Chapter 5

Turning 'intersectionality' on its head as we navigate our journeys through difficult dialogue

Victoria Showunmi

Introduction

This chapter explores the concepts of black race and identity in Britain through discourses between a mother and her daughters as they embark on a journey of enlightenment and togetherness while navigating the everyday incidents of racism and sexism. The methodology is a retrospective analysis and reflection on day-to-day mother-daughter narratives. The study examines what these narratives reveal, not only about racial and gender-based attitudes in contemporary western society, but also how these impinge on the self image and psychology of black girls.

The focus of the study is the experience of two black girls whose black mother was raised as a 'white girl' in an adoptive white affluent middle-class family. As such, it is positioned in the theories of intersectionality: Critical Race Theory (CRT) and White Studies. Analysis of these mother-daughter dialogues pulls together life-experiences and recognised theories to illustrate and explore some of the issues faced by young black girls growing up in the UK. It reveals the process through which young black girls' awareness and understanding of racism and sexism towards society can be developed and exposed in everyday conversations. It throws light on areas such as identity, loss and transformation. It also shows how a confident mother can help her daughters to come to grips with the causes and impact of racial and sexual discrimination.

Theoretical framework

The theoretical frameworks of CRT, Whiteness Studies and intersectionality are drawn on to explore and better understand the experiences as mentioned in the text.

Critical Race Theory

CRT developed from legal studies (Delgado, 1995) and is more commonly applied within the USA, though increasingly evident in the UK (e.g. Gillborn 2008 and the Journal of Race, Ethnicity and Education Special Issue, 2012). CRT starts from the premise that race and racism are endemic in society and both are considered to intersect with other forms of oppression based on gender, class, sexuality, language and culture. (Delgado 1995; Ladson-Billings 1998). One of the central tenets of CRT is the recognition of the experiential knowledge and voice (stories) of People of Colour. Dixson and Rousseau (2005) assert that the personal and community experience of People of Colour should be acknowledged as important sources of knowledge. Calmore (1995:321) describes CRT as tending:

> …toward a very personal expression that allows our experiences and lessons, learned as People of Color, to convey the knowledge we possess in a way that is empowering to us, and, it is hoped, ultimately empowering to those on whose behalf we act.

By providing 'counter stories' CRT challenges 'majoritarian [White] stories [that] are not often questioned because people do not see them as stories but as 'natural' parts of everyday life' (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002:28). Added to this, they serve to critique dominant White ideologies and White privilege/supremacy: 'a system of opportunities and benefits conferred upon people simply because they are White' (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002:27). By creating new knowledge, counter-stories serve to challenge taken-for-granted norms (Ladson-Billings and Donnor, 2005), and at the same time, help us to rethink the 'traditional notion of what counts as [valid] knowledge' (Delgado Bernal, 2002:109). Castro-Salazar and Bagley (2010, 34) observed that CRT 'help[s] the oppressed to create their own shared memory and history which can then be used as a source of strength as they work within a system dominated by a narrative that excludes and minimises their existence'. CRT therefore seeks to be empowering and is committed to achieving social justice for People of Colour.

CRT scholars utilize personal narratives and stories as appropriate forms to provide evidence and challenge the 'number only' approach to the documentation of inequity or discrimination that tends to support and evidence discrimination from a quantitative rather than a qualitative perspective (Parker and Lynn, 2002).

'Whiteness' and Whiteness Studies

Dyer (1997: pp 10) implies that 'Whiteness is an invisible perspective, a dominant and normative space against which difference is measured'. Interestingly, McIntosh (1988, 155) supports Dyer's definition and takes it to an even deeper level, contending that 'Whiteness is the capacity that Whiteness brings for passing unnoticed, un-harassed, 'unbothered' through public space'. According to Leonardo (2004, pp139) 'Whiteness' brings with it 'racial privilege [which] is the notion that White subjects accrue advantages by virtue of being constructed as Whites. Usually, this occurs through the valuation of White skin colour, although this is not the only criterion for racial distinction (Hunter, 2002). He continues with '...hair texture, nose shapes, culture, and language also multiply the privileges of Whites or those who approximate them' (Hunter 2002, pp171-189). Fanon's work (1967) deals with the desire to inhabit Whiteness, while Twine's (1999) study of Brazil indicates that people 'whiten' up in the census to satisfy personal (yet collectively refuted) desires for privilege.

Garner (2006: 257) argues that the notion of 'Whiteness is most effectively conceptualised as both a resource and a contingent hierarchy, and its utility is that it enables collective identities to be examined in a more nuanced way than is allowed for by the hegemonic Black/White, or more accurately, White/non-White paradigms'. Importantly, White privilege is like any social phenomenon, 'it is complex and in a White-supremacist society, all White people have some sort of privilege in some settings. There are general patterns, but such privilege plays out differently depending on context and other aspects of one's identity' (Jensen, 2005: 8). Garner's (2006) work provides a historical timeline which implies that Whiteness studies follow a pattern that originates in the cultural path of Black America, that has then been hijacked by radical elements within the dominant 'White' culture. Such thinking can be traced back through the works

of Du Bois (1977, 1935), Hughes (1947), Wright (1992), Ellison (1952), Baldwin (1955) and Fanon (1967). A survey conducted by Roediger on Black perspectives in 1999 enables one to focus on the genealogy of, and vernacular setting for, the expression of Whiteness as 'fear' identified by Morrison (1987, 1993) and hooks (1997).

Understanding the notion of Whiteness is integral to this chapter because the author, while visibly Black, has had the experience of being socialized as White, and the consequent exposure to White privilege, as part of belonging to a White middle-class family.

Intersectionality

The term 'intersectionality' is mostly identified with CRT scholar Kimberle Crenshaw (1989) who, along with other scholars, contributed to and advocated thinking critically about the multidimensional aspect of women's oppression along race, class and gender lines. According to Delgado Bernal (2002: 116) focusing on the intersection of oppression is vital because 'one's identity is not based on the social construction of race but rather is multidimensional and intersects with various experiences'. Many argue that scholars using the 'intersectional approach' will socially locate individuals in the context of their 'real lives' (Weber and Fore, 2007:123). Intersectional discussions examine how both the formal and informal systems of power are deployed, maintained and reinforced through notions of race, class and gender (Collins, 1998; Weber and Fore, 2007).

Methodological approach

The chapter draws on a conceptual framework that relates to the works of authors who write in the field of Critical Race Theory (CRT), along with whiteness studies. I use the notion of CRT to tell the story of racism in this study. The Critical Race Theory movement

> is a collection of activists and scholars interested in studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism and power. The movement considers many of the same issues that conventional civil rights and ethnic studies discourses take up, but places them in a broader perspective that includes economics, history, context,

> group- and self-interest, and even feelings and the unconscious (Delgardo and Stefancic, 2001:102).

The narrative used throughout is a methodological tool to tell the story of racism encountered in everyday life. What is of particular interest is the way in which racism has arisen, and then been discussed, as part of 'everyday parenting'. The landscape changed after the Coalition Government came into power in 2010. The discussion on who and who was not British became a heated and contested debate that was ripping through the heart of Britain, British families and the wider community.

The methodology incorporates biographical research to help illustrate the complexities of racism and class differences in modern society. Biographical research is an exciting, stimulating and fast-moving field which seeks to understand the changing experiences and outlooks of individuals in their daily lives (Merrill and West, 2009).

I was having an in-depth conversation (by cell phone) with my daughter about aspects of her studies as she was getting onto a bus in the Woodford area of London. I could hear there was a high level of noise in the background. I continued talking, when my daughter said:

"Mum did you hear that?"

I said, "No - what was I meant to be hearing?"

Mum! As I got onto the bus a man just said, "Oh look, we have a Zulu getting onto the bus".

This comment serves as a reminder that here in the United Kingdom, even though we may believe that things have begun to change throughout the world since Barack Obama's success, there still appears to be no remedy to the pervasive presence of direct racism. My first reaction was for my daughter's safety as I was unable to help, sitting in a comfortable chair in my office while talking to her on the telephone. Now I could hear the man as he continued to spurt out racist comments for at least another ten minutes,

including the use of the word ‘nigger’. It took another black woman on the bus to intervene and challenge his behaviour.

Throughout the ordeal, the bus driver was silent and continued to focus on the job at hand, driving the bus. Eventually, he reluctantly found his voice, when the man became louder and stood up in front of the black woman who was defending my daughter. “Mate, I am going to call the police if you do not stop shouting abuse, so are you getting off now or shall I call the police”. Thankfully the man got off the bus.

The conversation continued with my daughter as I endeavored to establish whether she was OK. I was bracing myself for another one of those difficult conversations. Instead my daughter said: “Oh mum, yeah I am OK; this is just Woodford. People keep saying that there’s no more racism. Obviously, they’re not experiencing the same as we do every day”.

Academic writing is usually seen as requiring distance and objectivity from the author. I have chosen to bring our lives into the work because I believe, along with Lea and Helfand (2007), that our scholarship is deeply informed by how we have experienced the world. Working through the various significant events that occur in one’s own life, such as the one described above, provides the opportunity to explore and understand, and to build and develop our differing identities. This was very much the case in the dialogue with my daughter concerning the incident on the bus.

Although my daughter appeared to be taking it in her stride, I was troubled by what had just taken place. What had given the man the right to spurt out racial abuse to a young woman who was getting on the bus in an orderly fashion? Was it that his perceived white privilege gave him the power and right to express his views? Did he think that he was on safe territory, and therefore would not be challenged by those around him?

> Race only becomes ‘real’ as a social force when individuals or groups behave towards each other in ways which either reflect or perpetuate the hegemonic ideology of subordination and the patterns of inequality in daily life (Marable, 1993: 114).

The racism that is being displayed here is raw and directed towards a person of colour in order to create the maximum impact for an attention-seeking white male, who, at the time, might himself be feeling marginalised due to rejection or unemployment. It is difficult to apprehend what was actually going through my daughter's mind. Her undisturbed and matter-of-fact comment of "well that is how it is in Woodford" is difficult for a mother to work through with her daughter on the telephone. There was a need for one of those mother-daughter dialogues to ensure that the day's events were not lost in the midst of the business of life. The incident continued to play on my mind throughout the day, and I found myself telling other colleagues at work about what had happened to my daughter. Some were amazed that she had experienced such direct racism within our diverse society that we 'British' are so proud of being part of. Others just failed to comment.

The way in which events are addressed in our house is through a series of questions. This particular situation was no different. I continued to ask my daughter questions about the day's event while I was returning home from work. "What happened to the man who called you such awful names? Do you think that he was a local man who was perhaps just unhappy?" There appeared to be no straightforward answer to whatever question I asked. It was apparent that my daughter took the events as part of everyday life. I wondered if this was due to my own lack of emotional engagement. Had this now been passed on to her? Was this the dismissive attribute that I displayed as part of my own 'Englishness'? Should I have asked my daughter how the encounter had made her feel? Had I just been concerned about the happenings that had taken place on the bus with very little acknowledgement of anything broader?

I realised that, in order to ensure that my daughter was sifting through the information at a pace that suited her, I had taken control of the pace and what went into the overall dialogue. There was no rule book: only my beliefs and values for what I thought a 'good' mother should be. How did I know that this would be good enough in the overall scheme of things? As a parent who has an understanding of how gender, race and whiteness theory works, talking about racism with a daughter still poses a challenge. How does one apply all such learning to a conversation with a child/young person who is looking for

answers? It seems that when a question is asked, a parent has less than a minute to formulate an answer.

When I arrived home, we talked again about the situation that had occurred on the bus. I suggested that it might be good for her to capture her thoughts on a blog, as I was going to include any thoughts that I had into my academic writing. I was taken back by her response:

> "So you are going to use my experience for your work?"
>
> "Well, yes, it is something that I had always thought about doing, if the timing had been right."

The discussion continued with more questions:

> "I am not sure that you can just do that without asking me, can you, mum?"
>
> "I suppose I do need to ask whether you would be OK with me using this experience: what do you think?"

My daughter's eventual response was: "Of course it's OK, I just didn't know that it would be useful". It was really evident that her experience had not shifted her matter-of-fact attitude at all; perhaps the fact that she is a well-grounded individual helped her to make sense of – and then shrug off – the incident.

All this reminded me of a similar incident that had taken place on a bus two years prior to this one. The difference was that it was with a black woman who felt the need to shower my daughter with racial abuse. The focus of this abuse was on skin shade. My daughter was out with her university friends when they were on the bus home. As they were a large group, they took seats upstairs and were enjoying the ride home until a woman got on and imagined that my daughter had an issue with people being of darker complexion. The woman threatened violence against my daughter, as she had made the assumption that my daughter viewed herself as superior. Interestingly enough, both my older daughters had experienced 'shadism' from the time that they were toddlers, as society appears more ready to accept the lighter version of black. (The term 'shadism' means to

judge or be against a person because of their skin tone rather than their race.) As their mother, I taught them to understand that whether you were light or dark you were still black, facing the same obstacles. I never separated the two, as my experience was that it did not matter how much black there was: in most contexts you would still be seen as black from the classification of race.

The difficultly that had emerged out of our conversation was the apparent tacit acceptance by my daughter of the routine racism and shadism she encountered in her life. It was as though she felt there were much more important things to discuss than the issue of racism. Racism was always going to be with us and therefore, "should we not just get used to it, and accept that was just the way life is". I was aware that, as her mother, it was important that she knew that the notion of acceptance could be viewed as 'giving up'.

My daughter's passive acceptance of racist behavior has been recognized by Delgado and Stefancic (2001:102-103) who state:

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

I felt angry that routine, everyday acts of racism were remaining untackled. I found myself defending the current UK legislation, particularly the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 which shows that things are changing and that there is no need to take people's abuse. A man had recently been jailed for eight months for ranting racial abuse at two children in the north of England. In addition to this, other members of the community, including a police officer, have been caught out by the law that now defines racial abuse as a criminal offence. The conversation with my daughter described earlier made me reflect on when racism/sexism may first have begun to impinge on her life (and the life of

my other daughter) as she had seemed so unsurprised and unfazed by her experience on the bus. It made me think back on what both my daughters might have faced at school.

In 1990 my other daughter, then six years old had previously been at school for one year in a rural area where she had experienced no direct racism. and had just started at a school in the suburbs of London. She came home with the following question, “What is a “paki”, mummy? Somebody at school called me a paki”. I had less than a split second to decide how the question that had been posed was going to be answered. Indeed, there were at least three things going on here that needed to be addressed. The first was to explain that the use of the word ‘paki’ was a very mean word that should not be used by children to describe others. The second point was to explain that ‘paki’ was shortened for Pakistani and that she was not a Pakistani child. Instead her heritage was made up of her father who was of British and Jamaican roots and her Nigerian mother. I suppose, if I am honest, what took me by surprise was the directness of the racism that my daughter experienced.

This took me back to when I had my own first dose of racism within school at the age of four, and how my foster mother dealt with the difficult conversation that was required to ensure that I was OK. We had just moved into a quaint village which had previously made a petition in an attempt to stop my foster parents from buying a house in the village. The villagers appeared to be afraid of the affluent family that had moved in with black children. I can recall my first morning at the village school in the South West of England. The school was surrounded by lush green fields. As we walked up to the school gate I sensed the parents and children looking at me. I was the only black child in the playground with so many eyes watching me. I did not know what to expect as I had been shielded by whiteness; even though I knew that I was different, I was still very naïve. The worst part of the day was during playtime when children would call out a range of names: blacky, wog, and gollywog. It was the time of day that I hated the most and felt most vulnerable. Contrary to what is often believed, evidence (Tizard and Phoenix, 1993) suggests that such insults were much more common in primary than in secondary schools.

There are some white people who may consider such insults as part and parcel of playground life; however, there is no doubt that many children in Tizard and Phoenix's study found the insults to be deeply distressing:

> It was when I was nine or ten, and we moved to X [an outer suburb] and there was no black people up there, and I got called names, blacky, nigger. I couldn't understand it, I mean, I was a person, it's just that the colour of my skin was different... (pp 35 -37)

There were times when the village children were attempting to make sense of what was going on – as they did not understand why I was different from them. I was bombarded with many questions stemming from the lack of understanding from both the parents and children. Children would come to me and ask, "Why are you wearing shoes?" Or they would call me various derogatory names. The way my family dealt with the hostility I experiences at school was to hold a public meeting in the school playground. As you can imagine, things only got worse, and I became concerned why God had made me this colour at all.

There are certain social survival techniques that white parents just cannot teach their black children and experiences that they cannot share. Their child will need to look to other black adults or black friends in order to learn these skills. This is not possible for a child cut off from his/her own community.

> … black [child] reared in his own community can at least retreat to his own people for solace when the situation demands it. What of the black child who is defined as an alien in the white community…? Obviously such a child would be under inordinate stress and he would be likely to crumble under tension (Chestang, L.1972 pp 100 -105).

My mother created a poem for me to read out in class, with the aim of making the children less critical. "I know a little girl called Flo, who was dropped in snow – and that's why she is a little white girl. I am a little girl who was dropped in gravy – and that's why I'm a little brown girl". My mother was convinced that it was only names, and

that “sticks and stones may break my bones – but names will never hurt you”. However, the children in Tizard and Phoenix’s study, when asked whether they thought that name-calling was always racist, or whether they thought it was just ‘a bit different’, the vast majority saw it as racist.

I was determined that I would do things very differently with my own daughters. Although they appeared to have come to terms with racist language directed at them, I felt concerned that words *could* hurt. Even though they seemed to have accepted this sort of treatment as the norm, I wondered how it might have impinged on their self-esteem and their feelings of identity. I realised that my daughters’ sense of identity would be more complex than just exploring the effects of race. They would also be influenced by my own black-white identity issues which I may have passed on to my daughters, adding another intersectional factor and further confusing their self-image. Would my white associations and characteristics get in the way of the development of my daughters? Had I raised them with English stiff-upper-lip repression of emotions? My daughters and I both have white middle-class English accents – which have made things both difficult and easy for all of us in life.

I asked my daughter how she felt about her identity, to which her initial response was: “I know where I am coming from”. However, further questioning revealed some identity issues. My daughter recalled being told by fellow university students: “You won’t get on in Hackney (an inner London suburb with a sizeable African-Caribbean population) with that accent”. Comments like this had made her reflect on her own identity. She later said to me: “The way I speak gets in the way for some blacks”. This revealed not necessarily her own identity issues, but confusion in others about her identity. I wondered whether our frequent mother-daughter dialogues had helped her to develop confidence and a strong sense of identity, or whether they might sometimes make her more sensitive to things that had not previously impinged on her. There are very clear distinctions between the classes within the UK and each of them has its own distinctive accent.

It was clear that there was a further intersectional aspect at work in the above dialogue: that of class. My daughter’s accent is middle-class English, which is almost as

discriminated against as blackness in an area like Hackney (not to mention the additional issue of gender discrimination and its impact on identity, which has been the subject of many dialogues between myself and my daughters – but that is another story.)

Finally, when I reflected on other dialogues that I have had with my daughters it occurred to me that it was not only overt racist behavior that may have affected them, but also indirect symbolic messages. My youngest daughter went to the cinema with her older sister to see the long-awaited *Princess and the Frog* where the princess was black. Both of them were excited that this film had been made. My youngest daughter noticed that the black princess in the marketing pictures was wearing a blue dress, and the white princess the pink dress. (Previously princesses would usually be dressed in pink.) She also asked why the white princess was enclosed in a heart shape with a light background, while the black princess had no heart shape and had a dark background. Had my youngest daughter unconsciously perceived a subliminal racial bias? (The only other characters with dark backgrounds were the beasts.)

Conclusion

In summary this chapter has provided a glimpse from a range of dialogues between a mother and her daughters. It shows us that, in spite the various equality Acts and perceived ideas that discrimination has disappeared, there is not much change between a six-year-old girl asking "what's a Paki…?" to a 24-year-old woman being addressed as a Zulu on the bus. We are still struggling with ways to move the agenda forward so that racism does eventually become something of the past.

In writing this chapter, I have sought to understand the extent to which CRT, Whiteness studies and intersectionality are useful theoretical/conceptual tools in conceptualising the experiences of a family grappling with 'every-day racism'. Overall, the chapter exposes contradictions in the Black mothers' and daughters' experiences which are not simply explained away by racism, but instead are fuelled by embodied Whiteness. The paper contends that while CRT is a useful explanatory framework in understanding experiences underpinned by racism, other theoretical models may also need to be applied. It also suggests that, while the perspectives of CRT and Whiteness studies cannot neatly be

integrated, they are of value in helping to unpack diverse Black academic staff experiences.

Questions for discussion

How do we ensure that when considering everyday racism gender is also included?

How can educators develop a social justice lens in the role of leaders?

Summary

- Understanding the notions of race is complex and is evolving through the many different identities.
- Intersectionality, is an approach which can be used as a framework to comprehend difference within structural and oppressive organizations.
- Critical conversation on gender, race and class with young people is crucial to the work of social justice.

Recommended reading

Collins, P. H. and Bilge, S. (2016) *Intersectionality*. John Wiley & Sons.

Crenshaw, K. (1990) Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, **43**(6), pp. 1241-1299.

Lykke, N. (2010) *Feminist Studies: A guide to intersectional theory, methodology and writing*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Showunmi, V. (2017) The Role of the 'Black Girls' Club': Challenging the Status Quo. In J.L. Martin, A.E. Nickels and M. Sharp-Grier, M. (Eds.) *Feminist Pedagogy, Practice, and Activism: Improving lives for girls and women*. New York: Routledge.

References

Baldwin, J. (1955) *Notes on a Native Son.* Boston: Beacon Books.

Bernal, D. D. (2002). Critical race theory, Latino critical theory, and critical raced-gendered epistemologies: Recognizing students of color as holders and creators of knowledge. *Qualitative inquiry*, **8**(1), pp. 105-126.

Calmore, J. (1995) Racialized Space and the Culture of Segregation: 'Hewing a stone of hope from a mountain of despair'. *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*, **143**(5), pp 1233-1273.

Castro-Salazar, R. and Bagley, C. (2010) 'Ni de aqui ni from there'. Navigating between contexts: Counter-narratives of undocumented Mexican students in the United States. *Race Ethnicity and Education*,**13** (1) pp. 23-40.

Chestang, L. (1972). The dilemma of biracial adoption. *Social Work, 17*(3), 100-105. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/23710919

Collins, P. H. (1998). *Fighting Words: Black women and the search for justice*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Crenshaw, K. (1990). Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, **43**, pp. 1241-1299.

Delgado, R. (Ed.) (1995). *Critical Race Theory: The cutting edge.* Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Delgado, R. and Stefancic, J. (2001). Critical race theory: An introduction. New York: New York University Press.

Delgado Bernal, D. (2002). Critical race theory, Latino critical theory, and critical raced-gendered epistemologies: Recognizing students of Color as holders and creators of knowledge. *Qualitative Inquiry*, **8**(1), pp, 105-126.

Dixson, A. D. and Rousseau, C. K. (2005) And we are still not saved: Critical race theory in education ten years later. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, **8**(1), pp. 7-27.

Dyer, R. (1997) *White*. London: Routledge.

Du Bois, W.E.B. (1977[1935]) *Black Reconstruction in the United States, 1860 – 1880*. New York: Kraus International.

Ellison, R. (1952) *Invisible Man.* New York: Random House.

Fanon, F. (1967). *Black Skin, White Mask.* New York: Grove Press.

Garner, S. (2006) The Uses of Whiteness: What sociologists working on Europe can draw from US research on whiteness. *Sociology*, **40**(2), pp. 257 -275.

Gillborn, D. (2008). *Racism and Education: Coincidence or conspiracy?* London: Routledge.

Jensen, R. (2005). The Heart of Whiteness: Confronting race, racism, and white privilege. San Francisco: City Lights.

Lea, V. and Helfand, J. (Eds.) (2004). *Identifying Race and Transforming Whiteness in the Classroom*. Oxford: Peter Lang International Academic Publishers.

hooks, b. (1997) Representing Whiteness in Black Imagination. In R. Frankenberg (Ed.) *Displacing Whiteness: Essays in social and cultural criticism.* Durham, N.C: Duke University Press.

Hunter, M. (2002) 'if you're light you're alright': Light skin color as social capital for women of color. *Gender and Society*, **16**(2), pp. 171-189.

Hughes, L. (1947) *The Ways of White Folks.* New York: Routledge.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1998) Just what is critical race theory and what's it doing in a nice field like education? *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, **11**(1), pp. 7-24.

Ladson-Billings, G. and J. Donnor (2005) The Moral Activist Role of Critical Race Theory Scholarship. In N.F. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.) *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research (3rd edition).* Thousand Oaks California and London: Sage.

Leonardo, Z. (2004) The Color of Supremacy: Beyond the discourse of 'white privilege. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, **36** (2), pp. 137 -144.

Marable, M. (1993) Beyond Identity Politics: Towards a liberation theory for multicultural democracy. *Race & Class*, **35**(1), pp. 113-130.

McIntosh, P. (1992) White Privilege and Male Privilege: A personal account of coming to correspondences through work in women's studies. In: M. Andersen and T. Morrison (1991) *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness in the literary imagination*. New York: Vintage.

Merrill, B. and West, L. (2009) *Using Biographical Methods in Social Research*. London: Sage.

Gill, O. and Jackson, B. (1983) *Adoption and Race.* London: British Association for Adoption. .

Parker, L. and Lynn, M. (2002) What's Race to Do with It? Critical race theory's conflicts with and connections to qualitative research methodology and epistemology. *Qualitative Inquiry*, **8** (1), pp. 7-22.

Solórzano, D. and Yosso, T. (2002) Critical Race Methodology: Counter-storytelling as an analytical framework for education research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, **8** (1), pp. 23-44.

Tizard, B. and Phoenix, A. (1995). *Black White or Mixed Race*. London: Routledge.

Twine, F.W. (2010) White Like Who? The value of whiteness in British interracial families. *Ethnicities*, **10**(3), pp. 292-312.

Weber, L. and Fore, E. (2007) Race, Ethnicity, and Health: An intersectional approach. *Handbook of the Sociology of Racial and Ethnic Relations.* New York: Springer.

Wright, R. (1992[1945]) *Black Boy.* New York: Harper Collins.