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CHAPTER 12

UNVEILING RACE/ISM AND WHITE(NESS) SUPREMACY THROUGH HISTORIARTGRAPHY

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ABSTRACT

This chapter explores historically provocative artwork as a medium for instigating dialogues related to white(ness) supremacy in social studies classrooms. Its authors respond to four paintings by acclaimed artist Titus Kaphar that articulate white supremacy in accounts of American history, while considering his question: “Can art amend history?” To guide the authors’ arts-based process, they constructed an analytical framework—*historiartgraphy*—grounded in themes associated with Critical Race Theory (CRT) and art critique. *Historiartgraphy* serves as a heuristic framework through which to analyze historical narratives about the United States and contemplate how it might be amended, rather than erased, in social studies education to expose white(ness) supremacy.

White(ness) supremacy has been, and remains, a force that is historically and politically contingent on varying configurations of social and economic relations. Undergirding white(ness) supremacy is whiteness. The creation of the United States of America is steeped in the oppression, persecution, and inequity of peoples racialized into zones of being and non-being (Grosfoguel, 2016). Although racism is a dominant influence on political/human rights, employment, independence, and security, it is barely recognizable throughout historical accounts used in education (Omi & Winant, 1994). Race/racism, a social fact that has been socially constructed into a *social real*—a phenomenon that organizes hierarchical relations of opposition (Bonilla-Silva, 1999, 2001), as is whiteness. Whiteness perpetuates a racial ideology that reinforces racial inequality and more inconspicuous forms of exclusion (Bonilla-Silva, 2001; Carr, 1997; Doane, 2003).

During the 1990s, whiteness became a central object of analysis (*a social real*) within anti-oppressive literature (e.g., whiteness studies, multicultural education, teacher education). The (re)centering of whiteness in education and educational research, namely focused on being white (whiteness as identity), is perceived by some scholars as a threat to anti-oppressive efforts; a way to (re)secure white supremacy by positioning white identity as the racial norm (Giroux, 1992). Others warned that (re)centering whiteness would diminish the presence of perspectives of people of color (Montecinos, 2004) and eclipse the study of racial power (Anderson, 2003). The social, cultural, and political centering of whiteness (in scholarship) perpetuates white(ness) supremacy (Omi & Winant, 1994; Doane, 2003).

For this chapter, our use of the term white(ness) supremacy is twofold: (1) To acknowledge white supremacy as a manifestation of power that further promotes whiteness as a source and type of privilege, ideology, and property; (2) To decenter the tendency to place value on that which, and who is (re)defined as white (identity). The challenge for us then is how to acknowledge and expose the role of white(ness) supremacy in social studies education, and United States history specifically—in a way that dislodges it from being the pedagogical/curricular core. To counter its centrality, we engage art and storytelling practices associated with critical race theory (CRT), namely critiquing (of) master-narratives) and composing composites (of counternarratives) (Cook, 2013; Cook & Dixson, 2013; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Wertz, Nosek, McNiesh, & Marlow, 2011).

Carretero, López, González, and Rodríguez-Moneo's (2012) assertion that master-narratives are typically “organized around a continuous and a temporal protagonist, the nation ... [and] create a positive emotional evaluation—frequently uncritical of the nation's history” (p. 154). Based on their analysis of history textbooks used in different nations (mostly Latin America), Carretero et al. (2012) argued that there are six common features of historical master-narratives:

1. Exclusion-inclusion features that designate a positive “we” and negative “others”;
2. Cognitive and affective anchorings of identity;
3. Frequent presence of mythic characters and narratives;
4. Search of freedom or territory;
5. Basic moral orientations that justify political decisions and various violent acts; and
6. Romantic and essentialist concepts of both the nation and its citizens. (p. 157)

In other words, historical master-narratives, which are primarily fashioned by groups in dominant positions of power, rest upon abscesses and wrestle with excesses while attempting to contain them so as to present an unblemished and homogeneous composite of the United States and Americanism (Kazin & McCartin, 2012), to portray what we refer to as the *American Experience*.

In this chapter, we illustrate how race/ism and white(ness) supremacy education, though *veiled* in the pedagogical and curricular consciousness/culture of social studies education, can be further discerned. By merging historiography and (visual) art into *historiartgraphy*, we constructed a framework using a critical race theoretical lens to help challenge racial hierarchies related to race/ism as an expression of white(ness) supremacy. We aim to inspire other ways of disrupting how social studies education, history, historiography, and historical consciousness traditionally have been constituted so as to “paint a portrait” of America, Americanism, and *The American Experience*. To pilot *historiartgraphy*—focused on (dis)locating mono-vocal renditions of American history/heritage in social studies education—we relied on historically provocative artwork by Titus Kaphar.

AMENDING ART AS INSPIRATION

During a Ted Talk in August 2017, critically acclaimed painter/sculptor and 2018 MacArthur “Genius Grant” recipient Titus Kaphar posed the question: “Can art amend history?” His question was provoked while visiting the Natural History Museum with his sons. Before entering the museum, his 9-year-old son questioned the “fairness” of a sculpture depicting Theodore Roosevelt riding a horse while flanked by an Indigenous man and an African American slave. This question of equity prompted Kaphar to contemplate the value of amending rather than erasing history (i.e., by removing public sculptures and monuments symbolizing race/ism and white[ness] supremacy). In other words, decommemoration does not address the invisibility of African Americans and other marginalized groups. Instead, what is needed to support a politics of belonging is critical

race memory work in the form of countercommemoration (Brasher, Alderman, & Inwood, 2013).

During the Ted Talk, Kaphar (2017) modified a painting depicting a master-narrative to highlight a Black boy. This process illuminated his absence amid the pervasiveness of white(ness) supremacy. Rather than (re)construct/delete the historical monument depicted, Kaphar amended the master-narrative by (re)articulating the boy's *aesthetic* presence. We understood his Ted Talk as a demonstration of his (re)creative process of amending history and took interest in it as a pedagogical and methodological approach to disrupting the current asymmetrical iteration of social studies education (Chandler & Branscombe, 2015; Wills, 2001). By amending, rather than erasing, his technique is consistent with the view that every facet of a historical phenomenon bears traces of multidimensional perspectives that deserve to be contemplated, investigated and valued (Derrida, 1993). Through his artwork, Kaphar continues to unsettle white(ness) supremacy by exposing how it is present yet *veiled*.

Along this trajectory of (re)articulating race/ism and white(ness) supremacy through art and critique, we curated a hypothetical art show titled, "White(ness), Art & Social Studies" using some of Kaphar's paintings to instigate anti-oppressive dialogues in social studies education and to provoke counternarratives about American history. Along with this curated show, we developed an experiential framework—*historiartgraphy*—based on elements of art critique, historical analysis, and CRT. In short, we selected four works of art from Titus Kaphar's oeuvre, engaged in a dialogue about each painting, created reflective notes, and analyzed this data using themes from CRT, which we present as composite counternarratives. Our analysis resulted in a set of composite narratives that entailed shifting perspectives, reflecting, critiquing, and producing historical counternarratives. These thematic composites (re)articulate white(ness) supremacy through *unveiling* its workings historically, especially via historical master-narratives that continue to inform the historicized perceptions of, and among, minoritized people in the United States as well as the identities of those creating/perceiving individual and collective selves and Others through social studies education.

LANDSCAPES OF WHITE(NESS) IN SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION

The National Council for the Social Sciences (NCSS) defines social studies as "the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence" (NCSS, 2017). Social studies educators, through such disciplines, seek a fostering of discourses essential for establishing an equitable and engaging society. However, how can social studies education

attempt to meet this goal without integrating dialogues on race/ism and white(ness) supremacy? In its current form, social studies maintains dominant, self-reinforcing narratives of white(ness) supremacy buttressed by *non-integrated* considerations and accounts of history/heritage that, unless (re)imagined, will continue to render it inadequate (Chandler & Branscombe, 2015; Wills, 2001).

Master-Narratives

Chandler and Branscombe (2015) explored ways in which enacted curriculum can ~~safeguard white supremacy through master~~ narratives, rendering social studies inoperative. They conducted three case studies on the ways that white teachers approach the topic of race in U.S. history classes when teaching the colonization/ founding of the United States. They found that each of the teachers' approach propagated master-narratives, mono-vocal white vision/versions of reality/history, and did so in a manner that *veiled* opportunities for full class discourse/inquiry/rebuttal. Further, Chandler and Branscombe argued that race/ism and white(ness) supremacy should be considered/evaluated/scrutinized systemically, and when educators fail to cultivate such conversations, social studies education becomes an inadequate resource for (re) conceptualizing ideations of social justice.

When educators fail to consciously/critically instigate conversations of race/ism and white(ness) supremacy in social studies education, students—especially those of diverse backgrounds—struggle to “identify, deconstruct and more fully appreciate diverse racialized realities and power constructs” (Carr, 2016, p. 54). Consequently, master-narratives remain upheld/unmarked/unnamed and ultimately, alarmingly problematic (Chandler & Branscombe, 2015). For example, their use “essentializes and wipes out” cultural intricacies and “will engender not only stereotyping but also curricular choices” (Montecinos, 1995, p. 293). In turn, the enduring presence of master narratives supports theoretical arguments made by scholars that issues of race/ism and white(ness) supremacy remain invisible in formalized social studies curriculum (Carr, 2016; Chandler & Branscombe, 2015; Chandler & McKnight, 2009; Garner, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 2003).

Incessantly, a one-sided, Eurocentric, whitenized story is presented, promoted, and upheld within social studies education (Carr, 2016; Chandler & Branscombe, 2015), yet whiteness remains unarticulated, unchallenged and invisible (Ladson-Billings, 2003; Levstik & Tyson, 2008). In other words, as a racial/racist structure, white(ness) “never has to speak its name, never has to acknowledge its role as an organizing principle in social and cultural relations” (Lipsitz, 1995, p. 369).

Heroification and Truncation

While reviewing limitations of history textbooks, Alridge (2006), found that the content was dominated by “heroes” who were white (described as such in today’s racial discourse). For instance, George Washington and Thomas Jefferson were commonly portrayed in textbooks unilaterally, devoid of any sense of (dis)honorable/(dis)reputable traits or actions. Therefore, this heroification exposes students to a shallow, one-dimensional version of American history (van Kessel & Crowley, 2017), which fails to acknowledge the “complexities, contradictions, and nuances” comprising what has passed and recounts of it (Alridge, 2006, p. 663).

Such a truncated adaptation of American history actively perpetuates race/ism and white(ness) supremacy by distorting historical information, which can then “stifle students’ feelings of civic agency and self-efficacy” (van Kessel & Crowley, 2017, p. 429). By withholding egregious information about white “heroes,” students are denied the opportunity to develop their critical thinking skills and properly situate race/ism and white(ness) supremacy in what gets cobbled together so as to represent America, Americanism, and the *American Experience*. Students who are misinformed can be misguided and miseducated by master-narratives that gloss over the fact that George Washington was a slave owner, and that Thomas Jefferson procreated with an enslaved woman (Sally Hemings) and had biracial children (DuBois, 1935/1966). Instead, they are being prepared to uphold master-narratives, resulting in yet another generation ill-equipped to further a more democratic society and doomed to repeat mistakes of the past (Alridge, 2006).

Using CRT to Understand Racial Equity in Social Studies Education

Calls to enlist anti-racist frameworks in social studies teacher education point to the need to provide support for racial equity over racial tolerance for educators and learners. Critical race theory has been offered a framework in support of such calls (Howard, 2004). For instance, King and Chandler (2016) advocate for the inclusion of racial pedagogical content knowledge into social studies education courses so that lessons bring awareness and resistance to institutional and structural aspects of race and racism, not simply to individual acts of prejudice. The need for anti-racist frameworks in social studies is supported by studies such as the one by Martell (2017), which analyzed the beliefs and practices of eight (four undergraduate and four graduate) preservice social studies teachers (men, women, white (4), Asian (1), Latino (1)) practicing teachers in an urban elementary school. Half exhibited practice and beliefs in their teaching as

a way to develop racial tolerance, while the other half exhibited teaching as a way to establish racial equity.

Social studies can foster the interrogation of personal and collective identities and perspectives, help to increase learners' levels of civic engagement, and help learners connect to deliberative democracy (Beyerbach & Ramalho, 2011; Carr, 2016). Researchers have also examined, from a critical stance, the potential of art to meet some of the pedagogical and curricular shortcomings in the teaching of social studies (LeCompte & Baumi, 2012). When used as a conduit for critical discourse, art can lead students to interrogate personal and collective identities and perspectives, increase their levels of civic engagement and connect to deliberative democracy (Beyerbach & Ramalho, 2011; Carr, 2016). Besides, researchers' positionalities—which typically focus on the relationship between the research and their sociopolitically situated identities and power relationships—can be expanded to address the artistic and aesthetic dimensions of the imagined and enacted research process.

Cook and Alderman (2017) advocate for the use of film and counternarratives to challenge slave narratives that “whitewash” or sanitize the history of America’s *dark* [our emphasis] past (p. 160). Instead of perpetuating the trope of dark/ness as negative, we refer to this whitewashed (sanitized) history as a *pale* history, with *pale* meaning inadequate (adjective) or so it’s accept- seeming to fade into the background (verb). Our amendment of their narrative about a *dark* past illustrates what a counternarrative is and can do.

In this case, it helps us identify and challenge master-narratives in which white/ness is associated with good/ness, even in a project that critiques it (whiteness). Additionally, providing this example of a counternarrative primes the reader for what is come; historiartgraphy.

RESEARCHER POSITIONALITY

Throughout this research, we embraced Brown, Carducci, and Kuby’s (2014) notion that “research emerges from the researcher’s biography or lived experiences” (p. 6), as well as assists in (re)defining **our** epistemological ways of knowing (Ladson-Billings, 2000). Moreover, from a CRT perspective, interests/identities/roles can be negotiated, validated, and understood (Milner, 2007). What is most central to our research team positionalities are decisions over representation and shared perspectives. Both of our voices, perspectives, narratives, and counternarratives are represented in a composite narrative. In this sense, one of us is not privileged over another. Our positionality statement is partly a communiqué pointing to the analytical energy it takes to operationalize the framework and a stabilizer that helps readers “maintain awareness of the context, purpose, and focus of the research” (Doyle, 2013, p. 251).

Bretton Varga, with Eastern European family origins, was born and raised in Northern California. The product of private elementary/secondary schooling, Bretton experienced first-hand a sectarian, biased iteration of social studies steeped in race/ism and whiteness supremacy. Vonzell Agosto also suffered social studies this way within the U.S. public education system, bereft of her cultural history as an African American Mexican American student. Dialogues about historical places/people/events that included multiple/shifting perspectives were nonexistent. Growing up in the San Francisco Bay Area, Bretton was exposed to countless museums/art shows from a young age and on. The same was the case for Vonzell who grew up in the libraries, theaters, dance clubs, and museums of Chicago. When traveling domestically/internationally, Vonzell looks for local artistry/artesania on the street while Bretton commonly seeks out local museums/art shows/public sculptures, and contemplates the implications of dominant power structures on the artist/artwork (McCabe & Holmes, 2009). The multi-dimensional pedagogical and theoretical guidepost for this work is *historiartgraphy*, paired with the personal and political histories, areas of consciousness, and cultural backgrounds we brought to the analysis ~~as socially positioned selves~~.

 AU: "non-existent" is one word in Webster's dictionary.

HISTORIARTGRAPHICAL FRAMEWORK

Whereas history is often conceptualized through fundamental knowings of past events, historiography integrates the agency and shifting perspectives of individuals affected by historical phenomena (Burns, 2006; Fallace, 2009; Winks, 1999), and contributing to the narration of ever-changing historical perspectives (Winks, 1999). We combined historiography and social art into *historiartgraphy*. We first introduce some working definitions and then ground them in the extant literature.

1. **Historiography:** The writing of history, including how history is ignored, erased, edited, and amended (Burns, 2006; Fallace, 2009; Winks 1999).
2. **Social art:** A sociological analysis captured by artists creating, or inferred by audiences using, works of art (Beyerbach & Ramalho, 2011).
3. **Social art historiography:** Using works of art as sources of sociological and historical and cultural analysis of historical narratives in order to (1) develop sociohistorical consciousness about historical cultures (Seixas, 2017), and (2) to communicate about contemporary life in order to transform it by communicating how history has been, is being, and can be ignored, erased, edited, and amended (Desai, Hamlin, & Mattson, 2010).

This framework relies on the use of art and the “use of history,” which has a particular theoretical trajectory we discuss next.

Use of History (and Histories)

In Nordic countries, the “use of history,” is an analytical and pedagogical concept that denotes the space of action between historical consciousness and historical culture (Nordgren, 2016). According to Nordgren (2016), historical culture comprises all references to the past that are available in a given context (i.e., artifacts, rituals, customs, narratives) as well as the “networks through which these references are distributed” such as schools, cultural institutions, and the media (p. 481). In other words, according to Nordgren the “use of history” refers to how people actively use the historical culture available to them (p. 479), while also gaining historical consciousness through communicative processes. He further explains how, for example, “whether saluting the flag or burning it, people are making use of history” (p. 481). National flags and stories about them create historical culture, but “ideas and feelings about how it all makes sense” constitute historical consciousness (p. 481).

Moreover, historical consciousness about the plurality of historical cultures (i.e., multiple cultures and histories) supports the development of intercultural historical competence (Nordgren & Johansson, 2015), which can guide how people learn history, communicate to explain it, and use it to then build and transform identities/societies that further constitute historical culture. Though a newer contribution to international research on history education, the concept *use of history* has been taken up by researchers interested in how teachers and students in the United States analyze sources in the context of common educational standards (Cowgill, 2017).

History understood as a triad of *culture*, *use*, and *consciousness* paves the way for its study as an interplay between “artifacts, rituals, customs, narratives, (cultural) institutions, and media” (Nordgren, 2016, p. 481). We use this triadic approach to historical analysis to support the development of sociopolitical *consciousness* about how white(ness) supremacy is *culturally* constructed and *used* in and in support of historical narratives. This approach challenges neat conceptions of time and consciousness, as demarcated points of isolated existence, and presents opportunities to rupture the foundation of master-narratives within society/political/cultural contexts (Aronsson, 2004; Karlsson, 2014; Nordgren, 2011).

Yet, we remain mindful of the questions asked by Clark and Grever (2017), regarding the development of historical culture and consciousness:

To what extent is there space in the classrooms of settler-colonial societies, such as Australia, the US, and Canada, or schools in Asia, the Middle East,

and Africa for students to think about historical consciousness in more culturally specific terms? Can we even think outside our current scholarly lexicon—very much influenced by Western academic discourses—to compare modes of historical connection, memory, and practice between cultures? (p. 192)

To their questions we add: How can social studies education help make the space needed for exploring historical memory, connection, and practice across racial/ethnic cultures? In response, we turn to CRT as an unsettling approach that theoretically derives from critiques of racism/ethnocentrism linked to power. We conclude this section with a brief introduction to the primary themes or tenets guiding our use of CRT in the analysis and reflection.

Critical Race Studies and the Use of Critical Race Analysis

In education, critiques of whiteness have been (re)fueled by critical race studies in education, primarily drawing on CRT and foundational arguments from critical race legal studies. For instance, Harris (1993) used a critical race legal studies lens focused on real estate and property rights to describe whiteness as property types. She argued that the treatment of whiteness as property stems from preexisting conceptions of the social marker *white* as White people (racial identity), white privilege, and white racial ideology.

This reasoning about white supremacy linked to property has been taken up in education by Leonardo and Broderick (2011), who describe smartness as the property of whiteness. Such logic can be furthered in social studies and history education such as when the development of historical literacy fails to consider the role of power in the selection and interpretation of sources, and in resulting choices made as contradictory narratives emerge. An exception is described by Offen (2012), who combined historical literacy with political literacy in teaching youth about remembrance in the classroom and streets of Germany. Over time, whiteness has become accepted as an institutionalized social thing (i.e., status) that one or many can enjoy, use, and retain via entitlement or legal doctrine (Harris, 1993). However, failing to recognize/interrogate its social meaning as part of social studies education is problematic (Doane, 2003). Whiteness as property, as in particular notions of smartness, is analogous to the improvement or development of property, land, and area.

Priming is a form of whitewashing, and its value is found in the extent to which it provides a suitable surface to be covered. Priming can conceal or reveal, as was demonstrated by Titus Kaphar who used paint to white out/whitewash central characters (white people) to bring attention to a figure

AU: "preexisting" is one word in Webster's dictionary.

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depicted as being less central (a Black boy), a part of the background. Priming in education has been examined using CRT as *racial priming*, “a socialization process wherein racialized messages and racial ideologies are passed on to White children indirectly, directly, consciously, and unconsciously” (Smith, Yosso, & Solórzano, 2007, p. 560). Histories and master narratives of the United States prime learners (regardless of their racial/ethnic categorization) to receive and narrate history unproblematically (Woodson, 2015), or not.

History and historiography, when treated as seemingly race/racism neutral processes and outcomes, pales against critical race analyses and resulting counternarratives being brought forth on issues related to past and present acts of nation-state recolonization and violence (Wing, 1999). Race/racism focused dialogue that includes perspectives such as anti-racism and anti-white(ness) supremacy, is still needed in social studies education less it remains an area of dis(g)race (Howard, 2003). *Historiartgraphy*—grounded with CRT—assists us in addressing two questions. The first is conceptual: What kinds of possibilities for rupturing master-narratives might be unveiled through *historiartgraphy*? The second is empirical and is answered with the support of critical race analysis: How does the use of art support the articulation of race/ism and white(ness) supremacy in social studies education? The methodology used to respond to these questions is described in the following section.

METHODOLOGY

The hypothetical art show titled, “White(ness), Art & Social Studies,” derives from critical race methodology and visual research methodology. This *historiartgraphical* art show made use of history, art, and critique as creative processes to support curating, designing, and counterstorytelling (Solórzano, & Yosso, 2002). According to Taliaferro-Baszile (2015), critical race counterstorytelling—a methodological component of CRT that (re)centers perspectives and experiences of people of color (Cook, 2013)—has “been the single most important strategy in ongoing struggles against colonialism, racism, and White supremacy among other oppressions” (p. 240). More recently, it has been used in social studies lesson planning about the Civil Rights Movement (Hawkman & Castro, 2017).

In our art-based approach to research we relied on images and narratives. Regarding the images we relied on approach central to visual methodology, we paid specific attention to *ways of seeing*, responding to artwork (Berger, 1972), and critiquing art (i.e., contextual realm, symbology, and composition) (Barrett, 2007). More specifically, we used a modified version of Rose’s (2016) content analysis of visuals—image selection and analysis—with critical race counterstorytelling (a CRT methodology) to

analyze four of Kaphar's paintings. Critical race counterstorytelling is a narrative approach to inquiry that is informed by theory and analysis about race, racism, and anti-racism.

Sample (of Artworks) and Procedures

We each selected two works from Titus Kaphar's digitized art gallery that we felt were historically provocative. As we *looked* at each piece of artwork we remained conscious of the systemic power structures that influence the viewing of images, such as "the mobilization of fashion, pop, art, television, and other forms of media image, and the variety of urban lifestyles that have become part and parcel of daily life under capitalism" (Harvey, 1989, p. 63). To these four works of art, we responded individually—through the lens of CRT—in writing by journaling our initial reactions, thoughts, and questions given our respective subjectivities (regarding pain, beauty, and inspiration) and experiences (with education, art, and analysis), as cultural/social beings differently positioned by race/ethnicity and gender. We met to share these entries with one another through dialogue. In an alternating fashion, one of us read an entry while the other listened and—after occasionally pausing to take notes—constructed a response. Expanding on our initial impressions/reactions/observations, we repeated this dialogical process of data generation for each work of art. A sample of the data prior to its construction into composites is provided here:

Vonzell's Entry: *The Refinery of Whiteness*

Art: Texture of the tar, clouds, and land are rough—contrasts the silk, though the suit is wrinkled which is more like the land and suggest wear or use.

Whiteness as identity: Assimilation; put on the "power suit"; cannot take off the tar-skin.

Whiteness as property: bodies are to be dressed/cloaked according to Euro-norms whiteness Whiteness as ideology: An ideal image of a great man—independent, perched high, nature at his feet.

Social studies: silk trade, cotton plantations, colonization, tar, and feathering

Bretton's Response

Conflict (smell, humiliation); beneath; betrayal; ominous, brooding, contempt, Black thinker(?), smeared, dignity, arrival/departure

[me: uncle tom's; hierarchy among slave ranks]

Our intention was to engage one another in dialogue about race/ism and white(ness) supremacy while remaining mindful of the temporal position-

ing of the works (digital images of the originals). For instance, we perceived the art as challenging historical narratives about whiteness as goodness (i.e., benevolent slave owners, westward expansion as nation building, heroic founders of America). We were then able to critique these master-narratives using the temporal position of the art (current) while attending to the temporal position of the subject matter in the past and its legacy in current events (i.e., gendered racism, police violence, neocolonialism).

Next, using CRT propositions that specifically recognizes the permanence of racism and exposes/challenges deficit thinking and language of oppressed people through counterstorytelling (Cook, 2013; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Yosso, 2002), we crafted composite counternarratives from the data (journal entries, dialogue, and reflective note-taking). Composites draw information from various sources, including “personal and professional experiences, memories, scholarly research, historical accounts, recent events, and fiction (Bell, 1987; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002)” (Griffin, 2016, p. 367). In composites, individual people and their contributions are integrated and narrated by one or more fictitious characters. This approach provides a textless representative of us than reflective of our creative and ideological convergences. When used as tool of inquiry, composites create a space for readers’ fictive experience (Bell, 1987; Woodson, 2015; Howard, 2003), as they relate personally to the form, texture, and themes expressed in the composite (Wertz et al., 2011).

This shared and iterative process challenges the traditional quasi-scientific views of research as a linear or even circular process of politically neutral inquiry (Zald, 1991), which can uphold the phenomenon of race/ism and white(ness) supremacy in education and research. The four works by Kaphar are accompanied by composite counternarratives that are titled to reflect their major themes. We crafted the composites from the data we generated by reflecting on the art, sharing those reflections in connection to CRT, and interacting conversationally and graphically while listening and speaking (Cook, 2013; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Wertz et al., 2011). Within each composite we indicate using brackets, CRT themes and critiques of master-narratives in history textbooks identified by Carretero et al. (2012).

Commonly associated with this process is the use of the pronoun “I” (Wertz et al., 2011). According to Todres (2007), “the composite first person narrative is more than a definition or series of statements about a phenomenon; it tells something with universal human qualities so that the reader can relate personally to the themes” (p. 2). It is also an outcome of Cartesian philosophy, which privileged first-person accounts of reality (Scruton, 2004). With this in mind, we purposely avoided the use of the pronoun “I” throughout our composites in an effort to collapse our individ-

ual identities and release any sense of stratified intellectual proprietorship resulting from our collective engagement with the data (Patel, 2016). In decentering ourselves, we aim to illuminate a heightened sense of ownerless interplay between the composite counterstories we present and the reader.

White(ness), Art and Social Studies: Composite Counternarratives

Underpinned by the notion of racial priming, “White(ness), Art & Social Studies” offers composite counternarratives that challenge the socialization of future generations to accept whitewashed iterations of history.

Composite One: Shrouded by Whiteness



Source: Titus Kaphar (2015) [Oil, loose canvas on canvas] © Courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.

Figure 12.1. Behind the myth of benevolence.

Kaphar has physically draped a portrait of Thomas Jefferson over a woman (Sally Hemings), his slave. While some believe he fathered six children with her, there is no denying the power and privilege he held. Thomas Jefferson is often portrayed as a national hero, but of what exactly is he the hero? [*A critique of romantic and essentialist concepts of both the nation and its citizens.*] Taken at face value, one could point to his writing proficiency and argumentative prowess, but why are we conditioned as a society

to be selective about what components of history we embrace? Whiteness is dominating; it contains the capacity to historically “white-out” wrongdoings and immoral tendencies.

Has she snuck out? Was it his mistake to leave the curtain open? By accident, perhaps, we get to peek in/peek out to become curious about what is behind (the whiteness of) this work—and about the possibilities of peeling back whiteness on a larger scale. What stories, histories, and hidden moments of heritage would be uncovered? Could this lead to the (re)consideration of who we glorify/deem to be leaders/heroes/founders?

~~In considering~~ the connectivity between shrouding/draping and whitening-out/wrongdoings, begs the question: Is there a sense of normativity behind the predatory actions of misogyny, and is this a reflection of how heroes/leaders perform in America, Americanism, and the *American Experience*? [*Critique of basic moral orientations that justify political decisions and various violent acts.*] This painting reminds harkens back to the concept of the veil (being behind it) (DuBois, 1903; Rawls, 1971). Lifting or pulling it back can be aided by CRT to expose historical narratives. Art with a CRT (i.e., critical race feminism) analysis can expose in order to critique and ask what does and does not bear repeating (#Metoo movement to end sexual harassment, discrimination, predation).

What does one call rape that is built into the social structure so as to be socially and legally permissible? Patriarchy? Androcentrism? Misogyny? White supremacist, heterosexist, capitalist, patriarchy is the phrase bell hooks (1995) used (perhaps differently ordered). Terms too neat and academic to describe the knot this work can stir in throats, guts, chests, and just behind the countenance of viewers. [*Critique of cognitive and affective anchorings of identity.*] How do people in classrooms feel when exposed to the curriculum of past and present trauma?

Even current discussions about historical trauma set up a pathologizing and paternalizing discourse around students of color. The myth of benevolence, like in this portrait, shrouds white(ness). Rather, historical trauma is individualized in students who are psychoanalyzed, rather than depicted as an ongoing power-play associated with white(ness) supremacy.

Sotero (2006) describes a conceptual model of historical trauma focused on mass trauma perpetuated by dominant groups that enforce subjugation through various means (i.e., military force, bio-warfare, genocide, ethnic cleansing, incarceration, enslavement, laws that prohibit freedom of movement, economic development, and cultural expression). In contrast to the psychological and psychoanalytical approach, her model posits that historical trauma originates with subjugation and requires at least four elements in order to become instantiated into a group’s collective memory: (1) overwhelming physical and psychological violence, (2) segregation and/or displacement, (3) economic deprivation, and (4) cultural

dispossession. In social studies education, Garrett (2012, 2017) attempts to balance social and psychological analysis in his discussions of race, colonization, and neoliberalism as part of students' experience in the difficult knowledge-making process. Mass historical trauma opens the dialogue to intersectional analysis of white(ness) supremacy in the duty of narratives comprising social and political histories, identities, and healing practices. This art resonates with Brasher et al's (2017) writing on recovering history as resistance work.

Composite Two: (Re)Defining Connections of Servitude



Source: Titus Kaphar (2014). [Oil on canvas] © Titus Kaphar. Courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.

Figure 12.2. Her Mother's Mother's Mother.

The shape of the cutout looks like a keyhole in a door, and locked behind it is a mother with one of her breasts exposed. This image suggests she had been nursing a child likely to have been removed from her arms. A child is in the lower segment of the painting and looks to have been ripped out of the scene **above**. The child being held out to the side, like a doll, by someone who appears to be a white woman. Holding another person invokes the idea of relationships and compels me to wonder about the relationship between the child and the woman cradling her. Are they (un)related? Is the woman the child's educator and/or the family's historian?

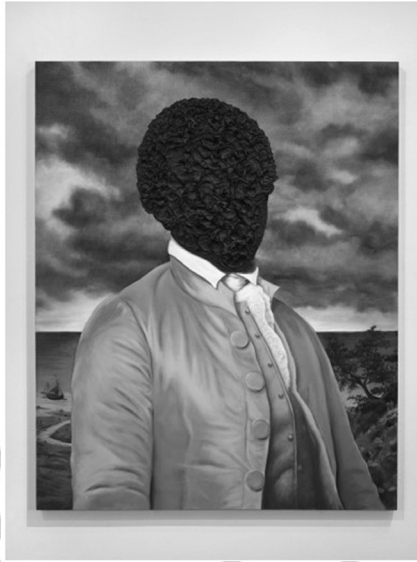
She and the child are dressed in gowns that cover them from neck to toe. In contrast, the Black woman above is exposed. She is half wrapped, head wrapped, and seemingly rapt by the scene of the White woman holding a child who could be hers. Could, if not for slavery. Slavery reduced her to property, made her unable to *have* a child; unable to have and to hold. [*Critique of whiteness as property, not for sale.*] Statuses of wife and mother are socially arranged roles that were not afforded to those who were owned as slaves. Instead, Black women were in bondage, which primarily was an economic arrangement that defined their children as mere burdens and distractions, yet commodities for slaveholders. The Black/Brown child here is the link in the (narrative) chain, between laboring to give birth and labor to prove (what one was) worth. [*Critique of racism, classism, and sexism; CRT themes critical race feminism, intersectionality.*]

The main subject (a Black woman) is wearing what seems like an expensive necklace made of gold, and the seemingly white woman is draped in a dress made of yards of luxurious fabric that appears to have been costly. These items lead to me think these women were paid handsomely for her services or were treated well by their owners or employers. Or, is it possible *she* (the seemingly white woman) was a slave owner? Where is the color line (Frederick Douglass)? Is the white woman not all white, but also Black and a slave?

Shadows of whiteness, as a cultural disruptor, cannot be forgotten. At the confluence of cultures, new identities emerge. Can heritage culture be healed? Should it be healed? Throughout history, cultures on every continent have blended together. Given Haraway's (1985) concept of a cyborg, where X and Y combine into the letter Z to represent the cyborg or new being one might ask if this is a scene of a new $X+Y=Z$ (no men), an onto-epistemological asymmetrical positionality that is not only Black—white, young—old, adult—child. Each experiences life/learning in unique ways. Still, the upside-down subjects read alongside feminist pedagogy are reminders of the immense gap in the epistemological canon between what society has attributed to men versus women.

Hegemonic, racist ideologies—such as white(ness) supremacy—are multidimensional systems of domination that affect individuals both somatically and metaphysically. Mills (2003) outlines how political models entrenched in racial superiority/inferiority jeopardize the integration people of color into the white *macro body*—both bodily and non-bodily—of society (Alcoff, 1999; Gordon, 1994). Further, in America, Americanism and *The American Experience*, non-male, non-white bodies—red, yellow, brown, black—have been (dis)embodied and designated as alien (Mills, 2003), yet subservient. How do educators reflecting on these subjects (re)construct meaning about relationships involving service (i.e., service learning, servant leadership, servitude) in schools, colleges and universities, and communities?

Composite Three: The Arrival/Departure of Whiteness/ Blackness



Source: Titus Kaphar (2016). [Tar and oil on canvas] © Titus Kaphar. Courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.

Figure 12.3. Billy Lee: Portrait in Tar.

The sense of conflict surrounding the subject/medium/location is captivating. Specifically, the tar. Why paint such a thing? Tar could have been used to remind viewers of the atrocities from the past and current instantiations of the power behind them. Tar also has a very distinct smell and when coupled with an image of a human being, signifies humiliation, degradation, and suffering. Roads are covered with tar and driven upon. People often pay little attention to what is below their feet, tires, or vehicles. Did this character pay attention to the lives of those he enslaved? Was this character enslaved? Was he given a satin suit and cotton shirt and tie—designed with a European flair (layered and buttoned clothing)—to complement a sense of hope for an equal existence, only to be betrayed and humiliated with the threat of being tarred and feathered? If the tar was removed, what face would we see, that of the oppressor or oppressed?

To what end has white(ness) distressed Billy's Lee's identity? Is Billy Lee European or African? Did he make a healthy profit off the enslavement of others, and travel across the Atlantic to perpetuate racial ideas and constructs? Or was Billy Lee stolen from his homeland, forced into bondage/servitude? Billy Lee could have been a Black thinker, author or poet during

a period of the European Enlightenment. In this scenario, his face has been smeared with tar as a way of corporeally undermining any sense of intellect or accomplishment. [*Critique of whiteness as smartness.*] His shoulders are set back in a dignified/defiant manner, but what had he/would he have accomplished? Is he resisting a coerced identity that whiteness is mandating?

Ominous. Looking past Billy Lee to the background of colonial conquest, brooding clouds appear to be filling the sky. Something much more contemptuous awaits on the horizon for Billy Lee. Is he arriving or departing? [*Critique of the search of freedom or territory, settler-colonialism.*] These considerations of Billy Lee related to the arrival/departure of Blackness, for instance, are worth considering given the recent inclusion in a social studies textbook that described African slaves as “workers.” This was revised after a mother complained that it misrepresented forced migration related to the capture and trade of slaves who were Black (Fernandez & Hauser, 2015).

Composite Four: The Hollow Words of White(ness) Supremacy



Source: Titus Kaphar (2016). [Oil, canvas and rusted nails on canvas] © Titus Kaphar. Courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.

Figure 3.4. Absconded from the Household of the President of the United States.

Peeking from behind the plush, velvet green curtain, is a mountain, a symbol of resoluteness and strength. People look to this man for leadership, and he is setting a precedent with his corruption/criminality/piracy. Yet, something terrible has happened here. Thievery. aristocracy. plushness.

championing? There is tension between the primary subject's (anti)heroic identity and how (non)white people perceive him. A villain—bandit or pirate—intent on seizing something that is not his. If zoomed out, would there be more pirates ready to assault truth/identity/liberty? [*Critique of the frequent presence of mythic characters and narratives.*]

The subject is hiding behind the words written on scraps that constitute his disguise. The shredded material reminds me of broken treaties of the past, put through paper shredders of today, and police tape used today to cordon off crime scenes. The layered material invites onlookers to touch it—metaphorically is it velvet, rock, gold, rust or vomit? Would touching it lead to contamination (of the evidence)? [*Critique of cognitive and affective anchorings of identity.*]

At a glance, the painting is about white(ness) vomiting wealth built on the backs of Indigenous Black and Indian peoples. [*Critique of romantic and essentialist concepts of both the nation and its citizens.*] At what cost was this nation built? Throughout the history of the United States, cultures have been intimidated, molested and raped by Eurocentric peoples, all common trademarks of piracy. Additionally, white(ness) and agents of law(less) enforcement—militia, slave catchers, and police—have deep connections throughout history/modernity. [*Critique of power used in domination by officials.*]

The stratification of power and privilege within America, Americanism and the *American Experience* hinges upon the heroification of white beings. Van Kessel and Crowley (2017) posit that social studies textbooks are replete with narratives that transform “flesh-and-blood individuals into pious, perfect creature without conflicts, pain, credibility, or human interest” (Loewen, 2007, p. 11). While intended to inspire students, audacious/false/irresponsible historical narratives—constructed around a white messiah—can cause disengagement for students by “minimizing the importance of broad mobilization in creating social change” (van Kessel & Crowley, 2017, p. 429.). Similarly, villainification diffuses narratives that perpetuate a version of history that is equally—if not more—problematic. Considering that white(ness) supremacy remains a “violent, irrational, unstable system that needs to make itself appear natural and benign in order to perpetuate itself” (Vera & Gordon, 2003, p. 114), any challenges/disruptions made to the implications/manifestations of race/ism and white(ness) supremacy must occur “without absolving those who comprise this system of their responsibility, regardless of whether they are aware of their complicity” (van Kessel & Crowley, 2017, p. 429).

FILLING THE GAP

Despite being *veiled* throughout social studies curriculum (Ladson-Billings, 2003; Levstik & Tyson, 2008), race/ism and white(ness) supremacy remain ubiquitous (Anderson, 2003; Doane, 2003). While curricula are mired in a constant state of flux, so too are society/political/cultural contexts of struggle and change (Omni & Winant, 1986). Although conceptualizations of race/ism and white(ness) supremacy continue to (d)evolve, historically provocative artwork—along with the temporal fluidity of its analysis—presents opportunities to (re)negotiate hegemonic demarcations within America, Americanism, and the *American Experience*.

Beyond spatial/aesthetic considerations (i.e., color, line, assemblage, form) art analysis/critique, *historiartgraphy*—grounded in CRT and critiques of systems of domination—is an approach to investigating the functions of race/ism and white(ness) supremacy (i.e., forging new historical perceptions/ impressions, events, and locations). In the context of exploring master narratives informed by race/racism, *historiartgraphy* helped us confront historical narratives that would have us “avert the critical gaze from the racial object to the racial subject; from the described and imagined to the describers and imaginers; from the serving to the served” (Morrison, 1992, p. 90). In other words, the artwork put us to work in that they enlisted our cognitive-affective engagement with past and present images, narratives, and actions. This approach alerted us to the role of the creators and constructors (i.e., actors, artists, architects, authors) whose renderings about history, as actual and factual, construe the social reality of race/racism.

FINAL ARTIST'S AND AUTHORS' THOUGHTS

Collectively, the four works of art created by Titus Kaphar and curated in this chapter offer a multifaceted, operational method for articulating race/ism and white(ness) supremacy in social studies education. Using his provocative art provided us with a starting place, a focus but not a closed space. As artistic amendments, the work invited us to further interpret and intuit historical narratives and possibilities not only with whiteness in mind/body/spirit but also with regard for the meaning, use, and influence of colors/textures/patterns/techniques. Standardized curricular materials and normative pedagogical approaches fail to address these sensibilities (Ladson-Billings, 2003; Levstik & Tyson, 2008). *Historiartgraphy* can instigate amendment through dialogue, and provide a medium through which to respond to calls for a more complete and admissible version of history (Alridge, 2006; Desai et al., 2010).

Titus Kaphar creates historically provocative works of art that can be used to instigate racial discourses and a critical analysis appertaining to issues of modernity. According to Kaphar, “art is so visual,” and in being an educational proxy, it offers students “a chance at having conversations about difficult things” (Kaphar, personal communication). Regarding teachers, who exhibit a proclivity toward upholding/maintaining master narratives by veiling minoritized perspectives, Kaphar seeks their engagement through his technical proficiency of historically representational form. He compares his artwork to “Trojan Horses” that “draw you in” (Kaphar, personal communication). and present (un)predictable contingencies for dialogues with/among students. When asked about his work being implemented in a social studies classroom, he said:

There are many things that art can represent; it can also represent what a textbook is not. My artwork is so drastically different from the images that they [students] see in textbooks and institutions. Painting offers visually new didactics in classrooms and is far away from what is there for students. I say this all the time; the injustice is the absence. What’s missing, the hidden stories, the counter-narratives. But really, the framework is set up for these conversations not to happen. Conversations about white supremacy and white privilege. Students get little guidance, and so they can’t discern and decipher these hidden areas or missing parts of the narrative. (Kaphar, personal communication).

Considering textbooks are the primary source of information for students, and are flush with the pillars/people of white(ness) that uphold master narratives, it is paramount for educators to incorporate outside materials if enhancing/challenging/developing students’ conceptual lens of history is prioritized.

Elaborating on this point and approaches to decentering race/ism and white(ness) supremacy, he said:

White privilege and white supremacy are so incorporated into our nation’s fabric that until that fabric is pulled in front of people’s faces, nothing is going to change. People have a hard time realizing that it [white supremacy] is even there. There needs to be a united front about these topics. (Kaphar, personal communication)

He went on to express appreciation for different people (i.e., educators) approaching the topic from different angles. For educators interested in using his artwork, Kaphar’s suggests they cultivate a healthy space for students to engage in historically rich/responsible dialogues and historical interrogation. Specifically, he said:

The conversations are incredible when you start by asking them “what do you see?” You don’t need to tell them where to go; they will get there on their own. Getting kids to question what it is they are seeing, but also what they are not seeing, is something happening less frequently throughout schools. From a historical point, I want my art to assist in teaching students how to be historical detectives.

Although the teaching Kaphar describes can be practiced across subject matter areas, we are particularly interested in how historiartgraphy can support students in social studies classes to become historical detectives whose art critique combines with social critique to address the power, property, identity, and ideology that white(ness) supremacy entail and compels.

Social studies education bears the weight of preparing students for active and responsible participation in a democratic society (Evans, 2007; Fallace, 2008, 2009; Parker, 2001; Thornton & Barton, 2010). A key challenge for social studies educators is that master narrative within America, Americanism, and the *American Experience* often bestow upon past/present/future generations an iteration of social studies education that upholds oppressive social hierarchies (Kumashiro, 2000, 2001). If social studies educators are committed to outfitting students with the critical analytical skills/perspectives imperative for responsible and active democratic participation, a destabilization of hegemonic master-narratives must take place. Historiartgraphy can be used to undermine incomplete/false/racist depictions of history that present a pluralistically inclusive portrayal of varied racialized postures/ideations/landscapes. Conjointly, historiartgraphy—while *unveiling* how white(ness) supremacy arrives, departs, serves—offers social studies educators opportunities to restore unacceptably hollowed-out and whitenized words and phrases such as “America, the beautiful” and “We the people.” [*Critique of exclusion-inclusion features that designate a positive “we” and negative “others.”*]

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