Chapter 2: CRT and Narrative Inquiry: Storytelling and tackling the *'master narrative'* with counter-narratives

Sun and Moon, Power and Whiteness

Abstract

'Tackling the Master Narrative' centres on the normativity of Whiteness. I look at some of the existing work that looks at Black student teachers in an educational setting (usually University) and teacher education. Previous literature highlights the othering and isolation of these students by schools, White peers and their own tutors. There is a significant section on Critical Race Theory (CRT) as it was the main theoretical framework used. The chapter also outlines and discusses the following topics, main headliners drawn out from the literature and echoed in the narratives of the students who took part in the study:

- *Racism (sub-divided into the following 4 points)*
- *Whiteness and White Supremacy*
- *White Privilege*
- *Microaggressions*
- *Institutional Racism*

The importance of my position and insider-bias is also covered in this section and touches upon the ethical considerations that were taken on board. The overarching idea of this chapter is to build up a picture of what it is to be Black in a society where one is not part of the somatic norm. The students work in institutions that have equality policies and stated commitments to fairness; all refracted through the seemingly unconscious utilization of the lens of Whiteness through which everything appears to be viewed.

The following chapter will look more closely at CRT and how it provided the framework for the students' narratives to be realised. As the researcher, it enabled me to wield the methodological tools to devise a way to gather the data. There is also a lexicon of language attributed to CRT that has become part of the mainstream when discussing issues usually related to racism and discrimination e.g. *'microaggressions'*, *'unconscious bias'*, *'white privilege'*, *'white ally'* and *'intersectionality'*. The power in these words is that they help to encapsulate, through the use of interviews, what had been experienced. Students had the opportunity to exemplify a perspective or personal truth. It was as if CRT acted as a sociolinguistic Tower of Babel, allowing all to have access to a common language and, to a greater degree, an understanding of what the students had experienced.

Black students and teacher education

As a starting point, this study takes into consideration that there has been only a limited amount of research into the U.K experiences of Black students on teacher training courses although there has been research looking into the experiences of Black children in the U.K primary school setting. The majority discourse until the 90s was that Black children were failing due to a deficit in their aspirations, culture and ethnicity. This politically driven discourse was further embedded by the Government lacking in their promotion of diversity training for teacher trainees. The Department of Education and Science (DES) 1971 report 'The Education of Immigrants' (cited in Swann, 1985, p. 546) had stated that:

> '*…it would be impracticable to attempt to ensure that all newly qualified teachers had received a training which would equip them to take charge of classes including a substantial immigrant population immediately on entering schools.'*

There appeared to be a turnaround in thinking when the Home Affairs Committee Report (1981, cited in Swann, 1985, p.541) stated that if the ITE institutions were not equipping the students with the right tools to dispel stereotypes, including their own, then '*Teachers cannot reasonably be blamed for failing ethnic minority children*' (ibid). Although this conclusion is questionable, the question of the quality and amount of training teacher trainees receive and engage with about diversity was and still is live (Picower, 2009; Mirza and Meetoo, 2012; Pearce, 2012).

'The Swann Report: Education for All' (1985), four years on from the Home Affairs Committee, was perhaps ground-breaking in its attempt to recognize the importance of racism and the need for a progressively inclusive education system. This included the training and increasing the racial literacy of teacher trainees and their HEIs. Also noted within the report was that there could be *'unintentional racism'* (Swann, 1985, p.9) within the school setting. The report was clear in stating that *'unintentional racism'* was having a negative effect on the educational experiences of West Indian children. In terms of classification, no differentiation was made for ethnicity so for 'West Indian' we can read Black. Swann also expressed an urgent concern regarding the need for there to be more Black teachers to reflect

the increasingly multi-cultural make-up of the U.K and the collection of statistical data to demonstrate that BME staff were being recruited. The collection of this data still continues but the presence of BME staff does not necessarily mean that an institution (school or HEI) is non-discriminatory in the way it treats and provides for its non-White staff (Puwar, 2004; Pilkington, 2011; Bhopal and Jackson, 2013). Showunmi and Constantine-Simm's (1995) research into the experiences of teacher training and the decline in Black teachers highlighted issues of low expectations, hindered progress and experiences of racism for Black teacher trainees (Osler, 1997). Similar themes were being re-iterated two decades later (Basit *et al*. 2006; Basit *et al*. 2007; Wilkins and Lall, 2011; Wright, 2013). Following concerns over the recruitment of Black teacher students (Swann, 1985; Boffey, 2014; Evans and Leonard, 2014) and retention (Callender, Robinson and Robertson 2006; Mirza and Meetoo, 2012; Wilkins and Lall 2011), strategies to attract this under-represented group, such as those run by the now-defunct Training and Development Agency (TDA), were put in place to increase the number of Black students who successfully applied to ITE courses and successfully completed them.

The low retention rates for Black students teachers were attributed to the isolation and incidences of covert and overt racism that some of the students experienced (Siraj-Blatchford, 1991; Osler, 1997; Davies and Crozier, 2005; Mirza, 2009a, Wilkins and Lall 2011). Students had also felt themselves burdened by the weight of being considered totemic of their ethnic group (McIntosh, 1988; hooks, 1992; Bhavani *et al*., 2005). If they did well and successfully passed their degree, that complied with the liberal script and policies of equality and parity that their University applied to itself. If, on the other hand, the student failed, then that failure was considered their own and due to a deficit in their own capabilities (Osler, 1997; Andall-Stanberry, 2016).

The TDA drive came with a financial incentive to ITE providers to actively increase their quota of Black and minority ethnic students (BME). This approach had some degree of success. By 2005/6, 12 per cent of teacher trainees to ITE came from a BME background (Mirza and Meetoo, 2012). However, any progress such as this was undermined by the 24 per cent of BME students failing to achieve Qualified Teacher Status at the end of their training.

This was double the percentage noted for White teacher trainees (Adonis, 2008 cited in Mirza and Meetoo, 2012). By 2014, a situation can still arise where:

> '*17.2% of Black African applicants, and 28.7% of Black Caribbean applicants were taken on by teacher training institutions across all subjects, against 46.7% of White applicants*….[and] *Nationally, while 17% of pupils in the UK are from Black, Asian and ethnic minority backgrounds, only about 7% of teachers are.*'(Boffey, 2014)

Mirza (2014, cited in Boffey, 2014) re-iterated that institutional racism was a major factor behind this continuing problem of attracting, applying then retaining BME students, an aspect which appeared to be missed in recent seismic educational policy changes regarding teacher training (Jones, 2015). This leads me to not only question the effectiveness of the strategies that were put in place but also the will of those whose job it was to implement the changes. I then consider the question put forward by Lorde who queried:

> *'What does it mean when the tools of a racist patriarchy are used to examine the fruits of that same patriarchy? It means that only the most narrow perimeters of change are possible and allowable'.* (Lorde, 2007, pp. 110 – 111)

In other words, a system will generally reproduce itself if the ethos and constituent pieces (read staff) remain the same. It could also be argued that the limited sustainability of the strategies that were put in place is down to the will of the bodies charged with implementing them. As Lorde goes on to write:

> *'For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us temporarily to beat him at his own games, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change.'* (Lorde, 2007, p. 112)

Critical Race Theory (CRT)

The master's tools that Lorde remonstrated against are replaced by ones from within CRT that aid us to explore and narrate the Black experience from the standpoint of a Black person. Using CRT as a theoretical framework allows the researcher the opportunity to interrogate the dominant discourse propagated by schools and Universities that they are institutions that uphold the liberal tenets of *'objectivity, meritocracy, colourblindness, race neutrality and equal opportunity'* (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002, p.26); ideals that are enshrined within school policy and documentation, an area that will be looked at later on in this chapter.

CRT, as a theory, emerged from the field of law as a response to the dismay expressed at the shortcomings considered inherent in the neo-Marxist field of Critical Legal Studies as well as the delayed progress in terms of social reform in the United States following the profound changes evinced during the Civil Right movements of the 1960s. The two initial advocates of CRT are seen to be Derrick Bell, an African American legal academic and Alan Freeman, a White academic. The seeds of the new movement grew from their recognition that there had to be a radical change in the way systems and methods were enacted in terms of race relations and judicial outcomes for African Americans. This mode of thinking was then later applied to the fields of education and teacher training. Teacher education and the school are spaces in which inequality can be inculcated and perpetuated from the very root with young minds being taught fallacies about who they are and their place in the world by knowing or unconscious educators. The question of how this U.S-based theoretical framework has influenced and illuminated the U.K context has been discussed by Gillborn and Warmington (2015). They note that in conjunction with the fundamental convergence along the lines of race discourse, CRT in the U.K setting has progressed in other ways, a major focus on the role of education as opposed to the legal field in the U.S being one of them. Furthermore, they argue that within the discourse surrounding CRT in the U.K, intersectionality is a central premise, especially when discussing race and class intersections; perhaps more prominent in the U.K setting because of a British social history and legacy. (Chakrabarty, Roberts and Preston, 2012; Gillborn and Ladson-Billings, 2017). CRT methodology also acknowledges not only the centrality of race but also the intersectionality of race and racism with other forms of discrimination and domination e.g. subjugation based on race, gender, *'surname, phenotype* [and] *accent'* (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002, p.25). CRT allows the thinker and interrogator to apply ideas that call to account hidden and embedded ways of thinking which have served to uphold domains of White privilege and White supremacy.

Solórzano and Yosso (2002) argue that CRT advances a methodology to help illuminate and account for the presence of racism in the classroom.

> *'…critical race theory in education is a framework or set of basic insights that seeks to identify, analyse and transform those structures and cultural aspects of education that maintain subordinate and dominant racial positions in and out of the classroom.'* (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002, p. 25)

There is an acknowledgement on the part of CRT researchers that schools have the power to either collude, knowingly or unknowingly, with the prevalent system of Whiteness and oppress the potential of a child or endow them with the tools to succeed.

It was felt by the emergent Critical Race theorists that the neo-Marxist focus on class did not give a clear and whole picture of the level of inequality, rooted in race, that was being experienced in all areas of society for African-Americans (Giroux, 2000, cited in Yosso and Solórzano, 2005). Race had a fundamental part to play and this was recognized in the formation of CRT. Within CRT, racism is seen as being so rooted in everyday life and society as a whole that the effects of it often go unnoticed, unchallenged or accepted as the norm by both the beneficiaries of White privilege and those who were subjected to it in its more insidious forms, like a hidden virus.

The principle of being '*Othered*' and reflecting on life in liminal spaces has embedded CRT within many fields in the U.S e.g. Latino/a-crit, Asian-Crit, Queer-Crit and an important one for this study being that of education. Over the past decade or so, CRT has been gaining momentum and gaining credence within the UK educational setting. Gillborn (2005) wrote about what he considered to be the *'tacit intentionality'* (Gillborn, 2005, p.2) of institutional racism being enacted in schools, with *'taken-for-granted'* (ibid) acts carried out by power groups of White stakeholders (e.g. teachers). The people in positions of power perpetuated acts of White supremacy and maintained the status quo, that being the under-achievement of Black students/children (Maylor, 2009a, b and c; Mirza, 2009; Hylton, 2012; Chakrabarty, Roberts and Preston, 2012; Cole, 2012; Warmington, 2012).

Mirza (2006 and 2009a) explored the experiences of women across the intersectionalities of race and gender and the desire to succeed through education. She talks about the *'hidden voice of the women'* (Mirza, 2006, p.4) and the relevance of *'situated knowledges'* (ibid). This is an important point to reflect upon when considering how narratives of experience told through interviews, form part of the framework for this study, helping to throw light on other constructed realities and *'other ways of knowing'* (ibid).

Although it could be argued that there is '*no single position statement that defines CRT'* (Rollock and Gillborn, 2011, p. 1) or a *'canonical set of doctrines or methodologies to which* [CRT scholars] *all subscribe'* (Crenshaw *et al.* cited in Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 12) due to

its evolving nature and being responsive to changes in policy and alert to experiential testimony, there are certain tenets that all CRT scholars recognize as being intrinsic to the field:

1. That racism is pervasive and part of everyday existence
2. The importance of storytelling to give voice to the experience of Black people
3. A critique of liberalism and a colour-blind doctrine
4. Whiteness as a property

In effect, CRT allows for an open discursive space for the counter-narratives that once upon a time would have been silenced or just ignored. The use of interviews and a dialogical process are innate within CRT. A strength of the theoretical framework is that it provides a space for counter-stories of struggle, resistance and resilience to be told; stories that swim against the tide.

An unpacking of the *'master narrative'* (Montecinos, 1995 cited in Solórzano and Yosso, 2002, p. 27) is central to CRT or, what Chinua Achebe – who has been called *'the patriarch of the African novel'* (Franklin, 2008) - referred to as *'the balanc*[ing] *of stories…the process of re-storying'* (de Hoyos, 2000). Although he has not been referred to as a CRT scholar or adherent, his ideas and words resonate with the tenets of CRT, not solely to be the owner of your own story but also to have the right to tell it and be heard. Franklin echoes this sentiment when reflecting on Achebe's debut seminal work, 'Things Fall Apart' that dealt with the corrosive impact of colonisation:

> *'There is danger in relying on someone else to speak for you: you can trust that your message will be communicated accurately only if you speak with your own voice.'* (Franklin, 2008)

For Achebe, the importance of language could not be underestimated *'*[f]*or when language is seriously interfered with, when it is disjoined from truth . . . horrors can descend again'* (Franklin, 2008). The use of the word *'horrors'* might appear melodramatic but contextually

it would not have appeared out of place if attributed to any of the students' heart-felt narratives. Language in this context also means having the *words* to express what has been undergone.

When considering the hold a particular narrative, given to us as truth, can have on us, a poem written by William Ross Wallace in 1865, comes to mind. It has a refrain that has taken on the weight of being almost proverbial: *The Hand that Rocks the Cradle is the Hand that Rules the World*. 'The Hand' in that case was that of a loving mother whose influence on their child would determine what kind of society was produced. The gendered weight of that responsibility itself can be a discussion for another day. However, the point I wish to draw from this is that the 'mother narrative' - or *'master narrative'* (Montecinos, 1995 cited in Solórzano and Yosso, 2002, p. 27) that has been passed down via the 20th and 21st century U.K state educational system - is one of deficit to be found in those who are from the African diaspora. The hand that rocked this cradle was the educational framework, curriculua and political thinking that determined that children from 'West Indian' backgrounds were to be deemed as educationally subnormal. Even when the evidence in front of them contradicted that, it was so readily and easily dismissed. This was searingly put by Bernard Coard (1971) and his seminal work on how black children were systematically failed by the British educational system and, more often than not, this was done knowingly. Four decades later, Sir Steve McQueen, award-winning film-maker and Turner-prize winning artist, executive produced a BBC documentary – *'Subnormal: A British Scandal'* - that highlighted the arduous struggle of the parents who fought to protect their children and expose this scandal (BBC1, 2021; Weale, 2021).

Just one person's story I can list here is that of Dr. Anthony G. Reddie, the Director of the Oxford Centre for Religion and Culture and a Fellow of Regent's Park College (Oxford University, U.K). I came across an online interview in which he talked about not only his position and success with humour, but also his earlier schooling. It was (and still is) shocking to read the way in which he was underestimated by the majority of his teachers and denied the opportunity, that should have been his, to sit an exam that he was more than entitled to and capable of completing. The possibility of going to a Russell Group University was never suggested to him, a Black working-class boy from Birmingham. The hand that rocked that cradle of education and future citizenship did not belong to a body that recognised the

intelligence and skills of a young boy who had been negatively stereotyped and profiled by his school. He did, however, have a champion in his History teacher, someone who in CRT literature would be referred to as a white ally. This teacher fought against the tide for Reddie but his judgement was swept away by the institutional racism Reddie encountered:

> *'The most visceral moment of racism was at school. I was the best student in my school at History and English, and I was put in for the lower tier secondary examinations where the maximum grade was a C, rather than the higher ones. Which I know I could have aced. Before GCSEs, secondary school examinations were split into two tiers, O-levels — which are the GCSE equivalent, and CSE levels, which were basically given to people so they could leave with something. I ended up getting the highest mark that had ever been achieved in my History CSE level (96%) and my school wanted to put it in the local paper: 'Black school boy achieves record CSE grade'. And I almost did the interview, until Mr Richard Wilkinson, my history teacher, and the only person who was an advocate for me at school, pulled me aside and told me not to. All of my teachers were white, but he was explicitly progressive and radical. He had fought for me to sit the higher exams, but everyone else had voted against him. He said: 'I'm not telling you what to do, but if I were you I would not do that interview. We both know that you should have done O-Levels. This is not an educational triumph, this is an indictment of our racism. There are other people in this school — white people — who you are better than, who will get B and A grades because they had the chance to, and you didn't. We are still friends, but I can't bring myself to call him Richard, he will always be Mr Wilkinson to me.'* (Reddie, 2020)

McQueen produced a series of films called *'Small Axe'* (BBC, 2020) which foregrounded significant aspects of black British history that for many people, myself included, had remained hidden, to the point of erasure e.g. The Mangrove Nine whose trial, so near in historical time, underscored the institutional racism within the Police force. The final episode of this anthology, *'Education'* (Small Axe, 13 December 2020), spoke to the experience of Reddie and countless many others - as seen in the BBC documentary *'Subnormal: A British Scandal* - who had systematically been let down by an education system that was supposedly fair and level. This idea of the system being about equality at its heart was – and is - central to the *'master narrative'.* The *'master narrative'* is the one that the students were led to be believe underpinned and pervaded the school settings that they were going to work in. An explicit representation of this fair and level playing field was encapsulated for all to read in the schools' equality policies. Yet, when a student's experiences ran counter to this narrative, the response in some cases was such that a student would perhaps question themselves (*'maybe it's just in my head'* – Sewa) and what they had

experienced. In certain cases, the conclusion they came to was that they were being gaslit[1]. The plausibility of what they tried to give testimony too was eroded and undermined. Why? More than likely because their testimonies challenged the '*master narrative'* (Montecinos, 1995 cited in Solórzano and Yosso, 2002, p. 27) or the *'majoritarian story'* (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002, p. 28) which '*[is] not often questioned because people do not see them as stories but as "natural" parts of everyday life'* (ibid). This idea is further compounded by the award-winning writer Chimamada Ngozi Adiche when she talks about '*the danger of the single story'* (Adiche, 2009), of, in effect, only being aware of the *'master narrative'*. The effect of the *'single story'* is synonymous with the one caused by *'The Hand that rocks the cradle'*; they would shape one's view of the world, one's own position in it and that of others who you may not have even met or shared the same spaces with. The result is a level of deep-seated, ingrained unconscious bias. An illustration of this is given by Adiche, when she recalls the time she went to the village to visit Fide, her family's domestic help:

> *'Then one Saturday, we went to his* [Fide] *village to visit, and his mother showed us a beautifully patterned basket made of dyed raffia that his brother had made. I was startled. It had not occurred to me that anybody in his family could actually make something. All I had heard about them was how poor they were, so that it had become impossible for me to see them as anything else but poor. Their poverty was my single story of them.*' (Adiche, 2009)

The telling comment here is that although Adiche had only encountered one facet of Fide, she had unconsciously constructed a perception of who he was and what he did. Her own unconscious bias in relation to Fide was made evident to her in this one stunning example. When Adiche then went on to study in the U.S., the shock – almost irony – was that the white students she encountered had already come to a lowered expectation of who she was and her place in their world.

> *'What struck me was this: She had felt sorry for me even before she saw me. Her default position toward me, as an African, was a kind of patronizing, well-meaning pity. My roommate had a single story of Africa: a single story of catastrophe. In this single story, there was no possibility of Africans being similar to her in any way, no possibility of feelings more complex than pity, no possibility of a connection as human equals.'* (Adiche, 2009)

This so strongly resonates with some of the students' narratives:

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[1] *'Gaslight'* (1944) is a film starring Ingrid Bergman and Charles Boyer. The husband tries to drive his wife mad, and to have others think she is, by questioning her understanding of reality.

'Maybe he [CBT] *thinks I shouldn't be teaching or whatever and she* [the class teacher the student was working with] *said I'm starting to feel the same way…I felt like I was fighting a battle.'* (Tunde)

'Even on this course, I have felt, well, there's certain things that you feel…It's working harder, but also how people see you. So, for example, if I didn't do a piece of work, I'd feel that being viewed as being lazy is something that goes with [that]*…and not necessarily by the tutors, but by your peers as well…it's just going to be viewed differently to the person next to you who just has a different colour skin.'* (Kiara)

Adiche had the tools and the racial literacy to recognise and confront the stereotyping she was overtly being subjected to. The schools (and the staff operating them) were generally not at the stage Adiche was, where she could recognise the *'single story'* she had unknowingly adhered to and was willing and able to make the necessary adjustments. I would surmise that the schools (and staff) were not at this stage of acquired racial literacy because they believed that they had already done the work that meant that they were invested in maintaining high standards of social justice. What further proof would be needed other than their equality and diversity policies, freely-accessible via their internet portals? When asked about the efficacy and protection suggested by there being an equality policy in their schools, the responses from the students suggested that these documents were of little use, generally performative and were there because a school was legally bound to have one:

'*Yeah, sometimes I think those are just policies, they're just there, you know, just there so that people can see them but they don't really (pause) they're just policies'* (Tolu)

'…they're not very useful. From what I saw, they'd have INSET [in-service training] *days to try and support issues that were happening there and the SENCO* [Special Needs co-ordinator – Erolet and I clarify that the SENCO is trying to get the teachers to be open to pupils backgrounds and the influence that may have on perceived negative behaviour] *was trying to make a real effort because she realized that this was happening and she was not happy about it but a lot of the staff are resisting what she wants to happen and she'll put on these INSET days and they'll all be there talking about it and then the next day they completely don't use any of the stuff she's told them anyway'* (Erolet)

'All schools have these policies. Whether they adhere to it is a different case, isn't it?' (Larissa)

So, when stories of their school experiences strayed from the single story that pervaded the narratives indirectly put out by their tutors i.e. that not only would Universities

be safe and welcoming spaces but so would the schools they were going learn and work in, the students considered the legal documentation to be of limited support and protection. They did not want to trouble that perception for fear of not being believed and/or another negative repercussion. This was highlighted by Tolu when she described her experience at school the SoE had worked with for a considerable number of years:

> *'…Yeah, but towards the end, I think my CBT noticed our experiences and then she kind of, came to our side.* (VP: what kind of things do you think she noticed?) *Well, we didn't get the support and I think she noticed we weren't getting enough support. She's my CBT now* [on another placement] *and when she came to me yesterday, one of the comments she made was oh this is different, I can see. This is a total difference from where you were before. She made a comment like that but she wouldn't go into details so, I don't know what she meant by that but from the comments she made, I assume she knew that we had it rough, yeah, I think that's what she said that you really had it rough at* [named school]. (VP: So the university's response was not to believe what a student said was going on? – Tolu agrees)*'*

So, in understandably protecting themselves, and their progression on the course, by not speaking out – because they felt that they could not – this resulted in a strange conundrum whereby the students were indirectly engaged in upholding a system that was sometimes toxic to them. The feeling of not being welcome and that their presence was something to be endured by the school is evident in what Keisha says:

> *'Headteacher, deputy headteacher, they'd never say hello, never return a smile, my mentor never spoke to her* [there should have been open lines of communication between her mentor and senior management]. *She* [the mentor] *never introduced herself to me. I had my first conversation with her on my penultimate observation…I did never speak* [sic] *to her and when I did, she'd see me in the hallway and still* (trails off) (VP: ignore?) *Yeah!'*

Referring back to the disputed findings of the CRED (2021) report, the notion of there being a single story is again strongly challenged. Indeed, the report also quotes Adiche from her Ted talk about the dangers of a single story:

> *'Stories matter. Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign, but stories can also be used to empower and humanise. Stories can break the dignity of a people, but stories can also repair that broken dignity'* (CRED, 2021, p.91)

Yet it could be argued that this apparent recognition of a multiplicity of stories, as seen by the quotation from the CRED report, is contradicted by a reverse narrative, also evident in the report, which denies the existence of institutional racism (Olusoga, 2021) despite detailed testimonies to the contrary. The U.K. scandal surrounding the '*Windrush generation*[2]' was not mentioned in the report yet that has been a devastating indictment and exposure of systemic and institutional racism at the heart of the U.K government. Nevertheless, when referring to the Timpson Report (2019, cited in CRED, 2021, p.77) that looked at the high exclusionary rates from school of children from minoritized communities, including children of mixed heritage and of the African diaspora, the CRED report makes a specific note that *'the Review found no evidence of systemic or institutional racism'* (CRED, 2021, p. 77). Yet we have The Lammy Review (2017) which was an excoriating report on institutional racism being rife in both the police and judicial system. The Stuart Hall Foundation (2021) published a report highlighting that there had already been more than 50 years of reporting, fighting and putative legislation against racism in British institutions. This dates from the first Race Relations Act of 1965 to a stop along the way that was the Race Relations Amendment Act (RRAA) (2000) 35 years later. It was only following the RRAA that schools were legally required to have an equality and diversity policy. We then, in turn, have those some of those very same British institutions, stating in 2021, a year on from the murder of George Floyd in the U.S and the global calls for change, that they do indeed have issues of systemic racism. You only have to look at the reports produced by the Church of England (CoE, 2021), the Girl Guides (2021), the National Health Service (NHS, 2021) and numerous U.K. Universities (EHRC, 2019; Universities UK, 2020) to attest to that.

What is so damning and chilling is that these reports are not from decades ago, they are from here, from now, decades after the first reports such as the Rampton Report and the Swann Report first made their recommendations following investigations into the racism evinced in the U.K educational system of that time. On a more pertinent note, the mitigation and denial of institutional racism could act to silence those who would most need to throw a light on their experiences and deny any attempt to negate their stories.

[2] The *'Windrush generation'* were children of those who came on board, from the Caribbean on *'HMT Empire Windrush'* in 1948. The majority of the children were born in Britain. The scandal in 2018 saw many of them deported or imprisoned based on the 'hostile environment' engendered by the then Home Secretary, Theresa May. They were clamping down on those they thought had illegally entered the country. This strategy unfairly caught many of the descendants of the *'Windrush'* who had believed themselves to be British and to be citizens of the U.K.

Interestingly, there does appear to be a curious, if not rather toxic paradox when we consider the *'stories'* that the students will help to perpetuate in the classroom. As mentioned in the Prologue, governmental policy does not favour the teaching of CRT and white privilege (Nelson, 2020). The *'master narrative'* will remain pervasive if the tools that one could use to interrogate and dismantle it are removed and the students will be placed in the unenviable position of becoming disseminating agents of that *'master narrative'* (The Black Curriculum, 2021).

Racism

A significant starting point for CRT is that racism is pervasive, intrinsic to the warp and weft of societal structure and so therefore in our education system (Milner, 2007). As a preliminary perspective, this runs contra to the liberalist view of U.S society engendered by years of affirmative action policies and hard-won changes brought about by the Civil Rights movements of the 1960s. Ladson-Billings, a significant writer in the field of CRT and education, writes that:

> '*CRT begins with the notion that racism is "`normal, not aberrant, in American society'" (Delgado, 1995, p. xiv), and, because it is so enmeshed in the fabric of our social order, it appears both normal and natural to people in this culture. Indeed, Bell's major premise in Faces at the bottom of the well (1992) is that racism is a permanent fixture of American life. Thus, the strategy becomes one of unmasking and exposing racism in its various permutations'* (1998, p.11)

In recognition of this, it was acknowledged that in order to unmask racism and expose its effects and machinations, the experiences and testimony of African Americans was crucial if there was to be an unpicking and examination of the educational system. However, it is important to note that the more overt manifestations of racism are rejected by a majority of people, no matter their ethnic grouping. Acts of overt racism, crude in their obviousness and wounding in their intentionality, can be confronted and even challenged using legal rulings and policies that have been put together by institutions to ostensibly protect their BME colleagues from discrimination (Single Equality Act, 2010). It is, however, the more subtle forms that can go undetected to the mind, ear and eye that are not attuned to them. Living a life where one must negotiate the rules of engagement with a world that functions on the solid foundations of Whiteness, equips those who have a heightened consciousness, with skills to challenge the inequity and discourse surrounding race with a level of racial literacy. These

skills include having the conceptual tools to decipher what is happening and the vocabulary to express it (Twine, 2006; Laughter *et al.*, 2021). The subtle forms are symptomatic of what Gillborn (2008, p.27) referred to as the *'hidden operations of power'*. Recognising and naming the more elusive forms of racism, such as microaggressions, is made easier with the tools furnished by CRT. Racism works alongside, and as part of White privilege, to maintain the hegemony of a global White racialized minority. Within the field of CRT, this is recognized as White supremacy.

Whiteness and White supremacy

> *'Whiteness' is a racial discourse, whereas the category of 'White people' represents a socially constructed identity, usually based on skin colour.'* (Leonardo, 2002, p.31)

The term 'Whiteness' here has nothing to do with phenotype classification but concerns the discourse surrounding White people as an ethnic and racialised group and the privileges that have been normative and invisible being part of that group. 'White supremacy' is also a term that goes hand-in-hand with any discussion surrounding Whiteness and White privilege. It does not necessarily refer to the far-right groups who espouse racist ideology but it does refer to the dominance and normativity that is inherent in White ethnicity and the privileges, the majority unasked for, that go hand-in-hand with this. When the reality of White privilege is made real, some White people have emphasized the neutrality of their position (McIntosh, 1988; Marx, 2006; McIntosh, 2020) and this is a stance I have witnessed when teaching White teacher trainees. When engaged in any conversation around race with students of all ethnicities on the PGCE course, I feel compelled to highlight what Leonardo (2002) notes about Whiteness being a racial discourse before exploring the meaning of the term 'White supremacy', a term that immediately has the students on guard (Miller and Harris, 2018). The rationale behind the exploration and explanation of White supremacy is that some of the students - more likely those that have consciously and unconsciously experienced others benefiting from their white privilege - will have a more open mind and react less antagonistically (Aveling, 2006) than those who have been the beneficiaries of this privilege (Hossain, 2015). One of the participants, Sarah said:

> *'I'm fine with it but I think some people would find it a bit, oh we're talking about slavery, oh I've* [Sarah] *got a problem…I got it from other ethnic groups as if they*

just didn't want to talk about it…like when were doing certain [topics] *like history, it was just oh God, why are we talking about this? I think it makes them uncomfortable because it's something that's swept under the carpet.'*

The attribution of what is perceived as blame for being white would have had a strong effect on students being able to hear or engage in any discourse around white privilege. To take part in discussions that, in effect, lay a subtle question mark over everything you have worked for, won and had been given could prove to be deeply unsettling on an existential level and lead to many questions. These benefits manifest in terms of access to better life chances. This is especially pertinent when dealing with questions of hegemony by, what is in effect, a global White minority.

A troubling metaphor that I would use to illuminate this conundrum is based on a scene from the film *'Us'* (2019), directed by African-American actor, writer and producer Jordan Peele. The doppelgängers of a family invade their home one night. Red, the doppelgänger mother-figure, explains that they share a soul with this family, that they are the shadow family, 'tethered' to them but living a parallel, painful version of their lives. This metaphor resonates with both the micro and macro experiences relating to race, racism, privilege and othering outlined in this book.

Just as King (1991) stated that White people have internalized an ideological world view which justifies their position, privilege and an, if not always, overt subjugation but an ever-present suppression of Black people (Tatum, 1992). Concurrent with this, there is the idea of internalized racism by Black people. This is when Black people view themselves through the lens of White supremacy (hooks, 1992) whose purpose, like a mirror at the fairground, is to skew and distort the image seen reflecting back. hooks (1992) mentions how this leads to an erosion of self-esteem and a crisis of Black identity. The media, the world of work and education work together to encourage the rejection of Blackness and for it to be replaced with a vestige of Whiteness through the acquisition of accepted codes such as language, dress education and places of education. Solórzano and Yosso (2001) assert that CRT in education is crucial if we are to '*challenge* [the] *dominant ideology'* (Solórzano and Yosso, 2001, p.2) and better educate all who are subject to, and part of, the educational system.

White privilege

Whilst undertaking research to look at the privileging of men in society and their sometimes overt, sometimes unconscious collusion with the structures that helped maintain their positions of power, McIntosh (1988; 2020) was confronted by her own unseen White privilege and the recognition that she had been conditioned from a young age to ignore it. Marx (2006) had noted how White women tended to exhibit a level of denial about coming to terms with their White privilege. This would have been especially hard for McIntosh to confront as a feminist who believed in the solidarity of women living under a patriarchal hegemony.

McIntosh began to record mundane actions or conditions that she felt she could rely upon as a White person, regardless of her gender, but her African-American friends and colleagues could not. By unpacking what she termed her *'invisible knapsack of White privilege'* (McIntosh, 1988, p.100), McIntosh realized that she had to *'give up the myth of meritocracy'* (McIntosh, 1988, p.99). This can be illustrated by Phillips (1993) when he refers to this myth of meritocracy as being partly behind the tragedy of *'Othello…A Black European success'* (Phillips, 1993, p.45). Othello was a Black man in a White world who had succeeded in a field considered worthy of admiration (warfare). He was considered an insider as long as he conformed to the script that was written for him, one that he was seemingly unaware of when he married the White daughter of a rich Venetian statesman. Othello believed in meritocracy and a world where your good deeds should speak for themselves.

> *'My services, which I have done the signiory,*
> *Shall out-tongue his complaints'* (Shakespeare, *Othello,* Act I, Scene II, v20 - 21)

Yet, as we know, part of the tragedy of *'Othello'* was that this was not the case. Questions of meritocracy and fairness of treatment is an issue that remains central to the discourse surrounding the experience of Black students (Mirza and Meetoo, 2012) and Black staff within the academy (Maylor, 2009a; Mirza, 2015) who have felt themselves treated differently and made to feel *'Other',* perhaps through experiencing microaggressions. Sewa comments on this othering and lack of respect in relation to the teaching assistant (TA) who worked with her in her classroom. What Sewa says follows an incident where a child had lost their jumper. The TA seemed upset that Sewa had not acted immediately to go and find it but

to do so would have meant leaving her class of children alone which she is legally not allowed to do:

> *'I just know she wouldn't have behaved like that with the class teacher. She would have respected her and then wait*[ed] *and then get it attended to.'*
>
> *'…the respect wasn't there at the beginning.'* (Ruth)

So, for the students like Sewa, the question of privilege and questioning the validity of their right to be seen as in charge of the setting, was there from the very start of their placement.

Microaggressions: Symptoms of Whiteness

Microaggressions, a concept developed by psychiatrist Chester Pierce in the 1970s, are defined as '*subtle, stunning often automatic and non-verbal exchanges which are "put downs" of Blacks by offenders*' (Pierce *et al.*, 1978, cited in Solórzano, Ceja and Yosso, 2000, p.60) or as *'death by a thousand cuts'* (Singh, 2016). These exchanges are basically part of everyday interactions, however brief they might be, that leave the receiver feeling undermined, undervalued and under attack (Sue and Constantine, 2007). What is also symptomatic of Whiteness and what that entails i.e. privilege and a privileged epistemological position due to having a White ethnicity, the initiator of the microaggression is probably unaware that they have committed an action which has been seen to come from a dismissive view of the ethnicity of the person in front of them. For both parties, having the vocabulary to explain what passed between them can prove difficult because that element of racial literacy is not embedded as part of their knowledge. As Sue and Constantine (2007, p.137) go on to say:

> *'Microaggressive exchanges are so pervasive and automatic in daily conversations and interactions that they are often dismissed and glossed over as being innocent and innocuous. They are, nevertheless, extremely damaging to persons of color because microaggressions impair classroom performance and workplace productivity by creating emotional turmoil and depleting psychological resources'*

The existence of microinvalidations and microinsults, both of which come under the banner of microaggressions are harder to pinpoint and define (Sue and Constantine, 2007). Microinvalidations are described as perhaps the most deceptive form of microaggression as they serve to try and negate the lived experiences of Black people and as Sue and Constantine

(2007, p.138) write '*attempt to replace it with the racial reality of White American (oftentimes with damaging consequences to the targets).'* A recent example of this is when, in 2015, the former U.S First Lady, Michelle Obama gave an address at Tuskagee University to graduating students. She made reference to the way she was pictured on the controversial front cover for the *New Yorker*[i] (Goldenberg, 2008), during her husband's re-election campaign, with an 'Angela Davis' style afro and toting a gun and how '*it knocked me back a bit.'* Professor Angela Davies, as she is now known, is an academic, a civil rights activist and former Black Panther, was once the most wanted woman in America. She was portrayed as a dangerous radical, a terrorist and charged with being Public Enemy No. 1 (Lowry, 2015). The effect of the 'Angela Davies' comment was to mark Michelle Obama as an outsider, as '*Other'.* Lowry's online response to the then-First Lady's speech refers to Mrs. Obama as being *'characteristically self-pitying'* and *'aggrieved'.* I would argue that this was because she had made a stance in speaking out about the microinvalidations she had experienced at the end of a cartoonists pen. He then went on to say that:

> '*…she related a series of inconsequential gibes or perceived insults mostly from 2008 that, for her, loom large enough to share with graduating seniors years later.'* (Lowry, 2015).

'Inconsequential"? *'Perceived"*? These words and this statement is a powerful example of what Sue and Constantine (2007) refer to as a microinvalidation where the views of a Black articulate and highly intelligent woman, wife to arguably the most powerful man in the world, are marginalized and diminished in an attempt to move her story from the centre ground back into the shadows so that the White majoritarian narrative can regain the centre ground.

Microinvalidations coupled with microinsults can be words or actions that, again serve to diminish but can be encountered in scenarios whereby a Black person is at the front of a lecture hall or in the corridor of a school and by a look or comment, it would be evident that the students (or parents) thought them either the cleaner or the helper, not the actual lecturer or class teacher (Aderin-Pocock, 2016). Fanon (2008) had earlier described the emotional and psychological impact of this reductivist form of negation where, like *'Othello',* his qualities were not allowed to speak for him:

> *'The evidence was there, unalterable. My Blackness was there, dark and unarguable…The time had long since passed when a Negro priest was an occasion for wonder. We had physicians, professors, statesmen. Yes, but something out of the ordinary still clung to such cases. "We have a Senegalese history teacher. He is quite bright…Our doctor is coloured. He is very gentle."'* (Fanon, 2008, p. 88)

CRT furnishes the researcher with the tools of language and a critical lens to not only see but challenge not only the overt forms of racism, which arguably is an easier task to do, but also throw a light on the hidden and deceptive forms of racism as named within the concept of microaggressions.

The automaticity of these microaggressions ties in with the idea of dysconscious racism referred to in King's (1991) research.

> *'…a form of racism that tacitly accepts dominant White norms and privileges…Uncritical ways of thinking about racial inequity accept certain culturally sanctioned assumptions, myths and beliefs that justify the social and economic advantages White people have as a result of subordinating diverse others. Any serious challenge to the status quo that calls this racial privilege into question inevitably challenges the self-identity of White people who have internalized these ideological justifications'* (King, 1991, p.135)

This quotation from King further illustrates how hidden internalized forms of racism can be, even to the unsuspecting initiator of the racist act. Yet, as has been noted, when discourses surrounding race are attempted within an educational or ITE setting, the responses from the White students can include shock, anger and a denial that they could be subject to racist thoughts and actions (King, 1991; Sue and Constantine, 2007; Picower, 2009; Lander 2011b; Pearce, 2012). Whereas dysconscious racism, as a concept, may be readily used in connection with individuals, institutional racism is a term used to define the structural and endemic aspect of racism within systems and institutions. The notion of a '[tacit acceptance] *of dominant White norms and privileges*….[and] an *impaired consciousness* (King, 2004, p.73) inherent to dysconscious racism, resonates with the notion of institutional racism.

The concept of institutional racism, coined in the U.S by Charles V. Hamilton and Kwame Ture (né Stokely Carmichael), has been around since the 60's and the rise of the Black power movement; a movement that held as central the forging of unity amongst African-Americans and a call to decolonize the mind. The notion of decolonizing the mind, divesting oneself of the burden of slavery and colonialism, harked back to the ideas and

philosophy of Marcus Garvey, Jamaican-born civil rights activist and Pan-Africanist, who is quoted as saying:

> '*We are going to emancipate ourselves from mental slavery, for though others may free the body, none but ourselves can free the mind.'* (Garvey, 1937).

This idea of *'mental slavery'* and *'free*[ing] *the mind'* resonates with the notion of '*double consciousness'* (Du Bois, 2006) and internalized racism later proposed by hooks (1992) where Black people still measure themselves against the deficit model symptomatic of a state where Whiteness is hegemonic and the norm. In an echo of Garvey's pan-Africanism, and later Kwame Ture's (who was influenced by Fanon's work), Fanon wrote:

> *'As long as the Black man is among his own, he will have no occasion, except in minor internal conflicts, to experience his being through others'.* (Fanon, 2008, p.82)

Referring back to the earlier discussion on racism, Bonilla-Silva (1997; 2001) posited an alternative to the frameworks that, at the time of his research, were being used to construct a discourse around racism and frameworks that he considered quite flawed. Bonilla-Silva went on further to say that '[r]*ather than viewing racism as a mere idea, belief or attitude, I contend that racism is the ideological apparatus of a racialized social system.*' (Bonilla-Silva, 1997, p.2). This incorporates the notion that society is composed of individuals and if some of these constituent individuals are racist, there will therefore be racist elements in society and the institutions that they then become part of. It is important to recognize this as an aspect of critical race discourse when examining the experiences of minority Black students working in fundamentally White institutions.

Institutional racism

Institutional racism itself is defined as:

> *'The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people.*' (Macpherson, 1999, para. 6.34)

The concept of a society being institutionally racist was first applied in the U.K at the time of The Scarman Report (1981) after the Brixton Disorders. Scarman referred to *'Britain* [as] *an institutionally racist society'* in response to the way the police service had conducted itself during the riots (Scarman, 1981 cited in Macpherson, 1999, para. 6.7). Nearly two decades later, the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry (Macpherson, 1999) brought the concept of institutional racism back to the forefront of public consciousness and speech. The report stated that the insertion of the word *'institutional'* placed the focus where it needed to be i.e. at the level of the institution *'rather than simply with the individuals who represent it'* (Macpherson, 1999, para. 6.32). It could be argued that the comment from the Macpherson report offers a less holistic approach to dealing with racism in society in that it appears to shy away from holding individuals responsible for racist actions by stating:

> *'*[t]*he addition of the word 'institutional' therefore identifies the source of the differential treatment; this lies in some sense within the organisation rather than simply with the individuals who represent it.* (Macpherson, 1999, para. 6.32)

This is an important distinction when looking at the experiences of Black students in ITE and on school placement. The student becomes, to some extent, part of the school institution and can be subject to racist acts on the part of individuals who constitute the school, from the school management team to the auxiliary staff.

The Macpherson report notes that without a recognition on the part of '*policy, example and leadership'* (ibid) to acknowledge that there is an issue and that racism exists within their institution, it will continue to flourish undetected and unchallenged; *'It is a corrosive disease'* (ibid). This acknowledgement by the Macpherson report of how institutional racism can become invisible and entrenched is highly significant in terms of what is experienced by Black students whilst on school placement. The report also made reference to the *'unintentional'* and *'unwitting'* racism exhibited by the Metropolitan Police Service during the original investigation into Stephen Lawrence's racist murder and explained it as being due to:

> *'...* [a] *lack of understanding, ignorance or mistaken beliefs. It can arise from well intentioned but patronising words or actions. It can arise from unfamiliarity with the*

> *behaviour or cultural traditions of people or families from minority ethnic communities....Furthermore such attitudes can thrive in a tightly knit community, so that there can be a collective failure to detect and to outlaw this breed of racism…'* (Macpherson, 1999, para. 6.17)

This frame of reference would suggest that there needs to be instilled a necessary vigilance to safeguard against racism being enacted and allowed to thrive. However, I would contend that if the enacted behaviour is unintentional, unwitting even dysconscious, then it is difficult for there to be a conscious and reflective proactive response to confronting it. The *'tightly knit community'* that the Macpherson report alludes to, with its overt and covert codes of practice, could be describing the school setting.

The relevance of the Macpherson Report was that it led to the introduction of the RRAA or Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) which stipulated that all schools had to have a written document relating to race equality for their school to adhere to. The RRAA was replaced a decade later by the umbrella-like Single Equality Act (2010) which now encompassed and aimed to deliver protection against racial discrimination, disability discrimination and sex discrimination under the banner of '*protected characteristics'*. In terms of race relations, critics argued that this grouping together would dilute the effectiveness of dealing with issues related to racial discrimination (TUC, 2012). So, it is important for this study to consider the implementation and effectiveness of the policies when problems concerning racial equality and social justice are challenged but also to consider the level of performativity surrounding these policies that students may have encountered.

Institutional policies: Acts of Interest Convergence?

When considering the U.K context and the impact of the RRAA in terms of educational policy, interest convergence, a concept found within CRT and devised by Bell (1980, cited in Decuir and Dixson, 2004) acts as a point of reflection. The prevailing discourse surrounding CRT interpreted the introduction of civil rights legislation for African Americans, which up until 1964 were basic rights for Whites only in America, as taking place '*only inasmuch as they converged with the self-interests of Whites.*' (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004, p.28). Within the U.K, following the sustained campaign by Stephen Lawrence's family to see his (White racist) killers brought to justice, the result was the landmark Macpherson Report in 1999. Yet, Gillborn (2008) argues that this Inquiry, which led to the introduction of new legislation,

is an example of interest convergence at work. He asserts that the decision to initiate and publicly support the Inquiry coincided with the recently elected New Labour Government's desire to be seen as crusading and proactive in terms of tackling racism head-on.

Coupled with the concept of *'interest convergence'* is the concept of the *'contradiction closing case',* both notions devised and terms coined by Prof. Derrick Bell, the latter though being where hard won reforms are pushed back and *'racism returns to its business-as-usual'* (Gillborn, 2008, p.119). In many quarters, the CRED report could be seen in this light. Following the release of the report, Baroness Doreen Lawrence, Stephen Lawrence's mother, is quoted as saying:

> *'My son was murdered because of racism and you cannot forget that. Once you start covering it up it is giving the green light to racists. You imagine what's going to happen come tomorrow. What's going to happen on our streets with our young people? You are giving racists the green light.'* (Syal, 2021)

Furthermore, the original reform is then used as a moral justification that changes have taken place and society has moved on although its initial power and influence will have been diminished by changes made following on from the initial inception of the policy.

Hill Collins (1998) talks along these lines when she refers to the *'new politics of containment'* (Hill Collins, 1998, p.14) and how, despite what appears to have been significant political changes in favour of Black women e.g. positive discrimination work policies, they are still *'glued to the bottom of the bag* (Hill Collins, 1998, p.13). She raises the point of how Black women are made visible in order to hide *'the exclusionary practices of racial segregation, this new politics produces remarkably consistent Black female disadvantage while claiming to do the opposite'* (Hill Collins, 1998, p.14). This conclusion

takes us back to CRT and the notion of the '*contradiction closing case*' where a change is later seen as superficial as there is a return to *'business-as-usual'* (Gillborn, 2008, p.119).

School Policies

Relevant to this narrative as a whole is that schools had to take active steps to tackle racism and racial discrimination. An overt and active demonstration of that would be a school's written policy for racial equality. However, with the introduction of the Equality Act (2010), which superseded the RRAA (2000), schools need now only demonstrate *'due regard'* to the needs of *'people with particular protected characteristics'* (DfE, 2013, p.22), race being only one of those characteristics. It should also be noted that the RRAA was a direct result of the 1999 MacPherson report.

Research (Deem and Morley, 2006; Joseph-Salisbury, 2020) has been produced which has looked at the different perceptions held by staff when examining their university's equality policies, and the resulting effects, as well as how diversity might be perceived and understood (Ahmed, 2007). It has to be noted that any move to act on the support provisions laid down by the equality policies might be more readily attributed to whether an act is interpreted as being racist or not. The act or action will be subject to the sociological, psychological and emotional lens of the person who is charged with taking responsibility and acting on the claims made. This is of greater relevance since the Single Equality Act replaced the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) and the government, in 2012, removed the obligation for schools to report racist incidents to their local authorities (Insted, 2012).

It could be argued that the act of requiring schools statutorily to have a written race policy is an act of interest convergence in that the requirement for a written policy suited both political stakeholders as well as a step forward for anti-racists who had long campaigned for equality for Black children in the U.K educational system (Coard, 1971; Troyna, 1992; Gillborn and Mirza, 2000; Richardson, 2005; Maylor, 2009c; Joseph-Salisbury, 2020). Schools were now being seen to overtly perform as institutions of equity and equal opportunities as well as

being champions of diversity. In situations where a student was subjected to overt acts of racism by their classteacher and/or mentor, an HEI in Mirza and Meetoo's study (2012) just de-selected the school. This kind of action is not taken lightly and means that the HEI will not place students at a school that has been found to be in contravention of, as in the case mentioned, race equality policies as well as neglecting their duty of care to the student. This was an action that the HEI I worked for had also carried out in the case of a student being racially abused by the classteacher/mentor she was placed with on school experience.

However, considering the prevailing political climate and increasingly tenuous position of HEIs in being the main conduit for teacher education, de-selecting schools is not an immediate option HEIs would take. Government policy had seen a drive towards School Direct (Burns, 2013; Bell, 2015; DfE, 2015) i.e. teacher trainees being trained in schools and away from the traditional route of teaching being a university-based course. One branch of School Direct is the salaried School Direct route whereby a student is employed by their school – as a teacher - whilst training to teach. Increasingly, HEIs are finding their long-nurtured relationships with partnership schools disturbed or terminated as former partners moved to take on what was, until recently, the financially attractive role of employing School Direct salaried students.

There is, though, concern amongst colleagues that those students who may be most affected by racism and discrimination within the school setting may be the least willing to speak up. If problems of discrimination do arise in school, the School Direct salaried student has to complain to the school i.e. their employer. The fragility of the positions some School Direct students can find themselves in is illustrated by Sewa:

> *'My school, at the beginning I think, I sort of had to prove myself, that is what I… now, reflecting on things that happened at the beginning, I think they wanted me to prove myself sort of.* (I ask whether Sewa thought the difference in treatment was because she was a student – School Direct – or personal to her?) *I don't know, I think probably it was personal, because I think my colleagues in the primary building, had more support.'*

The issues around complaining to your employer about discrimination in the work-place is well-documented and not a new phenomenon (Lund, 2006; Gallagher, 2009; Eisenkraft, 2010, Cabrera, 2014, McRae, 2017). The question this situation gives rise to is how would schools deal with issues of racism directed towards their staff and their children?

Schools no longer have to record and report to the local authority any incidences of racism (Talwar, 2012) as it is for the school to determine what is meant as racism and what is not. This should work for the more overt demonstrations of racism but what about the more subtle forms? The school system that the students are part of is hegemonically White, both in terms of staffing, epistemological outlook and the inherent privileges that are characteristic of Whiteness. If the school and the students are not schooled in racial literacy (Twine, 2006), practices which '…*provide children of African Caribbean ancestry with resources that assist them in countering everyday racism'* (Twine, 2006), it can then be argued that racist incidences will remain invisible to those who would have the power to do something about any inequality. These racial literacy practices are more involved than having a 'Black History Month' every October but would be an overt recognition of Black people's presence prior to the *'Windrush'* generation, contributions and agency over centuries (Fryer, 2010; Olusoga, 2016; Kaufmann, 2017) and an active attempt at decolonizing the Curriculum.

In terms of what is written in the policies, Ahmed (2012) writes about the language of diversity that can be read in equality policies. The presence of this language engages the reader and ensures garnered confidence in the institution's adherence to its written values. As Puwar (2004, p.1) further states:

> *'The language of diversity is today embraced as a holy mantra across different sites. We are told that diversity is good for us. It makes for an enriched multicultural society…In policy terms, diversity has overwhelmingly come to mean the inclusion of different bodies.'*

The question of performativity is invoked when considering the assertion that the words of a policy are performative when the policy 'does' what it says, i.e. *'the issuing of the utterance is the performing of an action'* (Austin, 1975, cited in Ahmed, 2012, p. 116). The notion of enacting and performativity was echoed in the Macpherson Report (1999) with its statement that *'it is in the implementation of policies and in the words and actions of* [⋯] *acting together that racism may become apparent'* (Macpherson, 1999, para. 6.24).

In contrast, Ahmed introduces the notion of non-performatives as doing the opposite; *'In the world of the non-performative, to name is not to bring into effect'* (Ahmed, 2012,

p.117). By their presence, schools can appear to comply with the idea of equality but this non-performative use of the language of diversity can screen racism (Ahmed, 2007). It could be argued that the document has been produced to cater to an audience and is, in effect, a paper tiger, a document that would appear to be effective and to be adhered to but is fundamentally ineffectual. As evident in their narratives, the students recognized the non-performativity of the inclusion documents:

> Angela (IFS): *'It's there in case you try to play the "race card"'*
>
> Liz (IFS): '[The policy is] *for the government and the university to protect themselves*'

There is a gap between what appears to be the authority inherent in an equality policy and the reality of what it can actually achieve. This notion can be especially applied to the race equality policies to be found in schools that the students attended whilst on school placement in order to determine the actual level of performativity of those documents.

Ahmed (2012) also draws a clear definition as to what *'diversity work'* can be interpreted as being. It can be an attempt, through the use of policies, to transform the institution i.e. school so that there is a convergence between the paper document so that what could be termed rhetoric then becomes reality. The other definition she gives is of the work you or I might do because we do not fit the mould of the institution, are not part of the somatic norm and inhabited spaces within that institution. Puwar (2004) referred to being a '*space invader'* when caught in this scenario. As your presence is unexpected, you have to work harder to allay any concerns or fears that might be engendered by your presence. Recent online campaigns (2014) by students in the U.S (*I, too, am Harvard*) and the U.K (*I, too, am Oxford*) highlight the diversity work, using Ahmed's second definition, and emotional work that these students have had to expend in terms of diversity work and to demonstrate that they are not '*Other'*.

Hochshild's (1983) work on emotional labour describes the emotional effort or work that is put into making personal views and feelings more palatable to our audience or the onlooker and to signify that we are not alien, or too different to, the rest of the group. In relation to the work space, Fineman (2003) writes about '*emotion scripts'* and how they are

used to reinforce the unwritten rules of how we conduct ourselves in work spaces as well as the written ones made concrete in policies. In a school environment, this could be interpreted as following the prescribed dress code or, through observance of the group, knowing which seat can be sat on in the staffroom. Fineman (2003) refers to the concepts of '*surface acting'* where one pretends emotions that are not really felt so one's outward behaviour is changed and '*deep acting*'. The latter involves concealing what one really feels so as to appear to follow the employer's ethos so only the expressed feeling appears to have changed. The employer in this case would be the Headteacher, classteacher and/or mentor. This dissonance between '*deep acting'* and '*surface acting'* can lead to a level of intrapersonal conflict which Lorde (2007), as a Black feminist theorist, refers to when she writes about the *'constant drain of energy which might be better used in redefining ourselves'* (Lorde, 2007, p.115). This could lead to a level of interpersonal conflict or '*emotional labour'* when we are in contradiction with the workplace '*emotion script'*. There are physiological, psychological and ethical implications to be considered (Fineman, 2003) relating to the wellbeing of individuals enmeshed in such situations.

The notion of *'emotional labour'* resonates with Du Bois's notion of *'double consciousness'* (2006) which suggests the work involved in being alert to the gaze of others, how they might perceive you and of *'measuring one's soul by the tape of a world'* (Du Bois, 2006, p.3) that is ultimately critical. The self-imposed self-monitoring that takes place can be exemplified by Fanon's (2008) reference to Sartre where Fanon quotes:

> *'They have allowed themselves to be poisoned by the stereotype that others have of them, and they live in fear that their acts will correspond to this stereotype…We may say that their conduct is perpertually overdetermined from the inside.'* (Fanon, 2008, p.87)

This chimes with the dissonance that can be created between '*surface acting'* and *'deep acting'.* Du Bois goes on to talk about *'two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.'* (Du Bois, 2006, p.3). This strongly expresses, at one end of the spectrum, the pain, hyper-awareness and challenge to well-being that can be experienced when you feel yourself to be a *'space invader'.* A coming-to-terms with this state could be seen to be expressed by Mohanty (2003). She writes that she feels that she is no longer just subject to and living under the Western gaze that would have found her wanting (Fanon,

2008). She refers to what are, in effect, the intersectionalities of her identity and existence as a woman from Mumbai, India who has made her home in Ithaca, New York:

> *'I no longer live simply under the gaze of Western eyes. I also live inside it and negotiate it every day.'* (Mohanty, 2003, p. 530)

The above quotation by Mohanty suggests a reconciliation with what could be warring parts, forged by external and internal pressures, as defined by Du Bois. Mirza (2016) talked about her experiences of honing her accent so as to fit in and not draw that gaze too far in her direction yet this lead to the experience of *'double consciousness'.* The desire to fit in, not to be too different and be accepted as part of a group is a primal one (Freud, 1922) but the colonial gaze serves to create and maintain a level of distance as explored by Lorde and her reference to the master's house and maintenance of hegemony.

Intrinsic to CRT is the recognition that racism and the structures of Whiteness are normative, invisible and perpetually functioning. When referring to work carried out with White pre-service teachers (teacher trainees), Picower (2009) talks about the '*tools of Whiteness'* - emotional, ideological and performative forms of denial of racism - that are wielded as a shield by those who do not wish to or find it morally and ideologically painful to accept the notion of privileges that they have been party to, for historical reasons and a quirk of evolution. This denial takes the form not only of a '*passive **resistance to** but much more of an active **protection of**'* (op. cit., p.197, sic) their position of material and ideological hegemony. The research questions will explore whether this is the position found in the schools where the students were placed and what strategies were put in place by the students to counter this resistance.

A criticism, however, that has been levelled at CRT is what has been labelled as its lack of empirical rigor (Lopez, 2001). This contentious discourse centres on the notion that the personal stories told are subjective, usually told from a place of emotion and subjectivity not of logic and empiricism, therefore not subject to scientific methods and so cannot be considered reliable. Yet when a person talks about an experience that goes to the very heart of them, it would not be unusual for their testimony to be emotional. Emotional narratives do not automatically equal untrustworthy or invalid testimony. This particular discourse highlights the pervading political, social and legal environment where the stories of alterity and inhabiting liminal spaces for African-Americans led to the theorising of CRT.

Whilst considering the use of CRT as a framework, a thought came to mind about the relationship between the sun and the moon; the moon is always present but we need the reflected light of the sun to make it visible. The moon has to have a celestial ally for it to be seen and noticed. In terms of CRT, this for me, is best exemplified by Bell's (1993) *Rules of Racial Standing* (1 and 2) which highlights a situation Black teacher trainees have found themselves in i.e. an enforced need for an ally, a White ally to make visible and act as translators so that their experience can be heard and, to an extent, understood by those in charge. It is not that the students are literally speaking a different language to that of their fellow students and school colleagues but the appropriation of their story by a 'White ally' gives their stories credence and a wider audience (Rankine, 2015). What I experience as ideological dissonance, in that an ally or qualifier is needed, is best illustrated by the following quotation from hooks (1990, cited in Lawler, 2014, p. 36):

> '*No need to heed your voice when I can talk about you better than you can speak about yourself. No need to hear your voice. Only tell me about your pain. I want to know your story. And then I will tell it back to you in a new way. Tell it back to you in such a way that it has become my own. Rewriting you I rewrite myself anew. I am still author, authority. I am still colonizer, the speaking subject and you are now at the centre of my talk.'*

CRT acts as a lens to frame the narratives of the students and allows the discussion of race and racism to be foregrounded and take its place rather than being the proverbial elephant in the room or spectre at the feast. As a theoretical grounding, CRT has natural links with Narrative Inquiry (NI). The decision to use NI and CRT together was based on how NI can fill in the gaps left by CRT. A traditional use of CRT is to create composite characters who then, via the use of counter-narratives, go on to narrate, discuss and unpick imagined scenarios which are steeped in reality (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004; Rollock, 2012; Griffin *et al.* 2014). These characters and the stories that they tell are there to illustrate both the hidden and overt aspects of Whiteness enacted in everyday life. This book takes on board the concept of counter-narratives but they are in the form of interviews with the students. Their stories act as counter-narratives in that their testimonies flow against the tide of received wisdom (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001) from the University i.e. that all is well for all students, regardless of their ethnicity. This was highlighted by Larissa when asked whether she would mention any

of the issues she was having to her University tutor. She had had experiences where parents had refused to recognise her position as the student teacher and that *"some parents refused to talk to me about anything to do with their child"*:

> *'No, I wouldn't have mentioned it to my CBT or anyone in the school because I think you have to be really careful when you start mentioning anything to do with race because there's always an issue that you might be misunderstood or they might, you might be making excuses for something… one of the targets for any placement is to make relationships with parents. They might turn around and say that it had something to do with you what you're experiencing and so I was aware of not trying to make it something it's not.'* (Larissa)

Rather than use created, composite characters, a decision was made to let the students speak for themselves (albeit with pseudonyms) to avoid another instance of, in effect, silencing their true message. NI allows the researcher to go deeper into their experiences and allows those experiences to be expressed using the students' own words.

Clandinin and Connelly (2000), recognised as the main proponents of NI, explain how narrative inquiries are generally shaped by the experiences of the researcher and how these experiences then impact on how the research is then carried out. This had implications for me when considering the influence of what, in effect, became insider-research with my holding the dual position of researcher and tutor. This went along with the potential impact of bias in the analysis and interpretation of the data.

A contradictory criticism, however, of NI is that it can be considered both *'overly personal and interpersonal'* (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p. 181) which suggests that critics consider the researcher and/or participant too involved with their own story; almost levelling a critique of egocentricity. Conversely, it could be argued that this level of experiential affinity between researcher and participant – perhaps re-framed as bias - is a fundamental aspect of the *'co-creation of knowledge'* that Lander (2011a) refers to. Bhopal (2010) makes reference to research that argues that the *'research/interview relationships…should work on a participatory model in which the researcher shares their own biography with the researched'* (Bhopal, 2010, p.188). This notion subverts what has

been seen as criticism of NI by emphasising the positive effects of there being a level of inter-connectedness between researcher and participant.

Storytelling and relating narratives are a fundamental aspect of both NI and CRT methodology so as Webster and Mertova (2007) posit:

> *'In narratives, our voices echo those of others in the sociocultural world, and we evidence cultural membership both through our ways of crafting stories and through the very content of these stories*.' (2007, p.2)

The 'sociocultural' world referred to by Webster and Mertova (2007) is affected and shaped by the *'majoritarian story'* we are part of and engage in (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002), a story that *'distorts and silences the experiences of people of color'* (op.cit, p.29). Within these *'majoritarian stor[ies]'* is the *'silence within statements'* (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002, p.29) which further underscore the *'master narrative'* and further highlight the *'contours of racism'* (Leonardo, 2002). Narratives or storytelling, in this case, are not to be taken in the same vein as fictional stories that we buy or read for pleasure but rather the '*construction of reality'* (Lander, 2011a). As Webster and Mertova (2007) exemplify NI as being:

> *'…set in human stories of experience. It provides researchers with a rich framework through which to investigate the ways humans experience the world depicted through their stories'* (2007, p.1)

The use of Narrative Inquiry will allow me to explore, through narratives in the form of focus group and individual interviews, the experiences of the participants and look for insights to be gleaned about the institutions or schools they worked in.

Employing narrative to frame ideas can act as valuable tool, especially in terms of using analogies to illustrate the epistemologies of the students within this study by

juxtaposition with the themes found in the play, *'Othello'* (Shakespeare, 1993). One of the themes that runs through the play is that of being a Black body in a White space, ostensibly accepted whilst expedient to do so, but fundamentally an outsider in terms of race and class. I do recognise the irony of using a play written by a White Western European male, telling the story of a Black African male to illustrate the real lives of Black women, born, bred and/or living in the U.K. Also, using this as a methodological strand does resonate with hooks (1990) powerful reference to the use of the White voice having legitimating power over and of the Black voice. However, the recognition of what are, in effect, the structures of Whiteness represented in literary form, is an important facet of the CRT theoretical framework.

The application of these interpretative frameworks and contingent research methods '*would tend to treat knowledge as created and negotiated between human beings'* (Oliver, 2014, p.144). An aspect of this research will be to unpick this '*knowledge'* whetted by the school experience. Is it based on an epistemology generated by Whiteness and, if so, to what extent do the participants have a hand in creating it? Solórzano and Yosso (2002) note the importance of acknowledging the pervasiveness of White privilege in building narratives, or what is taken to be knowledge, about race and that *'people of color often buy into and tell majoritarian stories'* (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002, p. 28). The methodological tool of exploring narrative would allow us to unpick that as it allows the participants to tell their own story and, by doing so, create and negotiate an epistemological discourse that runs contra to the dominant one of Whiteness.

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[i] *Dubbed the 'Terrorist Fist bump' cartoon, Michelle Obama is pictured with an afro and an automatic rifle slung across her back whilst Barack Obama is dressed as a Muslim.*