Jennings & Lynn, 2005, p. 25). The major premise of CRT is that racism is a central part of American life. This theory rejects the notions of America as a fair, colorblind meritocracy. Instead, CRT takes the stance that racism has played a key role in all contemporary manifestations of unequal power, unequal privilege, and unequal wealth between racial groups in American society (Jennings & Lynn, 2005; Lynn & Parker, 2006; Ryan & Dixson, 2006).

Obviously, racism is particularly problematic for those in subordinated racial groups, like African Americans. The idea of Black inferiority is communicated in various venues of society, including education. Specifically related to literacy education, Willis (2008) illuminates the undercurrent of racism in reading theory and practice. Her extensive research on the historical, social, and political foundations of reading comprehension and testing in the U.S. reveals how "reading material was used to inculcate dominant ideologies as common sense" and how "books written for African American students were designed to reproduce dominant ideologies as natural, commonsensical, and universal" (p. xi). This impact of racism in literacy education is echoed by Delpit (2006) who asserts that "there can be no doubt that in many classrooms students of color do reject literacy, for they feel that literate discourses reject them" (p. 160). It is evident that within education African American students are continually faced with the task of "beating the odds" that are stacked so high against them. This can negatively impact these students' confidence and motivation. Furthermore, bombarded with negative discourse and images, African Americans students may often find it difficult to maintain a positive identity (Moore, 2001; Murrell, 2002; Smedley, 2008; Spencer, 1999; Stevenson & Arrington, 2009).

While the construction of an identity is a perpetual process spanning the course of a lifetime, identity development is most crucial during adolescence and the college years (Burt & Halpin, 1998; Kalsner, 1992). Several researchers have indicated that the task of identity development

for non-White youth is exacerbated given our racially hostile society (Burt & Halpin, 1998; Kalsner, 1992; Spencer, 1999). Not only do African American students have to deal with the normative issues of identity, but they also have to contend with the stress and alienation that accompany the threat and experience of racism. Thus, the construction of an identity among these students is a lengthier and more fragile process. Unresolved identity issues can have an enormous negative impact on academic achievement (Kalsner, 1992; Spencer, 1999). Consequently, researchers advocate that faculty provide support to African American students as they work through racial identity issues and transition into academia (Davis, 1994). Furthermore, instructors can facilitate the resolution of racial identity by fostering cultural consciousness in the classroom (Kalsner, 1992).

Also related to identity are self-esteem and self-efficacy—both of which have an impact on student engagement and success. Students who feel confident in their academic and social abilities are more likely to be motivated and involved in their academic pursuits (Kalsner, 1992; Moore, 2001). In a study of pre-college preparation, Welch, Hodges, and Payne (1996) found that fostering a “scholar-identity” had strong implications for college success among African American students. In other words, African American students who view themselves as academically competent are more likely to be successful and persist to degree completion. These claims are supported by attribution theory research, which indicates that students with a mastery orientation as opposed to a helpless orientation are more likely to be motivated to persist despite any experiences of failure (Kalsner, 1992). The reason for this perseverance is that mastery-oriented students perceive themselves as having the power and ability to be successful whereas helpless-oriented students perceive themselves as academically inadequate.

Similar conclusions have been drawn through research on locus of control, which refers to the extent that individuals feel that they have power over their outcomes. Students with an external locus of control feel that they personally are very limited in their power and ability and that others have far more power and ability to determine their academic outcomes. This psychological state often translates into diminished academic motivation, involvement, and success. On the other hand, students with an internal locus of control feel that they personally are very much in control of their academic outcomes. Therefore, these students tend to put forth greater effort and achieve greater success. However, Kalsner (1992) cites an important caveat to control orientation research as it relates to African American students. For these students, a dual control orientation is linked to increased motivation and achievement.

In other words, if they are to be successful, African American students benefit from being made aware of the external, sociopolitical barriers to their success in addition to having confidence in their personal abilities (Kalsner, 1992). This is very similar to racial socialization research which stressed the importance of dual socialization for African American youths where they are made conscious of the racial hostility they may encounter in society in addition to being given a sense of racial and cultural pride (Stevenson & Arrington, 2009; Ward, 2000).

For African American college students race, racism, and racial identity intersect with their educational experiences in complex and critical ways and have an important impact on these students' engagement in their college coursework (Burt & Halpin, 1998; Kalsner, 1992; Moore, 2001; Smedley, 2008; Spencer, 1999; Stevenson & Arrington, 2009; Ward, 2000). Paulson and Armstrong (2010) "stress the importance of including an understanding of identity in postsecondary literacy educational contexts" (p. 3). Specifically, they emphasize that students do not meet their academic goals by simply mastering basic skills through a linear process. Instead, reading has a variety of purposes that are dependent upon a variety of academic and discourse-community contexts. Students most need to be able to recognize and navigate these contexts; this recognition and navigation involves "sophisticated matters of socialization and acculturation" (p. 3) that are ultimately linked to students' identities (Paulson & Armstrong, 2010). Patton et al. (2007) cite that "the classroom—where knowledge is constructed, organized, produced and distributed—is a central site for the construction of social and racial power" (p. 49). They further explain that too often, college faculty ignore the role of race and its systematic complexities and while doing so further disadvantage students of color. Emphasizing the importance of reading curriculum and pedagogy that reflects the racialized identities and experiences of African American students, Gay (2000) asserts that literature "is a powerful medium through which students can confront social injustices, visualize racial inequities and find solutions to personal and political problems" (p. 131). In light of this, developmental reading courses and the textbooks that drive them should address race and racism as they are central to the identities and experiences of African American students (Carter, 2005; Gay, 2000; Hale, 2001; Patton et al., 2007).

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to analyze how developmental reading courses represent and frame the impact of race on the life experiences of African Americans. As argued in the research literature, it is critical for developmental reading courses to adequately reflect the experiences

of African Americans as a means to engage these students and heighten their persistence and ultimate success in the collegiate experience. Thus, race, racism, and racial identity have a fundamental impact on the life experiences of African Americans and should, therefore, be addressed in developmental reading coursework. Developmental reading textbooks are perhaps the most influential determinants of the instructional practices used in developmental reading courses (Wood, 2003). Publishers of textbooks strongly encourage instructors to organize their courses around their content. At the same time, instructors rely heavily on these textbooks "as resources and references to convey knowledge and information to their students" (Shen, 2002, p. 69). In essence, the curricula and instruction in most developmental reading classrooms is dependent upon what material appears in the course textbook (Shen, 2002; Wood, 2003). Thus, these textbooks are a logical starting point for examining developmental reading course content.

The importance of interrogating textbook content, specifically as it relates to African American students, is supported by Gay (2000), who points out that "the largely uncontested authority and pervasiveness of textbooks are important reasons why understanding their treatment of ethnic and cultural diversity and their effects on student learning is essential" (p. 113). Grounded in Critical Race Theory, I conducted a qualitative content analysis of the reading selections related to African Americans in a representative sample of five of the most recently published, top-selling developmental reading textbooks. The specific research question that guided this research is *How do the reading selections in developmental reading textbooks represent and frame the impact of race on the life experiences of African Americans?*

Theoretical Framework and Positionality

Literacy researchers who adopt Critical Race Theory as an analytical lens "challenge traditional theories that language and literacy are neutral, objective, and color-blind" (Willis et al., 2008, p. 36). Furthermore, literacy researchers using Critical Race Theory acknowledge that "there can be no disinterested, objective, and value-free definition of literacy" and that "the way literacy is viewed and taught is always and inevitably ideological" (Willis et al., 2008, p. 83). Methodologically, a study that is conducted from a Critical Race Theory perspective

foregrounds race and racism in all aspects of the research process; challenges the traditional research paradigm, texts, and theories used to explain the experiences of people of Color; offers a liberatory or transformative solution to racial, gender, and class subordination; focuses on the racialized, gendered

and classed experiences of students of Color; uses an interdisciplinary knowledge base to better understand the experiences of students of Color. (Willis et al., 2008, p. 57)

As a Critical Race Theory qualitative content analysis, this study aims to scrutinize issues of inequality, to resist the reproduction of oppressive ideology, and to make strides toward social change within the contexts of developmental reading and higher education. Specifically, Critical Race Theory is used as an analytical construct with which to qualitatively analyze the reading selections related to African Americans in developmental reading textbooks.

Milner (2007) posits that “researchers’ multiple and varied positions, roles, and identities are intricately and inextricably embedded in the process and outcomes of education research” (p. 389). This is particularly important to this study since qualitative research is subjective in nature, and the specific procedures used in such a study are exclusively dependent on the subjective position of the researcher. Furthermore, careful consideration of my personal stance and position as a researcher is crucial since my study centralizes race, racism, and racial identity. In such a case, Milner (2007) asserts that “when researchers are not mindful of the enormous role of their own and others’ racialized positionality and cultural ways of knowing, the results can be dangerous to communities and individuals of color” (p. 388).

I approach this study first and foremost as an African American. My identity as an African American is central to my worldview, and it impacts how I move about in all areas of my life. At the heart of my work as a developmental reading professor is my desire to cultivate cultural consciousness amongst my students. An overwhelming majority of my students are African American—mostly low-income, first-generation college students. Through conversations with my students and in reading their reflective writing assignments, I have realized that many of my students consider themselves to be “outsiders” to the academy, and they are very sensitive to the hurdles to their success as they relate to race and racism. I work to address these issues by openly sharing my experiences with education and life in general. I am open about the injustices that I have had to encounter, but I emphasize my resilience and the resilience of so many African Americans. I point out to the students that they themselves are incredibly resilient. From there, I strive to cultivate in them a more positive scholarly identity—one where they see themselves as the competent, knowledgeable, and capable individuals that I believe them to be.

Thus, this research study is one with which I am intimately connected. This study is situated within the essence of who I am personally and

professionally. Teaching for me is a form of social activism, and I engage daily in the struggle for a more just society. I work to infuse criticality in both my theorizing about my students and my curricular and instructional choices. At the center of my thinking and teaching is a critical examination of the complex intersections of race, identity, power, and education. To me, this is the only way to truly educate students in such a way that will increase their success and persistence and ultimately the quality of their lives beyond the academy.

Methodology

As previously mentioned, this study is a Critical Race Theory qualitative content analysis of current, top-selling developmental reading textbooks. Historically, content analysis was a purely quantitative research method used in the study of mass communications (Krippendorff, 2004; White & Marsh, 2006). More recently, content analysis has been employed by researchers in a variety of disciplines to conduct qualitative as well as quantitative studies. White and Marsh (2006) describe qualitative content analysis as a "highly flexible research method" where the researcher "uses analytical constructs, or rules of inference, to move from the text to the answers to the research questions" (p. 27). Zhang and Wildemuth (2009) explain that qualitative content analysis goes beyond merely counting words or extracting objective content from texts. Rather, qualitative content analysis "allows researchers to understand social reality in a subjective but scientific manner" (p. 308).

Sampling and Sample Unit

There is a relatively large market for developmental reading textbooks with well over 100 books currently in print. In addition, there is considerable variety in the content of developmental reading textbooks, including books that emphasize study skills and basic reading strategies and traditional workbook-style texts that focus on discrete skill practice drills. Sampling in qualitative content analysis is purposive, theoretical and contingent upon the specific parameters of the study (White & Marsh, 2006; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). Given the depth of a qualitative content analysis and the time frame for this study, it was important that I limit the sample to a reasonable size. The critical nature of my study and the characteristics of the potential textbooks were also taken into account when considering sampling. Specifically, I decided to omit workbook-style textbooks as the focus of my analysis is on reading selections in developmental reading textbooks. Workbook-style textbooks tend to only include very short reading passages; thus, they do not offer the kinds of text that are most useful for a critical

study. I decided to construct a sample that would include recent, top-selling developmental reading textbooks. This rationale for selecting the most recently published (copyright dates between 2008 and 2011), top-selling textbooks is because they are most likely to reflect the most current models of literacy instruction and the most likely to be used in developmental reading courses.

The sampling universe of textbooks for this study was determined by contacting three major publishers of developmental reading textbooks, Pearson Higher Education, McGraw-Hill, and Wadsworth Cengage Learning (formerly Houghton Mifflin Higher Education), and requesting copies of their most recent, top-selling developmental reading textbooks. Based on the information that I obtained from the publishers' representatives, five textbooks make up the total sample for this study (see appendix A). The sampling unit was limited to full-length reading selections (all of which were comprised of five or more paragraphs) that deal explicitly or implicitly with issues related to African Americans, and did not include the short, isolated paragraphs typically found in practice exercises. There were no limitations on the genre of the reading selections, and as a result, I included autobiographical essays, fiction, and excerpts from actual content area textbook chapters.

To determine which reading passages fit the criteria for my sample, I skimmed every full-length reading selection in the five textbooks to make note of those selections that deal with issues related to African Americans. Some selections deal explicitly with the experiences of African Americans (e.g., in their titles). Other reading selections were not as explicit, and in those cases, I read those more closely to determine their relevance to my study. In doing so, I realized that many of the readings discussed the experiences of African Americans more subtly. Therefore, I chose to include reading passages that deal with African Americans both explicitly and implicitly in the sample. Within the five developmental reading textbooks, there were a total of 166 full-length reading selections. Of the 166 full-length passages, 19 implicitly or explicitly discussed issues related to African Americans (see appendix B). These 19 passages constituted my sampling unit (see appendix C).

Data Analysis

To determine how developmental reading textbooks represent and frame the impact of race on the life experiences of African Americans, I used the constant comparative method, as advocated by Zhang and Wildemuth (2009). They explain that the constant comparative method was originally developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) for research using a grounded theory approach; however, this method is now widely used

as a method of qualitative data analysis (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). White and Marsh (2006) describe the constant comparative method in qualitative content analysis as one where the researcher reads through the documents, makes note of key phrases and segments that correspond with the research questions, identifies others that seem important but that are unexpected, and recursively compares the categories and constructs with other data and rereading of the same documents.

Open coding. The first step of data analysis was open coding, which included reading and rereading the reading selections that deal with African Americans with the purpose of noting ideas related to race that emerged from the texts. During open coding, I generated a list of codes to represent race-related ideas from the textbook reading selections.

Axial coding. Next, I engaged in axial coding, during which I compared the codes from the open coding list to determine any relationships between them. With this information, I created a preliminary coding map in which I arranged the related themes and the specific codes that are related to each theme. For example, codes such as Black-White distrust, White flight, post-racial society, and opposition to Whites were organized under the larger theme of Black-White relations.

Selective coding. Finally, I engaged in selective coding, which entailed using my preliminary coding map, rereading each reading selection and assigning my previously generated codes to the relevant passages of the text. This was a recursive process during which I compared instances of my initial codes and themes between the various texts and within each text. Consequently, I refined my codes and themes, omitting those codes and themes that were not as applicable to my research question, combining categories and codes, and adding new ones that emerged from comparing instances between and within each text. Once the final codes were assigned to each of the reading selections, I tallied the frequencies of the instances in which each of the codes and their overarching themes appeared in the texts. The themes that were most frequent in the reading selections became the core themes. I further examined the core themes within the reading selections and generated larger analytic themes. These analytic themes take into account Critical Race Theory and provide the analytic lens through which I reconstruct the meanings found in the data.

Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) provide four criteria for evaluating interpretive research: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. In conducting my study, I took several steps to meet Lincoln and Guba's (1985) four criteria outlined above. To meet credibility and trans-

ferability, I conducted an in-depth analysis of several textbooks, written by multiple authors and published by multiple publishers. Although my analysis focused on the full-length reading selection in each textbook, I also examined several other aspects of the textbooks (front matter, teacher tips, and student activities) to gain an accurate understanding of the texts' range of material. In addition, to ensure dependability and confirmability, I engaged in a recursive process of reading and rereading through that data to refine and revise my interpretations of the data. Furthermore, to ensure validity and truth value of my study, I situated my findings within a Critical Race Theory paradigm as well as provided thick (in-depth and very detailed) descriptions of the reading selections in the textbooks and my interpretations of them.

To further ensure the trustworthiness of my study, I cross-checked my coding and analysis with an independent researcher—a fellow doctoral student with knowledge of Critical Race Theory, qualitative content analysis, and experience teaching developmental reading to African American students. I provided the independent researcher with my research question and a sample of 10 reading selections (two selections from each of the five textbooks from my study) and asked her to engage in a two-tiered coding process. For five of the selections, she simply read through each of them and generated possible codes based on the research question for my study. We then discussed her codes, and I made modifications to my codes as necessary, based on her suggestions and critiques. For the remaining five reading selections, she used a coding map that I had created using the codes I generated during axial coding. As she read through these five selections, she assigned codes from my coding map to the sections of the text that she interpreted as relevant to the codes. Again, we discussed her assignment of codes, and I modified my coding as necessary. This process was repeated until there was 100% agreement between the independent researcher and me. In most cases, any variance in our assignment of codes was purely semantic—for example she may have used the term “White privilege,” while I used the term “White advantage” (see appendix D for the final coding map).

Findings

In examining how the textbooks represent and frame the racialized experiences of African Americans, I found that overall the developmental reading textbooks in this study appear to provide minimal representation of African Americans in the full-length reading selections included in the textbooks. As mentioned above in the section on sampling, within the five textbooks included in this study, there are a total of 166 full-length reading selections. Of the 166 passages, only 19 passages implicitly or

explicitly discuss the life experiences of African Americans. This alone may be problematic for African American students enrolled in developmental reading courses. While developmental reading textbooks need not focus exclusively on African Americans, it is crucial to the success of African American students that these texts adequately represent their experiences (Delpit, 2006; Gay, 2000; Hale, 2001; Willis, 2008).

Beyond adequately representing African Americans in textbooks, publishers must also accurately depict the lived experiences of African Americans—especially as they relate to the impact of race. My analysis of the reading selections related to African Americans in these textbooks yielded five themes related to race: Black/White comparisons, Black-White relations, African American cultural values, African American psychological consciousness, and racial inequality. In examining the frequency of the instances of these themes and the research question for this study, the themes of racial inequality and Black-White relations emerged as most related to my research question and most frequent in my content analysis of the reading selections related to African Americans included in these books. Thus, racial inequality and Black-White relations serve as the core themes with which I developed analytic themes for discussing the findings of this study. I discuss both of these core themes and their frequency and give typical examples of how they are represented and framed in the reading selections.

Racial Inequality

Racial inequality emerged as the overarching theme related to African Americans and their experiences. I found 36 instances of this theme in all five of the developmental reading textbooks combined, and this theme encompasses the issues of racism, discrimination, prejudice, and racial oppression that, both historically and in the present, have plagued the lives of African Americans. Furthermore, as it is framed in some of the textbooks I consider in this study, the theme of racial inequality also incorporates incidents of overcoming racism and discrimination, race-based legislation such as affirmative action, and the many political and legislative triumphs of African Americans in their struggle for equality.

My analysis of the developmental reading textbooks showed that there was no difference in their representations of this theme. All of the textbooks examine the complexity of racial inequality in U.S. society, past and present, and they discuss the implications of racial inequality for African Americans and for broader society as well. In addition, all of the textbooks examine the struggle for equality, not just the experience of inequality—that is, the progress resulting from the struggle is acknowledged, but the ongoing nature of the struggle is emphasized.

Nevertheless, although all of the textbooks generally provide comparable representation of racial inequality for African Americans, some reading selections in the textbooks provide a more cursory framing of this theme. In this cursory approach, racial inequality is framed from a historical perspective with little attention paid to contemporary relevance, thereby suggesting that the fight for racial equality as a battle has already been won and may not be an equally valid and current concern, which gives an unrealistic portrayal of racial inequality in contemporary U.S. society. In addition, the reading selections that take a more cursory approach to racial inequality tend to mention this theme implicitly, discussing examples of racial inequality as anecdotes or as strategies for making a larger point.

An example of a cursory approach to racial inequality is seen in a reading selection titled "Women in History," written by Leonard Pitt in *Bridging the Gap* (Smith & Morris, 2011). In this selection, Pitt describes the variety of roles that women played during the Civil War and he makes a reference to racial inequality when he discusses suffrage. He states,

[O]nce abolition was finally assured in 1865, most feminists felt certain that suffrage would follow quickly. They believed that women had earned the vote by their patriotic wartime efforts. Besides, it appeared certain that black men would soon be allowed to vote. And once black men had the ballot in hand, how could anyone justify keeping it from white women—or black women? (Smith & Morris, 2011, p. 260)

In this example, Pitt directly references the fact that African Americans were denied basic rights such as voting ("it appeared certain that black men would soon be allowed to vote"). In the reading selection, the author also alludes to the struggle of African Americans to gain their freedom from slavery and to be granted full rights as U.S. citizens. In taking a historical approach in framing the issue of racial inequality, Pitt presents the African American struggle for equality as an issue of the past that has been largely resolved through abolition and the impending extension of the right to vote for Black men. Discussion of racial inequality in this selection is left implicit rather than made explicit, as the example of racial inequality is used to support the author's primary focus on the struggle that women had to endure to gain equal rights in American society and are not presented as issues for discussion and study in their own right. Thus, the issue of racial inequality could easily be overlooked.

Another example of a cursory framing of racial inequality is seen in *The Art of Critical Reading* (Mather & McCarthy, 2009). In a selection titled "Commencement Address," written by Marian Wright Edelman,

the author gives an anecdote about Sojourner Truth. She describes Truth as an “illiterate slave woman who could not read or write, but she could not stand second-class treatment of women and she hated slavery” (Mather & McCarthy, 2009, p. 22). In this quotation, the author implicitly acknowledges that racial inequality was an issue in American society, and the issue of gender inequality is mentioned along with racial inequality. Nevertheless, much like the reading selection “Women in History,” by Pitt in *Bridging the Gap*, this passage does not explicitly refer to the complexity of racial inequality and its impact on contemporary society. Although Edelman’s primary point on perseverance in striving for a better, more equal U.S. is an important one to make, the issues of racial inequality, its social contexts, and its lingering effects are glossed over in such a way that they could be easily ignored or oversimplified by readers.

In contrast, in the comprehensive approach, racial inequality is examined more thoroughly and is framed as both historically and contemporarily significant. Such reading selections generally discuss the impact of racial inequality on various aspects of life chances and life experiences at both individual and societal levels. Moreover, the comprehensive approach emphasizes the struggle for racial equality—acknowledging the triumphs, but also honing in on the fact that the struggle continues in the present day.

A prime example of a comprehensive framing of racial inequality is seen in a reading selection titled “Race,” by Barack Obama. This selection appears in *Developing Critical Reading Skills* (Spears, 2009). In this selection, Obama discusses his thoughts on race relations in the U.S. In a personal example, Obama shares his experiences as a Black man in a racially unequal society. He states,

I can recite the usual litany of petty slights that during my forty-five years have been directed my way: security guards tailing me as I shop in department stores, white couples who toss me their keys as I stand outside a restaurant waiting for the valet, police cars pulling me over for no apparent reason. I know what it is like to have people tell me I can’t do something because of my color, and I know the bitter swill of swallowed back anger. (Spears, 2009, p. 450)

In this quotation, Obama offers a tangible example of the racial inequality that lingers in U.S. society and how it affects the daily life experiences of African Americans (“security guards tailing me as I shop in department stores,” “white couples who toss me their keys as I stand outside a restaurant waiting for the valet,” “police cars pulling me over for no apparent reason”). This example is particularly compelling, coming from

a man who is the first African American president of the United States. Some would consider his success as evidence of a post-racial American society, in which, according to Lum (2009), race no longer matters and racial inequality has been overcome. However, this account of Obama's experiences with racial inequality illustrates that these issues are still very much a reality for African Americans—successful or not.

Another example of a comprehensive framing of racial inequality is seen in *Opening Doors* (Cortina & Elder, 2011), in a reading selection titled "The Age of Globalization" written by Alan Brinkley. While this selection is primarily focused on the events of September 11, 2001, and their root causes, there is some discussion of social class among African Americans. In this selection, Brinkley discusses the effects of the Civil Rights Movement on the economic standing of African Americans:

There were few areas of American life from which blacks were any longer entirely excluded. Middle-class blacks, in other words, had realized great gains from the legislation of the 1960s, from the changing national mood on race, from the creation of controversial affirmative action programs and from their own strenuous efforts. (Cortina & Elder, 2011, p. 743)

Inherent in this quotation is the idea that African Americans have not always been treated as equal in U.S. society but have made gains in their social standing through their struggle for equality ("There were few areas of American life from which blacks were any longer entirely excluded."). While Brinkley clearly celebrates this triumph for Blacks, he is careful to illuminate the fact that the struggle for equality for African Americans is not an issue of the past. He goes on to explain that many African Americans continue to be "disadvantaged by many factors in the changing social and economic climate—among them a growing impatience with affirmative action and other programs designed to advance their fortunes" (Cortina & Elder, 2011, p. 743). Thus, this reading selection frames the issue of racial inequality as an ongoing struggle: there has been some progress, but ultimately, the struggle continues.

Black-White Relations

The second theme, with a total of 49 instances, which arose during my analysis of the five developmental reading textbooks, is Black-White relations. This theme encompasses issues related to the interactions between African Americans and White Americans as they relate to racial inequality. As examined in the previous theme, there is a long-standing history of racial inequality in U.S. society. At the crux of this inequality are assumptions of White superiority and Black inferiority that are manifested through White privilege and domination along with the

subordination and oppression of Blacks. Consequently, racial inequality and the struggle for equality centers on the relationship between African Americans and White Americans.

In examining how the reading selections in the developmental reading textbooks represent issues pertaining to Black-White relations, there are no noteworthy differences between the books. For the most part all of the textbooks deal with similar issues related to Black-White interactions (e.g., the disparity in power between these two races). The reading selections in all of the textbooks discuss the struggle between Blacks and Whites as being the direct result of power differentials, and they explore Black-White relations from historical and more contemporary lenses.

The fundamental difference between some of the developmental reading textbooks is in how they *frame* these issues of Black-White relations. My analysis revealed that the selections in *Opening Doors* and *Bridging the Gap* tend to frame interactions between African Americans and White Americans in relatively uncharitable terms, by focusing overwhelmingly on past and present Black-White conflict and situations in which Blacks continue to be oppressed and by offering little optimism in the future of Black-White relations.

For example, *Opening Doors* (Cortina & Elder, 2011) features a selection titled "African Americans: The Struggle for Equality," written by Thomas Patterson. This reading selection gives a detailed description of the history and current state of Black-White relations in the U.S. This selection portrays Whites as actively and intentionally resistant to equal opportunities for African Americans. Patterson asserts that "of all America's problems, none has been as persistent as the white race's unwillingness to yield a fair share of society's benefits to members of the black race" (Cortina & Elder, 2011, p. 163). Patterson goes on to describe the extent of White resistance through anti-Black laws and politics such as the *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) Supreme Court decision that "became a justification for the separate and *unequal* treatment of African Americans" (p. 164). Similarly, Patterson discusses White opposition to the *Brown* ruling, which made school-based racial segregation illegal. In what they called the Southern Manifesto, several Southern congressmen "urged their state governments to resist forced integration by any lawful means" (p. 164).

This reading selection further characterizes White resistance by citing instances of physical violence against African Americans who pursued equal rights. For example, Patterson describes how Dr. King and his followers were attacked by the Birmingham police using dogs, cattle prods, and fire hoses and how two civil rights workers were murdered during a voter registration drive in Selma, Alabama; both events demonstrate

the extent to which some Whites were willing to go to block racial equality. The author ends this selection by making explicit that the power struggle between Blacks and Whites is far from over: "Although the most significant progress in history toward the legal equality of all Americans occurred during the 1960's, Dr. King's dream of a color-blind society has remained elusive" (Cortina & Elder, 2011, p. 166).

Another example is seen in *Bridging the Gap* (Smith & Morris, 2011) in Pitt's "Women in History." In this selection, the author describes the notion of Blacks and Whites collaborating during times of crisis. During the Civil War, Pitt explains that "North and South, black and white, many women served as nurses, some as spies and even as soldiers" (Smith & Morris, 2011, p. 259). This quotation portrays a laying aside of racial and other differences to work toward a common goal. Implicit in this example is the idea that in the absence of crisis, African Americans and White Americans collaborate very little, if at all. In addition, the above quotation gives some indication of the tenuous and often volatile relationship between these two races.

This uncharitable portrayal of Black-White relations is vastly different from the other three developmental textbooks (*Developing Critical Reading Skills*, *Mindscapes*, and *The Art of Critical Reading*), which tend to frame the interactions between Blacks and Whites with hopefulness for the future. The reading selections in these textbooks generally recognize that, historically and currently, there is a disparity and struggle for power between these two races, but they offer some resolution to this conflict and encourage readers to move toward a future of Black-White reconciliation.

This trend of acknowledging the unpleasant while focusing on the positive is exemplified in *Mindscapes* (Carter, 2011), which includes a selection titled "Racial Injustice," by Marvin Perry, J. Wayne Baker, and Pamela Hollinger. Specifically, this selection discusses how the "closing decades of the twentieth century were marked by unprecedented achievement of African American women writers who overcame racial discrimination to become award-winning poets, novelists, screenplay writers and governmental emissaries" (Carter, 2011, p. 442). These writers, including Gwendolyn Brooks and Toni Morrison, were unique in that they used their writing to expose the racial injustice that African Americans continue to face. These writers also raised awareness of African American cultural influence in America and received mainstream acceptance (in the form of Pulitzer and Nobel Prizes, academic appointments, honors and awards, and so forth), which speaks to Black-White reconciliation. This reading presents the mainstream acceptance of these authors as significant because of their emphasis on racial equality for African Americans. Being granted such

prestigious mainstream honors is not only an acknowledgement of their talents as writers but also an acceptance of African Americans and their experiences by White Americans.

In *Developing Critical Reading Skills* (Spears, 2009), the notion of reconciliation between Blacks and Whites is further exemplified in the passage titled "Race." In this passage the author, Barack Obama, speaks of a future nation that embraces and appreciates individuals from all races and cultures. He envisions a U.S. that is "finally freed from the past of Jim Crow and slavery, Japanese internment camps and Mexican braceros, work-place tensions and cultural conflict" (as cited in Spears, 2009, p. 449). Still, Obama is very clear that this ideal is far from realized. He is very explicit in discussing the discrepancy between a post-racial ideal and current reality when he asserts,

to think clearly about race, then requires us to see the world on a split screen—to maintain in our sights the kind of America that we want while looking squarely at America as it is, to acknowledge the sins of our past and the challenges of the present without becoming trapped in cynicism and despair.
(as cited in Spears, 2009, p. 451)

In this quotation and throughout the selection, Obama describes the struggle for racial equality—both past and present—and urges readers not to turn a blind eye to the racial hostility that still exists.

It is evident that this reading passage does not simply embrace a post-racial view of U.S. society (such that issues of race and racism are no longer factors with which we must contend; Lum, 2009). Obama does not ignore the legacy and current reality of racial tension and inequality; nevertheless, he implores readers to take responsibility to make the dream of a multi-racial worldview a reality in the U.S. In other words, unlike the selections in the standard textbooks, this passage does not leave readers with merely a depressing and defeated look at Black-White relations. Instead, Obama presents the potential for Black-White relations in which the tension and inequality of the past do not have to dictate the future.

Implications

This study illuminates three major findings regarding how this sample of five of the most-recent, top-selling developmental reading textbooks represent and frame the impact of race on the life experiences of African Americans:

- Very few reading selections related to African Americans are included in the textbooks; however, racial inequality and Black-White relations are discussed as major themes in the life experiences of African Americans.

- Racial inequality is framed through either a comprehensive or cursory approach.
- Black-White relations are framed with either a focus on past/present tension or future reconciliation.

Each of these three findings has important implications for developmental reading coursework and the engagement and success of African American developmental reading students.

Limited Representation of African Americans

The need for course content that is relevant, responsive, and inclusive of the social, cultural, historical, and political contexts of students is well-established in the research literature (Degener, 2001; Delpit, 2006; Freire, 1970, 1991; Gay, 2000; Hale, 2001; Murrell, 2002; Paulson & Armstrong, 2010). Representative course materials are particularly salient for the engagement and success of African American students as they are forging a positive identity within a racially hostile educational system and society (Burt & Halpin, 1998; Kalsner, 1992; Moore, 2001; Smedley, 2008; Spencer, 1999; Stevenson & Arrington, 2009; Ward, 2000). The limited attention that the developmental reading textbooks in this study devote to the experiences of African Americans is highly problematic for African American students, who are most likely to enroll in developmental reading coursework, along with developmental reading instructors who are seeking to serve the needs of these students (Atwell et al., 2006; Delpit, 2006; Gay, 2000; Hale, 2001; Kinzie et al., 2008; Willis, 2008).

Specifically, the lack of representation in these textbooks reinforces the subordination of African Americans in education and in larger society—thus, potentially impeding the engagement and success of African American students in developmental reading courses. Furthermore, the lack of representative textbook content makes it necessary for developmental reading instructors to seek out supplemental reading material in order to address the needs of African American students in their courses. While some instructors willingly go the extra mile to accomplish this task, many instructors are incapable or unwilling to devote the time and energy to locating and incorporating supplementary materials related to African Americans in their courses. Consequently, the curricular needs of African American students in developmental reading courses go unmet.

Framing Racial Inequality: Cursory versus Comprehensive Approaches

While the number of passages related to African Americans and their experiences in the developmental reading textbooks that I analyzed in my study is relatively small compared to the total number of reading

selections included in the books, the reading selections cover important themes related to African Americans and their experiences—namely racial inequality and Black-White relations. The first theme, racial inequality, covers issues of racism, discrimination, prejudice, and racial oppression. All of the textbooks included in this study discuss these issues, but as illustrated in the findings of this study, some of the reading selections frame racial inequality in a cursory manner and other reading selections frame racial inequality in a more comprehensive manner. Specifically, the cursory approach presents racial inequality as a historically significant issue with little to no relevance in modern society. On the other hand, the comprehensive approach contends that racial inequality for African Americans is an issue that is both historically and contemporarily relevant. Each approach to framing racial inequality has a distinct impact on engagement and success amongst African American developmental reading students.

Cursory approach. As previously mentioned, the cursory approach to racial inequality presents an unrealistic portrayal of how this issue plays out in contemporary U.S. society. According to Critical Race Theory, racism is endemic to American society and is at the root of all present-day manifestations of racial inequality (Jennings & Lynn, 2005; Lynn & Parker, 2006; Ryan & Dixson, 2006). In light of this, the cursory approach to racial inequality is dangerously inaccurate. Reading selections that deny or diminish the racial inequality that is germane to African American students' lived experiences prohibit the students from critically examining and developing strategies for combating the negative impact of racism in their academic and personal lives. Ignoring or oversimplifying racial inequality is potentially damaging to the identities, academic engagement, and ultimately, the academic success of African American students (Burt & Halpin, 1998; Kalsner, 1992; Moore, 2001; Smedley, 2008; Spencer, 1999; Stevenson & Arrington, 2009; Ward, 2000).

Comprehensive approach. From a theoretical and pedagogical standpoint, the comprehensive framing of racial inequality, on the other hand, is necessary when teaching African American students. The benefits of a comprehensive approach, in which racial inequality is framed as a relevant struggle in the daily lives of African Americans, are supported by Critical Race Theory (Jennings & Lynn, 2005; Ryan & Dixson, 2006). In other words, there can be no adequate and accurate discussion of the experiences of African Americans without fully examining the impact of race and racism. The comprehensive approach to racial inequality found in many of the textbook reading selections is also supported by researchers who assert that literacy and learning must be situated in the historical, political, social, and cultural contexts of the students (Delpit,

2006; Freire, 1970, 1991; Gay, 2000; Hale, 2001; Paulson & Armstrong, 2010; Williams, 2008, 2009;). In doing so, literacy and learning help students become “critically conscious” of their experiences within the larger society (Degener, 2001; Freire, 1970, 1991). Reading selections that use a comprehensive framing of racial inequality offer African American students an opportunity to interrogate the complexity and implications of racism and strategize ways to overcome this barrier to their success (Gay, 2000).

Framing Black-White Relations: Past and Present Tensions versus Future Reconciliation

The second theme, Black-White relations, examines the interactions between African Americans and White Americans as they relate to racial inequality. Although all of the textbooks included in this study acknowledge the past and present tensions between these two groups, some of the textbooks frame Black-White relations through a pessimistic lens focused solely on the existing tensions and other textbooks use a more positive framing that focuses on the potential for reconciliation. There are benefits and drawbacks to both methods for framing Black-White relations as it relates to engagement and success among African American developmental reading students.

Past and present tensions. The textbook reading selections that focus exclusively on the Black-White power struggle with an explicit emphasis on White power, privilege, and dominance can be interpreted as negative, gloomy, and defeatist. African American students who encounter these reading passages may develop a sense of powerlessness and despair. On the other hand, several researchers argue that foregrounding issues of racism, dominance, and oppression is important to the engagement and socialization of these students (Jennings & Lynn, 2005; Lynn & Parker, 2006; Moore, 2001; Patton et al., 2007). In other words, by being upfront about the harsh realities of racial hostility in U.S. society, the ostensibly negative reading passages in the textbooks may be beneficial to African American students. The logic behind such reasoning is that these students are faced with racial issues on a daily basis, whether or not they are consciously aware of them. If African American students are to effectively navigate academia as a microcosm of larger society, they have to be conscious of sociopolitical barriers to their success. Thus, the seeming pessimism in some of the textbook reading selections is both warranted and necessary. Nevertheless, this approach may also fail to provide such students with information on how to overcome, and ultimately destroy, racial barriers. Being exposed only to the negative side of Black-White relations may leave African American students at

increased risk for developing an external locus of control and/or helpless orientation, such that they underestimate their ability to influence their outcomes while overestimating the power of others (Kalsner, 1992; Moore, 2001). This psychological state often leads to decreased academic motivation, involvement, success, and ultimately attrition from college (Kalsner, 1992; Moore, 2001).

Future reconciliation. In comparison, some readers may consider the future-focused, solution-centered approach to Black-White relations that characterizes other reading selections in the developmental reading textbooks as being too rosy and out of touch with reality. The ideal of a post-racial society can be construed as displaying ignorance to issues of privilege, dominance, and oppression that historically and currently dictate much of the interactions between African Americans and White Americans. African American students who encounter these passages could infer that issues of race and racism are no longer salient in U.S. society, which could be detrimental to their success, as they will undoubtedly face instances of racism and discrimination in academia and beyond.

However, the reading selections that focus on future reconciliation in no way ignore the harsh past and present realities of Black-White relations. These reading selections fully acknowledge issues of privilege, power, and oppression, but they do so in a way that also identifies ways to envision the potential for eradicating these problems by looking toward reconciliation and equality. This perspective is supported by researchers who advocate a dual approach to socializing African American students (Kalsner, 1992; Stevenson & Arrington, 2009; Ward, 2000). In this dual approach, African American students are made aware not only of the potential and reality of racism and discrimination that exist in our society, but also of the potential for overcoming and abolishing these barriers. By being made aware of the potential for success as well as the barriers to success, these students may be more likely to develop a mastery orientation, such that they perceive themselves as having the power and ability to succeed. According to attribution theory, students with a mastery orientation are more likely to be motivated to persevere in the face of difficulty (Kalsner, 1992; Moore, 2001). Furthermore, a cautiously optimistic, future-focused approach to Black-White relations is potentially more likely to foster a dual control orientation within African American students. Students with a dual control orientation report increased motivation and achievement, as they are aware of external, sociopolitical barriers to their success but still have confidence in their abilities to overcome and eliminate them (Kalsner, 1992; Moore, 2001; Stevenson & Arrington, 2009; Ward, 2000). These bodies of research

evidence suggest that the positive framing of Black-White relations found in some of the reading selections may be more productive for African American students, as they navigate life in academia and in the larger society.

Conclusions and Recommendations

As demonstrated in the research literature and the discussion of the implications of the findings of this study, developmental reading textbook content that deals with issues related to race sets the stage for increased engagement among African American students in developmental reading coursework. Using such reading selections to contextualize reading skill development may prove to be more relevant, meaningful, and instructionally effective for these students. Developmental reading instruction that also helps these students situate their experiences within the larger social, cultural, historical, and political context may enhance African American students' reading skills while promoting their scholarly engagement in ways that will foster their motivation to persist in college.

In light of the findings of this study and their implications for engagement and success among African American students, there are several recommendations for developmental reading professionals. First, it is paramount that developmental reading instructors and administrators be mindful of the racialized experiences of African Americans and how these experiences influence academic engagement and success among African American students. Meeting the needs of African American students in developmental reading courses, especially as they relate to race, racism, and racial identity, must be made a curricular and pedagogical priority. Along with this shift in priorities, it is imperative that developmental reading instructors and administrators carefully review and select course textbooks—paying close attention to how these textbooks represent and frame the impact of race on life experiences of African Americans. The analysis of the most recent, top-selling textbooks in this study shed light on the current deficiencies of developmental reading textbooks. If these deficiencies are to be remedied, developmental reading professionals must demand that publishing companies increase the availability of textbooks that adequately and accurately represent African Americans. Until such a time as these textbooks become available, developmental reading instructors and administrators must make a commitment to locating and including supplementary reading materials that are reflective of African American students in developmental reading courses.

Finally, this study focused solely on developmental reading textbook content and found several instances of content that could be useful

in increasing African American student engagement. Nevertheless, Banks (1996) asserts that content integration is merely the first step in making curriculum and instruction more conducive to the engagement and success of students within a multicultural education framework. The instructional process through which the students interact with the content is further essential. Consequently, although the content of the textbooks is a significant starting point, the manner in which the students engage the content is also a critical consideration. Though there are some research studies that examine critical approaches to developmental reading instruction (Falk-Ross, 2002; Lesley, 2001; Paulson & Armstrong, 2010; Williams, 2008, 2009), further studies on Critical Race Theory approaches to literacy instruction in these courses are needed.

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Appendix A

Sample of Developmental Reading Textbooks

Title	Author(s)	Date	Publisher
<i>Bridging the Gap</i>	Smith & Morris	2011	Pearson Higher Education
<i>Opening Doors</i>	Cortina & Elder	2011	McGraw-Hill
<i>Mindscales: Critical Reading Skills and Strategies</i>	Carter	2011	Wadsworth Cengage
<i>Developing Critical Reading Skills</i>	Spears	2009	McGraw-Hill
<i>The Art of Critical Reading</i>	Mather & McCarthy	2009	McGraw-Hill

Appendix B

General Characteristics of Reading Selections from the Five Textbooks

Title, Date, and Author	Full-Length Reading Selections	Passages Related to African Americans
<i>Bridging the Gap</i> , 2011, Smith and Morris	27	2 (7%)
<i>Opening Doors</i> , 2011, Cortina and Elder	29	6 (21%)
<i>Mindscapes: Critical Reading Skills and Strategies</i> , 2011, Carter	28	6 (21%)
<i>The Art of Critical Reading</i> , 2009, Mather and McCarthy	57	3 (5%)
<i>Developing Critical Reading Skills</i> , 2009, Spears	25	2 (8%)
Total	166	19 (11%)

Appendix C

Reading Selections from the Developmental Reading Textbooks

Reading Selection	Author(s)	Textbook
"The First Day"	E. P. Jones	<i>Developing Critical</i>
"Race" from the <i>Audacity of Hope</i>	B. Obama	<i>Reading Skills</i>
"Black Men and Public Space"	B. Staples	<i>The Art of Critical</i>
"Commencement Address"	M. W. Edelman	<i>Reading</i>
"Teachers, Schools and Society"	M. Sadker and D. Sadker	

Reading Selection	Author(s)	Textbook
"Get In, Show Up, Drop Out"	A. Kingsbury	<i>Mindscales: Critical</i>
"Racial Injustice"	M. Perry, J. W. Baker, P. P. Hollinger	<i>Reading Skills and Strategies</i>
"Equity and Educational Practice"	G. Huerta	
"Diversity and Cultural Contacts: Interpreting Through Different I's"	T. K. Gamble and M. W. Gamble	
"Organized Crime—American Mafia"	No Author Listed	
"World War I and Its Aftermath: The Lost Generation and the Jazz Age"	M. Perry, J. W. Baker, P. P. Hollinger	
"Cultural Diversity: Family Strengths and Challenges"	D. H. Olsen and J. DeFrain	<i>Opening Doors</i>
"African Americans: The Struggle for Equality"	T. E. Patterson	
"Poverty in America and Improving Social Welfare through Public Education"	T. E. Patterson	
"The Development of Rock Music in American Society"	R. Kamien A. Brinkley	
"The Age of Globalization" "Saved"	A. Haley and Malcolm X	
"Women in History"	L. Pitt	<i>Bridging the Gap</i>
"Madame C. J. Walker"	B. C. Bigelow	

Appendix D

Coding Map for Reading Selections

Themes Related to Race:

- Black-White Comparisons
 - % of population
 - % income level
 - % of educational attainment
 - differences in body language cues
- Black-White Relations
 - white complacency
 - black/white reconciliation
 - distrust of whites
 - colorblind ideology
 - whites circumventing equal opportunity laws
 - white exploitation of black poverty
 - multi-racial worldview
 - sin of slavery
 - post-racial society
 - discrepancy between relational ideal and reality
 - mainstream acceptance
 - power struggle
 - African enslavement
 - black/white distrust
 - being black in white America
 - white flight
 - white resistance to black equality
 - opposition to whites
 - white privilege
 - whites as enemies
 - white-black collaboration in crises
 - anti-black politics and laws
 - negative media campaigns
 - physical violence against blacks
 - white supremacy
- African American Cultural Values
 - black spirituality
 - cultural influence
 - artistic expression and style
 - community
 - black solidarity
 - social activism
 - distinct cultural identity
 - religious commitment
 - giving back
 - resilience
 - perseverance
 - success
 - black feminism
 - strong work ethic
 - education highly valued
 - strong achievement motivation
- African American Psychological Consciousness
 - wounds of segregation
 - “the African American experience”
 - trials of black manhood
 - negative media messages
 - racial identity and behavior
 - resilience
 - black consciousness
 - self-hate
 - alienation
 - “the black psyche”
 - double consciousness
 - being black in white America
 - love/hate relationship with America
 - feelings of powerlessness
 - being judged as inferior
 - diminished self-esteem

- victims of circumstance
- helplessness and despair
- perseverance
- pain of slavery
- black feminism
- coping with negative perceptions of black males
- psychological impact of stereotyping
- Racial Inequality
 - legacy of racial injustice
 - racism undercutting inequality
 - stereotyping and discrimination
 - struggle for racial equality
 - racial prejudice
 - within-group discrimination
 - some progress through struggle
 - struggle continues
 - legal injustice
 - freedom
 - racial oppression
 - social activism
 - minority group
 - overcoming discrimination
 - institutional racism
 - triumphs for blacks
 - race-based legislation
 - affirmative action