

Oral Defense Announcement

University of Missouri – St. Louis Graduate School

An oral examination in defense of the co-authored dissertation for the degree
Doctor of Education with an emphasis in Educational Practice

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Dream-Seekers (Ladson-Billings, 2009): An Analysis of Culturally Relevant Pedagogical Development Through the Perspective of Black Novice Teachers

Date: April 6, 2024

Time: 8:00 am

Place: Remote

Abstract

Using critical race theory and Gloria Ladson-Billings' culturally relevant pedagogy as theoretical frameworks, this thematic narrative analysis study explores the epistemology and ontology of culturally relevant pedagogy by investigating the research question *How do Black novice teachers (years 1-5) become culturally relevant practitioners?* The researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with Black K-12 public school teachers in which the participants investigated how their upbringing, cultural identities, K-12 experiences, and teacher preparation program/process impacts their practice of culturally relevant pedagogy. The narratives shared by participants gave researchers context for the perceptions they had regarding their readiness to implement or engage in culturally relevant pedagogy. Five themes emerged from the narrative analysis: 1) K-12 Racialized Trauma; 2) Racialized Awakening and Awareness; 3) the Sanctuary of Educational and Familial Spaces; 4) the Impact of Professional Development; and 5) "Seeking the Dream": the quest toward embracing the epistemological and ontological paradigms of a culturally relevant pedagogy. This dissertation will discuss the findings related to those themes as well as possible implications and recommendations from the study including: surfacing the impact of K-12 trauma on teacher ways of being; the importance of pre-service and in-service reflecting on lived experience in order to develop a culturally relevant pedagogy; and the need for clearer guidance from educational policymakers, educator preparation programs, professional development providers, and district/school leaders regarding the development of culturally relevant practices.

Defense of Dissertation Committee

Thomasina F. Hassler, Ph.D. - Chairperson

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